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SOME CENTRAL RADIANCE

The Influence of Plotinus on the Novels of Ellen Glasgow

by

Irene Mottadelli

Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of the University of Ottawa in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Ottawa, 1979.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Professor Jacqueline Tavernier-Courbin, of the Department of English, University of Ottawa, for the help and encouragement she has given me in the preparation of this thesis.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Irene Mottadelli is a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is a graduate of the University of Manitoba, where she received her Bachelor of Arts (General) degree. Following graduation, she studied at Queen's University, in Kingston, Ontario, where she was awarded a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) standing, and the Tracy Prize in English. Mrs. Mottadelli was also a tutor in the Department of English at Queen's. In Ottawa, Mrs. Mottadelli began her preparation for a Master of Arts degree in English at Carleton University. While there, she studied American literature under Professors Munro Beattie and Marston La France. She later transferred to the University of Ottawa.

Mrs. Mottadelli has interspersed formal study with career, and has held a number of positions related to her interest in literature and in creative writing. She has been a fashion copywriter, and became head fashion writer for Crawley's Advertising Agency, London, England. She was also a journalist with the Winnipeg Free Press, and was Assistant Women's Editor of the Winnipeg Citizen. In addition, she was editor of two magazines published in Calgary, Alberta. Mrs. Mottadelli has written a radio series for children, which was aired in Kingston, Ontario, a prize-winning play, staged in Ottawa, and a short story, published in a national magazine. She is also a teacher, having taught English in Ottawa High Schools for a number of years.

Drama has claimed some of Mrs. Mottadelli's attention. While at the University of Manitoba, she directed J.M. Synge's play, "The Shadow of the Glen." The production was entered in the University's Interfaculty Drama Festival and won awards for best play, best direction, and best actress. In Kingston, Mrs. Mottadelli directed an original play written by a fellow member of the Domino Theatre Company. The production won the Ontario award for the best Canadian play in the Dominion Drama Festival. In Ottawa, Mrs. Mottadelli has directed for a local theatre company, and has taught drama to teen-agers and adults.

Mrs. Mottadelli has studied art in Ottawa and New York. She has exhibited in several shows, and last year was selected to show three watercolours at the Art Student's League in New York.

RESUME

In the attempt to show the considerable influence of Plotinus on the philosophy and work of Ellen Glasgow, this thesis is concerned with three levels of experience perceived by Neo-Platonism: the "unclean pleasures" of the world, civic virtue, and vision and illumination. The thesis shows that Glasgow's own philosophy was strongly influenced by Neo-Platonism and by philosophers and writers themselves influenced by Plotinus. Glasgow, like Plotinus, rejects materialism and worldliness. This is apparent in her treatment of three groups of characters: a) the "happiness hunters," b) the pragmatists, empiricists and utilitarians, and c) the "evasive idealists." Like Plotinus, Glasgow takes refuge in civic virtue. She bases her concept of civic virtue, as does Neo-Platonism, on Platonic Idealism and on stoic fortitude or asceticism, which includes the ideal of moral order found in the concept of "cosmopolitanism." Stoic "cosmopolitanism" in Glasgow is related to Jeffersonian democracy. In her political novels, Glasgow attempts to accommodate traditional Ideals to the political and economic realities of the New South. However, she is disillusioned by a world in which these Ideals are increasingly disregarded. She looks for hope to an emotional response which she calls, "simple goodness," and to the Divine Fortitude of Neo-

Platonism. To the end, Glasgow's central radiance of Being, recognizable as Plotinus' First Existent, is the guide in her novels, both to civic virtue and to Divine Fortitude which looks "beyond all here."

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General David Archbald, of Ellen Glasgow's novel, The Sheltered Life, is a character of major importance to Glasgow criticism, for we may safely take him to represent, to a considerable extent, Glasgow herself. Of General Archbald, Glasgow writes:

> As at least one critic has recognized, the old man left behind by the years, is the central character of the book; and into his lonely spirit I have put much of my ultimate feeling about life. He represents the tragedy, wherever it appears, of the civilized man in a world that is not civilized.[1]

In the central section of the novel, entitled "The Deep Past," the General sits reflecting that he has been a good citizen, a successful lawyer, a faithful husband, and an indulgent father--all in all, a figure of civic virtue--but he still feels that "the centre of the pattern"[2] is missing:

> Rarely since his youth had he remembered that something was missing, that he had lost irrevocably a part from the whole, lost that sense of fulfillment not only in himself but in what men call Divine goodness. Irrevocably--but suppose, after all, the loss were not irrevocable! (S. L., 165.)

Inner reflection is rewarded, and, if only for a moment, the pattern regains true meaning:

> Suddenly, without warning, a wave of joy rose from some central radiance of being, he would find again that ecstasy he had lost, without ever possessing. For one heartbeat, while the wave broke and the dazzling spray flooded his thought, he told himself that he was immortal, that here on this green bench in the sun he had found the confirmation of love, faith, truth, right, Divine goodness. (S. L., 165.)

The General's experience may well remind us of that of the Divine "proficient" described by Plotinus in The Enneads, who, having turned from the desires of the flesh, achieves the reward of virtue, that unity with the central radiance of Being which is symbolized in Plotinus by the sun. Plotinus describes the experience as follows:

> When we look, our Term is attained; this is rest; this the end of singing ill; effectively before Him, we lift a choral song full of God.
>
> In this choiring the soul looks upon the well-spring of Life, wellspring also of Intellect, beginning of Being, fount of Good, root of Soul. . . .
>
> We have not been cut away; we are not separate, what though the body-nature has closed about us to press us to itself; we breathe and hold our ground because the Supreme does not give and pass. . . .
>
> Our being is fuller for our turning Thither; this is our prosperity, to hold aloof is loneliness and lessening. Here is the soul's peace, outside of evil, refuge taken in the place clean of wrong; here it has its Act, its true knowing; here it is immune. Here is living, the true; that of today, all living apart from Him, is but shadow, mimicry.[3]

The similarity to be found between the experience of General Archbald and that of the Neo-Platonic proficient or saint is neither accidental nor, in terms of Glasgow's work, transitory. It is the logical result of a dependance on the philosophy of Plotinus which extends throughout Glasgow's writing and explains in good measure her sympathy for characters who display civic virtue and particularly those who, like General Archbald, move beyond civic virtue to illumination and ecstasy.

This dependance on Neo-Platonism can be traced outside of the novels, in Glasgow's letters and in her non-fiction writing. In the autobiographical, The Woman Within, Glasgow records that, despite her early reading in economics, political science and science itself, she had a deeply felt need for God. She writes: "had I known the God of Plotinus or the God of St. Francis, I should have sought Him as a refuge."[4] As late as 1943, two years before her death, Glasgow writes to Signe Toksvig, her confidante:

> I have had always a deep interest in mysticism. For many years, I studied transcendental philosophies, and oddly enough, in spite of a firm foundation of realism in my attitude toward life, I still turn to Plotinus when I seek wisdom and need consolation.[5]

Although Glasgow says, in The Woman Within, that she "lacked the spiritual wings for his (Plotinus') flight of the alone to the Alone," (W. W., 172.) she records three personal visionary experiences of the kind which restores General Archbald to his early faith, and which might be expected to have confirmed Glasgow in her Neo-Platonic belief.

The first recorded experience with mystic revelation took place at Murren, Switzerland, in 1905, where Glasgow was staying when she received news of the impending death of Gerald B., a man with whom she was deeply in love. She describes the experience as follows:

> I tried with all my strength to find absorption in the Power people called God, or in the vast

> hollowness of the Universe . . . . Then, after long effort, I sank into an effortless peace. Lying there, in that golden August light, I knew, or felt, or beheld, a union deeper than vision. Light streamed through me, after anguish, and for one instant, I felt pure ecstasy. In a single blinding flash of illumination, I knew blessedness. I was part of the spirit that moved in the light and the wind and the grass. I was--or felt I was--in communion with reality, with ultimate being . . . . (W. W., 166.)

A second experience, similar in its implications, but not quite the same, took place in Richmond several years later. It followed a disagreement with a man identified in The Woman Within as Harold S. (actually Henry Anderson, a Richmond lawyer, to whom Glasgow was engaged). Harold was too much of a social climber to gain Glasgow's wholehearted approval. She says that "both conscience and reason warned (her) against marriage." (W. W., 228.) In one conversation with Harold, concerning a supposed interest in the Queen of Rumania, whom Harold had met while overseas during the First World War, Glasgow reports that she and Harold "wandered round and round, in a circle that led nowhere, and avoided always the center of gravity." (W. W., 235.) This typical appeal to conscience, and the suggestion of Neo-Platonic imagery in which the circle of confusion revolved on a secure center, precedes Glasgow's account of the first real quarrel of the lovers. After Harold has left, perhaps never to return, Glasgow recognizes that she has lost something she

"had not ever possessed"; never could she have resigned herself to union with the opportunistic Harold. (W. W., 236.) Ellen is left virtually alone in the family house. After swallowing several sedative pills, she experiences "a tide of Blessedness. . . . rising and ebbing," and catches a glimpse of a "radiant landscape" which contained "all of the beings I had loved and lost on earth." (W. W., 239.)

The third experience takes place as Ellen lies critically ill from a heart attack in 1940, five years before her death. She writes of having been on the "ragged edge," and continues:

> After pain, there was no shadow of fear, of shrinking or of reluctance. While an icy chill that seemed the other side of a glow, of a warmth, as of an unutterable sense of fulfillment ran from my feet upward, I felt a sense of peace. I had never believed in a limited personal immortality, in a narrow margin of eternity, or of the separate ego. The peace I felt was not the peace of possession. It was--the fleeting essence escapes whenever I try to confine it--a sense of infinite reunion with the Unknown Everything or Nothing. It was surrender of identity. . . . By surrender, I do not mean extinction of identity. I mean enlargement and complete illumination of being. (W. W., 289.)

Glasgow's experiences share with that of General Archbald certain important similarities. There is an awareness of an inner radiance connected with natural phenomenon, particularly with light; there is a mystical illumination of self; and there is a feeling of ecstasy which is itself

part of a feeling of being blessed and at one with Divine Being or Divine Goodness. These similarities indicate a reliance on Neo-Platonism which is, in fact, a recurring factor in Glasgow's thought and writing, supplying an ultimate term of her own philosophy. Unless this is understood, Glasgow critics may well continue to feel, as a number do, that her work is somewhat irrelevant and weak, and that she, herself, was increasingly isolated, rigid, saved from despair only because of a resolute closing of the eyes to the facts and possibilities of life around her. L. D. Rubin, for example, speaks of "the maiden lady in Richmond, regally holding court in her stone manse . . . (while) beyond the windows the rooming houses and antique shops (stretch) out in all directions."[6] Monique Parent Frazee rejects the civilized men with whom Glasgow identifies, claiming that they are "weak, ineffectual, and without a sense of purpose."[7] Glasgow herself she sees as having "found peace--happiness never." She describes "poor Ellen"[8] as a woman tormented and torn, living "between the fear of not finding a husband and the greater fear of giving in to one,"[9] and calls Glasgow's rejection of Hemingway and his imitators "an instinctive recoil from sex." Parent Frazee wonders how Glasgow's "superwomen," like Dorinda Oakley of Barren Ground, would react to "true men."[10]

Laying aside the fact that Parent Frazee does not define "true men," or identify superwomen other than Dorinda,

and that, in fact, the heroine of Life and Gabriella does react to a man very much involved in the affairs of the world, the pragmatic Ben O'Hara, it must be emphasized that Glasgow's rejection of Harold S. was accomplished with an enthusiasm and with a clarity of purpose which could cause her to state:

> Gradually, as this grasp weakened and relaxed, all the other parts of my nature, all that was vital and constructive, returned to life. Creative energy flooded my mind, and I felt, with some infallible intuition, that my best work was ahead of me. I wrote Barren Ground, and immediately I knew I had found myself. (W. W., 243.)

Some of this response finds its way into the heroine of Barren Ground in her own recoil from sex and from romance when she exults, "Oh, if the women who wanted love could only know the infinite relief of having love over!"[11] Further, in The Woman Within, Glasgow records that:

> Between fifty and sixty I lived perhaps my fullest and richest years. Though my deafness still tortured me, and I could never overcome that raw, aching sensitiveness in the presence of strangers, I was able, in appearance at least, to rise triumphantly over misfortune. I made many friends. (W. W., 273.)

As a matter of fact, after Glasgow attended a conference of Southern writers, in 1931, Allen Tate, who was also present, could write of her, "the more I think about grand Ellen Glasgow, the more I fall in love with her."[12] Sherwood Anderson was also impressed by Glasgow at the same

conference, and said, "Ellen Glasgow. . . . is charming. She is quite old now, but (has) tremendous vitality . . . a kind of mental alertness, eagerness and charm."[13] It is, in fact, a matter of record that Glasgow died with "a smile on her lips."[14]

True, as Glasgow indicated herself, this kind of "humane stoicism" was a prop she clung to in the face of persistent deafness. She added further:

> I could bear what I had to bear, but I could not pretend it away. I could not pretend that my life had not been blighted before it had opened. (W. W., 138.)

Still, there is much in the novels and in Glasgow's own critical and autobiographical writing to suggest that there is in her response to life an element of real joy, such as that accorded General Archbald (above). Such joy for Glasgow, as for Archbald, is the result of a reassurance found in the determination to live "the life of the mind," to move beyond cold or perverse logic to "that inmost reason which we may call the heart."[15] She continued to believe that the approach to a perfect state lies not without but within, and that "the greatest menace to an epoch so noticeably deficient in 'blessedness' is the menace of material power which has outstripped philosophy."[16]

That the life of the mind, to which Glasgow pays tribute again and again is, in some measure, dependent on

the philosophy of Plotinus is an observation made by a number of critics. However, the extent of this influence has not been fully explored. Neo-Platonism makes more than a sporadic appearance in Glasgow's thought and work. It provides a shaping force of that settled philosophy for which Glasgow strove all her life. Neo-Platonism appears throughout the novels, informing theme, creating character, and structuring plot. Unless this is clearly apprehended, Glasgow's work cannot be rightly assessed or truly appreciated.

This thesis, therefore, will begin by exploring the extent to which Neo-Platonism influenced Glasgow's own philosophy. Before concluding, it will show the influence of Neo-Platonism on Glasgow's work as that work reflects three levels of Neo-Platonic experience: the "unclean pleasures" of the world, civic virtue, and vision and illumination.

CHAPTER II

A "SETTLED PHILOSOPHY"

A Study of the Influence of Plotinus on the Philosophy of Ellen Glasgow.

In A Certain Measure, An Interpretation of Prose Fiction, Ellen Glasgow speaks of her attempt to bring philosophic insight to her work as a writer:

> I have tried to take the longer view; I have put my faith in ideas; I have examined life, not from a remote angle of vision, but in the flesh and with the pulse of the living. Always I have attempted, it may be unsuccessfully, to condense the results of experience and insight into a settled philosophy. To the imaginative artist, emotion, and even ideas, may be inconsistent in relation to art, but the truths of philosophy must, in a certain measure, be confirmed by the intellect. (C. M., 122, 123.)

By "settled philosophy," Glasgow meant a clear, consistent, and systematic philosophy capable of providing a touchstone of truth in the passing moment of the novel. Such a philosophy would present, of course, an organizing principle.

Glasgow's own doubt about her success in achieving such a system is shared by a number of her critics. Her philosophy has seemed to them secondary, inconsistent, intuitive and dimly perceived, not to say downright "feminine" in its emotional woolly-headedness, and they have classified her work accordingly. Marion Richards, for example, reports that "Glasgow's scientific, philosophical, and political explorations did nothing to strengthen her work. The finest of her novels probe problems with gentle irony, rather than offer a solution."[1] Blair Rouse, in listing a number of philosophical and literary influences, comments that, in reacting to Darwin, Glasgow "felt rather than reacted in any

clearly logical ways," and Rouse adds that "Glasgow read Oriental poetry and religious works with pleasure, but showed little inclination toward mysticism except for an occasional interest in manifestations of the supernatural."[2] For Frederick P. W. McDowell, Glasgow's philosophical idealism was manifested "more as an illumination of disparate moments of her experience than as a substratum into which all experience could be dissolved." McDowell records in Glasgow's work "phases of development which inclined either to the rationalist or to the idealist." He speaks rather vaguely of a "liberalism of thought" and a "conservatism of spirit" reconciled in "the solitary life of the spirit." McDowell concludes that "The exactness of perception in Henry James at his best was denied to Miss Glasgow, for she never achieved James' command of self, and consequently of medium; but at best she explored as deeply as he the subtle relationships existing between personality and environment."[3] Yet, on this last point, McDowell does not deal with Glasgow's own opinion of James that "when one industriously sifted his moral problems, there was little left but the smooth sands of decorum." (W. W., 206.) While Glasgow was herself sympathetic to aristocratic virtue, her liberal egalitarianism demanded of her a constant concern for the dignity and economic well-being of the lower and middle classes, generally discriminated against by the overly-conservative upper

classes. Because she encompassed a broader and more inclusive philosophic base, it might be questioned whether Glasgow did not achieve as comprehensive an understanding of the self as James. Certainly, for a greater number of readers, her works must seem more immediate and more relevant to their everyday experience. McDowell, in addition to his other criticism, finds that John Fincastle, the hero of Glasgow's novel, Vein of Iron, and one of her civilized older men, "lacks a firm basis and a precise definition." McDowell believes that Fincastle's (Plotinian) philosophy "is too sentimental for a professional thinker to hold so unreservedly."[4]

One can even find more critical skepticism. For Joan Santas, Glasgow is influenced by Spinoza in attempting to erect a Southern American Eden of the blessed, more valid than the Northern dream based on the Horatio Alger myth, the end result of puritanism--a more valid ideal because a more inclusive one. Santas claims that, "This ideal which Ellen Glasgow pursued throughout her novels, owes more to her interpretation of the enduring values of the Southern dream than it does to her understanding of Spinoza."[5] Monique Parent Frazee disregards Glasgow's claim that she did, in fact, seek a settled philosophy. Speaking of Glasgow and her "maître", Schopenhauer, she comments:

> Ellen est romancière et n'a jamais eu l'intention de créer un système philosophique; l'abstraction n'est pas son fort. Elle s'y résigne aisément,

> puisque le grand pessimiste n'a pas interdit aux femmes de chercher, au moins l'ultime sagesse qu'est le Nirvana, 'cette paix qui est au-dessus de toute raison, ce calme parfait de l'esprit, ce profond repos, cette confiance et cette sérénité inviolables . . . seule la connaissance demeure.'[6]

Though Parent Frazee acknowledges Glasgow's debt to Plotinus, she has, as has been noted, little positive to say of Glasgow's civilized men, those characters in the novels with whom Glasgow identifies most strongly, and who might be expected to be most positively influenced by her philosophy. To Parent Frazee, these characters are weak, unmasculine, as confused as Parent Frazee finds Glasgow to be. Parent Frazee conjectures that Glasgow created "weak" men so that strong women could take over for them. Asa Timberlake, Glasgow's civilized older man in In This Our Life and Beyond Defeat, Parent Frazee finds to be "pale and unconvincing."

> There is a creative way of enduring, an ultimate victory in suffering accepted for a purpose; but Asa does not know for what or what else he could do. Unlike Prometheus or Sisyphus, he buys no future liberty for anybody, and his final freedom is acquired at the price of desertion, not redemption. So, in the end, these two (Asa and John Fincastle) remain insignificant and negative. They are the typical production of female creativity, revealing an innate difficulty in achieving greatness in male characterization.[7]

This rather nouveau-feminist reaction, which one finds in all of Parent Frazee's criticism of Glasgow, would deeply have incensed the author herself, particularly as they cast aspersions upon her writing because of her sex. Glasgow

undoubtedly believed her views on sexual inequality to be liberated; in A Certain Measure, for example, she says with typical irony:

> Although, under the proverbially celibate tooth of time, man's conclusions about women have become less renowned, they remain suitably commemorated in those fixed opinions which we persist in calling masculine ideals and feminine intuitions. These, also, though subject to decay from within, are equally invulnerable to the years and chance, to enlightenment and the Darwinian hypothesis. (C. M., 226.)

Much critical distress might be alleviated and a fairer assessment made if the words of Henri Bergson, a philosopher known to Glasgow, were applied to Glasgow, herself:

> In the problems the philosopher has posed, we recognize the questions that are agitated around him. In the solutions he gives them, we expect to find arranged or disarranged, but scarcely modified, the elements of preceding or contemporary philosophies. Such a view must have been suggested to him by one philosophy, and such another by another. With what he has read, heard, learned, we shall doubtless be able to recompose the greater part of what he has done. We then set to work, we return to the sources, we weigh the influences, we extract the similarities, and we end by seeing in the doctrine what we seek in it: a more or less original synthesis of the ideas in the midst of which the philosopher lived. . . . for the human spirit is so fashioned that it cannot begin to understand the new until it has tried everything to lead it back to the old.[8]

What Glasgow's critics are, in reality, recording is the fact that their author found herself in the early stages of the modern absurdist position. With her heart she yearned

for the past, and for a Supreme Being which could offer certainty and stability; but, on those occasions when she felt herself oppressed by personal disaster or by the cruelty she saw in the world around her, the universe seemed without purpose, or, at best, ruled by a malevolent and indifferent deity. Such a deity she connected with the God of her father, "The Awful Power of the Old Testament." (W. W., 55.) The inconsistencies and skepticism offered by modern philosophy could, on such occasions, offer little to "hold by,"[9] and could prompt her to declare:

> There is nothing in the mind except what was first in the senses. So be it. But matter has no existence except as a form of mind. So be it. And yet, we know the mind only as we know matter, by perception. Well, so be it. Let all go, knowledge, matter, mind. (W. W., 177.)

Yet, though Glasgow continued to doubt the existence of a personal God or an ordered universe, she could neither settle for an extreme or consistent nihilism, nor could she achieve a fully existential position. Like modern absurdists, such as Samuel Beckett or Eugene Ionesco, she could question the existence of a logical and benevolent universe, but she could not, as even they cannot, given a further stage of disenchantment, "let all go." The "tragic conflict of types" which she records between the Calvinism of her father and the broad church Episcopalianism of her mother was, in fact, the conflict described by Karen Horney

as basic to American society, "that between competition and success on the one hand, and brotherly love and humility on the other."[10] Such conflict contained the seeds of a personal enquiry into a world in which utilitarianism, empiricism and pragmatism were tempered by an enthusiastic and still somewhat sentimental idealism.

"Hume's positivism had the paradoxical effect of producing an elaborate metaphysics, a religious revival, and a firmer belief in absolute ethical values."[11] This rebirth of intuition and faith can be traced through Hegel to a concept familiar to Glasgow's generation of thinkers, that "Reason in man is a manifestation of the underlying cosmic spirit which realizes itself gradually in the history of nations,"[12] a concept to be found as well in Plotinus. It is against such a background of thought that Glasgow can talk of turning from "Plotinus and Spinoza to Locke and Hume," (W. W., 225.) and back again to Plotinus (Letters, 319.)

To a philosophic study which ranged far and wide, Glasgow added an awareness of modern concepts in sociology, economics and science,[13] as she proceeded to sift through the ironies of the modern experience for an answer. Early in her career, Glasgow perceived that she must go beyond "Pascal's God known of the heart," (W. W., 172.) and seek "rest for the mind" (W. W., 172.) in a personal concept of

civilization, which she would call, "The heart in the intellect," (C. M., 39.) a phrase which is central to an understanding of Glasgow's work.[14]

Glasgow's reading in this pursuit was wider than she records,[15] and she records an impressive range. Even an incomplete list of sources named includes Mill, Adam Smith, Malthus, Sir Henry Maine, Walter Bagehot, the "German Scientists," Plato, Plotinus, Marcus Aurelius, the "great religions of the East," the Bible, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Schopenhauer, Fichte, Schelling, Darwin, Gibbon, Spenser, Henry George, Bergson, Nietzsche, Freud, and William James. To this must be added an avid reading of fiction. Glasgow read the French prose writers, Dumas, Balzac, Flaubert, and Maupassant, as well as Voltaire. She read Tolstoy, and comments interestingly enough, that he taught her something which, in fact, she had already learned from Plotinus, namely "that the ordinary is simply the universal observed from the surface, that the direct approach to reality is not without, but within." (W. W., 128.) It was a belief which Glasgow also found in Emerson, who was himself fundamentally influenced by Plotinus.[15a] The list of Glasgow's reading extends to Chekhov and Ibsen, and to the prose, poetry and drama of the English language including "every celebrated novel written in English." (C. M., 16.) In addition, in The Woman Within, Glasgow spends several pages paying tribute to another important source, and

someone whom she considered to be a kindred spirit, St. Francis of Assisi. She clearly connects him with Plotinus when she says of him: "'the only Christian since Christ'" (he) had found his Christ. Or had he found, instead, "'the flight of the alone to the Alone'"? (W. W., 266.)

Such a list indicates that Glasgow was deeply involved in the battle raging with renewed vigor at the turn of the century between science, religion, and philosophy, over the reality of Being in a world of becoming, particularly as this was relevant to evolutionary discovery and theory. It was a battle which may be seen as being very much influenced by the great, seminal mind of Plotinus, whose philosophy is itself more than a product of Platonic idealism; it is "logically the product of culmination of the whole of Greek philosophy,"[16] including Greek stoicism. This stoicism becomes for Glasgow a supplement for the stoicism which she imbibed from Marcus Aurelius and from the Calvinism of her father, and it helped her conceive that virtue of fortitude which sustains hero and heroine throughout her novels. Fortitude becomes, in fact, that "vein of iron" which appears throughout the novels, and is the title of one of Glasgow's major works.[17]

Glasgow, of course, was aware of Plotinus' influence on her conception of life, but her reliance on the Greek philosopher was, perhaps, greater than she realized. We

may see that a number of other sources known to Glasgow had also felt the influence of Neo-Platonism. Both William Dean Inge and Paul Henry have traced Plotinus' considerable influence on Christian thought, and particularly on Christian mysticism.[18] Inge, in addition, postulates the possible influence on Plotinus of Eastern religions, taught in Alexandria during Plotinus' residence there.[19] Inge also remarks, moreover, on the influence of Platonism and even Neo-Platonism on English thought and literature, particularly on the mystic and transcendental philosophy of the Romantics.[20] In addition, Glasgow would have been indirectly influenced by Plotinus through Schopenhauer who, during her search "to live with certitude and serenity, with reason on the ascendant," (W. W., 173.) offered her more satisfaction than Spinoza, whom she found to be "Blessed", but "not human." (W. W., 173.) Glasgow says that "only The World as Will and Idea stayed with me, until by pure accident, I discovered the great prose poem, Thus Spake Zarathustra." (W. W., 91.) It is important to note that Schopenhauer, has, throughout his philosophical writings, recorded a considerable debt to Plotinus. Nietzsche has also paid tribute to Schopenhauer, thus indirectly acknowledging Plotinus' influence. Nietzsche moreover recognizes Spinoza as one of his teachers, and many

of the basic tenets of Neo-Platonism can be found in Spinoza. And, it should be remembered that Bergson, too, acknowledges a debt to Plotinus. Though Glasgow found Bergson rather too mindless, too easy and too intuitive for her purposes (W. W., 267 ff.), Bergson does present a synopsis of much of the vitalistic philosophy resulting from the meditations of both French and German scientific writers of the time. Through Lamarck he influenced writers such as George Bernard Shaw to whom Glasgow is clearly sympathetic when she states, "Of course, we are still in the childish stage of culture. Shaw's 'infantilism' describes it, but we may finally grow up." (Letters, 187.)

