PHILOSOPHY IN THE FORSYTE SAGA

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PHILOSOPHY IN THE FORSYTE SAGA

THESIS

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By

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PREFACE

A study has been made of (1) the various philosophies of idealism and materialism, (2) the effects of these philosophies upon the life and thought of England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and (3) the demonstration of these philosophies in John Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* with a view to indicating the trends and tendencies in the philosophy of England which have helped to shape the personal and national life of the British people of today.

The reading matter for the thesis has been found in the following libraries: North Texas State Teachers College, University of Texas, Columbia University, Texas Christian University, City Library of Fort Worth, and Robert Lee Paschal High School of Fort Worth.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Definition of the Saga

The Forsyte Saga may be defined as a trilogy of novels dealing with the upper middle-class family life in England; the writer is John Galsworthy, a member of the class of which he writes. The first novel of the series is The Man of Property; the second one is In Chancery; and the third one is To Let. In addition to the three novels the Saga contains two interludes; the first one is Indian Summer of a Forsyte, coming between the first and second novels; and the other interlude, which is Awakening, comes between the second and third novels.

The subject matter of this trilogy is the study of the disintegration of an upper middle-class English family through three generations; the idol of the members of the family is property. The novels belong to the type of family novel which was started by Oliver Goldsmith in The Vicar of Wakefield.

The Man of Property, published in 1906, has as subject matter a study of the early Forsyte tribe and its individual success in the accumulation of property; property to a
Forsyte was money, and money was power. The desire for possession of property is the keynote of the first novel.

The second novel, *In Chancery*, is a study of the desire for power to dominate and hold by law the property that a Forsyte has in his possession; property is anything owned by law; it might mean money, houses, wives, children, art, beauty, health, or even soul. The ability or inability of a Forsyte to obtain and hold his property by law is the central idea in the second novel.

The third and last novel, *To Let*, is a study of the breaking up of possessiveness in the Forsyte family and its downfall as middle-class authority in England. The gradual change from basing social power upon class and property provides a series of problems with which the characters of the trilogy must deal. The equalization of labor and capital, brought about by the gradual change through a series of wars, is the key idea in *To Let*.

The setting in *Forsyte Saga* is late Victorian and twentieth-century England, with much of the action centered about London.

The first Jolyon Forsyte of whom anything is known, born 1741, died 1812, lived in the County of Dorset by the sea, and was a yeoman, i.e., a farmer on a small scale. He was "thick and sturdy," typical of England before the Industrial Era which set in after the Napoleonic Wars. The second Jolyon Forsyte, "superior Dorset Forsyte," born in 1770, died in 1892, known in the "Saga" as "Old
Jolyon," a cultured and refined specimen of the Forsytes, a tea merchant, and later chairman to important companies.¹

The Forsyte characters can be studied in their setting as types or as individuals. "Old Jolyon" may illustrate the possessive spirit of a class or of an individual. The British national quality of great possessiveness toward property is a fact; Great Britain was recognized as among the wealthiest nations during the late Victorian era and the early twentieth century.

The time of the novels in actual writing dates from 1890 to 1920, and the time stressed for action of the characters, outside of family history, is within the same period.

The place of action, outside of family history, which is mentioned only incidentally, is within London, and its fashionable wealthy districts; there is the occasional change of place brought about by travel and wars. The setting in London and the time in the late Victorian and the present periods were out of Galsworthy's own experiences. His own experiences, education, and interests were things he knew; Galsworthy as a Forsyte could reflect Forsyte experiences:

There is no doubt that in wording his picture of 'Robin Hill' in the Forsyte Saga my brother had the sight and grounds of 'Combe Warren' in his mind. But not one of those three houses built by my father

¹Leon Schalit, John Galsworthy, a Survey, p. 74.
-- the first of which was completely demolished some years ago -- bore the slightest resemblance to the house of 'Robin Hill.'

That the Forsyte setting was typical of Galsworthy's own background is further affirmed by other comments on his personal experiences, which parallel those of characters in the Saga:

It is easy to form an idea of his childhood; for although several details are distinctly different, the picture he has drawn in the sketch called Awakening of the little boy Jor's early life is practically a description of his own.

That the "Old Jolyon" of The Man of Property and of Indian Summer of a Forsyte reflects an actual character in the family of Galsworthy is suggested by the following comment from Galsworthy's sister: "It is in the older Jolyon of The Man of Property and the Indian Summer that we find many a trait of our father skillfully reproduced."

To understand the philosophical implications of the novels more fully it is necessary to know something of their author's place in English society. Galsworthy belonged to the same social stratum as his characters, the Forsytes, but to attempt to identify many of his associates among the Forsytes in the Saga is dangerous:

Here I should like to say that, to my mind, apart from the one acknowledged instance of Old Jolyon, too much has been made of the supposed likeness to real persons of the 'Forsyte' family in general. My brother did indeed observe and adopt many typical characteristics and idiosyncrasies of his relations, but in every case the

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3Ibid.

4Ibid.
individual underwent such drastic alteration at his hands that to label any one person in the 'Saga' as definitely 'taken' from any one relative in real life is to give a false impression.5

Educated as a typical Forsyte, Galsworthy reflected and acknowledged influences that are important to an understanding of the subject and setting of the Saga. His class possessed a kindness and sympathy for unfortunate human beings, as is indicated in the following letter to Professor Gilbert Murray on May 19, 1917:

I finished the asylum stories last night and got your letter this morning. I read them with a sort of horrified interest, and allowing for personal animus and exaggeration, I should think there is a lot of truth in them. Institutions are almost always the devil-fearful corrupters of human nature.

... On the general question, it looks to me -- without having had a chance yet to go into the law and facts of lunacy -- as if what was wanted were a new law, making monthly or bimonthly inspection of all asylums, private and public, necessary, by a doctor and a layman, carefully selected and governmentally appointed, having no connection whatever with, and no responsibility to the lunacy authorities, and whose duties would be to interview privately every patient in or out of the presence of their relatives, according as the relatives turned up for the inspection or not. I do not think it's a most damnable thing that people's liberty should be in the hands of those who may be interested in keeping them in limbo. There is one point not touched on by these sketches; that is the certification for lunacy of paupers by a single doctor, instead of the two required for more fortunate beings. ...

Yours always,

J. G.6

As a result of his interest in social matters, together with the interest and work of other people, many English laws

5Ibid., p. 15. 6Ibid., pp. 96-97.
regarding the conditions and treatments of unfortunates were improved:

About 1899 the British working classes tried to defend their interests by strikes and collective bargaining and by voting for Liberal or Liberal-labor members in the House of Commons. . . . The result of this change of mind was the formation of the British Labor Party. . . . The laboring classes were represented in Parliament by a party strong enough to make itself felt in law.7

Galsworthy's great humanitarianism concerned itself deeply with the awful consequences of war and unemployment. He and his wife became active in relief work in the hospitals of France during World War I, and he spoke freely on the practical causes of unemployment in business and domestic life:

Nothing will stop some of these well-off women from doing the work themselves instead of paying others; because they say it's the only way they can feel they've done something personally to help. It's a feeling one understands but it's clearly wrong. . . . It's rather a case of dislocation of employment, than of unemployment, I expect.8

His ideas of the king as a spiritual symbol of democracy may be gathered from one of his comments: "Democracy: Yes -- a King (such as ours) is a boon to Democracy."9

Galsworthy expressed himself concerning the effect of the war on Christianity:

It is the dogmatic and superstitional part of Christianity that the war will destroy -- it was already nearly dead -- not the ethical (which is also

7Carl Becker, Modern History, pp. 576, 578.
8Ibid., pp. 87-88. 9Ibid., pp. 90-91.
the spiritual in the broad sense of both words). On the contrary, it will give to that, I think, a vigorous push.\textsuperscript{10}

While on a lecture tour in the United States of America in 1919, Galsworthy gave the money that he received above his expenses to war relief: "I'm giving what I make by lecturing above our expenses to Syrian and Armenian, etc., relief."\textsuperscript{11}

This brief personality study of Galsworthy and his attitude toward democracy in social institutions is reviewed for the purpose of showing that in personal life as well as in the life he pictured for his characters he was concerned with the problems of society in a changing world. A biographical study shows Galsworthy a man of sensitive tolerance, of high honor, of chivalrous conduct; he is also possessed of egotism, conventionality, matter-of-factness, a Victorian culture, a cold reserve, and unimaginativeness. He attacked in the \textit{Saga} as in his private life the hypocrisy, bigotry, prudery, and queerness in England's rotting institutions and individuals. He was not unaware of the other half of the world, with its weak, oppressed, and starving "men of poverty," even though he was himself "a man of property." To leave off caste for a "man of property" is not easy; Galsworthy realized this fact; nevertheless, England and Englishmen must endure the pruning irony and satire of

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 93. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 100.
his pen. In evaluating social changes Galsworthy chose to work by what he called the purely negative method:

Of course I always have used the negative method -- (I suspect because I can't use the other) -- deliberately, from the hatred of preaching; from a sort of natural disgust and dislike at setting up to being a teacher on a lofty moral plane. . . . Excess I can and do condemn, and a yielding to passion where it causes great pain to others; but I feel it all to be a question of balance. . . . In other words, it's always 'excess' at which as a thinker and writer, I aim my shafts.12

As early as 1832 with the passage of the Reform Bill the power was being felt in England of such men as Galsworthy was later to depict in the Forsyte family. Parliament had responded most willingly to the passage of reform bills pleasing to the great middle class. It was this upper middle class that Galsworthy later identified as Forsytes. The industrial revolution had brought to many British people a type of slavery almost as hopeless as that of the Negro. Wealth had increased greatly, but at a disgraceful cost of broken bodies and starved minds. Industrialism was taking a heavy toll; food prices were kept high by tariff laws; war profiteers were numerous, and ignorance prevailed. The People's Charter was passed, and the organization of better working conditions by laws was soon functioning; however, the influential wealthy upper middle class and the nobility had very little sympathy and patience with the working people of industrial England,

12 Ibid., p. 98.
yet a few of the "Forsyte" class, the middle class, helped to work out many of the working man's problems.

John Galsworthy is associated with the history of the later Victorian period; the age was one of progress in spite of the many ills of the time. Good manners, strict morals, upright manhood and womanhood, sincere religion, colonial expansion, trade influence, economic leadership, and extreme wealth of individuals were marked characteristics of the age. A trend toward interest in all arts, a desire for college training, aggressiveness, and extreme possessiveness were dominant characteristics as well.

The English of the Victorian period were afraid of social degradation and inequality; they fought any new ideas in philosophy, science, and religion; they appealed to prejudice and tradition; yet they talked about free competition, freedom of contract, and social necessities. John Galsworthy indicted the whole social pattern with gentle irony in showing "what a thing is not," a device which he called his negative method.

In 1885 England was aware of a new life, a new generation of people and things. Oddly enough, old powers and old political divisions gave way to a new growth of strong internationalism and expansion. Leaders realized that nations could no longer live to themselves any more than

\[13\]bid., p. 79.
could individuals. Quick communication and transportation forced this fact upon the whole world. Leaders felt that the age of specialization for nations was dawning, just as industrialism and professionalism had caused specialization in fields of thought and individual endeavor. There was a realization of a certain interdependence of nations upon one another for the necessities of life. German dyes, American steel, Australian wool, and thousands of other national commodities were produced for world trade as well as for local consumption. The motor car and gasoline changed every locality in every continent. The struggle of capital and labor became more a national, or even an international, than an individual struggle.

Definition of Philosophy

Philosophy may be thought of as an analysis of experiences, either racial or individual. The word philosophy comes from a Greek word meaning, literally, "the love of wisdom"; it is further defined in Webster's Unabridged Dictionary as "the knowledge of phenomena as explained by, and resolved into causes and reasons, powers and laws; it is a systematic body of general conceptions or principles, ordinarily with implication of their practical application." To attempt to analyse experiences belonging to a race or an individual, according to a definition, is, except in a very general way, impossible, but individuals and groups
may be able to identify like experiences and to organize these experiences into ideas resulting in a system of thought bearing some leader's name. Such systems of thought have led to numerous schools of philosophy, but each one can finally be classified under one or the other of two general concepts of philosophic thinking -- idealism or materialism.

Idealism may be defined as "a term covering all those philosophies which agree in maintaining that spiritual values have a determining voice in the ordering of the universe."¹⁴

Webster's Unabridged Dictionary defines materialism as any theory which considers the facts of the universe to be sufficiently explained by the existence and nature of matter. The terms naturalism and materialism are so nearly alike that either term may be used, but it appears that materialism is more general in definition than naturalism.

The ancients originated philosophy in their endeavor to grasp and interpret the nature of things in their system of thought; philosophy was merely mythology and tradition. Socrates' reflections on ideas of "Being and Becoming"¹⁵ gave ethical insight to philosophy. Plato's ideas added sense-experience to "a system of external ideas, archetypes,


¹⁵Horatio W. Dresser, A History of Modern Philosophy, p. 3.
ethical principles and values. Later philosophers, whose interests were partly ethical and partly religious, systematized Christian doctrines after the order of Greek terminology and some of the principles of Greek logic; instead of the opposition between materialistic and idealistic world-view, reason and revelation were brought into critical relation:

The idea of God has become identified with the theological conception of the world, and Plato's supersensible world of eternal ideas with heaven or the City of God. Ecclesiastical authority became central, faith its ally, reason its servant. Nature as the field of scientific investigation was neglected.

Science enabled philosophy to break with tradition, mythology, and allegiance to later scholasticism; thus philosophy became freer to follow out the implications of the new world view both with respect to the inner life-idealism, and the natural life-materialism. Philosophy in England may have had its modern beginning with Francis Bacon; the method of thought for modern philosophy is that of the empiricist; the result is pragmatism. The empiricist attributes the origin of all knowledge to experience, and the result is a doctrine which teaches that meaning lies in the practical consequences and that the purpose of thinking is to develop beliefs which shall serve as principles of conduct.

