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THE LONDON CITIZEN IN ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

1590-1620

by

DOREEN MARY HEAPS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of

ENGLISH

Accepted
April 12. 1950.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1950

ABSTRACT
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Abstract

The London Citizen in Elizabethan Drama, 1590-1620.

This essay deals with the London citizen in Elizabethan drama from 1590-1620. In it I have tried to give a picture of the citizen's possession, habits and beliefs as they appear in the plays of the period.

In the introduction I defined the terms I used, defended the limits of the essay, and discussed the sources. I set forth, also, the method that I followed in arranging the material.

I divided the essay into two sections. In the first I gave the background for the plays by describing, in chapter one, the development of the citizen class; in chapter two, the appearance of London; in chapter three, the ideals of the sixteenth century citizen. In the second section I discussed various portions of the citizen's life and supported my conclusions by many references to the drama.

The second section was based almost directly on the plays. The fourth chapter was the one exception. In it I discussed the playwrights' contribution to the middle class drama and their attitudes towards the citizens.

The fifth chapter illustrated the third one and, on the whole, followed the same plan. I included in it, however,

references to the vices into which the citizen was led by too eager a pursuit of his ideals.

Chapter six dealt with Elizabethan business management and chapter seven with the position of the citizen's women-folk. Under business management, I considered the merchant adventurer, the lean merchant or usurer, the craftsman and the apprentice. In the following chapter I examined the citizen's attitude towards women and its reflection in the drama. The houses and gardens, food and drink, jewels and clothing of the London citizen were the subjects of chapter eight.

Religion and Superstition was the heading for chapter nine and Morals and Mores for chapter ten. In the former I gave illustrations of the Londoner's attitude towards Puritans and Roman Catholics and examples of the citizen's amazing belief in all forms of magic. The tenth chapter contained references to theft, murder, and adultery as well as to smoking, swearing, drinking and playgoing.

The succeeding two chapters were concerned, firstly, with the Londoner's opinion of social welfare and, secondly, with his concept of the state. Under these headings I discussed laws against vagrants; imprisonment for debt, insanity or immorality, and references to the citizen's ideal state.

In the thirteenth chapter I listed the amusements of the middle class and examined the citizen's response to the theatre, plays, books, games, puppet shows, dances, and songs. In the second last chapter I attempted to define the conventional Elizabethan opinion of various trades and professions.

In my conclusion I recapitulated the points that I had made throughout the essay. I drew attention to the constant appearance of two attitudes towards the citizen, mentioned again the reasons that I gave for them, and stated, once more, my opinion of their respective truths. I repeated that I thought a middle course had to be taken between the two attitudes. Then, I discussed briefly the artistic value of the middle class drama and concluded that it possessed little, if any, literary merit and contained, few memorable figures. I spoke, finally, of the plays' value as social documents. I said that they contained much information on details of food and drink, but added that only in the early part of the period could they be said to reflect the citizen's ethos completely. From 1610 on the drama seemed to me to be too one-sided to be very reliable or of much value in helping one form a balanced picture of the London citizen's attitude of mind.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1	i
------------------------	-------------	---

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

I. <u>Cities and the Middle Class</u>	1
a. The Revival of Trade	
b. The Merchants	
c. The Guild	
II. <u>London</u>	11
a. History	
b. In the Sixteenth Century	
c. The Government	
d. The Elizabethan Inhabitants	
e. Importance and Influence	
III. <u>The Ideals of the Middle Class</u>	22
a. Medieval	
b. Contemporary	

B. THE PLAYS

IV. <u>Dramatists and the Drama</u>	37
a. The Plays Considered	
b. Dramatists and Attitudes	
V. <u>Illustrations of Middle Class Ideals</u>	56
a. Medieval	
b. Contemporary	
VI. <u>Business Management</u>	73
a. The Theories	
b. The Merchant Adventurers	

c.	The Loan Merchants	
d.	The Peddlars	
e.	Speculation	
f.	The Craftsman and His Shop	
g.	The Apprentice	
VII.	<u>The Position of Women</u>	112
a.	The Elizabethan Attitude	
b.	The Wives	
c.	The Daughters	
d.	Women Servants and Craftsmen	
ee.	The Courtezan and the Citizen	
VIII.	<u>Homes, Food, Clothing</u>	129
a.	The Homes	
b.	The Food	
c.	The Clothing	
IX.	<u>Religion and Superstition</u>	184
a.	The Religious Background	
b.	The Puritans	
c.	The Elizabethan and the Supernatural	
X.	<u>Mores and Morals</u>	201
a.	The Elizabethan Definition of Moral Behaviour	
b.	Major Offences	
c.	Trivial Faults	
XI	<u>Social Welfare</u>	214
a.	The Paupers and Beggars	
b.	The Disbanded Soldiers	
c.	The Debtors	
d.	The Criminals and the Prisons	

XII.	<u>The State</u>	226
	a. Order and Trade	
	b. Mobs and Business	
XIII.	<u>Amusements</u>	233
	a. Reading and Plays	
	b. Fairs and Games	
	c. Hunting and Music	
XIV.	<u>Classes and Characterization</u>	250
	a. Professional Men	
	b. Merchants and Craftsmen	
	c. Carpenters and Clowns	
	d. Body Servants	
	e. The Middle Class and the Aristocracy	
XV.	<u>Conclusion</u>	267
	a. The Citizen in the Drama	
	b. The Plays as Literature	
	c. The Plays as Social Documents	

Introduction

In this paper I shall discuss the Elizabethan citizens portrayed in the drama from 1590 to 1620. I shall use the term, citizen, to refer to all Lord Mayors, clothiers, and shoemakers who live in a city; and I shall disregard the stage directions that give Edmonton, Venice or Rome as a setting. The Venice of Jonson and the Rome of Beaumont and Fletcher was, in all essentials, the city of London.

Furthermore, I shall extend the definition of citizen. Strictly speaking, a citizen was a man who was "free of a guild", that is, he had served his apprenticeship, had been a journeyman, and had produced his masterpiece. In this essay, however, I shall discuss the apprentice and the untrained workman as well as the mastercraftsman and his wife. But I shall exclude the members of the nobility and of the court circle unless their actions can be used to illustrate the life of the middle class. In other words, I shall use the terms, "citizens", and "members of the middle class", as synonyms.¹

¹ See Corbin, J, The Return of the Middle Class; Gretton, R.H., The English Middle Class; Palm, F.C., The Middle Class, Then and Now; Pirenne, Henri, The Medieval City State, for definitions of citizen and of middle class.

I did not think that it would be possible for me to write about the plays unless I had given an outline of the economic, geographical, and religious background of the London citizen. It seemed necessary, therefore, to include in this essay a description of London and a short account of the rise of towns and of the middle class.

I chose the years, 1590-1620, as limits for this essay and I used the term, "Elizabethan", to refer to any play written within these thirty years. The limits, no doubt, are somewhat arbitrary, but they served better than any others upon which I might have decided. Plays written about the citizen first appear in some numbers about 1590. They increase until 1605-1610 and, then, they begin to disappear. The picture of the citizen given in these later plays becomes steadily more stylized and conventional and, therefore, of less worth than that found in those written earlier in the the period. As a rule, I disregarded dramas written after 1620.

I cannot say, however, that I rigidly observed the limits, 1590-1620. In many instances, the dates of plays have not and cannot be determined. Consequently, if a play written just before 1590 or just after 1620 illustrated some aspect of citizen life, I used it in my essay; and I ignored all controversy over details of composition. Yet,

for the sake of efficiency, I had to adopt some system of dating, and I found it most convenient to rely upon that set forth by Alfred Harbage in his Annals of English Drama.

Since I was not concerned with textual matters I did not try to read early or facsimile copies of the plays. In general I used the latest editions that I could obtain. I thought that these would be the ones most readily available to the average reader. For example, Rhys Mermaid edition was my source for the well known plays of Dekker, such as The Honest Whore. But I was forced to rely upon Pearson's 1873 text for The Roaring Girl.

The varying editions that I used led to a divergence in the form of my footnotes. The texts did not agree upon divisions into acts and scenes and, in many instances, lines were not numbered. Hazlitt's edition of Dodsley's Old English Plays, sometimes separates the play into acts and scenes and sometimes indicates Act 1 only. On the other hand, Grosart's 1831-73 edition of Greene gives line numbers, sometimes without either act or scene.

If the lines of a play were not numbered, I quoted act or scene, if any, and page, thus: 1,ii,p.64. If the edition supplied act, scene, and line as in Kittredge's Shakespeare, my footnote contained act, scene, and line, thus; 1,ii,97. If I were discussing ideas contained in a complete scene or act, I indicated the act or scene

without any page or line number. For the convenience of the reader I have listed, in an appendix, the editions to which my footnotes refer.,

The reader will notice that I have made few allusions to Shakespeare or to his plays. In the body of the essay I shall state in detail my reasons for omitting the chief Elizabethan dramatist. I shall only say here that a discussion of the citizens in Shakespeare's plays would form an essay by itself and would involve a long analysis of Shakespeare's attitude towards and place in the middle class. I decided to confine myself, as much as possible, to the plays written by the other Elizabethan dramatists.

I make no claim to have covered all the plays written in the period. In the first place, not all of them were printed, and, secondly, only a fraction of these have been reprinted and were at hand. But I have made an attempt to read all of those available with the exception of the masque and related forms of the drama.

The treatment of material in this essay has been almost entirely confined to giving a summary of facts. I have attempted little or no interpretation or literary criticism, but have been satisfied to give the details of the everyday life of the London citizen as I have been able to reconstruct it from the drama.

Cities and the Middle Class¹

This essay deals with the London citizen in the Elizabethan drama from 1590 to 1620; but, before I turn to the plays written in this period, it would be as well for me to say something of the history of the citizen and of the city in which he lived so that we may have in our minds a setting for the Quomodos and the Eyres of the playwrights. In the introduction I have said that the citizen evolved in part from the merchant and that the rise of the latter was connected with the growth of towns. In this chapter I shall give in more detail the evolution of the citizen from the merchant and the relation of each to the towns. In a succeeding one, I shall consider the London of the late ~~sixteenth~~ and the early seventeenth century.

I For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Ashley, W.J., The Beginnings of Town Life in the Middle Ages.

Boissonade, P., Life and Work in Medieval Europe, tr. E. Power.

Clarke, M.V., The Medieval City State.

Cunningham, W., "Economic Change", in Cambridge Modern History.

Green, Alice, Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.

Gross, C., The English Gild Merchant,

Law, Alice, "The English Nouveau Riche in the Fourteenth Century," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.

Meseul, A., "The Middle Class", Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.

Pirenne, H., The Medieval City State
, Economic and Social History of the Later Middle Ages

Power, E., Medieval People.

In Europe during the Dark Ages there was little urban development and scanty merchantile activity. Existence was so hazardous that people were content to remain in their barricaded villages or in the towns that were not much more than armed camps. Naturally, at such a time, travel of any type was very dangerous, and it was no wonder that trade had almost ceased. The goods that were carried were mainly luxuries, the sale of which repaid the merchant for the risks that he took.

There was no sign of a break in this economic deadlock until the eleventh century. Then, however, the Pisans defeated the Arabs and thus reopened the trade routes across the Mediterranean. Immediately, both land and sea trade increased, and a large number of prosperous trading towns were established on or near the Mediterranean. The rapid expansion of Venice was typical of the growth of these towns. It quickly became the capital of an empire built on commerce and governed by merchant princes.

Other towns in the Italian peninsula followed in the wake of Venice, but many of them owed their prosperity to land trade rather than to trade by sea. Their merchants found it profitable to extend trade routes inland. First, they travelled to the towns that lay just beyond the Mediterranean coast; later, they reached those far in the interior of Europe. In this manner the revival of trade spread across the continent and towns isolated for many

years saw, in their streets, merchants from the far corners of Europe.

The trader who carried goods to the interior remained for a long time an odd combination of merchant and craftsman, vagabond and peddler. Strange as it seems, however, such a man was the predecessor of the settled and prosperous sixteenth century citizen, and I must try, therefore, to piece together some part of his history.

It is impossible to describe with any certainty how this merchant originated. He might have been a villager who had found his way to a port, seen the articles offered for sale there, and thought that they could be disposed of profitably in his native village, town or country. He might, on the other hand, have been a sea-trader who had felt that he could sell more goods if he went inland. In either instance, the new merchant would find his way slowly to feudal fortresses, ecclesiastical towns or small villages and would exchange his wares for articles made in the interior. Sometimes, waylaid by robbers or hampered by bad roads, he would lose everything and have to start afresh, perhaps practising a craft until he could save enough money to buy new merchandise.

The number of merchants increased in spite of all these difficulties, and, eventually, many of them became wealthy enough to return to their homes and to hire others to travel for them. They would take their places again

in town or village or make new ones for themselves; and, as well-to-do citizen merchants, familiar with much of Europe, they would form one of the more powerful groups in their towns.

From the twelfth to the fifteenth century there was a steady increase in merchantile activity all over Europe. In Italy, it culminated during the fourteenth century in the wealth and display of men such as the Di Medicis or the Bardi and Peruzzi. In other parts of Europe in the next century there were names equally famous among the Welsers and the Fuggers and in Jacques Coeur of Montpellier. In England, merchantile development did not come to a head until the sixteenth century, although it followed a pattern similar to that of the rest of Europe.

I have indicated in a general way the beginnings of the merchant class, but I cannot leave the merchant and craftsman until I consider certain forces that contributed later to middle class strength and diminished that of other ranks of society. These forces were the Crusades, the Black Death, and the rise of centralized monarchies. All, in one way or another, increased the numbers and wealth of the merchants, and, therefore, of the middle class and the cities.

The Crusades added both directly and indirectly to the wealth and power of the merchants. They created new demands among the nobility of Europe and thus they made

a market for the merchant's goods. They helped the merchant indirectly by weakening the feudal lords. The nobles had to borrow large sums of money from the merchants so that they could follow their sovereigns to the Holy Land. The merchants were only too glad to supply loans as long as they were repaid in rights, privileges, and land.

It seems difficult to reconcile the Black Death, which took the lives of members of all classes, with an increase in the size of the merchant class; but such was its effect.

As a result of the plague there was a serious decrease in the number of serfs available to work the land. Landlords who wished to keep their men on their manors had to offer money wages. Some of the serfs worked and saved the money, and, later, bought their freedom and went into trade. Others, through their moving from manor to manor in search of high wages, found the wandering life of the roads more profitable and more attractive than an existence on an estate, little better than that of a bond slave. These were the men who swelled the ranks of the merchants through becoming, in their turn, tinkers or itinerant traders.

The rise of the centralized monarchies added still further to the influence of the merchant and to the difficulties of the feudal landlord. The king found that it was safer and more profitable to depend upon the middle class than upon the feudal nobility. Both he and the

merchant saw that there were advantages in close association. The king borrowed money from the merchant, and the merchant received privileges in return. Usually these took the form of grants to the towns, many of which, as a result, became free from both royal and noble interference and governed their own affairs. That is to say, they were ruled by merchants.

While the king was granting favors to the middle class he was attempting to restrict the rights of the nobility and in so doing he often unconsciously aided the merchant again. For example, when he commanded his nobility to attend him at court either for a few months or longer he put the lords to new expense and made them, in a certain degree, more dependent upon the merchant than ever. They were forced to borrow from the merchant or to free their serfs for a monetary payment in order to obey the king. They found to their discomfort that the merchant's world of currency was taking the place of the feudal world of payment in kind, and their sons, when they realized what was happening, were only too eager to ally themselves with the middle class either through marriage or apprenticeship.

By the sixteenth century, as a result of the interaction of all these forces, the merchant had changed from a tinker to a great commercial prince. He could claim friendship with the king and set at naught the power of the nobles; but neither he nor his fellows could have

reached this position without the aid of some form of organization, of some instrument through which they could express themselves as a group. They had such an organization in the gild and they gradually changed it from an essentially medieval and fraternal association to one adapted to the needs of the modern and competitive world.

The first gild was composed of wandering traders who had banded together to combat the attacks of robbers and the hostile actions of the early bourgs.¹ This Gilda Mercatoria regulated the price and quality of goods sold at the fairs held by its members outside the walls of bourg or village.

As cities expanded and as life became more orderly, the problems facing the merchants demanded another form of organization and the Gilda Mercatoria lost much of its power because it no longer filled the needs of the merchants. The protection it had given was no longer necessary and its price regulations were taken over by the more complex craft gilds that developed within the towns.

The craft guild was an association, in town or large village, of all the workers in one craft. Through

¹ I use the term, "bourg", as found in Pirenne. A bourg is a town that had its origin in an ecclesiastical centre in the late Roman Empire. It had not been founded by merchants and was frequently hostile to them.

its mastercraftsmen, it set the requirements for entrance and made regulations concerning the sale and manufacture of goods by its members. The craft guild superseded the Gilda Mercatoria and had certain advantages over the latter. It could control directly both sale and manufacture whereas the older type of guild could supervise selling only.

All craft guilds were composed of apprentices, journeymen, and mastercraftsmen, but only the mastercraftsmen were full members.¹ That is, only they took part in the governing of the guild. Seven years was the usual term of service for the apprentice. When this time was over the apprentice became a journeyman. The journeyman could sell his goods and services, but could not become a mastercraftsman until he had satisfied additional regulations. These varied with the craft.

From the foregoing paragraphs it may be seen that the Gilda Mercatoria and the craft guild were related to the lives of the merchants and of the citizens. If we look further into the development of the craft guild we shall see that through it the merchant gradually assumed control of the town.

From very early times the craft guild had, as a rule, governed the towns that lived by trade. It could hardly be otherwise since the craftsman and his work kept the town

¹ The life of the apprentice, the journeyman, and the mastercraftsman will be discussed in greater detail in a succeeding chapter.

alive. But the craft guild won control of other centres as well. The guildsmen, whenever they had the opportunity, forced the feudal landlord to grant them rights over the fortress bourgs within his domain.¹ If he lived far away or display no interest in his town they tacitly assumed control. This shift in power from lord to guild had almost been completed by the fifteenth century.

In theory, government in the towns controlled by the guilds should have been reasonably democratic. Nearly every inhabitant in these towns was connected with the guilds in some manner or another, and, thus, was entitled to have some voice in the decisions of the guilds, especially in those that had to do with affairs of the town. Furthermore, all apprentices, if they had the ability, were entitled to become mastercraftsmen and someday to share in the government of the guild and, therefore, of the town. In reality, things were far otherwise. The guilds quickly became monopolies. A few mastercraftsmen gained wealth and power. Then, they restricted the entrance to the masters' class and allowed only their friends and relatives to enter it. In time, consequently, a select group came to rule the guilds and, through them, the towns.

By the seventeenth century, both merchant and craft guilds bore more resemblance to the modern company than

¹ The feudal lord was often forced by circumstances to grant control of his town to merchants. See pp. 5,6.

to their medieval counterparts and the distinction between the two had almost disappeared.

The increase in the number of wealthy merchants hastened the disintegration of the original form of the guilds. These men often carried on their trade in such a manner that it was impossible to tell whether they were craftsmen or merchants or both at the same time. The confusion arose as they took less and less active part in the work of their craft. They now had the resources to hire journeymen to manufacture while they restricted themselves to selling. Such merchant-craftsmen became very numerous in the sixteenth century and their counterparts appear frequently in the Elizabethan drama.¹

¹ This description of the two types of guilds has necessarily been very brief. Pirenne's Medieval Cities and Economic and Social History of The Middle Ages give the development of the guilds and their relationship to the towns in interesting and minute detail.

London¹

I shall turn now to the London of Elizabeth and James I, describing it and its connections with trade, so that we may be able to imagine the setting in which the sixteenth century citizen lived and to understand how he was influenced by it.

From its founding London had flourished because merchants had passed through it. Situated as it was, near a ford over the river where travellers crossed from north and south, east and west, it was an ideal place at which to carry on trade. It is little wonder, consequently, that it was important as an administrative, ecclesiastical, and commercial centre from the time of the Romans, and that it has remained so up to the present day.

Merchantile life in England developed first and most fully in London; the guilds and mastercraftsmen of Cheapside, of Bread Street, or of Goldsmiths' Row may be considered as examples or as predecessors of similar men and movements throughout the country.

1 For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Gomme, G.E., The Governauce of London,

Harrison, W., Description of England.

Judges, A.V., The Elizabethan Underworld, London,
Old London Illustrated.

Onion, C.T. ed., Shakespeare's England.

Sharpe, R.R. London and the Kingdom.

Stow, John, A Survey of London.

By the time of Elizabeth London was a rapidly expanding city of about 100,000 people. Despite its rapid growth, however, it still looked much as it had done in medieval times. To the traveller coming to it from Southwark or down the Great North Road, it would seem to be, as in the Middle Ages, a city of churches, the spires of which dominated the town and the huddled outskirts. With the Reformation the great monastic establishments had passed into the hands of the crown, of wealthy lords, or of influential citizens, but many of the abbeys and their chapels had not been destroyed. Some had been turned into churches of the reformed religion without any great alteration, others into dwelling places, and their naves and buttresses still rose above the lesser buildings. Among all the conglomerate mass of spires and towers, St. Paul's in the centre of the city, and the Tower of London, just outside the eastern boundary, were the most familiar and commanding landmarks.

The traveller from the south would have to cross the Thames before he entered the city and walked under its spires. But the river was more than the southern boundary of London. It was as much a part of it as were St. Paul's and Cheapside and it was used constantly both for pleasure and for commerce. Since it linked various sections of the city with one another, with the suburbs, and with other parts of the country much

more effeciently than the poor roads, the Londoner spent a considerable portion of his time on it. If it were possible to make his journey by boat rather than by road, he would call on one of the watermen of the Thames to take him. They would leave from any of the numerous wharfs and go up or down or across the river, passing on their way the pleasant gardens that lay along it, behind the houses of the wealthy citizens or adjoining the palaces of the nobles.

Parallel with the river and not far north of it ran the main shopping district, Cheapside. It was the broadest of the London streets and, in comparison with others, the cleanest. Most of the shops were on it or in its vicinity. The customer could walk along Cheapside and into the adjoining streets, obtain whatever he desired, and then stroll to St. Paul's, which lay nearby. In the centre aisle he might meet his friends or borrow money from the brokers who were stationed there.

The municipal buildings were grouped in the vicinity of Cheapside. The Royal Exchange, built by Gresham, Leadenhall, built by Eyre, and the Guildhall were among the more imposing of these. The major trading of the city was carried on in the Exchange and the governing of it took place in the Guildhall. The bulk of the former monastery of Blackfriars rose nearby, to the east of Leadenhall and of the Exchange and slightly north of

1. cf. The Roaring Girl, 1, i, p. 158.

2. cf. Michaelmas Term, 1, i. Every Man, Bobadil.

Cheapside. For a short period following the Reformation Parliament had met there. Thus, for a few years, the administration of England and of London was carried on in buildings within a stone's throw of one another. During Elizabeth's reign, however, Parliament moved to the suburb of Westminster and Blackfriars became a theatre.

Between and around the large buildings, such as St. Paul's and the Guildhall, houses of all shapes and sizes, some magnificent, some shabby, huddled together along the narrow and winding streets. The modest dwellings of the average citizen, the town houses of the wealthy country gentry and of the great nobles, the palaces of the queen's officials and of the royal family, countless taverns and ordinaries, and the gathering places of the city's underworld jostled each other indiscriminately. In the plays that have dwellings as their settings a similar variety is shown. Theseus, for example, entertains in the great hall of a palace, Falstaff in the public rooms of the Boar's Head.

Outside the walls lay the suburbs, growing planlessly and rapidly, much to the distress of the city fathers, who repeatedly passed ordinances forbidding the erection of new houses outside London. These were disregarded, however, for the city had no jurisdiction over the suburbs. In them London's constables could not forbid building, arrest for debt, or shut bawdy houses. Consequently,

they became the dwelling places of debtors and of courtezans, and all of the suburbs, with the exception of the royal one of Westminster, acquired evil reputations. According to the drama, it was in the suburbs that the unscrupulous citizen, with the aid of courtezans deprived many an "easy heir" of his estate, and many a son of a newly-wealthy citizen gambled away his father's hard earned money.¹

Certain sections of London, the scantuaries and the liberties, were supposed to be favorite resorts of the underworld. They had a reputation as evil as that of the suburbs and, perhaps, more deserved. But they had not always been in such ill repute, and it is interesting to see how they came to harbour thieves, debtors, and courtezans. Originally they had been the holy places of their districts and were frequently the sites of large churches or abbeys. On such sacred ground, according to Roman Catholic teaching, thieves and murderers might find refuge from the law. By Elizabeth's time, of course, there was no established Roman faith to enforce such doctrine, but, nevertheless, the tradition remained, and the lawless continued to find shelter in the scantuaries and liberties although it was no longer given by the church. The colorful, if vicious, life of these sections so delighted the dramatist

¹ cf. The Puritan, 11, i, p. 408, Michaelmas Term also. Easy is an "easy heir".

and the pamphlet writer that there are countless references to both sanctuaries and liberties in the literature of the time, especially to the most notorious of all, Whitefriars, or Alsatia, as it was called in the plays.

The playhouses, among them The Theatre, the Swan, the Globe, the Fortune, the Red Bull, were outside¹ the walls, either in the suburbs or beyond them, and, in their vicinity, were other places of amusement such as the Bear Garden, the zoo in the Tower,² and Finsbury Fields. In the latter, butts were set up for archery to encourage the Londoners to continue practising with the English longbow. Here the citizen walked and picnicked on his holidays. He might also visit the section of the Tower that was open to the public and marvel at the animals in its small zoo.³ Yet, however much he might enjoy theatres or puppet shows he must always have been conscious of official disapproval. The national government and the city council frowned on theatres and Finsbury Fields alike and did all they could to stop the riot and extravagance which offended their puritan consciences and which they

¹ Blackfriars was an exception. We have seen that it lay inside the city, p. 13 above.

² cf. Volpone, IV, i, 37-40.

³ The Tower lay just inside the walls. Yet it was conveniently near the outskirts. Many families leaving London for the day visited the Tower before they left the city.

thought were inextricably connected with plays and
 bear and bull baiting.¹

The government of London was in the hands of the
 guilds, known in London as the twelve great livery
 companies.² They ruled through a mayor and a council
 of aldermen, who could be chosen from the members of
 any guild, regardless of its relative size or importance.
 Once elected, the mayor and his council had absolute control
 within the walls for London was a free town.

The administration of the city presented many
 problems to the mayor and his council. The policing
 system, for example, was altogether inadequate. The
 constables or catchpols were usually drawn from the lowest
 stratum of society and were completely untrustworthy.
 Consequently, they could not be expected to handle riots
 or thieving efficiently. To make matters worse, the
 general populace little realized how necessary was
 law and order within the city. Many Londoners seemed to
 delight in confusion and uproar. They appeared, for instance,
 to be content to watch the administration of law pass into
 the hands of the apprentices when the cry of "clubs" rang
 through the streets.

1 The puritan attitude of the city council becomes
 evident very early in our period.

2. The twelve great livery companies were: the mercers,
 grocers, drapers, fishmongers, goldsmiths, skinners,
 merchant taylors, haberdashers, salters, ironmongers,
 vinters, cloth workers.

The problem of keeping London clean was as large as the one of keeping it orderly. There was no regular system of sewers. Water had to be carried to the houses from the conduits in the middle of the streets, and garbage was supposed to be carried away down the open centre gutter that discharged into one of the ditches connected with the Thames. More often than not, however, waste was thrown from the upper front windows and never reached the gutter. In many cases, it fell on the head of the unwary passerby. The often repeated Elizabethan phrase, "take the wall" springs from this haphazard arrangement. With such an elementary arrangement it was inevitable that the streets would be a constant mass of filth and refuse of all descriptions.

To us the dirt and the poor sanitation of Elizabethan London would seem as intolerable as the constant riots, but to the sixteenth century councillors cleanliness was less important than order, and they did very little to make London less dirty and more sanitary. In the records of the city we have an example of their inertia. In 1582 Peter Morris, a Dutchman, asked for permission to install a device to raise water from the Thames so that he could enlarge the inadequate supply reaching the city. His application was summarily refused and not long after the end of the Elizabethan period was there anything approaching a satisfactory water system in London.

The regulation of trade and of the manufacture of goods within the city was also the concern of the mayor and the aldermen, who, through municipal ordinances, made the wishes of the guilds effective. They would supervise, for example, such markets as that at Smithfields. Now and then the national government passed laws that superseded or over-lapped those of the citizens, but such action occurred very rarely in the case of trade that completely¹ carried on within the city.

Since there are few references in the plays to the passing of regulations by the mayor and his council and no scenes that picture meetings of the guilds, it seems hardly necessary to give any details of the day by day functioning of either guild or city council. The playwrights must have thought that guild government was too much a commonplace to interest their audiences. Although we are told that Quomodo was given a guild funeral and that Candido was an alderman, we know nothing further of the part they took in guild meetings or in the city council.

We now know something both of the appearance and of the government of London, but, before we leave the city, we should glance in an equally cursory fashion at its varied population. We must not think of it as the home of middle class citizens only, for no city is so composed. Men of all ranks made up the life of London and their interest were often the same as those of the craftsmen and merchants.

¹ cf. Trevelyan, G. M., English Social History, pp. 190-192.

From the citizen's point of view, the most important and the most influential group in London would be composed of the members of the court. Among them would be found nobles of the hereditary aristocracy, with titles dating from the time of William the Conqueror, and citizen administrators, such as Lord Burleigh, who had been raised to the peerage for service to the state. Such men and their wives would set the fashions and provide the best market for the citizens' goods. Wealthy merchants who held honored places in the city were next in rank and importance. They might belong to any of the guilds, and, as they walked through the sections of the city devoted to their crafts, ambitious apprentices would look upon them as models. Sir Thomas Gresham would be typical of such men.

The bulk of London's population was made up of the merchants and craftsmen whose wealth places them below the Greshams and the Eyres and yet safely above the carriers, tapsters, and drawers of the inns. Although these comfortable citizens are adequately and fairly frequently pictured in the plays, they are, as a rule, far less memorable than those below them in the social scale. The dramatists seemed to have an especial affection for the lowest members of Elizabethan society. We all remember Frank, the drawer, in Henry IV, Part I,¹ for his

¹ Henry IV, Part I, 1, iv, 37-125.

excellent stupidity; but we recall the first and second citizens in any play only because they introduce or discuss an important incident

London was crowded all the year with its own citizens, with visitors to the capital of England, younger sons, displaced servants, and unemployed soldiers and sailors. But, during the law terms, which marked the London seasons, the city was especially busy, and Cheapside was thronged with visitors eager for the newest in Italian rapiers, French cloaks, or yellow starched ruffs.

When we look back we can hardly wonder that the Londoner of Elizabeth's time was proud of his city. However filthy or disorderly it might be, it was the heart of England, and no movement of national importance, either political or financial, could hope to succeed without its approval. Even Elizabeth was careful to retain its favor and to flatter its populace. No doubt, she remembered that, only a few years before her coronation, the Somerset rebellion against Mary had failed mainly because it had not had the support of the capital; and, if we may judge from the plays, Elizabeth was well repaid for her astuteness by the unqualified allegiance of London and its citizens.

Having outlined in the preceding chapters the historical and geographic background of the London citizen, I have but one more section to cover before I pass on to the plays. In it I shall speak of the ideals of the citizen. These ideals, naturally, will be closely related to the geographical and historical factors previously discussed.

I For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Camp, C.W., The Artizan in Elizabethan Literature,

Craig, Hardin, The Enchanted Glass.

Cunningham, W., The Growth of English Industry and Commerce.

Gretton, R.H. The English Middle Class.

Hall, Herbert, Society in the Elizabethan Age.

,Knights, L.C., Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson.

Lee, Sidney, "Topical Side of the Elizabethan Drama",
Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society.

Powell, C.L., English Domestic Relations.

Routh, A.V., "The Advent of Modern Thought in Popular Literature," Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 7, p. 416.

"The Progress of Social Literature in Tudor Times," Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 5, p. 93.

Tawney, R.H., Religion and the Rise of Capitalism.

Veblen, T., The Theory of the Leisure Class.

Willey, B., The Seventeenth Century Background.

Wright, L.B. Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England.

I shall consider the citizen's ideals in this chapter for certain definite reasons. In the first place, ideals are frequently expressed in the plays, and I could not give a survey of the citizen without taking them into account. Secondly, when I know what the Elizabethan citizen thought most praiseworthy in conduct and what he desired most in material goods, I shall be able to account for certain of his actions. Finally, by comparing what he did with what he said, I shall see how he attempted to reconcile theory and practice and, thus, may obtain a more comprehensive picture of his life than would otherwise have been possible.

In this chapter I have made no effort to give a composite picture of the citizen's thought. Anyone who wishes to form his own, however, has only to read a number of the plays of the period, or even large sections of quotations from them, such as are given in this essay.

At first glance the Elizabethan's ideals appear to be a welter of inconsistencies and his judgements on men and morals seem hopelessly confused. Such confusion and contradiction sprang directly from the world in which he lived. Change was in the air. The foundations of faith had been shaken, and even the globe itself and the people on it seemed to have changed. For instance, old customs in religion were disappearing

and new conventions were being established. On the other hand, discoveries made former boundaries of travel outmoded, and many translations from both contemporary and ancient languages altered and enlarged the Elizabethan's concept of other cultures.

If I am to study these contradictory ideals I shall have to impose some order upon them. To do so seems impossible at first sight. The Elizabethan, however, like other men, formed his ideals from what he had been taught, the traditions of the past, and from what he saw around him, the conventions of the contemporary world. Naturally, then, I can divide his ideals into those inherited from the past and those formed by his present. When looked at from this point of view, the hopelessly unrelated form coherent groups and the totally contradictory explain themselves.

I shall have to turn again to the Middle Ages to account for the ideals that the citizen inherited from the past. This time I shall speak of the medieval conventions and beliefs rather than discuss merchantile development as I have done previously.

The main characteristic of the medieval era was its unity, founded in religion, and expressed in every part of life. There was much lay activity and a multitudinous diversity of people in the Middle Ages, it is true; but most of the inhabitants of Europe regarded themselves

primarily as members of a single religious unit, Christendom, rather than as Frenchmen, Englishmen, or Germans.

Both church and state gave allegiance to a common philosophy that stressed the worthless and transitory character of this life and yet regarded both temporal and eternal, perfect and imperfect, as part of God's all encompassing plan. Both church and state advised man to be content with his lot and to accept the fact that his position was part of a large unit. As late as the writing of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, for instance, he is told that he should do his duty in the state of life unto which it shall please God to call him.¹

Such teaching, to a society rigidly divided into nobles, clergy, and serfs, would imply that attempts to move from one class to another were evil and symptomatic of discontent. Medieval man, on the whole, had little incentive to change his place. He could even bear unhappiness on earth when he was assured by the church that reward for the good life and compensation for all suffering was to be found in heaven.

In this medieval world, according to religious and political theory, there was no place for the merchant.

¹ The Book of Common Prayer, "A catechism".

Question. What is thy duty towards thy neighbor?

Answer. My duty towards my neighbor....Not to covet or desire other men's goods; but to learn and labor truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of lie unto which it shall please God to call me.

The church condemned his profiting from another's need, and the state feared that his ability to rise from one class to another and to amass great fortunes would shake its ordered foundations. Even the merchants, although in practice they held important positions during the Middle Ages, gave allegiance to medieval standards that condemned their activities. In England, as late as the sixteenth century, the Elizabethan citizen continued to voice such medieval precepts.

The ideals that developed in medieval society were primarily religious in character. They told man that it was useless to hoard worldly goods for this transitory life and they commanded him to share good fortune, which was always the gift of God, with his fellow men. Generosity, therefore, became a virtue, and it could be expressed in many ways, in the traditional giving of alms to the poor, in offering hospitality to wanderers and to the indigent, in the care of penniless guild members and their widows and orphans by other guildsmen.

The numerous complaints in the Elizabethan drama concerning the disregard of this medieval virtue of generosity show that many Elizabethans were influenced by ideals springing out of the past. To such men, lack of hospitality, miserliness, and usury were vices, and neglect of one's fellow worker was a sin.

The Elizabethans inherited medieval man's awareness of evil as well as his sense of life's impermanence. They believed, therefore, that existence on earth was a constant fight to keep pure and chaste, and that, aware of his complete inability to achieve this end without the aid of God, man should be consistently humble. Their counterparts in the drama have much to say in praise of chastity and honesty, and they condemn ostentation and riotous spending, which they regard as a sign of man's pride.

The medieval church had used its influence to compel the making of regulations governing the price and quality of goods and in doing so had stressed again the evil of desiring riches on earth and the sin of taking gain for the sake of mere wealth. It had said, furthermore, that one's obligation to one's fellow in a common religious unit should be expressed in honest and competent work. Naturally, therefore, medieval man had ideals that demanded fair and careful work. The Elizabethan citizen inherited these. The sixteenth century merchant would have said that the craftsman should be conscientious because of his position in society and of his relationship to his God.

Medieval ideals concerning the place of man within the state were determined by the close relationship between religious and political theory that we have mentioned above. Again, in the sixteenth century, we

shall find Elizabethans echoing medieval thought when they say that the ideal nation should be composed of rank upon rank of people arranged in an organized hierarchy. They believed also that no one should try to occupy a place in society higher than that in which he was born.

Since he was influenced by two conflicting sets of ideals, the Elizabethan citizen had at least two different definitions of happiness, or of what constituted the good life. It is interesting to note that his expressed ideal was more apt to be medieval than contemporary in origin. According to medieval tradition the attainment of one's ideals should result in contentment with one's lot, in the absence of a desire to change or to know more than one needed for one's work. The perfect man the citizen formed from medieval concepts would be humble, generous, quiet spoken, and godly. Such idealized characters occur frequently in the plays. The guides to godliness and the accounts of the period such as those written by Harrison and Moryson also favor the citizen who possessed the traditional virtues of generosity and humility.¹

¹ Other writers as well preferred the medieval type of citizen. "Latimer and More deplored the appearance of competition, the idea of each man seeking to be richer than his neighbor, and declared it to be contrary to the laws of God and men, for each to seek his own profit independently of the profit of the community." Gomme, The Governanunce of London, p. 371.

The mediæval traditions that I have been discussing would have given the Elizabethan citizen little incentive to work hard, to move from one place to another, or to explore strange countries. But we know, of course, that the Elizabethan did not praise mediæval virtues alone and that a godly and quiet life was not his only ideal of happiness. On the contrary, he gloried in his rise in the world, liked to travel in far countries, and was eager for adventure. He had ideals from his present to justify such actions and to counterbalance the restrictive influence of past traditions. I shall now turn to the sixteenth century to see what standards it gave the Elizabethan. Eventually we may understand his contradictory ideals.

I have already said that religious customs had been altered and that discoveries had reformed the face of the globe by the sixteenth century. But such statements give us no idea of the magnitude of the changes that had taken place in many fields of human action and thought. I shall have to go into further detail before I attempt to define the new ideals that grew out of these altered conditions.