It is now necessary to establish the tenets of Plotinian philosophy which influenced Glasgow, directly or indirectly, as she searched for "a more or less original synthesis." Subsequent chapters will show how these tenets have had a major part in her thinking and writing. As will be seen, Neo-Platonism divides into three levels of experience: the Ultimate or Supreme Good, or, in other words, the First Existent, which is the source of all creation; the Divine Mind or First Thinker and Thought; and finally the All Soul, the First and Only Principle of Life. All three of them are in reality phases or levels of the Supreme Good; below them is matter capable of redemption or of union with

the Supreme Good only insofar as it is penetrated by the Supreme Good through the All Soul. In elaborating, I will attempt to draw out points particularly pertinent to Glasgow criticism and to this thesis. I begin with the Supreme Good or the First Existent.

The Supreme Good of Plotinus has similarities to the Divinity of both Plato and Aristotle in that it is ultimately an Unmoved Mover to which all of creation aspires, while, by its very nature, it overflows to inspire and irradiate the universe. It is a central radiance apprehended both by the intellect and by intuition (or, in romantic terms, by the heart) through vision which is itself the achievement first of civic virtue, and, ultimately, of sympathy or love of all creation. Love of the creation is therefore love of the Supreme Good, The Ultimate, the true source of all beauty. Plotinus calls the Supreme Good in this context, the Unoriginating, and speaks, as Plato does, of the mystery of the Supreme Being which, because of its unity, is unqualified. Of it, he says:

> But the Unoriginating, what is it? We can but withdraw, and search no further. What can we look for when we have reached the furthest? Every inquiry aims at a first, and, that attained, rests. (The Enneads, 604.)

The First Existent is likened to a light, the sun, or to the root of a great tree which extends through all creation. It overflows into the Divine Mind or First Thinker, the

Ideal Creation above the material world. In this Intellectual Principle or First Thinker, as in Plato, are the Ideals, representative of quality, quantity, motion and the virtues.

Man is linked to this system through the All Soul. The All Soul descends from the Divine Mind through the Intellective Soul, the Reasoning or Rational Soul, and the Unreasoning Soul, the last two of which are more closely involved with matter. The right purpose of all experience is to reach unity with the Supreme Good. This is accomplished by man when the vision of the Intellective Soul, almost untouched by Matter and eternally contemplating the Divine, is perceived by a life of philosophical morality (sanctity or proficienthood). The "saint" proceeds to identify his entire being with the Divine Mind and, through it, with the Supreme Good in a blessed state of union. In the "Ninth Tractate" of the "Fifth Ennead," Plotinus speaks of the process of unity with the Supreme Good. He establishes a scale of beings, at the bottom of which one finds those who "cannot fly (to the Supreme) for all the wings Nature has given them." Above these are those who "lift themselves a little above the earth; the better in their soul (urging) them from the pleasant to the nobler," but these have no "power to see the highest and so, in despair of any surer ground, they fall back, in virtue's name upon those actions

and options of the lower from which they sought to escape."

Plotinus continues:

> But there is a third order, those godlike men who, in their mightier power, in the keeness of their sight, have clear vision of the splendour above and rise to it from among the cloud and fog of earth and hold firmly to that other world, looking beyond all here, delighted in the place of reality, their native land, like a man returning after long wanderings to the pleasant ways of his own country. What is this other place, and how is it accessible?
>
> It is to be reached by those who, formed with the nature of the lover, are also authentically philosophic by inherent temper; in pain of love towards beauty but not held by material loveliness; taking refuge from that in things whose beauty is of the soul--such things as virtue, knowledge, institutions, law and custom--and thence, rising still a step, reach to the source of this loveliness of the Soul, thence to whatever be above that again until the Uttermost is reached, the First, the Principle whose beauty is self-springing; this attained, there is an end to the pain, inassuageable before. (The Enneads, 434.)

The Reasoning Soul is the discursive Soul through which man may, step by step, arrive at a knowledge which is at best, imperfect, not at one with Divine reason. Reasoning is the act of the Soul fallen into perplexity, distracted with cares, diminished in strength. The need of deliberation goes with the less self-sufficing intelligence. Thus reasoning is apprehended by ceasing to think the body's thoughts.

Civic virtues are for the rational sphere and are classified by Plotinus as being:

> the Prudence which belongs to the reasoning faculty; the Fortitude which conducts the emotional and passionate nature; the Sophrosyny which consists in a certain pace, in a concord between the passionate faculty and the reason; and Rectitude which is the due application of all the other virtues as each in turn would command or obey. (The Enneads, 30.)

These virtues are manifested in the virtue which "you find in yourself or admire in another," that is:

> loftiness of spirit; righteousness of life; disciplined purity; courage of the majestic fact; gravity; modesty that goes fearless and tranquil and passionless; and shining down upon all, the light of godlike Intellection. (The Enneads, 60.)

For Plotinus, virtue must be free to serve the Intellectual Principle, the Divine Mind, and therefore may move beyond mere observance of custom. He says:

> Virtue does not follow upon occurences as a saver of the imperilled; at its discretion it sacrifices a man; it may decree the jettison of life, means, children, country even; it looks to its own high aim and not to the safe-guarding of anything lower. (The Enneads, 599.)

Desire, pleasure and pain are for Plotinus the result of involvement in the world of matter, and with the animals in the last phase of the Soul, the Unreasoning Soul, the principle of animal life. Man must experience the emotional life of the body in order to learn the value of freedom, and turn to the Good and to the state of blessedness. The Unreasoning Soul is joined with the body in the animate and contains the sense-grasping imagination and

sensible memory, the appetites rooted in the flesh. Great discord and tribulation ensue when the soul is fighting a losing battle with matter, which is the source of all evil because it is farthest from the First Existent and therefore the least subject to the order which the First Existent imposes through the ideals represented by the Divine Mind. The soul must conquer this discord by turning to the Supreme Good through virtue, or it must repeat its struggle in the world until it has reached the perfection of the proficient. (What can essentially be considered as a belief in re-incarnation, is one which Plotinus seems to have shared with the Hindus and Buddhists.)

Plotinus asks us to picture the ugly soul unresponsive to the Supreme Good and to the beauty which shines through nature from the Intellectual Principle in order "to flood the universe with beauty and penetrant order." (The Enneads, 356.) The ugly soul is entrapped in an imperfect world which is but a shadow of the Ideal, and is:

> dissolute, unrighteous; teeming with all the lusts; torn by internal disorder; beset by the fears of its cowardice and the envies of its pettiness; thinking, in the little thought it has, only of the perishable and the base; perverse in all its impulses; the friend of unclean pleasures; living the life of abandonment to bodily sensation and delighting in its deformity . . . An unclean thing, flickering hither and thither at the call of objects of sense, deeply infected with the taint of body, occupied always with Matter, and absorbing Matter into itself; in its commerce with the

> Ignoble it has trafficked away for an alien nature its own essential form. (The Enneads, 60.)

This soul is like a bird which cannot fly, for there is "a sinking, a defeat, a failing of the wing." (The Enneads, 623.)

Man must realize his place in the assembly of ideas as in the assembly of nature. The concept that each is part of the whole leads Plotinus to the thought that an assembly of men is more likely to arrive at a truth than is one misguided man alone. (The Enneads, 539.) Man can be helped to this realization by those civic leaders who are able to bring moral force to society, those who are in touch with the Ideal and skilled in oratory, generalship, administration and sovereignty. (The Enneads, 441.) Music also provides assistance since "its thought is upon melody and rhythm," and it is "the earthly representation of . . . the Ideal Realm." It is more helpful than dancing, painting, sculpture or pantomimic gesturing which must be referred to the higher sphere through the Reason Principle in humanity. (The Enneads, 440, 441.) Occupations such as agriculture and medicine which "draw on pattern" have contact for man with the intellectual realm. (The Enneads, 441.)

All men, the whole assembly of men, might conceivably be led to seek the blessed life, thereby creating a community of the blessed on earth, an idea cherished by Spinoza. If

so persuaded, they would be like a man changed, "no longer himself not self belonging." Such a man is "merged with the Supreme, sunken into it, at one with it; centre coinciding with centre, for centres of circles, even here below, are one when they unite and two when they separate." All that is needed is a turning away, so that the Aphrodite of the Ways may be seen as the Aphrodite of Heaven. Still, Plotinus does not spell out a kingdom of the blessed on earth; he does speculate that when the universe has reached its term, there may very well be a fresh beginning. This will occur when all the ideas in the Divine Mind have been expressed through the All Soul, a concept which lends itself to the idea, already mentioned, that the cosmic spirit "realises itself gradually in the history of nations"--an idea most popular in Glasgow's time.

In a literature in which emotion and ideas may be inconsistent, as Glasgow acknowledges that they may be in the quotation which begins this chapter, and as they are in the world of hard fact, there is the see-saw journey of the soul as it seeks its true home:

> It is not in the soul's nature to touch utter nothingness; the lowest descent is into evil and, so far, into non-being; but to utter nothing, never. When the soul begins again to mount, it comes not to something alien but to its very self; thus detached, it is in nothing but itself; self-gathered, it is no longer in the order of being; it is in the Supreme.

> There is thus a converse in virtue of which the essential man outgrows Being, becomes identical with the Transcendant of Being. The self thus lifted, we are in the likeness of the Supreme; if from that heightened self we pass still higher--image to archetype--we win the Term of all our journeying. Fallen back again, we waken the virtue within until we know ourself all order once more; once more we are lightened of the burden and move by virtue towards Intellectual Principle and through the Wisdom in That to the Supreme. (The Enneads, 625.)

Major concepts which many of the philosophers, thinkers and writers whom Glasgow knew share with Plotinus and which Glasgow herself held include the belief in a Supreme Being or Existent which irradiates the universe with love and harmony, and the idea that this Supreme Being can be perceived by the proficient, the blessed, the self-controlled "supermen" who are few in number and whose ascetic turn and personal lives of civic virtue permit them intuitively to apprehend or become one with the Supreme Being. Such apprehension of the Supreme is gained by insight, achieved through experience in the desires, pains, and pleasures of the world of the senses. If the soul rests there, this becomes destructive both of fulfillment and of freedom. Freedom can best be identified as accord with the virtue and beauty of the universe as extension of the Supreme Being; freedom is therefore service to the Ideal. As in Plotinus, there must be stoic rejection of worldly pleasure, even while the life of the world is

lived, so that virtue does not become the slave of the senses.

In Glasgow, such a philosophy was submitted to the unsettling influence of such anti-rational philosophies as empiricism, utilitarianism, and, to a lesser extent, pragmatism, as well as of scientific skepticism. Quite late in her life, she even commented:

> I had ceased to believe that ideal goodness, or indeed anything ideal, existed as an abstract Reality in the universe. Yet, within myself, I found a sense of justice and compassion that I would not betray. The pious might receive this as moral evidence of the Divine nature. The sceptic would, no doubt, ascribe it to the long result of evolution. For my part, I had no quarrel with either, or with any other interpretation. (W. W., 272.)

Glasgow, nevertheless, follows this assertion in The Woman Within with a contradiction. In the chapter entitled, "Epilogue: Present Tense," which concludes the book, she says of the months following the serious heart attack which nearly took her life:

> When I thought of dying in those weary months of convalescence, it was not of dying as a cold negation, but as a warm and friendly welcome to the universe, to Being beyond and above consciousness, or any vestige of self. . . . (W. W., 290.)

Glasgow's own personal philosophy is formulated in an essay entitled "What I believe," first published in The Nation, April 12, 1933. In it, Glasgow postulates a kind of Lockeian equality which might wish to find a chicken in

the pot of every peasant, but would eliminate, with a somewhat Neitzschean ferocity, "by education or eugenics," both "the thriftless rich and the thriftless poor." She says that while "any system ever invented might usher in the millenium," this would only be possible if "man were really civilized." She believes that the one and only way to a civilized order is by and through the "blessedness" defined by Spinoza, as being "not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself." Aristocracy and the leadership which it might provide has given way to mass consciousness so that the creation of a new aristocracy of the worthy seems difficult, if not impossible. Man must turn inward, for "that mass of men will not be content to live entirely without religion or philosophy as a guide." And Glasgow concludes the essay:

> And, finally beyond this, I can see only the vanishing point in the perspective, where all beliefs disappear and the deepest certainties, if they exist, can be comprehended by that inmost reason which we may call the heart.[21]

Here, as in her life and work, the appeal to inmost reason, to religion and philosophy, provide a final term. In the novels, as Glasgow encounters the desire, pain and pleasure of becoming, likened by her to life on the Buddhist Wheel of Becoming,[22] she continues to find hope, stability, and the possibility of solution in civic virtue, and in those truly civilized men, who are her own version of the proficient or the sage. These are stoic and, to a degree, ascetic older

men who, guided by intuition and insight into the harmonies of nature and the heart, are true heroes for whom Glasgow can feel real sympathy.[23]

Throughout the novels, as Glasgow continues to "fight on the side of the Eternal," mankind is called to virtue by vision, illumination, from some central radiance of the heart and mind which, despite a seemingly illogical universal cruelty, if correctly apprehended encourages to the "gentle and friendly and tender" of Plotinus' Divine Good. (The Enneads, 413.)

It is the music of the spheres after all which provides order, optimism and hope for the individual and for society through that inner commitment which is true freedom and which lies finally beyond defeat. However, for many in Glasgow's novels, the music is faint, or can scarcely be heard at all. In the following chapter we will look at characters who, to one degree or another, are "infected with the taint of body,"[24] lost among the "unclean pleasures" of the world.

CHAPTER III

"UNCLEAN PLEASURES"

A Study of the Relationship Between Plotinus' "Unclean Pleasures" of the World and Glasgow's: "Happiness Hunters", Pragmatists, Utilitarians, and Empiricists, and "Evasive Idealists."

In her preface to Vein of Iron, Ellen Glasgow makes a significant connection between Neo-Platonism and that fortitude which she found to be the chief virtue of her own Scottish forbears. In speaking of the novel, Glasgow notes that, "the main strength of the book lies in the figures of the old Presbyterian grandmother and the old pagan philosopher." (C. M., 174.) Of John Fincastle, "the old pagan philosopher," Glasgow says:

> In the later John Fincastle I was trying to portray the fate of the philosopher in an era of science, of the scholar in a world of mechanical inventions. His return to an earlier spiritual age and to the philosophy of Plotinus is intellectually and historically accurate. (C. M., 171.)

Glasgow connects the Presbyterianism of John's mother with the faith of her Aunt Rebecca who instructed her as a child "in the Shorter Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith," (C. M., 168.) Glasgow says that the "resolute breed" of Scottish metaphysicians from which she has sprung, "had placed freedom to believe above freedom to doubt, and had valued immaterial safety more than material comfort." In doing so, they had placed chief reliance on "the substance of fortitude." (C. M., 169.)

Intellectual fortitude and the turning from material comfort are central elements of Plotinian philosophy; it is therefore not surprising to find Glasgow combining Presbyterianism with Neo-Platonism in this preface, as in the novel.

But it is not in Vein of Iron alone that Glasgow finds strength in the "agonized conscience" of Presbyterianism (C. M., 173.) or in ascetic fortitude. These elements are present in her novels from the very beginning.

In Glasgow's first novel, for example, Rachel Gavin, a painter caught in the trammels of a romance with Michael Akershem, an unbridled and violent rebel against wordly abuse, is unable to complete her great portrait of the repentant Mary Magdelene. Rachel, like Michael, is becoming the victim of a will trapped by desire, for, like Michael, she has not thoroughly learned the lesson that "every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world."[1] Halfway through the novel, Rachel, realizing that "a terrible shadow" looms between her and her art, draws back in anguish from worldly attachment. That moment might be seen as a centre of illumination around which the events of the novel revolve:

> She prayed as a stranger might have prayed who saw a great thing, unknown to him, lured to destruction. She saw with the eye of the mind; from the watch-tower of the intellect she looked down into the heart, and writhed and was sickened at the sight. It was as a devil and an angel warred within her, one chaining her to the flesh and to the earth, the other drawing her upward to the heaven of the mind.[2]

Conscience and fortitude are contrasted in Glasgow's novels with a dangerous and soul-destroying dalliance with

the "unclean pleasures" of the world. It is this dalliance which forms the subject matter of this chapter and the characters involved in it are divided into three types: the happiness hunters, the pragmatists, empiricists and utilitarians, and the evasive idealists. All are mutually interdependent and influenced by one another. Of these three types, the happiness hunters are, on the whole, the most blinded by their involvement, most abandoned by the Neo-Platonic Ideal which in Glasgow is accommodated to pragmatism and to vitalistic and evolutionary principles. Always, too, the Ideal must be tempered with Glasgow's skepticism, descended from Hume's logical positivism, so that, for Glasgow's characters as for Hume, belief becomes a matter of faith. In the preface to The Sheltered Life, Glasgow contrasts the happiness hunters with General Archbald:

> Beyond this, I saw a shallow and aimless society of happiness hunters, who lived in a perpetual flight from reality, and grasped at any effort-saving illusion of passion or pleasure. Against this background of futility was projected the contrasting character of General Archbald, a lover of wisdom, a humane and civilized soul, oppressed by the burden of tragic remembrance. The stream of events would pass before him, for he would remain permanently at the centre of vision, while, opposing him at the farther side, he would meet the wide, blank, unreflective gaze of inexperience. (C. M., 204-205.)

In fact, the General himself faces the three types of characters mentioned above as he deals with the

"unreflective gaze of inexperience," personified by his grandchild, Jenny Blair. As the novel gains movement and structure, Jenny Blair becomes involved romantically with George Birdsong, a happiness hunter and part-time idealist. She is also involved with John Welch, a scientist and empirical pragmatist who turns part-time idealist when he defends Jenny Blair's romanticism from a disclosure of her affair with George Birdsong. Welch's actions help to prevent the social implications of the affair from being truly examined. Finally, Jenny Blair is the admirer of Eva Birdsong, George's wife, the principal evasive idealist of the novel.

The "flickering hither and thither at the call of sense," the feeling of being trapped in the excesses of the body, which George Birdsong experiences in The Sheltered Life, is typical of what Glasgow describes in The Deliverance as being "bound on the wheel" of life. (See Chapter II, footnote 22) Rachel Gavin struggles with this feeling no less than do those other prisoners of desire and passion who throng Glasgow's novels. A good example, because almost a pure type, is Gerty Bridewell, the sophisticated and wealthy young socialite of The Wheel of Life, who asks "some practical explanation of the mental weariness" she feels. Gerty questions:

> Why, for instance, when she had been wretched with but one man on the box, should the addition of a second livery fail to produce in her the contentment of which she had often dreamed while she disconsolately regarded a single pair of shoulders? (W. L., 4.)[3]

However, Gerty's brief attempt at philosophy is cut short by her memory of the pleasures she has experienced during the "restless infatuation" which marked the first months of her marriage to "the richest man she knew," the worldly Perry Bridewell. Just the memory is enough to hold her captive as it lends "the colour of its pleasing torment to her existence." (W. L., 4, 5.) Yet, such memories lose their lustre when considered beside Perry's infidelity with Ada Lawley, a member of the Bridewell social circle, who, Gerty claims, "would rather lose her character any day than her complexion--not that she has very much of either left by now." (W. L., 112.) In retaliation, Gerty threatens Perry with an affair with Arnold Kemper, another member of the Bridewell set, and Perry replies with "jealous indignation." (W. L., 113.) It becomes apparent that members of Gerty's circle share with her, to one extent or another, a feeling of being "a little tired, heart sick, and . . . disillusioned. . . ." (W. L., 113.) It is a feeling somewhat more keenly felt in Gerty's case because of her friendship for the heroine of the novel, Laura Wilde, a poetess who "reads Plotinus at her dressmaker's." (W. L., 225.) For

the sensé-ridden hedonists of The Wheel of Life, life is "a mere series of sensations," from which the Ideal in the person of the heroine, Laura, and the hero, Roger Adams, struggles with fortitude to escape into "cleaner and sharper" air (W. L., 55.) where conscience and intellectual courage combine to produce the promise of virtue and order. The Wheel of Life is an early example of the battle between the Ideal and the material which forms the conflict not only in this novel and in Vein of Iron, but in all of Glasgow's novels.

Like Gerty, happiness hunters may, to a greater or lesser degree, recognize the claims of the Ideal. In Phases of an Inferior Planet, the heroine, Mariana, is the inferior planet in any proposed harmony of the spheres. Mariana's "thought is upon melody and rhythm,"[4] but she is not a great singer. She substitutes an attempt to buy happiness for the inspiration derived from Lohengrin and her reading of John Stuart Mill. Mariana translates her love of beautiful things into a career as a popular singer, and this leads to her involvement with an Englishman who is, in turn, responsible for her acquisition of wealth and her subsequent world-weariness. She rejects the claim of the Ideal which is made to her in a vision that she experiences about half way through the novel. Mariana has this vision after the birth of Algarcife's child, and she feels

that she has become "a pure intelligence, and that the appeal of her flesh no longer (retards) her ascent." When Mariana understands that her life has been a mistake, she contemplates an agrarian retreat in which she and Algarcife would be joined together in an ideal love inspired by the "pink blossoms" of the peach tree and the "sound of cow-bells across green pastures"[5] despite the fact that they would be poor once more. However, Mariana dies before this proposed retreat to the Southern countryside can be accomplished. Glasgow transfers the focus of attention to Algarcife, now a minister of the Episcopalian church, who has rejected the worldliness of his congregation for a life of servitude to those among his flock, both rich and poor, who are in need. As the novel closes, Glasgow has Algarcife pit worldly care once more against conscience and fortitude as he admonishes his congregation "that it is good for a man to do right, and to leave happiness to take care of itself." (P.I.P., 303.) Part of doing right for Algarcife will be adhering to "Jeffersonian Principles," particularly to the idea, expressed in relation to an election taking place at the time, that "Freedom (must be) shackled by the chains of respectability." (P.I.P., 240.) However, considering the mindless mass which crowds the streets following the election, like "a writhing mass of dark-bodied insects," (P.I.P., 234.) Algarcife's civic virtue seems in for a severe

test. This and the death of the heroine suggest that there can be little doubt that "the ideal (is still) singing the old lesson of the real found wanting--of passion tarnished by the touch of clay. Love craves knowledge and the vision beautiful fades before the eyes of earth." (P.I.P., 248.)

Glasgow will, however, make repeated attempts to find harmony and order in nature, in agrarianism. Blair Rouse is not correct, I think, in seeing "Asa's departure from the city" in Beyond Defeat as "a very personal act and not a symbol of agrarianism."[6] Insofar as agrarianism encompassed the Jeffersonian idea that the land could restore virtue to man adrift in the machine age it is compatible with Glasgow's Idealism. We see this kind of agrarianism not only in Phases of an Inferior Planet, but also in other novels, for example, The Deliverance, Barren Ground, and Beyond Defeat. Indeed the land as a restorative power, revealing the harmony in nature as it reflects the Ideal, appears throughout the novels. It is, for example, part of the final optimism perceived in The Battle Ground that the heroine, Betty Ambler, is able to manage the family plantation so competently following the ravages of the Civil War. In Vein of Iron, there is a symbolic return to the land, so that the taint of the animals, the gypsy in man, may be cleansed. Such cleansing and restorative virtue is akin to that perceived in Nature in Neo-Platonism when the beauty of the

Ideal is revealed by it, a beauty which is, in reality, the moral beauty of man's own nature, for all beauty reflects the symmetry and unity of the Ideal.

The choice between moral beauty, the Ideal, and selfish happiness hunting is presented in novel after novel, to hero and heroine. In The Voice of the People, Nicholas Burr must refuse a position on the Senate, and must overcome the worldly Dudley Webb, "a man of excellent digestion and a complacent conscience,"[7] and respond with an inner fortitude which is neither "exhilerated by sunshine nor . . . depressed by gloom." (V. P., 392.) Nick must learn "the lesson all great men learn--that happiness is but one result of the adjustment of the individual needs to the Eternal Laws." (V. P., 361.) In The Ancient Law, Daniel Ordway rejects material reward for a life of service to humanity, "seeking shelter in the good deeds he has done."[8] In The Romance of a Plain Man, Ben Starr refuses the presidency of a railway company for which he has worked for years in order to attend his ailing wife, Sally. She has within her "something immaterial and flamelike that (is) her soul--turned from (Ben), seeking always a clearer and diviner air."[9]

Even the two comedies of manner, The Romantic Comedians and They Stooped to Folly which, with The Sheltered Life, form Glasgow's trilogy of the novels of the city, call

for a solution which goes beyond mere pleasure. Although, in these two novels happiness hunting is treated with a more genial humor, Glasgow still suggests that "even the modern world must cling to something or perish."[10] Despite any pragmatic view of Victorian virtue, the search must continue for "something worth loving." (T.S.F., 350.) Through her rejection of the happiness hunters of Vein of Iron, of The Sheltered Life, and other novels, Glasgow continues to agonize over mere happiness hunting as morally unclean and unworthy. It can neither provide that vision of eternity which supports Asa Timberlake in Beyond Defeat, nor can it stimulate fortitude or offer hope for the future.[11]

The second group of characters astray among the unclean pleasures of the material world, the empiricists, utilitarians and pragmatists, receive greater sympathy from Glasgow because their pragmatism permits her the freedom to examine life "in the flesh and with the pulse of the living." (See page 12, above.) It is this element of pragmatism which makes for some apparently irreconcilable contradictions in character in the novels. In The Sheltered Life, for example, Glasgow seems to say that George Birdsong is at once a scapegrace guilty of cruel deception and a character worthy of sympathy because his "humanity" has led him beyond the pale of virtue. It is this humanity which General Archbald

shares with George, and which has caused the General himself to desire to go beyond the bonds of custom represented by the Episcopal church of which he is "a member in good standing." (S. L., 138 ff. and 163.) George shares with the General a pragmatic wish to adventure and, in doing so, to submit the Ideal to the fact, and love to knowledge. (P.I.P., 248.) But, the General's adventuring is past the stage of any light, romantic foray, if, given the General's character, it was ever in any danger of such. The General has been an early rebel and an advocate of the abolition of negro slavery. (S. L., 145 ff.) He can still, in the twilight of his life, wonder what the future may bring now that "religion and science, those hoary antagonists (are) reconciled and clasped in a fraternal embrace." (S. L., 146.) As the General attempts to reconcile the individual self to the empirical present and to human psychology, he reflects:

> But the age was drifting, he knew; the world was flattening around him; the heroic mould had been broken. Beauty, like Passion, would decline to the level of mediocrity. With the lost sense of glory, the power of personality would change and decay. It was possible, it was even probable, he thought, that the individual would return to the tribe from which it had so lately emerged. Better so, perhaps. Who could tell? Who could tell anything? Of one thing alone he was sure--life would never again melt and mingle into the radiance that was Eva Birdsong. Personality, he thought, being old and sentimental, could reach no higher. Beyond that triumph there was no other triumph. To go onward, civilization must

> fold back, must recoil from individualism and seek some fairer design. Though he did not suspect that his era was dying, he felt that both he and his age were drifting, not aimlessly like dust, but somewhere to an end. Somewhere? He was not greatly concerned. Whatever came, he could meet it; he could even endure not to meet it. Having lived his little hour of mortality, he had ceased to fear any form, he had ceased to fear any formlessness, of the Absolute. (S. L., 377-378.)