\footnote{16Ibid., p. 4.} \footnote{17Ibid., p. 5.}
Pragmatism represents a perfectly familiar attitude in philosophy, the empiricist's attitude. A pragmatist turns away from inveterate habits, from abstractions, insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins.18

The philosophy of the nineteenth century was characterized by a new scientific trend brought about by the publication of The Origin of the Species by Charles Darwin. Lamarck, the French naturalist, earlier in the century had formulated a theory concerning species transformation, but his ideas were not supported later by Darwin. Lamarck had, according to one commentator,

... supposed that environment modifies individual organisms to their offspring. ... If we may suppose that such changes take place in animals' bodies and may be passed on to the offspring by inheritance, the whole plan of evolution becomes much simpler.19

Lyell, an English geologist, was busy explaining the differences in the transformations of all kinds of earthly changes, which he believed were attempts of life to adjust itself to its environment; this adjustment was a gradual evolution. Lyell, however, propounded the idea that all changes were produced by causes still in operation, and that only by special creation things came into life. Darwin's The Origin of the Species was, therefore, not a new theory, but a new confirmation of a very old theory; Darwin attempted

18William James, Pragmatism, p. 51.
19Patrick, op. cit., pp. 127-128.
to show how the theory of evolution worked, rather than simply to announce a theory of evolution. The nineteenth-century public confused Darwinism and the theory of evolution. This confusion at once divided the opinions and thought of people.

The churchman's attack upon Darwinism and upon the theory of evolution became one and the same. This attack caused a conflict between science and religion that exists to some degree today.

John Galsworthy was born in this unrest of philosophical thought. The opponents of naturalism and materialism were the churchmen; this discussion is interested in the opposition in so far as it helped to make the history of philosophy. The result of the church's opposition to scientific findings produced a positivism in other fields of thought as well as that of philosophy; science itself became positive.

Lamennais broke with the church in the nineteenth century and undertook a new philosophical synthesis involving elements of mysticism, neoplatonism, pantheism, and theology. "He has been called the founder of theological skepticism in the nineteenth century."\textsuperscript{20} A type of socialism had been sponsored by Saint-Simon's group, which

\textsuperscript{20}Dresser, op. cit., pp. 279-280.
economic ideals for dominant ideas in intellectual and political life.  

What we choose to call "Forsyte philosophy," or the philosophy of the British middle class, at this time was more favorable to a policy of laissez-faire so far as industrial, economic, intellectual, and political life were concerned; yet the common people were seeking social justice through the conflicting socialism of Prudhomme, who was opposed to private property, and through a study of Karl Marx's materialistic views. Comte, a French philosopher of the nineteenth century, had also influenced English thought through his follower, John Stuart Mill. Mill gave the word "altruism" to English thought.

German idealism, particularly the Hegelian philosophy, had previously found many followers in England. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Carlyle, William Wordsworth, and others had given philosophical insight to moral and ethical idealism. The romantic movement in social and moral philosophy actually marked a change from British materialism to British idealism.

From this brief comment it may be seen that a study of philosophy and its trends in Britain through the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth centuries helps one to understand British national and individual life as

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21 Ibid., p. 286.  
22 Ibid., p. 291.
they are illustrated by the attitudes of the Forsytes or their prototypes in late Victorian or in modern England.
CHAPTER II

SOME PHILOSOPHIES OF IDEALISM

Concepts of Idealism

An understanding of the philosophy of idealism is needed for a clear conception of the philosophy of the Forsytes. Herein is given a somewhat detailed study of four influential philosophers of idealism who seem to have had direct bearing upon the concepts of idealism that prevailed in English thought during the late Victorian period and the first quarter of the twentieth century. The philosophers will be discussed in the order of their relative importance, but no attempt will be made to specify when and how each philosopher's idealism became a personal characteristic of the Forsytes or of Victorian and twentieth-century Englishmen.

Idealism considers the universe as grounded and rooted in mind.¹ One learns through the experiences of the mind, for without mind there may be no response. The various degrees of mind may be found from the lowest nervous reaction to material stimuli to the highest intellectual responses of humanity to Deity: "... if you seek elemental things,

¹Patrick, op. cit., p. 211.
you will not find them in matter and motion and force, but in experience, in thought, in reason, in religious and ethical ideals." These qualities are not only of human and earthly significance, but are also of Deific or cosmic concern. Philosophy either accepts both idealism and materialism or it accepts one and rejects the other. The two views, of idealism and of materialism, seem to be directly opposed to each other. The point of view accepted in either case will determine the outcome of one's philosophy. There are only three things the ordinary person can do about philosophy: (1) he may accept idealism and be a misfit in a physical setting, (2) or accept materialism and be a misfit in a spiritual setting, or (3) combine the two and make for himself an individual philosophy of pluralism or of monism. The Forsytes seem to have an individual philosophy of monism.

The oldest system of philosophy that concerns England is that of Plato. To interpret Plato is not so difficult for one who studies Plato alone, but to study him in connection with various idealistic interpretations by scholars of philosophy will put the average reader of philosophy in a dilemma.

Plato did not contend that there is nothing but mind in the universe:

2 Ibid.
His teaching was rather that the significant things in the world — that is, the real things — are Ideas, and by "Ideas" he did not mean any kind of merely mental states. He meant real objective things as "forms," which are not material. . . . These (Ideas) are the Cosmic realities, while what we call matter he named Non-Being, not intending to say that it does not exist in a way, but that it is without significance except as a kind of crude stuff or material; and, as such, a source of disorder and evil and imperfections. 

Plato affirmed that the real things are forms or archetypes known not by the senses, but by the human reason; Plato's interest was with spiritual values rather than with physical values. He believed all things to have a certain mathematical relation; his ideas were developed into thoughts of beauty and justice. Modern theories of idealism are more akin to Plato than to the idealism of later philosophers, who advocated that only mind is real. Plato's philosophy did not include the later idea that every atom and particle had within itself mind; he did have a theory of the relation of mind to matter, but to him matter was in a constant flux and never did actually become fixed, while mind or Ideas are unchanging, and they just exist; the universe is a copy of the world of "forms"; the mind-world is not forever coming into being and then passing away as the material universe is always doing; thereby material things pass, but the things of the mind remain fixed; thus they are the only reality.

3 Ibid., p. 213.
The present-day world is filled with the idealism of the ancient philosophers, chiefly that of Plato. Modern philosophy has added instruments, laboratories, and precise methods and forms of research, which addition, to many minds, adds positivism to positivism for either idealism or materialism. An important purpose in any form of philosophy is to conserve the values of the system for the valid field of philosophical thought, whether that field be idealistic or materialistic.

Faith is a definite concept of idealism, and especially in the philosophy of theology. Faith becomes a system of reasoning concerning the inner life, as fostered by St. Augustine and other religious leaders in theological philosophy. The modern idealism has many of Plato's views, but the religious element added ideas concerning the relation of the body and the soul as two different substances. The inner, or subjective world, became the exact opposite of the outer, or objective world. Modern philosophy claims the right to observe, describe, explain, and generalize.

Since philosophy may be thought of as an analysis of experiences, either racial or individual, these experiences may be pure inner-subjective types or pure outer-objective types or a combination of the two; these philosophies will follow some pattern in a logical or illogical order. Plato's ideas led into idealized living and thinking; he had a pattern which in his mind was logical, but not logical in the
same sense as was the pattern Galileo used to prove nature orderly by means of weights dropped from the tower of Pisa; this power of logic, a mathematical method employed in the field of nature, upset the world more than any other one thing in the history of philosophy.

Plato's idealism had pattern and had logic, but not in the sense of the pattern and logic of materialism; he believed that the world of "forms" and "ideas" had purpose. The world, Plato believed, is through and through rational and orderly. It is a "Cosmos," not a chaos. Its ultimate realities are Ideas, and the world becomes real in proportion as crude "Matter" takes on these ideal forms.  

Plato had a deep feeling for beauty as the result of art; to him art and beauty were the highest expressions of Ideas. "The object of art is the beautiful." If the idea is beautiful, then art must have produced the thought, for if it were ugly, art could not be therein.

If art is to represent the beautiful, it will attain this essentially in that it makes the good strike our senses. From this follow its laws and the standard which we must apply in order to know whether or not the achievement of art deserves recognition. Whenever it produces the ugly, it is contrary to its peculiar task; it is an offense against the laws of art; and Critique of Art and Aesthetics must pronounce this offense ugly.

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4Ibid., p. 160.
6Ibid., p. 362.
Plato saw within art or the lack of art the presence or absence of God:

Plato is firmly convinced of God's rule in nature, of the dependence of the world and of the world-process on God. The two postulates that there is an ineffaceable difference between the true and the false and between the false and between the good and the bad -- these are fundamental assumptions of every scientific theory of knowledge and of every scientific ethics -- are proof for him that reason rules the world.7

If one accepts Plato's belief in the Divine reason and power of God over man and that God revealed himself to man through beauty, then he must admit some relationship between God, the Creator, and Man, the Created.

At any rate God and man are not on the same plane. The relation between God and man is not such that it would be possible for human beings to render God a service to show him benefit, to reward him for the good which they have received from him. . . . Prayer is the simplest means . . . to approach the Deity. Plato values and urges prayer. . . . All good things come from God and are grounded in God. But so does all reality -- the logically ordered system of the invisible realm of Ideas and the visible Cosmos -- have its basis in God. . . . Thus Eros leads him who desires to know and who searches for truth, as well as him who follows pure beauty; both seek the greatest happiness, the unconditioned good, in truth and beauty; both are in this manner led to God. In God all human longings find rest.8

Another forceful philosopher of idealism was Immanuel Kant; he believed in the power and reality of pure mind as the only reality; the outward forms of objects to him had no external reality at all, "but a peculiarity of the mind, a

7Ibid., pp. 370-371.

8Ibid., pp. 384, 386, 387-388.
special form of our sensibility. Kant's idealism may be classed as voluntaristic because he affirmed the "primacy of the will."

When psychologists place great emphasis upon the Will as representing the really essential and fundamental aspects of the mind, we speak of them as Voluntarists.  

Kant's most famous book dealing with his idea of philosophy is The Critique of Pure Reason; theoretical knowledge and the problems thereof are the studies of this famous book. He believed that mind had a structure within itself and that knowledge was determined by the structure of the mind. Kant believed that knowledge was had through forms of sense and categories of understanding; these forms and categories do not exist outside of sense; thus knowledge is all confined to experience -- a mind-made world. Kant did not deny objective reality which caused phenomena, but he believed that one knew and experienced these objective realities only through the mental structure, thereby causing sensations; he believed knowledge to be the result of appearances.

Kant did not leave out an inner, or subjective, sense of morality, freedom, immortality, and God; he did not insist upon the extreme idea that nothing is real in the world except mind, but he believed that mind is not a part of the phenomenal world, but belongs to a world of deeper reality.

9Patrick, op. cit., p. 84.  
10Ibid., p. 219.
In the philosophy of Kant empirical British tradition and continental rationalism converged. Kant believed that sensations must have a cause and that this cause was outside the mind; this unknown, or the cause, is "thing in itself." The whole is to Kant a mental construction which makes all things orderly.

Kant reduced the proofs of God to three notions: first, there must have been a cause -- that cause, God; second, the world reveals an orderly or rational design -- that design is God; third, God is a being whose nature is existence -- God is. Kant established moral law and established God as the power for that moral law; he believed good will and character the same. If good will and character are so important, then duty becomes the unconditional command in Kant's philosophy; his formula for every situation is this:

So act that the maxim of thy will may always hold good as a principle of universal legislation. . . .
So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of another, always as an end, never as a means.12

Kant emphasized character values, good will, and social cooperation. Forsyte England had much need for Kantian character, approval, good will, and cooperation. The sanction of public approval or disapproval of our fellow men is a more powerful force than laws of the state.

Kant also gave direction to the modern scientific and

11 Ibid., p. 349. 12 Ibid., p. 442.
psychological study of aesthetics. In *Critique of Judgment* he gave the mind a higher faculty than reason and will, the faculty of feeling, which is a new type of beauty for the world to consider.

George Berkeley recognized mind and matter dependent upon each other as to reality, but he believed that mind is above matter, since matter would have no meaning or reality outside the meaning mind gave to it. It is usually agreed, for instance, that mountains, rivers, and lakes have meaning and existence outside of mind, but in reality the mind has given these meanings to these objects. The term perception, not notion or ideas, is the term Berkeley used in his discussion on what then is real:

> Only minds or spirits or souls are real. . . . God exists, and you and I exist; in other words, God, the infinite Spirit, and a realm of finite spirits. That which we call nature, with its regular laws and consequences, is simply the action of the divine mind upon our finite minds. . . . Objects are real, only they are not independent of a perceiving mind. In fact, there is, said Berkeley, nothing in the universe except the infinite Spirit and a realm of finite spirits.\(^{13}\)

Berkeley's skepticism was against himself as well as others, but he always maintained a high respect for the opinions of those with whom he disagreed. His discussions were at first directed at Locke's doctrine that "solidity, extension, motion, and figure exist in the external world, apart from perception."\(^{14}\) The idea of material things,

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\(^{14}\) Dresser, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
apart from sensible objects as perceived by the mind, was to Berkeley a misleading abstraction; he was an idealist who found no ground for the complete separation of mind and matter. One never sees anything separated from the actual perception of it; to exist is to be perceived, and there must be a mind to perceive; thus materials are known by experience. Feelings that arise through perception, space, time, and distance are sensations. Sense experience is a relationship to nature and to matter. Berkeley believed

... that the order of nature, which in terms of all human experience is the sequence of perceptions ... is grounded in the intelligible activity of God; it is God who gives us this orderly experience which we call nature.15

Berkeley has infused Platonism into his later ideas of perception and existence; his idealism is "to exist, is to be perceived."16

Berkeley's philosophy remains, despite criticisms of the most scholarly; even realists of the scientific type use his contributions to philosophy:

His philosophy is, like his life, a process in which he passes from mathematical rationalism to practical philosophy, and from practical philosophy to the Absolute. His concrete logic led him finally from humanism to religion, from Locke to Plato, from psychologism to transcendentalism. During this transition, the science to which he had made such original contributions became in his eyes a system of unintelligible incantations; the humanistic ethics which he had embraced so eagerly, a superficial rationalization of selfishness, and the Deistic religion he had defended, a form of sacrilege, too trivial to be considered blasphemy.17

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15Ibid., p. 100.  
16Ibid., p. 104.  
The English idealism and Berkeley's idealism in the acceptance of God as the creator of all things, material and spiritual, combined to make the idea of the soul and spirits of the universe under one Divine guidance called Father, or God. Berkeley's philosophy seems to work with people, not against them.