Reform in religion had not led only to new customs. It had eradicated completely mediævals man's concept of a united Christendom. Europe was no longer held together, loosely but firmly, in a single faith. On

the contrary, it had been split into sharply defined groups by the rise of diverse sects among whom there was no common ground since each claimed to have the exclusive religious truth.

With the growth of nationalism the divisions found in religion began to be duplicated in political life. The ~~man who~~, in the Middle Ages, would have described himself as a Christian, now, in the sixteenth century, would think of himself as a Roman Catholic or Huguenot Frenchman or as a Protestant Dutchman. The individual nation and the religious group were becoming more important than a united European Christendom.

Economic and cultural changes combined with these religious and political developments and resulted in a profound shift in the European's outlook. By the sixteenth century, mankind no longer wholeheartedly subscribed to the medieval doctrine that life on earth was completely sinful, worthless and transitory. Reform movements in the church had told him of the priesthood of the Christian man and had reminded him that, evil though he was, he needed only himself and God to find grace. The renewed study of Greek and Roman letters had shown him the magnitude of man's past efforts and had taught him that it was not forbidden to enjoy this life. The development of trade and the growth of the merchant class had demonstrated to him that effort in this world was sometime rewarded. It is little wonder that the

sixteenth century man's focus was in the contemporary world rather than in eternity and that he felt an increasing pride in himself and in his nation.

The Elizabethan citizen, in common with other men, slowly build up a new philosophy to fit the new facts that he had observed and he modified many of his ideals concerning religion, the state, success, and education. We shall not pay much attention to that part of his philosophy which duplicated the thought of members of other classes. For instance, knowing that both he and the nobles and clergy exalted the Queen and England and were proud of living in an exciting age tells us little new about the citizen. But we shall notice particularly certain ideals that he seemed to have formed for himself alone. No other class in society gave these ideals such loyal adherence and such voluble expression.¹

Of all Elizabethans the citizen was most directly influenced by the extension of trade and the growth of the importance of money, and, therefore, the ideals that he made his own were rooted in commerce and, particularly, in the use of capital. As a result, both time

¹ "The new world was to be different. Commerce was to rule its ways and to govern events. Feudal dues were to give way to economic laws. Discovery and adventure were to be the passwords of a new life. The hero of the old world was perhaps Henry V; the hero of the new world was to be Drake, and, later on, Gresham." Gommes, The Governauce of London, p. 370.

and money grew to be of great importance to the citizen. In a sense, both could be used as capital and made to produce profits. To keep and to make money and to conserve and to use time as fully as possible became ideals to the citizen, and he invented two virtues, those of thrift and industry, to complement his ideals.

The citizen was so convinced of the importance of his ideals and of the power of their attendant virtues that he urged them upon all around him. Wives, apprentices, sons, and servants, for instance, are all told to be prudent with money. The citizen repeated Polonius'¹ "neither a borrower nor a lender be" many times a day. The shopkeeper warned the housewife not to waste her money on unnecessary clothes and required her to more than make² the furrer meats furnish forth the marriage tables. The wealthy merchant told the young man that thrift would increase his inheritance. The master forbade the apprentices to spend their wages in diding and drinking, and, in the name of thrift, urged them to sell all material in the shop, even if it were poor and inferior.

¹ Hamlet, 1,iii,75.

² cf. Hamlet's "thrift, thrift, Horatio!" Hamlet, 1,ii,180.

In a similar manner the citizen insisted on the conservation of time and the practice of industry. To him laziness and inactivity were sins, because both wasted time.¹ He had little sympathy with the unemployed for he thought that a man who did not labor did not want to.² In the plays, for instance, the masters urge work upon their servants and the servants complain if it is withheld from them.

In addition to idealizing the saving of time and money the merchant praised honesty, moderation, and sobriety. At first sight, it might seem as if we have discussed these virtues as ones inherited from medieval tradition. But we mention them again here because the citizen changed them so that they now seem subsidiary to thrift and industry. The merchant, for example, has much to say in praise of honesty, but his honesty was tempered by prudence, as we shall see later in the plays. He was eager enough to send his customers to the Counter for debt if they did not pay him. On the other hand, he condoned practices equally dishonest. He was always ready to sell poor goods at an unfair price

He emphasized sobriety and moderation in the same manner. He praised sobriety in his servants and apprentices because it led to less wasteful spending, and

¹ cf. medieval attitude towards Sloth, one of the seven deadly sins.

² cf. Harrison. He realized problem cannot be solved at whipping post.

he was pleased when his wife showed moderation in dress because her restraint conserved material and money. It is doubtful whether he wished his noble customers to practice these virtues as well.

The citizen formed a new criterion of happiness to agree with his new ideals. In a world where he saw self-seeking rewarded he no longer felt compelled, as his medieval predecessor had done, to cultivate peace of mind and resignation to God's will. He no longer wanted to wait for compensation in eternity. Consequently, his definition of the good life contrasted strangely with that of medieval man. Happiness, to the Elizabethan citizen who was influenced by contemporary ideals, was to be found in success in the world. This success could take many forms. It might be shown by the accumulation of great wealth, by the purchase of land, or by the attainment of knighthood.¹

Wealth, titles, land, the sixteenth century merchant desired and frequently he succeeded in obtaining all three. But there was one thing that many citizens wanted even more than these tangible evidence of their industry.

¹ Evidence of the deceit the citizen sometimes practised in order to obtain a title will be found in the plays. But one or two other examples are interesting. Sir William Dethick, Garter-King-at-Arms, 1586-1605. whose mother was a Dutch shoemaker's daughter and whose grandmother was a baker's daughter, was accused of selling and forging papers. The accusation was brought forth by other members of the College of Arms. The famous and successful attempt of Shakespeare to obtain arms is familiar to everyone, but it is not so well known that an unpublished pamphlet accused him of doing so illegally. Two other players, Phillips and Pope were accused of the same action. Shakespeare's England, v.11, 82-83.

This was education for their sons. The middle class idealized academic learning as their descendants do today. They thought that it would open every door and solve every problem, and they had some justification for their belief. It is certainly true that the intelligent son of a middle class merchant who obtained a good education could reach a position open formerly only to a member of the clergy or the nobility.¹

Such were the values and the beliefs that the Elizabethan citizen built up from the world around him. When he visualized an ideal man to fit them he would see a thrifty merchant, probably with one son at the university, honest as far as honesty was compatible with shrewdness, proud of his titles from the the king and of honours from the city, and the owner of a large town house and a country estate.

¹ An amazing number of the English grammar schools were founded and supported by the London citizens. eg. St. Paul's School was founded in 1509 by Colet but was maintained by the city. The Mercers' School and The Merchant Taylors' were also endowed by merchants. Christ's Hospital was one of Henry VIII's foundations, but was supported by Londoners and was the recipient of large sums given by Dame Ramsay, the widow of a former Lord Mayor. Charterhouse was supported by Charles Sutton, a government official who had amassed great wealth. See, Mullinger, J.B., "English Grammar Schools," CHEL, vol.1V, p. 368.

If we compare this idealized merchant with the one that the citizen might have formed from medieval traditions we can see how greatly they would differ and we can understand the confusion that resulted when he tried to combine medieval and contemporary values in one man. No merchant, real or imaginary, could be generous, yet saving; willing to listen to the complaints of beggars and to open his house for every man's entertainment and never ready to leave his work; humble, and yet proud of his success.

In a later chapter we shall see the ideals that I have discussed illustrated in the plays. At the same time, we shall learn that the drama reflects the confusion and the insecurity of the sixteenth century merchant who tried to reconcile contradictory influences from the past and from the contemporary world

Up to this point I have given the economic, political, and topographical background of the plays. In addition, I shall suppose that the reader has a moderate acquaintance with the history of literature up to the time of Elizabeth. It will not be necessary for me to give any detailed information on the Elizabethan drama. I shall not be concerned with the literary merits of the plays but shall consider them principally for the information that they contain about Elizabethan life and times.

Naturally, then, every type of play will come within the range of this essay. The anonymous and the mediocre will serve as well as the masterpiece. Indeed more information on the life of the citizen may be obtained from the plays praised by the rabble at the Red Bull than from those in favor at Blackfriars or in the courtly circle of the Countess of Pembroke.

Some system, however, will have to be imposed on the plays in order to select the information needed and to judge its worth. The method I shall use will be

1 For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Brooke, Tucker, The Tudor Drama.

Chambers, E.K. The Elizabethan Stage.

Clark, A.M. Heywood.

Cromwell, Otelia, Heywood.

Hunt, Mary Leland, Thomas Dekker, a Study.

Jordan, J.C. Robert Greene.

Kelte, Mowbray, Bourgeois Elements in the Drama of Thomas Heywood.

to group under separate headings references to habits, customs, houses, or laws, irrespective of the time of play in which each reference occurs. I have gathered and sorted the material to give, as far as possible, a composite estimate of the Londoner's outlook on these and other varied subjects.

My method involved some difficulties. For example, comments from different plays, even on such an insignificant article as a ruff, are very apt to contradict each other. This divergence usually arose from two causes. On the one hand the sources were sometimes separated by as much as thirty years. On the other, the attitude of the two or more dramatists who had written on the subject were often completely opposed. One playwright was, perhaps, in favour of the ruff and of fine display; another often regarded both as signs of ostentation. I attempted to dispose of the first difficulty by pointing out changed conditions or by arranging the material in chronological order. The second one called for more detailed attention. It could be solved only by knowing the attitude of the various dramatists. Therefore, I shall briefly describe¹ them and their backgrounds.

¹ 1. Jestling Pilate's question, "what is truth", might cause further confusion. Every man, therefore, every dramatist, sees his own truth. In this connection we must say with Aldous Huxley that to carry on an intelligent existence we are forced to presuppose certain things. If Ben Jonson choses to attack "follies and foibles" something must have existed to warrant his bitterness. As far as possible I shall be concerned with the condition rather than with the judgement.

The principal dramatists who will be considered are Middleton, Dekker, Marston, Chapman, Heywood and Jonson. Anonymous or barely known writers such as Cooke, Tomkins, and Machin also wrote plays on London life. All of these men may be divided into two groups on the basis of their approach to the middle class. One group favored the citizen; the other used him solely as a source of ridicule. For my purpose, I shall consider first the writers who speak on behalf of the Londoner. These are Dekker, Heywood, and a few of the anonymous and minor writers.

Very little is known of Dekker's life. Tradition calls him a shoemaker of Dutch origin. His most popular play, The Shoemakers' Holiday, bears out this tale. It contains the best account in the drama of the shoemakers' life and one of the characters, Lacy, assumes the disguise of a Dutch journeyman. Many references will be made to this play throughout the essay. Whatever Dekker's position and ancestry may have been, public records, his own writings and those of his contemporaries show that he knew poverty and disgrace. He was imprisoned for debt and just saved from the Counter at another time.

With such a background Dekker could be expected to favour the citizens. Indeed, his enthusiasm for them carried him so far that his characters are undeniably idealized. Any evaluation of Dekker must be governed not only by the knowledge of this idealization but by an estimate of his character as well. He was of an open

and friendly disposition which did not look too deeply into the sources of incident and emotion. Depth of characterization cannot be expected from him. On the other hand, there are virtues in Dekker's approach. The surface judgement that he gives of events and people would be the same as that given by the contemporary citizen. Furthermore, his good humour and interest in his fellowmen allowed him to depict character with a friendly touch that created reality. The plays in which he collaborated have not this brightness of outlook. The darker tone is generally regarded to be the result of the influence of his collaborators. For this essay Dekker is the creator of Eyre and Margery.¹

¹ See Rhys, E., Introduction to the Mermaid edition: Much of the descriptions in his plays casts a vivid light upon this wild life of the playhouse and tavern which he, with other young poets of the extraordinary decade terminating the sixteenth century must have live...Some of the scenes in The Honest Whore, and again in Satiromastix and other of the lesser known comedies are full of this interest. p.xii.

The craftsman's life, merged itself in the citizen's is the end and all of the play; the King himself is but a shadow of social eminence compared with the Lord Mayor. Simon Eyre, the shoemaker, jolliest, most exuberant of all comedy types, is the very incarnation of the hearty English character in its prosperous workaday side, untroubled by spiritual misgivings and introspections and he is so set amidst the rest of the characters as to delightfully fulfil the joyous main intention of the play. p. xvii.

The streets and shop scenes, (Match Me in London) supposed to be placed chiefly in Seville might just as well be in London. Dekker transfers the "Counter" there without hesitation, and except for occasional doubtful attempts at Spanish local colour, the play is as native as anything that Dekker has done. p.xxxviii.

Heywood should follow Dekker in a discussion of the playwrights who spoke for the citizen. He has been called the founder of domestic drama.¹ Many writers have disputed his title, but I shall not question it and will go further and equate domestic drama and the plays dealing with middle class home life. It is my belief that interest in the home, and, particularly, in woman's place in it came with the increased wealth and knowledge of the middle class.² Therefore, domestic drama could not exist until plays were written about the citizen. Let me prove my point by illustration. If domestic drama is to refer solely to relations within the home, Othello, Macbeth, Lear are domestic dramas. This statement, of course, is ridiculous.³

1 cf. Powell, English Domestic Relations, Otelia Cromwell, Heywood, for ~~two~~ opposing interpretations.

2 cf. discussion of women. post. pp. 112-120.

3 Conduct books and religious treatises support my contention. They also show an increased interest in women's place in the home.

If domestic drama is defined in the above manner Heywood deserves his title. His foremost contributions are in this field. A Woman Killed with Kindness treats middle class marital problems with a sympathetic manner and not solely as a subject for ridicule. Mistress Frankford¹ is not the typical citizen's wife duped by a gallant. Wendoll is not the typical seducer. They are both, though inadequately drawn, rather average human beings in average circumstances confronted by a question of morals that cannot be easily solved.² All Heywood's plays display a similar interest in middle class life. His value may be described thus:

While he possessed the gift of genuine pathos, he was incapable of lending words to passion, his satiric gift was small and he rarely sought to exercise it, his wit and humour moving more or less within conventional bounds....He was devoid of any lyric vein though the popular sympathies by which he was stirred might have seemed likely to move him to song-for patriotism, both national and civic was second nature to him.

2

Beaumont and Fletcher opposed the vulgar taste of the day and Jonson the unlettered, but of all the dramatists Heywood was the most compliant with the public and yielded with easy acquiescence whole-hearted surrender. What the public demanded that would it get, whether incredible romances or lacrymose tragi comedies of the home, chronicle histories, showy mythologies, or classical tragedies, adventure on the high seas, intrigue comedies or courtly romances.

3

¹ Yet her easy surrender illustrates the Elizabethan concept of woman's essential frailty. However, she does not take her laxity as natural as do so many of the other women in the plays.

² Ward, A.W., "Thomas Heywood," Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 6, pp. 119-120.

³ Clark, M.V., Thomas Heywood, p. 110.

Heywood's plays are of use for reasons other than those suggested above. They are filled with details of the furnishings and customs of a middle class household. The country house of a well-to-do citizen can be reconstructed in imagination from certain of the stage directions and from the speeches in A Woman Killed with Kindness.

Both Dekker and Heywood, however, have weaknesses. Dekker's natural cheerfulness, as I have said, makes him idealize his characters. Heywood is naive and seems unaware of the existence of physical hardship. Yet, the two dramatists between them describe a goodly portion of the citizen's activity. Dekker illumines the combined shop and home life; Heywood the middle class home and the relationships created within it.

The plays of Lodge and Greene are usually favorable to the citizen, but are of such minor importance and indefinite worth that the attitude of the writers cannot be clearly formulated. Their pamphlet literature, on the other hand, speaks vividly of the evils of London. The outlook of Lodge and of Greene will be illustrated as references to their plays may be used.

1 The pamphlet literature forms excellent background material for a study of this type.

Two things are noticeable in the plays that attack the citizen. In the first place, the number of them is surprisingly large when it is compared with the number of those favoring the citizen. Instead of the two or three important playwrights who think Lord Mayors and aldermen worthy of praise, there are five or six who condemn them as stupid, ridiculous, and gullible. Secondly, these plays present an almost uniform picture, one that is in most cases extremely bitter.

This large number may be the result of an accident in preservation. Just as much of the pamphlet literature must have perished because of its inadequate binding and transitory interest so many of the plays favoring the citizen and designed for the audience at The Red Bull may have disappeared. These plays must have been thrown together hastily, rarely published, and still more rarely preserved. The audience for which they were written would be less literary and more easily pleased than an aristocratic one. There would, therefore, be little care given to either the writing or the printing of popular plays.

Such a supposition seems to be the only explanation for the large number of extant plays that ridicule the middle class. It is impossible to believe that the London citizens would have been satisfied with plays that followed the pattern of Michaelmas Term only

Members of no other audience would listen to themselves guyed as monotonously as the citizen would have been forced to if the plays extant were to represent all those acted in Elizabeth's day.

Now that I have attempted to account for the large number of plays directed against the citizen, I shall try to find reasons for the similarity of tone found in them. It is surprisingly uniform. Was the citizen as contemptible as these dramatists felt him to be or was there some other reason for their unanimous adverse criticism?

These attacks might have sprung from several causes. In the first place, the dramatist might have found it more profitable to cater to an aristocratic audience than to one composed of citizens. He might be taken under the patronage of a great lord and thus have his plays published and acted without fear of the censor. Secondly, he might be annoyed by the attitude of the authorities in London. The town councillors did all they could to prevent the spread of play-going. The playwright might be expected, therefore, to satirize the members of the group which threatened his means of livelihood.

Finally, especially late in the period, many of the playwrights were gentlemen or, if not, they wished to be connected with the leisured class. They would, consequently, write for the court and for the

aristocrat rather than for the craftsman.

The uniformity of the attack on the citizen, therefore, as well as the large number of plays that contain it, may be equally deceptive. Both may spring from widely varied motives and may not be the result of many men observing the same truth.² The interpretation of the middle class found in the plays written by the members of the aristocratic group of playwrights must be carefully balanced against the enthusiastic praise found in the works of Dekker and Heywood.

Keeping this warning in mind, I shall now consider the separate members of this groups. The important playwrights are Jonson, Middleton, Rowley, Chapman, Beaumont and Fletcher. The large number of the anonymous and minor writers will be included with these. The work of these lesser men will be discussed as a whole towards the end of the section, so that the favor extended to the citizen by certain of them may be pointed out separately.

Ben Jonson is the most important of the major playwrights. In his case both his plays and his personality must be taken into account. He was a proud, headstrong, man, a self-appointed prophet. Like Carlyle, he was convinced that he alone understood the threat to English custom that arose from an increased desire for wealth.

1 eg. Webster was the son of a merchant tailor, Shakespeare of a dealer in leather; but their ancestry did not prevent them from ridiculing the citizen when it served their turn.

2. The truth that the citizen deserved only contempt.

His fear and hatred of materialism set him against the citizen. But, in many instances, he seems to speak the truth and is, therefore, of great service in this essay.

His power and integrity arose from his conviction of truth and make him present, in his plays, a forceful and searching picture of city life. Through them he was determined to force awareness upon the masses and classes of his day. He attempted to do so with virulent satire. His energy made him intensify his bitter attack on sham and hypocrisy to the point where his gulls and panders are reduced to the final essence of stupidity and syncope. His citizens, similarly, are embodied lust, avarice, and blindness. His vehemence makes him heard. His sincerity forces belief upon us.

His deficiencies are part of his virtues. His burning interest made him see things too vividly to see clearly, made him disregard nuances of feeling; but his vigor outweighs his faults. Because of the directness, power and truth of their presentation of London, not one of Jonson's citizen plays that comes within our period may be disregarded. He may have seen only the evils of wealth, but he did not manufacture evidence, or accept a paid and prepared morality.

Middleton may well follow Jonson. He wrote many plays about the city and he was in close touch with its business administration. He and Jonson were both city chroniclers.

Naturally, then, the historical data as well as the folk lore of London would be familiar to him. He is further reported to have married the daughter of the city clerk. Although little more is known of his life, his contemporaries said that he was a good business man, no dreamer, and that he knew the slang of the streets as well as Dekker. Middleton, certainly, was abundantly supplied with source material for citizen plays, but the use he made of it is disappointing. He never identified himself with the Londoner, and his attitude towards city life was extremely stereotyped and may be judged only from his plays of intrigue. In these the standard aristocratic interpretation is given of the citizen.

Nevertheless, useless as this type of play is for the interpretation of middle class character, it furnishes documentary evidence on many incidental matters. I can find much material for this essay in Middleton's comedies of intrigue because they are unusually full of details on the walking, dressing, drinking and eating customs of London. This information, being purely factual, may be taken as it stands, and Middleton's philosophy disregarded. The plays in which Rowley collaborated are equally useful.

Both Marston and Chapman are aristocratic in their attitude towards the citizen. Marston was of good family

and boasted of his gentle birth. His temperament was marred by excessive pride and by extreme bitterness. With this background and disposition it was natural that he should write plays of intrigue. Such comedies give the playwright an opportunity to indulge in ridicule and to express disregard of conventional morality. Marston, therefore, in many plays gives the same picture of city life as does Middleton.

By the chronicler of the the London citizen in the drama, however, he is forgiven for his conventional picture of city life because he shared in the production of Eastward Ho. Mildred is said to be his contribution, and she embodies all the typical citizen virtues. She is the honest, industrious, thrifty heroine. Marston knew the citizens' standards of value even if he did not agree with them and frequently made them the objects of laughter.

Chapman, who shared with Marston and Dekker in writing Eastward Ho, becomes an important playwright rather late to be of much use to me. His contemporaries, furthermore, characterized him as a man of melancholy disposition who found his best outlet in high heroic drama. This side of his work does not concern me, but a few of his comedies of intrigue, like those of Middleton and Rowley, give details on dresses, wines, and coaches.

The same general conclusion can be drawn from the work of Beaumont and Fletcher as has been implied in dealing

with the plays of Middleton, Marston and Chapman.

Beaumont and Fletcher's plays are also mainly comedies of intrigue. They repeat with little sympathy the stock generalizations on citizen life. This outlook is to be expected as both writers were closely associated with the nobility, Beaumont being a knight. Their plays, however, cannot be ignored. For example, one of them, Philaster, a court comedy, has a scene wholly devoted to a discussion of the citizen. Material for this essay was found in the most unlikely dramas.

Little is known of the minor groups of dramatists who might be called Anon, Tomkins, Machin. Only their plays survive. They most frequently wrote plays that followed the comedy of intrigue pattern with its conventional situations. Otherwise, they followed the lead of Heywood and wrote dramas that were an indiscriminate hodge-podge in praise of the citizen.

No general statement can be made concerning the worth of the plays written by the members of this group. Sometimes a comedy of intrigue will supply a description of a dwelling house; sometimes a murder story will contain a discussion of middle class morality. Not one of the plays can be disregarded, even though those that contain information very often have little other merit. I could conclude, indeed, that the everyday existence of a nation seems to be more often reflected in transitory and second-rate

material than in the great masterpiece.

I have left the discussion of Shakespeare to the end of this section. I have had several reasons for doing so. Since he is by far the greatest dramatist of the age his attitude towards the citizen is of much importance. Secondly, this attitude has been the basis of heated debate. Also, according to the standards set in this essay, he does not seem to take sides. He appears to stand aloof. He was of the citizens rather than for them.

This last statement, however, cannot be at once be taken for granted. The evidence of the writers who debate his allegiance to the middle class must be considered in a very summary fashion. Those who claim Shakespeare for the aristocrats base their arguments on the plays. They say that a cynical note may be detected in Shakespeare treatment of the common man and that contempt and hatred dictated his mob scenes. They go as far as to call into question his birthplace and parentage.¹

On the other hand, those who say that Shakespeare identified himself with the citizen point to his background and to Falstaff and the London scenes in his plays to prove their contention. They add that he always expressed scorn of the noble.

To support the position taken in this essay reference will be made first to Shakespeare's background. There is much conjecture about the details of his ancestry. Yet

enough is known to place Shakespeare and his father squarely in the middle class. The father, indeed, might stand for the typical citizen discussed in the section on middle class ideals. In his own life he embodies many of those ideals set forth in the plays. He was a dealer in leather and a member of the guild. At one time he held a responsible position in the town, for like Eyre in London, he rose to an administrative post in Stratford. Also, like many of the prodigals of the plays, he lost his money. He had to try to avoid imprisonment for debt. As a consequence of these misfortunes the son had to leave school before he had completed his education.

This son revived and improved the family fortunes, perhaps through the exercise of the standard middle class virtues of thrift, industry and application. He was so successful that he was able to satisfy the older Shakespeare's middle class desire for land and for the status of a gentleman. The father made application for arms. The son saw them granted and, then, bought his land.

In other ways Shakespeare seems to spring from the middle class and yet to be totally unconscious of it. In this unconsciousness and in his emphasis on law and order he is truly bourgeois. He is not interested in or does not understand the duty of criticism forced upon Ben Jonson. Nowhere does he attack the strengthened

acquisitive attitude in the manner found in The Alchemist. Neither does he feel the contempt of Marston and Chapman for the city group. He seldom indulges in Middleton's type of intrigue with its farcical presentation of the Londoner. He does not sentimentalize in the fashion of Heywood for he seems to have no need to laud an imaginary perfect citizen.

This unawareness makes him give his London and citizen scenes without forcing a set interpretation upon his audience. He shows us Elizabethan life and leaves it at that. The Boar's Head in Eastcheap is background for Falstaff and any unemployed soldier. The laundry basket in The Merry Wives of Windsor tells us something of Washday in London. The crowd that pushed and bickered in Julius Caesar or in Coriolanus might be the same crowd that applauded Elizabeth before the Armada or that swallowed the plausibilities of Essex. The play of Bottom and Snug reflected the tastes of the patrons of the Bear Garden.

Shakespeare's references to law and order have been used over and over again to prove that he was aristocratic in sympathy, but here again it seems that he is the typical citizen. The monarchy had always found its strongest supporters among the members of the middle class. It was the merchants and the kings who had broken the power of the feudal lords. Middle class opposition might foster a revolt if monarchical power threatened its privileges but the merchant always returned to a system of law and

order under which business may be safely and profitably conducted.

Shakespeare and his contemporaries remembered civil unrest with fear. The Wars of the Roses were not forgotten. The troubles of Edward and Mary were barely a generation removed. Peace and a strong government were necessary if plays were to be presented in the Globe or luxuries sold in Cheapside.

In the foregoing paragraphs an effort has been made to show that Shakespeare had a middle class background and that, in many ways, he expresses the thought of the citizen group. His usefulness lies in this unconscious reflection which makes him give vivid and truthful London scenes in his plays.

In this essay, nevertheless, I have not made many references to Shakespeare's plays. I have more or less confined myself to the other Elizabethan dramatists. I have chosen to do so because I felt that the treatment of the citizen by Shakespeare would be an essay in itself. So much has been written about Shakespeare and the citizen that I should have to discuss this criticism at great length before I should have felt justified in using a great many incidents from his plays. Therefore, I have used only those that I felt were very well known and that could be defended by the foregoing brief discussion of Shakespeare and the middle class.

It is interesting to compare different interpretations of Shakespeare's place in the drama. Following are examples:

Shakespeare's characters are almost all plain gentle or simple; he does not anatomize the burgess' ambition and the fashionable young wife.

Raleigh, "The Age of Elizabeth" in Shakespeare's England, vol. 1 p. 25.

In Henry IV...the growing master of realistic delineation and unabated interest in all that lay before his eyes, to interpelate his narrative with scenes that bore no tincture of antiquity and to show the very age and body of his time its form and pressure in vivid transcripts of contemporary life as it was lived from day to day in a midland country town or in the crowded streets of London town.

Chambers, E.K, Shakespeare, a survey, p. 118.

One whose father was bailiff of Stratford and who had more than a touch of bourgeois in his blood.

ibid., p. 20.

Falstaff on the streets of contemporary London.

Brooke, T., Tudor Drama, p. 335.

Palm in The Middle Class, Then and Now; Gretton, in The English Middle Class and Wood in His article; and Shakespeare and the Plebs, take opposing stands to those implied above. The content that Shakespeare sympathized with the nobility.

¹ Illustrations of Middle Class Ideals

In this chapter, ¹ I shall turn to the plays for illustrations of the middle class ideals that ² I have outlined above. I shall follow the order of the earlier chapter, giving examples first of ideals handed down from the Middle Ages and then of those that arose from contemporary life.

I shall add, however, an extra section to this chapter so that I may consider some of the vices into which the citizens were drawn by too eager a pursuit of their ideals. I shall have to include this portion because the plays present citizen virtues closely intermingled with citizen vices. The dramatists apparently were very much aware of the fact that laudable pride could easily become unbearable arrogance and honest thrift turn into vicious avarice.

I have said earlier that the Elizabethan citizen praised the virtues of simplicity, honesty, and humility when he was influenced by medieval traditions. This outlook is reflected in the drama. Simon Eyre, in The Shoemaker's Holiday, for example, tells us over and over again that he will remain "simple Simon Eyre" despite all honours that may come to him. He insists that he has not become

¹ Background material for this chapter is identical with that given for chapter 3.

² See above pp. 22-36

proud and that he will continue to mingle with his workmen.¹ The pinner of Wakefield in George à Green² illustrates the same virtues. He is called the "honest pinner". He modestly refuses to accept titles or honours of any other kind and says that he prefers to remain in his humble surroundings.

Thomas, Lord Cromwell and James IV show the medieval virtues of generosity, that was often expressed in the keeping of a large house and numerous retainers. In the former play, the kindly Frescobald³ relieves the poor. In James IV, Bohan maintains the traditional standard of hospitality even though the effort brings him to the verge of bankruptcy. In other plays we are told that the poor are fed at Oldcastle's, Wolsey's and Gresham's doors. Gresham, particularly, is praised over and over again in the drama for his hospitality.⁴ On the other hand characters in the drama who neglect the virtue of generosity are sharply reprimanded. In The Looking Glass For London Radagon is condemned for his refusal to give money to his needy mother. "No charity within this city bides," she⁵ cries. Scarborough, in The Miseries of Enforced Marriage,

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, V,ii,

2 George a Greene, 1.1360.

3 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 111,i,p.357.

4 Eastward Ho, IV,90-105.

5 The Looking Glass for London, 1.1186.

also arouses the ire of those about him. His servants complain because he does not keep the house that his father did.¹

Medieval ideals not only demanded that man be generous, but also that he be contented with his position in society. Spendal's reformation illustrates this ideal. He says that unhappiness and misfortune have come to him because he attempted to live in a higher rank of society than that in which he was born. He resolves from now on to keep to his class and to live a "sober citizen".² Two citizens in Thomas, Lord Cromwell echo Spendal's thought when they discuss the necessity of keeping one's place and the harm caused by envy of the great.³ George à Greene, the "honest pinner", who has been mentioned before, serves to show contentment with one's place as well as humility and honesty. He will not accept a title but prefers to retain his allotted position in society.⁴ The Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Oakley, in The Shoemakers' Holiday has an equally strong awareness of the traditional restrictions that oblige him to keep to his own class. He realizes that his daughter should not think of marriage with

1 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, III, p. 521.

2. Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 289.

3 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, V, iv, p.368.

4 George à Greene, l.1360.

1

a member of the nobility. But, in the best romantic fashion, he is overruled by love at the end of the play.

The medieval tradition of fair and honest work finds expression in the plays. Simon Eyre's journeymen cobbler in obedience to it. We are led to believe that it is customary for them to produce fine work. The shoes made by Ralph for Jane are an example.² Many other plays also imply that the traditional standards of labor should be closely observed and condemn "sharp practice" such as the selling of poor goods in the manner of Falselight and Shortyard.³ Candido, for example, insists that his best goods be shown to his customers on all occasions.⁴

In order to see an example of the ideal man formed according to traditional values such as I have been discussing, I shall turn to Sir John Oldcastle. Lord Cobham in this play has many of the medieval virtues of generosity, honesty and hospitality. The brewer Murley shows his allegiance to these by his admiration of the nobleman, whom he describes as an "alms-giver,

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 1,i, 1.8-15.

2 Ibid., 11,i, 260-270.

3 Michaelmas Term, 1,i, 94-96.

4 The Honest Whore, 1,v, p.110.

house-keeper, a virtuous, religious gentleman".¹ As the sixteenth century drew to a close, however, such idealized pictures become increasingly rare. The generous and simple nobleman and the bluff and unassuming merchant described in the early plays of Heywood and Dekker give way to aristocrats contemptuous of the crowd and to citizens jealous of those above them.

Such citizens and such aristocrats we shall see now when we turn to the plays that illustrate ideals from the contemporary world. Again as in chapter III, I shall disregard those that the citizen shared with other classes. I shall give examples of ideals and virtues that are associated primarily with the middle class.

I shall begin with the virtue of thrift. There are countless examples in the plays of the citizens' belief in the value of saving. Candido's speech to his wife, in The Honest Whore, is one instance. In it, although she pays little attention to his words, he tries to impress upon her the necessity of obtaining as many pennies as possible.² Dame Margery Eyre, in contrast, needs no instruction in this matter. In The Shoemakers' Holiday, she remonstrates with Simon for hiring a journeyman that they cannot afford. It is interesting to note that two citizen virtues conflict in their

1 Sir John Oldcastle, II, ii, p. 326.

2 The Honest Whore, Part I, I, v, pp. 111-112.

discussion.¹ Eyre, in employing Lacy, is acting in accordance with the medieval code that decreed he should give aid to other members of his guild. His wife, on the other hand, is influenced by the newer ideal of saving money. We have evidence, however, later in the play, to justify that Simon is just as thrifty as Dame Margery. In one scene he is forced to order beer for his angry workman, but he countermands half the order as soon as he sees that they are forgetting their grievances.²

Eastward Ho, The Puritan, and Greene's tu Quoque also emphasize the importance of thrift. In the first play, Mildred and Golding are examples of this virtue, and Touchstone tries to force it upon Quicksilver.

Touchstone. ...I hired me a little shop,
fought low, took small gain, kept no debt book,
garnished my shop, for want of plate, with good
wholesome thrifty sentences, as 'Touchstone,
keep they shop, and they shop will keep thee'...³

In The London Prodigal, Delia's speech epitomizes much of the advice given to young heirs of the day when they are told not to spend their money on riotous living.

Delia. ...Brother take heed of pride, it soon bids
thrift adieu....
...I know not how it comes, but so it falls out.
That those whose fathers have died wondrous rich,
And took no pleasure but to gather wealth,

1 1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11,iii,69-72.

2 Ibid., 111,i,93-105.

3 Eastward Ho, 1,i,62-70.

Thinking of little that they leave behind
 For them they hope will be of their like mind-
 But it falls out contrary: forty years sparing
 Is scarce three seven years spending; never caring
 What will ensue, when all their coin is gone,
 And, all too late, when thrift is thought upon.
 Oft have I heard that Pride and Riot kissed
 And then Repentance cries- for had I wist.¹

Similarly, the citizen who relieves Martin Flowerdale's
 want delivers a sententious discourse to him after
 the fashion of Polonius.² Finally, Greene's Tu Quoque
 contains a sermon on the same subject. The wealthy
 citizen's widow who saves Spendal, the wayward journey-
 man, from imprisonment for debt, orders him to live within
 his limit.³

The members of a middle class audience would commend
 both speeches. They would say that the two young men had
 good examples to follow and should have known better a
 than to waste their money. They would point out that
 Spendal had been given a shop by a successful master
 and that Flowerdale's father was a wealthy and thrifty
 merchant.⁴

Industry, the companion virtue of thrift, also
 receives much commendation in the plays. Indeed, if
 we are to believe the drama, both the citizens and their

1 The London Prodigal, 11, i, p. 382.

2 Citizen. Fie, fie, young man! This course is very bad.
 Too many such have we about this city;
 Ibid. V, i, 392.

3 Greene's Tu Quoque, pp. 244, 269-270.

4 Ibid. p. 185, The London Prodigal, 1, i, p. 372

men thought so highly of hard work that they complained if it were not available. In Thomas, Lord Cromwell, for instance, the journeymen remonstrate with their master's son when he asks ¹them to stop work and offers to pay them for their idleness. They complain despite the fact that the elder Cromwell in other scenes constantly urges them to work as hard as they can. Later, in the same play, we see young Cromwell working late into the night, significantly surrounded by his money bags.² Hodge, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, also believes in the virtue of industry. When he is given Eyre's ³shop on Simon's appointment as Lord Mayor, he turns to the other journeymen and assures them that they and he may reach a position similar to that of Eyre if they will but work hard enough.

Industry was not only the path that led to success; it also took the place of the consolations of philosophy for the citizen. For instance, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, Eyre advises Jane, who is desolate at the loss of her husband, to work until she forgets her sorrow.⁴ Jane takes Eyre's advice, and later in the play, we see her managing her own small shop. She has recovered from her

¹ Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,ii, p.351.

² Ibid, 11,i,p.353.

³ The Shoemakers' Holiday, 1V,ii,1-5.

⁴ Ibid.,1,i,234-237.

sufficiently to consider Hammond as her second husband when he tells her that Ralph has been killed in France. Prate, the lawyer, in The Dumb Knight, also thinks contentment can be found through labor. When his wife, Lollia, complains that they are not advancing in the world as quickly as she wishes, he tells her that, if they both devote themselves to hard and constant effort, they will become successful and contented.¹

We have said earlier that certain other citizen virtues, virtues, such as sobriety, honesty, and moderation are praised, not for their intrinsic value but because they could be used to further thrift. If we refer again to Delia's speech, for example, we can see that she advises young men to live quietly so that they may conserve their means as well as improve their morals.² A speech of the elder Flowerdale, in The London Prodigal, illustrates the same attitude. He does not become concerned about the vices of his son until he learns that the young man is trying to obtain a large portion of his father's money.³ Only then does Flowerdale senior urge sobriety and moderation on young Martin.

1 The Dumb Knight. pp.124-125.

2 See above, p. 62.

3 The London Prodigal, lll,ii,p.382.

I have pointed out that the citizens expected material rewards for their labor and saving. They also liked to see success follow hard work when they attended the playhouses and the dramatists did their best to satisfy their audience. In the plays both merchants and workmen who are thrifty and industrious obtain houses, honours, titles, and access to the university for their sons. For example, Hodge in The Shoemakers' Holiday,¹ Spendal in Greene's Tu Quoque,² and Golding in Eastward Ho³ obtain their master's shops as a reward for their industry and thrift. Eyre also acquires property. He looks forward to having two different places of residence in the two years following his appointment as Lord Mayor.⁴ Sir Roger Oakley, Eyre's predecessor, has two houses, one in London and one in Cornhill. Rash, on being knighted, thinks that he will no longer live in the street in which he had worked. He will now be able to afford a new house.⁵ Young Cromwell tells his father that he will build a palace as fine as King Harry's at Sheen, and he is able to keep his promise before the

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, III, iv, 185-186.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, I, i, p. 185.

3 Golding marries his master's daughter and will inherit the shop. Eastward Ho, IV, ii, 445.

4 The Shoemakers' Holiday, cf. II, iii; III, iv; IV, ii; V, i.

5 Greene's Tu Quoque, I, i, p. 186.

the end of the play.¹ Quomodo obtains "land, fine, neat
land,"² through a combination of deceit and hard work.