The General's willingness to place faith in the Absolute, and then to submit the Absolute to experience is one which Glasgow shares with him throughout the novels. The hero and heroine will always venture forth pragmatically to enquire whether the Ideal might make its way in the world; whether, in fact, social progress is a possibility.

The sort of pragmatism which Glasgow imbibed from John Stuart Mill and later from William James was one in which utilitarian empiricism, or what she calls "the utilities" (C. M., 23.), is combined with Coleridgean evolutionary idealism,[12] itself influenced by Neo-Platonism through German idealism. This sort of pragmatism shares with Neo-Platonism the idea that true virtue lies not in custom, or fixed social ideas. It seeks the adaptation of the Ideal to both the evolving biological present and the psychological present. It is this kind of pragmatism which causes Glasgow in "What I Believe" to speak of the moral evolution of "life on this planet" towards the "sublime

virtues" of "truth, justice, courage, loyalty, compassion," before making a final appeal to a mystical "inmost reason which we may call the heart." It was Hume's attack on rationalism as being "merely useful,"[13] which led to the kind of idealistic leap backward suggested here. Like Coleridge, Glasgow seems to expect history to vindicate traditional belief when she simply rejects empiricism for faith and resorts to "the heart in the intellect," and the traditional Platonic virtues listed above: virtues which Plotinus would rank among the civic virtues of Plato, inferior only to Divine Virtue which is Divine Likeness.

Repeatedly, Glasgow's pragmatism rejects an untried, rationalistic, and self-serving idealism. In The Descendant, for instance, she attacks Mr. Self, the Methodist minister, with the assertion that he "was a gentleman of a great many ideals and a very few ideas." (T. D., 166.) Glasgow searches like a true Mill pragmatist for those "controlling laws"[14] which can be found in "the history of the race." (T. D., 246.) Michael Akershem, the hero of The Descendant, is not a failure because he searches; he is one because he searches wrongly. He is a sort of Darwinian throwback to the "old savage type," (T. D., 246.) and his abrupt rebellion causes him to commit Glasgow's cardinal sin, that of cruelty, by disrupting what achieved good can be found in civilized

society. Michael is guilty of abandoning Rachel Gavin for Anna Allard who, though a figure of considerable civic virtue, represents for Michael "the proprieties of life--nothing more." (T. D., 204.) Michael has refused to marry Rachel and, as his friend, John Driscoll, tells him, "Call it what you will, your fight against conventions is nothing more or less than a fight against morality. Men aren't so good that they should be allowed full liberty to do evil." (T. D., 142.) Here, as in Phases of an Inferior Planet, freedom must be shackled by respectability. Michael's intemperate and uncontrolled nature leads him to kill a fellow worker, Kyle, who objects to Michael's turning from a modern radical to an opportunistic and self-serving conservative. John Driscoll sees in the action, "an expression of the old savage type, beaten out by civilization and yet recurring here and there in the history of the race, to wage the old savage war against society." (T. D., 246.) Michael, in fact, represents the "whole-hearted retreat to the Neanderthal" (C. M., 53.), which Glasgow disparages in such contemporary writers as Ernest Hemingway who, in her own words, have "won acclaim as a pugilist or a stevedore or a ditch-digger or a bull fighter." (C. M., 53.)

Glasgow hopes that evolution will produce a society in which, after much trial and error, the cruelty of ignorance, which is the major cause of Jennie Blair's distress

at the end of The Sheltered Life, will be eradicated. While this fond hope meets with a conclusion constant in Glasgow's work of "not yet and maybe not ever," it is nearly fulfilled in Life and Gabriella where Glasgow attempts to wed the Ideal to the Horatio Alger myth, with its emphasis on individual achievement and purification through economic success. Ben O'Hara, the hero, has "lived deeply," and living for him has meant "action and achievement rather than criticism and philosophy."[15] Gabriella, the heroine, does however realize her own part in a scheme of things in which all are part of the one; she is one of the atoms in the "swarming life of the city," and she sees in Ben a real hope for the future as well as a virile partner who can conquer the existing fact:

> In his practical efficiency and his crude yet vital optimism, (Ben) embodied, she felt, the triumphs and failures of American democracy--this democracy of ugly fact and of fine ideals, of crooked deeds and of straight feeling, of little codes and of large adventures, of puny lives and of heroic deaths--this democracy of the smoky present and the clear future. 'If this is our raw material today,' she thought hopefully, 'what will be the finished and signed product of tomorrow?' (L. G., 480.)

One feels a sense of completion when Gabriella at the end of the novel pledges herself to Ben at last, and promises, "I'll come with you now--anywhere--toward the future." (L. G., 529.)

Another interesting attempt at a happy ending is Barren Ground. The pragmatic heroine of the novel, Dorinda Oakley, conquers the weakness of her own human nature, as she conquers the broomsedge that threatens to engulf the family farm, by refusing to succumb to despair over a disastrous love affair with a handsome young doctor, Jason Greylock. By using new methods of farming and through financial aid from her New York friends, Dorinda creates a successful dairy farm in Queen Elizabeth County, Virginia, the home of the Presbyterian Oakleys. Always a pragmatist, Dorinda does not hesitate to marry Nathan Pedlar, whose first wife, Rose Emily, is deceased; Dorinda marries Nathan for the simple reason that as well as being a "good" man, he is of great practical help to her. Moreover, the marriage will unite the Pedlar holdings to her own. Nathan also assists her in gaining control of Jason Greylock's farm when Jason goes the way of his drunkard father, and sinks deeper and deeper into personal neglect and poverty. Dorinda does, however, seek the ideal in the beauty of nature. Like the farmers who sit in Nathan's store, resembling "transcendental philosophers" patiently enduring their lot, Dorinda learns from "the communion with earth and sky" both fortitude and refinement of spirit. (B.G., 45.) Although, in the end, Dorinda cannot help recalling the "radiance of that old summer" with Jason, she is consoled by nature and by the knowledge that "where

beauty exists the understanding soul can never remain desolate." (B.G., 510.) When Nathan dies a hero, while assisting the victims of a train wreck, Dorinda realizes afresh what a good man he is behind his rather clownish exterior, but she finds the public expression of grief all too reminiscent of the sanctimony "consecrated to missionaries who had died at their posts or . . . distinguished generals of the Confederacy." (B.G., 440.) Both are examples of inflexible and evasive idealism in a changing world. While the people around her put their faith in a heroic idealism "too magnificent to be true," (B.G., 440.) Dorinda, herself, draws strength and fortitude from the land and from her own adventurous spirit. She also finds a source of courage in John Abner, the crippled son of Nathan and Rose Emily, for whom she has a great affection. As the novel draws to a close, John Abner is seen "limping towards her over the dead leaves in the walk . . . his long, black shadow (running) ahead of him," and looking "as if he were pursuing some transparent image of himself." (B.G., 510.) The reader will by now recognize in the shadow and in the transparent image symbols of Neo-Platonic philosophy. John Abner will move through the shadows of the world to some inward revelation of the Ideal which will help him to redeem the future.

In Barren Ground, pragmatism combines with agrarianism to provide the final note of optimism. Such also is the case in Beyond Defeat. Asa Timberlake is among a valiant band of exiles from tradition who flee to a farm, Hunter's Fare, owned by Kate Oliver, whose "simple goodness" shelters and instructs them as they conduct an experiment in communal living. In farming the land, the diverse group at Hunter's Fare receives instruction in virtues such as fortitude, loyalty (at least to one another), compassion, truth and justice; in addition, the land provides that vision of beauty, mentioned above, which instructs Asa in Divine Virtue.

Glasgow is, however, never secure in an evolutionary pragmatism. Like her protagonist, General Archbald, she fears the fate of philosophy in an age of science. She sees that "human nature does not change." (S. L., 144.) Evolution may mean at best a New Jerusalem where pleasure and happiness have become institutionalised to create a "favoured province, smooth, smiling, well-travelled," where "neither sin, nor disease, nor war will exist" and where "all the ancient wrongs would be righted. Nobody, not even the old people sunning themselves on green benches, would be allowed to ramble in mind." (S. L., 147.) It is a sinister picture reminiscent of the highly institutionalised mind control practised in 1984. It is also a rebuttal to

the sort of pragmatism recommended by William James when he says:

> At the same time (pragmatism) does not stand for any special results. It is a method only. But the general triumph of that method would mean an enormous change in what I (call) . . . the 'temperament' of philosophy. . . . Science and metaphysics would come much nearer together, would in fact work absolutely hand in hand.[16]

While pragmatism is seen by Glasgow as considerably better than mere selfish utilitarianism of the sort practised by Cyrus Treadwell of Virginia or William Fitzroy in In This Our Life, and while it may accompany a life of civic virtue such as that attempted by the heroes of Glasgow's political novels,[17] it is, as in Plotinus, merely another aspect of life on the wheel of becoming. When John Welch snaps at General Archbald that "transcendentalism" is "nonsense," (S. L., 146.) the General questions the belief that "material ends" are all the world needs "to build on," that "passion, even in the old, (is) a simple problem of lowering your blood pressure and abandoning salt." (S. L., 147.) For the General, truth lies "in the thinking self," and beyond that, despite the attention he gives to the problems of those around him, in that vision of the Divine which he experiences in the central section of the book entitled, "The Deep Past."[18] The General, at eighty-three, looks ahead to "the happiest years of his life, when nothing, not even life itself, will be necessary." The General is well on his way

to that state of being "immune to passion" which is a mark of Divine Virtue in Plotinus. (The Enneads, 32.)

Some apprehension, and it is only an apprehension, of the Ideal lies in the kind of idealism which nonetheless binds its adherents to a life of material servitude, that is the evasive idealism of which Eva Birdsong is the beauteous symbol in The Sheltered Life.

Glasgow is speaking of the third group of those who tarry among the unclean pleasures of the world when she says that, at twenty, she had even less patience than she had when she wrote the critical prefaces to her novels with "the coloured spectacles of evasive idealism." (C. M., 50.) We have seen this impatience epitomized in her attack on the character of Mr. Self,[19] of The Descendant. Glasgow continues steadfastly to believe that "nothing, not even idealism, can afford to live on dreams alone." It is for this reason that, in the novel Virginia, Glasgow supports the adventuresome idealism of Oliver Treadwell, Virginia's husband. Of Oliver, Glasgow says:

> In the Dinwiddie of the eighteen-eighties, he remains disappointed though not disillusioned. Oliver, the idealist, had wanted his dreams and nothing, not even idealism can afford to live upon dreams alone. (C. M., 89.)

However, Oliver leaves Virginia for the new woman, Margaret Oldcastle, who plays the lead in his plays, staged in New York. Glasgow, in speaking of her, shows her own growing

distaste for modern ideas of progress which, again, do not combine freedom with respectability:

> . . . the free woman, and her freedom, like that of man, had been built upon the strewn bodies of the weaker. The law of sacrifice, which is the basic law of life, ruled her as it ruled in mother-love and in the industrial warfare of men. (Virginia, 396.)

The utilitarian pragmatism which Glasgow frequently associates with business success, as is the case in Virginia and Barren Ground, for example, is also associated by her with Calvinism and with the rising members of the Southern middle class, the subject of her chronicle up to the First World War, and beyond. (C. M., pp. 4-5.) It was also, Glasgow indicates in Barren Ground, the philosophy of the sons and daughters of the "good people" of the country who "drifted away to the city where they assumed control of democracy as well as of the political machine," employing virtues that were "useful rather than ornamental." Such virtues were practiced by Glasgow's dour Calvinist father, who was a manager of the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia.[20] Ornamental virtues were left to Glasgow's Episcopalian mother. For Glasgow they are also the province of the Old South and of the "good families" of Virginia who preserved "among other things, custom, history, tradition, romantic fiction and the Episcopal church." (B. G., 5.) In speaking of the Old South, Glasgow refers to a veneration

for "religious and social taboos" and a "pride of name and estate." (C. M., 36.) While, for Glasgow, the Old South has a "lingering fragrance" and "an imperishable charm," it exerts a "stranglehold on the intellect." (C. M., 36, 37.) It is the sort of stranglehold which keeps Eva, Virginia, and other descendants of the Southern lady from abandoning mere duty in order to use their "reasoning faculties" effectively in dealing pragmatically with present reality. (C. M., 90.) This is true even though they preserve "that inviolable essence which is the self within the self," (C. M., 90.) the essence which is the Plotinian Ideal.

Essentially the reality with which these Southern ladies and their Southern gallants (the Dudley Webbs and Judge Honeywells of the novels) fail to deal effectively is social reform and economic reality of the kind called for in "What I Believe." Glasgow says specifically:

> As a general theory, leaving the ways and means to specialists, I believe that the private ownership of wealth should be curbed; that our natural resources should not be exploited for individual advantage; that every man should be assured of an opportunity to earn a living and a fair return for his labor; that our means of distribution should be readjusted to our increasing needs and the hollow cry of 'overproduction' banished from a world in which millions are starving. (op. cit., p. 541.)

However, it is a far cry to the educated and illuminated population for which Glasgow yearns, and as the idea begins to fade in the years between the two World Wars, Glasgow

questions the worth of her attempt to temporize the Ideal. She says in "I Believe,"

> It is far indeed from Plotinus to Locke or Hume or Darwin; yet I travelled that journey through the ether to what I feel to be the solid ground under my feet. And all the while, though I had never suspected this, I was revolving in a circular course, which would lead me back to the nature of self in the end. (op. cit., p. 103.)[21]

While the best of the Old South shares with Virginia simple goodness, a quality which Glasgow both admires and modifies, and which might briefly be described as the response of the open heart,[22] Virginia fails to appreciate that she is irrevocably a part of the tragic conflict of types in which Glasgow found herself involved. Virginia's philosophy fails to take account of the fact that while "inherited culture possessed grace and beauty and the inspiration of gaiety . . . . it was shallow rooted at best." (C. M., 13.) What the Old South and those whose lives are a commemoration of it fail to realize is that:

> for all its charm and its good will, the way of living (of the Old South) depended, not upon its own creative strength, but upon the enforced servitude of an alien race. Not the fortunes of war, not the moral order of the universe, but economic necessity doomed the South to defeat. In the coming industrial conquest, the aristocratic tradition could survive only as an armchair memorial. It was condemned to stand alone because it had been forsaken by time. (C. M., 13.)

Throughout, Glasgow attempts a pragmatic adjustment of the broken mould of a past perfection[23] to present

necessity. She rejects with "blood and irony" a return to the past, calling for a more realistic placing of "the crutch" of idealism on "the common ground" of democracy as she does in A Certain Measure. In speaking of Tucker, of The Deliverance, the first of her civilized men, she says:

> Yet his crutch also was firmly planted on the common ground; and this is as much perhaps as one has the right to expect from any romantic philosopher. (C. M. 96.)

However, where beauty and grace combine with selfish pride of place and possession there can be no lasting unity and little harmony. An aristocracy supported by financial involvement with the crass industrialization of the New South cannot create a society of the blessed. Eva attempts to ignore the "breath of decay" which emanates from a chemical factory in Penitentiary Bottom where underprivileged blacks live in crowded conditions, like the poor in Phases of an Inferior Planet. Eva, unfortunately for herself, also ignores the plight of Memoria, the coloured laundress, who lives in the Bottom, and with whom George is having an affair. It is an oversight which, eventually, leads to Eva's murder of George with the gun which he has used for shooting birds. The birds shot by George symbolise the killing of the free spirit by the evasive idealism which George--a Southern gentleman engaged in blood sports--shares with Eva. (The symbol of the birds is consistent with Plotinus' own

use of the symbol.) (See p. 28 above.) In the novel, General Archbald rescues a dog, William, from Southern "sportsmen," and William becomes the symbol of the General's own inability to participate successfully in cruel sports. Always in Glasgow the hunted animal is the symbol of human nature subjected to mindless cruelty. The bird symbolises both the spirit caged by convention or by worldly pleasure and the freeing of the spirit through experience and through identification with the Ideal. Bird symbolism, in fact, extends to Glasgow's final paragraph in Beyond Defeat where she speaks of the "winged spotlight." (B.D., 134.)

Stanley and Lavinia of In This Our Life, assisted by William Fitzroy, Lavinia's brother, are examples of other social aristocrats guilty of grasping blindly at position and material reward to the detriment of those below them in the social scale--in this case, Parry, another negro on whom Stanley attempts to place the blame for an automobile accident she has caused.[24] They also accomplish their own defeat and the defeat of all but the somewhat segregated group of rebels at Hunter's Fare, who represent a small civilized minority.

Duty and custom are never enough, even in The Battle Ground, where Glasgow steps back to the time of the Civil War to pay youthful tribute to the ideals which were so much a part of her own upbringing. Glasgow relates the aristocrats

of The Battle Ground to her mother's family. She says that The Battle Ground reflects "the undue influence of ancestor worship." (C. M., 21.) At the end of The Battle Ground, the heroine, Betty Ambler, and the hero, Daniel Mountjoy, must "begin again," facing with courage and fortitude the rigours of the reconstruction years to come. In Virginia, though the heroine desperately needs to change, she cannot, and she seems all but abandoned by Glasgow to keep a forlorn and lonely watch over the rituals of the past. Stanley, in particular, experiences the truth that it is but a short turn of the wheel until outmoded custom becomes the happiness hunting which binds the faithless to the lusts of the flesh.

True civic virtue while "in pain of love toward beauty," such as that exhibited by the representatives of the old order, cannot rely on mere outward show, or on the pious assertions of an anachronistic idealism which simply refuses to take the machine age seriously. It must search through and beyond the material for some inspired concord between the passionate faculty and reason which may serve society as a whole, offering guidance and consolation to those wandering, as Jennie Blair wanders, "through sunlight netted with shadows," (S.L., 169.) to become, too frequently, trapped like animals in the unclean pleasures of the world.

Having looked in this chapter at the three classes of characters who are concerned with material possession and well being to the peril of their spiritual well being (for even Dorinda is said by Glasgow to have a "strong and rather arrogant nature," (B.G., 341.)) it now becomes necessary to look in greater detail at those who attempt to serve the Ideal through Civic Virtue. That such characters combine Civic Virtue with pragmatism and evasive idealism should come as no surprise to the reader who is aware that, for Glasgow as for Plotinus, virtue must make its way amid the pains and pleasures afforded by participation in the material world.

CHAPTER IV

"TAKING REFUGE" IN CIVIC VIRTUE

A Study of the Relationship Between Glasgow's Concepts of Civic Virtue and Those of Plotinus, With Special Reference to Glasgow's Political Novels.

In describing those "godlike men" who are the sages of Neo-Platonism, Plotinus says that they are not held by "material loveliness," that they turn away from the "unclean pleasures" of the world, "taking refuge from (material loveliness) in things whose beauty is of the soul--such things as virtue, knowledge, institutions, law and custom." Plotinus is saying that in turning from the material it is possible to rise a step and take refuge in civic virtue. From civic virtue the proficient may then rise still further to "reach to the source of this loveliness of the Soul, thence to whatever be above that again until the Uttermost is reached, the First, the Principle whose beauty is self-springing." (The Enneads, 434.) In this chapter it will be shown that Glasgow herself attempts to take refuge in a civic virtue which greatly resembles that of Plotinus. This is obvious in her "political" novels, to which particular attention will be paid here. These novels offer an opportunity to explore the historical milieu in which Glasgow's Idealism had to make its way, and this in turn helps to explain the direction of the author's work as it relates to Neo-Platonism. The next chapter will show how Glasgow, disillusioned with the world of happiness hunters, which increasingly provides the setting of her novels; turns to civic virtue in the guise of "simple goodness," and to Divine Fortitude. In

considering the political novels, we deal with three of Glasgow's heroes, champions of the Ideal, whom Frederick McDowell describes as having the Nietzschean "force to shape destiny."[1] These men are Nicholas Burr, of the The Voice of the People, Gideon Vetch, of One Man in His Time, and David Blackburn, of The Builders. All are men of some knowledge, instructed by books and by practical experience. All are pragmatic leaders concerned, to one extent or another, in bringing traditional concepts of order to the unruly present so that "freedom (might) be shackled by the chains of respectability," by brotherly love, and by Jeffersonian principle. Before looking at the novels in which these men appear, it is necessary, in order to understand Glasgow's treatment of them and the direction of her work, to review Glasgow's ideas of civic virtue as they relate to those of Plotinus, and, in doing so, to note again the emphasis placed in both Plotinus and Glasgow on the stoic virtue of Fortitude. It is also helpful to take a preliminary look at the Ideal in the service of evasive idealism so that the later novels may be understood in contrast. The novel, Virginia, provides a useful example of evasive idealism particularly because it may be seen as heralding the beginning of Glasgow's more pragmatic and empiric middle period in which, as she said herself, she was particularly concerned with Darwin, Locke, and Hume.

When Plotinus' concept of civic virtue is examined more closely, it becomes clear that Glasgow's own concept is similar to that of her Greek mentor. Plotinus' "things whose beauty is of the soul," and those virtues named by Glasgow as being among the "sublime virtues," "truth, justice, courage, loyalty and compassion," are recognizable as Platonic civic virtues. The similarity between Plotinus and Glasgow becomes more apparent if we add to Glasgow's own list the virtue of knowledge which appears throughout her novels as a dependance on the mind, the "watch-tower of the intellect," (T.D., 115.) and on the learning which supports the intellect. Plotinus, who considered himself to be merely an interpreter of Plato, incorporates his virtues into a portrait of the virtuous man who has:

> loftiness of spirit; righteousness of life; disciplined purity; courage of the majestic fact; gravity, modesty that goes fearless and tranquil and passionless; and shining down upon all, the light of godlike intellection. (The Enneads, 60.)

This quotation actually incorporates the Platonic virtue of temperance, which mediates between excesses of passion, making the bodily appetites subservient to reason so that they have "disciplined purity." The virtue of temperance has undergone modification from the Stoic virtue of Apathy, indifference to pleasure and pain. This indifference

implies an acceptance of the world as an orderly microcosm of the universal macrocosm; the Stoic is indifferent because he assumed that everything is going as planned, pain is a part of the whole as is pleasure. Stoicism became "sharply ascetic,"[2] in its pursuit of apathy. For the Stoics:

> Moderation was held to be as bad as excess. Since the supreme good is apathy, it follows that nothing less than the complete eradication of all emotions must be achieved before a man can have attained his end.[3]

In addition to the above, the Stoics added to Greek thought the idea of the cosmopolis. This idea developed from the notion of "natural" which "suggested to the Stoics the idea" that there was "a universal brotherhood of man."[4] If there was an orderly microcosm in which all phenomena participated, it followed that "men everywhere ought, ideally, to be members of a universal community, citizens of one city."[5] This idea of universality is akin to Plotinus' doctrine that the light of the First Existent shines everywhere and is accessible to all, and particularly to those of a virtuous and philosophic temperament. Man turned to union with the Divine does not so much eradicate emotion as place it at the service of the intellect. Man is apathetic to material loveliness, and is willing, in the pursuit of the Ideal, to move beyond custom; as Plotinus says, "virtue does not follow on occurrence . . . it may decree the jettison of life. . . ." (The Enneads, 599.)

The idea of a cosmopolis was absorbed into Christianity, and "survived through the Middle Ages into the modern period," so that, as W.T. Jones remarks:

> When our Founding Fathers (in the United States) drew up the Declaration and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, they believed themselves to be putting in writing the dictates of natural law. And this doctrine of a universal moral order has survived to our own day. When we condemn Nazi racial laws as 'immoral' and 'unjust,' or as being in conflict with 'the rights of man,' we are thinking in Stoic terms.[6]

As part of her heritage of Jeffersonian democracy and Anglo-Saxon justice[7] Glasgow assumes the idea of a cosmopolis, the universal community in which each man is equal before the law, and in which each has the right to the pursuit of "happiness." The belief in Jeffersonian democracy as being the real aim of American society and, by extension, of society as a whole brings, in Glasgow, a desire for loyalty to "institutions, law, and custom," a desire which the law-abiding Plotinus felt in his own time. There is also in Glasgow the hope, noted above in relation to Coleridge, that knowledge will reveal the worth of the institution. However, by placing the emotions at the service of the intellect, the heart in the intellect, it is possible to discover that custom may not always be just; custom may be a cover for "evasive idealism." If no solid ground can be found for virtue in a society dedicated to

material values and to the narrow, selfish aims evinced by the evasive idealists in the preceding chapter, there evolves the idea which Glasgow also shares with Plotinus, that temperance, the subservience of the emotions to reason, is a first step to apathy. Such apathy indicates indifference to the emotions of the world as they are ensnared by materialism and the "unclean pleasures" of the world. Glasgow is willing to go a step further, in the attempt to rise to "the source of loveliness," and still further to unity with the "unknown Everything or Nothing." (W. W., 289.) This is a phrase which seems contradictory until one connects it with Plotinus' statement that while the First Existent is Everything and Everywhere, it is also self-contained and Nothing because it is unqualified by "quality, quantity, motion, and the virtues." The virtues referred to here are civic virtues which, in Plotinus, ensure the Platonic civic virtues; they are the Prudence, Fortitude, Sophrosyny and Rectitude of the material world and not the Divine Fortitude which rises above the material.