He seems to have found some objective world after all, only he calls it God, while others call it matter. One cannot but wonder whether Berkeley's view is so far wrong. The beauty of the sunset, mountains, cloud, and sea, the exquisite perfection of the microscopic world, the almost miraculous order of nature as shown in animal instinct, in the marvels of evolution, in variation, in heredity, in the mystery of life itself -- all these make it reasonable, indeed, to say that living energy, which surrounds us on every side, acting as stimulus to our sense organ, is God.18

George Wilhelm Hegel's idealism has to do with the theory that philosophy, art, and religion are the final values which the human mind struggles for, and that consciousness of the human mind in its various stages of development is the highest possible purpose of mind; that art and beauty are the highest expression of mind. The universe is rational and has purpose; it is the manifestation or expression of an Absolute Mind. All reality to Hegel is mind expressed through reason or thought. The universe to him represented a mind process -- "God thinking."19 Nature is nothing more than Absolute Mind revealing itself, but nature is not the highest expression; to Hegel that highest

18Patrick, op. cit., p. 351. 19Ibid., p. 221.
expression is self-consciousness, mind-realized in art, religion, and philosophy.

Hegel's idea is not a fixed process repeating itself, but a process of development, a type of progressive evolution not so much in nature as in mind. Mind or reason progressing gradually to its final fulfillment in Absolute Mind. His idealism is a powerful system of philosophy that has been drawn upon by many later philosophers of objective idealism in its varied forms.

Nearly all systems of objective Idealism are prone to speak of the Absolute, the Absolute Idea, or the Absolute Self, or Absolute Experience, and the word Absolute, unlike the word infinite in philosophy, does not stand for a mere superlative of excellence. It means, rather, that final unity which has always been the quest of philosophy.20

Hegel called his philosophical idea the Absolute Idea; thus the soul of man becomes the very essence of reality; mind is not something associated with matter or reality, but it is matter or reality, the primordial stuff of the very universe itself, a monistic idea; thus one finds God the great substance of the world. Hegel believed that only one who has the divine or Absolute in him could believe in the Absolute Idea; only spirit can know the spirit. Hegel combined rationalism with love and beauty; this rationalism came through a discipline called logic and justice. His idealism attempted "to deduce all reality to pure

20 Ibid., p. 223.
thought, to the utter neglect of nature, the sciences, and the facts of evil and irrationality in the world."\textsuperscript{21}

The various stages of the mind development in Hegel's philosophy start with the "mind subjective,"\textsuperscript{22} in which mind is a soul, a spirit of nature. Mind as consciousness sets up reason, and reason gives to consciousness a sense of unity; that unity gives a progressive attainment through mind objective, mind outside of self, to a realization of Mind Absolute, or God. The highest revelation or expression of Mind Absolute is in philosophy, art, and religion. Beauty again is the outcome of the philosophy of Idealism.

\textbf{Effects of Idealistic Philosophy on Twentieth-century England}

The outstanding teachers of the great English universities gave direction to philosophical idealism in British thought during the Victorian period; William Wallace did much to help introduce German idealism, and especially Hegelianism, into England. Wallace considered philosophy a progression of thought from love of wisdom to possession of wisdom, and believed that the system of Idea is superior to the chaotic materialistic appearance of the world.

Idealism in England during the mid-Victorian and late Victorian periods was a combination of the recognition of nature and the knowledge of nature within one's self-conscious

\textsuperscript{21} Dresser, op. cit., p. 227.

\textsuperscript{22} William Wallace, translator, Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, p. 167.
being; this recognition of nature involved implications of moral and spiritual experiences. Thomas Green, a great teacher educated at Oxford, set forth some ideas of philosophy in harmony with English thought, but there was not in his teaching a unity of selves and things, such as Hegel and a few post-Kantian theorists believed in. To Green change was inevitable; so he thought and sought an intelligible explanation of self and the complete universe of things in regard to change. He used a rational idea that man can gradually rise to knowledge of the external; he believed in a constructive idealism:

If we ask why there should be this reproduction of the external consciousness in each finite personality, . . . the question is "as unanswerable as every form of the question why the world as a whole should be what it is." This doctrine is in no way refuted by the theory of organic evolution, but even when that theory is interpreted to mean that there is a continuity between the lower stages of intelligence in men and the higher stages of intelligence in brutes. Even though it took countless generations and eons of time to evolve an organism through which the eternal consciousness could reproduce itself, it would still remain true that knowledge rests upon the assumption that there is such an eternal mind reproducing itself in the minds of men.²³

A. C. Bradley, who may appear as a skeptic in his realism and idealism, is not one according to the English mind; he intended his ideas for those who "become aware of and doubt all presuppositions."²⁴ Green did, however, according

²⁴Ibid., p. 397.
to Bradley, give preference to the idea of totality of appearances as belonging to the Absolute, the point where externality utterly ceased; he was a combination of the skeptic materialist and the idealist; but he believed to some degree in each. The real, then, according to Green,

... includes our experiences, our feelings of immediacy, as well as our thought and will. Reality is one experience; and in pure first immediate experience the whole Reality is present.\(^{25}\)

Forsyte or middle-class England believed and doubted; the Forsytes were contradictory personalities, as has been stated in the first part of this discussion. But at least the Englishman of the Forsyte class felt "self the locus of values."\(^{26}\) This same Englishman of the Forsyte class acknowledged the Absolute, God, but never lost self nor let it be absorbed into the Absolute; this self existed as a real individual, a Forsyte Englishman. This self-relation to God and the lasting identity of self within God became English Christianity and philosophy for Forsyte England. A few strong, outstanding pronouncements of idealized religious philosophy have recently been upheld by the now retired Bishop of Canterbury, as may be inferred from his retirement speech, which is available at any church press.

William Wallace helped spread the idealism of Hegel's philosophy, and established a system of the "Idea," which became superior to the chaotic, materialistic philosophy

\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 457.  \(^{26}\)Dresser, op. cit., p. 397.
then current in England. Idealism combined nature with self into the recognition of conscious beings with strong implications of moral and spiritual experiences and responsibilities, as implied in the ideas of Thomas Green, teacher of philosophy at Oxford, but in the teaching of Wallace it lacked the unity of self and things that Hegel's mind had conceived and Kant's philosophy had possessed. Because of this philosophy of the idealism of self and God, England became forceful in political, social, economic, religious, and cultural leadership through her great individuals:

Although it is easy to make fun of many aspects of Victorian England, we cannot ignore the fact that against this background great individuals stand out in every aspect of intellectual and public life. The very smugness and material prosperity of the age served as a healthy irritant to those questioning minds to which we must look back with veneration, not because they were conforming Victorians, but because they were keen-minded, progressive Victorians.\(^{27}\)

\(^{27}\)Rewey Belle Inglis, Alice Cecilia Cooper, Marion A. Sturdevant, and William Rose Benet, *Adventures in English Literature*, p. 663.
CHAPTER III

SOME PHILOSOPHIES OF MATERIALISM

Materialistic Philosophers

Just as a clear, definite, detailed study of idealism was needed for a true conception of the philosophy of Forsyte idealism, a like study of materialism is needed for the understanding of Forsyte materialism. First it may be well to arrive at an acceptable definition of materialism; then four important materialistic philosophers may be discussed in the order of their relative significance. No attempt will be made to specify when and how each philosopher’s materialism began to affect twentieth-century England.

In the philosophy of materialism emphasis is placed upon mechanical causes, the conservation of energy, and movements of matter through space. Mind is an incident, depending upon a highly developed nervous system in animals. Man possesses the highest development of the nervous system; therefore man is capable of a better mind than that possessed by other animals. Matter is real, and mind is understood as a product of matter in the materialistic and the mechanistic world. "Matter is the one and only kind of
being -- the primary substance."¹ It should be noted that "materialism considers the universe grounded and rooted in matter, or in physical energy."²

If matter is the "stuff"³ upon which materialism is based, what is it then that grows and changes? This growth and change is known as a type of evolution. What appears to be real may in truth be false. Is Nature real, or is Nature a manifestation of the real? What is the source of matter?

Theles of Milethus, who lived in the sixth century before Christ and who is called the father of philosophy, said that all things come from the water.⁴

Other philosophers believed in other sources, such as air or fire; the early Greeks believed the atomic theory, but not exactly as modern philosophy and science know the atom. There must be one substance, or two substances, or more than two substances as the source or sources of matter; the terms monism, dualism, and pluralism are used in reference to one, two, or more sources; the theory of monism and dualism has always been a popular idea in philosophy, but philosophers of the present day are more concerned with the meaning and value of the world rather than its source. "Dualism is the theory that mind and matter are the two fundamental realities in the world and that they cannot be

¹Patrick, op. cit., p. 200. ²Ibid., p. 211.
³Ibid., p. 181. ⁴Ibid.
reduced the one from the other."

The Christian theology is dualistic, as the soul has always been considered spiritual and immortal substance within the body; the body has been considered as mortal; however, most philosophers finally become monistic believers. At present some few philosophers are identified with the pluralistic theory, which is not discussed in this thesis.

"Monism is a theory which insists that the ultimate 'stuff' of the world is one." Both materialism and idealism attempt to find this one reality, and as the idealist insists upon mind, so the materialist insists upon matter. The materialist believes that mind is a form or function of matter and that matter is nature working under law; the law is the question for philosophy. Materialism is and can be as dogmatic as idealism, but historically "materialism has never succeeded in realizing this ideal of oneness." Atoms and ions provide the source of motion for the old and the present pattern of the materialistic world; some materialistic theories have even given a psychic power to atoms. The German philosopher Ernst Haeckel said:

The two fundamental forms of substance, ponderable matter and ether, are not dead and only moved by extrinsic force, but they are endowed with sensations and will (though naturally of the lowest

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5 Ibid., p. 182.  
6 Ibid., p. 184.  
grade); they experience an inclination for condensation, a dislike of strains, they strive after the one and struggle against the other. 8

He endows the psychic qualities of the atoms with a creative power called feeling and inclination as the cause of substance formed into mass and ether; matter to him had a live something within it, a creative psychic power within it.

The influence of physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology upon an understanding of the interaction of materials upon materials has helped to identify the practical results in a mechanistic way, but mechanism does not go far enough to justify philosophy's idea that all reality rests in matter.

The source of matter may be light; light travels, but what is the particle that travels from sun to earth? It may be a wave-motion, as water is a wave-motion, but there must be some container for these wave-motions in light just as water's wave-motions must fill all space. The theorist of materialism calls this light-power electromagnetic waves in the field of ether, but the corpuscular theory of light of the eighteenth century, later to be supplanted by the theory of energy or heat-wave or all kinds of light rays in the nineteenth century, seems to be more acceptable now. The idea of little particles traveling on these rays makes use of the central idea of the corpuscular theory of older physics. Light rays behave in two ways:

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8 Ibid., pp. 201-202.
like waves and like particles. Radiant-energy is a fact, but what it is is still a theory; there is atomic behavior in the light-ray; thus light is matter, electricity, and atomic power moving in waves. "In other words, not only may waves be made to show all the properties of particles, but particles may also be made to show all the properties of waves."9

The older idea of mind as a function of matter was the attempt of the materialist to reduce all implications of life-energy to the monistic idea of matter as the source of all life.

Man is an adaptive mechanism, wholly explicable in terms of laws of physics and chemistry. Consciousness arises in the transformation of energy in the highly complex mechanism of the nervous system, but is not itself a distinct form of energy nor a distinct form of being of any kind.10

The Greek materialist Democritus believed the soul composed of atoms, like the body; the German materialist Haeckel believed that thought was a secretion of the brain or a function of the brain.

The Forsytes' possessiveness in all things identifies them definitely with a strong materialistic philosophy based upon individual ownership of ideas or materials. The possession of power, they believed, would entitle them to all properties belonging to mind or materials.

A philosophy of the materialistic type that concerns

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9 Ibid., p. 195.  
10 Ibid., p. 247.
English thought may be found in the theories of Francis Bacon; he was concerned only with physical causes; his purpose was "not to understand the physical world, but to use it, to control it, and to exploit it."\(^{11}\) Modern philosophy can be said to begin with several philosophers; it might easily begin with Francis Bacon in emancipating the individual in cultural and religious matters, a type of mechanical theory of freedom in matter and mind. There is a great amount of empiricism and rationalism in modern philosophy. Bacon protested vigorously against the Aristotelian idea of scientific reasoning without mathematical usage and against the quantitative, mathematical idea of Democritus; he formulated ideas on induction, from particular to general principle, based on experiences through observations. As has been stated before, Galileo used mechanics to give mathematical theory of motion to laws of science; his famous experiment of weights dropped from the tower of Pisa was the type of mathematical proof Bacon insisted upon. Very soon logic entered the field of research as a result of the scientific-mathematical method of investigation.

Bacon's idea of philosophy is a departure from theology to the field of positive science; his ideas are saturated with positivism through empiricism, which has been the English point of view for three centuries. Francis Bacon was

\(^{11}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 162.}\)
... the first to express the empirical ideal or practical type of thought for which England has stood for three centuries. ... His limited interest in scientific principles which were coming into vogue indicates the shortcomings of his method. ... When honored later as the originator of the experimental method, the reference had been to his general method, not to its details or precepts. ... Yet it has been said that he accomplished more than anyone in freeing the human mind from preconceptions and directing attention to the unbiased study of facts. 12

Bacon actually started his work as critic of the existing philosophies by pointing out defects and then his suggesting remedies. He considered scholasticism formal and a dispute about nothing but words; he separated theology from philosophy and then made philosophy concerned with causes. "He believed philosophy should be a study of things in their connection, not of words." 13 He also attacked the fallacies of things and called his ideas of these ideas idols: "All men are more or less hampered by various tendencies to err, illusions both native and acquired. These preconceptions Bacon calls idols of the mind." 14 When the mind is liberated from idols, the individual may be able to observe, to gain facts, then to generalize and arrive at truth by the interpretation of nature through inductive reasoning to a final synthesis of sciences. Bacon used what John Galsworthy called the "negative method," or what scientists call the "scientific method,"

12Dresser, op. cit., p. 15.  
13Ibid., p. 16.  
14Ibid.
which means learning by discovering what "a thing is not," or, in other words, the process of elimination now used by scientists. Reality was individual nature made known to him by sense-perception.

For Bacon, science in contrast with religion is founded on perception, on general ideas derived from sense-impressions; Bacon concedes to metaphysics the right to discover the ultimate forms of bodies but he holds that final causes have no place in the scientific scheme of nature or in the practical life of man.15

Bacon's wise caution, his naturalism, and his empiricism were real contributions to the field of thought; his concern was of the natural world, but he nowhere denied the relation of man to his God. He warned his readers in the following statement concerning man's relation toward Divinity: "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion."16 Bacon was sure that knowledge would eliminate fear, and that the world had suffered too much from fear.