In the drama, honours from the city and from the sovereign, as well as land and property, come to the citizen who worked hard. Eyre, Gresham, Whittington, the favorite hero of the apprentices, become Lord Mayors.² Golding and Candido are aldermen and Spendal expects to receive a similar honour.³ Other members of the middle class are knighted or hope to be. For instance, Rash, in Greene's Tu Quoque,⁴ is given a title. He says, however, that his knighthood does not sit easy on his shoulders and that he intends to make it easier by custom.⁵ Murley, the brewer of Dunstable, carries golden spurs in his bosom in expectation of being knighted. His workmen assure him that elevation in rank is the natural outcome of a life of hard work.⁶

Critics were not lacking, however, to suggest, through the drama that many citizens were too eager for

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,ii,p.351.

2. Michaelmas Term, 1,i,114.

3 Eastward Ho, 1V,ii,70-80

4 The Honest Whore, Part 1,111,i,p.139.

5 Greene's Tu Quoque, 1,i,p185.

6 Sir John Oldcastle, 111,ii,p. 333.

honours and cared little what means they used to
 obtain them.¹ Sir John Oldcastle will again serve to ill
 illustrate. In this play the nobles who lead the rebellion²
 persuade Murley to finance it by promising him a knighthood.
 Both Lethe and the country wench in Michaelmas Term are
 infected with this fever for honours. Lethe pretends
 to be of noble birth although others in the play remind³
 him that his father was but a tooth drawer, and the
 country wench declares that she will be in a swoon until⁴
 she is gentle.

The plays give examples of the citizens' belief in
 academic learning. Thomas, Lord Cromwell and The Looking
 Glass for London, for instance, contain pictures of
 citizens who are willing to make sacrifices so that their
 sons may be educated. In the first play the smith
 Cromwell grumbles and says that not he but his wife
 wished to send their son to school. Nevertheless, he
 provides the money for the young man's education and
 becomes incoherent with pride when his son obtains a

1 cf. the speech of Trincalo in Albumazar. Trincalo
 is to be changed into a gentleman by magic means.

Trincalo. ...He'll steep me
 In soldier's blood, or boil me in a cauldron
 Of barbarous law French; or anoint me over
 With supple oil of great men's services;
 For these three means raise yeomen to the gentry.
 11,ii,p.333.

2 Sir John Oldcastle, 111,ii,p.333.

3 Michaelmas Term, 1,i.161-301.

4 Ibid., 1,ii,64-68.

a position as a result of his learning.¹ In The Looking Glass for London, Radagon's mother says that her son was educated at "mickle charge!!" He has obtained an honorable position as a result, but he no longer wishes to associate with his parents.² The Puritan and Michaelmas Term contain less praiseworthy examples of the citizens' desire for education. In these plays, the merchants obtain money by fraud in order to send their sons to school, In the first play, the scantimonious widow is forced to admit that her husband "deceived the world to get riches" to send their son, Edmund, to college.³ Quomodo, in Michaelmas Term,⁴ cheats to pay for Sim's attendance at the university.

I cannot find easily an ideal citizen in the drama who possesses only the contemporary virtues that we have been discussing, although I was able to point to many who possessed medieval ones alone. The greater number of idealized citizens are composite pictures. In part, they give allegiance to the traditions of the Middle Ages; but, on the other hand, they were often influenced by the ideals of the sixteenth century. Consequently, old and new virtues incongruously rub

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,ii,pp.351-352.

2. The Looking Glass for London, 1294-95.

3. The Puritan, 1,i,p.398.

4. Michaelmas Term, 11,iii.108-120.

elbows in the drama. Sir Alexander Wengave's description¹ of Stephen as he would like him to be or Master Knowell's advice to his nephew contain examples of this composite² citizen.

Knowell. What would I have you do? I'll tell you, kinsman;
 Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;
 That would I have you do; and not to spend
 Your coin on every foolish bauble that you fancy,
 Or every foolish train that humours you.
 I would not have to invade each place,
 Nor thrust yourself on all societies
 Till men's affections or your own desert,
 Should worthily invite you to your rank,
 He that is so restless in his courses,
 Oft sells his reputation at cheap market.
 Nor would I, you should melt away yourself
 In foolish bravery, lest, while you affect
 To make a blaze of gentry to the world,
 A little puff of schorn extinguish it;
 And you be left an unsavory snuff,
 Whose prosperity is only to offend.
 I'd ha' you sober and contain yourself
 Not that your sail be bigger than your boat;
 But moderate your expenses, now, at first,
 As you may keep the same proportion still;
 Nor stand so much in your gentility,
 Which is an airy, and mere borrowed thing,
 From dead men's dust, and bones, and none of yours,
 Except you make, or hold it.

Before we leave these examples I should add that the ideal citizen changes as the period progresses.

In the early plays the medieval type of citizen predominates. He was both generous and hardworking. At the end of our period, however, there are more Quomodos than Eures and relatively few pictures of such happy relationships between master and men as existed in the shop of Simon Eyre.

1 The Roaring Girl, p. 145 .

2. Every Man in His Humour, 1,i.73-99.

Naturally, we ask ourselves whether the merchant class was becoming more acquisitive than it had been. But it is very difficult to decide to what extent the plays reflect the outlook of the citizen and how much they are dependent upon the attitude of the dramatist. I have discussed this question in a general manner in a preceding chapter.¹ It seems impossible to reach any more definite conclusion here. I can say only that there must have been a marked increase in the competitive spirit. Otherwise, so many attacks would not have been made upon it in the drama. At the same time, I shall not forget the complaint of the citizen in The Knight of the Burning Pestle, who implies that the constant ridicule directed at the middle class was unfair and biased.²

I shall look for a moment at the faults in the citizen that the dramatists attack most vigorously. These were frequently the defects of his virtues or the results of too strenuous a pursuit of ideals, and, consequently, they may be related to the general subject of this chapter. The attacks, on the whole, resolve themselves into a criticism of the citizen's avarice and pride.

In The Dumb Knight the merchants themselves complain at the increase of greed in trade. They think that thrift has turned into avarice and say that all men "neglect

¹ see above, pp. 44-46.

² The Knight of the Burning Pestle, Induction, 7-11.

their health in regard of their profit!"¹ Quomodo, in Michaelmas Term, can serve as an example of the type of citizen that they condemn. He will go to any length to satisfy his craving for "land, fine neat land".² This criticism is carried to a ridiculous extreme in Greene's Tu Quoque. Bubble's uncle in this play is said to have dropped "stark dead" when he was asked to pay four shillings for a shoulder of mutton.³

The excessive pride of certain citizens who found that industry had rewarded them with titles and wealth is also criticized adversely. The fantastic pretensions of Rash on being knighted make him an object of laughter.⁴ Bubble is equally ridiculous. He thinks that he must speak Latin now that he is a gentleman and adds the only Latin he knows, "tu quoque", to everything that he says.⁵ He is also convinced that a suit of black carnation velvet is the only fit costume for a wealthy man.⁶ Old Fortunatus also contains an attack on the citizens' pride, in this case expressed by ostentatious dress.⁷

1 The Dumb Knight, III, i, p. 160.

2 Michaelmas Term, II, iii, 116-120.

3. Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 190.

4. Ibid. p. 186-211.

5 Ibid. p. 209-211.

6 Ibid. p. 209.

7 Old Fortunatus, I, i. 330. Fortunatus and his sons are always "gallant".

glance at Volpone, the most bitter satire on materialism found anywhere in the Elizabethan drama.

In Jonson's play all classes of society act from one motive, that of greed. Corvino, the merchant, Voltore, the lawyer, Corbaccio, the old gentleman, only wait on Volpone because they desire riches. They will sacrifice wives, sons, friends to obtain more money.

The whole point of the play is summed up in Volpone's words when he says that by playing on the avarice of his followers he can increase his wealth with even greater ease than the merchant, whose methods he and ¹ Mosca contemptuously list. If we are to believe Jonson all of society has succumbed to the disease of the merchant. All men "neglect their health² in regard of their profit."

1 Volpone, 1,i.30-51. Further references will be made to this scene in the following chapter.

2 The Dumb Knight, 111,i, p.160

Business Management

The citizen's theory of thrift and industry was embodied in a system of business management that was a strange mixture of the old and new. Old ways of earning a livelihood that had fitted into a feudal economy existed in company with or were being superseded by new methods. In the Elizabethan economy the ideal

1 For the background material contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Camp, C.W. The Artizan in Elizabethan Literature.

Cawley, R.R. Unpathed Waters.

Clark, Alice, The Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century.

Cunningham, W. The Growth of English Industry and Commerce.

Harrison, W., Description of England?

Gretton, R.H. The English Middle Class.

Gross, C., The English Gild Merchant.

Onions, C.T., ed., Shakespeare's England.

Power, Eileen, Medieval People.

Roth, Cecil, "The Jews in the Middle Ages," in Cambridge Medieval History, vol. 7, pp.633-663.

Sisson, C. S, "A colony of Jews in Shakespeare's London," in Essays and Studies by members of the English Association, vol.23, p. 38, 1938.

Toesch, Carl, "A History of the Concept of Usury," in The Journal of the History of Ideas, pp. 291-378, June, 1942.

Unwin, G., Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries.

of the fair and set return for one's work is found side by side with the evidence of enormous gains made in merchant ventures. The smith was the symbol of the old economy; the merchant adventurer of the new. The field of business offered exciting returns and dangerous investments to the man who desired novelty; a safe and sure income to the man who chose his grandfather's craft. In the heart of the city the Exchange heard news of successful and unsuccessful expeditions, but in the side streets cobblers mended shoes as they had done two centuries before.

The strange link between the old and the new was evident in many ways. The older handicrafts flourished side by side with pure trading. Many of the merchants combined both handicraft and trade and were craftsmen¹ speculators or merchant adventurers.

Preparation for this combination, however, had been made during the previous centuries. Even in the reign of Edward 11 trading had been fairly general. The trading fraternities had been re-organized then into livery companies and generally chartered.

The Elizabethan merchant had forerunners not only among the guild merchants of his own race but among the German traders who had played such an important part in the development of northern Eastern European trade. In

¹ cf. Albumazar, IV,ii,p.378, Shoemakers' Holiday, III,i.

These foreign merchants had an establishment in London, the Steelyard. They were called the Easterlings by the English. It is hard to say exactly how much they influenced the English merchant. Certainly with their presence in London he had a school at his front door and must have learned much about business organization from them. Thus, even in medieval London the tools and examples of organization were at hand that would produce the merchant-craftsman of seafaring Tudor England.¹

Many of these merchants who wished to have another source of income than that provided by their craft took advantage of the brave New world of America and India. They invested their money in sea voyages. The extent of these investments is amazing. In the records of many of the old expeditions shareholders range from lords to sempstresses.

These investments are well authenticated by the plays. Before I turn to the dramas for illustrations, however, I shall give ear to one of the conservatives who detrusted sea trading. He is William Harrison and he fears that the great amount of merchantile activity will hinder the advance of his beloved country.

...that great numbers of merchants were nothing to the furtherance of the state of the commonwealth: wherefore it is to be wished that the (huge) heap of them were somewhat restrained (as also of our lawiers) so should the rest leave more easily upon their own, and few

¹ The evolution of the guild of the merchant taylors furnishes a good instance of the development that various guilds underwent. It was originally the guild of the linen armourers.

honest chapmen be bought to decaie by breaking of the bankrupt. I doo not deny but that the navy of the land is in part maintained by their traffic, and so are the high prices of wares kept up, now they have gotten the only sale of things (upon pretense of a better furtherance of the commonwealth) into their (owne) hands: whereas in times past when the strange bottoms were suffered to come in, we had sugar for four pence the pound, that now (at the writing of this treatise) is well worth half a crown, raisons or corints for a penie that now are holden at six pence, and sometime at eight pence and tenpence the pound: nutmege at two pence half penie the ounce: ginger at a penie an ounce....Whereby we may see the sequel of things not always (but very seldom) to be such as pretended in the beginning. The wares that they carrie out of the realm, are for the most part brode clothes and carsies of all colors...and there either exchanged for other wares or readie money: to the great gain and commodities of our merchants. ...They have sought out the east and west Indies and....they bring home great commodities. (But alas I see not by all their travel that the price of things are any whit abated.) Certes their enormitie (for so I do accompt it) was sufficientlie provided for An 9, Edward 3, by a noble estatute made in that behalf, but upon what occasion the general execution thereof is stayed and not called on, in good sooth, I cannot tell. This only, I know, that every function and several vocation striveth with other, which of them should have all the water of commoditie run into their own cistern.

1

The best known incident centering in trade and showing the importance of the merchant in the Elizabethan drama is that which forms the main plot of the merchant of Venice.² The incident in this play is too familiar

¹ Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, Cap.v, pp131 pp.131-132

2. The name itself would imply romance to the Elizabethan.

to be described in any detail, but Antonio may serve as an example of the merchant adventurer. He was very wealthy although he was threatened with loss during the play and although he found himself in a position where his goods and the fate of his friend depended upon the success of a single fleet. His wealth might have been the wealth of a large number of London merchants and his investment can be taken as an example of those because of the Elizabethan craze for foreign speculation in sea trade.

All merchants did not remain at home to supervise their investments and to watch for their ships coming in at the pier as did Antonio. Many sailed with their cargoes. These sailor merchants must have been as familiar with stormy ocean nights as the sea boy of Shakespeare. Such a merchant is another Antonio, the Antonio in Albumazar. The plot of the play hinges on his absence. All his money was not invested in one place, however, as was the Venetian Antonio's, for his father, Trinculo, looked forward to the seizure of his master's riches through the aid of wizard Albumazar. The travelling Antonio serves as an example of the sea trader who retained his connections with other sections of Elizabethan business.

This play has a number of references in it that aid in forming a picture of the wealthy trader-merchant of Elizabeth's London. Antonio seemed to think that his business was very important. He delayed his own and his daughters marriage for three months¹ in order that he might collect his great sums of gold in Barbary. When he returned he was told that he had been given up² as lost by the Exchange. The Exchange took note of the voyages and the ships in much the same way as Lloyds does now.

Some idea of the difficulties undergone by daring merchants may be obtained from Antonio's account of his hardships, his shipwreck, his capture by pirates³ and his service in the galleys. There are also some references to the East India company and to methods of charting voyages. Albumazar, for example, has had his almanac made for the height and meridian of Japan.⁴ He considers giving it to the East India Company.

There they may smell out the price of cloves and pepper,
Monkeys and china dishes, five years ensuing,
And know the success of the voyage of the Magores.

All merchants were not as fortunate as the two Antonio's in having their ventures turn out successfully.

1 Albumazar, 1,v,p.320.

2. Ibid.,1v,ii,p.378.

3 Ibid.,111,ix,pp.376-378.

4 Ibid.,1,v,p.318.

Many investments failed, and shipwreck in Elizabethan stories meant disaster to both lords and sempstresses.

In the drama there are specific references to merchants who were ruined through investment in expeditions beyond the seas. The unfortunate Bannister in Thomas, Lord Cromwell¹ loses his money through misfortune at sea. Similarly, in The Dumb Knight, the merchant petitioning Prate, the unscrupulous lawyer, states bitterly that he is exposed to the hazard of the seas, and, further, that he needs confirmation of a charter to trade with Spain.² The rich Turkey merchant in The Merry Devil of Edmonton³ has lost all his money at sea. The Voyages of the Two English Brothers have references to the East Indian trade and several instances of misfortune.

Thomas, Lord Cromwell furnishes further information concerning the conduct of the travelling merchant's business. In it there is some indication of the close organization of the merchants. This network extended over all the known world. Perhaps the Hanseatic Steelyard furnished the model. What ever the origin Thomas, Lord Cromwell shows us the English factory in Antwerp in close touch with London. Word is brought to the

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1, iii, p. 353.

2. The Dumb Knight, 111, i, pp. 160-162.

3 The Merry Devil of Edmonton, p. 215.

governor there to apprehend Bannister for debt. He had just previously left England to avoid imprisonment.¹

The London Prodigal describes other aspects of the merchants life and investments. In it is a description of the excitement caused in London Pool by the home-coming of a ship. Martin asks what The Catherine and Hugh has brought to port.² In Elizabethan times London was the principal port for the merchants, even though the privateers favored Plymouth Hoe. In the same play the travelling merchant has been absent so long that his son has almost forgotten him. The forged will, furthermore shows us where Flowerdale had invested his money³ and confirms what has been said of such investments.

Sir Lancelot. Three ships now in the Straits
and homeward bound;
Two wardhips of two hundred pound a year,
The one in Wales, the other Gloucestershire;
Debt and accountssare thrity thousand pound;
Plate, money, jewels, sixteen thousand more;
Two housen furnished well in Coleman street;
Besides what so'er his uncle leaves to him,
Being of great domains and wealth at Peckham.

In Eastward Ho Mistress Fond and Mistress Gazer have seen a ship launched the day before Gertrude's wedding. They discuss the launching and look forward to Sir Petronal's departure in another fine adventurous

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 11,i &iii, pp354-356. cf. Mrs. Bannister's speech."O, master Frescobald, pity my husband's case. He is a man has lived as well as any, Till envious Fortune and the ravenous sea, Did rob, disrobe, and spoil us of our own."

2 The London Prodigal, 1,ii,p.372.

3 Ibid. 11,iv,p.381

¹ ship. The knight, however, who was attempting to revive his fortunes by a journey to America, had a short and unlucky voyage; and his wealth was less at the end of it than at the beginning.

So many adventurers, indeed attempted to gain wealth by sailing west that "setting sail for Virginia" became a cant term for a hopeless ambition. Moll tells Sebastian, for instance, not to choose a wife as if he were going on a voyage to Virginia.²

The citizen who combined craftsmanship and trading might be more of a craftsman than a trader. Eyre's agreement with the Dutch shipmaster is typical of the type of bargaining carried on by those who were primarily craftsmen. Eyre was not fundamentally concerned with shipping and it is doubtful whether his dealings were strictly honest. In this case he was reaping the results of another man's labor and "forestalling", a practice forbidden by the medieval market codes. No new legislation had been passed at that date to regulate such transactions, however, and Eyre was not breaking any rule in force at the time. An orderly system of shipping law had not been evolved to serve the Elizabethan tradesman as the medieval system of regulating the crafts had done his grandparents. In fact, the favor that Eyre receives on the success of his bargain is

1 Eastward Ho. 111, ii. 18-20.

2 The Rearing Girl, 1, i. p. 165.

symbolic of the changed outlook of the Elizabethan on trade. Only a little more than a century earlier such an action as Eyre's might have called forth prosecution.

Before I turn to a consideration of the craftsman carrying on his trade in his shop as his father had done I shall describe the activities of another type of Elizabethan businessman, the loan merchant. His development somewhat parallels that of the speculator or of the merchant adventurer. As was sometimes the case with the latter the loan merchant might use his craft to provide capital for other enterprises that yielded a larger return than that which could be obtained from the craft alone.

In certain ways the members of this group were in a better position than were the merchant adventurers. Lending money at interest had advantages over the placing of one's capital in sea voyages. It entailed far less personal danger and it gave an opportunity for the more accurate determination of business risks. But the loan merchant faced one unique drawback. He had to cope with the strong disapprobation of all around him. The disapproval of his actions was rooted in the mind of the age. He was condemned for taking interest, both by his own people, the citizens, and by his enemies, the

the aristocracy. This intangible legislation was much more a hindrance than any legal restrictions encountered by other merchants.

Effective as this disapproval was in the Elizabethan period it is rather difficult for people of the present century to comprehend its reasons or its weight. We forget that to the Elizabethan any man who made money out of another's need was a usurer. The influence of centuries of medieval teaching hung upon the word and unconsciously colored his attitude and so that he made biased judgements. We should make an effort, however, to realize that the Elizabethan still¹ that that a man who loaned money at interest was a usurer.

¹ The early church fathers had been responsible for the medieval distrust of usury. They had put the weight of their authority against those who received money for the loan of any commodity. They had based their disapproval on the Scriptures. The story of the Good Samaritan and the command that enjoined mutual care in distress both implied that aid should be given without asking for a return. The canonists, furthermore, made a distinct difference between usuria and interessa. If one loaned a horse to a neighbor there might be a small money sum (interessa) paid for its use, because one would be without the horse oneself and the horse might be injured in the meantime. Anything measurable, on the other hand, had to be returned exactly as given. Finally, the canonists said that the money lender asked payment on time, that was not his but God's.

If we do not realize that the Elizabethan's disapproval of loans was based, unconsciously, on the same canonical restrictions that had governed the thought of medieval man we shall not be able to understand the plays that deal with money lenders.

As a consequence of this attitude there is, in the plays, no ardent defence of lending as a means of increasing one's wealth. It does not arouse praise as does thrifty management or daring sea investment. In many cases, however, it is easy to understand why money lenders in the drama did not appear in a favorable light to the audience. They are generally pictured as making loans of necessity and as capitalizing upon emergency needs in exactly the same way as the medieval loan merchant had done. The stage usurer is invariably determined to ruin all younger sons and wayward apprentices.

The usurer in Elizabethan life and, therefore, his counterpart in the plays, had antecedents in the Middle Ages just as the merchant adventurers had forerunners in Chaucer's time. Loans had been needed and supplied in medieval times. First by the church, then by the great merchant houses on the continent, later by the Jews in most of Europe, and by the Germans and Lombards in England. The power of the Lombards and of the Germans, however, was a temporary one in England.

Long before the coronation of Elizabeth, Londoners were supervising their own financial affairs and those of the rest of the country. In fact the companies of merchant adventurers had learned so much from their predecessors that they were unconsciously using loans in the same manner as we do today.

Thus, it can be seen that by the end of the sixteenth century both the material and mental antecedents should have been provided for the loan merchant. The Germans and the Lombards had furnished examples. Canonical restrictions had disappeared. Since mental barriers are removed more slowly than material ones, however, the old atmosphere of suspicion and hatred remained to plague the successful loan merchant.

The Elizabethan loan merchant, therefore, as I have said, had to face strong and constant criticism. Naturally then, he demanded large returns for his money. Perhaps a certain sense of insecurity aroused by criticism made him, in most instances, retain contact with his craft. Such contact was necessary also on purely material grounds. The craft was the basis of the money lender's transactions and only certain crafts provided suitable machinery for money lending. Loans were made most frequently by the merchant tailors, the mercers, and the goldsmiths. For instance, a goldsmith would accept plate or jewellery

as security for his loans; the mercer would give cloth in place of a loan. Only rarely is there an instant of loans being offered independently of a craft. But, regardless of the type of lending, the disapproval was uniformly severe. The plays will illustrate.

The husband in The Puritan can serve as an example of the money lender who carried on his lending outside the craft. Every morning in Term time, he was at his stand in Westminster Hall, asking for payment of his loans.¹ We learn that he cheated to gain money for his son's education and that after his death he was spoken of with scorn and contempt by members of his household² as well as by outsiders.

Michaelmas Term and Ram Alley illustrate the methods of money lenders who used their craft as the basis of their transactions. In the first play there is a detailed account of the more unfavorable aspects of money lending and of the methods of the mercers. Easy is forced to borrow money from Quomodo, a mercer, who makes him take up part of it in commodities, that is, in goods. Easy, in his need, is forced to sell the cloth again through an agent who disposes of it at a ridiculously

1 The Puritan, 1,i.p.399.

2 Ibid, 1,i.p.400. 11,i,p.407.

low price. The agent is in the pay of Quomodo.¹ Thus, the mercer receives returns on his goods as great as any received by the merchant adventurers. In Ram Alley Throat deals with two types of money lenders. He borrows jewels from the goldsmith but sends his clerk to the broker (money lender) probably a mercer, in Fetter Lane, to pawn them for a velvet jerkin and a double ruff.² Many of the young heirs or the foolhardy apprentices in the plays find themselves in positions similar to those of Easy and Throat. In every instance the money lender is depicted as a man who unhesitatingly takes advantage of their needs.

In other plays there are more examples of the heartlessness of the brokers. In Thomas, Lord Cromwell, Bagot is a "damned broker", who loaned money to Bannister³ and then called it in before the latter had time to pay. In The Looking Glass for London there is a similar reference to the loaning of money and the calling it in in the hope that it could not be paid back. In such an instance the broker might receive something of more worth than the money itself. The poor man in this play is forced to pawn his cow and his wife's best gown.⁴ Volpone

1 Michaelmas Term, 11,iii.

2 Ram Alley, 111,i,p.334.

3 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,iii,p.353.

4 The Looking Glass for London, 652-820.

contains a further illustration of such methods. In the speech in which reference is made to Volpone's ability to obtain money without recourse to the methods of the money lender the tricks of the usurer are given in detail.¹

Volpone...expose no ships
To threatenings of the furrow-faced sea;
Turn no moneys in the bank public
Nor usure private.

Mos...No sire, nor devour
Soft prodigals. You shall have some will swallow
A melting heir as glibly as ~~your~~ Dutch
Will pills of butter, and ne'er purge for it;
Tear forth the fathers of poor families
Out of their beds and coffin them alive
In some kind clasping prison, where their bones
May be forthcoming, when the flesh is rotten;
But your sweet nature doth abhor these courses;
You loathe the widow's or the orphan's tears
Should wash your pavements or their piteous cries
Ring in your roofs and beat the air for vengeance.

Loan merchants, merchant adventurers and craftsmen do not complete the ranks of the Elizabethan business men. At the bottom of the social scale there was a small group of semi-artizans and semi-merchants who moved around the countryside as pedlers. These men are not very significant, it is true, but is interesting to read Harrison's account of their activities. He, no lover of the middleman, thoroughly disapproved of them, and, incidentally, illustrates in his description some of the difficulties that would be encountered by the daily shopper in London.

1 Volpone, 1,i,38-51.

In returning, therefore, unto my purpose I find that in corn great abuse is daily suffered, to the great prejudice of the town and the country, especially the poor arificier and householder, which tilleth no land, but laboring all the week to buy a bushel of grain on the market day, can there have none for his money because bodgers, loaders and common carriers of corn do not only buy it up all, but give above the price to be served in great quantities.

1

One further phenomenon in the field of business remains to be noted before the master, the journeyman and the apprentice in the shop are discussed. This was the great wave of speculation that carried the money of many a London citizen with it. The Elizabethans and the Jacobeans had heard of so many wonders that they were ready to believe any fantastic story, and, consequently, they would put their money into absurd inventions or into new receipts for the philosopher's stone.

Some of the more insane theories will be outlined later. One illustration given now, will serve to show that almost every Elizabethan was at heart a speculator, a believer in projects. It will be sufficient to draw attention to Sir Politic-would-be's plans for the state of Venice.

Sir P. Well, if I could find but one man
One man to mine own heart, whom I durst trust,
I would
Per. What, what, Sir?
Per. What, what, Sir?

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. 18, p. 295.

Highly certain in projects that I have;

2 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. 18, p. 295.

Sir P. Make him rich; make him a fortune;

...
With certain projects that I have;
Which I may not discover.

...
One is, and I care not greatly who know, to serve
the state
Of Venice with red hearrings for three years.

...
My first is
Concerning tinder boxes.

...
My next is, how to inquire, and be resolved,
By present demonstration, whether a ship,
Be guilty of the plague....

1

1 Volpone, 1V,i,42-104.

I shall turn now from the merchant adventurer, the speculator, the money lender and the small aritzan to the craftsman who had no interest other than his craft. He, his workmen and his shop, with its goods, arrangement and location will be my next concern.

It seems fairly certain from the evidence of the sixteenth century chronicles and plays that each guild had become closely associated with a certain section of London. The shops of the leather workers were on one street and those of the pastry cooks were on another. In the early days of the period of this survey, furthermore, the homes of the guildsman was usually part of his shop. Eyre's, ¹Candido's and Hog's houses were built in this fashion. Other homes were joined to their shops by passageways. This arrangement may have existed in the case of the Gallipots ²and the Tiltyards. Stage directions imply that such was the case.

These buildings were not very large, whatever their type. It was not usual to find an establishment like that of Jack of Newbury mentioned in Deloney. In Jack's factory five hundred workers were employed in specialized groups in much the same manner as the workers in an

1 1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, The Honest Whore, The Hog Has Lost His Pearl. Instructions in plays bear out this statement. eg. The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11,iii, "before Eyre's house."

2 The Roaring Girl.

assembly line.

Both interiors and exteriors of all types of shops are illustrated in the plays. Eyre's shop in The Shoemakers' Holiday is probably the best known. However, other plays have settings that are equally helpful. For example, many of the scenes in The Honest Whore¹ take place in Candido's shop. There is a description of the interior of a mercer's in both Greene's Tu Quoque² and Michaelmas Term³ and of the exterior of a tobacconist's, of a feather merchant's and of a mercer's in The Roaring Girl⁴.

From such plays we find that inside the building the goods were spread out on tables much as they are today. Candido in The Honest Whore takes pieces of cloth from the tables and displays them.⁵ Spendal and Longfield in Greene's Tu Quoque say that they have opened and spread out ten pieces to no purpose in an unprofitable sale.⁶

There is little detail about the lighting of the stores and the arrangement of material on the tables. The lighting in some shops was so poor that dishonest

1 The Honest Whore, 1,v;1V,iii.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.181.

3 Michaelmas Term, 11,iii,

4 The Roaring Girl, 1,i,pp.154-161.

5. The Honest Whore, 1V,iii,pp.160-161.

6 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.185.

merchants were able to place inferior material in an inadequate light that it might be sold without flaws being noticed. In certain cases the best material was not displayed. Bolts of it lay in the back shop for favorite customers. The journeyman, Roger, for example, is instructed to bring the fine goods from the back of the shop to satisfy Candido's customers.¹ A similar incident occurs in Greene's Tu Quoque.²

Sometimes the goods were displayed and sold in the front room and manufactured in one of the back ones. Frequently, however, the craftsmen worked and sold in one room as they did in The Shoemakers' Holiday.³ In George à Greene also there shoemakers sitting at their work. The stage directions seem to imply that they would be in the front room of the shop.⁴ So also Mistress Openwork is sewing in her shop when her husband reminds her of a neglected order.⁵

From the descriptions given in the plays it seems that the front of the shop frequently opened or had large shutters that were taken down. Sometimes stalls were arranged outside. The open front not only helped to display goods but also made work more pleasant for the men inside than it would otherwise have been.

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, IV, ii, 161.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 183

3 Op cit. III, i.

4 George à Greene, 991.

5 The Roaring Girl, p. 155.

It had yet another use. Goods could be shown by hanging them in the openings as well as by spreading them on the stalls. Poulterers, for instance, usually hung their fowl¹ in the open windows.

Along the length of the street and over the stalls there were many signs that explained the crafts the merchants followed. One reference in The Hog Has Lost His Pearl illustrates this custom. In this play Young Wealthy speaks of the picture of Hector in the haberdasher's shop.

The streets in front of the buildings had to be kept clean and orderly. Eyre commands his apprentices to sweep the kennels as soon as the day begins.² We should remember that the Elizabethan was never very careful about the disposal of his garbage. To throw it out the window seemed to him to be all that was necessary. Therefore, if the apprentices had not swept away the filth of the day before, the young gallants, such as those in The Roaring Girl,³ could never have idled up and down Cheapside later in their fine clothes and Cordovan boots.

Early in the morning Cheapside and the district around it must have been full of activity as the wares

1 cf. Philaster, V, 36-37.

2. The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11, iii, 1-12.

3 The Roaring Girl, pp. 153, 155.

were arranged for the day and the rubbish swept into the central gutter. The scene might not have differed very greatly from that encountered in one of our small towns when merchants and salesgirls arrange their goods inside the shops as delivery boys sweep the side walks.

If one walked through the streets centering in Cheapside after the business day had begun one would have been pursued by the cries of the shopmen, usually, "What lack you?". The elementary psychology displayed by such cries was much the same as that used in selling wares today. The tradesman and the apprentice tried to flatter the customer's pride and to appeal to his thriftiness at the same time. He told the prospective buyer that the goods in his shop were the best at the cheapest rate. The "satisfaction-or-your-money-back" approach was much favored in Elizabeth's time. For example, in Greene's Tu Quoque, Longfield informs his customers that he is giving them a better price to buy custom.¹ He has also said, "If you find a better in this town, I'll give you mine for nothing."² In the same vein Mrs. Tiltyard tells her buyers that the feathers she sells are worn by the best people³ and

1 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.184.

2 Ibid., p.183.

3 The Roaring Girl, p.154.

Candido insists on comfortable treatment for his customers.¹ "We are set here to please all customers," he says.

References to business training other than that connected directly with the process of buying or selling or with the practice of one's craft are extremely rare. Harrison has no comment to make on the keeping of accounts. Therefore, I can conjecture only. It is doubtful whether many of the merchants knew the system of double entry bookkeeping although it had been introduced into Florence long before, and James Peele had written a book on the subject as early as 1553.² Spendal is asked by Rash to give an inventory and account, but no more detail is given of the methods used in keeping such records.³ Even if we do not know how accounts were kept in the merchants' books it is amusing to find that Hog valued his so much that he kept them in a box at the bottom of his bed.⁴

It is equally difficult to prove from the plays that the Elizabethans had any set business hours or holidays, although it is known that work was generally governed by Exchange time. For most craftsmen the day began at ten when the Exchange opened.⁵ In some of the

1 The Honest Whore, Part 11,1,v,p.112.

2 ~~For this information~~ I am indebted to Mr.T.Larsen.

3 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.186.

4 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, V, p. 484.

5 Every Man in His Humour, 111,ii,42-45.

plays there are indirect references to bells ringing for lunch. It is not clear whether these were church bells or not. At any rate they seemed to be rung as a signal much as the twelve o'clock whistle is sounded today. Longer and more clamorous peals of bells sometimes greeted general holidays. The merchants observed these by closing their shope. They celebrated personal good fortune in the same manner. Both Rash¹ and Simon Eyre² consider a day off for themselves and their apprentices as a fitting way to mark their elevation in rank.

Such matters as have been immediately discussed, that is, salesmanship, arrangement of workers and goods in the shop, and training in account keeping were in the shopkeeper's own hands; but there were strict regulations governing both the merchants and labor conditions in many other details. Under the Tudors, industry was, in theory at least, state controlled. Poor workmanship was forbidden by law. Harrison has his word to say about the disregard of such regulations and the consequent lowering of the quality of the work produced.

In returning therefore to my matter this furthermore I have to say of our husbandmen and artificers, that they were never so excellent in their trades as at this present. But as the workmanship of the latter was newer, more fine and curious to the eye, also was it never less strong and

1 Greene's Tu Queque, p. 185.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111, iv, 201, 206.

substantial for continuance and benefit of the buyers. Neither is there anything that hurteth the common sort of our artificers more than haste and barbarous or slavish desire to turn the penny, and by ridding their work to make speedy utterance of their wares which enforceth them to bungle up and dispatch many things they care not how so they be out of their hands, whereby the buyer is often sore defrauded, and findeth to his cost that haste maketh waste according to the proverb.

1

1 Harrison's Description of England, 11, v, p. 135-136.

It is impossible to consider the craftsman in Elizabethan literature without discussing his apprentice. In the first place the one could have no existence without the other. Secondly, if I neglect the apprentice in the plays and the regulations and traditions governing them I shall miss one of the most interesting sections that is concerned with the citizen.

The general terms of the system of apprenticeship are known and, in many ways, parallel the relationship of knight and squire. These will be discussed in detail later. First, however, it may be wise to mention the reasons for the development of apprenticeship. The widely accepted idea that it provided a means of training craftsmen is sound, but it had another purpose, which gave it some of its most marked characteristics. The practice of apprenticeship was one way of overcoming the handicap imposed on younger brothers by the entail system of inheritance.

We can understand this reason for the existence of apprenticeship if we remember that the younger son of the younger brother had been proverbially poor not only in Elizabethan drama but in medieval story. If the church, the army, or an estate could not provide a means of livelihood for him, employment of some other kind had to be found. Trade was the one remaining alternative. Therefore, younger sons became apprentices.

But, since sons of noble men could not be permitted to enter any trade they desired, apprenticeship was restricted, especially in certain guilds that were felt to be more suitable than others for the sons of gentlemen. These restrictions took the form of entrance requirements. Certain standards were set for the apprentice. These had to be met before he entered service. The sons of freemen were apprenticed to artisans and the sons of the well to do to shopkeepers and merchants. These latter were not permitted to take apprentices from any lower rank.

It can be seen how erroneous is the idea that apprentices were poor children who had to be given an opportunity to earn a livelihood. Not until 1600, if then, was there any justification for identifying the position of the apprentice with that of the nineteenth century chimney sweep. In 1600, it is true, the government passed a law to enforce the apprenticeship of children in large poor families; but it was some time before this legislation took effect.

Among the guildsmen, the natural result of such restrictions was a feeling of pride in noble or well-to-do membership. Certain guilds delighted in claiming royal craftsmen. Edward II, for example, on the reorganization of the guilds that resulted in the forming of the livery companies, became a brother of the Merchant

Tailors. Sir Francis Drake was also a member of this guild and the powerful Mercers' Company included members of the nobility.

The plays make use of the crafts' connection with royalty and nobility. In George à Greene King Edward¹ is made a member of the "gentle craft" In The Four Prentices of London the four princes become apprentices² to a mercer, a goldsmith, a haberdasher, and a grocer. In The Shoemakers' Holiday, the nobleman, Lacy, does³ not scruple to learn a shoemaker's trade. In The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, Ilford says that the gentleman Scarborough's young brother should have been apprenticed⁴ to the tailors. Although much of the pride felt by the crafts and expressed in the plays must have been the outgrowth of pure fancy, the records justify a certain tradition of exclusiveness.

The restrictions upon entry led to a similar tradition among the apprentices. Up to 1600 many in certain guilds could and did pride themselves upon their gentle blood. At times, indeed, the apprentice served a master whom he considered socially inferior. Quicksilver,

1 George à Greene, 1210-1290.

2 The Four Prentices of London. I. i. p. 163.

3 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11, ii, 1-24.

4 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, 111, p. 520.

for example, replies to Touchstone in terms of contempt¹ and stresses his won noble birth.

Now that I have considered the reasons for the existence of apprenticeship and the effect of the entrance restrictions I shall turn to the development and working of the system itself. Apprenticeship had started as far back as the thirteenth century. It was essentially feudal in origin and it tried to produce both good citizens and good workmen, just as the medieval regulations on the price and quality of goods tried to encourage fine and honest work.

By 1300 apprenticeship had developed to the point where records were kept of the number of apprentices. In the fifteenth century the contract between the master and his apprentice had to be recorded. Working hours were regulated in this contract and it was stipulated that the apprentice had to remain single throughout his service and be at least twenty-four when it was completed.

Apprenticeship had assumed a very definite form for each of the guilds by the sixteenth century. If the apprentice could satisfy the qualifications set for entrance he usually took seven years to learn his craft. The length of the term, however, varied with the craft. Sometimes a longer and more difficult apprenticeship than usual was required, as in the goldsmiths' guild.