Before tracing civic virtue in Virginia and in the "political" novels, let us remark that it is not surprising to find in Glasgow a growing belief that fortitude or temperance entails a rejection of worldly values. The simple fact is that no matter how Glasgow tried to fit in pragmatic ideas of progress, informed as they were by

Platonic Idealism, she met on every side the greed and ruthless competition which were so much a part of the time in which she wrote. For one who could see cruelty as the greatest sin, such a milieu was tragically lacking in the brotherly love and humility evident in the character of a Virginia and in the cordial geniality of the Old South; it therefore reinforced Glasgow's Neo-Platonic and Calvinistic asceticism. On the other hand, Glasgow shows in her novels that the evasive idealism of the Old South, despite any geniality of manner, is guilty of evading more than the social realities of cast and race. For all its cavalier magnanimity, the Old South is guilty of the kind of, hidden lust for cruelty and bloodshed which expresses itself in blood sports of the kind which involve George Birdsong and General Archbald. As the Old South combines with the New, the emphasis is put increasingly on "laissez-faire" capitalism, on the survival of the fittest in the marketplace, and this breeds the sort of capitalistic monopoly encouraged by Northern barons of industry and the manipulation of politics to serve personal interest. This is true, despite the anti-trust legislation of such progressive presidents as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. In such circumstances, the anxieties of the American people arising from the potentially neurotic split in personality noted by Karen Horney could only be

intensified. Just after Glasgow had published Vein of Iron, in which hostile crowds roam the streets of a Southern city, Horney published, in 1937, The Neurotic Personality of Our Time, in which she speaks of a modern culture economically based on the principles of individual competition:

> The potential hostile tension between individuals results in a constant generation of fear--fear of the potential hostility of others, reinforced by a fear of retaliation for hostilities of one's own. Another important source of fear in the normal individual is the prospect of failure. The fear of failure is a realistic one because, in general, the chances of failing are much greater than those of succeeding, and because failures in a competitive society entail a realistic frustration of needs. They mean not only economic insecurity, but also loss of prestige and all kinds of emotional frustrations.[8]

As Glasgow observed the growing moral chaos and the intensifying hostility which surrounded her in the years between the war, she evinced a deepening sympathy for the "heroic" ideals of the past as they rested on established custom. In "Heroes and Monsters," published in 1935, Glasgow asks the reader, "Where is that 'immoderate past' celebrated in Mr. Allen Tate's loyal 'Ode to the Confederate Dead'?"[9] With gallantry of her own, Glasgow remains in this essay faithful to the "law of change," but she is troubled by modern Southern literature which records the brutality of the present moment; in fact she rejects it as

being unobjective and overly romantic.

> There are, no doubt, a few scattered realists, as lonely as sincerity in any field, who dwell outside the Land of Fable inhabited by fairies and goblins. But goblins are as unreal as fairies; and beneath the red paint and charcoal, Raw-Head-and-Bloody-Bones, is our battered old friend, Jack-the-Giant-Killer. We remain incurably romantic. Only a puff of smoke separates the fabulous Southern monster of the present--or the tender dreams of James Lane Allen from the fantastic nightmares of William Faulkner.[10]

"One may point to life and prove anything," Glasgow says in the same article. She continues:

> Despair itself may be vital; it may be strong; it may be courageous; though only worms can survive the damp chill of negation. Few things, however, are more certain than this: --the literature that crawls too long in the mire will lose at last the power of standing erect. On the farther side of deterioration lies the death of a culture.[11]

Glasgow's views on the effects of literature on society will be discussed later. Here, it is important to stress the fact that Glasgow continued in the years between the two World Wars to put her faith, however abused it might be by a faithless society, in the evolving Ideal as it guided civic virtue. This intent is apparent when, in the late 1920's and 1930's, Glasgow revised the novel, Virginia, so that Virginia, the old-fashioned Idealist, is given greater sympathy at the expense of her increasingly unconventional and disloyal husband, Oliver, who comes to represent the forces of savagery and disorder, of ruthless

competition and success. Fear of failure of the type spoken of by Karen Horney drives Oliver to compromise his ideals and to desert his place.

Though Glasgow finally all but abandoned Virginia insofar as Virginia was an evasive idealist, she did not cease to explore the worth of the heroic Ideals of the past for which her heroine stood. What, after all, Glasgow asks in the novel, is so wrong with Virginia or, for that matter, with her father, Gabriel Pendleton, an Episcopalian minister who, with his dutiful wife, seems to engage Glasgow's sympathies? If ever an ideal of civic virtue dwelt in human form it seems to dwell in Glasgow's Virginia as she represents the Southern lady. She is an instance of "the feminine ideal of the ages," and Glasgow pays tribute to her when she says:

> For fantastic as her image appears nowadays, the pattern of the lady has embodied for centuries the thwarted human longing for the beautiful and the good. (C. M., 96.)

Virginia, the modest and self-sacrificing representative of the Episcopalian point of view has, through her "simple goodness," "turned a comedy of manners into a tragedy of human fate." (C. M., 79.) Certainly, Virginia has an unfailing loyalty to her concept of duty to her family, as her mother has had before her. Despite the fact that Virginia's daughters, when grown, reject her because she

is old-fashioned in manner and dress, she continues to believe that "the girls (are) good children, dear children (for whom) she would have let herself be cut in pieces. . . . (Virginia, 401.) So that Harry, her son, may receive the education his brilliance deserves, Virginia goes "shabby" herself; "Harry's education must come before everything." (Virginia, 407.) Despite her husband's boredom with her preoccupation with home and family, and his neglect of her for his own writing, Virginia cannot "acknowledge the existence of a flaw in him," and this despite the fact that it is soon evident to the reader that Oliver is not really worthy of such devotion. It is true that he has, as a young writer, evinced "the generous impulses, the high heart for adventure, the enthusiasm of youth and youth's white rage for perfection. . . ." (Virginia, 403.) but, as the novel progresses, we see him yield to the "slow, insidious devil of compromise." He leaves the "small band of fighters who fight not for advantage, but for truth, (to stand) in that middle place with the safe majority who are 'neither for God nor for His enemies.'" (Virginia, 403.) Oliver turns to writing popular plays, and he compromises his sense of virtue by leaving his wife for Margaret Oldcastle. Virginia remains faithful until it becomes apparent that there is no hope left. Even then, she tries to serve justice rather than personal outrage by being as

objective as possible. Virginia realizes vaguely that the seeming victory of Margaret Oldcastle cannot be helped for it:

> was less the triumph of the individual than of the type. The justice not of society, but of nature, was on her side, for she was one with evolution and with the resistless principle of change. (Virginia, 486.)

It is only when Virginia parts from Oliver for the first time that she realises that he is a moral coward, and that his ruthless spirit is at one with the spirit of the Treadwells: Oliver "will always get the thing he wants most in the end." (Virginia, 493.) Virginia's compassion, her old-fashioned spirit of brotherly love and humility is essentially at war with the utilitarianism and pragmatism of the Treadwells so that, in fact, what Oliver says of the break-up of his marriage is true enough, and Virginia tells herself that the parting:

> 'has been coming on for years. . . . He said that, and it is true. It is so old that it has been here forever, and I seem to have been suffering it all my life since the day I was born.' (Virginia, 494.)

In addition to loyalty, justice and compassion, Virginia as Glasgow's feminine ideal displays courage, although not fighting courage it is true for:

> the violence of revolt had no part in her soul which had been taught to suffer and to renounce with dignity, not with heroics. Her submission was the submission of a flower that bends to the storm. (Virginia, 494.)

But then, Glasgow is always suspicious of fighting courage, particularly when it becomes violent. Consequently, though Virginia with all her virtues may appear "a mere anachronism . . . to the vulgar or the undisciplined," we are told that "goodness still clung to her, goodness and patience, and the lost instinct of the lady." (C. M., 93.)

Virginia's goodness however is largely instinctual. It evades the true facts of life around her as her treatment of her family shows. Virginia is sheltered by her adoring mother and father, and she has received her education from Miss Priscilla Batte, one of the "maiden ladies left destitute in Dinwiddie after the war," who "turned naturally to teaching as the only nice and respectable occupation which required neither preparation of mind nor considerable outlay of money." (Virginia, 11.) Virginia's knowledge, unlike that of Glasgow's political heroes, is no match at all for the social wrongs which surround her. In fact, Virginia's "uncritical emotional softness" (Virginia, 29.) has difficulty in perceiving them. She does perceive, however, that Cyrus Treadwell, Oliver's father, is "mean," and that he must not be judged to be a great man just because he has made a great deal of money. (Virginia, 64.) In fact, neither Virginia nor her father seem prepared to do much about the fact that Cyrus is a ruthless tycoon who has his hand in everything from cotton,

to tobacco, to lumber, to the railroads. Cyrus has made certain that he emerges "a victor from the hard-fought industrial battlefield of the century," (Virginia, 64.) and he remains socially and economically impervious to the rumors that there has been a "too rapid development of the Treadwell fortune." (Virginia, 64.) Cyrus walks the "flinty road of Calvinism " (Virginia, 457.), and this means that he does not permit emotion to interfere where "competition and success" are concerned. His greed, his dishonesty, and his lack of compassion help to ensure that any Jeffersonian principles of equality will serve his private interests. Despite this, Gabriel's instinctual goodness encourages him to feel a certain friendship for Cyrus, and Cyrus responds, acknowledging to himself that though Gabriel lacks any practical common sense, the strain of romanticism in the minister's nature occasions a "perverse, inexplicable liking . . . for the man:"

> The charm that Gabriel exercised over him was almost feminine in its subtlety and in its utter defiance of any rational sanction. It may have been that his nature, incapable though it was of love, was not entirely devoid of the rare capacity for friendship. (Virginia, 370.)

The "caged brutality" in Cyrus' heart is "soothed by the unconscious flattery of the other's belief in him," even though the kind of "highfaluting nonsense" that Gabriel preaches from the pulpit will never permit him to "understand

the first principles of business." (Virginia, 371.) The suggestion is that Cyrus feels the greatness beneath the minister's "insignificant" and "unheroic" appearance. (Virginia, 373.) True beauty, like the beauty of the Neo-Platonic ideal, is within him, and Gabriel holds:

> the greatest belief on the earth--the belief in Life--in its universality in spite of its littleness, in its justification in spite of its cruelties--(a belief which) shone through his shrunken little body as a flame shines through a vase. (Virginia, 373-374.)

Though Gabriel is obviously a vessel of the Ideal, such belief, despite its claims of universality, is as evasive as Virginia's belief in her family. It does not truly serve Jeffersonian cosmopolitanism any more than Cyrus' material aggressiveness. This is apparent not only in Gabriel's tentative support of Cyrus but in the actions which lead to Gabriel's death. The minister dies trying to save the life of a young negro, the grandson of one of Pendleton's former slaves. Gabriel does not really address himself to the problems resulting from "the old ignorance, the old lack of understanding and the new restlessness, the new enmity." (Virginia, 376.) When he attempts to step in between three whites who intend to punish the negro because he has "jostled" a white woman in the street, Gabriel does so because he feels "a personal sense of responsibility for any creature whose fathers had belonged

to him and had toiled in his service." (Virginia, 380.) Further, Gabriel is not entirely motivated by a spirit of compassion and brotherly love. He chooses between "the preacher and the fighter." (Virginia, 380.) He strikes out "with all his strength, while there (floats) before him the face of a man he had killed in his first charge at Manassas." This encourages the fighter in Gabriel and "the old fury, the old triumph, the old bloodstained splendour" return and a thought stabs through him, "'God forgive me for loving a fight.'" As the negro and the whites escape, Gabriel lies dying at the hands of prejudice and his own brutal instinct. Gabriel lies "alone, with the blood oozing from his mouth on the trodden weeds by the roadside." (Virginia, 381.) The weeds are symbolic of the suffocating social evils of Southern society, unattended by Gabriel or by his daughter in any deeply significant way. Gabriel, like Virginia, is too lost in evasive idealism. Much more than Virginia, who on more than one occasion in the novel manages to overcome cruel and competitive instincts, Gabriel is the victim of the savagery of his own nature. He cannot serve as a true hero of the Ideal.

The attitude of evasive idealism, the sustained sweetness and light, which can cause Gabriel in a spirit of exuberant "natural self-confidence" to tell himself that "Cyrus meant well," does not permit the mind to triumph

over instinct or emotion. It was an approach which Glasgow found apparent in the writings of the Southern romantic school of fiction which she planned to attack with "blood and irony." Southern fiction of the post-bellum years perpetrated the Southern sentimental fallacy of which Mark Twain complained when he said:

> practical common-sense, progressive ideas, and progressive works, (are) mixed up with the duel, the inflated speech, and the jejune romanticism of an absurd past which is dead.[12]

Even so progressive a writer as Joel Chandler Harris, who talked of "the stuff we are in the habit of calling Southern literature,"[13] could assure his publisher that, "In all my writings you will find nothing that cannot be read to a young girl." Vann Woodward also reports that:

> The White Rose of Memphis, a novel by Colonel William Falkner of Mississippi, was characterized by another Mississippian in 1882 as 'hallowed with an atmosphere of purity and sweetness.'[14]

It is obvious that such literature failed to take account of a number of disturbing realities apparent in Virginia and in the novels that were to follow it, and which Vann Woodward has defined as:

> the importation of shoddy standards from the North and the encroachment of rank indigenous evil, the preachment of an alien ethic, and the spreading helotry among the farmers.[15]

It was among the real evils of the New South that Glasgow felt the Ideal must make its way if it were to

answer the challenge of irony which, in Glasgow, attempts to reveal to the spirit of man what is of genuine worth and meaning and what is not. The evils of the South included not only the shoddy standards of an increasingly machine-dominated society supported by the competitive business ethic of the North, but also the problems posed by the indigenous evils of cast and race. Glasgow was also concerned in a number of novels with the problems of the farmer who was victim of both the weakness of his own nature and the greed of business, as well as political, and class interests. So successful was Glasgow in bringing realism to Southern writing that she earned the exacting praise of Vann Woodward, who writes:

> 'Realism crossed the Potomac twenty-five years ago, going north!' observed Stuart P. Sherman in 1926, referring to Glasgow's early work. When eventually the bold moderns of the South arrested the reading and theatrical world with the tragic intensity of the inner life and social drama of the South, they could find scarcely a theme that Ellen Glasgow had wholly neglected. She had bridged the gap between the old and the new literary revival, between romanticism and realism.[16]

Glasgow was, in fact, much engaged by the political problems of her time. She attempted to solve these problems by creating political leaders who, like those of Plato, might "deal at the highest level of policy" bringing knowledge to bear in the making of "correct decisions."[17] Glasgow, it may be noted here, chose her leaders, political

and otherwise, from among types of men whom Plotinus considers to be the most suitable for bringing "moral force to society." They are farmers, orators, generals, and artists. These men are particularly appropriate to Glasgow's own Idealism because these are the traditional leaders of a democratic state.

In addressing the political problems surrounding her, Glasgow appears as a modern pragmatic in her sympathy with the Progressive movement in American politics, which from the 1870's on, sought to improve the lot of the common man. Generally, Glasgow would have been in agreement with the aims of the movement to:

1. make political life more democratic,
2. make economic life fairer and more competitive,
3. make social life more moral and more just.[18]

These aims are apparent in Glasgow's three "political" novels. The first of these, The Voice of the People, shows evidence of Glasgow's concern with the Populist movement, which was allied with the Progressive movement in the United States during the first half of the Twentieth Century. In the Populist movement, Southern and Western farmers united politically in an attempt to redress wrongs suffered at the hands of government and big business. Their grievances were voiced by Colonel Leonidas L. Polk, a North Carolina farm editor when he wrote in 1887:

> There is something radically wrong in our industrial system. There is a screw loose. . . . The railroads have never been so prosperous, and yet agriculture languishes. The banks have never done better . . . business, and yet agriculture languishes. Manufacturing enterprises never made more money . . . and yet agriculture languishes. Towns and cities flourish and 'boom' . . . and yet agriculture languishes.[19]

The happy, self-sufficient farm which Sydney Lanier celebrated seems not to have existed. Lanier, in speaking of the New South, speaks like a true agrarian of the rewards of industry and fortitude in cultivating the soil:

> Small farming means, in short, meat and bread for which there are not notes in bank; pigs fed with home-made corn . . . yarn spun, stockings knit, butter made and sold (instead of bought); eggs, chickens . . . products of natural animal growth, and grass at nothing a ton.[20]

As Vann Woodward comments:

> It was an inspired vision, and it represented everything that the Southern farmer was not and had not. But the vision was made of the tough stuff of myths and was destined to endure. The new myth fulfilled the old Jeffersonian dream of an independent yeomanry, self-sufficient lords of a few acres.[21]

The largely agricultural South suffered from policy laid down in Washington following the Civil War to benefit principally North-Eastern manufacturing interests. Southern farmers felt the pinch of the high cost of transportation, heavy taxes and tariffs, falling prices and the high cost of credit.[22] It was to these ills that the Populist movement addressed itself, and it is from such ills that

Glasgow's Virginian farmers suffer. For Glasgow, however, the remedy is not so much economic redress as individual fortitude. Nicholas Burr, who relies on traditional values and the daring to step above his class, provides an example of this fortitude. Still, the appeal to personal virtue could not obscure the fact that Southern farmers were among the have-nots of the nation, and so Frederick McDowell can say of Burr that he is part of the Populist movement which attempted to redress wrong by means of political action:

> Although (Burr) is a Democrat, he represents, like the Populists, the agricultural interest; and his tragic death in defiance of a mob demanding a Negro prisoner can be traced, like the decline in Populist prestige, to the compulsive need felt in the South to maintain white supremacy under a strictly one-party system. The tradition which he has challenged in a sense triumphs over him, since it had done so little, fundamentally, to lessen racial tension.[23]

Nicholas is the first of Glasgow's political leaders to attempt to redress the wrongs suffered by the underprivileged and dispossessed. In addition, by his very action in trying to move up the social scale he will, like other Glasgow heroes, attack the evils of caste. He will also take issue with lobbies and the party machine. Part of Nicholas' moral strength to accomplish his task is found in the Southern heritage imbibed from studies which are made possible because of the help given him by a rural patron, Judge Bassett. The Judge lives in the district of

Kingsborough, Virginia, where Nicholas was born and where he grows up. Nicholas' patron, a member of the Old Southern aristocracy, permits him to study with the tutor of his son, Tom. Through this study Nicholas becomes responsive to the democratic idealism of Jefferson and Washington. As McDowell points out:

> As governor, Nicholas is often seen against statues of Washington in the Capitol square and in the Capitol building at Richmond; his moral character, it can be inferred, is similar in its integrity to the first president.[24]

Nicholas' Jeffersonian reliance on individual effort is given Glasgow's support as she contrasts Nick with his father who would rather rely on the government for handouts. Amos Burr's lethargic and backward approach to farming might be seen as one of the "indigenous evils" with which democratic progress has to cope in the South. In hoping that the Federal government will come to his aid economically, Amos shows that he is a part of the Populist movement which advocated such relief in the 1880's and 1890's.

However, if Amos is meant to be representative of the Southern farmer, Glasgow is giving us only a limited notion of the distress which the Southern farmer felt from a system of share cropping and crop lien which reduced many to penury.[25] Like Lanier, Glasgow turns to Jeffersonian and agrarian belief in redemptive toil. As Nicholas works

the land on his father's farm, we are told that:

> With a sudden shout Nicholas voiced the glorification of the toil--of honest work well done. He felt with the force of a revelation that to throw up the clods of the earth manfully is as beneficent as to revolutionise the world. It was not the matter of the work, but the mind that went into it, that counted--and the man who was not content to do small things well would leave great things undone. . . . Why should he, who had been born to the soil, struggle forth to alien ends as a sightless earthworm to the harrow's teeth? (V.P., 152.)

There are reasons enough, however, to struggle forth and civic virtue demands the courage to do so. This is true despite the fact that Nicholas is part of the evolutionary process which Glasgow saw as taking place, and is subject to the brute within his own nature which is part of the same process, especially in the case of those who are not controlled by temperance, compassion or custom. Nicholas is inevitably bound on the wheel of becoming, and is more lacking in insight than General Archbald, who is an aristocrat by birth and who looks back from the security of old age on the pains of a lifetime suffered at the "harrow teeth" of time. Nicholas, as representative of the Populist movement, must be concerned with the ills of the farmer as they are represented by his father. Amos is in a state of helotry to his richer neighbor, General Battle, and to those who control his economic destiny, because he plants a soil which is "poor," poorer than that of the Battle estate, and

still further impoverished by the peanut crop which has a tendency to rot in the ground. In order to pay his taxes, Amos is forced to consider mortgaging the farm. Neither the unremitting toil of Amos nor that of Nicholas' mother, Marthy, can bring the family a comfortable living in spite of the assistance that Nick gives. Although proper methods of agriculture are suggested by the Battles, such as fertilising with pea beans, this advice is not taken, and Amos' ignorance becomes again a part of the evils which Nick must face. Glasgow suggests in her treatment of the Battles that, if Amos and other farmers had some of the character and determination of the Southern aristocrats as well as greater knowledge, a revolution in their living standards might be achieved. Eugenia Battle, the General's daughter, attempts to bring scientific method to the Battle estate:

> There was work for (Eugenia) to do on the place, and she did it cheerfully. She studied farming with her father and overhauled the methods of the overseer, to the man's annoyance and the General's delight.
>
> 'She tells me Varly isn't scientific' roared the General with rapturous enjoyment. 'A scientific overseer! She'll be asking for an honest politician next.' (V.P., 270.)

The gallantry and determination to conquer an adverse fortune, so much a part of the South's heritage, the inherited courage and fortitude, are apparent in Eugenia as they are in Betty Ambler, Dorinda and Virginia.

Eugenia and Nick become romantically involved, but break off when Nick is accused by Bernard Battle, brother of Eugenia, of compromising the daughter of the local store owner for whom Nick has been working. When Nick realizes that Eugenia has doubts, he displays neither humility nor compassionate understanding but the "arrogant pride" of the strong, (V.P., 250.) and:

> Eugenia realizes how precariously balanced her lover's nature is between good and evil forces and how potentially satanic the deep-feeling individual can become.[26]

Yet, despite a lack of temperance in his nature, Nick is the "honest politician" of General Battle's remark. Nicholas becomes a lawyer, and then rises to become consecutively, the chairman of the State Democratic party, Governor of the State, and Democratic candidate for Senator. Nick is bolstered in his fight for Governor by the knowledge that a wise choice can be made by those who will elect him, an assembly of Anglo-Saxon origin who, Glasgow tells us, has the "morality" consonant with those accustomed to tilling the soil. The assembly elects him over the man Eugenia has married, Dudley Webb, the son of a widow of the Confederacy, whose "pride of caste" and "deliberate withdrawal into a romantic past from her present poverty and obscurity,"[27] place her in the ranks of Glasgow's evasive idealists. Dudley is himself something

of a demagogue, hiding false practise behind smooth speech and a specious appeal to Civil War patriotism which panders to evasive idealism in the electorate. Nicholas defends Webb, who is falsely accused of taking bribes in order to further the interests of the railway lobby in Virginia, in a speech that rings with all the virtues consonant with true civic virtue as well as with the ideal of cosmopolitanism:

> Men of Virginia, in the naming of your governor, let us have neither subterfuge nor slander. Better than the love of party is the love of honesty--and the democracy of Jefferson cannot thrive upon falsehood. Fair means are the only means, honest ends are the only ends. The party owes its right to existence to the people's will. . . . It is not the people's master, but the people's servant; if it should usurp the oppressor's place, it must die the oppressor's death. (V.P., 305.)

Nicholas' demand for justice and honesty in government is again in evidence when, during his bid for the Senate nomination, he refuses to yield to the pressure of a party worker, Rann, for a political favor. Rann, however, swings to the support of Webb, using questionable tactics in an attempt to defeat Nicholas. Nicholas in his own defence proclaims to an associate, Galt, that the people are with him. Glasgow's distrust of the faceless electorate is again apparent when Galt replies:

> The people! How long does it take a clever politician to befuddle them? You aren't new to the business, and you know these things as

> well as I do--or better. I tell you, when Dudley Webb begins to stump the State the people will begin to howl for him. He'll win over the women and the old Confederates when he gets on the Civil War, and the rest will come easy. (V.P., 330.)

The irony of the situation is that Nick is guilty of being himself something of an evasive idealist and to the extent that he is so, he fails as a forceful leader. Nick does not realize that the people are, in fact, the oppressors of liberty and equality. As Nick is soon to discover they are quick to become a mob, and the mob is the counterpart of the brute which Nick must cope with in himself. Nick dies trying to protect a condemned negro, a man about to be lynched by a group of his old neighbors in Kingsborough. When the group of men insist that they intend to "get the nigger!" from the jail where he is being kept, Nick sees "red," and feels "the old savage instinct (blaze) within him--the instinct to do battle to death." (V.P., 441.) Nick's death reveals the irony. As he lies dying from a gunshot wound, the sheriff who kneels on the ground beside him remarks: "And he died for a damned brute. . . ." (V.P., 442.) The idealism which guided Nick and the pragmatism which made it possible for him to try new ways of virtue against the party machine come to naught because of the elemental drives in his own nature and because of social ills in the society around him which have resulted in ignorance and racial inequality.

Nick, because he does not have the steadying influence of inherited position, shows the spirit of Margaret Oldcastle and of other Glasgow rebels against respectability; his freedom rests too much on "elemental forces" of the kind which turn liberty to license built on "the strewn bodies of the weaker." (Virginia, 486.) At the last, like Gabriel Pendleton and like Michael Akershem, Nick shows too much the spirit of the fighter and not enough of the insight of the true lover of moral beauty, the philosopher who awaits with patience (and some despair) the Kingdom of the Blessed.[28]

Involved with the problems of the farmer in The Voice of the People, is a problem shared by the South generally: the party machine influencing and often dominating a one-party system. The solution to this problem was of utmost importance if political life was to become "more democratic and economic life"fairer and more competitive." Parties, after the Civil War, were based more on patronage than principle, and politicians were inclined to concentrate more on spoils than on issues. It is against such a denial of freedom that Nick Burr rebels when he opposes the party man, Dudley Webb, and refuses to acknowledge any truth in a statement made by Galt that:

> convictions were all right when Madison was President, but that gentleman has been in heaven these many years, and they don't

> thrive under the present administration. A party man has got to be a party mouthpiece. He may laugh and weep with the people, but he has got to vote with the party. (V.P., 329.)

The question of party is taken up again by Glasgow in the second of the political novels, One Man in His Time. Gideon Vetch, Glasgow's hero, another governor of Virginia, fights to defend the rights of the working man subject, as the farmers were, to the manipulations of giant trusts and the interests of the established upper class, and the nouveaux riches who, like Ben Starr of The Romance of the Plain Man, helped to control industry, banking, and transportation. In One Man in His Time, Glasgow gives us a picture of a member of the established "good families" whose determination to cling fast to his own material wealth gives the reader insight into the labour unrest to be found in the novel. Judge Horatio Lancaster Page, "who (has) once been Ambassador to Great Britain," has "recently returned to his home city of Richmond" from France with his daughter, Corinna, the heroine of the book. Corinna exhibits a sweet disorder in her social attitudes, for she becomes an admirer of Gideon Vetch, and Gideon has sprung from the lower class. Her father, however, leaning heavily on the privilege of caste, remarks with revealing candour that:

> If it came to the point, though I have said that I am too old to fight for distressed virtue, I should very likely die in the last ditch for every inch of land and every

> worthless object I ever owned. When Vetch talks about taxing property more heavily, I am utterly and openly against him because it is my instinct to be. I refuse to give up my superfluous luxuries in the cause of equal justice for all, and I shall fight against it as long as there is a particle of fight left in my bones. (O. M., 47.)