John Locke's mind and philosophy were those of the empiricist and particularly of the English empiricist. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding is his chief work. He gave to philosophy in England its empirical turn. Locke never drew positive conclusions where he did not see the issue clearly; he was cautious on speculation; he held close

15Ibid., p. 18.  
16Patrick, op. cit., p. 38.
to the facts of experience as clues to the nature of things. He regarded philosophy as concerned with the problems of physics, logic, and ethics, and these problems were approached through analysis of understanding so far as ideas within the limit of experience were possible. Locke never liked to begin with rationalistic assumptions; he is definitely a materialist, but not dogmatic. He recognized "consciousness as a stream of experiences yielding its own method."\(^{17}\) He was not concerned with problems of the physical basis of mind, nor mind's essence, nor even its relation to body; these were entirely speculative to him. He was concerned with the mind in its practical exercise; the term "idea," as Locke used the word, meant "whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks."\(^{18}\) He did not hold to the theory of innate ideas and moral principles. English idealism of Locke's time held to the idea of man's social and moral nature as innate. Locke felt that there was no ground for ideas prior to experience, and experience to him meant contact with material things; therefore there is nothing that is innate concerning ideas; they come from experience.

Ideas may have two sources; those sources are sensation and reflection. Reflection to Locke is the internal sense, and sensation is the external sense. He believed

\(^{17}\)Dresser, op. cit., p. 64. \(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 65.
there was no need of evidence for the existence of ideas, because everyone is conscious of them within himself. Other people's actions and expressions are proof enough to satisfy anyone that these same ideas are to be found in other people. The evidences of the human mind, he felt, are the faculties by which the mind perceives, wills, remembers, desires, and combines external sensations to internal reflections.

Most ideas originate from sense-impressions; but ideas due to reflection involve self-consciousness, which is original, independent, howbeit sense experience yields the preliminary subject-matter which we reflect upon in our self-consciousness. . . . Nothing can be more plain than the distinction of perception of our simple ideas, which the mind can neither make nor destroy. 19

Thought goes on amid the pulsations of consciousness, the will being the power to act or not to act in the thought process.

Our knowledge is of three types, according to Locke: the first type is intuitive, the second is demonstrative, and the third is sensitive.

We have, to be sure, intuitive knowledge of self, demonstrative knowledge of God, and sensitive knowledge of the world of nature. . . . The existence of self is beyond doubt . . . by means of reason and cause . . . there must be a creator . . . sensations make us aware that nature exists. 20

Moral ideas, according to Locke, are derived in the same manner as sense experience; goodness is connected with

19 Ibid., p. 67.
20 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
pleasure, evil with pain as derived from the passions. Locke finds man capable of conforming his conduct to standards of rectitude, in accordance with the program of the moral life. Moral liberty is for him not mere freedom of will but freedom of the moral agent, power to act as to abstain from action according to preference. To prefer one action to another is to will it. ... the great incentive is happiness as the end at which we all naturally or reasonably aim in all our actions. ... Locke's whole philosophy in fact reinforces his hedonism, the doctrine that pleasure or happiness is good. ... empiricism is the doctrine of common sense.21

The theory of knowledge began with Locke; he was a forerunner of the theories of democratic government and knowledge within experience in contrast to the theory of innate knowledge. He exercised this same type of belief in religion, thereby giving democracy and experience as theories of knowledge:

Locke was one of the founders of religious rationalism, a good forerunner of religious tolerance. ... the ideal empiricist and apostle of liberty, who abides by the results of his empiricism in every field.22

Locke avoided positivism in his philosophy; he did not expound a complete doctrine of materialism, but he did open the way for future study in the field of materialistic philosophy. Man's power of reflection in reshaping ideas which have been gained through experience is Locke's chief contribution to philosophy; he also brought into philosophical thought the importance of the individual with that individual's will and freedom.

21 Ibid., pp. 71-72.  
22 Ibid., p. 73.
The chief contribution of John Stuart Mill to philosophical thought is his System of Logic, which rests upon empiricism and is based on analysis used in the inductive method of reasoning. He believed that consciousness was involved in the laws of association, of psychology, and of the modern natural sciences. "Mill held that no principle prior to experience need be assumed: All knowledge proceeds from experiences; experience is the test of all knowledge derived from it."

To feel or see by bodily or mental sensation is to know. To Mill, feeling and consciousness are the same. Feeling may imply bodily sensations as well as emotions; feeling, then, to Mill is awareness.

Mill believed that within the individual is the beginning of general truths. There are certain states or stages of an identical ego within individuals. There is a commonality running through all individuals which results in a general truth or in common truths within humanity. Human knowledge unites and formulates data. If reason is empirical, then objective values are rare, as most experiences still remain individual; but by inductive inferences from these particular experiences general values within humanity may be established. These values coming from experience are the source of knowledge -- mind. There are certain uniformities, but only a few absolutes that the

Ibid., p. 304.
human being must accept. The useful and desirable are the
worthy ends. Mill admits that

. . . the pleasures of the intellect, the emotions,
and the imagination are higher in value than bodily
feelings; that pleasures differ in kind as well as
quality. He finds that people prefer the higher
pleasures despite susceptibility to the lower. . . .
Conscience is building; its authority is as august
and strong as if it were imposed by a higher being
or older reality. . . . 'the feeling of unity with
our fellow-creatures'. . . . Mill shows that utility in-
volves justice, keeping faith, impartiality, equality.24

The theory in philosophy advocated by Charles Darwin
in The Origin of the Species has caused him both praise
and condemnation. The mechanistic theory of living organ-
ism, as has been said, originated with the ancient Greek
idea concerning the psychic qualities of the atom. Many
philosophers -- Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, Newton,
Herbert Spencer, and others -- have added philosophical
phrases to the materialistic concept of the origin of the
world. Darwin's discovery of the law of natural selection
which explains the origin of animal species added strength
to the opponents of idealism. Materialistic mechanism not
only attempts explanation of life but also attempts ex-
planation of mind on a purely mechanical plan. Darwin had
in mind in his The Origin of the Species an organic evolu-
tion, a progression; he attempted to show by reason and by
scientific proof that animal species are descended from

24 Ibid., pp. 309-310.
other species; and, further, he believed that plants and animals have a common origin. People usually confuse Darwinism and evolution, their belief being that they are one and the same. Evolution is a broader, older, and more general term; it may be thought of as the theory of a gradual change from primordial living germs; Darwinism is not so broad as evolution; it is merely an attempt to explain the method of progressive evolution.

The nineteenth century is marked with a mistaken belief on the part of the followers of both religion and evolution that each one had explained the world to its followers.

We have come to learn that religious attitude has been greatly strengthened by the enlarged vision which evolution has brought us. . . . Evolution has given us a new method, the genetic method, by which we learn to understand things by our studying their growth and their development.25

The followers of evolution fell into the mistake of believing that evolution had explained everything, and that other philosophies were unnecessary.

The student of philosophy, who has already learned that natural laws are not forces nor powers, but merely observed uniformities, is not likely to fall into the mistake of making a God of evolution.26

Evolution gives very little attention to the problem of life and the mind; it is in no way concerned with an explanation of life or of life's origin. The real evolutionary

26Ibid., p. 124.
scientist lays no claim to explaining these great unknowns. Darwin and Herbert Spencer added different things to the field of evolution. One stated a problem, and the other gave a system in the new field. In this great system matter, motion, and force are the powers that man must know in his effort to understand realities. Spencer's idea, translated into average human understanding, means:

All changes represent a process of integration and differentiation. In the beginning the world was a fiery mass, all alike and highly diffused. It began to be solidified, integrated, and different. Planets were separated from the sun; land and water, mountains and valleys appeared and represented further differentiation.27

Darwin believed that all the wonders of change by evolution are accomplished by chance variations and natural selection; he believed more in social inheritance than in biological inheritance.

Biologically the physical and mental equipment of the child is the same as that with which the father started, not the same as that with which his father ended, save only by such variations, coming, it is believed, from internal causes.28

Darwinism makes existence a struggle in which only the fittest survive. The fittest are those individual animals or plants that are best adapted to the environment. The right to survive the struggle is due to variations in structure and function between individuals in the species. "Like begets like, but not just like. Those having favorable variations will be selected and preserved. This is called

27 Ibid., p. 126.  
28 Ibid., p. 131.
natural selection."\textsuperscript{29} Darwin was influenced by the great revolutionary naturalist, Rousseau, who held somewhat similar ideas on the power of nature to select the favorable for the best development of the species. The whole idea of organic evolution stresses the struggle for existence, heredity, and variations. A more detailed study of the scientific implications of these terms is not needed in this thesis.

Effect of Materialistic Philosophy on Twentieth-century England

One must remember that the inhibitions which are associated with the Victorians were not invented by them. Since the fall of the human race in the garden of Eden, mankind has been blessed or cursed with a sense of propriety or decency. The Victorian conventions of thought and behavior were not exclusively English.

Industrialism and a great religious awakening did much to affect the idealistic philosophy of the Victorians. The spread of education and the wider publication of books helped to change the philosophy of the common, middle-class Englishman. Change of tradition brought about a more materialistic outlook. The Victorians thus assimilated the conceptions of industrialism and scientific materialism, which became the driving forces of contemporary life.

\textsuperscript{29}ibid., p. 129.
Controversies about evolution and the inspired authority of the Bible produced the skepticism of the twentieth century. One may deplore the change or rejoice in it, but it should be noted as a change in the intellectual conditions under which Englishmen lived. The whole attitude of the age is one of philosophical detachment, or of cynical skepticism, resulting in difficulty of communication of thought and feeling between the older, more orthodox, and the newer, more skeptical, points of view.

Hume points out that 'all knowledge degenerates into probability' whenever we attempt to demonstrate any belief. This is even true of mathematical knowledge. All that we can do is to explain the primary probability. This secondary probability is due to the judging faculty. When we question the judging faculties, then we must question the question, and so on ad infinitum. Therefore the more we subject our beliefs to scrutiny the more skeptical we perforce become.56

Religious decay brought about two tendencies: the weakening of paternal authority and the emancipation of women. The latter was influenced in turn by many movements and trends of the age, such as free athletic exercises, short skirts, removal of many legal disabilities, opening of professions and occupations to women, suffrage, and eligibility of women for election to the House of Commons.

In fact the whole 'woman question' became a burning one during the nineteenth century. Certain daring spirits, no longer satisfied with being parlor ornaments, desired a college education; others tried to

enter the business world; some went to war as nurses; others asked for property rights, and, worst of all, declared that women should have the vote. 31

The great importance of machinery also increased the power of organized labor. Industrialism has become a problem not peculiar to any country, as all industrial groups seem to have the same troubles. Their unrest may be due to the mechanization of their life. Countrymen come to the city, and in a generation or two their children become restless, because individuals long for the environmental conditions of their heredity, regardless of comfortable machines provided for their work and pleasure. The mechanistic comforts seem to have caused a decline in the acquisitiveness which formerly characterized thrifty, industrious, and hard-working individuals. "As a great manufacturing country, England could now let the broad plains of her colonies raise the food, while she repaid them from her developed industries." 32

John Galsworthy deals with current issues in a style unlike that of the propagandist in discussing the upper middle class life in The Forsyte Saga:

... always judicial, sane, and dignified, examining each problem calmly, without denouncing, and even eager to hear and to understand the point of view of the other person ... 33

He shows that the great transition from idealism to materialism is in its greatest turmoil. In the later chapters of

31 Inglinis, Cooper, Sturdevant, and Benet, op. cit., p. 665.
32 Ibid., p. 659.
33 Ibid., p. 988.
this thesis each novel and interlude of the Saga will be treated in a manner to show that idealism and materialism are combined in the mental, spiritual, and physical personality of the Englishmen therein portrayed.
CHAPTER IV

THE FORSYTE SAGA

The Man of Property

The Man of Property, published in 1906, is the first novel of the trilogy known as the Forsyte Saga. The writer treats it as a psychological novel in the hands of a very fine satirist. The setting is in London during the late Victorian age, beginning somewhere near 1886. There is much cruelty and hypocrisy together with much kindness and sincerity, revealed in the society depicted here. Perhaps the gradual fading-out of cruelty and hypocrisy that Galsworthy showed during the twenty years of his writing the Saga was due to his own mellowing as he grew older. "'As one gets older,' he once reflected, 'one no longer takes such a serious and tragic view of things; rather one is struck by the irony, the humor in them."

Galsworthy is a satirist, especially with character and environment. The various characters may be considered symbols of social values which grew out of their environment and heredity. The environment of the Victorian age was

1Natalie Croman, John Galsworthy, p. 11.
marked by a definite individual possessiveness, parallel
with England's national possessiveness, epitomized in her
policy of colonial expansion.

The Man of Property does not in the old sense reward
virtue and punish vice, but in a commonsense way it does re-
veal the worthiness and unworthiness of virtue and vice.
The author concerns himself with the physical and psy-
chological aspects of the Forsyte family as a unit, but
through the individuals of that family he evaluates the
excess found in each as worthy or unworthy values for family
life, the unit of national life.

In the opening chapter one knows at once that the
characters are typical of those in upper middle-class Eng-
lish society, for as the author indicates, there is "evid-
ce of that mysterious concrete tenacity which renders a
family so formidable a unit of society, so clear a repro-
duction of society in miniature."2 The Forsyte type is
characteristic of England, but is also to be found in
every nation. Galsworthy has most successfully pictured
them in Britain, for Victorian Britain symbolized property
more than any other nation could, with possessions so vast
in area that "the sun never set on English soil."

In Forsyte history the first Jolyon was a yeoman who
lived in the country of Dorset by the sea; his son, the

second Jolyon, "superior Dorset Forsyte," built houses and had ten children; these children migrated to London, and the eldest of these ten was Jolyon, the third, known in The Man of Property as Old Jolyon, a tea merchant, who is very refined and cultured and possessed of much property. He symbolizes solidarity of property power, but he is possessed of a certain element of philosophy in which love of beauty is evident.

A subconscious offensiveness is working in the family as the action opens with an "At Home" at Old Jolyon's house in Stanhope Gate; the occasion is an announcement of the engagement of Old Jolyon's granddaughter, June, to Philip Bosinney, a young architect.