1 Eastward Ho, 1, i, 30-40, 135-140.

At the end of his term the apprentice became a journeyman and either worked for an independent small master or set up shop for himself. He could own his own shop before he produced his masterpiece and, thus, before he was officially entitled to be called a mastercraftsman. As we have seen previously, however, in the later years of the sixteenth century it became increasingly difficult for the journeyman to become a master and for a small master to work for himself or to become important in the governing of the guild.¹ Restrictions were imposed that turned the guilds into powerful monopolies controlled by a few wealthy members who preferred the smaller masters to remain dependent upon them. Consequently, at the end of our period many craftsmen must have felt that the years spent as apprentices and journeymen were wasted.

During the greater part of the sixteenth century, however, the system of apprenticeship continued to be satisfactory. The apprentice received as orderly and as competent a training as could be provided in his time. His education, his manners, and his craft training were well supervised for, during the time of service, the master was responsible for his clothing food, lodging, discipline, and education.

The young men had to wear prescribed uniforms, blue gowns in winter, blue coats down to the calves in summer, flat cloth caps, shining shoes, and plain stockings. No silk was to be worn and no weapons carried but a pocket knife. In many of the plays, the master complains that the apprentice is not wearing his regulation clothing.¹ One can hardly blame the youth for not doing so, especially from 1600 onwards when the flat cap of the citizen became the butt of never ending ridicule.² Many of the apprentices must have rebelled against the standardized clothing as did Quicksilver. He wore a hat, pumps, short sword, dagger,³ and carried a tennis racket underneath his cloak.

As the master had to see that the apprentice could read and write and behave like a gentleman, he had to allow the youth to be educated with the members of his family and to eat at his table. But, in return, the master could enforce household rules on the apprentice. He could discipline him as he could his own children. He was permitted to beat the young man. The smith's apprentice in The Looking Glass for London questions this right. He wishes to know why it is not permissible for the servant to beat his master.⁴

1 cf. Eastward Ho, 1,i.

2 cf. Ibid., 1,i,135-140.

3 Ibid., 1,i, stage directions.

4 The Looking Glass for London, 1470.-1490.

The restrictions on the life of the apprentice extended beyond rules governing his clothing and his behaviour in his master's house. His entertainment was strictly regulated, in theory, if not in fact. He was not supposed to frequent taverns or play at dice. But according to the plays he was more often found roistering in taverns than learning his trade in the shop. Quicksilver dined with gallants in the tavern until his money was gone.¹ Spendal, although he had been taught careful habits during his apprenticeship, lost his shop through gambling as soon as he was beyond the reach of a master's discipline.²

Sometimes apprentices found rules and restrictions unbearable and ran away. If they did so they were treated as runaway slaves. In other cases when mutual dislike made the apprentice-master relationship intolerable for both, indentures were broken by agreement. Venturewell and Jasper in The Knight of the Burning Pestle terminated their association in this fashion.³

Not many indentures were broken, however, for a close relationship usually existed among the master, apprentices and journeymen. There is evidence of this bond in the plays. The friendship between Eyre and his

1 Eastward Ho, IV,i,159-170.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.289.

3 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, I,i,1-41.

workmen leads him to order Dame Margery not to interfere¹ with them. Similarly, in Thomas, Lord Cromwell, the workmen take it upon themselves to tell young Cromwell that he is wasting his time in study and that he would be better employed in learning a trade. They feel that their master's interests are their own and they do not want to see the son grow into a bookish dreamer.² Indeed, the faithful Hodge's feeling of responsibility leads him to follow young Cromwell to the continent and to share³ his hardships as an equal, and the journeymen of Candido resent even more than he does the tricks his wife plays upon him.⁴ Sometimes master and men were joined in villany. Quomodo's plans could not have been carried out without the close co-operation of Shortyard and Falselight.⁵ Thus, it may be seen that often the master and his workmen seemed to have identical interests whether good or evil.

The welfare of the apprentice was not left solely to the friendship and good nature of his master or to the co-operation existing in the shop. The Statute of Artificers in 1563 was a general act regulating the

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, III, i, 80-95.

2 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, I, ii, p. 351.

3 Ibid., II, ii, p. 355.

4 The Honest Whore, Part 1, III, i,

5 Michaelmas Term, I, 85-112.

crafts and attempting to deal with the problem caused by runaway apprentices and landless men. Earlier, in 1523, an act had been passed requiring that the apprentices should be English born and that ~~two~~ foreign journeymen only could be employed. When one remembers that a strong feeling against foreign workmen must have prompted this act, it seems strange that Lacy in his disguise as Hans should have been depicted as receiving a warm welcome from both Eyre and his journeymen.¹

Although much information may be obtained from the books and plays of the period on the training, clothing, education of the apprentice, there is an annoying lack of examples that show how the apprentice found employment once his term was finished. It has been said that the journeyman could set up his own shop but this statement does not account for those who could not afford to do so, although it was necessary for all of them to obtain work. A glance at the legislation of the period tells us that it was not always easy to find something to do. In the Poor Laws there is evidence of much unemployment. In fact, the many references to the evils of peace may be regarded as coming in part from the feeling that war would reduce the numbers of landless and unemployed men.

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11,iii,100-140.

There are, however, a few details in the plays.

James IV, like Philaster, a play with a courtly atmosphere, and, therefore, one that might easily be overlooked, has a reference to the search for employment. Slipper, Andrew, and Nano make out bills of advertisement for positions.¹ Similarly, Hodge and Cromwell, in another play, write up bills that say they are ready to take work.² These bills served the same purpose as the advertisement in our daily paper. They might be tacked up in a prominent place or they might possibly be found incorporated in the pamphlets of the time. In The Shoemakers' Holiday, Lacy obtains work by walking in front of the shop. ~~Eventually~~ Eventually, Eyre sends a workman to ask him if ~~the~~ Dutchman wants employment.³ Perhaps, in many cases employment was found in this fashion, or it might have been the practice of many masters to retain the men they had trained.

Life for the apprentice was not all training or learning to read or write, or worrying about the problem of finding employment some time in the future. He, as well as his master, had holidays, some statutory, some traditional, some both. On these days it seems only too evident that he forgot as many restrictions as he could. He made such use of his liberty, in fact, that

1 James IV, IV, iii, 1745-1820.

2 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, III, i, p. 357.

3 The Shoemakers' Holiday, II, iii, 90-100.

his holidays were dreaded by the law-abiding inhabitants of London. For example, Hippolito's servant in The Honest Whore laments the fact the gentle craft had every Monday off.¹ Not only the law-abiding feared the rioting apprentices. Sometimes their activities were turned against the criminal or near criminal classes in the city. On Shrove Tuesday it was their traditional privilege to pull down the bawds' houses along Southwark. In the Ill May Day Riots of 1517 the apprentices celebrations turned to anarchy.

On almost any day for high or low alike, for honest citizen or rogue, the apprentices' cry of 'clubs' meant confusion in the city and a temporary holiday for the apprentice. This was the call raised when the apprentices or their friends were in difficulty, and whenever it echoed through the London streets they left their work and rushed to give aid. At such a time there was little that the ill-organized police force could do to quell the rioters.

There are countless references to the apprentices' holidays and to their cries of 'clubs' in the drama of the time. Only a few examples are needed to illustrate. The ne'er do well in The Hog Has Lost His Pearl threatens the player with apprentices if the latter will not give him enough money for his jig.²

1 The Honest Whore, Part 1, IV, i, p.150.

2 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, I, p.436.

Shrove Tuesday is at hand, and I
have some acquaintance with bricklayers and
and plaisterers.

In the courtly comedy, Philaster, the apprentices,¹
with the citizens, are to place Philaster on the throne.
In The Knight of the Burning Pestle there is a constant
threat on the part of the citizen to 'cry clubs' so that
he and his apprentices may rescue Ralph from any danger
into which he may fall as a knight errant.²

Rioting such as these scenes imply did not take
place in the town only; a speech in The Merry Devil
of Edmonton shows that the 'lusty apprentices' as well
as their masters went out into the country on their
holidays.³

Before the citizen and his apprentice are dismissed
the part that women played as apprentices or as helpers
in the shop should be sketched. The conventional picture
of the merchants' wives will be described later, but
at present it will perhaps be sufficient to point out
that women were very often actively engaged in trade.
They were frequently apprenticed, not only in Elizabeth's
time but earlier. There are records of women apprentices
in the thirteenth century. In Chaucer's time women,
such as the Wife of Bath, had been apprenticed. In

¹ Philaster, V, iv, 1-24.

² The Knight of the Burning Pestle, II, i, 14-17.

³ The Merry Devil of Edmonton, p. 224.

our plays both Jane in The Shoemakers' Holiday and Mistress Openwork in The Roaring Girl had served their apprenticeship. The Elizabethan woman in trade might easily be as important as the master himself, especially if she were married to a master. She could take care of the business during his absence as did Viola or Margery,¹ or she might share his responsibilities, showing goods and working at her craft as did Mrs. Tiltyard and Mrs. Openwork.²

1 cf. The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111,lv, 1-20.

2 The Roaring Girl, pp.150-155,

The Position of Women

In this chapter I shall consider the women who appear in the plays that deal with the London citizen. There is an interesting variety of temperament and of occupation among them since they range from thrifty Dame Margery and blunt Moll Cutpurse to the foolish Gertrude of Eastward Ho and the courtesan Bellafront of The Honest Whore.

Before I turn to the plays themselves, I shall again discuss the outlook of the London citizen. I need to know what position he thought a woman should fill and

I For the background information contained in this chapter I am indebted to:

Camp, C.W., The Artizan in Elizabethan Literature.

Clark, Alice, The Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century.

Judges, A.V., The Elizabethan Underworld.

Knights, LC., Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson

Onions, C.T., ed., Shakespeare's England.

Powell, C.L., English Domestic Relations.

how he expected her to behave. On the whole, he regarded her as unstable, inferior, immoral, and extravagant.

His judgement in this matter, as in others, was formed partly from tradition and partly from his own experience.¹

The citizen had all the weight of medieval teaching behind him when he said that the woman should be subservient to the man and that she was especially prone to evil. He believed, as his great grandfathers had done, that God had ordained that the relationship between the sexes should be that of master and servant; and he pointed to the Bible and to the story of the creation of Eve and the fall of Adam for his proof. He said, logically enough, that if the Almighty had intended the first woman to be the equal of Adam he would have created her from a bone of the man's head rather than from one of his ribs.² He added that one could not expect any woman to be trustworthy when sin came into the world through Eve's frailty.

¹ I have tried to use the same approach as that found in the chapter on ideals. I could have repeated here much that I have already said about medieval and contemporary influences on the citizen.

² This was the opinion of the churchfathers and of Elizabethans who thought as they did. St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp the authority over the man, but to be in silence," was the type of advice given in many conduct books. However, RC in The Godly Forms of Household Government, 1598, uses the example given here to prove that the woman was the equal of the man. "Woman was not out of man's foot nor out of his head, but out of his side, therefore, not to be corded down...but walk jointly."

As a consequence of these beliefs the sixteenth century man felt that he was entitled to legal and spiritual superiority over his wife.¹ He thought that he should be able to beat her or lock her up with a total disregard for her wishes, if he found such action necessary.² Corvino's treatment of his wife in Volpone³ and Scarborrow's of Katherine in The Miseries of Enforced Marriage reflect this attitude and are not to be regarded as singular.⁴ Furthermore, since man thought woman extremely susceptible to evil he considered that it was his duty to guard her from temptation and to urge her constantly not to succumb to it when she met it.

In our plays lechery seems to be the sin into which women are led most frequently by their moral frailty. Wives, sisters, cousins, even mothers have to be warned against it. Corvino's determination to bar his wife's windows

1 Many of the treatises written during the Middle Ages attempt to prove that ~~Adam~~ was not to blame for the fall. cf. Powell, English Domestic Relations, cf. William Small shanks speeches to the Widow Taffeta in Ram Alley. He calls her "a parcel of man's flesh" and adds "that women and honesty are as well allied as parson's liesto their doctrines".

2 Wife beating was well within the law in Elizabeth's day.

3 Volpone, 11, v.

4 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, 1V, pp. 560-561.

that she might not have the opportunity to yield to the applications of passersby illustrates this ~~con~~ception of woman as particularly ready to fall into the temptations of sex.¹

On the other hand, the citizen sometimes praised women who were unusually chaste and continent². Again, however, he was merely repeating a traditional opinion. Medieval man had always approved of chastity. He had worshipped the Virgin Mary and had been impressed by the church's repeated commendation of the celibate state. It is worth noting that this emphasis on virginity raised the position of women who became nuns, but lowered that of the great majority who were wives and mothers.² It implied that the married man or woman had only chosen the lesser of two evils.³ Saint Paul had said that it was better to marry than to burn but both he and many of the church fathers taught that it was best to renounce all the temptations of the flesh and to live in chastity. We shall keep these words in mind when I come to the discussion of the citizens' widows.

The Elizabethan inheritance of medieval opinions concerning women explains why certain scenes and situations that we find unbearably dull, or even pathetic, were very

1 Volpone, 11,v,47-72.

2 cf. Powell's discussion in English Domestic Relations,

3 cf. Milton's Divorce Pamphlets. His views on marriage are far in advance of his age.

amusing to the sixteenth century audience. I refer, of course, to those scenes dealing with the cuckolding or the browbeating of the husband by the wife. A great many of these occur in the middle class plays. Most of us know that we find the reversal ^{of} usual relationships humorous if the ~~situation~~ situation is not treated with too much intensity. In a similar fashion, the Elizabethan was amused when he saw the ~~man~~ man who should have had complete control over his wife reduced to a subservient position by the naturally inferior woman. Thus, the patient Candido of The Honest Whore,¹ who obediently subjects himself to his wife's whims, and the sententious Prate of The Dumb Knight who is cuckolded by his wife Lollia, deserve the epithet, "foolish", because they are allowing the order of nature to be reversed.² Their positions³ are ridiculous, not pathetic.

The Elizabethan was hardly more complimentary to women when he was influenced by contemporary conditions than when he was supported by medieval traditions. He continued to regard her as inferior and unreliable, despite the fact that the Renaissance and the Reformation, coupled with the growth of commerce, had bettered her material

1 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 1,ii,pp100-101; 1,v,pp.112-114. 1,iv,p.107.

2 The Dumb Knight, 111,i,pp.164-166.

3 cf. The Woman Killed with Kindness

condition.¹ The citizen thought that the sixteenth century had only given woman new opportunities for evil. He said that love of money and pride were now added to her sins. Consequently, he condemned her desires for fine clothes and for marriage with the nobility more often than he praised her thrifty housekeeping. The established conception of woman's great moral frailty was evidently so fixed in his mind that a favorable revision of opinion concerning her was hardly possible.

I shall now discuss the citizens' opinions as they are reflected in the drama and shall turn first to the merchants' wives since they form the largest group of women in the plays that deal with the life of the middle class.

Let us look first at the pleasant, useful, and honorable merchants' wives before we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by adverse criticism. It is not difficult to see that a capable wife would be a great asset to any citizen, whether he be clothier, mercer, or goldsmith. One such as Viola who could attract customers by her pleasant manner, keep the apprentices in order, and manage the shop in the master's absence would be as useful as an extra pair of hands.

1 The Renaissance had made it fashionable for women to be as learned as their brothers. The Reformers, by setting their faces against celibacy and by making the home the stronghold of religion, emphasized the honorable position of woman and the necessity for a well established family life. The growth of commerce, by increasing the opportunities of women to won their own property and to take part in trade, furthered their independence. The disappearance of conventual life forced some young women to learn a trade.

The dramatists seem to realize that such women¹ exist, and, consequently, there are a goodly number of favorable pictures of citizens' wives in the plays. These women are ~~not~~ all as capable as Viola, but they have other virtues. Some are praised for their modesty, some for their chastity, some for their religious spirit. Among them is Mistress Openwork and Mistress Page and her friend. The former outwits the gallant who tries to seduce and defends the honour of citizens' wives in a long speech,² and the latter will not yield to the advances of a fine gallant even though he be that "fat rogue, Falstaff".³ Corvino's wife in Volpone and Gazetta in All Fools are equally loyal and continent. Celia rejects the jewels and fine clothes offered her by Volpone⁴ and Gazetta has friends who vouch for her virtue. When she is to be divorced by her husband several of them speak on her behalf and declare that she has not been unfaithful.⁵ Mistress Bannister in Thomas, Lord Cromwell and Tomasine in Michaelmas Term, a play on the whole very contemptuous of the citizens, are also favorable portrayals. The one is sincerely religious

1 see above 110-111.

2 The Roaring Girl, pp. 206-207.

3 The Merry Wives of Windsor, The play is set in Windsor but the scenes might be in London and Mistress page does not differ from the London citizen's wife.

4 Volpone, 111, vii, 188-208.

5 All Fools, 1V, i, pp. 57-59.

and the other is far more honest than her merchant husband.¹ She constantly tries to dissuade Quomodo from carrying out his evil plans.

Sometimes the citizens' wives, are praised for more modern virtues than those of continence or honesty. They are commended for thrift, industry, or independence.² Some of them seem to be on equal terms with their husbands and they express affection that is not at all subservient. In a previous chapter I have mentioned many of them who were careful with money,³ and I can add *Gazetta* to this list. She deplores her husband's association with gallants because she believes that it will lead him both into evil ways and into unnecessary expenditure.⁴ For expressions of independence and mutual esteem I shall turn again to *The Shoemakers' Holiday*. Margery and Simon seem to run the shop jointly⁵ and to be equally fond of one another. The citizen and his wife in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, also, although portrayed in a ridiculous light, are at least one in their regard for each other.

1 *Thomas, Lord Cromwell* 11,i,p.354.
Michaelmas Term, 11,iii.102-103.

2 These virtues are called contemporary or modern virtues as they are in the preceding chapter on ideals.

3 See above, 60-63.

4 *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, 111,iv, 175-184.

5 *The Shoemakers' Holiday* 111, iv, 175-184.

6 *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Induction, 40-60.

Now I shall turn from the sympathetic pictures of the citizens' wives in the drama to some of the examples of the adverse criticism that was so frequently directed against them. Again and again it is suggested that the increased wealth and importance of the citizen class only gave fresh scope to the natural viciousness of women. The citizens' wives are accused of sexual immorality and unfaithfulness. They are depicted as utterly incapable of resisting the advances of gallants and they are seen sitting in the bay windows over the shop, indulging in promiscuous flirtation. This opinion finds expression in The Malcontent. In this play Marquerelle says that any woman will yield to a man if properly courted, and she lists types of citizens' wives to prove her theory.¹

Marquerelle. Look ye, a Chaldean or an Assyrian, I am sure 'twas a most sweet Jew, told me; court any woman in the right sign and you shall not miss. But you must take her in the right vein, then; as when the sign is Pisces, a fishmonger's wife is very sociable; in Cancer, a physician's wife is very flexible; in Capricorn, a merchant's wife hardly holds out; in Libra, a lawyer's wife is very tractable, especially if her husband be at the theatre.

Lollia, who is false to Prate,² and the smith's wife in The Looking Glass for London,³ who commits adultery with the apprentice, are examples of citizens' wives who were supposed to be endlessly lecherous and unfaithful

1 The Malcontent, V, i, p. 31.

2 The Dumb Knight, III, i, p. 168.

3 The Looking Glass for London, 1422-1503.

Other wives in the plays are condemned for their wastefulness and extravagance. These are said to desire nothing but new coaches and gowns in the latest style and to be ready to sell their husband's possessions to buy French hoods and yellow ruff. Eastward Ho furnishes the best examples of such an ostentatious and extravagant wife. In this play Touchstone's wife and daughter, Gertrude, are dazzled by the prospect of the latter's marriage with the nobility, and they are equally eager to spend as much as possible of Touchstone's moeny. Both want coaches and French hoods and intend to take up swearing in a lady-like way, and both speak contemptuously of Touchstone's citizen habits.¹ In Ram Alley and The Dumb Knight the women also wish to wear French hoods and to marry well.² In the latter play the orator's wife regrets that she had not married a nobleman rather than prate. She says, "who would be a lawyer's wife and not a gentlewoman?"³

The most severely criticized women in the middle class plays, however, are the widows. The singling out of them for especial condemnation is the outcome of medieval prejudice. Tradition said that it was impossible for a widow to be continent. The Wife of Bath, we remember,

1 Eastward Ho, 1, ii, 85-170.

2 Ram Alley, 11, i, p. 303.

3 The Dumb Knight, 1, i, pp. 121-122.

was gat-toothed. The fact that a widow had lived with one man was supposed to make it impossible for her to live without others. The Puritan And Ram Alley contain full descriptions of the frailty of widows. In the first play the merchant's widow is torn between good works and lechery. On the death of her husband she resolves to give up luxury and selfishness and to devote herself to charity, even through her brother urges her¹ to marry again immediately. She persuades her younger daughter to join her in almsgiving. But neither the young woman nor the old remain ascetic for long. The widow eventually succumbs to the advances of the charlatan scholar; and the daughter, following her mother's example, deserts good works for Sir Andrew, who had offered her a cloth of silver, a monkey², a parrot, and a musk cat.

Mistress Changeable, the widow in Ram Alley, whose husband had been Taffeta, the mercer, is treated somewhat more sympathetically than the widow in The Puritan. She is both alert and intelligent in contrast to the other widow who is dull and stupid. Yet she is quite ready to take a second husband and makes no pretence of restricting herself to good works. Certainly the men in the play think no better of her than they would have done

1 The Puritan, 1,i,p.399.

2 Ibid. 1V,ii,p.419.

of the other woman. They expect the Widow Taffata to have the feminine susceptibility to men and clothes in an unusually strong measure. For instance, Sir Oliver, one of her suitors, expects her to capitulate immediately when he promises her that she shall be ladyfied and live at court, have jewels, a baboon, plate, chains, and household stuff. He is very much surprised to find¹ that she prefers her independence to his offer.

Many of the daughters of citizens in the plays only repeat the unfavorable picture of the merchant's wives. I have already mentioned Gertrude, the daughter in Eastward Ho. The elder daughter in The Puritan is of the same type. She wishes to marry above her class so that she may have a coach, two white horses, a guarded lackey and pied liveries.² On the other hand, there are citizens' daughters in the plays who are not akin to Gertrude. They do not differ greatly from the daughters of the nobles, however, and they tell us little about middle class life. We know that they are able to take care of the house and that they have some knowledge of accounts and the time and the money to read and sew and

1 Ram Alley, 111,i,p.321.

2 The Puritan, 1V,i,p.418. "Guarded", The term means that the lackey would wear an ornamented and braided coat. that the lackey would wear an ornamented and braided

to plan dances. Others have a smattering of classical learning. But the same thing might be said of daughters of any well-to-do family, whether it were noble or common.

Some of these girls come to life in the plays and display intelligence and independence. Others merely repeat conventional patterns. Among the former are Rose, the daughter of Sir Thomas Oakley,¹ and Joice in Greene's Tu Quoque.² Both, although afraid of their fathers, do not take what they consider unjust orders from them without protest. Luce, in The Knight of the Burning Pestle goes further than Rose or Joice and openly defies her father to follow Jasper.³ George a Greene's lady is equally devoted to her "honest pinner". She says that she will not give him up for any title in the land.⁴ In The London Prodigal Delia and her sister feel independent enough to countermand their father's instructions to the waiter at the ordinary.⁵ Delia is also an example of the young girl well trained in household affairs. She supervises the management of her sister

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111,iii,30.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.201.

3 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, 1,i,52-54.

4 George a Greene, 210-213,1260-1265.

5 The London Prodigal, 1,ii,-.375. Delia and Frank are supposed to be the daughters of a knight, but they behave as citizens' daughters would do and are treated as such.

Frank's house so well that her brother-in-law wishes¹ that she could be hired as a permanent housekeeper.

Other citizens' daughters, as I have said, are not so interesting as those just mentioned. They are pretty, guileless, fragile, but it is impossible to distinguish among them. Rebecca, in The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, for instance, is only a very poor copy of Jessica in The Merchant of Venice. The jailor's daughter, in The Two Noble Kinsmen, who might have been a source of much information, is similarly insignificant. She is only a love-sick girl² who, like Ophelia, goes mad when faced with misfortune.

Women were not connected with the middle class only through their positions as wives and daughters of citizens. Sometimes they worked in the shops as journeymen³ or apprentices or were employed as servants in the merchants' homes. Jane, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, may serve as an example of the first type and Luce of The London Prodigal of the second.

When I discuss these examples we shall observe women's increasing ability to provide for herself, but we shall continue to see her treated as if she were

1 The London Prodigal IV, i, p. 388.

2 eg. The Two Noble Kinsmen, IV, iii.

3 See above pp 110-111.

essentially immoral. Jane, for instance, has served her apprenticeship and is, thus, able to set up her own shop to earn her living. Hammon, however, although admiring her for her industry as well as for her beauty, does not think that she will prefer her shop to his offers. Jane, we notice, expects his suggestions to be "wanton."¹ Luce, the wife of the profligate Flowerdale, is also able to support herself and has similar temptations to withstand. Having no training such as that of Jane, she goes into service,² and finds that her master's friends have the same attitude towards women as had Hammon. They expect her to yield immediately to their importunities.³ The servant of the widow Taffata, Adriana, is regarded in the same manner. She is spoken of as a natural bait and "the porch to her Mistress" by Constantia.⁴

There are other women servants in our plays, but many of them are as standardized as are some of the daughters. They have either an exaggerated loyalty to their masters or an overwhelming desire to cheat them. One conclusion, however, may be drawn from the number of women in service depicted in the drama. It appears that more and more servants were being employed in middle class homes. Citizens who had recently become wealthy,

¹ The Shoemaker's Holiday, IV,i,10-12. Hammon says, "She thinks me wanton."

² The London Prodigal, III, iii, p. 287.

³ *Ibid.*, V,i,p.393.

⁴ Ram Alley, II,i,p.305.

such as Civit and Frank, were beginning to think that it ~~was~~
~~as~~ ignoble for them to soil their hands with medi¹al
 labor as it ~~was~~ for the nobility.

Frank. A gentle~~woman~~ and a married gentlewoman
 too, to be companion to cooks and kitchen boys!
 Not I, i'faith; I scorn that.

Before I leave the citizens and their womenfolk,
 I should draw attention to the fact that a large number
 of courtezans and their companion bawds ~~are~~ portrayed
 in citizen plays. I can learn little, however, about
 the average life of the citizen from their presence in
 the drama. I might perhaps hazard the guess that it
~~was not~~ a rare thing for a citizen to have a mistress and
 to spend a ² large part of his time in the suburbs.

Naturally, the courtezans are unfavorably treated
 by the dramatists. Their presence was regarded as proof
 of the existence of lechery and as a constant temptation
 to extravagance. Both medieval and contemporary opinion
 would say that they should not be tolerated and would
 deplore the fact that the citizen's increased wealth
 enabled him to keep a mistress who would lead him both
 into sin and waste.

1 The London Prodigal, IV, i, p. 388.

2 See above pp. 14-16

Also Ram Alley, I, i, p. 271.

Constantia. What makes he here
 In the skirts of Holborn, so near the field,
 And at a garden-house? He has some punk
 Upon my life!

It is interesting to see that the courtezans, whether they are living creations as ~~is~~ Bellafront, or mere sticks like Frances, nearly always voice contempt for the citizen, even when he gives them as many ruffs and farthingales as he buys his wife.

In closing this chapter on women I shall draw attention to the play, The Roaring Girl. Despite its heorine, in many ways this is essentially a play of and about the middle class. Almost all the characters in it are citizens and Moll herself is completely in sympathy with them, especially with the women. One feels that some sort of significance should be found in her presence among the shops and stalls, deliveries and picnics in Finsbury Fields. Yet it is difficult for us to generalize about her. She seems to be too much an ideal character. Perhaps I can conclude by saying that Moll, with her habit of asserting herself on equal terms with men, may indicate that the Elizabethan middle class women were becoming aware of their importance to the merchant and were desiring more freedom, despite all adverse criticism directed against them.

1
Homes, Food, Clothing.

At this point the principal actors, both male and female, the citizen and his wife, are on the stage. The backdrop of historical and geographical detail has been supplied by a discussion of the history of the time and by a description of London. But to complete my setting I must place the furniture and supply appropriate costumes, and, in order to do so, in the following chapters, I shall turn to the clothing and homes of the London citizens.

A few details about the houses of the London citizens have been already given in the discussion of the shop of the merchant. It has been pointed out that business practice and private life were closely linked when the shop formed part of the house. In such a case, the merchant or his wife might come from the kitchen or from the parlor to sell goods in the front of the building. However, although I have noted the interaction of business and social life resulting from such a combination I have not discussed the architectural design that caused this mingling

1 For the background information contained in this chapter I am indebted to:

Camden, W., Britannia.

Harrison, W., Description of England.

Old London Illustrated.

Onions, C.T., ed., Shakespeare's England.

Turner, T., Hudson, Some Account of Domestic Architecture in England.

The arrangement of the rooms beyond the partition that formed the back of the shop or of those on the second floor has not been outlined. Furthermore, such combined houses and shops have been mentioned only when they stood on one of the main streets of London. But now, the houses of the Londoners, their situations, and their designs will be fully discussed wherever in the city they may be found.

These houses might be in the town, in the suburbs, or in the county beyond, for the merchant frequently had two houses, a town residence and a country seat. Even if he were not wealthy enough to maintain two complete establishments he might be able to leave a rented shop at nightfall for a pleasant house beyond the walls or in the fashionable suburb of Westminster. But, if he were confined to one of the houses set along the city streets in the straggling fashion mentioned by Harrison, he could still plan and hope for a country house. Such a desire seemed to be part of the ambition of every London merchant.

From the evidence of the plays it seems that many of the merchants were able to fulfil this ambition. Sir Roger Oakley was one of these men. If the size and situation of his house is deduced from the scenes of The Shoemakers' Holiday it may be concluded that it was a typical Tudor country house with great mullioned windows

and set in spacious grounds. Rash, another merchant who is knighted, feels that he too must have more than one house. He plans to move first to the Strand and, in the next ¹quarter, to Fulham. The mercer, Quomodo, on the other hand, is able only ²to voice his ambition. He looks eagerly to the time when he will have a small neat house in Essex.

Both town and country houses were often set in fine gardens. Such gardens were possible even in the city because of the many open spaces within the walls of sixteenth century London. The great number of gardens indicated that the Elizabethan was as attracted to his plot of land as is the Englishman of today. This interest is illustrated by books, pamphlets, and plays. Harrison, for instance gives much space to Horticulture. Other books, such as Gerard's Herbal, are full of the Englishman's delight in his flowers. In the plays there are many references to flowers and to gardens. Much of the action of The Puritan takes place in the widow's garden. She asks her guests to walk there to gather pinks and gilly-flowers. ³ Sir Godfrey's chain is found under a rosemary bush. ⁴ Another garden is mentioned in All Fools, ⁵

¹ Greene's Tu Quoque, p.186.

² Michaelmas Term, 111,iv, 13-21.

³ The Puritan, 1V,ii, p.419.

⁴ Ibid., 11,ii, p.409.

⁵ All Fools, 111,i,p.53.

The widow Taffata, as well as Old Knowell, has her own orchard and garden. Her land evidently extends to the river for she warns William Smallshanks not to come ~~near~~¹ her out-houses, her garden, orchard, or riverside.

It is rather amusing to notice that gardens were not always thought of as innocuous or pleasant. Both private and public ones were sometimes regarded with as much suspicion as were the suburbs. The objections to gardens seem to arise from the supposition that they were used for clandestine meetings. As a result of this evil reputation the merchants' wives, in many of the plays, are warned against going to garden houses.

The exterior and the interior of the Elizabethan house were much the same whether it was set in the country with a large garden or in the ~~town~~ with a small one or none at all, whether it belonged to the moderately wealthy or to the extremely rich. Indeed, on the whole, the houses followed so much the same pattern that even the so-called palaces of the nobles differed little from the dwellings of the comfortable citizens. This lack of differentiation resulted mainly from the fact that the Elizabethan house plan had not been greatly altered from that of the medieval hall that had been built primarily for shelter. The house had not yet come to serve equally

¹ Ram Alley, IV, i, p.341.

as a protection from the elements and as an expression of individual taste.

From The Description of England we learn that many of the houses were built of both wood and plaster. The beams, roof, and main structures were of wood, the sidings of plaster. A few of the houses were entirely of wood or of brick. Only the public buildings and the fortress castles were of stone. The wood and plaster outside wall, during Elizabeth's time, began to be broken by large expanses of glass as it was rapidly replacing horn and lattice in the windows except in the very poor areas.¹ It seems that the Elizabethan was fascinated by the possibilities of large sections of glass for, from this period, come the enormous mullioned Tudor windows and the overhanging second story casements that can still be seen in the cottages in the small villages or in the Elizabethan manor houses on ancient estates in England.

The plays furnish evidence both of the common use of glass and of the popularity of large windows. The widow Taffeta sits at an overhanging casement and watches the passersby.² Corbaccio blocks up the window from which his wife watched the mountebank as many an Elizabethan must have done.³ In Doctor Faustus there is a reference to glass windows.⁴

¹ Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap.xii, p.233.

² Ram Alley, 1,i,p.278.

³ Volpone, 11,ii,278-288.

⁴ Doctor Faustus, 1,xi,70-80.

When the interior of the Elizabethan house is considered, it is found, as has been suggested, that its arrangement was still dictated by that of the medieval common hall. In this respect the typical Elizabethan home was simply a medieval dwelling with sleeping rooms and kitchen quarters off to one side or the other. Only rarely had the main hall become differentiated into parlor and dining room.

However, the halls and especially the parlors, when the latter were found, were furnished with more care than were the other portions of the house. For example, the walls of these rooms were frequently improved by the use of plaster. Harrison describes the method of plastering:¹

In plastering our fairest houses over our heads, we use first to lay a line or two of white mortar, tempered with hair, upon laths, which are nailed one by another (or sometimes upon reed or wickers more dangerous for fire, and made fast here and there saplaths for falling down) and finally cover all this with the aforesaid plaster, which beside the delectable whiteness of the stuff itself, is laid on so even and smoothly as nothing in my judgement can be done with more exactness.

The plays bear Harrison out. Hog's acquaintanceship with "plaisterers" has already been mentioned. In The Puritan, Sir Godfrey and Edmond are afraid that the plaster and the hangings of the best room will be set

1 Harrison's Description of England, 11, xii, p. 235.

2 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, 1, p. 436.

afire at the appearance of the devil who is to be
 1
 conjured by the sorcerer.

Sometimes hangings were used over the plaster or
 the wood to help keep the house warm and to serve as or-
 nament. Harrison furnishes a description of these hangings
 2
 as well as of the wood panelling and plastering:

The walls of our houses on the inner sides
 in like sort be either hanged with tapestry,
 arras work, or painted cloths, wherein either
 divers histories, or herbs, or beasts, knots,
 and such like are stained, or else they are ceiled
 with oak of our own, or wainscot brought hither
 out of the east countries, whereby the rooms are
 not a little commended, made warm, and much more
 close than otherwise they would be. As for
 stoves, yet we have not hitherto used them greatly,
 yet do they now begin to be made in divers houses
 of the gentry and wealthy ditizens....

Other references to arras work and to painted cloth,
 such as Harrison mentions, occur in many well known
 passages in the Elizabethan drama. In The Puritan such
 3
 a reference is given. In this play the house into which
 the scholar goes to avoid arrest has painted cloths and
 maps on the walls and fine galleries around the main room.
 Painted cloth is mentioned also in The Miseries of
 4
Enforced Marriage. The best known incidents concerning

1 The Puritan, 1V,ii,p.420-21.

2 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, Cap.xii,
 p. 235.

3 op cit. 111,v,pp.412-414; 1V,ii,p.421.

4 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, 1V, p.528.

painted cloth and arras work occur in the Henry IV plays. Falstaff hides behind the arras and from his speeches it is evident that he has seen many a painted cloth.¹ Indeed, much of the stage business of the Elizabethan theatre would be lost without the use of these hangings. Villains and fools hide behind them. Polonius' death comes to him² through an arras.

The painted cloths not only helped the Elizabethan householder to keep warm and the Elizabethan dramatist to provide exciting or amusing incident, but in both life and in the drama they could serve as an indication of wealth. The citizen's status might be judged by the richness and variety of his hangings. If he had tapestry work and not painted cloth he might well be a wealthy alderman rather than a more humble member of the guild. In Albumazar we find some such judgement made. The magician desires Pandolfo to hang his parlor with cloth of silver. But he has overestimated the wealth of the merchant. Pandolfo can fulfill the other demands of the sorcerer, but he has to borrow the cloth of silver from his mercer.³ Nevertheless, the fact that the sorcerer expected to find such an arras in the house of Pandolfo indicates that certain merchants, in the eyes of the average Elizabethan, were able to afford such

¹ Henry IV, Part 1, 11, iv, 550-551; Part 11, 1v, ii, 26-28. Falstaff says, "...slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth..."

² Hamlet, 111, iv, 22-24.

³ Albumazar, 11, iii.

costly hangings.

The speech of Sir Alexander Wengave shows us that he was a merchant who might well have had a cloth of silver Arras. He was exceedingly proud of possessions such as this, and of the wealth that enabled him to buy them:¹

The furniture that doth adorn this room
Cost many a fair gray groat ere it came here:
But most things are most cheap,
When they are most dear.
Nay when you look into my galleries,
How bravely they are trimmed up,
You all shall swear,
You are highly pleased to see what's set down there:
Stories of men and women, mixed together
Fair ones with fould, like sunshine in wet weather.
Within one square a thousand heads are laid
So close, that all of heads the room seems made:
As many faces there (filled with blithe looks)
Shew like the promising titles of new books,
(Written merrily) the readers being their own eyes
Which seem to move and to give plaudities:
And here and there (whilst with obsequious ears
Thronged heaps do listen) a cut purse thrusts and leers
With hawk's eyes for his prey; I need not shew him,
With a hanging villanous look, yourselves may know him,
The face is drawn sorely; then, sirs, below,
The very floor (as 'twere) waves to and fro,
And like a floating island, seems to move,
Upon a sea, bound in with shores above.

It is interesting to note here another reference to galleries. These were as distinctive a feature of the Elizabethan house as were the painted cloths and panelled walls. They served not only as showplaces for pictures or for particularly fine tapestry but also as a stage for the musicians or players who might be called upon to entertain the master's guests. Their separation from the rest of the house made them useful to the members

¹ The Roaring Girl, p.141-142.

of the household who might wish to walk or to read there when the gallery was not in use for some other purpose. For example, in The Puritan, Mary's suitor, Sir John Pennydub, walks along the gallery,¹ and, from her gallery, Tomasine, in Michaelmas Term, listens to the plans of Quomodo.²

By the sixteenth century the kitchen quarters had frequently been extended beyond the medieval plan and by the time of Elizabeth they usually consisted of a pantry, buttery, and kitchen. Although they would be as important in the management of the house as any other of the rooms, yet there are barely half a dozen references to them in the plays. Delia's skill and efficiency³ are shown in her supervision of Frank's kitchen arrangements. The mother in The Puritan is found turning a spit in the kitchen.⁴ The clown in The Looking Glass for London shows his familiarity with the kitchen quarters when he says that he carries his pantry, buttery, and kitchen with him. He means that he has wine, bread, and meat in his wide slops.⁵

1 The Puritan, 1,i,p.406.

2 Michaelmas Term, 111,iv.

3 The London Prodigal, 111,iii.p.390.

4 The Puritan, 11,i,p.406.

5. The Looking Glass for London, 2448,2460.

Despite the convenient enlargement of the kitchen quarters and the general improvement in the appearance of the other parts of the house that resulted from the use of hangings, wood panelling and plaster, the Elizabethan dwelling was still far from being completely comfortable. The householder had two constant problems. It was extremely difficult to remain clean and to keep warm. However, the Elizabethan did not suffer from as great discomfort as the twentieth century man might have done under similar circumstances, for the problems of personal and of household cleanliness did not appear as great to the Elizabethans as they do to us. Many sixteenth century Londoners had never taken a bath in their lives. It is reported of Elizabeth that she had had only one. Firk, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, carries his disregard for water even further. He objects strongly to the suggestion that he wash his face.¹ Frank, the apprentice in Eastward Ho, in his desire for a bathtub is the exception rather than the rule.² On the other hand, Hotspur's condemnation of the "dainty lord" is the outcome of the standard sixteenth century opinion.³

Perhaps fortunately, the Elizabethan seemed to be slightly more concerned over an unclean house than over

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, II,iii,20-23.