Though the aristocrats of Richmond find Vetch too ebullient and common for their taste, he is a better friend to them than might appear from his connections with the working man. Like Burr, Gideon Vetch is willing to move beyond custom, and politically and personally, like Corinna, Vetch tries to speak the truth. The truth which he expresses is Platonic in that, for him, temperance is the proper course to pursue if justice for all is to be achieved. In particular, Vetch shows "the spirit that comprehends, that reconciles and recreates" (O. M., 321.) when he tries to avert a general strike by standing between the conservatives and those who agitate for change. In doing so, Vetch has his work cut out for he must deal with the one-party system, and as McDowell explains:

> Under the one-party system in the South, strikers would often feel impelled to violence to make themselves heard at all, while reactionary elements in the Democratic party would use such outbursts to marshal public opinion against the workers.[29]

The pragmatic Vetch realizes that he must protect the workers who are in reality his own people, members of his own class. Though he says he is "merely a man of fact," he is

humane enough to realize that among the facts of his existence is "the average human life of hunger and pain and labour." (O.M., 175.) Vetch explains the problem to the young Stephen Culpepper, a war veteran wearied by the life of privilege he has known as a member of the aristocracy and by the disillusionment of the war. The governor says that "the conditions in all cities" are the same for the lower class and that:

> By next winter (conditions) will be worse . . . but it has already begun. The rate of wages is falling--for wages always fall first--and the cost of living is still as high as in war times. Rents are going up every day. Darrow (a supporter of Vetch) can tell you more about the speculation in rents than I can, and the housing of the working-classes, both white and coloured is growing worse. We shall soon be facing the most serious problem of the system under which we live, the problem of the unemployed. (O. M., 175.)

However, Vetch's "humaneness" is not matched, as has been noted, by good manners, a minor point it might seem, considering Vetch's heroic qualities. But manners, Glasgow has David Blackburn remark in The Builders, are "only the outer coating--the skin, if you like--of morals."[30] Vetch's lower-class manners betray the characteristics of a zealot which we have also noticed in Michael Akershem, another of Glasgow's lower-class heroes. Vetch's enthusiasms carry him beyond the bounds of truth. When Stephen calls on him for an answer to his demand that "there should be honest and able men in control of public offices," Vetch replies:

> I told you the other day . . . that I used the tools at my command, and I tell you now that I am forced to use rotten ones. (O. M., 173.)

Vetch, in Plotinus' terms, "falls back" from the level of civic virtue he has achieved upon the opinions of the self-interested politicians who surround him. Vetch will attempt to serve his desire of "humanizing industry" (O. M., 172.) in the "spirit of liberalism" by using the party machine to his own advantage. Pragmatism here fails to achieve the stoic indifference to material gain necessary to safeguard impartiality, which is the source of equal justice. Ironically once again, Vetch is killed by the passion of men in the political arena as local strikers hold a meeting to determine their future course. He is:

> destroyed by the radicals who put him into office and who distrust his course of moderation as thoroughly as do the privileged aristocrats.[31]

Vetch in intervening between opponents among the strikers comes between those more one-sided in their views than he is himself, but who nonetheless reflect his own zeal. Once again one of Glasgow's pragmatic leaders who would reform his world is defeated by "the mob", by the forces without, which are a part of the destructive forces within his own nature. Glasgow, however, overlooks Vetch's faults; and, in her efforts to find a place for the Ideal, for "human perfectibility" (O. M., 372.) in the everyday world, she forgives him. In the last chapter of her novel, entitled

"The Victory of Gideon Vetch," Glasgow finds in Vetch a "humanity" which is truly cosmopolitan because it attempts to be all-embracing. She holds almost desperately to optimism as Corinna ponders the enigma and the strength of Vetch:

> So this was the other side of Gideon Vetch--of that man of ignoble circumstances and infinite magnanimity. How could any one understand him? How, above all, could any one judge him? How could one fathom his power for good or for evil? She beheld him suddenly as a man who was inspired by an exalted illusion--the illusion of human perfectibility. In the changing world about her, the breaking up and the renewing, the dissolution and readjustment of ideals; in the modern conflict between the spirit that accepts and the spirit that rejects; in this age of destiny--was not an unconquerable optimism, an invincible belief in life, the one secure hope for the future? It is the human touch that creates hope, she thought; and the power of Gideon Vetch was revealed to her as simply the human touch magnified into a force. (O. M., 372.)

It is with similar optimism that Glasgow creates Ben O'Hara in Life and Gabriella, another novel of the middle period. Like Vetch, O'Hara is something of a "diamond in the rough," and like Vetch, O'Hara has questionable connections--this time with a Tammany Hall politician who has supported him.

The third political novel to be discussed in this chapter, The Builders, is set in the era of the First World War. Its hero, David Blackburn, presents a more promising choice for the leader who will reclaim the future for

democracy because in his upright and stoic character there is no room for the dishonesty of Vetch. Blackburn, a first supporter of the Republican party when such support was considered heresy against Southern values, will overlook the hardships suffered by the South under the "harsh provisions of the Reconstruction acts." (The Builders, 115.) These acts outraged the Anglo-Saxon sense of justice in that they "conferred upon the negroes full rights of citizenship while (denying) those rights to a large proportion of the white population--the former masters." (The Builders, 116.) David sees that the results of such Northern enthusiasm has been the manipulation of Southern votes by the Democratic machine as it turns negroes against white in the interest of party power. David has sympathy for the Republican party because he thinks that the one-party system has placed the South at the mercy of unscrupulous and unthinking men. However, he has decided that neither of the old parties represent the ideals of the American people and of liberal Jeffersonian democracy with its reliance on equal opportunity. He has become an Independent. The new America which David envisages must cease to pit North against South so that a more truly cosmopolitan country can combine "Northern belief in solidarity with the ardent Southern faith in personal independence and responsibility." (The Builders, 350.) Such an America will provide an example

to the free peoples of the world who will also unite, national boundaries forgotten, in "world peace and brotherhood." (The Builders, 356.) It is a humane vision of an international civic virtue based on American idealism, which displays Blackburn's ability to place the heart in the intellect, for Blackburn reasons out his position--in passages so lengthy they disrupt the narrative flow of the novel to a disconcerting extent.

It is apparent that David grounds his Idealism on agrarian and Jeffersonian belief for he trusts that "every man born with the love of a soil in his heart and brain will cast his will and his vision into the general plan of the future." (The Builders, 351.) This belief will help insure that justice and duty combine with liberty so that both authoritarianism and the massive "officialism" of the social state might be avoided. The insistence on personal independence and responsibility will safeguard the working man, and we see Blackburn demanding these qualities from the workers in the factory which he owns. The integrity which causes Blackburn to apply his Idealism to his personal life is based on the command of Christ, "'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men would do to you, do ye even to them,'" so far as it is an attempt to establish the reign of moral ideas, and "so far as it expresses the obscure longing in the human heart for justice and right

in the relations of men." (The Builders, 351.) Truth, justice and fortitude, and patriotic loyalty to America and to the whole of mankind, will lend themselves to the realization of the promise contained in the war. The "inconceivable beauty" which emerged as democracy struggled against Prussian authoritarianism will reveal the truth of the statement that "reality is not matter but spirit," (The Builders, 358.) the beauty of the Ideal.

The emphasis on the reality of the spirit within points to a strong element of mysticism in the novel which, like mysticism in Plotinus, encourages David to perform acts of civic virtue. This mysticism, which is part of a vision Blackburn experiences, suggests that there is a world beyond the pain of becoming and beyond romantic love of the kind that Blackburn experiences in the novel. Like Burr and Vetch, Blackburn's story is to end on a note of rejection of romance. As Nick loses Eugenia, replacing his love for her with fortitude and service to others, so David Blackburn gives up his love, Caroline Meade, the novel's heroine, so that he may do his duty by his wife, Angelica. David performs this act of civic virtue even though his wife is a selfish, evasive idealist who attacks him privately and publicly, through much of the novel, for his advanced views. The world beyond, in The Builders, is identified with the Kingdom of God which David perceives to be within, or

it is nowhere, an observation which makes David's philosophy consistent with Neo-Platonism despite its Christian derivations. In the chapter, "In Blackburn's Library," David looks inward and, as he does so, he is drawn backward in time by the memory of his mother who had combined fortitude with a sympathy and charity which "covered the universe." He remembers that "she had taught him all he knew--knowledge weak in science, but right in the invisible graces of mind and heart." (The Builders, 225.) With this early education at his mother's knee, David later learns to distrust "the kind of education with which the modern man begins the battle of life." David takes refuge, we assume, in the Ideal as a protection from empiricism and the sort of pragmatism which ventures forth into life with no secure guide to show it the way; David takes refuge in custom, the sort of Christian ethic propounded by his mother which gains so much of its content from Platonic Idealism. This rejection of the strictly empirical method precedes the vision spoken of above. As David sits in the library, the fount of the knowledge which guides civic virtue, he thinks:

> The present had never been more than a brief approach to the future. He had looked always for something truer, sounder, deeper, than the actuality that enmeshed him.

In the "deep past" of his own experience, David finds that actuality:

> Suddenly, while he sat there confronting the phantom he had once called himself, he was visited by a rush of thought which seemed to sweep on wings through his brain. Yet the moment afterwards, when he tried to seize and hold the vision that darted so gloriously out of the shining distance, he found that it had already dissolved into a sensation, an apprehension, too finely spun of light and shadow to be imprisoned in words. It was as if some incalculable discovery, some luminous revelation, had brushed him for an instant as it sped onward into the world. Once or twice in the past such a gleaming moment had just touched him leaving him with this vague sense of loss, of something missing, of an infinitely precious opportunity which had escaped him. Yet invariably it had been followed by some imperative call to action. . . . (The Builders, 226.)

Unlike General Archbald who does not lose the "infinitely precious opportunity" to reach a further state of fortitude than that experienced by David, Glasgow's politically-oriented hero continues to serve civic virtue, continues to obey the "call to action," aspiring only to the fortitude which puts duty before personal satisfaction or material gain. David's vision leads to his perception of the very active role in politics and in the war effort he will play:

> Every decision (would be) a ripple in the world battle between the powers of good and evil, or light and darkness. And he understood suddenly that the great abstractions for which men lay down their lives are one and indivisible--that there was not a corner of the earth where this fight for liberty could not be fought . . . . . The foundation of the Republic was sound, he believed, only the eyes of the builders had failed, the hands of the builders had trembled. That the ideal democracy was not a dream, but an unattained reality, he never doubted. The

> failure lay not in the play, but in the achievement. (The Builders, 227.)

Through "some mysterious trend of thought," the personal choices of David's life become "a part of the impersonal choice of humanity." (The Builders, 227.)

The Neo-Platonic call to civic virtue which David's vision has provided continues to be heard in the novels following The Builders. However, as the trumpet call to duty, which thrilled through the air in the war years and immediately afterwards, faded before the unpleasant facts of the present, Idealism declined. The truth of a statement made by Woodrow Wilson became increasingly apparent. Wilson observed that:

> when a war got going it was just war and there weren't two kinds of it. It required illiberalism at home to reinforce the men at the front. We couldn't fight Germany and maintain the ideals of Government that all thinking men shared. . . .

Wilson concluded that:

> 'Once lead this people into war . . . and they'll forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance. To fight, you must be brutal and ruthless, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fibre of our national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street.'[32]

This spirit, goaded by the social injustices of which we have been speaking in this chapter, meant that a spirit of aggressive self-interest invaded American life and the life of the capitalistic West generally. Depression deepened

in the 1930's and, in Glasgow's opinion, happiness hunters abounded. Knowledge revealed only to a few the worth of respectability and traditional concepts of order on which a new and better order might be built. Glasgow, to whose fate it fell to record the sorry passage of the time, refused to give up hope that the Ideal might somehow become incorporated into "an ideal democracy, a promised land of justice and liberty." (The Builders, 351.) However, by the time she wrote In This Our Life, she saw that "human beings" were increasingly at war with "human nature." (C.M., 250) Readers were so corrupted in their judgements that the "soul-less little pleasure-seeker, Stanley," of In This Our Life, (C.M., 259.) was seen by them as the "core" of the book. "It takes two to speak truth--one to speak it and one to hear it," Glasgow quotes Thoreau as saying. (C.M., 264.) Obviously there were few to hear the truth of Stanley or of the Ideal which informs the pages of In This Our Life. It is small wonder, for the novel is intended to portray "a world without moorings . . . driven by unconscious fear toward the verge of catastrophe." (C.M., 256.) A good part of this fear, as we readily see from Glasgow's discussion of a young airman who becomes involved with Roy Timberlake in the novel, comes from pitting brotherly love and humility against competition and success. As the airman tells his story, we see that his fear of rejection has resulted

in the desire to strike out and destroy, if only he is permitted to strike out in unison with others. He wants to share in the misery which war will bring. It is a perverted kind of cosmopolitanism and the airman informs Roy that he is sick and "rotten" inside. (I.T.L., 457.)

For Glasgow, as she neared the end of her life, the "life of the mind" seemed to be preserved among only a favoured few. (Letters, 370.) Even in the political novels, where Glasgow had searched so earnestly for a solution to the problems of civic virtue, civilization seemed to be doubling back to the brute in search of some fairer design. It was a discouraging picture despite any belief in the wholeness of experience, yet Glasgow continued to look for evidence of civic virtue. She sought it in a state of the mind and the emotions which relied less on conscious and determined application of the Ideal such as that made by David Blackburn, and less on the sort of opportunistic pragmatism of the kind we find in Life and Gabriella or One Man in His Time. Glasgow looked instead to a state of seemingly spontaneous response to the difficulties of life which she called, "simple goodness." It was a state which would permit her to continue to take refuge in fair and evolutionary dreams of the future. As barbarism ran rampant in life and in literature, Glasgow was encouraged all the more to turn to the fortitude

beyond the material, to the central radiance of vision which brought mysterious fulfillment of earthly conceptions of virtue.

It is to a discussion of simple goodness as it relates to a more conscious state, the heart in the intellect, and to vision that the next chapter addresses itself. The chapter includes a discussion of Glasgow's Divine Fortitude, particularly as it appears in those civilized older men, the proficients or sages of the novels, whose philosophic minds and genuine love of beauty permit them to look, with Plotinus, "beyond all here" to the ultimate fulfillment of Being.

CHAPTER V

"LOOKING BEYOND ALL HERE"

A Study of Glasgow's "Simple Goodness" as it Relates to Civic Virtue, Vision and Divine Fortitude.

In Beyond Defeat, Glasgow makes a final appeal to civic virtue in a quality which she calls "simple goodness." This chapter will examine how simple goodness relates to civic virtue and to vision, as Glasgow's characters, in company with the proficients of Neo-Platonism, look "beyond all here" for a reassurance which cannot be gained in the material realm alone. We shall observe, also, how civic virtue, with its emphasis on fortitude, leads, in Glasgow's work as in Plotinus, away from the "unclean pleasures" of the world to a state of Divine Fortitude or unity with the First Existent, the central radiance of Being.

Simple goodness, which Glasgow relates to Kate Oliver in Beyond Defeat, is a quality which she also found and admired in Victoria Littlepage of They Stooped to Folly. Simple goodness, as has been noted, is also attributed to the heroine of Virginia. In fact, Glasgow was fascinated by a somewhat naive and "illusive quality called goodness" as early as The Descendant, where she attributes this quality to Anna Allard. (T.D., 186.) If we look at "simple goodness" in relation to "the heart in the intellect," which Glasgow mentions in her discussion of Tucker Corbin of The Deliverance, (C.M., 22.) we learn much about the circular direction of Glasgow's work.

Glasgow's philosophy changes little in content: there is always the lure of the material world, the recourse to civic virtue, the hope for evolutionary progress, the heart-felt or romantic response to the difficulties of the Ideal, and the illumination of vision. Thus Glasgow can say of her first novel, The Descendant, "the germ of my future work, as well as my philosophy of life, lay hidden in that immature effort." (C.M., 55.) There is, however, a changing emphasis in the novels. After what we may call Glasgow's three introductory novels, The Descendant, Phases of an Inferior Planet, and The Voice of the People, in which something of her later pessimism about progress and the powers of romantic love appears, there follows a series of novels of private life, beginning with The Battle Ground and ending with The Miller of Old Church, in which one finds a heavy accent on the personal, the visionary, and the romantic. In these early novels, there is a typical emphasis on romantic love and the happy ending where the hero and heroine form a union intended to predict an optimistic future in which the tragic conflict of types is overcome, and the gap between the old and the new, the traditional and the progressive, is bridged. There is also in these early novels an emphasis on the uncompromising (and uncompromised) Ideal; The Wheel of Life is an example. The Miller of Old Church is the last of the novels written in what Glasgow

considered to be her "earlier manner," (C.M., 129.) a manner which she later came "reluctantly" to renounce.

In The Miller of Old Church we may note the re-emergence of the political hero drawn from the ranks of the common man. In Abel Revercomb, although we do not see him become a political leader, Glasgow discovers a man who is knowledgeable, as are her other political leaders, for Abel has "devoured the books of the political economists and he (has) sucked in the theories of social philosophy as a child sucks in milk." (M.O.C., 277.) Abel shares "the slowly expanding dream of his century: the dream of a poverty enriched by knowledge, of a social regeneration that would follow an enlightened and instructed proletariat." (M.O.C., 277.) For Abel there can be no compromise, except inadvertently in learning to serve the Ideal better, for as Abel tells himself, "his very success as a miller depended upon an integrity of character which permitted no compromise with the fundamental moralities." (M.O.C., 278.) Abel is well on his way to becoming one of the Nietzschean-type leaders discussed in the preceding chapter who attempt to turn the voice of the people to the service of the Ideal. The Miller of Old Church is an introduction to the middle period in which the political novels join with others which attempt a pragmatic solution to the problems of democracy more in the spirit of Vetch than of the earlier Burr. In

them, the Ideal yields in part to the "Northern" competitive spirit, as is the case in Life and Gabriella and Barren Ground, so that the Northern belief in solidarity seems to an extent more important than the Southern emphasis on individualism and responsibility. However, as the world grows increasingly cold to the Ideal, Glasgow turns again back to the personal, the visionary and the romantic, although she turns away in the majority of the later novels from the happy ending in terms of romantic love. This turning is accompanied by the reappearance of Glasgow's civilized older men, General Archbald, John Fincastle, and Asa Timberlake, who stand apart from life to contemplate and consider. It is accompanied by the return of heroines who, like Maria Fletcher of The Deliverance, share with the sage the responsibility for accommodating the Ideal to life. Other heroines of this type are Ada Fincastle, Roy Timberlake, and even Jenny Blair Archbald of The Sheltered Life who must deal with the future while General Archbald discovers a central radiance of meaning in the "deep past." There is in the later novels a renewed and increased emphasis on withdrawal from civic virtue and a rising to the Ideal beyond material experience. This is the looking beyond to Divine Fortitude. This withdrawal is accompanied in Glasgow's personal life by a series of heart attacks which

threatened and finally took her life. It is significant that at the same time as Glasgow was experiencing these attacks, two of her heroines, Victoria Littlepage and Lavinia Timberlake, also suffered fatal heart conditions. They, like Glasgow, grieve over the loss of traditional virtue in a world seemingly all but lost to compassionate order.

To trace in greater detail the path of Glasgow's work as it relates to "simple goodness" and to "the heart in the intellect," we begin by looking back to The Deliverance and to Tucker Corbin, the first of Glasgow's civilized older men. Glasgow tells us in A Certain Measure that Tucker is "civilized, not by machinery alone, but through that nobler organ which has been called, the heart in the intellect." (C.M., 38-39.) In the same passage, Glasgow connects this phrase with the observation that Tucker has his crutch firmly planted on common ground, and I have made the observation that the common ground is that of democracy, and for Glasgow democracy is dependent on Jeffersonian and Platonic idealism.

Jeffersonian democracy assumes both "personal independence and responsibility" and the leadership of the uncommon man, which is the counterbalance in society and in government to the will of the uneducated majority. In Glasgow, we find these represented in a man like Nicholas

Burr who through most of The Voice of the People represents the order which in Neo-Platonism is civic virtue. Glasgow shows sympathy for the uncommon man throughout her fictional writings, and she shows it as well in her correspondence when she writes, in 1943:

> As it is at least amusing, if not encouraging, to us whose natural sympathies are with the dispossessed of the earth, that, in years of trial, the common man turns to the uncommon man for inspiration and leadership. Who, for example, are today the chosen leaders of our proletarian multitudes? Two inheritors of superiority, Churchill and Roosevelt . . . and, by tradition, Jefferson, who made his home on a mountain. (Letters, 327.)

Like the three leaders named in this passage, Tucker is an uncommon man by birth; he is an aristocrat, and a former colonel in the Confederate army. Tucker is more of a true democrat than the evasive idealists of the Old South and of his class because his truth is cosmopolitan. He can serve with compassion and wisdom the Jeffersonian belief that "wealth should be distributed in accordance with 'industry and skill,'"[1] or, as Glasgow puts it, "personal independence and responsibility." It is this principle which Glasgow is supporting when she speaks of eliminating "the thriftless rich and the thriftless poor." The democratic spirit which we see in Tucker relies on the heart in the intellect, and also upon a pragmatic quality which is part of this response which Glasgow calls, "offhand

kindliness."[2] It is a quality which, as will be seen, has much in common with simple goodness. Tucker's heart does not stay with his class, nor is it ruled by narrow or preconceived notions of morality, dictated by custom alone; it extends to all those around him with a sort of impromptu generosity or compassion which serves Glasgow's pragmatic and adventuresome spirit, and which is the natural concomitant of Jeffersonian democracy. In discussing The Deliverance, we may perceive the extent of Tucker's cosmopolitanism, and the extent to which it is curbed by the Jeffersonian principle of "industry and skill." It will also be possible to see Tucker's breadth of vision, and the way in which it is influenced by the unity and moral integrity which he discovers in nature. Nature for the romantic Tucker, as for Coleridge and the romantics generally, provides mystical proof of the unity within, as it does in Neo-Platonism. It is the universal microcosm of the Stoics and hence of the Neo-Platonists. We may also see the extent to which Maria Fletcher is aware of the moral lessons which nature can teach. Maria shares Tucker's motivation and his aims and, in her romance with Christopher Blake, will be responsible for carrying Tucker's Idealism into the future.

As we meet Tucker, he is a maimed veteran of the Civil War, who lives with his sister, Lucy Blake, and her

three grown children, Christopher, Lila, and Cynthia, on a seventy-acre farm deeded to Tucker after the war. The farm takes up a small section of the former Blake estate lost early in the Reconstruction period, partially because of the dishonest tactics of the Blake's former overseer, Will Fletcher. The farm, devoted to the raising of tobacco, is worked by the young Christopher, a Southern Heathcliff, burning with surly resentment over the fact that the rest of the Blake estate, including Blake Hall, now belongs to Fletcher. The uneducated and "savage" Christopher thirsts for revenge, and when he fails in an attempt to kill Fletcher, he goes after his young grandson, Will, encouraging him to become a drunkard and a gambler, hostile to his grandfather and to his own good fortune.

Tucker's democratic compassion and the fortitude he shows in serving this compassion in spite of the severe injuries he has sustained in the war, are refreshing in contrast with Christopher's lust for revenge. Tucker shows compassion to his family, including his rather querulous sister, Lucy, who still believes she lives in a world of ballrooms, slaves and polite manners. She is blind, and the family, including Tucker, have encouraged her in her beliefs by acting out a charade in which they pretend that they live in Blake Hall, relatively secure in the life they knew. Tucker can admire Lucy's "magnificent patience,"

although there is a touch of irony in his attitude towards her--part of the wayward humour which is in itself a part of his offhand kindliness. This humour indicates his democratic sympathies, for Lucy's present sufferings are related to the life of privilege she has known. Tucker can show understanding as well for the worldly aspirations of Christopher, who would give "forty, fifty years" of the farm "for a single year of the big, noisy world. . . ." (The Deliverance, 297.) Tucker replies:

> 'Well, it's natural,' . . . . 'At your age I doubtless felt the same. The young want action, and they ought to have it, because it makes the quiet of middle age seem all the sweeter. You've missed your duels and your flirtations and your pomades, and you've been put into breeches and into philosophy at the same time.' (The Deliverance, 297-298.)

Here, once again, through Tucker, Glasgow expresses a Neo-Platonic belief in the unity of experience for Tucker knows that it is through knowledge of evil that Christopher may be brought to understand the necessity for good. It is a lesson which Tucker, like the Stoics, reads in nature.

Tucker's compassion is not limited to members of his own class, but goes also towards Jim Weatherby, a true man of the soil, a local farmer who is succeeding through industry and skill, thereby meeting a Jeffersonian prerequisite for equality. Jim hopes to marry Lila Blake despite the objections of her class-conscious, spinsterly

sister, Cynthia. It is to Tucker that Jim and Lila turn for support for, when Lila insists that she wants to marry a Weatherby, she gets no encouragement from Christopher or Cynthia.

Tucker has a special sympathy for Maria Fletcher, Will's grand-daughter, for they have much in common. Although Maria lacks Tucker's humour, she shows many of the qualities which make her Glasgow's ideal woman. She has a "high sense of honour," of which Tucker strongly approves. She has "high ideals" and a "broad intelligence." (The Deliverance, 413.) She, like Tucker, shows a generous understanding. She also displays a belief in the virtue of knowledge when she offers to educate Christopher, for whom she feels a strong romantic attachment.[3] Maria has acquired, through involvement in the evils of the world, an ascetic and "an almost puritan scorn" of the "vanities" by which she was surrounded when she married an unworthy man and travelled to Europe with him. Maria has learned the lesson of temperance and fortitude. In Europe, Maria has decided that love is the great "deliverance," love based, of course, on the Ideal. This occurs because she meets two poverty-stricken lovers who have given up wealth to serve music and revolutionary principles designed to help the dispossessed and the underprivileged. Maria, therefore, displays a Platonic Idealism and a Jeffersonian belief in equality of

opportunity. In addition, Maria, like Tucker, does not permit custom to restrict her judgement. This is true even in her relations with her miserly grandfather and her wayward brother. Maria shows also that she has the heart in the intellect in her dealings with Christopher who insists on defying "conventional morality" or custom in attacking young Will Fletcher. (The Deliverance, 221.) Maria understands this breach of loyalty because she realizes that Christopher has suffered and that he regrets the attack on Will. She also understands that Christopher has a "courage that has not faltered before the thing it hates." (The Deliverance, 347.) Though Christopher hates the life in the fields, Maria sees that the fields are the source of Christopher's strength. The benediction of nature, the lesson it teaches of universal wholeness and moral order casts its light throughout the novel. Nature is a guide and a friend to Maria, to Christopher and to Tucker, a man like Plotinus' proficients, who is "formed with the nature of the lover " so that he is particularly capable of reading the moral message in the beauty of nature. (The Enneads, 434.) Tucker has learned to appreciate nature all the more because of his early experience in the world which, like Maria's, has been sufficient to turn him, as much as this is possible, from the "unclean pleasures" of the world. Tucker had very nearly killed himself for the love of a woman when

he was younger, but she married a man unworthy of her who "got used to her body and never caught so much as a single glimpse of her soul." (The Deliverance, 301.) To Tucker she has seemed like "a little wild bird that somebody had caught and shut up in a cage." Her soul, like the wayward soul in Plotinus, is not free to follow its true path to illumination. Tucker with his larger compassion has longed to set her free. He has also desired to be an artist in his youth, showing early as well as late in his life that he is "in pain of love towards beauty." (The Enneads, 434.) As we meet him, this pain is assuaged by his habit of looking beyond and within nature to read the lessons of the universal spirit. For example, Tucker spends "'two hours chock full of thought and colour,'" simply observing a dandelion, and considering the courage which has caused it to "'put up the first of all through the earth'" in the spring. (The Deliverance, 296.) The patient and all-encompassing faith which nature has brought to Tucker is evident in his statement that he will not regret "'a single sin or a single virtue. They're all woven in the pattern of the whole, and I reckon the Lord knew the figure he had in mind.'" (The Deliverance, 473.)