The Forsytes were resentful of something, not individually, but as a family; this resentment expressed itself in an added perfection of raiment, an exuberance of family cordiality, an exaggeration of family importance, and the sniff. 3

The power and the importance of property is meant to impress Philip Bosinney, who is anything but thoughtful in his "perfection of raiment," but who is a very worthy young chap without property. It is Bosinney's lack of property that brings the danger. He is a foreigner to Forsytes, yet as English as they. He is a "Buccaneer," 4 possessed of the desire to express himself in architectural designing, and has a great liberalism toward life and things in general.

3 Ibid., p. 3. 4 Ibid., p. 6.
He is an encroachment on "Forsytism," material possessiveness, and tradition. Right at this point Forsytism, materialism, is brought face to face with idealism in Philip Bosinney, who may be identified as a symbol of passions and emotions, a great danger to cold possessiveness and tradition. The Forsytes are now on guard: "Never had there been so full an assembly, for, mysteriously united in spite of their differences, they had taken arms against a common peril."\(^5\)

June, who has a will as well as a mind, has grown up in a setting of property and tradition which to her has no meaning except to give her what she wants, and she wants Bosinney. She may well represent undirected energy and power, for,

Though not yet nineteen, she was notorious. Had she not said to Mrs. Soames -- who was always so beautifully dressed -- that feathers were vulgar? Mrs. Soames had actually given up wearing feathers, so dreadfully downright was dear June.\(^6\)

Mrs. Soames is Irene; Irene's feathers are the concrete advertisement of Soames' property in two ways: she is his and her feathers are his. Expensively dressed wives are good advertisements of their husbands' success and bank accounts. Soames feels a definite possessiveness of Irene; yet he intuitively realizes that she is not completely his, for he would, if he could, possess her very soul.

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 7.  
\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 6-7.
Irene may comfortably symbolize beauty, which is the greatest accomplishment of art; the two, art and beauty, are symbols of God, Mind Absolute. She is idealized beauty, which is unable to harmonize with pure materialism.

Soames Forsyte is the very soul of tradition and possessiveness of propertied England; he represents pure materialism, but he is, unfortunately, possessed of a sense of value for beauty and art, not for art's own value, but for its property value.

He had stopped to look in at a picture shop, for Soames was an "amateur" of pictures, and had a little room in No. 62, Montpellier Square, full of canvases, stacked against the wall, which he had no room to hang. . . . They were nearly all landscapes with figures in the foreground, a sign of some mysterious revolt against London, its tall houses, its interminable streets, where life and the lives of his breed and class were passed. . . . He noted the subjects of the pictures, the names of the painters, made calculation of their values, but without the satisfaction he usually derived from this inward appraisement. 7

He is absolutely immune to the spiritual essence of beauty; as a collector of art, the value that he sets on it is always one of money well-invested which should bring better returns. He is a complete prisoner to traditions and properties; he is an extreme egoist and a pronounced materialist.

Her power of attraction he regarded as part of her value as his property; . . . within twelve miles of Hyde Park Corner, the value of the land certain to

7 Ibid., pp. 63-64.
Late Victorian England knew him as a successful businessman, rigid in morality. "It was not as if he drank! Did he run into debt, or gamble, or swear; was he violent; were his friends rackety; did he stay out at night? On the contrary."[8]

Bosinney differs greatly from the family he is being drawn into. "He differs as much from the Forsytes as chalk from cheese, represents the might of the Ideal as opposed to the might of Capital."[9] Bosinney represents mind over matter, or ideal over material, in his expression of a "free hand" in the building and decorating of Soames' and Irene's house, "Robin Hill." His success carried failure also; for capital carries an alarming amount of power when Forsytes and Buccaneers are concerned with such an investment as Robin Hill.

June is the essence of activity and energy:

... a little bit of a thing, as somebody once said, "all hair and spirit," with fearless blue eyes, a firm jaw, and a bright colour, whose face and body seemed too slender for her crown of red-gold hair.[10]

June's taste for art is not for art itself, but for the promotion of "lame-ducks"; the creative artist must have such a person of interest and activity to further his work by

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[8] Ibid., pp. 62-64.  
[9] Ibid., p. 61.  
promoting formal displays in public and private galleries. June represents the idle rich who refuses to be idle; she never gives up spirit in any situation. She is subject to change, and change she can if she must. Her engagement to Bosinney, a lover of beauty for beauty's sake alone, is, of course, a mistake; he can never be united to superficial art and beauty.

Aunt Ann may be thought of as the very essence of Forsyte durability and the soul of property. Aunt Ann, who is always there, whose "grey curls banded her forehead, curls that, unchanged for decades, had extinguished in the family all sense of time."12 She seems the very strength of Victorianism, and portrays another kind of property -- the possession of Forsyte health.

Aunt Ann turned her old eyes from one to the other. Indulgent and severe was her look. In turn the three brothers looked at Ann. She was getting shaky. Wonderful woman! Eighty-six if a day; might live another ten years, and had never been strong. Swithin and James, the twins, were only seventy-five, Nicholas a mere baby of seventy or so. All were strong, and the inference was comforting. Of all forms of property their respective healths naturally concerned them most.13

Property, to the Forsytes, is anything that legally belongs to one; its form may be money, land, health, home, wife, children, social prestige; anything possessed by work, purchase, or inheritance is property.

Timothy is the symbol of security; his life is over a

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century long; Victorianism itself endured a little longer. Timothy held fast to what he had by way of property, and by so doing died the richest Forsyte, but with all his property of health and wealth and security, he seemed to be the least human of them all. He needed beauty and society to humanize his property. His wealth was intact, but it was useless. Were possession without use diminishes the value of the object possessed.

Soames is a good Victorian, a substantial Englishman; he never goes beyond good taste in any matter of ownership, but ownership with Soames has a specific meaning. "Out of all things he had collected, his silver, his pictures, his houses, his investments, he got a secret and intimate feeling; . . ."\(^{14}\) He had won the beautiful Irene Heron in marriage, and, according to his code, marriage made her his legal property. Forsytes were dependable in property matters. The very soul of Forsytism was a protective conformity to all principles of property, if that property were ever assailed by passion and freedom.

The only way Soames, the soul of materialism, could have ever possessed Irene, the soul of beauty and idealism, would have been through beauty's need of materialism's property. Irene had married Soames under just such a necessity. "He had forgotten the day when, adroitly taking

\(^{14}\) *bid.*, p. 76.
advantage of an acute phase of her dislike to her home surroundings, he crowned his labors with success."\textsuperscript{15}

Young Jolyon is not a genuine Forsyte; he is possessed of a philosophy of beauty and freedom aside from property possessiveness. He feels the insecurity of property alone; to him there must finally be more of an ideal of beauty within material properties; he must ultimately be more of an idealist than a materialist. Because of this freedom young Jolyon has been ostracized from the Forsyte ranks for fifteen years, for he stepped outside the security of family and property; he has sought property through necessity as an underwriter at Loyds; he has found expression of his love of beauty and freedom in water-colour art. A good combination of idealism and materialism in philosophy has made young Jolyon a most desirable type of the new Forsyte, or the new Englishman. The gradual encroachment of the new age upon the correctness and security of pure Forsytism may be symbolized by young Jolyon.

As the years go by, Old Jolyon is fast becoming a lonely old man.

Society, forsooth, the chattering bags and jackanapes, had set themselves up to pass judgment on his flesh and blood! A parcel of old women! . . . had dared to ostracize his son and his son's son in whom he had hoped to live again!\textsuperscript{16}

After Irene and Bossiney meet, the situation becomes

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 62. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 101.
impossible, for beauty and passion could not easily be separated by materialism. June sees fit to go into London and take a flat. In spite of all this possession surrounding him, Old Jolyon is too lonely to stay alone.

In his great chair with the book-rest sat Old Jolyon, the figure-head of his family and class, and creed -- with his white head and dome-like forehead, the representative of moderation, and order, and love of property. As lonely an old man as there was in London.\textsuperscript{17}

Old Jolyon now determines to end this separation from young Jolyon and loneliness:

\dots he found himself opposite the Hotch-Patch. \dots he went in \dots young Jolyon on the point of leaving the Club. \dots They met and crossed hands without a word \dots To old Jolyon it seemed that his son had grown. \dots Over the natural amiability of that son's face had come a rather sardonic mask, as though he had found in the circumstances of life the necessity for armour. The features were certainly those of a Forsyte, but the expression was more the introspective look of a student or philosopher. He had no doubt been obliged to look into himself a good deal in the course of those fifteen years.\textsuperscript{18}

We see this Victorian possessiveness confronted with a philosophic change working in each of the Jolyons.

The action of the great triangle of the novel moves interestingly and quickly in the three leading characters, Irene, Soames, and Bosinney. Irene is beauty, Soames is pragmatic materialism, and Bosinney is idealism or creative art. The climax of the struggle of beauty, materialism, and idealism, which goes on throughout the work, is reached in

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 41. \textsuperscript{18}Ibid., pp. 37-38.
the destruction of Bosinney and the separation of Irene and Soames; the conflict is moved along through the complacency of Victorianism and the philosophic unrest of Edwardianism. Soames believes himself secure in the properties of wealth, health, and love, bound by his adherence to the laws governing each.

And he was safe. Tradition, habit, education, inherited aptitude, native caution, all joined to form a solid professional honesty, superior to temptation from the very fact that it was built on an innate avoidance of risk. How could he fall, when his soul abhorred circumstances which render a fall possible -- a man cannot fall off the floor.19

Suddenly Soames realizes a change in his wife, Irene.

Beauty and idealism must be free; therefore Irene must be free; she cannot be bound by laws.

"I suppose he's fallen in love with some other woman?"

"Yes," said old Jolyon -- "Soames's wife!"20

Irene and Bosinney's attraction for each other has been inevitable; idealism and beauty are inseparable from creative art and passion. Art's greatest expression and highest form is beauty, a divine beauty in harmony with the greatness of the Mind Absolute. Soames has been completely unaware of the essence of spiritual beauty and cannot realize that he could lose Irene, so sure is he of his right to possess his own property; for she is his property by all laws of possession of her body and soul. Unable to foresee

19 Ibid., p. 177. 20 Ibid., p. 196.
his complete loss, he asserts all property rights toward Irene, and by so doing outrages the free body and soul of beauty, and he is now forever separated from the association with that which has been his very life. Irene, his possession, leaves his house.

There were her dresses; he had always liked, indeed insisted that she should be well-dressed — she had taken very few: ..., 'Soames Forsyte,' in Irene's handwriting. 'I think I have taken nothing that you or your people have given me.' ..., In that moment of emotion he betrayed the Forsyte in him — forgot himself, his interests, his property — was capable of almost anything; was lifted into the pure ether of the selfless and unpractical.21

Forystim looks on and is strongly fortified in vested property rights. The creative art in Bosinney finds expression in Robin Hill, a house of beauty, created and designed by passionate art symbolized by Bosinney, for the abode of the essence of beauty, represented by Irene. Expenses are borne by Soames, the essence of property and materialism. The freedom of beauty and art is thus enthralled, however, by the power of property.

Bosinney's realization of Soames' outrage toward Irene is more than art can endure, as an insult from property toward beauty. Property, Soames, is able to destroy art, Bosinney, and enslave beauty, Irene, when poor Bosinney is killed in his wanderings through the streets in crazed distress over Soames' outrage upon her. Irene returns to

21 Ibid., p. 358.
Soames, but materialism has forever lost her. The possession that Soames would have given the world to possess is now forever gone; yet he continues to hold her as property at Robin Hill, in spite of young Jolyon's efforts to aid both Soames and Irene.

There in the drawing-room doorway stood Irene; her eyes were wild and eager, her lips were parted, her hands outstretched. In spite of both men that light vanished from her face; her hands dropped to her sides; she stood like stone.  

Beauty imprisoned is beauty dead. Soames, unaware of his loss, stares and "in young Jolyon's face he slammed the door."  

Poor Soames, a pitiable, one-sided human being, as truly deformed as if lacking arms and legs, having been taught only the values of material properties, can never have the beauty of idealized spirituality. Training closes the doors for Soames. Materialism is completely entrenched in Soames' personality. Idealism is sometimes able to force its way into materialism, however, as will be seen in the following interlude.

**Indian Summer of a Forsyte**

The interlude, *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, is a depiction of materialism, or Forsytism, gradually being diffused by idealism in Old Jolyon, who has the courage to defend beauty in spite of his materialistic views. Now in his

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very old age he owns Robin Hill, the house that was Soames' very bitter memory. Pure Forsytism has been undergoing changes, and these changes had been nowhere more opposed than at Timothy's house, Baywater Road, London; here at Timothy's, family gossip collects and radiates so well that Timothy's home is known as "Forsyte's 'Change." Timothy is the dear soul of security, social security. Robin Hill and Old Jolyon represent change and the gradual encroachment of idealism upon materialism.

In Indian Summer of a Forsyte Old Jolyon shows the definite change that a Forsyte can make and yet keep the worthy values of Forsytism, for the possession of property does have a value.

The feud that started in The Man of Property between Old Jolyon's side of the house and James' side of the house was caused by the shifting of leadership from Old Jolyon's son, young Jolyon, to James' son, Soames. This change of leadership was brought about by young Jolyon's unapproved divorce. The two younger men, young Jolyon and Soames, add fuel to the fire by their differences of opinions and ideas relative to the freedom of Irene, symbol of beauty. The purchase of Robin Hill by Old Jolyon does not aid matters; Old Jolyon's new interest in the lovely Irene is fruit for gossip, but Old Jolyon is nevertheless very happy,

. . . living down here out of the racket of London and the cackle of Forsyte 'Change,' free of his boards, in a delicious atmosphere of no work and all play,
with plenty of occupation in the perfecting and mellowing of the house and its twenty acres, and in ministering to the whims of Holly and Jolly.\textsuperscript{24}

Holly and Jolly are young Jolyon's children by a second marriage; June, child of young Jolyon's first marriage and fiancee of Philip Bosinney before Philip knew Irene, "... had thrown off her melancholy at last -- witness this travel in Spain she was taking now with her father and her stepmother."\textsuperscript{25}

Irene does not remain as she was seen in the closing of The Man of Property. She could not possibly remain imprisoned with Soames, loathing him as she did; she has taken up her abode in the city and gradually has recovered from her unhappy marriage. She loves the beauty of Robin Hill with its memories of Bosinney; she frequently walks in the gardens; so does Old Jolyon. Idealism and materialism are the antagonists in this story. When Jolyon finds Irene in his gardens, he first thinks: "She's trespassing -- I must have a board put up."\textsuperscript{26}

Old Jolyon, now in his eighties, has begun to allow his suppressed desire for beauty to have a place with his love of property. Irene becomes his faithful and beautiful associate, and spoils him with gracious kindness in her attentions. Beauty is ever generous with those who adore her.