2 Eastward Ho, IV,ii,300-305.

3 Henry IV, Part I, I,iii,29-68.

a dirty fact. No doubt the greater concern comes from the extreme discomfort caused by the use of rushes as a floor covering. They both held the dirt and decayed as they were trodden on. The odor of these trampled rushes was not very pleasant and the Elizabethan tried to cover it by spreading perfume throughout his rooms. Casting bottles, such as those already mentioned, were used for this purpose.

The problem of warmth was apparently of even more importance to the Elizabethan than any raised by lack of cleanliness; for, regardless of the rich hangings and the plastered walls, both of which served a useful as well as an ornamental purpose, the houses remained cold. Although Harrison mentions stoves and lists chimneys and fireplaces as among the three things that have "marvellously altered" for the better since his day, the citizen's house was, in most cases, far too cold for comfort. For instance, the doctor's servant in The Honest Whore says that Hippolito's house was "colder than a citizen's house in Janivary!"

Harrison's discussion of two other alterations will serve to introduce the description of the house furnishings. Here, indeed, there had been a great change from medieval times, although otherwise the interior and the exterior of the house had remained much the same. The Elizabethan could increase his comfort through the use of new and

1. The Honest Whore, IV, iv, p. 166.

2. See note,

improved furniture even if he could do little about warmth and cleanliness.

Harrison first mentions the great "amendment in lodging". All types of furniture had improved in his day. In the place of the old pallet of straw the goodman² frequently had a comfortable bed with a mattress:

The furniture of our houses also exceeded and is grown in manner even to passing delicacy; and herein I do not speak of the nobility and gentry only, but likewise of the lowest sort in most places of our south country that have anything at all to take to.¹ Likewise in the houses of knights, gentlemen, merchantmen, and some other wealthy citizens, it is not unknown to behold generally their great provision of tapestry, turkey work, pewter, brass, fine linen, and thereto costly cupboards of plate, worth five or six hundred or a thousand pounds to be deemed by estimation. But as hereinall these sorts do far exceed their elders and predecessors, and in neatness and curiosity the merchant all other, so in times past the costly furniture stayed there, whereas now it is descended yet lower even unto inferior artificiers and many farmers, who by virtue of their old and not of their new leases, have for the most part learned also to garnish their cupboards with plate, their joined beds with tapestry and silk hangings, and their tables with carpets and fine napery, whereby the wealth of the country (God be praised, therefore, and give us grace to employ it well) doth infinitely appear.

3

Secondly, Harrison mentions the improvement in tableware.

Pewter is taking the place of the wooden trencher:

...For so common were all sorts of treen stuff in old timesthat a man should hardly find four pieces of pewter (of which one was peradventure a salt) in a good farmer's house....but now he

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. xii, p. 249.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid. 11, xii, pp. 238-239.

thinks his gains small toward the end of his term if he have not six or seven year's rent lying by him, therewith to purchase a new lease, besides fair garnish of pewter on his cupboard, with so much more in odd vessels going about the house, three or four feather beds, so many coverlids and carpets of tapestry, a silver salt, a bowl for wine (if not a whole nest) and a dozen of spoons to finish up the suit.

1

I shall turn again to the plays for confirmation of Harrison's statements. For example, among the furnishings of Bellafront's room are a cupboard, dressing table, and looking glasses.² In another play, I learn that Sir Alexander Wengave orders stools for most of his guests, but a chair for old Sir John.³ Throat orders stools for the gentlemen and a cushion for the heiress, and, at the same time, he desires a fire in the great chamber.⁴ Stools and cushions were not the only substitutes for chairs. Large oak chests served equally well. For instance, the one that stood at the bottom of the bed in Hog's room and in which he kept his accounts could be used also as a bedroom chair.⁵ Candido had a box of this sort in which he kept his robes of state. These chests fulfilled the functions of storage wardrobes and of seats. In the same play, The Honest Whore, there is an amusing

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. xii, pp. 240-241.

2 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 111, iii, p. 145.

3 The Roaring Girl, p. 143.

4 Ram Alley, 11, i, pp. 300-301.

5 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, V, p. 484.

incident that involves the use of another household furnishing. When Candido is unable to get his robes from his chest he takes the carpet off the table and cuts it so that he may use it as a robe in his appearance before the senate.¹ Such a carpet would be similar to a fine damasked or embroidered table cloth today.

The Honest Whore supplies us with proof of the increased popularity of pewterwork as well as with examples of other furnishings. Candido's wife, Viola, becomes very angry at the loss of her fine pewter cup.² Incidentally, it can be seen from the reference in this act that all guests drank from the same cup. This communal drinking was a sign of courtesy. In Eastward Ho,³ pewter is used at the inn in the same fashion. The widow Taffata has a great store of the new pewter dishes as well as a supply of fine sheets.⁴

Other plays illustrate further the extent to which the improvement in tableware was spreading among the different classes. Volpone shows us that Sir Politic-Would-Be carries his knife and fork and silver toothpick with him in a special case.⁵ However, it is interesting

1 The Honest Whore, Part I, 111,i, pp,139,140.

2 Ibid., 1,v,pp.114-115.

3 Eastward Ho, 111,iii. 10-11,90-155.

4 Ram Alley, 111,i.p.324.

5 Volpone, 1V,i,26-30.

to note that Sir Politic's possession of such silverware was regarded as a sign of affectation. In many homes the new customs of using pewter for everyday meals and of eating the food with knife and fork instead of with knife and fingers had not yet come into favor. In many homes food was still served in large wooden trenchers, cut with a knife, and eaten with the fingers. Bannister, for example, said that he had fed Bagot from his own trencher.¹ As further proof it may be noticed that servants were still often called scapetrenchers.²

Perhaps the best complete illustration in the plays that substantiates Harrison's careful descriptions of furnishings is found in Albumazar. Reference has already been made to the use of fine hangings in this play. Albumazar's complete instructions provide more evidence than a solitary example:³

...
 Parlour to be swept carefully,
 Washed, rubbed, perfumed, hanged
 Round from top to bottom,
 With pure white lunny tapestry of needle work.
 But 'twere cloth of silver, 'twere much better.
 Spread all the floor with finest Holland sheet
 And over this, fair damask table cloth:
 An altar in the midst, leaded with plate
 Of silver basons, ewers, cups, candlesticks,
 Flagon, and beakers; salts, chargers, casting bottles
 'Twere better not to miss some bowls of god.

The descriptions and examples given above refer primarily to the homes of the well-to-do citizens or to

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,iii, p.353.

2 The Miseries of Informed Marriage, p.471.

3 Albumazar, 11,iv, p.338.

those of the gentry. But as I have indicated, not all Londoners were able to live in such comfortable surroundings or to indulge in new pewter or in flock beds. Near the outskirts of the city or in the suburbs were many poor homes in which people lived a bare existence. Among these houses were those of the debtors and courtezans. The house of Cob, the water carrier, of Every Man in His Humour, would be in such a locality. From the descriptions of it given in the play we may gather that it was extremely simple.¹ In Ram Alley William Smallshanks is pictured coming from a similar small and squalid house when he is forced to live in the suburbs to escape imprisonment for debt.² That the associations of the houses of the suburbs were frequently as unsavory as their appearance may be seen from other plays. Prate warns his wife not to go to the houses in the suburbs and³ Mistress Openwork accuses her husband of keeping a second house and a mistress in the narrow streets near the walls of the city.⁴

1 Every Man in His Humour, IV, II, viii.

2 Ram Alley, I, i, pp. 271-73.

3 The Dumb Knight, II, i, p. 135.

4 The Roaring Girl, p. 160.

In the sixteenth century, as has been seen, the furnishings of the London houses were gradually improving and in many other ways the standard of living was rising. This rise, however, was not reflected in all parts of household management. Tables might be set with fine new pewter dishes, but the amount of food served and the fashion of preparing it had not been much changed by the increase of wealth in the middle class.

Thus, we may group the Elizabethans and medieval men together and, when we compare their eating habits with our own, we shall find that we eat much less. In our eyes the Elizabethans seem to have consumed a tremendous amount of food. Their meals were both larger and more frequent than ours. Consequently, the average Elizabethan was as apt to fall into the medieval sin of gluttony as had been any of Chaucer's contemporaries. They not only overate while at table but, from the plays, it seems that food was ever present in their minds. President in The Dumb Knight makes constant references to eating and Eyre's terms of affection for his wife consist almost entirely of words that have to do with food. Many a Londoner, no doubt, would have agreed with Sir Andrew Aguecheek's opinion that living was eating and drinking.³

1 The Dumb Knight, 1,i,126.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11,iv,158,(eel);111,i,92,(sausage).

3 Twelfth Night, 11,iii,11.

The food served, although greater in quantity, was much the same as that eaten today. A list given by Harrison contains many names with which we are familiar:

...But howsoever this case standeth, white meats, milk, butter and cheese, which were (never so deere in my time, and) wont to be accounted of as one of the chief stays thoroughout the Iland, are now reputed as food appertinent onlie to the inferior sort, whilest such as are more wealthie, doo feed upon the flesh of all kind of cattel accustomed to be eaten, all sorts of fish taken upon our coasts and fresh rivers, and such diversity of wild and tame foules as are either bred in our Iland or brought over unto us from other countries of the maine.

In number of dishes and change of meat, the nobilities of England do most exceed, sith there is no daie in maner that passeth over their heads wherein they have not onlie beefe, mutton, veale, lambe, kid, pork, conie, capon, pig or so manie of these as the season yeeldeth; but also some portion of the red or fallow deere, beside great varietie of fish and wilde foule, and thereto sundrie other delicacies....

1

The gentlemen and merchants keep much about one rate, and each of them contenteth himself with foure, five or six dishes when they have but some resort,...To be short, at such times as the merchants do make their ordinarie or voluntarie feast, it is a world to see what great provision is made of all maner of delicat meats, from everie quarter of the countrie, wherein, besides they are often comparable herein to the nobilities of the land, they will seldome regard anything that the butcher killeth, but reject the same as not worthy to come in place. In such cases also geliffes (of all colours, mixed with a varietie in the representation of sundrie floures, herbs,

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. vi, pp.144-145.

trees, formes of beasts, fish, foules and fruits, and thereunto marchpaine wrought with no small curiositie, tarts of diverse hewes and sundrie denominations,) conserves (of old fruits forren and home-bred) suckets, codinaes, marmilats, marchpaine, gingerbread, sugerbread, florentines, wild foule, venison of all sorts and (sundrie) outlandish confections.

1

In the plays of the day there are many references to large meals and to those who loved the capens served at them. Falstaff is the best known of the later. Capon is almost as prominent in his mind and in his lists as the intolerable deal of sack used to moisten little bread.² In James IV, Slipper has similar tastes. He obtains ale and toast, capon and beef and drinks claret in a bowl of silver.³ In Ram Alley, the Sergeants feed on capon, teals, and woodcocks from the Sherriff's own table.⁴ Capon, lambs, pheasants, pigeons, as well as rhenish, white, greek, muscadel, sherry, and canary wine are the sorcerer's requirements in Albumzar.⁵

Ngt all the Elizabethans, however, ate such large meals..The food of the lower classes was not so plentiful or so varied as that mentioned above. Many times the workmen had to be satisfied with bread and cheese. When Sir John Oldcastle and his wife escape from the inn in

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. vi, p.148.

2 Henry IV, Part 1, 11, iv, 580-601.

3 James IV, 960-990.

4 Ram Alley, 1V, 1, p.344.

5 Albumazar, 11, iii, p.340.

carrier's clothes they find bread and cheese in the
 packs of the horses.¹ Cromwell remembers that his father's
 former servants had given him bread and cheese and hot
 cheese cakes when he was a boy.² Also, Radagon's father
 rebukes him for his pride by reminding him that he had
 eaten bread and cheese and been satisfied.³

It is interesting to note, that, whatever the class
 of the Elizabethan, food was important to him both as
 a source of sustenance and as a means of expressing
 celebration and compliment. In many cases it had a further
 use as a standard of measurement for wealth and position.
 For example, venison is spoken of as a delicacy in
Michaelmas Term.⁴ One's position in life in that play
 is judged by one's opportunity to serve venison. When
 Susan is considering marriage she feels that if she
 marries Lethe she will have venison to eat. On the other
 hand, if she marries Easy she will have no venison
 but will have a complete table service with a
 salt, cloth, and a trencher.⁵

Elaborate and loaded dishes on a table not showed
 the wealth of the citizen, but were sometimes a symbol
 of a family or business celebrate. When important guests

1 Sir John Oldcastle, V, ix, pp. 345-346.

2 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, IV, ii, p. 363.

3 The Looking Glass for London, 1248-2250.

4 Michaelmas Term, I, i, 209-210.

5 Ibid., II, iii, 50-90.

came to dinner rich and carefully cooked dishes on the best plate and pewter were placed on the finest damask linen that the merchant owned. No doubt such preparation was necessary when the patient Candido¹ asked the Neopolitan lords to visit him. George à Greene has simpler fare than Candido would offer, but he was equally proud of it. He invites the Earl of Kendal and his train to eat beef hung since Martinmas² and wafer cakes. Bellafront, on the other hand, forms an interesting contrast. She prefers to save the best dishes for herself. She thinks that wine is sufficient for her guests, but as soon as they leave the house she³ orders a lunch of larks to be brought to her.

In addition to everyday entertaining, such as that illustrated above, great feasts were given on many ceremonial occasions, whether they were national, local, or personal. The Lord Mayor's Banquet was one of the best known of the public feasts. There are many references to it not only in the plays but in the chronicles of London and in the records of the livery companies. From these sources menus of such large feasts may be obtained. On a lower level, weddings, deaths, or promotions also called for feasts. Humble Radagon had forty pence in cakes and

1 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 1,v,p.116.

2 George à Greene, 620.

3 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 1,11,1, pp.124-125.

ale spent on his christening.¹ Eyre feasts the apprentices in Leadenhall on his becoming Lord Mayor.²

If the citizen were not entertaining in his home or joining in great feasts he might take his friends to the ordinary. This was the combined restaurant and delicatessen of the day where food or wine and prepared meals could be obtained. One could have dinner in the ordinary or order a hot meal to be brought to one's home. The inn served much the same purpose as the ordinary. Taverns, however, were more likely to be the background for dicing and drinking than for eating.

The plays contain many scenes set in taverns, ordinaries or inns. In The London Prodigal Delia and Frank are taken to a street cafe by their father and friends.³ The men order wine for themselves and small beer for the girls and cakes to eat with their drinks. The gallants and their courtezans also meet at inns and ordinaries. At such a time wine was more frequently served than food. Spendal and Nan Sweetman, for example, order hippocras.⁴

I have said that the citizen might extend courtesy to his friends by inviting them to dinner in his own house, by joining them in great feasts or by taking them to the ordinary. There was yet another way in which food

1 The Looking Glass for London, 1303-1310.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, V, iv.

3 The London Prodigal, 1, ii, pp. 374-375.

4 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 194.

might cement friendship. It might be used as a gift. Instances of this custom also occur in the plays. Nutmeg and ginger as well as a pair of mittens are sent to young Cromwell on the continent from friends and relatives at home. The citizen's wife in The Knight of the Burning Pestle offers Ralph a stick of liquorice. Volpone offers Corbaccio's wife food and sweetmeats.

Naturally, the most popular gift of food was candy or cake. The Elizabethan was very fond of the former. Candies are among the requirements of Albumazar. He wants boxes of white comfit and marchpane, dry sucket, macarons and diet bread. The ship that made Simon Eyre's fortune carried prunes, almonds and sugar candy as well as the more practical carrots and turnips. From The Hog Has Lost His Pearl it is learned that marmalade was considered a delicacy as much to be desired as candy. Young Wealthy tells Rebecca that she is a witty marmalade eater. Many other things that we should consider food were classified as candy by the Elizabethans. Furthermore, some of our candies were regarded as medicinal then.

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,ii,p.355.

2 The Knight of The Burning Pestle, 1,i,72-75.

3 Volpone, 111,viii,200-205.

4 Albumazar, 11,iii,p.340.

5 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111,i,171-181

6 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, 11,p. 451.

For instance, sugar was more a medicine than a sweetening. Tobacco was sometimes regarded as medicine. The advice that Lady Politic gives to Volpone concerning the cure of his illness would illustrate many of the ideas ¹ on medicine common among all classes of Elizabethans.

Lady P: Alas, good soul! the passion of the heart.
Seed-pearl were good now, boiled with syrup of apples,
Tincture of gold, and coral, citron-pills,
Your elecampane root, myrobolanes-

Finally, all varieties of food and drink might serve one other purpose. When the Elizabethan wished to pay a compliment or to make a new acquaintance he used taste as his emissary. In this way Rash sends ² a quart of maligo to Spendal. Civit, when he wished to make the acquaintance of his future father-in-law, ³ sends him a bottle of wine. This habit is commended by the courtesy books and was much in favor with the citizen.

1 Volpone, Act III, iv^m 50-54.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.196.

3 The London Prodigal, II, i, p.376.

I shall now turn from the survey of the house furnishings of the Elizabethans to a consideration of their clothing. The treatment of this subject in Elizabethan literature follows much the same lines as the discussion of dress has taken throughout the centuries. The similarity of tone may be understood when it is remembered that changing fashion has nearly always been regarded from the one viewpoint, that is, as the legitimate butt of ridicule. Consequently, literature dealing with it has been almost uniformly satiric.

This satiric tone has arisen from the fact that reformers, whether of Elizabeth's time or of the centuries preceding or following the sixteenth, have felt that changes in style and useless ornamentation in dress have been developed as a result of man's overwhelming pride. They have condemned as selfish the individual's desire, given form through his clothing, to emphasize his separation from those whom he considered less fortunate.

Elizabeth, the only person exempt from open ridicule, is the best symbol of the excess that provoked attack in the sixteenth century. Many of her portraits show the jewelled farthingale, the doublet, the slashed and ornamented sleeves, the enormous ruff, the elaborately dressed wig characteristic of the period. Such clothing, worn by a lesser person, almost invariably aroused the ire of both dramatists and pamphleteers.

As might be expected, therefore, there are many and varied references in the plays to all types of dress for there was an endless series of changes in style to be described, examined, ridiculed. In many instances, moreover, the attitude taken by the dramatists was not motivated solely by a desire to ridicule for ridicule's sake. To numerous writers in all fields the change in attire was felt to be the reflection not only of individual pride, but, in some manner, of the change in the economic situation in the sixteenth century.¹

At the beginning of the Elizabethan era clothing was fairly standardized, but it did not remain so. At first, vestiges of the influence of the feudal system were evident in the dress of the time and, as a result, many classes of society could be identified by their clothing. This situation, however, changed as the wealth of the Elizabethan merchant grew, for when the tradesman found that his money had given him powers equal to that of the noble, he decided that he wanted his rise in society to be reflected in his clothing. Therefore, as his wealth and influence increased, his clothes grew more and more luxurious and fantastic and more akin to those of the nobility. The revolt in dress that he initiated quickly spread to other ranks in society.

¹ cf. Harrison's comments on the improvement of housing and furniture. Above pp.142-143

In order to impose a clear and vivid pattern upon the heterogenous medley of mid-Elizabethan costume I have decided to use one article of clothing as a symbol and to trace it through its cycle of change so that it may serve as a chart to indicate the course of development in other parts of Elizabethan attire. My symbol will be the ruff. It was worn by both men and women, and as it waxed and waned so did the farthingale and the netherstocks.

The ruff began as a simple "falling" band or collar. Such it was at the time of Henry VIII. His collar differs little from that worn by the pilgrim or the lady in the time of Chaucer. Nevertheless, the king is said to have been the first person to wear this band about his neck. The band was either of linen or cambric and was usually embroidered. At first it was about an inch or two in depth. The falling band merged with the French pleated upright collar to form the Elizabethan ruff. It is interesting to note that the first Elizabethan ruffs were made by a man named Higgens who lived near the outskirts of London on a road first called Picadilly in the reign of Elizabeth. The ruffs that he made were called picardels or picadels.

As time went on the ruffs became very elaborate and very large. They were ornamented with lace or with pearls. Eventually, anyone wearing the most fashionable ruff looked as if his head had been forced through a

popular. The city fathers, the ministers, and the chief guild masters did all they could to stop the use and to ruin the popularity of the new starch, for to them it was only another evidence of unnecessary extravagance. An event that they regarded as a lucky coincidence gave them an opportunity to try to degrade yellow starch in the eyes of the public. This chance came at the height of the craze when the woman who made it was condemned to death for a crime totally unconnected with her profession. The city authorities thought that, if they could associate yellow starch and criminal activity in the public mind, they would halt the purchase of it. Therefore, they ordered that the woman, the executioner, and all the other officials should wear yellow starched ruffs when the death sentence was carried out. They displayed, however, a singular lack of knowledge of crowd psychology. As a result of the interest aroused by their commands the execution ground was thronged on the day of the woman's death and almost immediately yellow starched ruffs became more popular than they had every been. References in the drama vouch for the yellow ruff's popularity.

The variations in the ruff that have been described illustrate the height to which extravagance in clothes developed in Elizabeth's day. Similar fads in other articles of clothing will be noted in succeeding pages. As has

been said both they and the ruff reflect the changes in economic values that took place during this time; The increase in the cost of the ruff illustrates most vividly the rise in prices that both grew out of and formed part of the new values. For example, in 1560 a gentleman could get a ruff for twelve pence. In 1620, at the height of the craze when ruffs were a foot deep, he could not get one for less than four pounds.

The clothing of the women of the wealthy classes, whether that of the noble or of the commoner, will be discussed now to add further details to our picture of Elizabethan London. The changes that took place in their clothing will substantiate the conclusions already made on extravagance and changing styles in regard to the ruff.

The dress of these women consisted of a full skirt and a long doublet or bodice. The bodice came to a point far below the hips in front. An elaborate fan was often suspended from the point of the bodice. It was more an ornament than a useful article. The doublet furnished additional evidence of the love of ornamentation. It was frequently sewn with imitation or genuine precious stones. Any number of pendants or necklaces might hang over the already heavily jewelled dress. Similar decoration was carried out in the sleeves. Early in the period they had been tight, ending in points or in lace over the hands

and having a small roll at the top! Later they became full and were slashed so that contrasting material could show through the openings. Shortly before 1620, the sleeves became narrow again, but the puff at the top remained slashed and embroidered.

The full skirt was also ornamented and of rich material, but it did not expand and contract as the sleeve had done. The Elizabethan skirt started with a slight flare and ended in yards and yards of material supported by an elaborate arrangement of wire that was called a farthingale. This voluminous hooped skirt forced the wearer to sit in a chair without arms. At first the hoops were completely circular, but later they were made flat in front so that the skirts might be easier to manage than they had been.

There was equal extravagance in the dressing of women's hair. As the period advanced the head tires became increasingly fantastic. Early in Elizabeth's reign the hair had been worn in a simple fashion. The young unmarried woman had worn it loose or had tied it with a ribbon. The married woman had piled it in braids and curls. But, by the 1590's, elaborate wigs and hair tires became the fashion. Even the woman who did not wear wigs wore false fronts. The hair, whether one's own or in a wig, was piled and puffed and curled and interwoven with ropes of pearls. In many cases, it was impossible for the woman to wear a hat and a scrap of lace served the purpose.

It is easy to see ~~how~~ such costumes could lend themselves to the vanity of the wearer, whether the woman were queen or commoner. Social position and wealth could be indicated by damasked velvets and fine linen. Personal beauty could be heightened by fine jewels. On the other hand, defects in figure or in posture could be concealed by skilful boning in the doublet, by extra fulness in the skirt, or by built up shoes. Gertrude's tailor, for example, says that he can amend a fault in her waist by reboning¹ her doublet.

The men of the wealthy class in Elizabeth's era were just as clothes conscious as were the women and were just as apt to wear very high heels to obtain an extra inch of height. In fact, if a count were made, it would be found that the plays contain more references to men's attire than to women's. These examples, not only prove that the Elizabethan male wore as brightly colored and as varied a costume as did the woman, but also show that the clothing of both sexes went through somewhat similar cycles of change. The men as well as the women wore the long ornamented doublet. Their ruffs showed the same type of exaggeration. The sleeves and the trousers of the Elizabethan man expressed his individual love of ornament just as the sleeves and the farthingale of the woman reflected hers.

¹ Eastward Ho, 1, 11, 72-26.

It was in these two parts of his costume that the most marked changes took place.

In the beginning of the period the sleeves of the man's doublet were tight and plain and the upperstocks or trousers were also relatively narrow and unornamented. Later, about the middle of the Elizabethan era, the men's sleeves became full and slashed as those of the women had done, and long full upper stocks, that are most nearly paralleled by contemporary "plus fours," took the place of the narrow trousers. These, like the sleeves, were slashed, ornamented, and jewelled. If the illustrations of this period make the women look like galleons in full sail, they make the men look like nothing so much as a configuration of brightly colored and connected squashes. In time, the long balloon-like trousers gave way to short, slashed and extremely puffed upperstocks. Then the legs were covered with long silk stockings of all colors. These are the nether stocks such as Falstaff decided to sew in his repentance. The stockings were held up with "points," or elaborate garters, jewelled and highly embroidered. Fine leather shoes, sometimes also ornamented, covered the feet. At the same time as the trousers contracted, the sleeves tightened again and retained only the slashed puff at the top. The unfortunate male now resembled a long legged beetle.

Both men and women wore cloaks over their costumes. The women wore a long one that covered most of the skirt, but among the men the short Italian type was popular throughout the greater part of the reign. It was, however, more often worn by the gallant or by the soldier or by the prodigal son of a merchant than by the conservative citizen. The gallant and the prodigal, who wore weapons, wanted a cloak that would not hinder the use of sword and dagger. The citizen, who carried nothing more dangerous than a stick, wanted one that would give warmth. Consequently, he often praised the old English freize mantle.

The costumes immediately described would originally be those of the members of the nobility. However, as has been indicated, between the years, 1590-1620, such attire became the dress of the wealthy citizens while the traditional clothing that reflected class divisions was retained only by the conservatives or by the members of the poor and lower classes. For example, women who did not have enough money to follow changing fashions dressed in the manner that had been customary for citizens' wives in former reigns. They wore gowns of heavy material, usually woven in one color, either blue or brown, sometimes with white collars in the style of the falling band. Their bodices ended in the normal waistline and were joined to slightly gathered skirts. The sleeves were only full enough

to allow comfortable movement. Shoes were black and sometimes had wooden pattens or clogs to protect the feet in wet weather. Over the hair, which was plainly dressed, these women wore a tight fitting white cap or coif.

The men of the lower classes and the citizens who believed in the old ways were also plainly dressed. They wore a doublet with a simple collar like that of the women, slightly full trousers, and plain dark colored nether stocks. Over this clothing they placed the old fashioned long cloak. Their hats were of sombre dark felt, unornamented with feathers or jewels.

Throughout the period this tradition that every man should dress according to his class was kept in one or two instances other than those mentioned above. The buff jerkin remained the wear of the soldier. Falstaff wears a buff jerkin and Oath in The Puritan is introduced as "my kinsman, yonder, in the buff-jerkin". Similarly, the justices of the peace, and important members of the guilds wore clothing that had been developed in medieval times to signify their functions. It consisted of a long loose gown, trimmed with fur, very much like the college gown of today and a flat cap.

It has been noted previously that the wear of the apprentices also was supposed to be uniform but that it was not retained in every instance. The revolt of the

young workmen against flat caps and black shoes has been discussed and need not be dealt with in detail again.

Many Elizabethan Englishmen were distressed by the fact that adherence to traditional costume was to be found in a steadily decreasing number of instances. They were afraid of the growing diversity in styles of clothing. They felt that the ridiculous medley around them implied social disintegration, and they looked wistfully to the past with its orderly social system and its standardized clothing. They believed that uniformity was a sign of security. Harrison's comments on the clothing of Elizabeth's time illustrate the thought of such conservatives:

1 An Englishman, endeavoring sometime to write of our attire, made sundry platforms for his purpose, supposing by some of them to find steadfast ground whereon to build the sum of his discourse. But in the end (like an orator long without exercise) he saw what a difficult piece of work he had taken in hand, he gave over his travail, and only drew a picture of a naked man unto whom he gave a pair of shears in one hand, and a piece of cloth in the other to the end he should shape his apparel after such fashion as himself liked, sith he could find no kind of garment that could please him any while together, and this he called an Englishman....

2 ...Neither was it ever merrier with England than when an Englishman was known abroad by his own cloth, and contented himself at home with his fine carsey hosen and a mean slop; his coat, gown, and a cloak of brown, blue or puke, with some pretty furniture of velvet or fur and a doublet of sad tawny, or black velvet, or other comely silk, without such cuts and garish colours as are worn in these days, and never brought in but

1 Harrison's Description of England, Book II, cap. vii, pp. 167-168.

2 Ibid. p. 171-172.

by the consent of the French, who think themselves the gayest men when they have the most diversities of jags, and change of colours. Certes of all estates our merchants do least alter their attire and, therefore, are most to be commended, for albeit that which they wear be very fine and costly, yet in form and colour it represented a great piece of ancient gravity appertaining to citizens and burgesses, albeit the younger sort of their wives, both in attire and costly housekeeping, cannot twill when and where to make an end, as being women indeed in whom all kind of curiosity is to be found and seen, and in far greater measure than in women of high calling.

By 1590 the revolt against standardized dress, lamented by Harrison some twenty years earlier, had extended to every rank of society in which some amount of wealth enabled men and women to follow current fashions. At the same time, adverse criticism of farthingales and hoods spread from treatises, such as The Description of England, to conduct books and to plays. Ridicule of new fashions is particularly violent in the drama. Consequently, the plays of the period furnish examples not only of the clothing of each class but also of the changes within each group and of the varied reactions to the new styles. I shall now give incidents from the drama to illustrate the general discussion of dress set forth in the previous pages.

The first group that will be discussed in the light of the the evidence found in the plays will be composed of young serving men, of apprentices, journeymen, and an

young masters, particularly those who, for some reason or other, were able to dress in the latest fashion. This choice has been made for two reasons. In the first place, such young men might be expected to follow new customs. In the second place, because of their occupations, they would be influenced most forcibly by changing economic conditions. They would be in the centre of constant buying and selling. Therefore, they would be in a position to see their masters becoming wealthy and to reflect the change in the position of the middle class in their clothing and in their speech.

The best example of the interaction of all these forces is Bubble in Greene's Tu Quoque. Bubble had been a serving man and had worn the blue livery of his class. But then he comes into an inheritance and changes places with his master, Gervase. He marks his new position by sending Gervase immediately to the mercer's. As he is now going to dress in the latest fashion he orders seven ells of horseflesh colored taffata, nine yards of yellow satin and orange tawny velvet and a fine beaver melancholy hat.¹

Spendal, the journeyman, Lethe, and Slipper have similar unexpected good fortune and react in fairly uniform fashion. However, although Spendal furnishes an

¹ Greene's Tu Quoque, pp.189,209.

example of extravagance in his dicing and drinking, in his clothing he remains conservative. He retains the wear of the citizen. Stanes, with whom he quarrels, says contemptuously that Spendal dresses like a citizen despite his wealth.¹ But Lethe, whose father was a tooth-drawer, marks his rise from one class to another as Bubble had done. He exchanges his suit of kersey green for one of white satin.² Similarly, Slipper, the servant in James IV, quickly forgets the obligations and the clothing of his former position and uses the money he obtained by stealing to have a fine doublet made of material that cost five groats a yard.³ The doublet is to be ornamented by being cut like battlements of custard and edged with Coventry Blue. Furthermore, Slipper desires to have shoes of fine calf leather and to wear a sword and dagger for fashion's sake. It has been seen that Quicksilver shows his distaste for traditional clothing in similar fashion. He also carries a sword.⁴

Not all servingmen and apprentices in the plays were extravagant or desired to follow new fashions. Some of them condemned "newfangledness" as strongly as

1 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 223.

2 Michaelmas Term, 111,i.30.

3 James IV, 1V,iii, 1745-1820.

4 Eastward Ho, 1,i,(stage directions)

Harrison. The serving man, Oliver, in A Yorkshire Tragedy voices the opinions of the members of this group. To him the extraordinary clothing that his fellow servant, Sam, has brought from London is proof of the wickedness of the city. He says, "have we not as good poking-sticks in the country as need be put in the fire?"¹

The next group to be considered is that made up of wealthy merchants. In the plays that deal with them examples of moderation and of extravagance in dress may be found similar to those already noted in the case of their servants. Some of the men among the merchant ranks followed fashion as assiduously as either Bubble or Quicksilver had done. Young Flowerdale was such a man. He is a member of the new wealthy class. His father had been a hardworking merchant and had supplied his sons with more than enough money to dress in the latest fashion. He expected the young man, in return, to carry on the family business in his absence. Young Flowerdale, however, spent little of his time in trade and much of his allowance on clothes. He had an exaggerated idea of the importance

¹ A Yorkshire Tragedy, 1,i,p.427. Sam describes himself: "You see I am hanged after the truest fashion; three hats and two glasses bobbing upon them; two rebato wires upon my breast, a capcase by my side, a brush at my back an almanack in my pocket and three ballads in my codpiece. Nay I am a true picture of a common serving man."

of his appearance. For instance, he curses his tailor because the latter had spoilt a suit of peach coloured satin cut upon cloth of silver.¹ In Old Fortunatus there is a reference to the material that wealthy young men like Flowerdale would buy when they wanted to appear in the latest mode.² From other plays we learn that it was not only the young citizens of wealth and position who succumbed to the fascination of cloth of silver. Even the careful and moderate Candido is swayed by a desire for fine clothes. His rich apparel is described when his servant, Roger,³ puts it on at the instigations of Candido's wife, Viola.

There were, on the other hand, many established citizens who did not favor gaudy clothing and who kept to the old customs in dress. Prate, the lawyer, for example, is adamant in his refusal to acknowledge the charm of novelty in attire. He, who had condemned extravagance in household management, frowns equally on ostentation in clothes, despite his wife's constant demands that he keep pace with fashion in both matters.⁴ Prate was not alone in this attitude. When he was forced, through circumstances both unfortunate and ludicrous, to wear apparel richer

1 The London Prodigal, 1, ii, p. 375. cf. 1, i, p. 373.

2 Old Fortunatus, 1, ii, 135-140.

3 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 111, i, pp. 141-142.

4 The Dumb Knight, 1, i, p. 125.

than that customarily found among the members of his class, he is reprimanded for doing so by the King, who feels that the latest fashion does not become the citizen.¹ A description of the sober clothing favored by both Prate and the Senate is given by the furious Duke Alphonso who, just as unwillingly, has to wear the lawyer's city garb.² The attitude of Downright in Every Man in His Humour supports the one that Prate takes to clothing. Downright is extremely conservative in his dress. He wears a long cloak of sober russet color and has it lined, not with a bright contrasting shade as the fashion of the day demanded, but with a similar dull russet.³

Two examples will be sufficient to show that clothes consciousness such as has been described extended as far as the unemployed soldiers and the indigent gallants of the city. Captain Puff will serve as the prototype of the soldier who is dissatisfied with his buff jerkin. He hopes that marriage with a wealthy widow will enable him to buy three cloaks each lined with a different color, as well as a new suit.⁴ William Smallshank the representative of the other group, is the typical swaggering bravo.⁵ He boasts to the Widow that he is a complete gallant.

1 The Dumb Knight, 1V,i,p.199.

2 Ibid., 1V,i,pp.182-183.

3 Every Man in His Humour, 1V,viii,74-76.

4 Ram Alley, 111,i,p.314.

5 Ibid., 111,i,p.340.

However, Widow Taffeta is unimpressed by this ~~vaunt~~ for she has seen and judged many such men on the streets of London. She contemptuously informs Smallshanks that a fine gallant is a "fellow with his hat tucked up behind, about his neck a standing collar to keep his neck ~~band~~ clean, who wears a dirty shirt, a fellow that has no insides but prates by rote as do players^u and sparrows." In her definition a complete gallant was formed by a mercer, made by a tailor and given spirit^l by a player. ~~Her description could be~~ illustrated by many such men in the plays.

When we turn from the soldier and the gallant to consider the dress of the women in the drama, it will be seen that not all the feminine characters, in their judgement of the importance of clothing, display the common sense of the Widow Taffata. Their excessive concern with dress, lamented as early as Harrison's day steadily increased. The plays furnish more than adequate illustrations of this interest and give many descriptions of the fantastic dress favored by the women of the time.

In order that the discussion of feminine clothing may be easily followed, the women will be divided into groups similar to those already used in giving examples of the dress of the men in the drama. Thus, the citizens' wives and daughters will precede the courtezans and servants;

¹ Ram Alley, III, i, p. 340.

and, whenever possible, both sides of the picture will be given. Moderation and extravagance will again be contrasted.

The Shoemakers' Holiday, that has provided a starting point many times in the course of this essay will give us our first example of a citizen's wife. Margery Eyre, the principal female character in this play, will most suitably introduce this group, because she stands midway between the old and the new, between the preaching of thrift and the growth of extravagance. For instance, she cautions her husband in his use of time and money; yet, although she works in the shop, she cannot help being swept off her feet by Simon's honours. She feels that her position as Sheriff's wife calls for the purchase of a farthingale¹ and a French hood. But from the excitement that she shows when she thinks that she is now able to buy such articles of dress, it can be assumed that, up to the time of Simon's appointment as Sheriff, Margery had worn the standard costume of a citizen's wife, a sober dress with a slightly gathered skirt and a tight fitting linen coif. Margery, coming as she does at the beginning of the period of most marked merchant expansion, is moderate in her demands. Gertrude and her mother, who appear in a play written later than The Shoemakers' Holiday, show no such restraint. By their time merchant wealth was taken for

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, III, iv, 43-46.

granted and the citizens' wives regarded expensive
farthingales and fine hoods as their perogatives:¹

Ger. I tell you I cannot endure it, I must be a lady: do you weary your coif with a London licket, your stammel petticoat with two guards, the buffin gown with the tuft-taffetycape, and the velvet lace. I must be a lady, and I will be a lady. I like some humors of the City dames well: to eat cherries only at an angel a pound, good! to dye rich scarlet black, pretty! To line a grogram gown clean thorough with velvet, tolerable! Their pure linen, their smocks of three pounds a smock are to be borne withal! But your mincing niceries, taffata pipkins, durance petticoats and silver bodkins-God's my life, as I shall be a lady, I cannot endure it!