Christopher, because he has not learned the lesson of universal acceptance and with it the compassion which nature has to teach, becomes increasingly involved in his

plan to debauch Will Fletcher, thereby cutting off Will's ability to function with strength and skill. The more Christopher does this, the more he loses his own affinity with nature which has, more than he realizes, brought "zest" to his life. He loses "his sensitiveness to external things--to the changes of the seasons as to the beauties of an autumn sunrise." (The Deliverance, 253.) Finally, Will kills his grandfather because his dissolute life has caused the older Fletcher to disown him. Christopher, now increasingly repentant before the virtue of Maria, takes the blame, showing his growing sense of responsibility. It is only after two years in prison, when his strength has broken, that Christopher gains enough of the humility and fortitude of Maria and Tucker to make him the hero Glasgow intends. As Christopher sits on a bench in the prison yard, he can feel gratitude that:

> The warm sun in his face, the blue sky straight overhead, the spouting fountain from which a sparrow drank, produced in him a recognition, wholly passionless, of the abundant physical beauty of the earth. (The Deliverance, 538.)

Christopher is fully ready to join company with Tucker and Maria, and Glasgow sees to it that he is free to do so. Christopher is cleared by Will's confession. Tucker and Maria await him. Christopher now accepts with fortitude the "turning of the wheel," (The Deliverance, 542.) which leads, in Christopher's case at least, to self knowledge.

When Christopher meets with Maria at the conclusion of the novel there is a moment of visionary ecstasy which is part of the sustained climax which covers Christopher's growing awareness of his true self. In this passage, Christopher looks deep into the nature of things and, as he does so, an apprehension of the meaning within experience provides a feeling of freedom which is, in reality, the freedom to serve and to perform acts of civic virtue. This is the same freedom provided by vision and union with the First Existent to be found in Plotinus.

> The dew was thick on the grass, and crossing to the old bench, he sat again in the pale sunshine beside the damask rose-bush on which a single flower blossomed out of season. Around the cedars in the graveyard the sunrise flamed upon a violet background, and across the field of life-everlasting there ran a sparkling path of fire. The air was strong with autumn scents, and as he drank it in with deep draughts it seemed to him that he began to breathe anew the spirit of life. With a single bound of the heart the sense of freedom came to him and with it the happiness that he had missed, the evening before pulsed through his veins. Much remained to him--the earth with its untold miracles, the sky with its infinity of space, his own soul--and Maria! (The Deliverance, 543.)

Christopher is led by visionary inner radiance to join Maria and Tucker in a response to life that combines the heart in the intellect with offhand kindliness. This is, in reality, a spontaneous and simple goodness, the result of observing the unity in nature, and of placing reliance on conventional civic virtues. In doing so, Christopher

is "lightened of his burden," and knows himself "all order" within. (The Enneads, 625.)

Christopher has learned that good and evil must combine, as they do in Neo-Platonism, to make the whole. His courageous new acceptance of life is the result of the strife and struggle he has known. This response is truly cosmopolitan in a Jeffersonian sense for it assumes that evil must be overcome with industry and skill. Not only has Christopher himself become responsible so that he is prepared to take his place in the community, but he has acknowledged the worth of Jim Weatherby and the love between Jim and Lila which is their deliverance from slavery to outmoded custom.

In Christopher's final turning to inner revelation which leads to a union between the lovers, Glasgow overcomes the tragic conflict of types, and serves democracy in doing so. Christopher Blake, with Tucker, represents the old Southern aristocracy, and Maria Fletcher, particularly through her relationship to her grandfather, serves the aggressive and rising middle class. In addition, Maria has acquired some of the genial and expansive manner of the Old South which she shares with Tucker. She, in herself, represents a combination of the "brotherly love and humility" of the old Episcopalian South and the "competition and success" which marked the Horatio Alger approach of the

more Calvinistic and puritanical North.

In following the direction of Glasgow's work, however, one must note that Glasgow was far from satisfied with The Deliverance and with the happy ending based on romantic love and the goodness of Tucker, Maria and Christopher. She felt that the novel was too full of "quixotic romanticism," (C.M., 39.) and she doubted that love could ever have conquered the "triumphant hatred in Christopher's heart." (C.M., 39.) There is a growing disillusion reflected in these remarks which is apparent in Glasgow's treatment of romantic love and simple goodness in later novels. However, Glasgow never does abandon the beneficent virtues of Tucker and Maria, for she sees that all men are bound to the wheel despite the liberating effects of civic virtue, and all are fit objects of compassion. All are, to varying extents like the in-bred idiots of Panther's Gap in Vein of Iron who represent, for John Fincastle, a world of idiots. The inhabitants of Panther's Gap are comparable to the idiot child, Tony, and they represent the wayward animal nature of man. Civic virtue is a step only; perfection must await union with the Supreme Being or some future state of earthly bliss.

By the time Glasgow concerns herself with civic virtue in relation to the simple goodness of Virginia Pendleton, she has decided that she must reject her "earlier, more romantic style." (C.M., 129.) Glasgow had found The Miller of Old Church, written just before Virginia, to be "a rather curious blend of romance and realism." She felt that in writing the novel, she was "still feeling the backward pull of inherited tendencies." (C.M., 129.) She apparently also felt that in identifying the beautiful and the good too often with tradition she had been writing too much in the style of the sentimentalists of the Reconstruction Era and later, those who were nowhere offensive to delicacy or piety, and who did not linger to inquire too rigidly into the sins of the South. For example, in The Deliverance the problem of class difference is treated with optimistic romanticism, and there is little discussion of the negro problem, to which Glasgow gives a great deal of attention in later works. Glasgow had also been overfond of the happy ending in terms of romantic love, as we have seen. In Virginia, this kind of love, far from creating joy and optimism, helps to turn "a comedy of manners into a tragedy of human fate." (C.M., 79.) Nonetheless, though Glasgow was about to enter her more pragmatic and realistic middle period, she did not readily abandon past values, and she leaves to Virginia more than

might have been thought. Though Virginia has a more limited education and less experience in the outside world than does Maria, and though she is more reserved than Tucker, she shows a similar heartfelt response and offhand kindliness. This, as in The Deliverance, is the result of fortitude born of realizing that there is "Never pleasure without pain, never growth without decay, never life without death." (Virginia, 351.) Virginia has realized this truth as she kneels in the circle of light which the lamp draws around her young son, Harry, lying critically ill with diphtheria. As Harry shows signs of recovery, Virginia falls on her knees by his bed, and it seems to her that she has "reached that deep place beyond which there is nothing." (Virginia, 360.) Since Glasgow has been discussing Omnipotence, one might assume that she had in mind the unqualified Nothing which is the Everything of Plotinus' First Existent. Virginia's fortitude, gained through her traumatic experience with the unpleasant side of living, means that she, like Maria and Tucker, can comprehend life as being a blend of good and evil, and her compassion can reach those who do and do not accord with her moral code. Virginia can be sympathetic not only to her family and her neighbors but she is even generous to the new generation of pragmatists whose industry and skill are turned more to rending the social fabric than repairing it. These, of course, are

typified by Margaret Oldcastle and increasingly by Oliver whose waywardness Virginia seeks to understand though she cannot approve it. Glasgow obviously admires Virginia's compassion and the reader wonders whether Margaret Oldcastle has triumphed over Virginia, or Virginia's dignity of manner has given the victory to Glasgow's heroine. (Virginia, 487-488.) It is not surprising to find that Glasgow does not leave Virginia as deserted as at first the reader may suppose. Glasgow tells us that Virginia's tie to her son, Henry, who becomes a student at Oxford, the home of Platonic studies, is "unbreakable." (C.M., 92.) When Henry discovers that his mother has been left alone by a father for whom he has never had much sympathy, he writes, "Dearest mother, I am coming home to you," and these are the final words of the novel. The implication is that, in the younger generation, there will be one member who will carry the Ideals of the past into the future and greet the changing and troubled times with the same simple goodness which marks the civic virtue of Virginia.

The note of surprise which we catch in Glasgow's statement that simple goodness had turned comedy into tragedy in Virginia is heard again in relation to Victoria Littlepage of They Stooped to Folly, a novel which marks the end of the middle period of Glasgow's fiction. In this comedy Glasgow obviously meant to treat rigid and dutiful

adherence to custom with greater irony and satire than she does. In Victoria, Glasgow chooses instead a simple goodness which provides an escape from a troubled society by leading first to an enlightened civic virtue and from that to Divine Fortitude. As a result, Victoria may be said to be the first of Glasgow's sages in the novels of private life which close her career. Of Victoria, Glasgow says:

> By the time I was half through my comedy, one of the minor characters had resolutely advanced from obscurity. I had meant to keep Victoria in the background, to draw her, somewhat sketchily and flippantly, as a tiresome good woman; and I was even inclined to be a little annoyed when I found that she had, as actors say, 'stolen' a chief role. It is true that I had wished her to go as far as simple goodness of heart, without any unusual beauty or charm or intelligence can ever carry a woman; and my mistake seemed to be that I did not comprehend how great was the distance which simple goodness could cover . . . . Gradually, as the book progressed, I found myself to be concentrating upon her, and to be trying through her mind and heart, to explore the depths of the average woman of good will. The other women, old or young, were still as living, as wide awake, but their position and arrangement had altered. Instead of being the centre of the drama, they began to revolve about Victoria, and to move in her light. (C.M., 244.)

The suggestion of Neo-Platonic symbolism in the radiance which Victoria sheds around her, placing her as General Archbald is to be placed, at the centre of vision, is the result once again, of inheriting the Ideals of the past. These are represented by a Victorian sense of propriety, and are combined with a pragmatic Jeffersonian sense of

cosmopolitanism. By the time They Stooped to Folly was published in 1929, Glasgow was facing increasingly chaotic times. She turned instinctively to the past for shelter, particularly as she was, at the same time, adjusting herself to the break-up of her romance with Henry Anderson, a modern who, in subtracting cosmopolitanism from pragmatism, had subtracted personal integrity as well. Like Gideon Vetch, Henry seems to have been willing to adjust the means to the end and the end to his own personal interpretation of justice. L.D. Rubin gives some indication of the changing world which Glasgow faced, and which was emerging steadily as the setting for her last novels:

> In Ellen Glasgow's lifetime, especially after the First World War, she could see the signs of social disintegration all around her. They are visible today as never before, in a thousand guises. The Olde-Virginia-Ham signs along U.S. Highway One; the sterile and artificial humbuggery of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., the machine politicians and lobbyists swarming about the statues of Washington and Lee in the State Capitol; the Room-for-Rent signs on the forlorn old mansions along Franklin and Grace streets in downtown Richmond; the plush suburban estates along the Cary Street Road on the West End, symbolizing as they do cultural-aristocracy-become-commercial-aristocracy.[4]

In a time of false and fading values, Victoria's loyalty and compassion become a reassuring beacon. Victoria displays her fidelity as Virginia has done in being a dutiful wife and an understanding mother. She represents the integrity of the home against the maraudings of Amy

Dalrymple, an old family friend who returns from Europe and attempts to distract Virginius Littlepage, Victoria's husband, from his duties as a husband and father. Victoria is perhaps too understanding, at least as far as her daughter, Mary Victoria, is concerned. She is, particularly in this regard, in danger of becoming merely an evasive idealist, blindly obeying a duty which does not truly provide justice, as Virginia is when she fails to assess the justice of the claims put upon her by her family. Victoria's sympathies expand when she comes to see that Milly Burden, a typist in her husband's office, and a modern, defiant of tradition, needs her understanding and help. Both Milly and Mary Victoria are involved with Martin Welding who is, at first, Milly's lover. He is "rescued" from this affair by Mary Victoria, and he marries her. The respectable Victoria cannot quite see why Milly is not more repentant, particularly when she renews the affair with Martin following his marriage to Mary Victoria. Victoria, as a sign of her breadth of understanding, is aware, however, of how great a trial her daughter's self-righteous and reforming nature must be to a husband as weak as Martin. Glasgow seems lost between the self-centred and self-deluded demands of the three characters caught in the "love" triangle, and the need for progress, for she lets her heroine admit to herself that the whole thing is beyond her, and permits her to escape

decision. Victoria is dying, and shows considerable fortitude in keeping her condition from her family, and in trying to retain her former self-sacrificing and helpful approach. However, a "spiritual apathy" pervades Victoria's being, and she becomes "indifferent alike to public welfare and private reform." (T.S.F., 187.) As this spiritual apathy, this stoic indifference, takes over, Victoria comes to the knowledge which is at the heart of Stoic apathy; she discovers that good and evil are one, part of some incomprehensible whole. As she sits listening to the unenlightened demands of her daughter, Victoria's gaze "(flutters) down, like a tired bird in the golden dust of the sunset," (T.S.F., 187.) for the demands of the world are the demands of an "alien nature," and there is "a sinking, a defeat, a failing of the wing." (The Enneads, 623.) Before the indifference she feels, Victoria comes to know that the cycles between barbarism and the ideal, of which her brother Marmaduke, an artist, is wont to speak are all one, part of some drama she does not fully comprehend, some romantic dream which seems to have no fulfillment on earth. Victoria is reminiscent of the Neo-Platonic sage here for she is "looking beyond all here" to the "term of her journeying." Like the sages who are to follow her, she rises still a step to reach to the source of the loveliness of the Soul." Near the end, as fatigue grips her,

Victoria turns from civic virtue, as does General Archbald in his moment of vision. She asks herself with an apathy which is akin to Divine Fortitude:

> 'Does everything resolve itself into the running down of physical energy? If only I were not so tired, I might care more . . . but I have ceased to feel that anything matters . . .' Time and space slipped away from her. Like a pale cloud she felt them unwinding about her; she felt them dissolving and evaporating in a mist of light through the window and beyond into the transcendent blue of the sky. Marriage had dropped from her, too, with all the years and the crowd of withered husks she had once considered so vital. Her heart was throbbing with tenderness; but it was the tenderness of the past, not the present, and she realized suddenly that the loves which had stayed by her even when she was unaware of their nearness were the loves of her childhood. 'Is it true that love is outside of time?' she asked amazed and delighted. 'Is it true that life passes, but the spirit of life is immortal?' (T.S.F., 179.)

Such childlike acceptance suggests the Neo-Platonic acceptance of the whole of experience. It represents a true social cosmopolitanism for it includes the laughter of Amy Dalrymple which Victoria hears following her vision and which she interprets as sounding like "a shower of golden motes in the sunlight."

Victoria's acceptance of the unity of life is indirectly passed on to her husband, so that he too understands that:

> Love . . . was not loyalty; it was not loving-kindness; it was not even tenderness. You might love a woman and yet betray her; you might love a woman and yet destroy her. You might do any-

> thing in love, he saw at last, with a pang of agony, but cease to remember. (T.S.F., 318.)

Virginius however is left behind in a world where virtue must be interpreted and modified as a quality, where Divine Fortitude must become again the fortitude which accompanies civic virtue. He therefore interprets Victoria in terms of the fidelity and fortitude which she has shown on earth. He says to himself, "I never really understood her. I never really appreciated her goodness." (T.S.F., 318.) Though Victoria has risen above civic virtue to Divine apathy, civic virtue in the novel is interpreted in the light of the traditional values from which she has risen and of her wholeness of vision which is part of her ascetic fortitude. Though Milly Burden flees to New York and "freedom" in search of "something worth loving," (T.S.F., 348.), Virginius sees her desire as "that insatiable appetite of youth for disaster." (T.S.F., 349.) To her claim that "the whole world is mine, and in the whole world there must be something worth loving," (T.S.F., 349.) Virginius replies, "then you have not had enough?" Frederick McDowell sees Milly as the one slight hope for the future which the novel offers, but it is a faint hope indeed, for Virginius also

questions whether there is joy or cruelty in Milly's voice. (T.S.F., 347.) Milly is, after all, something of a happiness hunter. She represents the forces which will tear the social fabric, just as Michael Akershem has done many years before.

By the end of They Stooped to Folly, Glasgow has taken the step beyond civic virtue to Divine Fortitude and away from the burden of existence. However, civic virtue still offers some promise for the future, and it is a necessary part of the world of the novel. It is necessary to accept the Neo-Platonic split between civic virtue, as it attempts to incorporate a distasteful and splintered present, and Divine Fortitude, as it rises in dismay beyond the unclean pleasures of the world in order to gain a more unassailable security in the apathy and the ecstasy beyond the material.

The split between civic virtue and Divine Fortitude--if indeed it may be called a split, for it is really a transition, as it is in Plotinus--is apparent in Glasgow's next novel, The Sheltered Life. In the novel, General Archbald, Glasgow's sage, turns from the "shallow and aimless society of happiness hunters" to a state of ecstasy which is the result of Divine Apathy. General Archbald has looked forward to a time when "nothing . . . will be necessary," not even Eva Birdsong. Eva has the General's

sympathy because she is the representative of a past order with its geniality and universal compassion, a simple goodness based, like that of Virginia, on custom. She is a representative of the "code of beautiful behavior." The General is very well aware, however, of the cruelty of evasive idealism which has produced his own unhappy marriage, the neurotic spinsterhood of his daughter, Etta, the overbearing meddling of his daughter-in-law, Cora, and the unhappy isolation of his daughter, Isabella, who is spurned by the eligible men of her set because she has made the mistake of "staying out in the woods until daybreak" with a young gallant who has taken her for a buggy ride. The fact that the horse drawing the buggy was incapacitated by an accident has not influenced adverse reaction significantly. Evasive idealism has also helped to destroy the lives of Eva and George Birdsong by preventing both from facing the social and economic realities of their position in a workaday society which no longer supports genteel manners and the leisure class. Still, out of all these distressing components of the General's life, Eva remains a comforting and beautiful reminder of an inner beauty and harmony in an age when the General, like Glasgow, and like Victoria Littlepage, feels something within which is about to"(flutter) and (sink) down like a tired bird." (S.L., 186.) Eva is an outmoded mould of perfection, evidence of

a Divine unfolding of the Ideal to which the General clings despite his pragmatic desire to see change. This reliance on tradition makes the General sympathetic to George's misdeeds because George, like Eva, is a representative of the romantic code of beautiful behavior, a Southern gentleman who separates the "wrong side of his life" from his marriage. (S.L., 208.) The General cannot, however, sympathize with John Welch who would uncover the facts of Eva's and George's life which John calls a "long pretense." (S.L., 207.) General Archbald, like Victoria, turns in bewilderment from the romantic idealism he prefers and the empirical probing which John Welch demands. Like the aging Victoria Littlepage, he is almost through with the selfish dictates of the will, as would be any Schopenhauerian or Neo-Platonic sage who had come to realize the futility of the life lived among the unclean pleasures of the world. He is as disinterested as Victoria at the end of his life, and he can think:

> His daughter, his daughter-in-law, Jenny Blair, grandchildren, William (the General's dog)--all were dearer because they were no longer necessary. And dearer than all, though she too had ceased to be necessary, was Eva Birdsong. (S.L., 274.)

Simple goodness again accompanies Divine Fortitude in Glasgow's next novel, Vein of Iron. The novel records a further step in the disintegration of society from the

sheltered world of Glasgow's previous novel. In The Sheltered Life, a group of aristocrats, the Birdsongs and the Archbalds, find, in an old and decaying neighborhood in a Southern city, a setting which is relatively kind to the evasive idealism which they practice. At first, in Vein of Iron also it might be said that the little town of Ironside provides shelter, this time for the more exacting and ascetic virtues and customs of a society dominated by Calvinism. However, as we can see, Glasgow moves the setting to the city of Queenborough, and the virtues of the past along with the fortitude which sustains them must confront the self-seeking and materialistic city which represents modern urban society. John Fincastle, the last of Glasgow's civilized older men to be identified as such by the author, might truly be said to have the heart in the intellect, far more consciously than Tucker Corbin and the others, who do not have John's learning. Unlike Virginia and Victoria, Tucker can rely on a metaphysics which is derived from his own reading and thinking, and not primarily on custom and inherited Ideals. Yet, all John's learning comes to the rationalistic and mystical response of the heart which is typical of simple goodness. This is understandable because such a response is ultimately the one called for in Plotinus and in other philosophers that John had read--Spinoza and Schopenhauer.

John Fincastle is a former minister of the Presbyterian church. He is reduced to teaching school in the front parlour of the old family home, the Manse, located in Ironside, which is a small village in Shut-in Valley in the Appalachian mountains of Virginia. John has become a "pagan" philosopher, and has spent years attempting to reconcile the "truths" of Christianity to those of the mystics with whom he deals in writing a work on philosophy which extends to several volumes. John has come to ask himself whether "pure philosophy" has "ever advanced beyond the Three Hypostases of Plotinus." (V.I., lll.) John ponders the question and, as he does so, we catch a glimpse of the skepticism which never quite leaves Glasgow's own philosophy:

> Was there a swifter approach to Deity (granting an approachable Deity) than the flight of the alone to the Alone? Perhaps in some distant future man might turn away, disillusioned, from the inventive mind, and human consciousness might stumble back again along the forgotten paths of blessedness and mystic vision. (V.I., lll.)

As it had demanded of Tucker and Virginia, duty demands of Fincastle that he attempt to accord his philosophy with the claims of civic virtue put upon him by his family and by the society of which he is a member. The family includes: Mary Evelyn, John's kindly wife, a former aristocrat from Queenborough, now all but lost in the material details of

life, and increasingly an invalid; Ada Fincastle, John's daughter, who becomes involved with Ralph McBride, an irresponsible son of a stern and restrictive Calvinist mother who fathers a child on Ada even though he is already married, and finally Grandmother Fincastle, John's mother, and his sister, Meg, on whose Presbyterian fortitude and steady industry the family relies for much of its stability.

Despite the claims of family, John has his eyes on the philosophical whole and looks beyond all here, feeling that the claims put upon him have broken his single self into the many lives of his family. John is tied to the demands of civic virtue, but he realizes that:

> As for his deeper consciousness, the crystal globe holding the light within the light, this had been always remote and inviolable. Nothing had broken through. Not joy, not pain, not love, not passions, not sorrow, not loss, not life at its sharpest edge had been able to break or bend this still pointed flame that burned upward. (V.I., 111.)

Such commitment to the Divine First Existent does, however, mean that John will continue to respond to a compassionate and heartfelt regard for those around him. During the First World War, John moves with the Fincastle family to Queenborough. This is quite largely because Ada is running from the judgement of Ironside and from the knowledge of the savage and the animal in her own nature. The wild or out-

law aspect of Ada's nature is symbolized by Thunder Mountain, which stands at the head of Shut-in Valley. Away from the respectable conventions of Ironside, high on the slopes of Thunder Mountain, Ada and Ralph first consummate their love. The mountain represents the oversoul of the valley for Fincastle. Earlier, for the Indians who inhabited the area, it had been the home of the Great Spirit which moved in its pines and ran in its brooks, the spirit of sacrifice as well as the spirit of unity. This Great Spirit of the Indians represents the good and evil of existence, and, in this way, the Neo-Platonic oversoul of Fincastle and the Great Spirit of the Indians are one. The message for Ada is the same as that for Glasgow's other heroes and heroines: Ada must learn good from evil by learning to accept compassionately the whole of life. In the past, as her Grandmother Fincastle has pointed out to her, she has shown too much the "single" and "jealous heart."

The move to Queenborough represents a move to the materialistic society of Ada's Episcopalian mother, influenced as it now is by the modern competitive spirit. In the city, the family finds the world which Vann Woodward has spoken of, the world of shoddy standards and harsh business ethics. There is also the materialistic conformity which promotes the struggle for gain at the expense of brotherhood and humanity. Loyalty in such a society becomes

the brash decision to get what one can from the common pot. Industry and skill are not rewarded proportionately as war-time prosperity makes labour difficult to obtain. Glasgow describes the setting in a passage which forecasts the growing alienation of the individual from society, which is so much a part of the modern absurdist feeling:

> A few of the more spacious houses had been turned into flats and supplied with the modern necessities of steam heat and electricity. A few others had become boarding houses for the clerks and stenographers in the near factories, and the saleswomen in shops. Over these places, one and all, a kind of skin-deep prosperity had broken out in a rash. When every man, black or white, who could wield a hammer was able to command from six to eight dollars a day for driving a nail, the earliest war wages had been transformed by magic into pianolas and Nottingham lace curtains, just as the later and still higher wages of the post-war period would change automatically into radios and electric refrigerators and the newest model of Ford cars. Though the wind had died down for a moment, it seemed to her (Ada) that she could still hear the shrill human wail, 'I . . . . . I . . . . . I . . . . .' (V.I., 278.)

No Eva Birdsong graces the streets with the light of a passing glory, and as the war ends and the depression arrives, even the aristocrats find it difficult to retain their cavalier magnanimity, or a sense of responsibility for those around them. Ada's own relatives on her mother's side, the Blands, who are perhaps better than many, still live in Queenborough. They lose all they have in supporting a bank which is failing and in which they have an interest. This is done

in a spirit of responsibility to the bank and the depositors. On the other hand, their grand-daughter is a frivolous happiness hunter. She is sheltered from the harsh realities of the depression and the Bland's own situation, so that she wastes money foolishly while others starve.

John remains an Idealist throughout the trials of life in Queenborough, though the harshness of the depression years brings out his sense of irony and his skepticism. He tries to help his poorer neighbors, showing particular compassion to the son of one of them by taking him from the soup-line and finding him a job as a teacher of English. John steps without the single self and is able to offer understanding and consolation when Ralph is injured in a car accident while taking a young and attractive neighbor, Minna Bergen, for a ride. John accepts with a cheerful fortitude and a sort of offhand kindliness and humor, reminiscent of Tucker, the vicissitudes of an increasingly ammoral society, even when he loses his job teaching young ladies philosophy because they prefer a young man they can flirt with. During this time of exile from his "native land" of Plotinian perfection and comprehension, John is visited by one of the few people who have read his books, a scholar from Germany who speaks the language of John's instruction in German metaphysics. As the man talks to him, John discovers that "the stream of metaphysics" sounds

to him now "as vague as the lapping of surf on the beach." (V.I., 426.) He decides also that God cannot be put under a microscope, and to the visitor's query, what is left after Bergson and James, John replies in language which suggests his dependance on traditional values and Ideals:

> The intellect has survived Bergson. Ultimate truth will outwear James by an eternity. It is possible that God is more than motion. It is even possible that modern man is more than glandular maladjustment. (V.I., 427.)