\textsuperscript{24} John Galsworthy, \textit{Indian Summer of a Forsyte}, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 13.
It is beauty that ministers to the needs of Old Jolyon now in the beautiful Indian summer of his life. Irene, the lady in grey, the essence of beauty, becomes the perfume of the evening of life and the reason for the most pleasant lingering of Old Jolyon. "For it is written that a Forsyte shall not love beauty more than reason; nor his own way more than his own health." 27

Old Jolyon wants the best of what remains of life:

If anything came after this life, it wouldn't be what he wanted; not Robin Hill, the flowers and birds and pretty faces -- too few, even now, about him! With the years his dislike of humbug had increased; the orthodoxy he had worn in the sixties, as he had worn side-whiskers out of sheer exuberance, had long dropped off, leaving him reverent before three things alone -- beauty, upright conduct, and the sense of property; and the greatest of these now was beauty. 28

Old Jolyon cannot imagine life without beauty, represented by Irene, but when one grows old it seems that everything works to limit his freedom and beauty. He must fight the idea of an old man "at the mercy of love and care," but fighting tires him. "A man of eighty-five has no passions, but the Beauty which produces passion works on in the old way, till death closes the eyes which crave the sight of Her." 29

Old Jolyon sits waiting -- waiting; he knows that beauty will come; Irene will come to him:

... but she would come up to him and say: "Dear Uncle Jolyon, I am sorry!" and sit in the swing and let him look at her and tell her that he had not

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27 Ibid., p. 65. 28 Ibid., p. 7. 29 Ibid., p. 68.
been very well but was all right now; and that dog would lick her hand. That dog knew his master was fond of her; that dog was a good dog.\textsuperscript{30}

Now Old Jolyon sits beneath the tree, loving life and memories, but life and memories have to do with beauty now, idealized beauty, not property and possessiveness.

He smelled the scent of limes and lavender. Ah! that was why there was such a racket of bees. They were excited -- busy, as his heart was busy and excited. Drowsy, too, drowsy and drugged on honey and happiness; as his heart was drugged and drowsy. Summer -- summer -- they seemed saying; great bees and little bees, and the flies too.\textsuperscript{31}

Old Jolyon's thoughts are on beauty now, not on his property. He is thoroughly alive to beauty, and Irene is now his first and last thought. His property, Robin Hill, has proved to be a sensible setting for idealized loveliness.

What a change in a Forsyte!

And settling back in his chair, he closed his eyes. Some thistledown came on what little air there was, and pitched on his moustache more white than itself. He did not know; but his breathing stirred it, caught there. A ray of sunlight struck through and lodged on his boot. A bumble-bee alighted and strolled on the crown of his Panama hat. And the delicious surge of slumber reached the brain beneath that hat, and the head swayed forward and rested on his breast. Summer -- summer! So went the hum.

The stable clock struck the quarter past. The dog Batthasar stretched and looked up at his master. The thistledown no longer moved. The dog placed his chin over the sunlit foot. It did not stir. The dog withdrew his chin quickly, rose, and leaped on Old Jolyon's lap, looked in the face, whined; then, leaping down, sat on his haunches, gazing up. And suddenly he uttered a long, long howl.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 83. \textsuperscript{31}Ibid., pp. 83-84.
But the thistledown was still as death, and the face of his old master. Summer -- summer -- summer! The soundless footsteps on the grass! 32

Old Jolyon's mixture of materialism and idealism in his last days is not "humbug" to him; other Forsytes are to experience this mixture later.

In Chancery

The possessive spirit of materialism as it applies to property is such that it is never fixed; Forsytes believed that any property should always give a return of four or five per cent; this turning value of property was a fixed idea with them, but property was changing and so were the Forsytes:

The possessive instinct never stands still. Through florescence and feud, frosts and fires, it followed the laws of progression even in the Forsyte family, which had believed it fixed for ever. 33

Properties' material possessions are not always the solution of a Forsyte problem as the years go by. In Chancery reveals the slow but sure mingling of idealism with materialism through the effect of court decisions, public opinion, and wars. England is on the move; her self-contented provincialism is moving toward a self-contented imperialism; England's extended empire is a result of England's possessiveness on the move.

The Forsytes are changing, too, from without and within.

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32Ibid., pp. 84-85.
33John Galsworthy, In Chancery, p. 89.
Although Swithin had a proper funeral at Highgate, Old Jolyon, who was the first to leave Highgate, wishes to be buried at Robin Hill, and to Forsyte "'Change" he is wayward. "The philosophic vein within him, of course, had always been too liable to crop out of the strata of pure Forsytism."34 His will causes a shiver on Forsyte "'Change," so unusual is this document: "He had actually left 15,000 pounds to whomever do you think, my dear? To Irene!"35 Then there is Susan Hayman, the married Forsyte sister, whose choice of cremation at death disturbed the family tradition very little since Old Jolyon had broken it by being buried at Robin Hill.

Soames, however, is still the unchanged man of property, a pure Forsyte. Irene has gone from him, and he has not seen her in twelve years, but he cannot forget her. Uncle Jolyon has remembered Irene in his will, and now she is in seclusion in London, finding interest and comfort in her music pupils, but Soames is lonely, and his zeal for collecting pictures has no zest; he is without peace in his peaceful house near Mapledurham. Soames is especially unhappy because there is no future for his property when he shall die, nor for his art collection. He has chosen a worthwhile hobby of collecting pictures that have great value and a much greater future value.

34 Ibid., p. 90. 35 Ibid., p. 91.
There is but one answer to Soames' problem. He must have a child, a son of his own. He becomes obsessed with a desire to reproduce himself for the sake of his property; therefore he must have a son, for in a son he may live again. His son will manage well and increase Forsyte possessions. He regrets that Irene has not given him a son.

It was intricate and deeply involved with the growing consciousness that property without anyone to leave it to is the negation of true Forsytism. To have an heir, some continuance of self, who would begin where he left off -- ensure, in fact, that he would not leave off -- had quite obsessed him for the last year or more.36

Into the story comes Annette, who is not in his social class but who is a nice, dependable girl who may be brought to favor him and his wealth; it will, of course, be a marriage of convenience. So again Soames plans a most selfish marriage. He has had to endure much from Irene, and he feels that it has been the most unfair thing that could ever have happened to him, for he has been upright, honest, and a most respected citizen. What was it that Irene could not love in him? Why did she have to leave him? He and his smug social status have suffered.

Divorce! It seemed ridiculous after all these years of utter separation! But it would have to be. No other way! The question, he thought with realism, is -- which of us? She or me? She deserted me. She ought to pay for it.37

Soames feels that after twelve years he has mastered

36Ibid., p. 139. 37Ibid., pp. 145-146.
his passion for Irene, even if he cannot forget her; but he soon realizes his mistake when he again forces his presence upon her in the interest of his desired divorce. He is again spurned by the beautiful Irene. Beauty will not be bound by possessive materialism. Soames, as materialism, grits his teeth and asks Irene, as beauty, why she cannot endure him:

God knows what it was. I've never understood you. I shall never understand you. You had everything you wanted; and you can have it again, and more. What's the matter with me? I ask you a plain question: 'What is it?' . . . 'I'm not lame. I'm not loathsome, I'm not a boor, I'm not a fool.' What is it. What's the matter with me? 38

He is possessive materialism; freedom is necessary for beauty, but possessive materialism allows no freedom.

A divorce now seems necessary, but without publicity; a Forsyte always avoids publicity " . . . so utterly repugnant to one who regarded his private life his most sacred piece of property." 39 Soames engages a lawyer and a woman detective to collect evidence of unfaithfulness, the only valid ground for an English divorce. Aroused in the meantime by the recent contact with Irene's beauty, Soames makes two efforts at reconciliation, which are definitely unsuccessful. Galsworthy's touch of humor to this pathetic and ironic situation is very amusing in that the detective's evidence points to Soames as his own wife's seducer.

38 Ibid., p. 292. 39 Ibid., p. 309.
Forsytism, blind materialism, is ridiculed, but is eventually successful in gaining the needed material evidence against Irene.

Old Jolyon's will has brought young Jolyon and Irene together; Soames soon has evidence against young Jolyon for the divorce. Young Jolyon, who is the essence of freedom and simple truth, a liveable mixture of idealism and materialism, cannot bear to see beauty, Irene, so distressed; for he has not forgotten her miserable expression when Soames slammed the door in his face; attempted reconciliations and his final decision on divorce have been driving Irene and young Jolyon together all the time. Beauty cannot remain imprisoned and hidden, so goes to the arms of truth and freedom! Young Jolyon is a sensible mixture of idealism and materialism.

In the meantime, young Forsytism is being trained well at Oxford and elsewhere. Snobbery and scholarship work well together in Forsytism. Val Dartie experiences the pangs of cruel criticism that may emanate from college class. His father, Montague Dartie, stages a scene; his identity is unknown to Val's friends, and his friends' opinions are severe. Val is rightfully ashamed, but his shame springs from the wrong source: "He remembered how, at school, when some parent came down who did not pass the
standards, it just clung to the fellow afterwards."\textsuperscript{40} England's growing pains were, in the meantime, slowly bringing about the Boer War, in which the youth are to fight as dignified age and property look on.

Soames, at last divorced from Irene, is now "out of chancery," and is soon married to Annette in Paris; here foreign encroachment on Forsytism is evident. Soames knows that this marriage is not according to the Forsyte ideal and that Forsyte "'Change" will register disapproval, and makes the marriage a most quiet one, so far as he can. Forsyte "'Change" can and does accept the situation. Soames is very happy over his marriage now that he feels hopeful of living again in a rightful son; so sure is he of his Forsytism that if he wants a son, a son it shall be -- so powerful is property. Again Soames is crossed by fate, for the child is a wilful little female -- a cross between pure Forsytism and a foreigner. Soames accepts fate's decree, and Fleur, his daughter, becomes his whole soul.

Irene, beauty, and young Jolyon, freedom and truth, have married and are supremely happy in their son, Jon, the treasured child of beauty and freedom; Jon represents truth liberated in the world and ever subject to the selfish attacks and imprisonments of the power of property's possessiveness. Jon may represent fate's ironic "what might have been" for Soames. Fleur has been trained to have whatever

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 123.
she wants, for property can and will get it for her. Soames even makes a personal request to Irene and young Jolyon for the wilful Fleur, who now wants Jon, just as June wanted Bosinney, and as Soames wanted Irene in the previous generation.

Forsyte property has increased greatly, for the children of "Superior Dorset" have "turned thirty thousand pounds into a cool million between them in the course of their lives," but young Jolyon feels himself unequal in business to his father's generation of Forsytes, since he has inherited, has not made, his property. He has been busy with other things besides property. He is a blending of the past and present generations; he describes himself as

... a poor specimen, representing, I'm afraid, nothing but the end of the century, unearned income, amateurism, and individual liberty -- a different thing from individualism, Jolly. You are the fifth Jolyon Forsyte, old man, and you open the hall of the new century.  

Galsworthy has allowed Holly, Val, and Jolly to depict the individual and national trends of the Boer War period. A unified combination of ideal and material values seems to have been the sanity of the time. The union of Val and Holly is thus based on a very sensible philosophy. As a part of the great trilogy's continuance Val and Holly play

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41 Ibid., p. 272. 42 Ibid., p. 273.
a most important part in the rising action which takes place in To Let. 

The love story of Holly and Val not only carries on the development of the Forsyte Family, but is a sort of preparation for the incomparably more important love affair between Fleur and Jon and the family feud over it.43

The Victorian age was passing, the queen was dead, and "into the preserves of the well-to-do middle class, democracy is breaking."44

Val and Holly represent the union of the two feuding sides of the Forsytes; the war has done something to Forsyte England; Val and Holly are agreeable; they respect the individual differences in each other. War has brought a certain union and strength as well as confusion and waste to English life. Poor Jolly had died, and the feud that might have been over Jolly's objection to Holly and Val's marriage had died out through a harmonized living together of free idealism and property.

Soames and young Jolyon are good studies in the contrast of fixed ideas and growing ideas with reference to thought and behavior. Jolyon has gone through a divorce with its attendant Forsyte disapproval; he has suffered, too, but unlike Soames, Jolyon has been the winner within himself over Forsytism. Jolyon never stopped anyone from doing anything; he believed that free-will is strength and

43Schalit, op. cit., p. 69. 44ibid.
not weakness. Jolyon’s character is a beautiful combination of the strength of Forsytism and the beauty of idealism.

The gradual disintegration of pure Forsytism which starts in *The Man of Property* is carried through the whole *Forsyte Saga*, meeting the demands of a changing humanity in a changing world; this disintegration is caused by a conflict of materialism and idealism.

In *Chancery* causes the disintegration of Forsytism to be hastened along through Annette’s and Soames’ marriage; Soames is still a Forsyte: “After all, we’re the backbone of the country. They won’t upset us easily. Possession’s nine points of the law.”45 Their child Fleur retains much of Forsytism and is characterized by the strange mixture of hypocrisy and truthfulness of the incoming age. Fleur is not pure English; she has foreign blood in her veins. The old Forsyte idea of keeping wealth within the family is sustained in the possible union of Fleur and Jon. Forsytism believes in keeping property intact within the family, but it also is aware that property possessiveness should not enslave beauty and freedom.

Forsytism is conservative but will, if it must, take its chance now. Soames is glad to be out of the web of Chancery, but very soon finds himself in a greater web

with greater risks. He feels deep satisfaction in the thought that his property will be safe in this new property, his daughter, Fleur, who is his; for, even though she may be half French: "By God! this thing was his."[46]  

The Awakening  

In the interlude which follows, called The Awakening, Galsworthy deals with the delicate mental reactions of a child's experience; this experience is the realization of beauty for little Jon. Gradually or abruptly a child realizes a difference in what adults mean by the material world and their ideal world. The term awakening, as Galsworthy has used the expression, means the experience of beauty as it is first realized by little Jon Forsyte.  

The story can well be thought of as a companion picture to Indian Summer of a Forsyte, with many contrasts and likenesses. Beauty as age sees and experiences it, and beauty as a child sees and experiences it may be considered the central theme of these two interludes, respectively. The two stories furnish relief in the drama presented by the three great major scenes of the Forsyte Saga. Indian Summer of a Forsyte comes as a most delightful relief scene between The Man of Property and In Chancery; so The Awakening comes between In Chancery and To Let.  