Frank, in The London Prodigal is another example of the type of London woman exemplified by Gertrude. She is very happy when her husband, Civit, promises to dress her as a rich citizen's wife should be dressed.² She expects to have any number of French hoods, farthingales and jewels. She also thinks that she must wear her hair in the latest fashion. When Luce, in her disguise as a Dutch maid applies to Frank for a position, she is accepted only because Frank believes Luce can dress hair with great skill.³ Lollia, the wife in The Dumb Knight, is equally concerned with fine clothing. She desires an especially extravagant wig.

¹ Eastward Ho, 1,ii,17-34.

² The London Prodigal, 1,i,p.382³

³ Ibid.,111,iii,p.390.

Lollia. The tire, the tire, made castle upon castle, jewel upon jewel, knot upon knot: crowns, garlands, gardings, and what not, the hood, the rebato, the French fall, the loose bodied gown, the pin in the hair.

1

The courtezans, if possible, were even more concerned with lace and cambric than were the Lollias and Franks of the city. Frances, the country wench, and Bellafront, will furnish representative of this class. The country wench had quickly learned the fashions and manners of the town. She could swoon as gracefully as any lady and she knew that her head tire must be arranged by an expensive hairdresser. She forces Lethe to provide a hairdresser and fine clothing for her.² Throat, who intends to marry Francis, is bedevilled by her extravagance as was Lethe by that of the country wench. On one occasion he has to pawn his books to buy a velvet jerkin and a double ruff for his lady.³ Although Bellafront's clothing cannot be inferred from similar demands made upon the men who attend her, for she makes none; yet certain details of her dress can be gathered from the scenes of The Honest Whore. She is seen mending her white silk stockings and adjusting her ruff with a poking stick.⁴ A later scene shows her dressed in a loose gown and a felt hat.⁴

The women who lived, thus, on the border of society were forced to dress well. Their clothes were, in a sense,

1 The Dumb Knight, 1, i, pp. 121-122.

2 Michaelmas Term, 111, i, 1-32.

3 Ram Alley, 111, i, p. 334.

4 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 11, i, pp. 117-119.; 111, ii, pp. 142-143

part of their trade. However, there were other men and women among the lower classes of the city who did not care about fine clothes and who cannot be readily grouped under any formal heading. Among these would be the untrained workman, the "rude mechanic", who wore homespun and who was frequently too poor to put more money upon his back than was absolutely necessary. Little information can be found in the plays about his dress. There is less on that of the keepers of taverns and of inns, although it is known that Mistress Quickly resents Falstaff's implication that she could not distinguish between shirts of filthy dowlas and those of fine linen. Lastly, among the social outcasts and the extremely poor, come the mountebanks, clowns and other charlatans whose clothing like that of the courtezans, was part of their trade. Few references to them occur in the plays except the excellent description¹ of the mountebank given in Volpone.

Before the subject of clothing is dismissed completely some space must be given to a consideration of accessories, of precious stones and of feathers, for ornaments, such as necklaces and fans, were regarded as an important part of costume. Jewels, especially, were put to many uses. Two methods of employing them as ornaments have already been mentioned. It has been said that the dublets of both men and women were frequently sewn with pearls and that chains and necklaces were worn by both sexes. Women favored extremely elaborate chains or necklaces and also

liked to wind pearls in their hair. Men preferred the one fine jewel suspended on a chain. Among the members of the guilds a single heavy gold chain, such as that worn by Candido, might be used both for ornament and as a symbol of authority.¹ Stephen, however, prefers his ring with a posy to a chain. He feels that the posy demonstrates his literary taste.² The Hog and the Jew of Malta also have precious stones although it is not known what they are. They are evidently of great value for much disturbance results when they are lost.³ Pandolfo, another merchant, finds his jewels of use to fulfil the demands of the sorcerer, Albumazar.⁴ It is known that, in many cases, another type of ornament favored by the men, the ear jewel, was often of as much service to the owner as was Pandolfo's large store to him. This conclusion may be drawn from the large number of references in the plays to the pawning of the ear jewel. For instance, Matthew in Every Man in His Humour pawns his at once when he falls into debt and needs ready money.⁵ Perhaps the fact that it could be disposed of easily led to the popularity of the ear jewel.

Fine feathers were also regarded as luxuries by the Elizabethans and were almost as highly valued as were jewels.

1 The Honest Whore, Part I, 111, ii, p. 142.

2 Every Man in His Humour, 11, ii, 40-42.

3 cf. The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, v, p. 492.

4 Albumazar, 111, ii, p. 339.

5 Every Man in His Humour, 1V, vii, 56-60.

They were used in the trimming of the hats of both sexes and were made into elaborate fans that the women hung from the points of their doublets. The description, in The Roaring Girl, of the shop of the Tiltyards shows the¹ importance of the feather trade. The Induction of The Malcontent contains another interesting reference to feathers. In this prologue the players sit on the stage and discuss the value of feathers in completing one's² costume.

Both everyday articles of clothing and expensive accessories were often given as gifts by the citizens. Jewels and fans such as those described above were especially popular for this purpose. For instance, Flowerdale, while he is wooing Luce, says that he will have a carcanet³ of fine jewels made for her. Frank, later in the same play, offers Luce her fan as a gift.⁴ Unfortunately she spoils her giving by adding that she expects her husband, Civit

1 The Roaring Girl, pp. 154-155.

2 The Malcontent, Induction, pp. 4-5. This scene is interesting not only for the reference to feathers but also for the fact that one of the players in it has come from dinner at the house of his cousin, the draper. Such an incident illustrates the close connection that existed among many of the classes in Elizabeth's day. The player who is related to the merchant discusses merchantile activity. In this way the interests of the player, of the draper and of the feather merchant are linked at one moment on the stage of the theatre.

3 The London Prodigal, 11, i, p. 375.

4 Ibid., V, i, p. 395.

to supply her with another. She wants the new one made with a fine jewelled handle in the latest fashion. Civit says, "I'll buy thee a new one with a longer handle."²

Further gifts of jewels and fans, such as those offered to the Widow Taffata, have been mentioned in previous sections of this essay and need not be discussed again.

Gloves, shoes, handkerchiefs, even cloaks, were among the other articles of clothing that served equally well as gifts. In The Shoemakers' Holiday, one very effective use is made of the gift of a pair of shoes. When Ralph leaves to go to the wars he makes a pair of shoes¹ as a fairwell gift to his wife, Jane. They are carefully cut and worked in an original design as the shoes of the day frequently were. This individual design on the shoes brings Ralph and Jane together at the end of the play.

Lingua, the masque-like drama of the debate of the five senses for supremacy, makes an excellent summary for this section on clothing, although it seems almost impossible that such a formal play could fulfil this function. Lingua, however, has been considered suitable for this purpose because its scenes and stage directions sum up and repeat many of the points that have been made in the preceding pages. For instance, it contains descriptions of both wise and foolish citizens, of the typical citizen's wife, of the gallant and of the soldier. In addition to showing the extravagance of the Elizabethans, this play

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, ll, i, 260-270.

illustrates once more the growing importance of the middle class through its many references to the wealthy bourgeoisie.

Common Sense, the best of all sense, the sixth sense, is the most important of the characters in Lingua, and introduces others that can be used for our purpose. It is interesting to see that he represents the ideal citizen. He wears the long black velvet cassock and the flat velvet cap of the consellor, and he requires that consideration be given to a scarlet gown as the symbol of authority. He is grave, dignified, and soberly dressed.¹

Phantastes, on the other hand, may illustrate the citizen who has been carried away by extremes of fashion. He appears in a white satin doublet of one fashion, green velvet hose of another and wears a hat with a plume of feathers and a short taffata cloak.² One of his speeches gives further details of ostentatious dress. He mentions a fantastical gull wearing a Spanish felt, a French doublet, a Granado stocking, a Dutch slop, an Italian cloak, and a Welsh frieze jerkin.³ This type of criticism of clothes is repeated by Portia when she describes her English suitor.

Mendacio and Appetitio are not so interesting for our purpose as are Phantastes and Tactus, but their

1 Lingua, 11,iii,p.371.

2 Ibid., 11,ii,p.367.

3 Ibid., 111,v,p.393.

4 The Merchant of Venice, 1,ii,32-82.

costumes and titles throw light on certain members of the London population who wore conventional livery.

Mendacio is dressed like a page in a taffata suit.¹

Appetitio supplies the traditional picture of the soldier with his leather jerkin and his sword.² His name illustrates the Elizabethan attitude towards unemployed returned soldiers.

Towards the end of the play Tactus comes on the stage and gives us the most entertaining and the most complete picture of extravagance in dress found in any of the plays. Here again is the foolish citizen's wife who has been seen in Gertrude and her mother. The dress is described in detail, and the hundred and one activities and occupations that must have existed to outfit the Elizabethan as he or she wished to be can be imagined as the words of Tactus are heard or read.

Tactus' knowledge of dress had been forced upon him and has come as a result of his plan to have a boy dressed as a "nice gentlewoman" to plead his case. He found that he had underestimated the diversity of a nice gentlewoman's attire and he is exasperated by its complexity. Although his complaints may be exaggerated, they are an indication of the time and care spent in dressing. He states that he had started a dozen maids an hour ago to dress the boy and that they were not finished yet. Furthermore, he says that

1 Lingua, 1, ii, p. 342.

2 Ibid., 11, i, p. 361.

there is such a "doing with looking glasses, such pinning, unpinning, setting, unsetting, forming and conforming, painting blue veins, and cheeks, such stir with sticks and combs and carcanet, dressings, furls, falls, squares, busks, bodies, scarfs, necklaces, rebatos, borders, tires, fans, palisadoes, puffs, ruffs, cuffs, muffs, pulses, fusles, partlets, frislets, bandlets, fillets, croslets, pendulets, amulets, annulets, bracelets, that she is scarce dressed to the girdle. In exasperation Tactus concludes that there was such a "calling for farthingales, kirtles, busk points, shoeties, that seven peddler's shops, nay, all Sturbridge fair, would scarce furnish her."¹

¹ Lingua, IV, VI, p. 426.

¹ Religion and Superstition

The plays dealing with the London citizen contain few references to religious beliefs and these are scattered and contradictory. At first sight this seeming lack of concern with religion appears strange to us. We remember that the Reformation had not been long established in England by 1590; and, on the other hand, that the battles of Roundhead and Cavalier were to be fought only two decades after 1620. We feel that men and women living in the thirty years between these two dates must have often discussed the rival claims of Puritan, Anglican, and Catholic; and we expect the drama of the time to contain many references to the Reformation and to the Anglican Settlement.

1 For the background information contained in this chapter I am indebted to:

Craig, Hardin, The Enchanted Glass.

Jordon, W.K., The Development of Religious Toleration from Elizabeth to the Restoration.

Judges, A.V., The Elizabethan Underworld.

Knights, L.C., Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson.

Murray, R.H., Political Consequences of the Reformation.

Seebohm, F. The Oxford Reformers,

Willey, B., The Seventeenth Century Background

Contrary to our expectations, however, questions of religion never form an important theme in the drama.¹

Indeed, if we judge from the plays, we shall conclude that the majority of Englishmen did not wish to engage in ecclesiastical controversy any more and that they heartily welcomed the comparative peace established through the Elizabethan settlement. It is true, no doubt, that many of them must have been tired of theological bickering and have had no wish to see a return of persecution such as had marked the reigns of Edward VI and Mary. Others who remembered that religious dissent had been active from the time of Wycliffe and the Lollards would feel that the issues of the Reformation had been stated and fought out in the years before.

We must not forget, on the other hand, that many Elizabethans still thought that religious questions were vitally important. These men, however, were often as silent as those who were indifferent.² It was so dangerous for anyone to attempt to meddle with or to criticize the Anglican settlement that silence was forced upon them. Elizabeth, like her father, had identified herself with both state and established church, and, therefore, she could accuse of treason those who actively supported either the old

¹ Even despite the restriction, one would have expected some echo in the drama.

² cf. The Puritan, 1,ii,p.400, The scholar says that he is "put to silence like a sectary."
He is "put to silence like a sectary."

religion or a very advanced form of protestantism.¹

A combination of indifference and fear, then, was largely responsible for the lack of many direct references to religion in the drama.

The references that we do find almost always deal with the Puritans, either to praise them or to ridicule them.² On the one hand, certain dramatists wrote complimentary speeches about the Puritans when they remembered that members of the middle class among their audience would be predominantly Protestant in sympathy. Other playwrights could not resist mocking the sect that was attempting to close the theatres on the grounds that plays and players were a menace to godliness. Later in our period, such derision far outbalances praise. By then the dramatists were writing for an audience whose tastes were aristocratic and who had no wish to listen to commendation of the Puritan.

I shall look first at the plays which ridicule the followers of Calvin. The Puritan is the only one that attempts to do so in a fashion that is at all consistent throughout the entire drama. Even it, on the whole, scarcely deserves the title, for it differs only in a

1 Both Roman Catholics and Puritans suffered. The Roman Catholics were accused of plotting with the Spaniards and the Scotch, usually on behalf of Mary of Scotland; The Puritans were accused of questioning Elizabeth's rights. Even the Puritan writer of the Marprelate tracts had to move his press constantly to escape arrest, despite the fact that he voiced the popular feeling that had been aroused by the repression of Whitgift.

2 I have used Puritan and Puritanism following the texts of the plays.

few incidents from the other comedies ~~attacking~~ the citizens and gallants of London. In these few incidents the servants in the widow's household and her deceased husband are ridiculed. The principal vice imputed to them is hypocrisy. The husband had been a regular attendant at church and had often been so eager to be there in time for the service that he would leave his home without finishing his meal or fastening his garters.¹ Yet he lied and cheated to obtain money for his son's education.² The servants, particularly Nicholas, are equally hypocritical. They turn away from Oath's profanity, yet they are willing enough to lie as long as they can satisfy their consciences by means of some doubtful casuistry.³ They are also secretly envious of the braggart soldiers. Nicholas, despite his assumed humility, cannot hide the fact that he is proud to be a kinsman of one of them.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the adverse criticism found in this play refers to the servants' interpretation of their Bibles. They carry the books with them wherever they go and take every word in the pages literally, being too ignorant to understand parable and allegory. Consequently, they make ridiculous deductions.

1 The Puritan, 11,i,p.408.

2 Ibid.,1,iii,pp.401-402.

3 Ibid., 1,iii,pp.402-403.

and form fantastic opinions on religious matters.¹ A similar ignorance leads them to accept without question the dictates of their minister who has filled them with a holy fear of plays and players.²

The scholar and the soldiers in The Puritan are contemptuous of the Puritan habit of mind. They feel that it is better to be "a charitable knave than a soothing Puritan."³ In addition, the former thinks that it is an error to give such men as Nicholas the opportunity to judge for themselves in matters of religion. He is completely sceptical in belief, doubting even the existence of the Devil,^{3 4} much to the horror of others in the play. Before I leave The Puritan I might say that it suggests that the severe forms of Protestantism attracted the middle and lower classes more than any other group in England. It implies, also, that the merchants and servants did not adopt them purely because of their spiritual significance but because they gave the former a cloak for avarice and the latter a reason for pride and insubordination.

Other plays echo the attitude found in The Puritan. In The Looking Glass for London, the prophets, Oseas and Jonah, make long speeches of exhortation and threat

1 The Puritan, 1, iv, p. 404. This satire is, of course, directed at the Puritan's belief that the Bible was the final authority.

2 Ibid., 1, iv, p. 404.

3 Ibid., 1, ii, p. 401.

4 Ibid., 1, vi, p. 416.

similar to those found in the Old Testament. These catalogues of punishments are supposed to cause the reformation of the characters in the play, just as the play itself, according to its prologue, was supposed to reform London. However, not everyone in the play regards the commands of the prophets as law. The clown, for instance is contemptuous of Jonah and Oseas as well as of all other puritans.² He thinks that his master is made to give him his indentures and to join the fasting populace. He continues contentedly to make a glutton of himself in the midst of reform and penitence and says that his master does nothing but "fast and pray."³

In certain particulars, Eastward Ho presents a similar picture. No doubt many among the Elizabethan audience thought that Golding, Mildred, and Touchstone were the characters who should be admired; but a more discriminating taste can see that ridicule is poured upon the Puritan virtues of Golding and Mildred and on the sententious moralizing of Touchstone. Candido's platitudes in The Honest Whore are treated in the same manner. The dramatist, no doubt, intended his audience to think that Candido, like the servants in The Puritan, is too literal in his interpretation of religious teachings. He becomes a figure

1 cf. The Looking Glass for London, 1953-1970.

2 cf. Volpone, 1, ii. 39-47.

And. Like one of the reformed, a fool as you see
Counting all old doctrine heresy....
Into a very strange beast, by some writers called
an ass
By others a precise, pure illuminate brother....

3 The Looking Glass for London, 2168-2174.

of fun through his strict adherence to precept and, unlike Touchstone, is supposed to be totally unfit to deal with the affairs of the world.

I have indicated briefly the attitude found in plays that do not favor the Puritan. Isolated references throughout the drama repeat it. Although I cannot draw attention to them all, I should mention the frequent coupling of the tailor's craft and the reformed religion. At times, the word, tailor, is used almost as a synonym for Puritan, especially if the speaker wished to imply that the latter is a hypocrite.¹

I shall turn now to the plays that express approval of the Puritan. The most important of these is Thomas, Lord Cromwell, and Sir John Oldcastle. Since I have previously discussed both plays at some length I shall call attention here only to the references to religion found in them. The praise of the Puritan virtues of thrift and industry in the former play is less important to us now than the figure of Mrs. Bannister, who may be said to represent the ideal Puritan woman. She is faithful to her husband, sincere in her belief, and both humble

¹ cf. Ram Alley, V, i, p. 368. Constantia says that Boucher was "more fast asleep than...a puritan tailor at a Sunday evening's lecture!"

and firm in the face of adversity. Despite Mrs. Bannister, however, Thomas, Lord Cromwell is disappointing, as are all the plays when I wish to find in them some indication that either the playwright or members of the audience were aware of any of the issues at the root of the religious controversy. As a matter of historical fact, Cromwell, while he was one of the chief ministers of Henry VIII, was able to influence the course of the Reformation in England and to put into effect many of his own Protestant doctrines. He was responsible also for one of the English Bibles and is associated with The Book of Common Prayer. Under Cromwell's direction, Coverdale revised and collated his own Bible of 1535, with Tindale's and Mathew's and produced the Great Bible of 1539, which is often called Cromwell's Bible. The psalms from it were later incorporated in The Book of Common Prayer. However, despite Cromwell's important part in the intrigues of Catholic and Protestant during the English Reformation, the author of Thomas, Lord Cromwell, allows his hero only to promise to rid the land of wicket abbots and fat priests.¹

The second play, Sir John Oldcastle, seems at first sight to be much more closely related than is Thomas, Lord Cromwell to religion in general and to Puritanism in particular. The central figure is the famous Lollard

¹ Thomas, Lord Cromwell, IV, ii, p. 369. The dramatist was probably remembering Cromwell's part in the dissolution of the monasteries.

martyr and follower of Wycliffe. The ostensible purpose of the rebellion that forms the background of the plot is religious reform. But, after some words of praise for Sir John and an abortive attack on Catholicism through the figure of the wicked priest,¹ the play disintegrates as a piece of Puritan propaganda and becomes rather the story of a merry brewer and of intriguing nobles than the exposition of the life of a Lollard. One cannot avoid concluding that Harpool, Sir John's servant, has the attitude that is approved by the Elizabethan audience and expresses most accurately the belief of the dramatist. In his heart he favors neither the old church nor the new, but wishes to benefit from both.²

This two-sided attitude is the one most predominant in the plays as a whole. The citizen seems to be saying with Mercutio, "a curse on both your houses". He knew that religious quarrels, whether fomented by Puritan or Catholic, led to riots and civil disturbance, which were bad for trade. The average citizen, as depicted in

¹ cf. Sir John Oldcastle, III, iv, pp. 334-335. Sir John of Wrotham is essentially another copy of Sir John Falstaff rather than the portrait of a priest.

² cf. Sir John Oldcastle, IV, iii, p. 340. Note that Harpool while at home with Sir John defies attempts to persecute Sir John for his beliefs. Yet when Sir John is in prison Harpool persuades the warder that he is a follower of the old church not a heretic, so that he may wait on his master.

Har. I am of the old church, not a heretic, nor Puritan.
I'll swear, drink ale, kiss a wench,
Go to mass, eat fish all lent and fast
Fridays with cakes and ale, fruit and spicery....

in the plays, seems to put his business before his religion.

Cash, in Every Man in His Humour, for example, is "no precision,...nor a rigid Roman Catholic." Firk, of The Shoemakers' Holiday, regards going to church as he regards washing his face. Both are unnecessary follies and should be indulged in as little as possible. He never goes to church and with difficulty is persuaded to wash his face. The jailor in Eastward Ho says indifferently that he has had both Papists and Puritans in his cells. Perhaps the famous remark of Sir Toby to Malvolio, "dost thou think because thou are virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" sums up most adequately the general attitude of the drama. Religious fanaticism is deplored, whether it be Protestant or Catholic in origin.

In the preceding paragraphs I have noted the scarcity of references in the drama to the religious struggles of the period. I have said that the average Elizabethan did not seem to be aware of the issues over which the theologians and statesmen fought. But I must not say in the same breath that his ignorance and apparent lack of interest in religious dogma meant that he thought there was no

existence beyond the one with which he was familiar. The

1 Every Man in His Humour, 111,ii,96-98.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 11,iii,20-23;1V,v,133.

3 Eastward Ho, V,ii,40-44.

4 Twelfth Night, 11,iii,121-125.

5 This statement is based on the plays alone. One would form a completely different idea if one read through the pamphlet literature of the time.

Elizabethan was very much aware of the other world that his experience could not reach. Although he sometimes seemed to be doubtful whether a benign or a demoniac power ruled it, nevertheless, he was always conscious of its existence.

This awareness of another world beyond our sight and touch takes its highest form in religion, as we know. In its lowest and most vulgar manifestation it becomes superstition. This is the form in which we meet it most frequently in the drama. I shall now turn, somewhat incongruously, from a search for references to freewill or the efficacy of good works to a consideration of Elizabethan witches with beards and devils smelling of brimstone.

The London citizen would have been unable to say where his belief in the spiritual became fear of the supernatural. He was never quite clear about the difference between admitting the existence of the Devil and dreading the power of witches. When led by his immense credulity, he believed a tale he could not understand, he was just as apt to say that it proved the existence of charms and spells as he was to attribute it to the efforts of Satan to confuse man. He had lost his saints with the Reformation,

but he replaced them with astrologers and alchemists.

Both Albumazar and The Puritan illustrate the Elizabethan's belief in the supernatural. It is true that both plays ridicule the citizen's credulity; yet the fact that they were written and contain descriptions of the methods of sorcerers is evidence that such men were able to prey upon a superstitious populace. The first play is concerned with the transformation of a farmer into the form of his wealthy master.² The farmer, Trincalo, never doubts the ability of the sorcerer to change him into another man. The play contains an interesting description of the preparations of the magician and another of his methods of consulting the stars.³ He is, of course, a charlatan, who demands valuable gold and silver articles to carry out his magic only so that he may steal them.

In The Puritan, the scholar and the soldier, Oath, make a similar attempt to obtain money by playing on the credulity of the citizens. They promise the widow that the soldier-conjurer, Oath, will find a lost chain through magic incantations. They say that he will call up a devil to assist him. Neither the widow nor her brother doubt the truth of these statements. When Idle makes a reference

1 Both astrology and alchemy are treated here as practised by charlatans. It should not be forgotten, however, that astrology was the infant stage of astronomy and alchemy of chemistry. Serious, if elementary, research in these fields could be called astrology and alchemy.

2 Albumazar, 1, ii, pp. 330, 332.

3 *Ibid.*, 1, ii, pp. 330-335.

to the law of James (1604) against witchcraft, Sir Godfrey begs the sorcerer to carry out the magic with the utmost possible secrecy.¹ The knight knows that he will be heavily fined if the authorities discover a magician in his house.

George à Greene forms an interesting contrast to the plays just mentioned. In the first two plays the citizens are pictured as complete fools who willingly believe any fantastic story that they are told. In George à Greene, however, the "honest pinner" is superior to other citizens and to the nobles in that he does not believe in magicians. On the contrary, he plays upon the superstition of the lords and persuades them to visit a conjurer who lives in a nearby cave. By disguising himself as the conjurer and taking his place in the cave he is able to defeat the nobles plot against the king.²

These plays and others lead us to believe that the streets were full of mountebanks, conjurers and astrologers who would promise the citizens good fortune in love, prosperity in business, or relief from rheumatism. A street scene such as is pictured in Volpone when the magnifico disguises himself as a mountebank and sells elixers must have been often repeated in London and its suburbs. The unfortunate jailor's daughter

¹ The Puritan, 11, vi, p. 416.

² George à Greene, 600-612, 690-740.

in The Two Noble Kinsmen has seen so many conjurers and magicians that she thinks she meets one when she runs¹ mad.

The astrologers and alchemists may have been found more often beyond the walls than in the city. There they and their houses were safe from the city authorities. Ben Jonson's alchemist lives near the suburbs or in them.

Subtle. Yes, you were once the good,
Honest plaine livery, three-pound knave; that kept
Your master's worship's house, here...

Face³. Will you be so loud?

Subtle. Since, by my means, translated suburb-captaine.²

Belief in astrologers and alchemists necessitated acceptance of the magic properties of their potions and instruments. For instance, Pandolfo is sure that he can see Cambridge with its hall "full of bare heads, bald and brushed," through the magic qualities of Albumazar's "perspicil," and both he and Trincalo are equally impressed by the otacousticon.³ Jonson's alchemist also has miraculous instruments.⁴ He is surrounded by retorts and beakers that are regarded with superstitious awe by his patrons.

1 The Two Noble Kinsmen, 1,iii,v,80-86.

2 The Alchemist, 1,i,15-20.

3 Albumazar, 1,iii,pp.311-313.

4 op.cit. 1,i, 43-45.

Face. Your stills, your glasses, your materials,
Built you a furnace....

Volpone on the other hand, confines himself to potions. He sells a wondrous "urguento" that will not only "disperse all malignant humours" but cure every ill that has attacked man.¹ Both the bawd Marquerelle in The Malcontent² and the ~~shem~~ doctor in A Mad World My Masters³ can perform similar miracles through their medicines and⁴ potions.

The Elixabethan did not confine his belief his belief in the supernatural to an indiscriminate acceptance of alchemist, conjurer, or magician. He was also firmly convinced that the Devil or his ministers were ready to pounce upon him from every bush, as we may see from the plays. In The Knight of the Burning Pestle, for instance,

1 Volpone, 11,ii,110-148.

2 The Malcontent, 11,iv,p.16. Marquerelle's description of the posset is interesting. She says that it is made of, "seven and thirty yolks of Barbary hen's eggs, eighteen spoonfuls and a half of the juice of cock sparrow's bones; one ounce three drams, four scruples and one quarter of the syrup of Ethiopian dates; sweetened with three quarters of a pound of pure candied Indian eringos stewed with the powder of pearl of America, amber of Cataia and lambstones of Muscovia. This purifieth the blood, strengthened the veins, mundifieth the teeth, comforteth the stomach, fortifieth the back and quickeneth the wit."

3 A Mad World My Masters. 111,p.272. Penitent Brothel pretends to be a doctor so that he may see Hairbrain's wife.

4 Not all astrologers were professionals. Goodman Car of Thomas, Lord Cromwell prides himself on his knowledge of the stars.

the citizen and his wife are certain that Ralph must be possessed when he does not fight as well as they had expected.¹ Although the clowns in Doctor Faustus² and Friar Bacon³ are terrified by the appearance of the devil, they never doubt that one stands before them. The drunken clown in The Looking Glass for London is not only sure that he sees a devil, but he speaks genially with his infernal visitor.⁴ In A Mad World, My Masters a devil appears to Penitent Brothel in the guise of his paramour, Mistress Hairbrain. When the unfortunate man learns that his supposed mistress is an evil angel, he is frightened into reform.⁵ Hippolito's servant in The Honest Whore evidently expects to meet a messenger from Hell as he goes about his work. He says that he must not admit women with beards to the house for they are witches and in league with the nether world.⁶ Gertrude's belief in the supernatural takes a gentler form than that seen in the examples given so far. She is sure that there are fairies.⁷ Even the Widow Taffata thinks that such creature might

1 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, 11,v,52-58.

2 Doctor Faustus, 1,iv,73-80.

3 Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, 1,i,126-129.

4 The Looking Glass for London, 1840-1900.

5 A Mad World, My Masters, 1v,p.276.

6 The Honest Whore, 1v,ii,p.154-156.

7 Eastward Ho, V,i,104-121.

exist although she scornfully rejects the suggestion
 that astrologers have any power.¹

Taffata. (to Boucher)...A trivial idle jest,
 'Tis for a man of your repute and note,
 To credit fortune tellers; a petty rig
 That never saw five shillings in a heap,
 Will take upon him to define men's fate,
 Yet never knows himself shall die a beggar,
 Or be hanged up for pilfering table cloths
 Shirts and smocks hanged out to dry on hedges,
 'Tis merely base to trust them, or if there be
 A man in whom the Delphic god hath breathed
 His true divining fire, that can foretell
 The fixed decree of fate, he likewise knows
 What is within the everlasting book
 Of destiny decreed, cannot by wit
 Or a man's invention, be dissolved, or shunned.

Finally, I should mention that the Elizabethans
 had many small and trivial superstitions that have
 their counterparts in those of today. Just as in the
 twentieth century some people will not walk under a
 ladder, so Cornelio would not sign a contract on the
 day that two drops of blood fell from his nose and² Murley
 would not fight on Friday.³ Bobadil, also, has a pet
 belief, which is very useful to him. He says that planets
 have an evil influence upon men, and that he was not able
 to fight well on a particular day because a certain⁴
 planet had power over him.

1 Ram Alley, i,i,p.283.

2 All Fools, IV,i, p.159.

3 Sir John Oldcastle, 11,ii,p.328.

4 Every Man in His Humour, IV,v, 176-181.

1
Mores and Morals

I have partially described, in previous chapters the morals of the citizen as they are expressed through the drama. I have discussed his ideals and his opinion of sexual immorality.² I have left untouched, however, other aspects of his outlook on right and wrong. We do not know as yet how he regarded murder or theft, dicing or drunkenness. In this chapter, therefore, I shall try to indicate briefly his attitude concerning such matters.

The incidents that illustrate this attitude fall into two groups. The first deals with what the citizen considered major crimes, such as murder, theft, adultery or fornication, and the second with what he deemed minor

¹ For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Hall, Berbert, Society in the Elizabethan Age.

Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld.

Knights, Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson.

Onions, C.T., ed., Shakespeare's England.

Powell, C.L., English Domestic Relations.

² See above, pp. 56-72, 112-120.

offences, such as drunkenness, dicing, racing, overdressing, swearing, smoking, and constant attendance at fairs or playhouses.

Although references to the sins of the first group are far more rare than to those of the second, we can learn easily from them what the citizen thought of adultery, murder or theft; and we find that his judgement did not differ from that of other members of the audience. Both he and the aristocrat watched Hamlet, The Spanish Tragedy, or A Woman Killed with Kindness and thought that it was fitting for death to be punished with death and adultery with banishment.

Arden of Feversham and A Yorkshire Tragedy best illustrate the middle class attitude towards murder. In these plays murder committed in unpretentious surroundings is condemned just as it is when planned and carried out by royalty in A King and No King and Thierry and Theodoret. The citizen expected nemesis to overtake the murderer regardless of who he was and of where his crime was perpetrated.

I have just pointed out that the citizen thought adultery should be punished by banishment from the home. This statement seems to contradict what I have said¹ concerning adultery in a previous chapter. There, I drew attention to the fact that it was often treated

¹ See above, pp. 115-116.

humorously. In this chapter, however, I am concerned with the serious view of unfaithfulness. We have ample evidence that the citizen regarded adultery as a grave sin when his wife or daughter committed it, even though he may have laughed at stage presentations of other men's cuckoldry.¹ His womenfolk, on the whole, agreed with him. Thus, Openwork and Moll in The Roaring Girl are one in their condemnation of sexual laxness. Openwork says "that masked faces show as shopkeepers do their broidered stuff, by owl light. Fine wares cannot be open enough".² Moll concludes, when she discusses infidelity, that "base is that mind th that kneels unto her body".³ The Woman Killed with Kindness provides the best summary of the attitude of the serious minded London citizen. In this play the unfaithful wife is banished and is not forgiven until she lies on her deathbed.⁴

I need to add little more to these remarks on adultery since I have discussed it in other chapters as well as in this one. I shall call attention, however, to the frequently expressed opinion that city life,

1 The citizen's Puritanism went so far that in 1650 an act was passed punishing adultery with death. The penalty was inflicted in two or three cases only. Then, juries refused to convict.

2 The Roaring Girl, p. 204. By "masked faces" Openwork means women who wear masks when keeping trysts with their lovers.

3 Ibid., p. 174.

4 The Woman Killed with Kindness, V, v, 75-83.

particularly in London, increased the danger of falling into adultery or fornication. Threat, for instance, informs Boucher that he is mad to seek a virgin in the Inns of Court,¹ and William Smallshanks mistress tells him that she had remained innocent as long as she had lived in the country.² It is true, no doubt, that the city afforded more opportunity than the country for gallants and merchants to visit houses of prostitution, such as Cob, the water carrier, was supposed to have kept.³ Furthermore, the corrupt police officers often acted as bawds.⁴ They were ready to overlook the fact that many of the women who sold flowers or produce in the streets carried on an illegal trade as well.⁵

There are few references to theft in the middle class drama and none that can be taken seriously in a consideration of morals. The stealing of Hog's box, Albumazar's absconding, or Falstaff's robbery are not the incidents that I need.⁶ Although men were hanged

1 Ram Alley, III,i,p.317.

2 Ibid., I,i,p.274.

3 Every Man in His Humour, IV,viii.

4 cf. Ram Alley, V,i,p.377. "the most constables in our outparishes are bawds themselves."

5 cf. Greene's Tu Quoque, p.182. The wench with the basket of linen.

6 Other robbers escape as well and their crimes are not regarded seriously. cf. Slipper in James IV, the clown in The Looking Glass and the scholar in The Puritan.

for stealing bread as well as for taking money, I can find no echo of this summary justice in our plays. We shall have to turn to the pamphlets and to the rogue literature to find accounts of remorseful highwaymen and of professional thieves who pen their last repentances before they turn to the gibbet. These pamphlets also contain the comments of the citizen on the sin of stealing and tell us that he did not think death too great a punishment for this any kind of theft.

There are, however, very many references in the drama to cheating and to selling goods under false pretences. The merchant who followed these practices was as guilty of robbing his customers or fellow tradesmen as was the footpad who held a pistol and demanded their goods. But this vice does not bring severe punishment or wholesale execration from the citizen as does robbery committed by professional thieves.

When I turn from the sins that the Elizabethan considered heinous to the petty vices of his day I find an abundance of varied material upon which to draw. I note especially that there is no unanimity of judgement expressed in these references to drunkenness, dicing, or smoking, although such habits were all attacked for the same reason. They were regarded as injurious to the practice of thrift.

Some citizens, however, thought that money was ~~more~~ foolishly spent on play than on ale; others, that it was more often wasted in betting on cocks than in buying fine feathers.

The scenes of drinking in tavern or home illustrate very well how the Elizabethan's attitude varied. As a rule he did not condemn ale or wine drinking until it was carried to excess.¹ Eyre, for instance, is quite willing to order beer for his apprentices,² and the tavern scenes frequently picture citizens and gallants gathered together to gossip or exchange news.³ Harrison also speaks approvingly of taverns, but adds that men sometimes come from them "red as cocks".⁴ To Touchstone, on the other hand, taverns and the drinking that takes place in them are always to be regarded as threats to morality. He complains bitterly that Quicksilver wastes his time and money roistering in taverns.

There are other scenes in the plays that show the citizen's disapproval of the drunkard. The clown in The Looking Glass For London arouses the ire of Jonah and Ale and wine, of course was the normal drink of the Elizabethan. Water and milk were rarely safe and tea and coffee unknown.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111, i, 92-94.

3 Ram Alley contains such a scene, also The London Prodigal, 1, ii, p. 374.

4 Harrison's Description of England, Book 11, cap. xviii, p. 295. cf. also, Bardolph in Henry IV, Part 1, and The Honest Whore, Part 1, Matheo speaks of base rogues who maintain a St. Anthony's fire in their noses."

5. East ward Ho, 1, i, 130-180.

6 The Looking

and Oseas and their followers. ¹ Much to Bess' and Clem's disgust ~~the gallants~~ in The Fair Maid of the West ² spend their time in drunken revelry. Justice Tuchin in Ram Alley brings disgrace on his own head and on those ³ of his fellow officials by drinking to excess. He over-indulges in ale despite the fact that he threatens to punish drunkards and quotes the law of James that decreed a ~~man~~ arrested for drunkenness for the first time was to be fined five shilling or to spend six hours ⁴ in the stocks. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are even worse drunkards than Justice Tuchin. They stir the contempt ⁵ of the steward, Malvolio.

Gambling, on the whole, is much more wholeheartedly condemned than is drunkenness. Almost every reference to it in the plays is unfavorable. The apprentices are especially given to it. Their masters complain that they wager their money away in card games, in dicing, in racing, or in cockfighting. Quicksilver, for example,

1 The Looking Glass for London, 2140-2200.

2 The Fair Maid of the West.

3 Ram Alley, 1V,i, p.335.

4 Ibid., 1V, i, p.335, footnote.

5 Twelfth Night, 11,iii,92-101.

not only keeps a mistress, but also gambles and has¹
 a racing nag. Other members of the London populace
 like to wager as well. Spendal, the journeyman,²
 loses much of his wealth through gambling, and Martin
 Flowerdale gambled and drank until he could repair his³
 fortunes only through marriage with an heiress.

The citizens of London who were concerned over their
 sons and apprentices dicing, drinking, and betting, were
 often equally disturbed by their attendance at playhouses
 or fairs. Touchstone is sure that his wayward apprentice has⁴
 lost his wits at the playhouse. In The Puritan
 Nicholas explains that he has been forbidden to have anything
 to do with players since they and their plays teach men⁴
 evil ways. The merchants frowne upon shows put on in the
 streets by mountebanks and upon fairs outside the city
 even more than upon play-acting. Two instances will illus-
 trate this disapproval. Prate in The Dumb Knight tells⁵
 Lollia not to watch motions, and Hairbrain in A Mad World,

1 Eastward Ho, 1V,ii,300-320.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p.198.

3 The London Prodigal, 111,ii,p.384.

4 Eastward Ho, 1V,ii,418-422.

5 The Dumb Knight, 11,i,p.135. Motions will be discussed
 later. See pp. 243.

My Masters takes away his wife's "naughty pamphlets" through which she learns of the work of the playwright and forbids her to go wandering about the streets where she may see motions and monsters.¹

Such men as Prate and Hairbrain thought painting the face and elaborate dressing as wicked and as wasteful as going to the theatre. As these vices and the citizen's attitude towards them have been discussed in some detail previously, they need only be mentioned here.