John turns to the First Existent, the final term of intellectual search, with the belief that the "natural speech of the heart" is the greatest virtue. As his visitor leaves, John stands looking "on an earth and sky that seemed to be bathed in some fluid quality of mind," just as they had seemed to be to Tucker who could find courage in a dandelion, and to Christopher who could find fortitude in a sunrise. Life has taught John Fincastle to rely on a simple goodness, a response of the heart, for "pure philosophy is a wordless thing." (V.I., 427.) John is really acknowledging the Neo-Platonic doctrine that the First Existent is the sum of all things and cannot be qualified. It is therefore wordless.

As John ages, he feels more than ever that he is "resting in some timeless reality." (V.I., 441.) He must make the long journey away from the chaos of the city to Ironside where he can find "release from the will which

involves him in the world of experience." He must experience the "freedom" of the Neo-Platonic sage to "sink back into changeless beatitude, into nothing and everything." (V.I., 452.) John Fincastle is a man returning after "long wanderings" to the "pleasant ways of his own country."

If we may judge by the vision which he has, what John seeks first of all in returning to Ironside is the solid base of civic virtue provided by the Calvinist fortitude and conscience of his mother, so that he may rise above this to the unqualified unity with the Supreme Being. John wishes to escape the unclean pleasures and the shoddy standards of the city, and even the ephemeral beauty of his wife, which represents throughout the novel the beauty of the material world. As we shall see, John wishes at the same time to escape the animal nature of man which involves him in the struggle for survival. As John approaches the Manse, he is rewarded by a vision and is reassured that there is a unity within nature. He is taken beyond the splintered present to the Divine Fortitude which has consoled others who have risen to union with the Supreme Good. Still, as can also be seen in the quotation which is to follow, Glasgow will again demand a Neo-Platonic division of the self: through Ada Fincastle she will insist on a return to earth and to civic virtue. John leaves behind

him his representative, his daughter, chastened into respectability and ready to cleanse the world of aimless happiness hunting and egocentric behavior of the type which has threatened her marriage. John's vision and his glimpse of Divine Fortitude, as well as a better world to come, are all contained in a passage which describes John's approach to his old home, the Manse:

> The manse was dilapidated, crumbling to ruins, smothered in weeds and in rubbish, but he saw it as one sees an image that rises quickly to the surface of memory, fresh, vivid, unaltered . . . . Every dandelion, every clover-leaf, every pointed blade of grass, stood out in a spear of light that would melt at a breath, at a touch, at a whisper. Was this vision the reality? Not brick and mortar, stone and iron, but this vision? . . . . . Vertigo seized him again, and he sank down between the house and the garden. A strange, wild odor surrounded him. Gypsies had camped here. Or was it a man with a bear? Yet that was a lifetime before. But the smell of an animal, heavy, sour, curiously dark, seemed to drag him back to the earth, to all that had happened or had not happened in life, to the old ache, the old bitterness . . . . A name floated into his thoughts, Mary Evelyn. Was she named Mary Evelyn? And how long ago had he known her? His mother he could remember. All his childhood was perfectly clear in his memory. He could recall every incident, every person and object that had filled in the pattern. But between his childhood and the present moment when he was old and dying there was nothing but loneliness. The sunset blazed on the broken window-panes of the house, and the dark face--dark and stern and bright--watching beyond the panes was the face of his mother. 'It's time to go in,' he thought. 'I must get up and go in.' But when he stood up, the pain leaped at him, and he dropped back to earth. (V.I., 457.)

This passage comes close to the end of the novel, and in doing so confirms the Neo-Platonic theme despite earlier touches of skepticism. The Ideal, as we see by the closing lines of the passage, has not left its place of pain and bondage on the wheel of becoming. Ralph and Ada return to the Manse to attempt a new life in Ironside, as has been indicated above. They will scour away the "smell at the Manse," the smell which may have been left by the man with a bear--possibly a reference to the "nightmares of William Faulkner" spoken of by Glasgow in "Heroes and Monsters". (Above, p. 71.) To scour away the animal smell, Ralph and Ada will use "lime and more lime;" (V.I., 461.) they will show fortitude and conscience based on the virtues which find their strength and courage in family life as this depends on Platonic virtue. Ralph, despite his "fear of softness, his incurable hostility to life," and his cynical realism will depend partly on Ada to see him through and partly on a growing magnanimity. Ada has learned the lesson of her own humanity, the humility and compassion prescribed by Neo-Platonism with its reliance on the "gentle and friendly and tender," (The Enneads, 413.) and by Christianity. Ada may move beyond any narrow or jealous interpretation of the Ideal as Glasgow's other protagonists have done. Evil has been a teacher, and now there is less "idiocy" in Ada's own approach. "Shut-in Valley is smaller

and the Manse is nearer the church;" Ada is not so hostile to her neighbors, and her response will be more like the simple goodness of Victoria and less like the demanding and competitive self-righteousness of Mary Victoria or the Calvinist society which rejected Ada and which was a part of her own nature when she rejected those around her. It is a temperate and kindly attitude which brings the heart to the intellect in spite of a lack on Ada's part of any formal training in metaphysics.

In Glasgow's last two novels, In This Our Life and Beyond Defeat, simple goodness is again involved in the disorderly "modern temper" which, Glasgow says in her introduction to the novel "pressed around me in a single community . . . confused, vascillating, uncertain and distracted from permanent values." (C.M., 249.) Asa Timberlake, the civilized older man of the novels, can find little satisfaction in the life he is forced to lead and he must look for goodness elsewhere or within. His daughter, Stanley, is a selfish happiness-hunter who does not scruple to run off with her sister Roy's husband, Peter. And, of course, later in the novel Stanley lies about her own involvement in an automobile accident and blames the innocent negro, Parry. She does not show courage, truthfulness or even common honesty. Even Roy, Asa's other daughter, on whom he can rely most for a compassionate understanding of

his own situation cannot be relied upon to secure the traditional values which have formed the pattern of his life. Roy has opened the door to Peter's infidelity by agreeing that he is free to do whatever he pleases so long as he is guided by his "true" feelings[5]. Roy does not demand loyalty from Peter or tell him that it is his duty to stay by her. Lavinia, of whom we have spoken briefly in Chapter III, is loyal to the virtues of the past because they protect her own interests. Lavinia is an evasive idealist who does not plumb the depths of her emotions, so that her idea of the cosmopolitan and democratic reaches of virtue does not go beyond her own limited circle, in the way that at the beginning of <u>They Stooped to Folly</u> Victoria Littlepage's vision is circumscribed by family loyalty. Asa practises brotherly love and humility in a milieu where competition and success rule the day. This places him to an uncomfortable extent, at the mercy of Lavinia's uncle, the pompous and dictatorial William Fitzroy. William is generous only where his own material interests and bodily lusts are involved. For instance, he lavishes gifts and money on Stanley because she flatters him and because she has a surface beauty of face and figure. Asa must face the loss of the Ideal at work also, for he is a gently and kindly soul in an impersonal and callous system in which there is little regard for

individual needs or rights. Asa has belonged to the monied class which supported the aristocratic tradition, but Asa's father, Daniel, had lost the Timberlake Tobacco Company to the robber barons of the business world, represented by the Standard Tobacco Company. Now, "at fifty-nine, with forty-seven years of faithful plodding behind him, (Asa is) as insecure as a drying leaf on a stem." (I.T.O.L., 10.) He is also working for a wage which does not offer him comfort or security.

In In This Our Life, the first of the two novels which deal with the Timberlake family, Asa must look beyond the life described above to the peace of Hunter's Fare, where nature and the simple goodness of Kate Oliver offer a sense of security and, at the same time, an opportunity for true freedom which is found in service to the Ideal, as it is in Plotinus. A glimpse of the release which such a life offers is given at the conclusion of In This Our Life which, Glasgow informs us, is intended to end "in the stern accents of our unconquerable hope." (C.M., 257.) By this she means man's hope of creating a community of the blessed on earth in which civic virtue and democratic principle will bring a greater measure of Ideal perfection. She also means the freedom of the individual to achieve personal independence and responsibility and, through this, happiness, as Asa does on the farm. Hunter's Fare is a model for a better society,

and Glasgow speaks in glowing terms of the hope it offers:

> Looking up at the closed sky once again, (Asa) had a vision of Kate and the harvested fields and the broad river. Still ahead, and within sight, but just out of reach, and always a little farther away, fading but not ever disappearing, was freedom. (I.T.O.L., 467.)

In this passage, freedom seems almost unattainable. It is, at best, very far off. The reason for this points to a problem in Glasgow's philosophy and in that of Plotinus; a problem which helps to explain why Glasgow is not satisfied with the thought of a Kingdom of the Blessed on earth but, in Beyond Defeat must seek reassurance also in Divine Fortitude. Hunter's Fare is a name which has significance in relation to Glasgow's work. We have noted Glasgow's rejection of cruelty apparent, for example, in her rejection of the hunt in The Sheltered Life. We might note it again when Toby, the idiot, is chased by the children in Vein of Iron. Glasgow likens this chase, which begins the novel and introduces the theme, to that of a rabbit. It is Ada who, in the course of the novel, learns that true compassion must rely on respectability as well as on open-hearted and simple goodness which goes beyond mere duty (so that she is able, for example, to forgive Ralph his affair with Minna.) It is Ada also who recalls the death of the rabbit. She remembers with horror that it was "torn to pieces by (the) hounds," and that she had "heard it cry out like a baby. She had watched its eyes throbbing

with fear and pain, like small, terrified hearts." (V.I., 5.) We can be sure that Ada is expressing Glasgow's own typical reaction here to the fact that the animal in man is being hunted and destroyed rather than being understood in such a way that the wayward and wild spirit might be turned to the service of the Ideal. Still, in order to move forward, and progress beyond the empty customs of the past, some sacrifice of order and of the Ideal must be made; some sacrifice of duty and custom as Plotinus would have it, or loyalty in Glasgow's terminology. Social disruption must ensue and cruelties be perpetrated. As Plotinus tells us, "Virtue . . . at its discretion . . . sacrifices a man; it may decree the jettison of life, means, children, country even; it looks to its own high aim and not to the safe-guarding of anything lower." (The Enneads, 599.) To regain unity, it is doubly necessary to move beyond the world and society to the ascetic fortitude which lies beyond the material. What, then, does the retreat to Hunter's Fare actually entail?

Monique Parent Frazee claims that Asa's "final freedom is acquired at the price of desertion, not redemption."[5] When Asa finally resolves to leave Lavinia so that he may go to live on the farm with Kate, he leaves more behind than a complaining and cruel wife who does not see or understand the sacrifices he makes to keep the family together. He

leaves behind respectability and the social order of which marriage is a symbol--the very respectability which is a part of Ada Fincastle's redemption! When he does so he finds, not surprisingly, that Queenborough society supports Lavinia because she is a wife in good standing, faithful, and willing to preserve at least the outward mould of order. It is this order, after all, which protects the weak, the young for example, who are seen as running wild in Vein of Iron beyond the bounds of respectable behavior which would ensure the integrity of the family group and their own happiness. Glasgow is obviously distressed by such young people; Minna Bergen is an example. Again, it is because Stanley is responsible for the breakdown of Roy's marriage that Glasgow attacks her in In This Our Life. Because of the breakdown of the marriage, Roy brings a child into the world who, like herself, has little or no protection. It is not merely the weak who are protected by loyalty and custom: in Virginia, for example, Oliver and Margaret Oldcastle lose stature because they break with tradition, perpetrating a cruel injustice against Oliver's patient and loving wife. In Vein of Iron part of the strength of Grandmother Fincastle is her Presbyterian insistence on the sanctity of marriage. In short, Glasgow is of two minds on the subject of Asa's desertion of his wife, and for the specific reason that, no matter how effectively the action

strikes at evasive idealism, it is unkind and cruel, not only to Lavinia but to all those who share her sense of loyalty--those who are loyal to custom and duty despite any personal unhappiness and hardship. Glasgow had long seen the dangers in such a desertion. It will be recalled that in The Builders, she forces David Blackburn back to his wife despite the claims of Caroline's more Idealistic love. The same attitude is apparent as early as The Descendant, where Anna Allard accuses Michael Akershem of being responsible for causing a workingman to leave his family for a younger woman, so that his wife and five children are left unprotected. (T.D., 177.) No matter how Glasgow tries to smooth over the desertion, it means that the animal in man must be hunted and, in a sense, destroyed. Temperance and understanding cannot then lead the way to a greater compassion and mutual affection based on the knowledge that both Asa and Lavinia are victims of evasive idealism and outmoded custom. Glasgow tries to avoid brutality by shifting the setting to the symbolic world of Hunter's Fare but, if we can judge by the reaction of her civilized older man, Asa, she is still skeptical of the move even if she appears to have turned the other cheek for the last time:

> He couldn't hurt her (Lavinia), that was his weakness. He couldn't bear hurting things. And yet, he knew that only by hurting her could he

> defend his own sense of right, of justice, of inward integrity. Is it true, he asked himself wearily, turning away, that there comes a crisis in life when inhumanity alone can serve the ends of humanity? Is it imperative, at such moments, to reach not only beyond one's lower impulses, but even beyond one's better nature? Could a principle betray one as well as an appetite? He was too old to believe that. Right was right, wrong was wrong, or his universe fell to pieces. I do not know where I am going, he thought, I cannot see a step before me, but I must go on. (I.T.O.L., 399.)

Yet, these objections aside, Lavinia's constant complaints about her heart condition, the fact that she "delights in hurting him," (I.T.O.L., 102.) defeat Asa's best intentions. Lavinia joins William in destroying Asa's self-confidence, particularly as she supports the immoral behavior of Stanley against Asa's wishes. By the time In This Our Life ends, Asa wants only to escape to the farm and to Kate Oliver. The farm means nature and nature means to Asa what it has meant to Tucker, to Dorinda, to John Fincastle, and to so many others in Glasgow's novels: it is a source of order and of mystery. Asa thinks of the farm and Kate and he becomes strong again. He feels a deep peace as he realizes that outer appearance is representative of the reality within:

> I am standing here, in this doorway, in this street, in this windy emptiness of October. Yet a part of me, the more real part, is miles away with Kate, following the river path, where meadow-larks are skimming over the life-everlasting. But this is solid . . . this is real; and the other is only an image in the mind.

> Still, who knows what is real? Matter is solid, but it can be broken in two; it can be burned into ashes. He had merely to separate his dual life, dividing the life of circumstance from the life which he knew as his own and his whole relation to the universe shifted and altered. The strong man within and the average man without, he felt, standing there in this one moment, in this autumn brightness, were not different and unrelated identities . . . . (Yet) he was still what he had been from the beginning, an exile who had not ever known his own country, an atom without a universe. (I.T.C.L., 238.)

The retreat to the farm means that Asa is making the attempt to separate the strong man within from the average man without. This comes to mean that Asa lives a life of civic virtue in relation to those around him on the farm while he continues to be concerned over the fate of Lavinia. At the same time, he continues to exclude her, and, in doing so, he is acting like an average man, not like a philosopher concerned with bringing the whole of experience into harmony, the atoms into relationship with one another. Security for Asa as for David Archbald and John Fincastle is really beyond and within the life on the farm, and is, in fact, within the "crystal globe" of eternity of which traditional patterns of virtue give promise as they do in Vein of Iron.

Asa's concern for Lavinia is shared by his daughter, Roy, who returns to Queenborough from New York at the beginning of Beyond Defeat. Roy brings with her her son, Timothy, who was conceived during the night spent with the young

Englishman mentioned above, at the end of Chapter IV. Roy met the father of her child at a bus stop when she was running from the anomalies and cruelties of the life she had known in Queenborough. The affair with the Englishman compromises Roy's inherited values, but she cannot overlook the fact that Stanley can hide very effectively behind the evasive idealism which is part of family loyalty and duty. Roy is chiefly disturbed by the fact that Stanley returns to Queenborough after Peter's death and reclaims her former fiancé, Craig Fleming. Craig and Roy had, during the absence of Stanley and Peter, become romantically involved. Roy has determined by the time she returns that she will begin anew, and that her heart will be "invulnerable to memory." (B.D., 18.) However, Roy cannot forget so readily. Once in her old room in the Timberlake house, she sees two white pigeons flash by the window of her old room, and she realizes that "everything was as she had known it would be, even the shadowy fall of leaves, even the slow, retarded rhythm of wings in the sunlight." (B.D., 18.) The Neo-Platonic symbolism of shadows and birds indicates that Roy must learn that true freedom must be found among the shadows cast by the events of the past. She must learn purity of vision from the past and from memory, and she begins by admitting that "all that happened was my fault, not his (the Englishman). It happened because of my longing to

revenge myself on what I had most loved and valued." (B.D., 19.) The past is part of the future--even though Roy, like her father, might try to reject it. Roy must accept this truth because it is reinforced by a visionary experience which gives her a more compassionate understanding of her mother. The experience also demands a more heartfelt or more romantic approach:

> When she opened her eyes, it seemed to her that the light in the room was moving in circles. In a slowly revolving centre, her mother's look was suspended, alone, unsupported but filled with a heart-broken loneliness. Some message outside herself, Roy felt, was struggling to reach her, to break through the hardened shell of identity, or of repugnance. Poor Mother, she has suffered . . . . but the words were as hollow as blown bubbles. Poor Mother, she has never known love, and love was perhaps the one thing she wanted from life. While Roy gazed at Lavinia's mauve-tinted features, she reminded herself with detached pity of her mother's frustrated girlhood. To desire and not ever to be desired, that, Roy suspected, without knowing, was the hidden core of the tragedy. To be without charm in a place and a period when charm alone was important in women. Perhaps, in the beginning she had tried sweetness, and when sweetness failed her, she had transferred her hunger for love into a craving for power. For it was power, not love, not loneliness, not even vain longing that had fed and thrived upon distrust and jealousy and upon real or fancied affronts. (B.D., 50.)

Though Lavinia's cause is a cause without the heart in the intellect, for in its selfish lust for personal power it cannot serve democratic justice, Lavinia, like Eva Birdsong represents the past mould of the Ideal. She cannot simply be rejected without losing sight of where one is going in

pursuit of the Ideal. Glasgow emphasizes that it is not possible to redress the evils of an era where charm was all if such an era is not taken into account. This is true even if ultimately the solution lies within and is essentially the same for all ages, as Roy claims to be the case. The solution depends in all ages on the turning to mystic union with the Supreme Being which is the inspiration to acts of civic virtue. Roy decides that the past cannot be so readily rejected, and she also decides to plead Lavinia's case to her father because Lavinia will not accept Timothy unless Asa returns. Once on the farm, Roy finds that Kate's simple goodness is, by contrast with her mother's self-righteous and rigid attitude, much to be preferred. It is more than the charm which in the past had secured for the Southern woman, wealth, position, and authority which are largely unexamined by the proponents of evasive idealism and are often unwarranted and harmful;[6] therefore, Roy can hardly be expected to continue to support her mother's demands that Asa return to his former home when these are based on a self-pity and a demand for power occasioned by a lack of charm, for it is just this charm which has so far succeeded in wrecking Roy's own life. Kate's simple goodness, like that of Tucker and the others is broader, more inclusive and more genuinely compassionate, at least with regard to those who share her world.

Kate's goodness supplies the demands of the heart in the intellect although, like Virginia and Victoria, Kate is not a scholar. Kate's goodness is based on a love of the land. As she welcomes Roy to the farm, giving a special welcome to Timothy, Roy thinks, "She loves the land as if it were human . . . . It is life, the whole of life that she feels. She has learned how life must be lived." (B.D., 83.) Kate has gathered around her a small band of exiles to whom she shows a compassion sufficient to help them gain independence and responsibility. Their industry and skill are devoted to raising crops which help to supply the war effort, and they depend on one another, and particularly on Kate and Asa, the strong souls who set them a courageous example of duty well performed and loyalty to the task at hand. The breadth of Kate's generosity is apparent in the statement made by Craig Fleming, who has also found refuge on the farm, that "'Her husband was like her, they say, only more so. They never turned off a man or a dog without help.'" (B.D., 111.) There is, in Kate, something of a Stoic indifference also, for while she has "warmth and sympathy," she has "the sense of a strong impersonal identity." (B.D., 111.) And Glasgow suggests that Kate's goodness has its roots in a central radiance of being, a goodness deep within. For Craig Fleming, Kate's simple goodness is "'character which has overflowed from its source, which upholds both the visible

and invisible world.'" (B.D., 87.) Before Kate's goodness, Roy must yield, particularly as Kate promises to keep Timothy on the farm. Asa even hopes that Timothy will come to love the land as he does, and will become a farmer. For Asa, as for Kate, the land is a source of strength and renewal. It is also, particularly for Asa, reassurance of the unity within passing time, that central radiance of Being which has sustained Glasgow's other civilized older men. In Section Three of Beyond Defeat, Asa moves within and beyond the circles of time:

> While he rested there, in the hushed life of the hour, warmed by the sun, and by the bitter-sweet tang of autumn, it seemed to him that he was caught and held in some slow drift of time. Barred with a pattern of light and shade, the terraces appeared to rise and fall. Within this stillness, the wind moved, the grass bent and straightened, the fall of leaves broke and scattered. All these separate motions were imprisoned here, now, in the crystal globe of this instant. But beyond this sphere of eternity, above, below, around the encircled moment, he felt that changeless, perpetual rhythm of time passing . . . . Awakening from his sleep which was not sleep, he remembered that outside this stillness, this peace, this crystal globe, the retarded evolution of men had turned back on itself, and was, even now, devouring its own children. (B.D., 119.)

This same visionary awareness of the unity within the good and evil of existence, apparent here as it is in The Deliverance, is also a part of Roy's reaction to the beauty of the farm:

> The autumn landscape broke apart and dissolved in a mist. Looking away from (Craig) she gazed over the wide, flat field where the two pointers were leaping through the tall broomsedge and life-everlasting. When the plumes of wheaten-red or silver-white stirred and divided, a few startled crows skimmed in flapping curves over their transparent shadows. In the windy brightness of October the movement of the distance was like the motion of ruffled water, of water rising and falling and breaking into waves of foam before it parted and scattered. (B.D., 66.)

The beauty and harmony within nature offers confirmation of the worth of Hunter's Fare, and Roy cannot help rejecting the idea that she must bring Asa back to Queenborough and to the life he has known. At the same time, Roy sits in judgement on those who would judge her as she questions herself:

> What was it that made Kate able to work her effortless miracles? Could one solitary human being, through goodness and wisdom alone, gather the broken fragments of other lives and bind them together? Roy knew what people would say . . . all the people who did not believe in goodness, who did not know wisdom. Mother, she thought, will never forgive me. Even Aunt Charlotte, tolerant but obtuse, in her late-blooming selfishness, would mildly sorrow and disapprove. She could see the collective features of Queenborough, the aloof features of standards and traditions, of canons and precepts, of rubrics and ritual innumerable. She could see all these damaged yet impervious death-masks frozen in judgement. (B.D., 114.)

Kate also sits in judgement. Unlike Virginia she is not afraid of straight talk when the occasion demands it, and through her pragmatic and enterprising spirit she is able, Glasgow tells us rather optimistically, to break out of the

circle (or the wheel). Aunt Charlotte, the widow of William Fitzroy diagnoses the secret of Kate's attraction:

> 'Well, for one thing, she is heartening to live with. When things are at their worst, she doesn't sit down and wring her hands or run round in a circle. She insists there's a way somewhere, and looking will find it.' (B.D., 100.)

One way to find a way out is to compromise, more in the spirit of Glasgow's novels of the middle period, although in these, Glasgow supports loyalty to the home. It is tempting to give up on principle, as far as Lavinia is concerned, for principles "betray," and to restrict compassion. Kate's simple goodness does not extend to Lavinia. When it is suggested to Kate that Asa return to his wife, "indignation" pulses in her "usually serene voice," (B.D., 86.) and she is quick to say, "'You know as well as I do, what sort of a marriage that was.'" (B.D., 86.) Kate suggests that if Roy were truly devoted to her father, she would not ask him to return to Lavinia. Asa, in fact, is also set against the return. He tells Roy that he only stayed with her mother because of the financial support he was willing to give her until William's bequest to Lavinia provided an opportunity for Asa to leave. The memory of Lavinia causes Asa to smile "a grim smile as if with acid about his mouth." (B.D., 98.) It is a smile reminiscent of the bitterness in Michael Akershem 's character.

However, Lavinia is not dispensed with so easily. She has a serious heart attack, and Roy and her father receive a summons to go to her which they feel they must obey. On the way to her bedside, Roy and her father agree that Roy's deepest roots are in her father. We must assume the allusion, at least in part, is to Asa's compassion and loyalty which sustained the family for so many years as well as to his Neo-Platonic willingness to go beyond duty to search out the Ideal at Hunter's Fare. As the novel nears its conclusion, Glasgow pauses to praise what has been and what is symbolized in the passing of Lavinia--even as she feels her own heart failing. Though the passing mould of perfection of which Lavinia was the representative was held together by charm, charm, it is interesting to remember, was one of the attributes which Sherwood Anderson found so compelling in Glasgow herself. Asa cannot care for Lavinia, but he must agree with Charlotte that there was more in Lavinia than they had thought, "'how much beauty--how much fortitude.'" Asa tells Charlotte that Lavinia "was the last of a noble tradition." He reflects on Lavinia's passing:

> For it seemed to him, at the moment that an era, as well as a tradition was ending. And not an era alone, but a bright, lost vision, a long adventure, an inaccessible hope. All the outward forms which had designed and illumined, and circumscribed, and finally destroyed the pattern of his life, all these, with their many changing shapes, were not over. Yet something, he felt, without words, was still left, something, if

> only the living seed of tomorrow. The past in its high beauty and its low cruelty, in its perpetual seeking and finding, or seeking and not finding, this past, he told himself, still lingered there, out in the night, beyond the farthest shadow of that dark violence. Other world, related or unrelated, would take shape and emerge. Other worlds and other dreams, and, in time perhaps, other ruins of worlds and dreams. (B.D., 133.)

The Ideals of the past will light the way to a brighter tomorrow beyond the changing patterns of the future which the First Existent in its unfolding of all possible forms of its Being will divulge. These Ideals promise, in their romantic compassion, a better solution than the cold and mathematical empiricism of John Welch, and certainly a better hope for harmonious accord than the utilitarianism of William Fitzroy. They are part of the evasive idealism of Lavinia as they are of other forms of civic virtue current or outmoded--including simple goodness which by its very presence amid the unclean pleasures of the world must be evasive. Part of the promise of a golden tomorrow is the agrarianism of Hunter's Fare and the spirit which is found in nature. There is also promise in the romantic union of Roy and Craig Fleming, for Roy will carry Asa's Idealism forward into the future. Timothy can be expected to do the same, particularly if Asa's hope that his grandson will remain on the farm is fulfilled.