The childlike problem of just how to come down the

[46] Ibid., p. 556.
stairs confronts Jon; he is not an unusual child, but normal and full of action. His imagination is alert, and his world of discovery is an open field for action and thought.

Jon made his entry into the world in 1901 just after the Poor War and near the time of a national liberal revival. Force and coercion had by that time become unpopular, so parents followed the trend:

Coercion was unpopular, parents had exalted notions of giving their offsprings a good time. They spoiled their rod, spared their children, and anticipated the results with enthusiasm. 47

Little Jon chose well as far as parents went. Young Jolyon, a lover of truth and freedom with a talent for creative expression for beauty, is a liberal in fatherhood; Irene, essence of beauty, with a consciousness of freedom or death, is also a liberal in motherhood. Young Jon must have inherited from his Forsyte ancestry a natural conservatism, for he realized that:

What had saved him from becoming a cross between a lap dog and a little prig had been his father's adoration of his mother, for even little Jon could see that she was not merely just his mother, and that he played second fiddle to her in his father's heart. 48

Jon's training has been typically English; his tutor has seen that he was taught the usual ideas relative to language, history, geography, and sums; he, himself, has demonstrated thoroughly the idea that children should not be

47 John Galsworthy, The Awakening, p. 5. 48 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
forced. His nurse, however, often thinks "that other children would do him a 'world of good.'" 49

Jon's experience of being held down on his back by "Da," the nurse, because he must not do the thing of which she disapproves has given him an agony of fear and "this first interference with the free individualism of a Forsyte drove him almost frantic." 50 Both Jolyon and Irene disapprove of the nurse's discipline. Little Jon is most thoroughly pleased to hear his father's remark on the incident: "Well, she mustn't show it that way. I know exactly what it feels like to be held down on one's back. No Forsyte can stand it for a minute." 51

Jon is not a stupid child; there is a real child's world in all his experiences of measles, games, books, and personal relations to all other members of the family. He capitalizes his measles, imitates his stories, and judges his games and people with a thoroughly normal child attitude.

The concern and interest of Jolyon and Irene with the normal development of little Jon's likes and dislikes saves them from being considered neglectful parents. Jolyon's concern over little Jon's source of learning shows his interest in his son's attitudes:

'Jon,' said his father to his mother, under the oak tree, 'is terrible. I'm afraid he's going to turn out a sailor, or something hopeless. Do you see any

49 Ibid., p. 6.  50 Ibid., p. 7.  51 Ibid., p. 8.
sign of his appreciating beauty? . . . Well, thank heaven, he's no turn for wheels or engines! I can bear anything but that. But, I wish he'd take more interest in Nature.52

Jolyon knows within himself that nature is the source of beauty, and that his son must love and appreciate beauty or else he will miss the highest value in life. In order to create an interest in nature Jolyon has brought him books, for Jon loves books, and they are always a part of his environment. Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn attract Jon's attention to nature in the "make believe" world in which he lives with them:

However hard his active little brain tried to keep the sense of beauty away, she did creep in on him for a second now and then, perching on the wing of a dragon-fly, glistening on the water lilies, or brushing his eyes with her blue as he lay on his back in ambush.53

After Jon greets his parents on their return from Ireland, there is stirring within him just what he does not know.

While he was eating his jam beneath the oak tree, he noticed things about his mother that he had never seemed to see before, her cheeks for instance were creamy, there were silver threads in her dark goldy hair, her throat had no knob in it like Bella's, and she went in and out so softly. He noticed, too, some little lines running away from the corners of her eyes, and a nice darkness under them. She was ever so beautiful, more beautiful than "Da" or Mademoiselle, or 'Auntie' June or even 'Auntie' Holly, who had pink cheeks and came out too suddenly in places. This new beauty of his mother had a kind of particular importance, and he ate less than he had expected to.54

52 Ibid., p. 12. 53 Ibid., pp. 15-16. 54 Ibid., pp. 21-22.
Little Jon thus becomes aware of beauty in the beauty of Irene, his mother; he will remember beauty's awakening within himself the rest of his life. Jon's jam and bread world is his parents' world of materialism, and Jon's mother's beauty is the adult's world of idealism. Jon needs both worlds. Beauty, the sound of loveliness within his heart -- he thinks, "It's nice, isn't it?"  

To Let

To Let is the concluding part of the disintegration of Forsyte possessiveness; the year 1920 is taken as a beginning. The Forsytes have gone through the great war; their blood has contributed its share for England. Soames has given an ambulance, but he has now become disillusioned over the whole matter of war. The war and peace have produced

... psychological consequences in a tenacious nature. He had, mentally, so frequently experienced ruin, that he had ceased to believe in its material probability. Paying away four thousand a year in income and super tax, one could not very well be worse off!  

Fleur is too young to take any active part in the women's service during the war; the family feels that this has been fortunate, for Fleur is so restless and wilful and the country seems

... a democratic England -- dishevelled, hurried, noisy, and seemingly without an apex. And that something fastidious in the soul of Soames turned

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55 Ibid., p. 36.  
56 John Galsworthy, To Let, p. 39.
over within him. Gone forever, the close borough of rank and polish! Wealth there was -- oh, yes, wealth -- he himself was a richer man than his father had ever been; but manners, flavour, quality, all gone, engulfed in one vase, ugly, shoulder-rubbing, petrol-smelling Cheerio.57

Soames is troubled over the rapid decay of the material values of Victorian England. Edwardian England was not so bad, but this modern England is fearful. King George V, he thinks, ought to be able to have Parliament do better about the whole country. He is concerned about Fleur.

. . . into this new hurly-burly of bad manners and loose morals his daughter -- flower of his life -- was flung! And when those Labour chaps got power -- if they ever did -- the worst was yet to come! . . . 'They'd better put a search-light on to where they're all going,' he thought, 'and light up their precious democracy!'58

Soames' art collection and his other property values suffered a discount:

If confiscation once began it was he -- the worker and the saver -- who would be looted! That was the negation of all virtue, the overturning of all Forsyte principles. Could civilization be built on any other? He did not think so. Well, they wouldn't confiscate his pictures, for they wouldn't know their worth. But what would they be worth, if these maniacs once began to milk capital? A drug on the market. 'I don't care about myself,' he thought; 'I could live on five hundred a year, and never know the difference at my age.' But Fleur! This fortune, so wisely invested, these treasures so carefully chosen and amassed, were all for her. And if it should turn out that he couldn't give or leave them to her -- well, life had no meaning, and what was the use of going in to look at this crazy, futuristic stuff with the view of seeing whether it had any future?59

57Ibid., pp. 45-46. 58Ibid., p. 46. 59Ibid., p. 50.
Soames has paid his shilling and gone into the art gallery with some ten or twelve other persons to review the most recent product of the most recent artists. He overhears a jumpy conversation between two young men commenting on a piece of sculpture:

Missed it, old bean; he's pulling your leg. When Jove and Juno created them, he was saying, 'I'll see how much these fools will swallow!' And they've lapped up the lot.
You young duffer! Vaslovitch is an innovator. Don't you see that he's brought satire into sculpture? The future of plastic art, of music, painting, and even architecture, has set in satiric. It was bound to. People are tired -- the bottom's tumbled out of sentiment.  

Soames accidentally drops his handkerchief and strolls on to the next number on the exhibit; the young men also move on, still in conversation: "Well, I'm quite equal to taking a little interest in beauty. I was through the war. You've dropped your handkerchief, sir."  

Soames verifies the handkerchief by a quick stab at the nose; he recognizes his Eau de Cologne, and his initials are in the corner; he must always be sure concerning his property. He takes a look at the young man's face.

It had rather fawn-like ears, a laughing mouth, with half a toothbrush growing out of it on each side, and small lively eyes, above a normally dressed appearance.
'Thank you,' he said; and moved by a sort of irritation, added: 'Glad to hear you like beauty; that's rare nowadays.'
'I dote on it,' said the young man; 'but you and I are the last of the old guard, sir.'

60 Ibid., p. 60.
61 Ibid., p. 51.
Soames smiled.
"If you really care for pictures," he said, "here's my card; I can show you some quite good ones any Sunday, if you're down the river and care to look in."

"Awfully nice of you, sir," I'll drop in like a bird. My name's Mont-Michael."

Soames regrets this indiscretion of his at once; why, he wonders, did he give this young fellow his card? He observes a large canvas opposite him with "a great many square tomato-coloured blobs on it.""

"I suppose that's satiric, too," he thought. "What a thing!"

Why, even since the Post-Impressionists there had been one or two painters not to be sneezed at. During the thirty-eight years of his connoisseur's life, indeed, he had marked so many 'movements,' seen the tides of taste and technique so ebb and flow, that there was really no telling anything except there was money to be made out of every change of fashion.

The tomato-coloured blob puzzles Soames,

... till someone passing said ... what expression he gets with his background! Expression? Of what? Soames went back to his seat. The thing was 'rich,' as his father would have said, and he wouldn't give a damn for it. Expression? Ah! they were all expressionists now, he had heard on the continent. So it was coming here, too, was it? He remembered the first wave of influenza in 1887 or 8 -- hatched in China, so they said. He wondered where this -- this Expressionism -- had been hatched. The thing was a regular disease.

Soames notices a woman and a youth with their backs to him standing before a picture. No mistaking the woman, Irene, his divorced wife, and her son, no doubt -- young

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62 Ibid., p. 52. 63 Ibid., p. 53. 64 Ibid., p. 53.
65 Ibid., p. 53. 66 Ibid., p. 54.
Jolyon Forsyte's son. This boy is just six months older than his Fleur. Soames' emotions disturb him; here is the boy who might have been his son. He takes out his watch; Fleur is late. Suddenly Fleur arrives with an air of having been looking for him all the while. She sees Mont-Michael and wonders at his recognition of her father; Soames explains to her that the young fellow picked up his handkerchief. As she listens to her father, she notices Jon, and later has an opportunity to speak to him. She is interested in him and inquires of her father about him. Fleur has always been able to twist her father around her little finger; he tries to appear unconcerned, but he has a deep fear for his property:

But her dark eyes, whose southern glint and cleanliness often almost frightened him, met his with perfect innocence. . . . "Your grandfather and his brother had a quarrel. The two families don't know each other. How romantic!" 67

Irene is also disturbed over this meeting of Fleur and Jon. The two young Forsytes know nothing of the family feud. Jon and Fleur are attracted to each other with the power of love at first sight; ". . . love at first sight! He had felt it beginning in him with the glint of those dark eyes." 68 They instinctively feel the fears of their parents, and the curiosity of each is further aroused.

Jon is a truly sensitive, dreamy youth with a poetic

67 Ibid., p. 68.  
68 Ibid., p. 89.
streak. Irene's whole soul is set upon his spiritual de-
velopment in an atmosphere of genuine beauty and sentiment.
Young Jolyon now at seventy-two is suffering from a heart
ailment which he has kept from his family; he is upset over
the idea of a love affair between Jon and Fleur; he wants
to tell Jon, but Irene is afraid of Jon's judgment of her.
Soames does not want Fleur to know all of the story, either.
It is out of this secrecy about the parents' pasts that the
tragedy of To Let is constructed.

Val and Holly have returned from South Africa after
twenty years and have bought a farm in southern England.
Val has turned out to be a pleasing person with many ad-
mirable traits of character, and he and Holly seem per-
factly happy in their marriage. This union may serve as a
parallel study for the intended marriage of the other two
cousins, Jon and Fleur. Just what was there, Galsworthy
appears to ask, in the nature and destiny of humanity that
has followed through the lives of Irene and Soames into the
lives of their children, Jon and Fleur? Was it that some-
thing within personality that made the union of one group
of cousins perfectly harmonious, and the possible union of
the other group so fatal? Young Jolyon seems to vision the
conflict ahead in a remark to Holly:

Spiritualism -- queer word, when the more they
manifest the more they prove that they've got hold
of matter. . . . No, it'll end in our calling all
matter spirit, or all spirit matter -- I don't
know which. 69

A possible failure to recognize a blending of idealism and
materialism causes their confusion.

Fleur has a great degree of honesty and sincerity, but
secrecy and sham creep into her actions in spite of herself;
this Jon notices as Fleur speaks, and he remembers his
mother's statement:

'Och, how do you do?' As if he had never seen her,
. . . He knew better than to speak. Once in his
early life, surprised reading by a night-light,
he had said . . . 'I was just turning over the
leaves, mum,' . . . his father had replied, 'Jon,
never tell stories, because of your face -- no-
body will ever believe them.' 70

There is a directness and a straight-forwardness in Fleur
that he finds admirable, but she is capable of seeing any-
thing in the light of her own mind, regardless of the facts:

'Did you think I dropped my handkerchief on pur-
pose?' 'No!' cried Jon, intensely shocked. 'Well,
I did, of course. Let's get back or they'll think
we're doing this on purpose too.' 71

Her power of discrimination is unbalanced always in favor
of her inherited egoism and possessiveness. In Jon there
is a compelling power for genuine honesty and tenderness as
straight-forward in him as is the power of Fleur to see a
thing as she wants it. There is no sham in Jon, no se-
crecy, no tinge of hypocrisy in his nature; in his heredity
and environment is little that would promote sham and

69Ibid., p. 125. 70Ibid., pp. 131-132. 71Ibid., p. 138.
secrecy. "Anything to be with you," he says; "and why need I pretend? . . . "72

Fleur starts in with a firm purpose to discover the family skeleton; she goes to Robin Hill uninvited and has tea with Jon and his mother; the conversation turns upon modern artists and the futuristic revolution in art and concepts of beauty.

Soames prefers to remain blind to his daughter's modern ideas; he also wants to remain ignorant of one Prosper Profound, who represents the nihilistic post-war revolutionary element against a sane, sensible, social organization. Profound is a socialist who has become interested in Annette. Soames has to endure this second affront to his ability to hold his wife. "When two people have married, and lived like us, Soames, they had better be quiet about each other. . . . You have made me very practical."73

Fleur is determined to possess Jon, whose affections lean in her direction. She tries her best to persuade him into a secret marriage, but Jon, who is honestly in love with her, will not allow himself to do such an unworthy thing.

'I've planned it all out. We've only to go to Scotland. When we're married they'll soon come round. People always come round to facts. Don't you see, Jon?'