According to our plays the citizen was far less decided about the immorality of swearing and smoking than he was about that of dicing or playgoing. The Elizabethan thought that swearing was fashionable rather than evil and was apt to become profane at the slightest provocation. Moll swears and uses a great many words from the rogues' cant, the slang of the day;² Flowerdale's speech is also rich in oaths,³ and Septimius, the soldier, in The False One is so profane that Achilles says that to take his oaths from him is to take three parts of his language.⁴ Captain Puff in Ram Alley, amazes the Widow Taffata by his frequent use of the term, "God Bless us."⁵

1 A Mad World, My Masters, 1, p. 263.

2 The Roaring Girl, p. 212.

3 The London Prodigal, 1, 1, p. 372.

4 The False One, 1, 1, 80-85,

5 Ram Alley, 111, 1, p. 322. Widow Taffata says that Puff "swears 'God Bless us'".

Finally, Gertrude swears mightily and thinks that she speaks like a lady.¹ Touchstone disapproves of his daughter's choice of language more because he regards it as a sign of pride than because he thinks it evil in itself. Apparently many a citizen's wife or daughter spoke as Gertrude did and roused similar disapproval.

References to smoking are even more diverse than those to swearing. Taking tobacco was attacked because it was wasteful and because it was unpleasant. But, on the other hand, the habit of smoking was spreading rapidly. According to Stowe, Hawkins introduced tobacco in 1565. Camden tells us that tobacco drinking was common in 1580. In the early years of James reign there were seven thousand shops selling tobacco in one form or another. Tobacco is one of the characters in *Lingua*.² Moll, Fiddle, Justice Clements, and Bobadil are in favor of smoking. Moll smokes with gusto;

¹ *Eastward Ho*, 111, ii, 110-192; 11, i, 163-170.

cf. *Henry IV*, Part 1, 111, ii, 249-260.

² *Hotspur*. . . "Not yours, in good sooth!" Heart, you swear like a comfit-maker's wife. 'not you, in good sooth!' and 'as true as I live!' and 'as God shall mend me!' and as 'sure as day'

And giv'st such sarcenet surety for thy oaths
As if thou ne'er walk'st further than Finsbury.
Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
A good mouth filling oath; and leave 'in sooth'
And such protests of pepper gingerbread
To velvet guards and Sunday citizens.

² *Lingua*, 1v, iv, stage directions. Tobacco in a taffeta mantle, his arms brown and naked. Buskins made of the peelings of osiers, his neck bare, hung with Indian leaves, his face brown painted with blue stripes. On his head a painted wicker crown with tobacco pipes set in it. Plumes of tobacco leaves, led by two Indian boys naked, with tapers in their hands, tobacco boxes and pipes lighted.

Idle wants tobacco's solace in a debtors' prison;¹ Justice Clements praises the weed;² and Bobadil impresses Cob, the water carrier, with his smoking.³ Cash, however, strongly disapproves of the unpleasant fumes⁴ and the wife in The Knight of the Burning Pestle thinks tobacco is horrid stuff.⁵ The courtesan Bellafront refuses to take any from the gallants who come to her house.⁶

It would seem, then, that it is extremely difficult to come to any definite conclusion about the morality of the citizen. It is true that I have made certain generalizations in the chapters on ideals and women, but in this essay I have not the space to define or to discuss citizen morality as a whole. Our evidence is too varied. I can do little more than indicate what the attitude towards morals and mores was by giving references such as have been found in the preceding pages.

One fact, however, emerges clearly from the plays in general as well as from particular examples. I can

1 The Puritan, 1, iv, p. 403.

2 Every Man in His Humour, 111, iii. 128-160.

3 Ibid., 11, i, 195-202.

4 Ibid., 111, ii, 330-381.

5 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, 1, ii, 140-145.

6 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 11, i, p. 123.

say with certainty that the force of Puritanism was steadily growing stronger and that in time the London citizen's morality would force him to condemn completely plays in which smoking, drinking, or swearing were treated as indifferent matters.

1 Social Welfare

In the plays that deal with the London citizen there are many references to the disbanded soldiers who begged at street corners or swaggered in taverns and to the "landless" men who came to the city and swelled the ranks of the "sturdy beggars".² These references show us that many of the citizens were aware of the large number of poor and unemployed in the city and that a few of them thought some form of social legislation was necessary to cope with the problems of poverty and crime. In this chapter, therefore, I shall discuss the Elizabethan's attitude towards the care of the indigent and the criminal as it is reflected in the drama.

In most cases, up to the time of the Tudors, the relief of the poor and the punishment of criminals had been purely the affair of the parish or town and, consequently, all legislation dealing with crime and poverty,

1 For the background information contained in this chapter I am indebted to:

Judges, A.V., The Elizabethan Underworld.

Leonard, E.M. Early History of English Poor Relief.

Old London Illustrated.

Onions, C.T., ed., Shakespeare's England

, Trevelyan, G.M., English Social History.

2 These were the terms used in Elizabethan times to describe the unemployed agricultural laborer.

had been extremely haphazard. But, by the end of Elizabeth's reign a Poor Law had been worked out that covered the whole kingdom and that was much in advance¹ of similar legislation on the continent.

Under the Elizabethan Poor Law the care of the penniless remained the immediate concern of the local parish, but the parish officers were directly responsible to the crown. In the country districts, for example, the parish poor relief was overseen by the Justice of the Peace, who was a servant of the Queen. In the towns the various officials in charge of workhouses and of alms had to make their reports to the Privy Council.

These parish officials were compelled by law to buy material and to build workhouses for those among the indigent who belonged in their districts and who were willing to work. They had also to give alms and shelter to the aged and to those who could not work. They did everything possible, however, to avoid giving relief to any people in the parish who were not intitled to it.²

I have described briefly the aspect of poor relief in throughout England in the late sixteenth century. Conditions in London, however, did not always duplicate those in other parts of the country; and, therefore I shall now look at

¹ The Elizabethan Poor Law was not altered in any significant detail until 1834, when the New Poor Law was passed.

² The Overseers of the Poor did all they could to force the vagrant to work. A law passed in 1547 said that the vagrant who refused to work should be forcibly apprenticed. In 1567, he could be sent to the galleys or banished from England.

at certain problems that were peculiar to the capital. In The Overseers of the Poor in London, for example, found it difficult to enforce the Poor Law justly when they were confronted by the large numbers of disbanded soldiers and landless men who had flocked to the city. These crowded into the low districts such as Alsatia and greatly swelled the ranks of thieves, debtors, and beggars.

There are many allusions in the plays both to soldiers and to landless men and to the provision made for them.

I shall now consider those that refer to the unemployed agricultural laborers and to the inclosure that had forced them to come to town.¹

In Sir John Oldcastle, for instance, two old men sit in the alehouse on the public road and discuss the poor in general and the "sturdy beggar" in particular. They say that there are "more stocks" to set the latter in than there are "houses to relieve them".² They mention the statute that forbade a man to leave his own parish and they talk about the compulsory giving of alms. But even though these old men are sympathetic to the "sturdy beggar" they feel that he

1 Although the London citizen seemed to think that inclosure was one of the greater evils of his day, it is doubtful whether as many of the "sturdy beggars" as he believed, were recruited from the ranks of landless men. In some cases, whole villages were depopulated, but this occurrence was the exception rather than the rule. It was not until the nineteenth century that the problem of depopulation became acute. cf. Judges, A.V., The Elizabethan Underworld, "Introduction", pp. viii and Trevelyan, G.M., English Social History, pp. 116-120 for two differing views.

2. Sir John Oldcastle, 1.iii, p. 323

threatens the peace of the commonwealth; in general, other citizens are of the same opinion. The servant, Wagner, in Doctor Faustus, for instance, has heard of landless men and speaks of the clown as a "villian bare and out of service."¹ The citizens describe Sir Petronal Flash after the failure of his "setting sail for Virginia" as "coming to town like a masterless man"² In this phrase they imply that the knight is a worthless person.

Before I turn to the plays that contain references to the disbanded soldiers of Elizabethan London, I shall look at the English army in the sixteenth century. It was in very bad repute. The queen allowed her soldiers to go without pay as long as she possibly could; and, consequently, no man who was able to make a living elsewhere would enter the army voluntarily. Its ranks had to be supplied from the goals or through the activities of the press gang. Moreover, the captains in charge of these convicts and pressed men did not care how many of them were killed for they kept the pay of the slain when and if it were delivered. Other officers put fictitious names on their rolls so that they could claim pay for these imaginary soldiers. Indeed, on the whole, the picture of Falstaff and his "one hundred and

1 Doctor Faustus, 1,iv,8-10.

, 2 Eastward Ho, 1V,ii,110-120.

fifty tattered prodigals" is not very far from the truth;¹
 and living counterparts of the Puffs and the Pistols of
 the plays were often found in the Elizabethan army.²

The authentic soldiers who swaggered and boasted in the London taverns or who begged for alms in the streets were joined by hordes of imposters. Sometimes these were landless men, sometimes the mere rag-tag of the city. In any case, with the aid of their borrowed military glory, they hoped to buy food and lodging.

In the drama there are many scenes that tell us how these soldiers tried to obtain a living. According to the plays there seems to be three principal methods for both authentic and sham men-at-arms to make ends meet. They might plan to marry wealthy women, as did Puff or Sir Petronel Flash.³ They might, on the other hand, show their scars and ask for alms in compensation for their services, as Mawworm and Antient Aubrey may have done. The imposters, Brainworm, in Every Man in His Humour,⁴ and Trapdoor, in The Roaring Girl, attempt to obtain

¹ Henry IV, Part 1, IV,ii,10-150.

² The swaggering soldier in the plays seems to me to be as much a portrait of an English soldier as an echo of the "miles gloriosus";

³ Ram Alley, III,ii,p.314.

⁴ Eastward Ho, III,ii,70-75.

⁵ Every Man in His Humour, II,ii.

money in a similar manner. Trapdoor says that he is
 "a poor soldier, hurt in the low countries, taken by
 the Turk in the seige of Belgrade."²¹

Many of the soldiers, however, preferred to use yet another method to gain their living. These men, like Bobadil, found that they could exist through practising various forms of charlatanism. Thus, some might brag of their deeds and flaunt themselves as experienced and widely travelled men, connoisseurs for everything from fencing to food.² These men would pretend that their friendship was a privilege granted only to a chosen few; they hoped that those whome they impressed, particularly the women, would pay their bills or even pawn their plate to support such fine gallants. Bobadil is an example of this type of soldier.³ Sir Arthur of The London Prodigal describes them as haunting taverns and living off their hostesses.⁴

Soldiers such as Skirmish and Oath, on the other hand, practised a slightly more elaborate form of cheating. They

1 The Roaring Girl, pl214-215. cf. Moll's attitude. She says that such men as Trapdoor are a disgrace to their profession. He is a "mere whip-jack, and that is in the commonwealth of rogues a slave, that can talk of a sea-fight, name all your cheif pirates, discover more countries to you than either the Dutch, Spanish, Rrench, or English ever found out; yet indeed all his services is by land, and that is to rob a fair or some such venturous exploit.

2 cf. The Honest Whore, Part 1, 1,ii,p.101. Fustigo says that he will manage to live by pretending to be a "terrible wide mouthed swaggerer".

3 Every Man in His Humour, 1,iv,15-75.

4 The London Prodigal, 11,ii,p.379.

set themselves up as conjurers or alchemists and obtained money from credulous citizens by performing magic. Both Oath and Skirmish say that they are forced to "turn to their wits" in this manner so that they will not be imprisoned in the Counter.¹

Despite all their scheming, the disbanded soldiers sometimes found that they could not obtain enough money to keep them. Then, they were often forced to join other debtors in prison. Idle, for instance, is sent to the Marshalsea.²

The problem of caring for the penniless in London, difficult enough already, was made yet more complicated by the large number of debtors, who were often neither soldiers nor landless men, nor paupers in the usual sense of the word. Often they were merchants who had been unsuccessful in business ventures. As such they were not entitled to be cared for in the workhouse; not being soldiers they were unable to show their wounds as they begged. There was no government or municipal organization to which they could turn for aid.³ Indeed, they were attacked by city officials rather than helped. Their debts were treated as crimes, and they were committed to a debtors' prison until they could pay the money that they owed.

1 The Puritan, 1,ii,p.401.

2 Ibid., 1,iv,p.403.

3 Aid was sometimes given by the guild to its members if they ran into debt.

The Elizabethan citizens, on the whole, found no fault with this treatment of the debtor. They felt that, if a man ran into debt, he was being punished for the sin of idleness, and they did not think that it was ridiculous to imprison him if he owed other men. They did not see that the debtor could hardly look to his affairs and earn enough money to pay his debts while he was in the Counter. Sir Dugway in The Roaring Girl voices the citizens' attitude when he says:

When prodigal ruffians far in debt are grown, 1
Should not you cut them, citizens wereo'erthrown.

The debtors were usually sent to the Fleet or to the Counter and, while there, they were expected to pay for their food. There is an interesting scene in Greene's Tu Quoque that describes the prisoners' mealtime and the wrangling over the prices of bread and wine.² Originally, the debtors had to pay for their water and lodging also, but this custom was abolished by Sir Stephen Foster. He had been in a debtor's prison at one time. Later, he became Mayor; he rebuilt Ludgate in 1450, and made it illegal to charge debtors for their lodging and water.

The references that deal with The Counter and the Fleet and with the men and women committed to them are many and varied. They range from those that speak of the

1 The Roaring Girl, p. 180.

2 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 257-260.

prodigal who loses his money through wanton spending to those that picture the hardworking citizen whose argosies have been lost and his income with them. Spendal is a good example of the first type, Bannister of the second. The former is confined to a debtors' prison and in one scene he is asked to pay for his food. He is told that if he does not pay the required amount he will have to go into the "two penny ward" or into ¹ "the hole". The debtors who could afford luxuries or who had friends to provide for them lived in more pleasant quarters than those who had neither wealthy friends nor other resources.

Other references to the debtors' prisons are found in Ram Alley. In this play, Francis asks the sergeant about the health of the keeper of the Counter. She says that when she had been imprisoned formerly he had always given her good provisions that he had refused to give the knights.² Smallshanks, in the same play, is so much in debt and so afraid of the Counter that he lives in the suburbs and "dwindles as much at a sergeant in buff as a new player does at a plague bill."³

The problem of debt is treated more sympathetically in Thomas, Lord Cromwell than in any other play. In it

1 Greene's Tu Quoque, pp. 260, 257.

2 Ram Alley, IV, i, p. 344. Francis says:
 And honest sergeant, how does master Grype;
 The keeper of the Counter?... He is an honest man;
 Has often stood for me
 And been my friend; and let me go o'trust
 For victual, when he has denied it knights....

3 Ibid., I, i.

the unfairness of imprisonment and the necessity for some sort of old age pension for loyal retainers are both discussed.¹ The ancient servants, Seely and Joan, for instance, who have been forced to pawn their cow to escape the debtor's prison, are given a small income by Cromwell² and commended for their honorable service. In the same play, the honest merchant Bannister, who has been forced to fly to Antwerp to avoid being sent to the Counter, is treated with understanding; and, at the end of the play, his persecutor, Bagot, is punished for his harshness.³

The plays and pamphlets that express sympathy for the debtor are in the minority, however; and we must take it for granted that the Elizabethans who were concerned over the stupidity of imprisonment for debt were relatively few in number. Most of our plays and many of the citizens simply speak of the Fleet and the Counter as part of Elizabethan life. It is easy to understand why the problem of debt continued to be troublesome for many years. The Marshalsea flourished until the days of Macawber.

Other problems connected with crime and poverty are treated in the plays and pamphlets. I have discussed many of these in the sections on ideals, ethics, and London.⁴ I have said that the police force was inadequate,

1 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 111, 1kp.352.

2 Ibid., 1V, 11, p.362.

3 Ibid., 11, iii, p.356.

4 see above, pp.15, 17, 53, 127, 204-205.

that its members were underpaid, and that they encouraged prostitution. Such a constabulary could not cope with half the crime of Elizabethan London, and, all the while more acts of violence ~~were~~ being committed than had been in the years before. Sometimes these were the direct result of summary and unintelligent justice. The prisons, including those for debtors, were negligently governed. Newgate, the state prison, was not much better than Bridewell, the house ~~of~~ ¹ correction for prostitutes. Bedlam, where the insane were treated as criminals, was the worst of ² all.

In conclusion, I may say that the Elizabethan Poor Law was the only important social legislation passed in the late sixteenth century. Otherwise the Elizabethans seemed to be caught in a vicious circle. They made no attempt to reform criminals or to root out the social evils that led to theft and murder. Nothing constructive, for instance, was done for the landlessmen or for the disbanded soldiers. Therefore, they were frequently ³ reduced to stealing. It is true that in our plays, in

1 The Honest Whore, Part 11, V,ii,pp.270-271.

2 Ibid., Part 1, V,ii,pp.173-190.

3 Sometimes this practice was encouraged by outwardly respectable citizens. cf. The Looking Glass for London, 1630-1650. The usurer urges Alcon and his wife to steal so that he may benefit from their crimes.

a few instances, seem to indicate an awakening social consciousness, but this had not as yet become very active. The welfare work now performed by state or city still seemed to be, to many citizens, the duty of the individual or of the guild.

The State

In this chapter I shall turn to the Elizabethan's concept of the ideal state. There are several reasons for devoting a complete chapter to the citizens' reaction to authority as it was embodied in the national and municipal governments. In the first place, since I am trying to make my survey of the middle class drama as complete as possible, I must consider the large number of references in the plays to the organization of the country and to the necessity for an established order.

There is, however, another reason for looking at these speeches about riot, rebellion, and peaceful government. Not many years after 1620 the middle class in London united and supported Parliament in beheading a king. It is interesting to see that the citizen of Elizabeth's day would not have approved of any suggestion to depose the queen.² He would have considered such action as treason too horrible to contemplate. Despite his growing power, he would not have believed that he would ever use it against the throne.

We know, in general, the citizen's outlook on the state and can see the reasons for his decided stand against

1. The background material for this chapter has already been listed. It is much the same as for the chapter on ideals. see p. 22.

2 This statement, of course, refers to the majority of citizens and does not include those that were engaged in "popish plots".

treason. I have said previously that he inherited the medieval concept of degree. He believed that a nation should consist of rank upon rank of different classes, each fulfilling a particular function in obedience to a central authority. He did not change his opinion in our period, and I shall now outline some of his reasons for maintaining it so firmly.

In the first place, all members of the middle class wished to have an orderly society and a strong government because their business could be carried on most successfully under peaceful conditions. They knew that riot and civil disturbance hindered commerce. The Elizabethan remembered that the Wars of the Roses and even the persecutions of Edward VI and of Mary had tended to ruin the prosperity of the country through interfering with trade.

Secondly, the citizens, although growing in power, had no desire to use their wealth to destroy the nobility or to upset the order of rank. They wished rather to find their way among the lords and to enjoy the latter's traditional privileges. The citizens of London and of other large towns may have been jealous of the power and influence of the great noble, but they never regarded the Howards and the Somersets as the eighteenth century Parisians did the lords at Versailles.

The middle class craftsman or merchant who lived in London had particularly strong reasons to frown on rebellion against the throne. His city had gained its power through joining the kings in their struggles against the nobles, and it had obtained privileges and liberties in return for its support. Naturally, therefore, at this period, the sentiment of the London citizen would be in favor of the king or queen. It would have been impossible for any loyal tradesman to foresee the time when a king would threaten the financial power of the middle class rather than use it against the nobles.

Finally, the growth of national spirit and the increased patriotism of all classes of Englishmen served to strengthen the ideal of an organized state. Pride in England's achievements in the New World and in her defeat of the Armada made the average Elizabethan feel that almost anything could be dared if England remained true to herself and united within her borders. Ralph, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, for instance, although pressed into the army and forced to leave his wife, never questions the organization of the state that has treated him in this summary manner. Both he and Eyre feel that it is his duty to "crack the crowns of the French knaves" ²¹ for the glory of England.

1 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 1, i, 241-253.

With these influences working upon him it is no wonder that the citizen was in favor of "order" and "degree", or that his counterpart in the drama always supports authority. The latter's sentiment never varies, regardless of the type of play. Both in the ones that criticize the citizen and in those that praise him he is seen speaking against dissention, deploring riot, and praising peace and subjection to official decrees. From the plays of Shakespeare to the most feeble efforts of unknown writers the outlook remains the same.

In The Looking Glass for London, for example, Oseas say that a disturbed commonwealth is a hell. "If feet¹ hold head in scorn, the city state will fall and be forlorn." His language may not be as elaborate as that of Ulysses² in Troilus and Cressida, but his argument is no different. Scarborough in The Miseries of Enforced Marriage is equally certain that the order of society must be preserved even though he himself may suffer for a time under it. He says that the world will turn upside down when "the butler³ fights with the master". Sir John Oldcastle echoes The Looking Glass for London and The Miseries of Enforced Marriage. In the beginning of the play the judge and the sheriff order the mayor to tell his citizens that

1 The Looking Glass for London, 1503-1511.

2 Troilus and Cressida, 1,iii,83-130.

3 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, IV, p.565.

1

they should not rebel against their superiors.

Judge. You, master mayor, look to your citizens;
 ...No meetings in precinct, where the vulgar sort
 sit on their ale-bench, with their cups and can,...
 Matters of state be not their common talk, nor
 pure religion by their lips profaned.

Near the end of the play the king preaches to the rebels
 the same doctrine of the separation of classes. He tells
 the nobleman, Acton, that he has forgotten his place in
 joining with the populace.
 style="text-align: center;">2

King. You should be more discreetlytempered
 than to join with peasants; ...
 And thou hast made it (the gentry) more than
 popular.

We notice throughout the play that Murley's men are never
 at ease about fighting against the king and "learned
 bishops".
 style="text-align: center;">3

Other plays bear out what I have just stated.
 style="text-align: right;">4

Ulysses speech on degree is too well known to be quoted.
 The "lesson" of Julius Caesar is that the murder of the
 head of the state brings disaster upon those who commit it
 and upon the country itself. The revolution of Jack Cade
 is treated in a similar manner. He and the other rebels
 threaten not only the king and the nobles but the common-
 weal as well and bring about their own destruction.
 style="text-align: right;">5

1 Sir John Oldcastle, 1v, p.320.

2 Ibid., 1v, ii, p.337.

3 Ibid., 111, ii, p.333.

4 Troilus and Cressida, 1, iii, 83-130.

5 Henry VI, Part 11, 1v, v, vi, vii, viii.

As a result of his belief in degree the London citizen feared and hated the mob as did the aristocrat above him. He knew that "the muddy throng of the rank multitude."¹ could upset the even tenor of city trade or tear down the stalls in front of Goldsmith's Row even more easily than it could storm the houses of the nobles. He never believed that numbers meant wisdom and sometimes he was dubious about the worth of a popular vote in civic elections. For instance, Commonsense in Lingua, in many ways the embodiment of the citizen's ideal mayor, regards with scorn the conflicting judgements of the mustard maker and the currier.²

Commonsense. Crave my counsel! Tell me what manner of man he is? Can he hold a velvet cap cap in one hand, and vale his bonnet with the other? Knows he how to become a scarlet gown? Hath he pair of fresh posts at his door? Can he part a couple of dogs brawling in the streets? Why then chuse him mayor: Fie upon it, what a toil have I had to chuse them a mayor yonder? There's a fusty currier will have this man, there's a chandler wipes his nose on his sleeve, and swears it shall not be so; there's a mustard maker, looks as keen as vinegar, will have another.

In Philaster and The Shoemaker's Holiday, two widely differing plays, we have the same picture. According to the Elizabethan, a group of people, either large or small, is more apt to be influenced by emotion than by reason. In the first play, for instance, the "beast with many

1 Old Fortunatus, 11,ii, 238-240.

2 Lingua, 11,iii,p.371.

heads, the swaggering multitude" calls for the immediate execution of Pharamond, regardless of political consequences.¹ In The Shoemakers' Holiday, a much smaller assemblage, that composed of Eyre's apprentices and journeymen, is also depicted as unstable, even though the author of the play favors the citizen class, and rarely criticizes it. Hodge and his fellows, for instance, voice two completely opposed² opinions of the war with France in almost as many moments. Finally, the confused citizen in A King and No King, amidst the hubbub of the multitude, wishes that peace would come again and the crowd disperse.³ He and other citizens wanted a government strong enough to put down such insurrection so that they might be able to go about their own business without interruption.

1 Philaster, V,iv,38-40. The multitude does not realize that Pharamond's execution might bring his country's army to their city.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 1,i,121-268.

3 A King and No King, 11,ii.

Amusements

Up to this point I have described the Elizabethan citizen working in his shop, trading on the high seas, or taking part in London's government, but I have paid very little attention to what he did in his leisure time. In this chapter, therefore, I shall try to learn how he amused himself when he was not working. I shall find that he had a large and varied choice of entertainment. For instance, he might stay at home to read the latest pamphlet or the newest translation, or he might go to the playhouse, the Bear Garden, or the archery butts in Finsbury Fields. In fine weather he might venture further away to the woods and streams beyond London for a day's duck shooting or angling.

I shall mention first the allusions that refer to the citizen's ability to read. These are so numerous and include so many different classes that one is apt to think that the population of sixteenth century London

was. For the background information contained in this chapter I am chiefly indebted to:

Camp, C.W., The Artizan in Elizabethan Literature.

Child, H., "The Song Book and the Miscellanies," Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 4, p. 109.

Crane, R.S., "The Vogue of Guy of Warwick," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.

Onions, C.T., Shakespeare's England.

Routh, A.V., "London and the Development of Popular Literature," Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. 4, p. 316.

Wright, L.B., Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England.

was unusually literate. Almost every character in the drama seems to have received enough education to enable him or her at least to understand the popular chronicles and romances or the black letter ballads, that were hawked about the streets and sold at every fair. Moll Cutpurse, for instance, can read;¹ and Jane, although only the wife of a journeyman cobbler, assures Hammon that she can find her husband's name in a list of wounded soldiers.² Widow Taffata's servant in Ram Alley,³ the courtesan in A Mad World, My Masters,⁴ and Bellafront in The Honest Whore⁵ are all acquainted with the latest fiction. In the plays that I have considered there seems to be only one or two speeches that mentions someone who is unable to read or write, and, then, the illiteracy is spoken of as something unusual. In Michaelmas Term,⁶ for instance, Lethe's mother cannot read; Neither can the page in All Fools.⁷

Despite this evidence, however, we must not think that all Londoners were able to read. Printing had been

1 The Roaring Girl, p. 196.

2 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 1V,i,86-87.

3 Ram Alley, 111,i,p.322.

4 A Mad World, My Masters, 1,p.263.

5 The Honest Whore, Part 1, 11,i,pp.118 -119; 111,iii,p.145.

6 Michaelmas Term, 1,i,338.

7 All Fools, V,i,p. 60. cf. Eastward Ho, V,iii.80-84.

carried on in England for only a hundred years. The schools founded by such men as Colet were not much more than a generation old.¹ London did not have a public library² until 1684. With such inadequate supply of schools, teachers and libraries it would have been impossible to teach the whole population to read or to furnish them with books even if they had been literate. It is amazing, nevertheless, that so many Londoners were able to understand the printed word and that they displayed such an insatiable desire for all kinds of reading material. They bought chronicles, conduct books, histories, romances, pamphlet accounts of recent murders, even paper bound copies of the current plays. These last sold for 4d to 6d, that is about 2s 6d³ in present day money.

Numerous translations satisfied the citizen's curiosity about former times and other countries. They made classical and foreign literature available to those who were unable to read Latin or Greek, French, Spanish or Italian. Many of the citizen, for instance, learned

1 Dates of schools varied. Christ's Hospital, 1553; Westminster, 1560; Merchant Taylors', 1561; Charterhouse, in 1611.

2 Built by Tenison, rector of St. Martin's in The Fields. cf. reference in Lingua, lll, vi, p. 405, "to town library."

3 "Romance took Londoner to Indies or courts of Eastern potentates, dramatized history which recreated past and magnified deeds of English heroes...plays which glorified plain folk and homespun virtues,...dramatic journalism which brought the latest murder,...comforted conscience with lessons," Wright, L.B., Middle Class Culture, p. 607.

something of Renaissance Italy from an English translation of a French version of Machievelli's The Prince although¹ their picture was not strictly accurate. In The London² Prodigal, Martin Flowerdale reads this book. Sir Politic-Would-Be is also fond of Machi~~vel~~. He thinks that his familiarity³ with it shows that he is a cynical man of the world. Lady Politic, on the other hand, prefers the works of Petrarch and of Montaigne⁴ to The Prince and feels that she knows something of both French and Italian literature because she has read translations of them. Everyone, however, did not approve of the state of translation. Some of the learned protested as Phantastes does in Lingua that such men as North were only "prostituting the hard mysteries of an unknown tongue" to the vulgar so that "every commoner was as familiar with Alexander as he that wrote it".⁵

The Elizabeth's belief that reading would improve all parts of a man was responsible for the publication of large numbers of conduct or religious books. These

1 Gentillet, a Frenchman, had translated The Prince and then written a reply. The Elizabethan's first knew of Machievelli through a translations of this Frenchman's reply. Gentillet regarded The Prince as the work of one of the Devil's ministers rather than as a straightforward political treatise. As a result, the Elizabethans adopted Gentillet's opinion of Machievelli and, thus, made the term, machiavel, synonymous with villain.

2 The London Prodigal, 111,ii,p.383.

3 Volpone, 1V,i,26.

4 Ibid.,111,iv,78-87.

5 Lingua, 111,v,p.396.

were supposed to help one face adversity, live the good life, and conduct oneself properly in society. This is the type of book that Sir John Oldcastle prefers. He has a Bible, the Testament, the Psalms in metre, The Sick Man's Salve, The Treasure of Gladness, and the Almanack in English. Quicke's taste after his reformation is the same as Sir John's.² He quotes The Book of Martyrs and The Sick Man's Salve.

The published plays and the collections of poems such as Tottel's Miscellany, The Paradyse of Daynty Devices, and the various Garlands were also eagerly received. Apprentices, servants, and other young men were particularly fond of this form of reading. Rresident, in The Dumb Knight,³ for instance, reads Venus and Adonis, and Master Matthew,⁴ of Every Man in His Humour, has a "new book, Hieronymo" and⁵ he steals verses from Hero and Leander.

The romances, the popular chronicles, and tales of adventure, none of which strove for accuracy,⁶ were

1 Sir John Oldcastle, IV, iii, p.338. cf. the taste of Sir Hahn's servant, Harpool. He has books that he would not be parted from, "Bevis of Hampton, Owleglas, The Friar and the Boy, Elinour Rummig, Robin Hood and other such goodly stories."

2 Eastward Ho, V, ii, 73-75.

3 The Dumb Knight, III, i, p.158.

4 Every Man in His Humour, I, iv.50-63.

5 Ibid., IV, i, 70-90.

6 Some of these were, in a certain sense, translations; but I have used the term, translation, to refer to history political essays, poems, that were not changed greatly from their original forms.

beloved of the citizen's womenfolk, despite the fact that Vives and other writers on morals warns wives and maids¹ against reading "naughty ballets and vain romances".

Gertrude and her mother in Eastward Ho know many of the romances by heart.² The Widow Taffeta in Ram Alley wishes her maid to read Amadis de Gaul and Bonsel el Phaebo to her,³ and the citizen's widow in The Puritan⁴ reads the chronicles. Although the citizens' wives and daughters were the most fervent admirers of romances and of tales of adventure they were not the only ones to read these stories. Other interesting references show us that the taste was widespread. The clown in The Looking Glass for London, on being arrested, demands to be put in the chronicles.⁵ Albumazar says that "we children of the stars read things to come as clearly as poor mortals stories past in Speed or Hollingshead."⁶ Mrs. Bannister⁷ may have read Hakluyt for she knows stories of cannibals.

1 Quoted in Powell, p. 186.

2 Eastward Ho, V, i, 37-50.

3 Ram Alley, 111, i, p. 322.

4 The Puritan, 11, i, p. 406.

5 The Looking Glass for London, 2533-2534.

6 Albumazar, 1, iv, p. 312.

7 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1, iii, p. 253.

Finally, Mendacio makes an enlightening comment on all such books. He says;¹

...I must confess I would have fain have jogged Stow n and and great Hollingshed on their elbows, when they were about their chronicles; and as I remember, Sir John Mandeville's travels, and a great part of the Decades were of my doing. But for The Mirror of Knighthood, Bevis of Southhampton, Palmerin of England, Amadis of Gaul, Huon de Bourdeaux, Sir Guy of Warwick, Martin Marprelate, Robin Hood, Gargantua, Gerilion, and a thousand such exquisite monuments as these, no doubt but they breathe in my breath up and down.

The citizen also read much rogue literature. These pamphlets, such as the Bellman of London or the Coney Catching dialogues, were, in one way, only a specialized form of chronicle or of adventure story.² But, on the other hand, they were also related to the religious conduct books since their supposed purpose was to reform sinners and to warn the unwary against the vices of London. When Quicksilver in Eastward Ho pens his last repentance, he tells the story of his rioting in the lower sections of London and of his contrition so that others may profit from his sad experience.³

These examples from the plays do not include all forms of literature read by the citizens in the drama. But they group together the more important types and indicate some of the citizen's preferences. Many books of a miscellaneous nature were published and read

1 Lingua, 11,1,p.365.

2 That is, they told stories in time order and related tales of startling deeds.

3 Eastward Ho, V,v.

and are also referred to in the plays. They range from the Fables of Aesop mentioned by the son in The Looking Glass for London and rimed geography, to descriptions of gardening methods and accounts of hawking and hunting such as the one Stephen wished to obtain.²

Both men and women among the London citizens found entertainment and excitement in the playhouses as well as in books. Throughout most of our period they continued to attend in large numbers despite growing puritan disapproval. There are many references in the drama to the citizen's delight in the theatre. I shall quote only a few of these for illustration since most of them repeat the same information.

The citizens, as a rule, went to the Red Bull or to the Fortune rather than to the Globe. In their tastes they were like the wife in The Knight of the Burning Pestle who asks the players why they ever perform anything except Meg of Westminster and Jane Shore.³ They favored well known themes and simple, but sensational plots. The Spanish Tragedy, for instance, was one of the most popular plays and was often performed at the Fortune. Quicksilver is so well acquainted with this melodrama that his conversation, when he is drunk, always includes speeches from it.⁴ Comedy

1 The Looking Glass for London, 1300-1303.

2 Every Man in His Humour, 1, i, 35-40.

3 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, Induction, 17-27.

4 Eastward Ho, 11, i, 112-192.

as well as tragedy had to be very obvious if it were to please the citizen. When Bubble, in Greene's Tu Quoque, goes to see a play at the Glove or at the Red Bull he insists that there be a clown in it. The player in The Hog Has Lost His Pearl knows that nearly every member of his audience will agree with Bubble, Quicksilver, and the citizen's wife. He wants a simple play that anyone can understand. When he looks at the piece that the scholar has prepared for him, he says:

I pray you let me see the beginning of it;
I hope you have made no dark sentence in't; for,
I assure you, our audience commonly are very
simple, idle people and if they hear what they
understand not, they would quite forsake our
house.

Such plays did not require fine acting, and the players could "thunder with their heels" as much as they pleased while playing them.

Merchants and craftsmen, apprentices and sempsters took great delight in pageants and street performances and flocked to watch the Lord Mayor's show and the various parades and masques associated with the celebrations of the guilds. The demand for elaborate Lord Mayor's shows alone was enough to furnish Thomas Heywood with almost constant employment; and the interest in the strange, the

1 The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, 1, p. 435.

2 The Puritan, 111, vi, p. 415.

unusual, the spectacular kept the streets filled with conjurers and magicians, motions and monsters.

The latter, perhaps, were even more popular than the pageants for the citizen did not need a holiday to see them. He could lean from his shop windows to watch performing bears or dogs and his wife could open the casement above the shop to flirt with the conjurer or mountebank who directed them. These street amusements took various forms. A conjurer or a juggler might erect a small stage and do tricks to amuse the passing merchants and gallants. Other men might have animals or even deformed humans, dwarfs or giants, monsters as they were called, perform from a similar stage. Sometimes the entertainment might be a puppet show, such as Jonah and the Whale. The term, motion, was usually applied to puppets, but it was also very often used indiscriminately to refer to almost any kind of street entertainment. Countless scenes such as have been immediately described occur in the drama and a few instances will serve to illustrate them.

A very interesting reference is found in A King and No King. In this play the captain Barcurian speaks of the soldier Bessus and says that the latter is such a coward¹ that people would pay to see him.

¹ A King and No King, v,iii,

Barcurius. That would be a show, indeed, worth seeing. Sirs, be wise and take money for this motion, travel with it: and where the name of Bessus has been known, a good coward stirring, 'twill yield more than a tilting.

A similar scene in Ram Alley shows William Smallshanks and Boucher baiting another Coward, Captain Face (Puff),¹ Smallshanks pretends that he is a showman with a monster and enumerates Face's attractions in the fashion of an Elizabethan mountebank advertizing a performing monkey.²

...Gentlemen,
You shall see the strange nature of an outlandish beast
That has but two legs, bearded like a man
Nosed like a goose and tongued like a woman,
Lately brought from the land of Cataia.

In the same play, there is a reference to the tricks of a baboon. One of the citizen's wives who had watched the performance tired to do the same trick the next morning; but, unhappily, she intangled herself so completely that she had to call for help while still in her smock. The speaker who tells of her attempt says that onlookers thought her husband should have turned her misfortune to account by using her as a monster.³

Constantia. They say some of our city dames who were much desirous to see the baboons do their best tricks, went, and came home, went to bed, slept; the next morning one of them beginning to shift a smock sends down her maid to warm her one...Some think she is bewitched

1 This soldier is called both Face and Puff in the play.

2 Ram Alley, lv,i,pp.348-351.

3 Ibid1,1,i,pp.279-280.

and others possessed...She'd get more gold than the baboons or calves with two tails or monsters whatever.

Perhaps Prate is afraid of a similar accident happening to his wife, Lollia. ~~At~~ any rate, as we have seen, he warns her not to go to the suburbs to watch motions and monsters.¹

The London citizens liked to attend fairs held near the city or some distance beyond it. At these they could see as many motions and monsters as they desired, buy ballads and pamphlets from hawkers, trinkets from the costermongers and necessities from the merchants who had come from other parts of England to set up their booths at the fair. Bartholemew Fair, Craydon Fair and Stourbridge Fair, among others,² are mentioned in our plays.

Bear-baiting and cockfighting also afforded amusement to the citizen. We find it difficult to understand why he enjoyed watching dogs being clawed to death or cocks tearing each other to pieces. Yet the demand for the first form of entertainment was great enough to fill the Bear Garden south of the river, and certain of the bears kept there became very well known. One in particular, called

1 The Dumb Knight, 11,i,p.135.

2 cf. Jonson's play, Bartholemew Fair; Lingua, 111,vi,p.406, "Stourbridge Fair monsters"; The London Prodigal, 1,ii,p.374. Stourbridge Fair, held at Cambridge, was the most important during the sixteenth century. See Trevelyan, G.M., English Social History, pp.186.

George Stone, is often referred to in the plays. For instance, Pyeboard tells Idle that he has as many upon¹ him as George Stone, the bear.

These people who enjoyed seeing bears and dogs fighting counted executions and hangings among their amusements. They clustered around the gibbet to hear the last words of thief or murderer because they wanted spectacle even if it involved death. The citizens in *Philaster*, for example, are eager to see Pharamond killed not only for the sake of justice but also for the excitement that his execution will afford.²

All kinds of games appealed to the London citizen. Some preferred ~~games~~ played indoors, for high stakes; others liked to bowl in the open air merely for exercise. The references in the plays include both types. In *Greene's Tu Quoque* the characters play at dice and primero in the tavern,³ and in *Michaelmas Term* Quomodo looks forward to playing cards when he is finished his work.⁴ The Elizabethan did not confine his wagers to games of cards. Spendal⁵ for instance, has lost his money at tennis. Edmond, in *The Puritan*, also plays tennis and is as unfortunate as the wayward journeyman.⁶ *The Two Noble Kinsmen* contains

1 *The Puritan*, 111,vi,p.415.

2 *Philaster*, V,iv,38-40.

3 *Greene's Tu Quoque*, p. 220.

4 *Michaelmas Term*, 1V,i,90-105.

5 *Greene's Tu Quoque*, p.212.

6 *The Puritan*, 11,i,p.406.

a reference to tennis as well as to stool ball and to
¹ darts, None of these, however, are played for money.
² Mr. Openwork likes bowls, and Adriana, in Ram Alley,
 informs us that the citizen's wives play at shuttle cock,
 if they are not riding ~~shunting~~, or in horselitters,
³ coaches or caroches.

London's closeness to the country influenced the
 citizen's taste in pastimes. We have seen that he liked
 to go some distance to the local fairs. He also enjoyed
 spending a day, by himself or with a small group of
 friends in the fields or woods beyond the city. He could
 hunt or fish or picnic or simply enjoy being in the open
 air. Quomodo, for instance, wants to take a day off and
 eat in green fields.⁴ In The Two Noble Kinsmen, the wooer
 of the jailor's daughter goes angling.⁵ In The Roaring
Girl, the Gallipots and the Tiltyards have the city
 together, the men to hunt with a waterspaniel and a decoy
 duck and the women to wait for them in a pleasant place
⁶ for a picnic.

In the same play, Maxton asks Moll to come out
 of the town with him and to travel down the river.⁷

1 The Two Noble Kinsmen, V, ii, 74.

2 The Roaring Girl, I, i, p. 163.

3 Ram Alley, IV, i, p. 336.

4 Michaelmas Term, IV, i, 90-105.

5 The Two Noble Kinsmen, IV, i, 51-55.

6 The Roaring Girl, pp. 163-164.

7 Ibid., p. 158.

To leave London by boat was apparently a much favored¹ manner of getting into the country. The citizen went some way up or down the river and then landed either at a quiet spot to eat the meal that he had brought with him,

or at a well-known inn for one already prepared. Sometimes he extended his trip as far as Drake's ship anchored at Deptford. He could go abroad and, after he had examined the ship that had sailed around the world, have his tea served to him on the deck. References to this custom occur in Every Man in His Humour² and in Eastward Ho.³ But this excursion, unfortunately, was ruined by those who took part in it. The London citizen removed so much of The Golden Horn and carried pieces off as souvenirs that the vessel almost fell apart. Eventually it became so dismantled that it was declared unsafe, and visitors were no longer permitted aboard.

I shall close this chapter on the citizens' amusements with a few illustrations of his love of music and dancing. We all know that the complete English nobleman of the period was able to compose a song and sing it to his own accompaniment. We shall find now that the members of the lower and middle classes were no less fond of music and no less accomplished in their own way. They, as well as the nobleman, expected to be able to hear music in the tavern whenever they

¹ cf. A King and No King, 11, ii.

² Every Man in His Humour, 1, ii, 151.

³ Eastward Ho, 111, ii, 315-322.

desired it, and they sang and played in their own homes. The daughter¹ in Michaelmas Term, for instance, can play the virginal. Gertrude, in² Eastward Ho, sings snatches of songs in between her swoons. Moll pretends to be a music teacher "right³ against Clifford's Inn" Even the rogues, she tells us, have their own songs. Men sing as often as women, as Hodge in Thomas, Lord Cromwell⁴ shows us.

Dancing often accompanied singing and was equally popular. The citizens danced on holidays especially. Slipper, in The Looking Glass for London,⁵ anticipates dancing a hornpipe on Shrove Tuesday. The shoemakers, in The Shoemakers' Holiday, sing and dance a morris dance⁶ when they have a day off from their work. Martin Flowerdale wants music when he is in the tavern,⁷ but feels that he should not dance on fair day. Thus, he seems to be an exception to most of the people around him. The jailor's daughter in The Two Noble Kinsmen, says that Palamon can⁸ dance the best morris that she has ever seen. The wedding

1 Michaelmas Term, 11,iii,97-99.

2 Eastward Ho, 11,ii,38-64.

3 The Roaring Girl, pp.196-197.

4 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 111,ii,p.559.

5 The Looking Glass for London, 1830, 1835.

6 The Shoemakers' Holiday, 111,v,72-75; V,iv,40-60.

7 The London Prodigal, 1,ii,p.375.

8 The Two Noble Kinsmen, V,ii,50-55.

of Master John and Mistress Anne Frankford is an occasion for dancing both in the main hall and in the servants quarters.¹ Nick, Jenkin, Roger and Cecily debate what dance they shall have. They mention Rogero, The Beginning of the World, John Come and Kiss Me Now, The Cushion Dance, Tom Tyler, The Hunting of the Fox, and The Hay. They decide at last upon Sellinger's² Round (St. Leger's Round). This is the "first tune that the planets played" according to one of the speakers in Lingua.³

1 A Woman Killed With Kindness, 1,i.

2 Ibid., 1,ii.

3 Lingua, 111,vii,p.409.

Classes and Characterization

I shall conclude my study of the London citizen~~an~~ by outlining the drama's conventional treatment of the various groups that I ~~have~~ mentioned. If I can define the more or less stock attitudes towards the different crafts and professions I shall be able to judge the extent to which the condemnation or praise of craftsmen and merchants is merely the result of the playwright's repeating a popular pattern.

I shall consider first the citizens who would now be members of the professional classes, that is, the clergymen, lawyers, scholars, doctors, and dentists.² The Elizabethan would have said that ~~only~~ those in the first three groups had professional standing. In making this decision he was again influenced by tradition, for, during the medieval period, the practice of law and the pursuit of knowledge had been connected with the church and not with trade; and, therefore, both had ~~possessed~~ a certain amount of prestige. In the Elizabethan period law and scholarship continued to share honours with the ministry. Medicine and dentistry, on the other hand, had no such status in the sixteenth century. Doctors and dentists were merely guildsmen. Many of them still practised their original craft of barbering

1 The information contained in this chapter is based directly on the plays.

2 This grouping is purely arbitrary. The Elizabethans did not distinguish between crafts and professions as strictly as we do. But some sort of order had to be found and this one seemed to be the most satisfactory.

and remained barber-surgeons. For my purpose, nevertheless, I shall discuss clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and dentists in one section.

There is not enough material in our plays to justify much generalization about theologians. The restrictions on religion that made it unwise to discuss questions of doctrine made it equally dangerous to comment at any length on the personality of clergymen. Only in plays such as Sir John Oldcastle, The Puritan and James IV, can we see faint indications of a conventional outlook on both ministers and priests. The latter, as seen in Sir John Oldcastle,¹ were apt to be presented as wordly and immoral men, the former, according to The Puritan,² were narrow-minded fanatics. But, despite the harshness of both opinions, there is never any suggestion in our plays that the clergymen's calling was despicable in itself.

From the many references to lawyers I gather that the men who studied or practised law were thought to have chosen a reputable profession. Yet the individual lawyers are rarely portrayed in a favorable light. In the first place, they are often accused of preying on the ignorant to obtain money for themselves and of promoting quarrels so that they might collect fees for settling them. In

1 Sir John Oldcastle, III, iv, pp. 334-335.

2 The Puritan, I, iv, p. 104.

The Roaring Girl, for instance, we hear that "Holborn¹ is a wrangling street", It has this reputation because "lawyers walk to and fro" in it. ~~The~~ Elizabethan did not only believe that lawyers promoted arguments and asked payment for settling them; but, according to the plays, he thought that their knowledge was often a mere pretence. Sometimes they and their clients were equally ignorant of the statutes which concerned them both.

Throat, in Ram Alley, and Prate, in The Dumb Knight, are typical of this kind of lawyer. Prate is perhaps the less unattractive of the pair. He is sententious rather than ignorant, stupid rather than vicious. He has, ~~at least~~,² risen though his plodding hard work to some sort of administrative post. Throat, on the other hand, has not had any training in law at all. He, it is said, was once stocked for "stealing the cook's fees".² His unsavory past, however, does not deter him from pretending to know as much law as any one trained in the Inns of court. He comes uninvited to Lady Somerfield's house, for instance, and gives orders to her servants, all the while using legal terms that he does not understand.³ The lawyer in The White Devil is equally addicted to long and obscure words. of whose

¹ The Roaring Girl, p. 191.

² Ram Alley, p. 276.

³ The White Devil, pp. 335-359.

meaning both he and his hearers are ignorant. The latter¹ speak somewhat contemptuously of his "learned verbosity."

The drama also implies very frequently that lawyers are sexually immoral. We are told that it is not safe for a woman to walk near their quarters in the city. During law term it is especially dangerous for "a wench to pass the Inns of Court."²

I can make only two generalizations about the scholars, supported mainly by James IV and The Puritan.³ They are regarded as complete sceptics who jest at all things holy in religion and the state.⁴ Pyeboard, in The Puritan,⁵ for instance, does not even believe in the devil. Scholars such as Friar Bacon, Dr. Faustus and Friar Bungay are often tempted to tamper with the forbidden arts of black magic. The drama implies, furthermore, that the university men were frequently found aiding the rogues and charlatans

1 The White Devil, 111, p.18.

2 Ram Alley, 111, ii, p.317.

3 Other plays give the same type of characterization.

4 This statement is supported by the plays alone. The pamphlet literature at times gives a completely different picture.

5 The Puritan, 111, vi, p.416.

in London because they were unable to find other employment. Their education had raised them above trade but had not necessarily given them a position in the state. Andrew in James IV, for example, cannot obtain employment even though he is well educated and a gentleman by birth.¹

Cromwell's schooling was also of no use in helping him find work during one stage of his career.²

I have said that the Elizabethan's attitude towards doctors and dentists was completely different from his opinion of the clergyman, the lawyer, the scholar. He might feel that the first was negligent, the second immoral, and that the third sought knowledge which would have been better avoided; but he believed that all three had an accepted place on a reasonably high level in society. He never thought that they were beneath the merchant in rank no matter how impoverished or morally degraded they might become. But he generally placed doctors and dentists below the merchant and scorned them, not only for their own particular vices, but because they were members of one of the minor guilds.

This contempt is expressed in various ways in the drama. Both doctors and dentists are said to be ignorant quacks. Since, frequently no more training was required of them than that given by serving an apprenticeship (to)

1 James IV, 598-600.

2 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 111, i, p. 257.

to a barber these accusations, in many instances, had adequate foundation in fact.

The doctor's quackery is said to have been particularly evident in their treatment of venereal diseases. The Knight of the Burning Pestle, for example, shows us Barbarose¹ trying to cure people suffering from syphilis and kindred ailments. His patients endure a great deal of pain, but it is doubtful whether they benefit from his ministrations. Other plays contain more general condemnations of the doctor's inefficiency and ignorance. A physician is consulted in Thierry and Theodoret when Theodoret is ill, but even the bawd is unimpressed by his ability. She says that English doctors have nothing but "a bundle of pot herbs" and that they generally cry out "endive and suckery with a few mallow roots and butter-milk".² The Barber-surgeon in All Fools is also incompetent and unreliable although he pretends to have an enormous store of knowledge.

Since doctors were often surgeons, physicians, and "tooth-drawers", the position of the dentist in the plays is the same as that of the doctor. He is also regarded as ignorant and untrustworthy. When Lethe's pretensions to nobility are questioned the other characters in the play remark contemptuously that his father was "but a tooth-drawer."³

1 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, III, iv.

2 Thierry and Theodoret, V, i, p. 64.

3 Michaelmas Term, I, i, 161, 301.

It must be admitted, however, that an equally conventional picture of the good doctor may be found in a few plays. The physicians in The Two Noble Kinsmen, Kinsmen, The Dumb Knight¹, and Macbeth represent this latter type. The ~~one~~¹ in the second play, might be the forerunner of the trusted family doctor. The physician who attends the jailor's daughter in The Two Noble Kinsmen² is equally capable and kind. Finally, we all know that the doctor who watches Lady Macbeth is treated with respect³ by both the gentlewoman and Macbeth.

I shall now turn to certain officials of the municipal and national governments and try to define the conventional opinion of them. It is not much more flattering than that of the doctors and dentists. The most sympathetic characterizations are those of the Sheriff in The Puritan, of Commonsense in Lingua, and of Simon Eyre in The Shoemakers' Holiday⁴. The first man is grave and dignified; the second,⁵ intelligent and honest; the third, merry and frank.⁶

1 The Dumb Knight, p. 147.

2 The Two Noble Kinsmen, IV, iii,

3 Macbeth, V, i, iii,

4 The Puritan, III, v, p. 413.

5 Lingua, III, ii, pp 377.

6 The Shoemakers' Holiday, I, i, 130-142.

These are the exceptions, however. In almost all other instances, the officials are pictured as stupid and dishonest. Justice Tuchin is so foolish that he becomes ridiculous.¹ It is true that "old merry Justice Clements" is much superior to Tuchin, but even he is not a model of sober behaviour.²

Bailiffs and their assistants are almost always illiterate and corrupt. Those who are sent to arrest Pyeboard are good examples. They stare in blank amazement at the maps in the Sheriff's house, and they can be bribed easily.³ I have already discussed soldiers and constables in some detail in previous chapters.⁴ It is only necessary, therefore, to repeat here that the former were regarded as cowardly rogues and the latter as completely untrustworthy.

I come next to the merchants and craftsmen. These form the bulk of the middle class and they appear more frequently than members of any other group in the plays that deal with the citizens. Here again, I shall be content to give a brief summary. In certain instances, previous sections have already indicated indirectly the conventional representation of certain guildsmen.⁵ On the other hand, our plays

1 Ram Alley, 1V,i,p.335.

2 Every Man in His Humour, 1V,i,171-181.

3 The Puritan, 111,v,p.413.

4 See above, pp.219-221,224-225,.

5 See above, pp.73-94.

sometimes do not contain enough information concerning certain of the guilds to justify my making general statements.

There are many references, however, to mercers and goldsmiths; shoemakers and tailors. The first two are almost invariably said to be very wealthy and to make additional gains through usury. Such, for instance, are Quomodo in Michaelmas Term¹ and the goldsmith in Ram Alley².

The shoemakers are frequently pictured as very generous and very loyal to king and country. Once more Simon Eyre and his apprentices will serve as illustrations.³ The Shoemakers in George à Greene are also patriotic and fun-loving. They refuse to allow anyone to pass them except King Edward who later names their trade "the gentle craft".⁴ They celebrate this honour with dancing and feasting.

The tailors might have been expected to have had characteristics similar to those of the shoemakers. The workmen in both crafts sat and sewed all day on articles of dress. But the tailors form a complete contrast to Eyre and his journeymen. They are cowards or dour Puritans. For example, the tailors whom Trincalo is going to summon

1. Michaelmas Term, 111,iii.

2. Ram Alley, 111,i,p.334.

3. The Shoemakers' Holiday, cf.1,i.

4. George à Greene, 1280-1290.

have all "refused the last muster at Mile End".¹ The connection² between Puritans and tailors ~~has~~ already been mentioned in the chapter on religion.

In some instances, the conventional picture of the craftsman appears to have been based on the character of his patron saint.³ This explanation seems to be especially applicable in the case of the smiths. Like Vulcan, they are almost always quarrelsome and drunken. The smith in The Looking Glass for London is typical. The elder Cromwell's apprentices ~~also~~ seem ready enough⁴ to bicker with him or with his son.

I shall now descend several steps below the merchants and craftsmen in rank and look at the innkeepers, carriers, occasional workers, body servants, and farmers. The members of the first group seem to have many characteristics similar to those of the shoemakers. The innkeepers are merry and genial.⁵ Mine host in "The Merry Devil of Edmonton", for instance, might be a cousin to Simon Eyre.⁶

The good nature found in the masters of the inns did not extend to the ostlers employed by them or to

1 Albumazar, 11,ii,p.323.

2 See above p.191.

3 This statement could be developed at some length.

4 Thomas, Lord Cromwell, 1,ii,p.351.

5 The brewer, Murley, is equally merry.

6 The Merry Devil of Edmonton, pp.226-227.

the carriers who paused at the inns overnight. On the contrary, both ostlers and carriers are ribald, ignorant and disgruntled. The ostler in Doctor Faustus,¹ for example, is given to obscenity in speech. Furthermore, the carrier and his wife, Kate, in Sir John Oldcastle and Cob in Every Man in His Humour are easily confused by anything strange. The carrier and his wife do not know how to dress themselves in Lord and Lady Cobham's clothes;² and Cob cannot abide "abominable, vile, . . . rascally verses" that he does not understand.³ We remember, also, that the carriers and ostlers in Henry IV, Part 1,⁴ are not fastidious either in their speech or in their personal habits.⁴

Workmen who were hired by the day or who had not been formally apprentices are treated in much the same manner as are the carriers and the ostlers. Among them we find carpenter, watermen, and clowns. They, like the carriers and ostlers, are noted for their ribaldry and drunkenness. The carpenters in The Dumb Knight, for instance, as they erect a scaffold, joke about the sexual immorality of women. There is a reference in The Roaring Girl to the watermen's

1 Doctor Faustus, 1,viii.

2 Sir John Oldcastle, V,viii,p.345.

3 Every Man in His Humour, 1,iii,90-100.

4 Henry IV, Part 1, 11,i,1-35.

5 The Dumb Knight, pp.152-153.

love of ale.¹ In this play, Trapdoor, the soldier, says that he can obtain information about Moll from the ferrymen if he drinks long enough with them.

The personal or body servants present a somewhat different picture. They have more affinities with the young apprentices than with the members of any other group. They are usually impertinent and affected, but, at the same time, shrewd and witty. Brainworm in Every Man in His Humour, for instance, is much more intelligent than many of his betters in the play.² Daffodil in The London Prodigal, on the other hand, serves as an example of the servant who has to be checked for impertinence. He removed Luce's bracelet and is dismissed by her father.³ Later he is employed again; and, then, his fellow servant, Artichoke, speaks pertly to Sir Lancelot about the folly of taking Daffodil back into service.⁴ President, in The Dumb Knight does not treat his master with any more respect than Daffodil extends to Luce. He eats as he talks with his employer.⁵ Dondolo, in The Revenger's Tragedy has also to be rebuked for forgetting his place. He constantly apes his betters

1 The Roaring Girl, p. 148.

2 Every Man in His Humour, 11,ii.

3 The London Prodigal, 11,ii,pp.378-379.

4 Ibid.p380.

5 The Dumb Knight, p.126.

by speaking in a form of Euphuism.¹ Neatfoot, the servant of Alexander Wengave, talks in the same fashion as Dondolo.²

All Elizabethan servants, however, are not presented as rude or affected. A few instances in the drama give an equally set representation of the overworked and mistreated servant. Butler, in The Miseries of Enforced Marriage,³ is an example of this type of servant.

A useful summary of the conventional opinion of the servant is found in Staines' speech in Greene's Tu Quoque. In it he outlines the advantages and disadvantages of a serving man's life:⁴

Staines. That I should live to be a serving man, a fellow that scalds his mouth with another man's porridge; brings up meat for other men's bellies, and carries away the bones for his own; changes his clean tbencher for a foul one and is glad of it; and yet did I never live so merry a life, when I was my master's master as now I do being man to my man. And I will stand to't for all my former speeches, a serving man lives a better life than his master; and thus, I prove it; the saying is, The nearer the bone the sweeter the flesh: then must the serving man needs eat sweeter flesh for he always picks the bones, and, again, the proverb says, The deeper the sweeter: there has the serving man the advantage again for he drinks still in the bottom of the pot; he fills his belly and never asks what's to pay; wears broadcloth and yet dares walk Watling Street, without any fear of his draper. And for his colors, they are according to the season; in the summer, he is apparelled for the most part, like the heavens, in blue, in the winter, like the earth, in frieze.

1 The Revenger's Tragedy, 11,i,p.29.

2 The Roaring Girl, pp.138-139.

3 The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, p. 522-523.

4 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 207.

I have dealt now with most of the classes in London about whom there is enough evidence in the drama to warrant my making some generalizations. I shall add one more group, however, to those already considered even though its members are not citizens. This group is made up of the farmers who have come to the city. They appear frequently enough in the citizen plays to justify my including them and defining the conventional attitude towards them.

The farmers are nearly always treated as clumsy, boorish, and stupid. The town gull in Every Man in His Humour¹ voices great contempt for the country gull. References in The Roaring Girl and in Albumazar are not any more complimentary to farmers than those in Every Man in His Humour. The first play contains scornful allusions² to farmers who have gone to town to be gentlemen. The second describes Trinculo in the process of becoming a man of leisure. He is ridiculed for aping men above³ him in rank.

The generalizations that I have made so far about the conventional approach to the various classes in the drama have not been based on any particular set of plays. The evidence has been chosen indiscriminately from

1 Every Man in His Humour, 1V, v, 1-10.

2 Albumazar, 11, v, p. 345.

those in favor of the citizen and from those which criticize him severely. If I turn, finally, however, to the latter group I shall be able to make some generalizations about the conventional treatment of the middle class. My conclusions, however, will be based on the plays written towards the end of our period. The judgement found in these plays is aristocratic in tone and considers the members of the middle class from a level completely alien to them.

The citizens, on the one hand, are criticized for blindly adhering to custom and, on the other,¹ for disregarding all tradition in an endeavour to make money. Cleopatra in The False One, expresses the latter opinion very well when she compares Caesar to a merchant, "a mere wandering merchant, servile for gain: He trades for poor commodities and makes his conquests thefts."²

The citizens, moreover, are nearly always said to be cowards. Laxton, in The Roaring Girl, for example, calls the citizen soldiers "Mile End Milksops".³ The mayor in Henry VI, Part 1 admires the courage of the nobles and says that he himself fights "not once in forty year."⁴

¹ see above 56-74.

² The False One, 1V,ii,20-24.

³ The Roaring Girl, pp.213-214.

⁴ Henry VI, Part 1, 1,iii,89-91.

Staines expresses great astonishment when he learns¹ that Spendal is a "high spirited citizen".

One result of this unfavorable opinion is seen very clearly in the plays. The aristocrats and those among the citizens who pretended to be gentle wished to have nothing to do with trade or with those engaged in it. Kately,² for example, is mocked by Wellbred. William Smallshanks dreads the possibility of being forced to join the citizen³ class. The Duke Alphonso, in The Dumb Knight is very indignant⁴ when he has to put on the lawyer Prate's clothes. Gertrude mocks her father and his trade and attempts to⁵ dissociate herself from him and it.

I can draw one important conclusion from these conventional opinions about the middle class. They occur constantly in plays written from 1610 on. It seems evident that the break between the classes in London was becoming much more marked than it had been before 1600.

1 Greene's Tu Quoque, p. 232.

2 Every Man in His Humour, IV, vi, 1-45.

3 Ram Alley, IV, i, p. 361.

4 The Dumb Knight, p. 169.

5 Eastward Ho, cf. I, ii.

In one of the early plays, for instance, the drunken clown walks into the court banqueting hall. He is neither severely ridiculed nor harshly reprimanded. A similar treatment of such an incident would not be found in plays written about 1620 and later.

1 The Looking Glass for London, 2020-2160.

Conclusion

I can now draw certain conclusions about the London citizen in the Elizabethan drama. It seems quite clear, in the first place, that the plays contain two distinct concepts of the citizen. One regards him as a hero, as the man who starts with nothing but his own earnestness, application and ideals and becomes an Eyre or a Gresham, a knight and the builder of Leadenhall or of the Exchange. The other pictures him as a stupid, foolishly-proud, envious, grasping, money-hoarder, who cannot be relied upon to keep his word and who has no ideals and fewer morals.

Let me again mention the reasons that I have already given for the drama's two-fold attitude towards the citizen. I have suggested that the conditions of the time were partly to blame for a change in the outlook towards the middle class. The citizen's position in society altered and so did the treatment given him in the drama.¹

Early in the thirty years that I have covered in this study the citizen was just becoming aware of his new importance, and he was, as yet, only ~~proud~~ of his wealth and industry. He had no idea that he could command a position similar to that of the noble. He was like a small boy who was pleased with himself because he had succeeded in a task. Not yet

¹ See above pp30-32.

had the comfortable feeling of achievement turned into ostentatious display of ability. As time went on, however, and as 1600 became 1610, the citizen grew very conscious of his altered status and acutely aware of the power given him by his increased wealth. He began to demand equal treatment with the aristocracy and to ape those above him in dress and manners. The noblemen and the gentlemen came to fear his power and to condemn his attempts to upset the order of society. It was ~~inevitable~~¹ that the citizen in the drama could not continue to be pictured as a Simon Eyre, friendly and astute, yet, at heart, properly subservient to Sir Hugh Lacy and to the Earl of Cornwall.

I have also pointed out that, throughout the period, 1590-1620, two groups of dramatists had been writing about the citizen and that, consequently, two attitudes of mind had been expressed in the plays concerning him.¹ ³The playwrights, such as Dekker and Heywood, who were closely linked with the middle class voiced a fellow pride in merchants' wealth and power. The citizen was akin to them in manners and beliefs, and, naturally, they wrote of him with a sympathy that sometimes carried them into eulogy. There had always been, on the other hand, the dramatists who were aristocratic rather than bourgeois in feeling and who regarded the citizen as beneath them and as a different sort of person. Even without being motivated

¹ see above 38-50.

by deliberate malice, these dramatists could hardly fail to depict the citizen as unintelligent, crude and boorish.

If the citizen's position had remained stationary, and if the numbers of playwrights of opposing sympathies had never varied, the drama's picture of the middle class would have wavered between equal praise and equal blame. But, as I have said, the citizen gained more wealth and more power. Both his position and his frame of mind changed, and those writing of him reflected this upheaval. Furthermore, the balance between dramatists who sympathized with the middle class and those who feared it became tilted very much in favor of the latter group. Towards 1620 these playwrights began a concentrated and deliberate attack on the citizen, and, to make matters worse, these were the writers who could command the most influential audience. They grew more and more vituperative in their attack. The heralds of Dick Whittington and his cat, on the other hand, disappeared¹ or gave up their allegiance.

I shall now discuss the last factor that contributed to the large number of unfavorable characterizations found in the drama in the later part of the period. The nature of the audience determined the type of play written about the citizen; and, late in the Elizabethan period, the audience was becoming more and more aristocratic and less

¹ see above pp.45-46.

and less middle class. The Londoners themselves, as we have seen,¹ contributed to this tendency. The city authorities tried to stop theatre-going, and they did all they could to hinder the dramatists. The gentlemen and nobles, on the other hand, continued to attend the playhouses. They frequented private theatres that were ~~not~~ under the jurisdiction of the city and they gave their patronage and protection to individual companies. Naturally, they would not expect the dramatists who were dependent upon them to write mainly success stories of mercers and iron-mongers. Naturally, the middle class became more and more the butt of ridicule; or disappeared from plays altogether.

The time of the appearance and of the disappearance of the citizen in the drama can be related directly to the two-sided picture that I have been discussing. I can almost say, indeed, that nearly every sympathetic presentation of the citizen is found before 1605. The Fair Maid of the West and The Shoemaker's a Gentleman are admittedly later, but they are almost the only examples of their type of play to occur at that time. The ingenious plays most favorable to the citizen were written before or just about 1605. James IV, The Looking Glass for London, The Shoemakers' Holiday, The Four Prentices Thomas, Lord Cromwell, and Sir John Oldcastle are examples.

¹ I see above pp. 209-210.

But, as 1620 approaches, the references to the citizen are found in dramas such as The White Devil, The Hog Has Lost His Pearl, The False One and Thierry and Theodoret. These are either outright satires on the citizen or tragedies and melodramas concerned with lords and ladies, kings and queens, in which allusions to the middle class are only incidental and almost always uncomplimentary.

Having decided so much about the two attitudes and having outlined briefly the reasons for such varying concepts, I am now faced with the problem of deciding the worth of these contrasted presentations. What is to be gained from them? How far can either be trusted? I must answer these questions before I can come to any conclusion about the value of the plays as social documents.

I have tried to answer these questions already in the body of the essay, and have discussed them at some length in the section on the dramatists.¹ Here, I can only say again that we must balance one picture against the other and must take into account the bias of the dramatist before we believe too firmly all that he says.

I have chosen a non-committal middle course. Certainly not all citizens were as resourceful or as merry as Eyre; on the other hand, neither were they all scheming villains

¹ see above pp. 38-46, 50-51 .

like Quomodo. No doubt some of them were jovial. Equally, no doubt, some of them made "coarse commodities look sleek". I am forced, I must confess, back upon certain of my original conclusions. I feel that we can trust the citizen drama completely only when it gives details of food and drink and clothes and houses. Concerning its interpretation of "the follies and the foibles" of the time, I can but repeat that there must have been some avarice for Ben Jonson to attack so vigorously. But there must also have been some hospitality for it to be commended by Dekker. Neither man would have known avarice or generosity if he had not seen it about him.¹

I can say one thing more, however, about the worth of these presentations. There is no completely realistic portrayal of any citizen in the drama. No one of the plays makes us think that a character in it embodies the absolute truth about a certain type of human nature. No merchant or tradesman makes us feel as we do about Macbeth or Othello or Romeo. There is no universal London citizen.

The criticism just mentioned leads me directly to a consideration of the plays as literature. I shall not say a great deal about their artistic value, because, as I pointed out in the introduction, I have not been concerned

1 Here again I am led into a personal judgement.

with questions of style.¹ Taken as a group, however, the citizen plays have little literary merit. I have previously suggested reasons for this lack. The citizens' tastes were not subtle.² The plays written for them were crude and, consequently, there are no memorable merchants or draftsmen in the plays dealing with the middle class, with the possible exception of Simon Eyre.³

Even stupidity and deceit, the two vices most frequently attributed to the merchants, do not help to make us remember the mercers and the tailors in the drama. We cannot forget Iago's treachery, but Bagot's villany will not remain in our minds. Prate and Candido, the stupid citizens, are no more skilfully drawn than is Bagot and the plays in which they appear have little more merit than any others that deal with the citizen class.

Certainly, the citizen is never a tragic or a heroic figure.⁴ When misfortune befalls him, as it does Spendal, he is taken to the Counter and writes a last repentance. No one thus in the clutche of Master Grype is a subject for tragedy. Even Shakespeare's Antonio suffers from

¹ See Introduction, iv.

² see above p.242.

³ I have omitted Touchstone, Quicksilver and Gentrude here because they are deliberately ridiculed.

the vulgarity of a bargain over a pound of flesh; The persecuted Bannister is barely pathetic.

The most memorable of all the citizens are perhaps Touchstone, Gertrude and Quicksilver of Eastward Ho, and Simon Eyre of The Shoemakers' Holiday. But of these the first three are supposed to be farcical characters and the fourth, even though he is the ideal citizen hero, cannot be considered the equal of Tamburlaine or of Henry V. His grandeur, if we can call it such, is of a completely different order. It is impossible to imagine him faced with disaster.

I shall conclude this chapter with a short discussion of the value of the plays as social documents. In many ways I have been more concerned with this aspect of them than with any other.

Again I shall have to divide my discussion into two parts. For instance, the plays may be regarded as social documents because they give information on small details that range from the black puddings of Bonduca to the French fall in Ram Alley. Secondly, they may also reflect the philosophy and ideals of the citizen and, for this reason, may be of use to the social historian.

There is no doubt that the middle class drama gives us details of Elizabethan life. The plays contain an amazing

amount of information about clothes, food, houses, and which agrees very well with the accounts of the times written by Harrison, Stowe, Camden and others. I need not stress this point. A large part of this essay is more or less a tabulation of such details. The chapter on food, clothing and homes is a direct illustration of the value of the drama in reconstructing a picture of everyday life in sixteenth¹ century London.

It is also amazing to see how precepts voiced by characters in the plays duplicate those expressed by conduct books and descriptive treatises. This similarity is especially noticeable in the early part of the period. Sermons on ~~thrift~~ and generosity in The Shoemakers' Holiday or James IV repeat almost word for word the admonitions of Becon and Harrison. In fact, nearly all the conclusions that I have drawn from the plays in the chapter on ideals I could have reached by reading only the accounts of the time or books on behaviour.

Nevertheless, I cannot say that the plays completely reflect all parts of the citizen's ethos. The agreement between the drama and the conduct books is noticeable in the early part of the period only. As far as I can judge, I should conclude that the plays written between 1590 and 1620 express the ideals that the citizen was conscious of possessing. In other words, He thought that a merchant should be generous, kind-hearted, and faithful to his guild.

1. See above pp. 129-183.

and his counterpart in the drama voices the same sentiments. It is not my affair, fortunately, to decide whether or not the merchant and craftsman lived up to such an ideal.

From 1605-1620, on the other hand, the drama expresses an unpleasant side of the citizen's beliefs. The plays imply that the merchant's sole object was to amass wealth, regardless of the method used to obtain it. No merchant or craftsman, however, would have admitted that such an ideal governed his actions, and it is difficult to decide how far he unconsciously gave allegiance to such a code. It seems impossible to believe that the bitter attack on the merchant contained in the plays written about 1620 embodies the whole truth.

Taken as a whole, however, the plays indicate clearly the change that took place in the status of the merchant. They give more than adequate evidence that he stood at the crossroads of the medieval and modern world. He was pulled back to the past by traditional teachings and ideals and towards the future by a belief in the power of money. His speech and behaviour in the drama show him to be the ancestor of the wealthy middle class merchants and landowners whose ideals and actions formed the England of the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Appendix 1

Editions and Plays

Ancient British Drama

The Life and Death of Thomas, Lord Cromwell

The London Prodigal

A Mad World, My Masters

The Malcontent

The Puritan

Sir John Oldcastle

The Revenger's Tragedy

A Yorkshire Tragedy

Dekker, Dramatic Works, Pearson, 1873.

The Roaring Girl

Dekker, Rhys, Mermaid edition.

The Honest Whore

Dodsley's Old English Plays

Albumazar

All Fools

The Dumb Knight

Greene's Tu Quoque

The Hog Has Lost His Pearl

Lingua

The Miseries of Enforced Marriage

Ram Alley

Greene, Life and Complete Works, Grosart.

George a Greene

The Looking Glass for London

Jonson, Works, Herford, ed.

The Alchemist

Bartholemew Fair

Schelling and Black, Typical Elizabethan Plays.

Eastward Ho

Every Man in His Humour

The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay

The Knight of the Burning Pestle

Michaelmas Term

The Pleasant Comedy of Old Fortunatus

Philaster

The Shoemakers' Holiday

The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Shakespeare, Complete Works, Kittredge.

Appendix II

Approximate dates of plays quoted in this essay.
Dating follows Harbage, Annals of English Drama.
Brackets indicate plays read but not quoted.

<u>Friar Bacon</u> 1589-92	<u>Linguist</u> 1602-1607
<u>The Jew of Malta</u> 1589-90	<u>The Honest Whore, I</u> 1604
<u>James IV</u> 1590-91	<u>All Fools</u> 1599-1604
<u>The Looking Glass</u> 1587-91	<u>(Westward Ho)</u> 1604
<u>(Fair Em)</u> 1589-91	<u>(Wise Woman of Hodgson)</u> 1604
<u>Arden of Feversham</u> 1585-92	
<u>Dr. Faustus</u> 1588-92	<u>The Malcontent</u> 1604
<u>The Merchant of Venice</u> 1594-1596	<u>London Prodigal</u> 1603-1605
<u>Every Man</u> 1598	<u>Eastward Ho</u> 1605
<u>Old Fortunatus</u> 1599	<u>The Honest Whore, II</u> 1606
<u>The Shoemakers' Holiday</u> 1599	<u>(Building of the Royal Exchange)</u> 1605
<u>Sir John Oldcastle</u> 1599	<u>Volpone</u> 1605-1606
<u>Julius Caesar</u> 1598-99	<u>A Mad World</u> 1604-1607
<u>(Patient Grissel)</u> 1600	<u>Michaelmas Term</u> 1604-1606
<u>Four Prentices</u> 1592-1600	<u>The Puritan</u> 1606
<u>Merry Wives</u> 1598-1602	<u>Macbeth</u> 1606
<u>Twelfth Night</u> 1600-1602	<u>The Revenger's Tragedy</u> 1606
<u>Hamlet</u> 1599-1601	<u>A Yorkshire Tragedy</u> 1605-1608
<u>Thomas, Lord Cromwell</u> 1592-1602	<u>The Knight of the Burning Pestle</u> 1607-1610
<u>Fair Maid of the Exchange</u> 1602-1607	<u>(Travails of Three English Brothers)</u> 1607
<u>Troilus and Cressida</u> 1601-1603	<u>Miseries of Enforced Marriage</u> 1605-1607
<u>Merry Devil of Edmonton</u> 1599-1604	<u>Ram Alley</u> 1607-1608
<u>Henry IV, I</u> 1597	<u>The Dumb Knight</u> 1607-1608

<u>A Shoemaker a Gentleman)</u>	1607-1608
<u>Philaster</u>	1608-1610
<u>The Roaring Girl</u>	1604-1610
<u>(Fair Maid of the West)</u>	1607-1630
<u>The Alchemist</u>	1610
<u>A King and No King</u>	1611
<u>Greene's Tu Quoque</u>	1611
<u>(Chaste Maid in Cheapside)</u>	1611-1613
<u>The White Devil</u>	1609-1613
<u>Two Noble Kinsmen</u>	1613-1616
<u>The Hog Has Lost His Pearl</u>	1613
<u>Bartholemew Fair</u>	1614
<u>Albumazar</u>	1615
<u>Thierry and Theodoret</u>	1607-1621
<u>(Mayor of Quimbrough)</u>	1615-1620
<u>The False One</u>	1610-1622
<u>The Witch of Edmonton</u>	1621

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