'I must think a little, Fleur.' . . . but he did not promise.74

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72Ibid., p. 167. 73Ibid., p. 285. 74Ibid., pp. 305-306.
He feels that he must be in a position to be proud and to honor his marriage with Fleur. Secrecy and sham would destroy everything which his marriage and his very soul stand for; Fleur is willing to sacrifice every honorable impulse in order to have her wish, and she is totally unable to appreciate and understand the dignity of Jon's decision. She has to suffer the misery of unreasonable compromise between deceit and sham on one hand and sincerity and honesty on the other. Her better self knows that Jon is right, but she is much weaker in character than Jon. Fleur hears her father philosophize on the problem: "Whose child are you?" he said. "Whose child is he? The present linked with the past, the future with both. There's no getting away from that."

Soames now seems to have a little more than his share of misfortunes; he is the victim, seemingly, of his own choice and desires, but Soames wonders why he has to suffer. Annette is frankly cynical about their relations; she does not care for him, and he has no real affection for her. So it was at the time of the marriage, he realizes; so it is now; so must it ever be. Soames wonders why all the bad luck in dealing with wives has happened to him; he never realizes that he has always chosen them on the wrong principle. He even suffers a kind of English grievance from

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75 Ibid., p. 318.
his French wife; he holds, as do most Englishmen, that marriage should be based on mutual love. Even Fleur detects a thin vein of sham in the relation of her mother, Prosper Profound, and her father.

Soames himself puzzles over the dilemma:

There it was, and the love was not -- but there you were, and must continue to be! Thus you had it both ways, and were not tarred with cynicism, realism, and immortality like the French. Moreover, it was necessary in the interest of property. He knew that she knew that they both knew that there was no love between them, but he still expected her not to admit in words or conduct such a thing, and he would never understand what she meant when she talked of the hypocrisy of the English.76

Timothy's life has covered over a century; he has been through Victorianism, Edwardianism, and Modernism, but he concerns himself very little with the moderns; Soames needs to see after Uncle Timothy; so he finds himself at the

. . . doorstep of that little house where four Forsytes had once lived, and now but one dwelt on like a winter fly; the house into which Soames had come and out of which he had gone times without number, divested of, or burdened with, fardels of family gossip; the house of the 'old people' of another century, another age. . . . 'No,' he thought, 'there's nothing like it left; it ought to be preserved.' And, by George, they might laugh at it, but for standard of gentle life never departed from, for fastidiousness of skin and eye and nose and feeling, it beat to-day hollow -- to-day with its tubes and cars, its perpetual smoking, its cross-legged, bare-necked girls visible up to the knees and down to the waist if you took the trouble (agreeable to the satyr within each Forsyte but hardly the idea of a lady), with their feet, too, screwed round the legs of their chairs while they ate, and their 'SoClongs' and their 'Old Beans,'

76Ibid., pp. 73-74.
and their laughter -- girls who gave him the shudders whenever he thought of Fleur in contact with them; and the hard-eyed, capable older women who managed life and gave him the shudders too. No! his old aunts, if they never opened their minds, their eyes, or very much their windows, at least had manners, and a standard and reverence for past and future."

Soames learns from Smithers and Timothy that Timothy nowadays is concerned only with his food and his will and, perhaps, now and then, with the price of consols.

Soon after this old Timothy dies and is buried at Highgate as the last of the old Forsytes. After the funeral Soames sits dreaming of his life and of his property. He knows that the Forsyte age and way of life are vacant -- "To Let" -- but his heart still craves beauty and loving, although to these possessions Soames himself has closed the doors of his soul and heart. The new freedom of young women seems to Soames an ironic trend of life. Why could he not have had a son, he wonders, whose behavior was always accepted as conservative and conventional, no matter what he did? A son was less worry than a daughter, and his Fleur was different from other other men's daughters. He has told her very little about his past, but she has learned all she needs to know from others and from a picture in a frame over which her own picture had been placed.

In contrast to Soames, Jolyon and Irene realize that Jon must be told the truth. Jolyon wants Jon to learn that

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 93, 101-102.}\]
truth from his father. Jon has to be told why he should give up Fleur. Jolyon spends a great while wording a letter, explaining all that Jon needs to know in order to understand. Jon goes away to himself to read the letter:

Jolyon is puzzled:

Where had the boy gone to read his letter! The wretched letter . . . Life -- its love -- its work -- its beauty -- its aching, and its end! A good time; a fine time in spite of it all; until -- you regretted that you have ever been born. Life -- it wore you down, yet did not make you want to die -- that was the cunning evil! Mistake to have a heart!78

Jolyon wanders through the gardens, regretting that, at seventy-two, he must be the instruments that hurt Jon, Irene's child, his child. Jolyon's heart tells him that he has overdone himself.

He staggered up toward the terrace . . . fell against the wall of the house . . . his face buried in the honeysuckle . . . Its fragrance mingled with awful pain. 'My love!' he thought; 'the boy!' And with a great effort he tottered in through the long window, and sank into old Jolyon's chair. The book was there, a pencil in it; he caught it up, scribbled a word on the open page . . . His hand dropped. . . . So it was like this -- was it?79 . . . There was a great wrench; and darkness. . . . 79

Jon knows that he must give Fleur up:

She clung to him. He kissed her eyes, her cheeks, her lips. But while he kissed her he saw the sheets of that letter . . . his father's white dead face -- his mother kneeling before it. . . . he felt curiously old.80

Fleur is not convinced that she has lost Jon, and insists

78 Ibid., p. 369. 79 Ibid., pp. 372–373.
80 Ibid., p. 407.
that her father help her. He has always managed to get for her anything she has wanted. Why not this? Soames smothered his pride and goes to Robin Hill to ask Irene's consent to Jon's marriage to Fleur:

It's an infernal mischance; I've done my best to discourage it. I consider my daughter crazy, but I've got into the habit of indulging her; that's why I'm here. I suppose you are fond of your son... Please say to her as I've said to you, that it rests with Jon...
Tell Fleur that it's no good, please; I must do as my father wished before he died. 81

After the interview Soames realizes that the marriage is impossible and leaves Robin Hill forever. He thinks of the Forsytes:

Six thousand top hats, four thousand parasols would be doffed and furled... There was life in the old dog yet! Tradition! And again Tradition! How strong and how elastic; wars might rage, taxation prey, trades unions take toll, and Europe perish of starvation; but the ten thousand would be fed... 82

Fleur, since she cannot have Jon, marries Mont-Michael, heir to a title; so that now Forsyte's wealth is linked with aristocracy.

Jon leaves Robin Hill for British Columbia, North America. In American idealism and materialism there is a democracy of thought in which Jon seeks relief. Irene plans to join Jon soon. At the last exhibit of Jolyon's water-colours Irene sees Soames and waves a little farewell

81 Ibid., pp. 423-424, 426. 82 Ibid., p. 330.
with a smile; she is leaving for America, too, while thinking to herself -- "To Let" -- the Forsyte age and way of life.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The study in this thesis has indicated trends and tendencies in the philosophy of England during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as they have been observed through a study of idealistic and materialistic philosophies as demonstrated in The Forsyte Saga, and has tried to show the extent to which materialism and idealism have influenced the personal and national life of the British people.

The depiction of the gradual disintegration of possessive materialism and tradition in The Forsyte Saga through three generations of English family life points definitely to such a disintegration in the personal and national life of the English middle class, a weakening of the power of property and tradition, which in turn may mean a weakening of imperialism. The tendency in the Saga seems to point to a turning from imperialism to a democracy in the exercise of political, social, economic, religious, and cultural life of the individuals and of the nation.

Idealistic philosophy maintains that spiritual values have a determining voice in the ordering of the universe. Materialistic philosophy maintains that the universe is
explained by the existence and nature of matter. Materialism and idealism have both been studied in their relation to English thought; the outcome shows a dual conception of the importance of both the material and the ideal in the life of the Englishman and of his nation.

In the study of The Forsyte Saga certain trends and tendencies which make for durability and social security may be noted in British individuals and in the British nation.

The Philosophy of England's Individual

The Englishman's philosophy of idealism and materialism is a mixture wherein self and God are never lost sight of. The dual personality of self and God is within each person. He has within himself a free will, as young Jolyon always manifested, and as Old Jolyon believed in Indian Summer of a Forsyte. Individuals with similar philosophies and feelings make a public opinion which is a great power in a nation. Training in the home or school establishes a despotic or a democratic attitude. Forsytes were trained at Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Cambridge, Oxford, and such schools, where certain freedom and liberty were allowed.

Soames Forsyte represents the kind of Englishman who, with his possessive power in money and property, gave England her commercial power. With this individual wealth England is now enabled to make security for her present war supplies.
Wealth, property, purchasing power, and lending power of such men as Jolyon, who represents England's men of vision, hope, and ideals, plus the power and force of such men as Soames, with their pure materialism in sterling pounds, have built Britain's wealth into an international power that has stood, and can endure, the severest strain on property yet experienced. The Jolyons and the Soameseses of England are giving support in man-power and money-power today.

A study of such men as these leads one to believe that if England's middle class sinks now, England will die, but England's middle class itself will go on: "Forsytes will not pass away, they will -- even if in other forms -- constantly renew themselves, for human nature remains despite all surface change."¹

The individual Englishman who has mingled his materialism with a belated idealism as Old Jolyon did, or the Englishman who has seemingly always had within him a genuine love of idealism but realizes the value of pure materialism as did young Jolyon, or the individual Englishman who is purely materialistic as was Soames, or the shielded, protected person of pure beauty or idealism as was Irene -- each one seems to be dependent upon not only himself but also upon those other countrymen of his who make up his nation. Even in death a Forsyte felt that "... the saplings

¹Schalit, op. cit., p. 85.
would take its place, each one a new custodian of the sense of property. Good forest of Forsytes! . . . soundest timber of our land!"2

Thus it appears that the individual who serves England in 1942 has a long, hard history behind him that crystallized into Victorianism and later into modernism, the latter a democracy filled through and through with practical materialism and a sure religious idealism. England's people must have vision or they perish. Forsytes do have vision; Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Cambridge, and Oxford are supported by the Forsytes. Forsytes can and do change; Robin Hills can be "For Sale" or "To Let"3; even Soames can feel a change in the presence of death and beauty:

The drawings were pleasing enough, with quite a sense of atmosphere, and something individual in the brush work. 'His father and my father; he and I; his child and mine!'1 thought Soames. So it had gone on! And all about that woman! Softened by the events of the past week, affected by the melancholy beauty of the autumn day, Soames came nearer than he had ever been to realization of that truth -- passing the understanding of a Forsyte pure -- that the body of Beauty has a spiritual-essence, uncatchable save by devotion which thinks not of self.4

The English Nation's Philosophy

England's ability to survive her present crisis rests well in the hands of her past and present philosophical policies in regard to government, business, religion, and

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3Galsworthy, To Let, p. 467. 4Tbid., pp. 467-468.
culture. More especially now does one believe that philosophy in all its phases of individual and national life is the key to the trends of any nation's stability and change. Nations and individuals who regard learning as growth and growth as involving change must regard learning as an institution the main task of which is to train individuals so that they will be able to meet courageously things as they are and things as they may turn out to be. As substantial changes occur in the social order, individual and national philosophies will reflect these changes; there will be a constant holding on to the old that has been tried and a reaching out for the new produced by new inventions, new uses, and new thoughts; thus England will hold to her Forsytes through change.

There are times, however, when everything seems set against the religious and cultural tenets of the passing age, as young Jolyon said to his son Jon in discussion:

The young are tired of us, our gods, and our ideals. Off with their heads, they say -- smash their idols! And let's get back to -- nothing! And by Jove, they've done it! Jon's a poet. He'll be going in, too, and stamping on what's left of us. Property, beauty, sentiment -- all smoke. We mustn't own anything nowadays, not even our feelings. They stand in the way of -- nothing.5

But in the final test in Jon's life, he stands by the teachings of truth, faith, and honor he had within him;

5Ibid., p. 248.
tempted to repudiate all, he finally gave his own answer: "I must do as my father wished before he died." \(^6\)

England, however, knows too the importance of materialism. Her money and property have stood by her in the present crisis as they have in the past. Would America have sent supplies without collateral? England must finance her war, but as Soames felt the pinch of fear in the first World War with its attendant evils, so no doubt the present-day Englishman may be uneasy:

Money was extraordinarily tight; and morality extraordinarily loose! The war had done it. Banks were not lending; people breaking contracts all over the place. There was a feeling in the air and a look on faces that he did not like. The country seemed in for a spell of gambling and bankruptcies. There was satisfaction in the thought that neither he nor his trusts had an investment which could be affected by anything less maniacal than national repudiation or a levy on capital. If Soames had faith, it was in what he called "English common sense" -- or the power to have things, if not one way then another. He might -- like his father James before him -- say he didn't know what things were coming to, but he never in his heart believed he was only an Englishman like any other, so quietly tenacious of what he had that he knew he would never really part with it without something more or less equivalent in exchange. \(^7\)

Soames' theory of individual ownership and possessiveness with its attendant good and evil is in conflict with the nationalist-socialistic idea of property and is consequently at stake today in the greatest and most destructive war in history. Soames is faithful to his possessive instinct,
even while acknowledging its failures:

The waters of change were foaming in, carrying the promise of new forms only when their destructive flood should have passed its full. He sat there, subconscious of them, but with his thoughts resolutely set on the past -- as a man might ride into a wild night with his face to the tail of his galloping horse. Athwart the Victorian dykes the waters were rolling on property, manners, and morals, on melody and the old forms of art -- water bringing to his mouth a salt taste as of blood, lapping to the foot of his Highgate Hill where Victorianism lay buried. And sitting there, high upon its most individual spot, Soames -- like a figure of Investment -- refused their restless sounds. Instinctively he would not fight them -- there was in him too much primeval wisdom, of Man the possessive animal. They would quiet down when they had fulfilled their tidal fever of dispossessing and destroying; when the creations and the properties of others were sufficiently broken and dejected -- they would lapse and ebb, and fresh forms would rise based on an instinct older than the fever of change -- the instinct of Home.8

Whatever the outcome of England's and her Allies' war with Germany may be, the power of philosophic thought is still manifested in the conflict; England's materialistic-idealist policy through pragmatic empiricism and her possessiveness in property and ideals have revealed truths and trends for all individuals and nations that prefer the materialistic-idealist combination of philosophic thought to that type of pure materialism working to overthrow it.

Galsworthy has shown in The Forsyte Saga that the disintegration of the old order resolved itself into a change that held fast to such of the old ideals as it found practicable and let go of those which had served their day.

8Tbid., pp. 474-475.
He shows that democracy in living supplanted the old imperialism, which was then and is today "To Let."
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