As the splintered and setting sun lights the windows of the houses of Queenborough, Glasgow tells us that a "winged light again pierced the shadows and swept, unerringly, across the wide arch of sky." (B.D., 134.) It is the light of a searchlight connected with the war. Earlier in the novel Glasgow has suggested that the war is evil, but that it is part of the totality of mankind's experience, and therefore will serve as a source of knowledge which may lead to a better future. Symbolically, this light is the wheel of becoming, guided still by a central radiance within and beyond to which Glasgow continues to turn in her work as in her life to the very end. Still, in the world, the centres do not coincide, and Asa must look beyond all here for escape from the unclean pleasures of the world. He is beyond defeat in the promise which civic virtue combined with Divine Fortitude brings, but he also still feels the vexations of the wheel, the pain of becoming. Hunter's Fare is a token only of a society where man has finally "grown up." Meanwhile for the man and woman within the encircled moment, a final answer lies not in a "personal God," but in the "self within the self," which is all selves and everywhere.

Central radiance and with it Divine Fortitude are the final goal of Glasgow's novels. In this thesis we have discussed the way in which the unclean pleasures of the world and civic virtue lead in Glasgow as in Plotinus to the

unassailable security of the First Existent. It remains to show how Glasgow's reliance on the philosophy of Plotinus, which is so large a part of her "settled philosophy," affects what has been said by other critics about her work. In doing so, we may also point out briefly, the way in which Glasgow's Neo-Platonism affected her own assessment of her position as a writer, and how it affects her place in American literature.

CONCLUSION

Before making a final assessment of Glasgow's work in relation to Neo-Platonism, it is helpful to review what has already been said, in order to facilitate a discussion of the comments of other critics, Glasgow's role as a writer, and her place in American literature.

In the attempt to show the considerable influence of Plotinus on the philosophy and work of Ellen Glasgow, this thesis has been concerned with the three levels of experience perceived by Neo-Platonism: the "unclean pleasures" of the world, civic virtue, and vision and illumination. Chapter Two, entitled "A Settled Philosophy," established the fact that Glasgow's own philosophy was strongly influenced by Neo-Platonism through her study of Plotinus and of several philosophers and writers themselves influenced by Neo-Platonism. Although there is a persistent element of skepticism in Glasgow's work, which comes in part from her reading of anti-rational philosophies, there is evidence throughout her writing of a reliance on transcendental philosophies, and particularly on Neo-Platonism which puts an emphasis on blessedness and on the emotional appeal to an "inmost reason of the heart." In Chapter Three it was shown that Glasgow, like Plotinus, relies on intellectual fortitude and on the ~~turning~~ from material comfort to civic virtue. This is particularly apparent in her rejection of the happiness hunters who appear throughout the novels,

those who, in the words of Plotinus, "flicker hither and thither at the call of sense." All men are to a degree involved with the material, and Glasgow is suspicious of two other categories of characters: the pragmatists, empiricists and utilitarians on the one hand, and, on the other, the evasive idealists. As Chapter Four shows, Glasgow, like Plotinus, takes refuge in the order and security of civic virtue. Glasgow's civic virtue is based on the Platonic virtues, and on stoic fortitude which includes the concept of a moral order based on cosmopolitanism; this Glasgow relates to Jeffersonian democracy. In the pursuit of Ideal order, Glasgow is pragmatic and shares with Coleridge the belief that evolution will reveal the worth of the Ideal. However, as Glasgow observes the growing moral chaos around her, she turns increasingly for reassurance to the "heroic" ideals of the past, particularly as these are represented in the kind of brotherly love and humility displayed by the heroine of Virginia. In this novel, however, it becomes apparent that the evasive idealism of the Old South cannot cope with the changing times, especially as there is growing evidence of a laissez-faire capitalism which supports the drive towards competition, success, and the survival of the fittest in the marketplace and in society. Glasgow attempts to accommodate traditional ideals to the political and economic realities of the New South in three political novels which support

Progressive political thought in the United States as this attempted to make life more democratic, more moral, and more just. These novels are, The Voice of the People, One Man in His Time, and The Builders. In Nicholas Burr, Glasgow combines an appeal to Populist legislation with a reliance on individual integrity and Jeffersonian idealism. Nicholas' efforts at reform in this early novel are cut short because of his death, which is the result of an inner savagery which provides evidence that, despite his civic virtue, he is still subject to the pain of living in the material world. Nicholas' savagery reflects the savagery of the mob which kills him. In One Man in His Time, Gideon Vetch attempts to champion the rights of the working man. Though he is, overall, more temperate than Nick, he is destroyed by the zeal of those around him. Vetch is an example of those heroes and heroines of the middle period of Glasgow's fiction who represent Glasgow's pragmatic and empirical attempt to compromise with the Ideal in the hope that this will bring about social progress. Glasgow defends Vetch's idealism even though he compromises it in using politically expedient and questionable methods to achieve his political goals. In Glasgow's third political hero, David Blackburn, she creates an upright and stoic character dedicated to American ideals of social justice. David wishes to combine Southern belief in personal independence and responsibility with a Northern belief in

solidarity by uniting the North and the South politically and socially. He hopes to create a pattern of justice and unity which will set an international precept and bring world peace. Blackburn's Idealism is inspired by Neo-Platonic vision, a "luminous revelation" which is evidence of a Divine Fortitude within experience. David, however, does not withdraw from the world but determines to live a life of civic virtue so that he may serve the "impersonal choice of humanity." Though the Neo-Platonic call to civic virtue continues in the novels, Glasgow is disappointed by a world in which traditional Ideals are increasingly disregarded. She turns for hope to an emotional response which she calls, "simple goodness." Chapter Five of the thesis discusses simple goodness in relation to another response to life which Glasgow calls "the heart in the intellect." It discusses both in relation to vision and Divine Fortitude. The chapter begins by showing that simple goodness is a quality which can be found in the first of Glasgow's civilized older men, Tucker Corbin of The Deliverance. Along with simple goodness, Tucker displays the "heart in the intellect," and another related quality, "offhand kindliness." In part, simple goodness is the result of relying on nature to reveal the Neo-Platonic and stoic quality of cosmopolitanism which, in Glasgow, becomes universal compassion supported by Jeffersonian idealism. Simple goodness, a form of civic

virtue, relies for inspiration on contact with the Supreme Being, the central radiance of Glasgow's novels, and of Neo-Platonism. Simple goodness reappears in the novels following Glasgow's pragmatic middle period in three of her heroines, Virginia Pendleton, Victoria Littlepage and Kate Oliver. All three rely on traditional and Platonic Idealism as evidenced in traditional virtue. All three discover within themselves through the aid of vision, the compassion characteristic of Tucker. This simple goodness is akin to that found in John Fincastle of Vein of Iron who, though more intellectual than other characters who display simple goodness, still turns in the end to an emotional response which places the heart in the intellect. Fincastle, like other heroes and heroines of the final novels, looks beyond all here, seeking final consolation and escape away from the happiness hunting and moral chaos of the present. He finds this in a withdrawal from life to the ascetic certainty of Divine Fortitude. In Glasgow's final two novels the same escape is evident, particularly in Asa Timberlake. Glasgow hopes that the civic virtue of the past, based on Platonic Idealism will help to create a blessed community of the future based to a certain extent on the model community of Hunter's Fare. To the end, the central radiance of Being provides a guide for the characters in Glasgow's novels, both to Divine Fortitude and to future blessedness on earth.

It becomes apparent in the light of what has been said that much of what has been written critically of Glasgow's work is open to question. It is clear that, contrary to what a number of critics have suggested, Glasgow's philosophy does provide a major strength in her work. It is responsible for the overall direction of the work, for much of the content and plot, for the shaping of character, and, finally, for theme. Two solutions to the problems of modern men are, in fact, offered by Glasgow, and these are based on Plotinus' own solution to a life lived among the pains and pleasures of the world. Both are, of course, dependant on one another. Man can choose to live a life of civic virtue based on Platonic Idealism and on a pragmatic willingness to change society in the service of the Ideal. In this life, like many of Glasgow's characters, and like Plotinus, himself, man can seek consolation and strength from meditation and from union with the Supreme Being. We are told, in fact, that Plotinus lived just such a life himself. Prophyry, a student of Plotinus, says of his teacher:

> Oft-times as you strove to rise above the bitter waves of this blood-drenched life, above the sickening whirl, toiling in the mid-most of the rushing flood and the unimaginable turmoil, oft-times from the Ever-Blessed, there was shown to you the Term still close at hand. (The Enneads, 16.)

Such a life, in Glasgow's novels, includes a willingness to cast one's bread upon the waters of life, trusting to the Supreme Being to guide the way to wisdom and fulfillment. A life of civic virtue might be inspired by Jeffersonian agrarianism of the kind found in a number of Glasgow's novels. This type of life is now popular with a group of hardy Idealists, often inspired by another transcendentalist, Henry David Thoreau, who leave the city to cultivate the soil and their own spirits, as they seek union with the spirit in the woods. On the other hand, man can aspire to a more contemplative life of benign withdrawal from worldly pleasure and the turmoil of worldly aspiration. This is the life indicated by Victoria Littlepage, David Archbald, or John Fincastle who, as their lives draw to a close, rise "still a step (and) reach to the source of loveliness of the Soul," and to "the First," where there is "an end to the pain inassuageable before." (The Enneads, 434.) The message is clear: all men are a part of the whole, and each must show a compassionate awareness of this fact if the promise of democracy is to be fulfilled; each must endeavour to set an example of respectable and responsible behavior in which there is room for new approaches to the problem of achieving equality and social justice. Though there is cruelty in evolution, man must attempt to avoid the brutality inherent in revolutionary overthrow of the existing order or in the

battle for the survival of the economically or socially fittest. Glasgow, like Plotinus, is dismayed by the cruelty in life and looks to a Good which is "gentle and friendly and tender," and she stresses the importance of brotherly love and humility. It is apparent that Glasgow's reliance on mysticism is much more than an occasional interest. It is the heart and soul of her work. Glasgow's Neo-Platonism, in fact, provides the final term of her work, and comes to incorporate both her skepticism and her pragmatic belief in progress, so that, in the novels, it does provide a "substratum into which all experience can be dissolved." Glasgow's "command of self" seems weak because she attempted to escape from the evasive idealism of the past while holding fast to past values. This leads in Beyond Defeat to a seeming absurdity which finds her compassionately trying to hold fast to past loyalties while attempting to rid her hero of a wife who represents the past mould of perfection. Such a difficulty can only be resolved if one admits that life is cruel, and this is an admission which Glasgow frequently made. The position in which she finds herself in Beyond Defeat shows that Glasgow was what she claimed to be, the victim of the tragic conflict of types. Like Dorinda Oakley or Gabriella Carr, Glasgow yearns for competition and success while, at the same time, she cannot forego the brotherly love and humility found particularly in the Episcopalian Christianity

of Virginia. Glasgow in herself represented the dual drives of a society that Karen Horney saw as divided and potentially neurotic. She sought to achieve a command of the self by resorting to transcendental philosophy. While she may not have achieved perfect command, she does have an understanding of the uncertainties of her readers, and this gives to her novels great vitality and immediacy for the modern reader, who is only slightly more advanced in the split between traditional Idealism and the scientific and empiric pragmatism of the Machine Age. One finds in Glasgow not only the "smooth sands of decorum," but the abrasive facts of everyday life.

Joan Santas claims that Glasgow did not understand Spinoza, though she gives little reason for saying so. Glasgow herself said that she found Spinoza too "mathematical," (W.W., 173.) and we may well imagine that she preferred a more romantic and heartfelt approach to the problems of philosophy. Santas sees the Southern dream, in which each individual in society finds a place and is cared for, as being related by Glasgow to Spinoza's Kingdom of the Blessed. Such a kingdom in Glasgow could owe as much to the ideas of Plotinus as it does to Spinoza, and more. Plotinus' conception of the unity and harmony of the whole in which each "atom" has a part, the Stoic idea of the cosmopolitan whole, has obvious resemblances to Spinoza's thought. In Plotinus, as in Spinoza, evil or conflict is part of the whole, and

part of each man's learning process. Spinoza, like Plotinus, relied on Platonic Idealism; however, Spinoza's emphasis on Descartian logic and mathematical consistency leads him to a resigned acceptance of duty and custom which is not congenial to Glasgow's thought. Such an acceptance helps to explain why Glasgow found Spinoza to be admirable but not human.

There seems little doubt that Glasgow did seek a settled philosophy based more on the optimism of Plotinus than on the pessimism of Schopenhauer. This philosophy shares with Buddhism a belief in a divinity which can be reached by meditation and by the practice of an impersonal civic virtue. Union with the First Existent of Plotinus as with the Supreme Good of Buddhism takes the proficient beyond the qualified material world to an unqualified Nirvana. It is both a reasoned approach and one made through a mystical response of the heart to the spirit within the created world. Buddhism and Neo-Platonism are in agreement on a number of points. Glasgow's philosophy relies on both. Though the proficients of Buddhism are more withdrawn and more contemplative than Glasgow's sages, they share with them and with the proficients of Neo-Platonism a belief in an ascetic fortitude intended to free the proficient from the demoralizing lusts of the

flesh while it guarantees impartial justice. Monique Parent Frazee's idea that Glasgow created weak men so that strong women could take over for them is a denial of the strength which Glasgow obviously accorded her sages and civilized men, who are representatives of order and compassion in a world torn and distracted. The strength of these men and of others who share their qualities is that they are almost free from the temptations experienced by those around them, and they can offer consolation and encouragement, understanding and example, to those characters like Jenny Blair Archbald, Ada Fincastle, or Roy Timberlake who are "torn by internal disorder." (The Enneads, 60.) Like her characters, Glasgow knew the pull of conflicting desires and the disappointments of love in an imperfect world; but we must assume that she also felt the springtime ecstasies she describes, as well as the quiet joys of her civilized men, in whom, as she says, she put "much of (her) ultimate feeling about life." (C.M., 204.)

Glasgow mentions George Santayana with sympathy in The Woman Within and in her letters. Santayana was a philosopher with whom Glasgow shared a belief in a pragmatic Idealism. Glasgow approves of Santayana's statement that, "a spirit with any wisdom is not over-eager to live at all." (W.W., 180.) In doing so, she shows further evidence of her

extreme sensitivity to the cruelty and suffering she encountered in her personal life and in the lives she observed. Rather than reacting as she thought Ernest Hemingway and others did, with savagery to the thwarted desires of the ego caught between tradition and a reckless and shallow participation in the unclean pleasures of the world, Glasgow preferred the Neo-Platonic way of blessed illumination and civic virtue. Like the Beats and the "New Romantics,"[1] of more recent years who depend heavily on Buddhist philosophy, Glasgow could not be one to box her way out of a tight corner, even figuratively. Those characters in her books who attempt to live by the sword, die by it. Glasgow felt that the heart should be in the intellect and not at the mercy of whims of behavior; the causes of social distress and disorder should be explored and corrected. Her early schooling in liberal democracy and Fabian socialism helps to account for the fact that there is a strain of thought which is sympathetic to the reformist writing of the 1930's in her work. She was always wary, however, of any writer who described only the surface of life, as she thought that Sinclair Lewis did. Glasgow calls him a "nominalist,"[2] and says that he gives too much importance to such things as drugstores and ice cream sodas, while neglecting to write the sort of realistic fiction which aspires to create "a moment of ordinary life imprisoned

in crystal."[3] Doubtless Glasgow is thinking of the crystal globe which, in her own writing, symbolizes the presence of the Ideal in time.

It is because of Glasgow's determination to treat social distress with temperate forbearance and impersonal fortitude that she is able to make a realistic and comprehensive appraisal of its causes. She turns away as a consequence from the Gothic romanticism of Southern writers like William Faulkner or Erskine Caldwell--and in more recent years, of Tennessee Williams, Flannery O'Connor, and Carson McCullers. She felt that a nation which dragged too long in the "mire" of such exaggeration could not endure. She preferred the more buoyant approach of an evolution safeguarded by respectability and enlightened by tradition.

However, it is apparent that Glasgow saw the world as increasingly confused and further and further removed from traditional values. Glasgow found herself in something of an absurdist position of the kind found in The Romantic Comedians, to take one example. Here, the aged Judge Gamaliel Bland Honeywell, originally a bastion of respectability, pursues and wins a young girl who cares mainly for her own gratification. She is an example of the "impetuous cruelty of youth."[4] Judge Honeywell, like other of Glasgow's heroes, forgives the girl and retreats (at least momentarily, for he is something of a roué) to his library, his memories

of an untarnished and sheltered childhood, and a vision in which he is one with "the deep below the deeps of experience . . . the changeless beatitude beneath the shifting cycles of birth and death." (R.C., 342.) The confusion which the Judge feels is typical of that experienced by the absurdist writers of the modern era. Edward Albee states the case when he says:

> A world that can be explained by reasoning, however faulty, is a familiar world. But, in a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. His is an irremediable exile, because he is deprived of memories of a lost homeland as much as he lacks the hope of a promised land to come. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of Absurdity.[5]

Albee quotes Eugene Ionesco to the same purpose:

> Absurd is that which is devoid of purpose . . . . Cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots, man is lost: all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless.[6]

Instead of being determined to destroy, to clear away the rubble of what the absurdists often see as a failed society, Glasgow takes a more patient and reasoned approach which is similar to that taken by Paul Goodman in Growing Up Absurd where he attacks the childishness of members of the Beat Generation who simply reject their inherited civilization without attempting to come to terms with it or improve it. It is an attack which is repeated by Robert A. Hipkiss,

particularly against Beat writer, Jack Kerouac, in Jack Kerouac, Prophet of the New Romanticism.[7] Glasgow would likely have agreed with Goodman's charge against his society, for it reflects a further stage in the social disintegration she recorded. Goodman says:

> Equal to our businessmen, our government and public spokemen have a knack for debasing the noble and making the excellent trivial.[8]

Goodman points in dismay to a number of missed revolutions or causes, many of which Glasgow supported, such as democratic equality of opportunity, regional self-determination, agrarianism, the individuality of free men, brotherhood among men and races, and pacifism.[9] Although Glasgow would have been dismayed by the excesses of the Beats who, in their refusal to conform to a "phony" and highly organized society, largely opted out, she shares a Beat desire for "offhand kindliness." It is also true that in Beyond Defeat, Glasgow, like the Beats, is so dismayed by the absence of the Ideal in the life around her that she creates a world of her own at Hunter's Fare which we might almost call a commune.

Glasgow is a transitional writer. She confronts many of the problems found in the works of modern writers, demanding, in the modern spirit, an unsentimental and ironic appraisal. At the same time the reader may find in her work the verbena fragrance of the Old South, of a past order or

civilization which though evasive was genteel, gracious and courageous. It is to a lost mould of perfection based on the heroic ideals of the past that Glasgow turns in the hope that it contains the seeds of a community more blessed than the society she saw evolving around her. At the same time she turns to Plotinus and to that central radiance of Being which guarantees personal integrity and freedom while it provides illumination and meaning throughout the novels.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

1. Ellen Glasgow, A Certain Measure, An Interpretation of Prose Fiction (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1943) p. 204. Future references to this work will be included in the text of the thesis and will be identified by the letters, C.M.

2. Ellen Glasgow, The Sheltered Life (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1934) p. 165. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, S.L.

3. Plotinus, The Enneads, trans. by Stephen McKenna (London: Faber and Faber, 1969) pp. 622-623. Future references will be included in the text and will be identified as The Enneads.

4. Ellen Glasgow, The Woman Within (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1954) p. 93. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, W.W.

5. Ellen Glasgow, Letters of Ellen Glasgow, selected and edited by Blair Rouse (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958) p. 319. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified as Letters.

6. Louis D. Rubin, Jr., No Place on Earth: Ellen Glasgow, James Branch Cabell and Richmond-in-Virginia (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959) p. 47.

7. Monique Parent Frazee, "Ellen Glasgow as Feminist", in Ellen Glasgow Centennial Essays, ed. M. Thomas Inge (Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1976) p. 185.

8. Ibid., p. 162.

9. Ibid., p. 163.

10. Ibid., p. 185.

11. Ellen Glasgow, Barren Ground (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1925) p. 301. Future references to this work

will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, B.G.

12. Quoted by Dorothy Scury, "Glasgow and the Southern Renaissance," Ellen Glasgow Centennial Essays. Op. cit., p. 59.

13. Ibid.

14. E. Stanly Godbold, Jr., Ellen Glasgow and the Woman Within (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972) p. 299.

15. Ellen Glasgow, "What I Believe," reprinted in America Through Women's Eyes, ed. Mary E. Beard (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1933) p. 546.

16. Ibid., p. 542.

CHAPTER II

1. Marion K. Richard, Ellen Glasgow's Development as a Novelist (Paris: Mouton, 1971) pp. 193-194.

2. Blair Rouse, Ellen Glasgow (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1962) p. 29.

3. Frederick P. W. McDowell, Ellen Glasgow and the Ironic Art of Fiction (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1963) pp. 39, 234.

4. Ibid., p. 209.

5. Joan Foster Santas, Ellen Glasgow's American Dream (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1965) pp. 5-6.

6. Monique Parent Frazee, Ellen Glasgow, Romancière (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1960) p. 266.

7. "Ellen Glasgow as Feminist," op. cit., pp. 186-187.

8. Henri Bergson, quoted by Ben-Ami Scharfstein, The Roots of Bergson's Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943) p. 7.

9. This phrase is used by Roy Timberlake in In This Our Life. Roy says:

> There's nothing to hold by, and even if there were . . . oh, I'd hate it! I hate everything I used to believe in. I hate all the things I've been told were the right things. Nobody, not even you [her father, Asa] told me the truth.

Ellen Glasgow, In This Our Life (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1941) p. 434. Future references to this work will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, I.T.L.

10. Karen Horney, The Neurotic Personality of Our Time (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1937) p. 288.

11. George H. Sabine, A History of Political Thought (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961) p. 605.

12. Ibid., p. 606.

13. See "The Search for Truth," in The Woman Within. Glasgow also notes an involvement with Fabian socialism.

14. Glasgow uses this phrase in relation to Tucker, the first of her civilized older men, who appears in The Deliverance. She writes:

> but Tucker was a civilized soul in a world which by and large, is not, and may not ever become civilized. His true companions in my books are General Archbald in The Sheltered Life and John Fincastle in Vein of Iron. This rare pattern of mankind has always attracted me as a novelist. I like to imagine how the world would appear if human beings were really civilized, not by machinery alone, but through that nobler organ which has been called, the heart in the intellect. (C. M., 38-39.)

15. This can be assumed from the great number of names of writers and philosophers which dot the letters and the novels, almost casually introduced at times.

15a. See Sherman Paul, Emerson's Angle of Vision, Man and Nature in American Experience (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1952) pp. 72, 108, 153.

16. Paul Henry, S. J., "The Place of Plotinus in the History of Thought," "Introduction" (1962) to Plotinus, The Enneads, trans. Stephen Mackenna (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1969) p. lxiii.

17. See Letters, p. 191.

18. See Henry, pp. lxiv ff., and Inge, Christian Mysticism (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1925).

19. W. R. Inge, The Philosophy of Plotinus (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918) pp. 81-82. Inge also comments here that the influence of the Eastern religions came down to the Christian church from Clement.

20. W. R. Inge, "Religion," The English Genius, A Survey of the English Achievement and Character, ed., Hugh Kingsmill (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1938). Inge comments that, "It is a remarkable fact that the mind of our countrymen has always found Greek thought more congenial than Latin," and adds further that, "Wordsworth is one of the great religious poets of all time; to understand The Prelude is to understand Plato." P. 11 ff.

It is apparent from notes scribbled into Glasgow's own copy of The Select Works of Plotinus, ed., Thomas Taylor (London: Bell, 1895) that she was aware of similarities in thought between Plotinus, the Upanishads, Pascal and Christianity. In her own library Glasgow had besides the "Dialogues" and the "Phaedon" of Plato: The Essence of Plotinus, based on a translation by Stephen Mackenna, compiled by Grace H. Turnbull (New York: Oxford, 1934); Select Works of Plotinus, trans., T. Taylor (London: Black, 1817) uncut; Select Works of Plotinus, with an Introduction by Thomas Taylor, tr. (London: Bell, 1895); Porphyry the Philosopher to His Wife Marcella, trans., A Zimmern (London: Redway, 1896); Two Treatises of Proclus, the Platonic Successor, trans., Thomas Taylor (London: printed for the translator, 1833). For this information and for autographs of Glasgow's comments, I am indebted to Cynthia Sinnott, Senior Assistant in Rare Books, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

21. Op. cit., pp. 541, 546.

22. In speaking of Christopher Blake in The Deliverance, Glasgow says: "It seemed to him sitting there in the shadow, that he felt--as he had felt before in grave moments--the revolutions of the wheel on which he was bound." Op. cit., p. 484. It is likely that Glasgow's reference is to the Buddhist Wheel of Life, or of Fate, although it has to be remembered that all life, in Plotinus, circles around the central radiance in a wheel of becoming which finds its

true centre away from the world of sense. The Buddhist Wheel can be defined as the repetitive life of the Soul bound to a vicious circle of grasping and loss, like the evil soul in Plotinus. The circle is, "the fate of all ignorant, grasping beings who pursuing life and pleasure, simply go round and round on the 'wheel of becoming' with its inevitable and frustrating alternation of joy and agony, success and failure." Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia, Vol. 4 (New York: Funk and Wagnall's Inc., 1973) p. 323. For Glasgow's enthusiastic appreciation of Buddhist thought, see Letters, 334, and W. W., 174.

23. Glasgow's civilized men are named above in Footnote 14. To these one might add Asa Timberlake of In This Our Life and Beyond Defeat, but with reservations occasioned by Asa's return to Glasgow's earlier romanticism in which Asa is directly involved.

24. See above, p. 27, where Plotinus describes the ugly soul.

CHAPTER III

1. The quotation is from Schopenhauer, and is used by Glasgow as the preface to Book II of The Descendant. Ellen Glasgow, The Descendant (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1897) p. 37. Schopenhauer held the Plotinian idea that the involvement of the will in the pleasures of the world leads to self-centred involvement in sensual pleasure, unless the person involved turned away from evil, realizing the error of his ways.

2. Ellen Glasgow, The Descendant (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1897) pp. 115-116. Future references to this work will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, T.D.

3. Ellen Glasgow, The Wheel of Life (New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1906) p. 4. Future references to this work will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, W.L.

4. From Plotinus. See above, p. 28.

5. Ellen Glasgow, Phases of an Inferior Planet (London: William Heineman, 1898) p. 292. Future references to this work will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, P.I.P.

6. Blair Rouse, "Ellen Glasgow's Civilized Men," in Ellen Glasgow Centennial Essays, op. cit., p. 155.

7. Ellen Glasgow, The Voice of the People (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1900) p. 396. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, V.P.

8. Ellen Glasgow, The Ancient Law (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1908) p. 263. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, A.L.

9. Ellen Glasgow, The Romance of a Plain Man (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909) p. 459. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, R.P.M.

10. Ellen Glasgow, They Stooped to Folly, A Comedy of Morals (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1922) p. 212. Future references to this work will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, T.S.F.

11. See page 119 of Beyond Defeat, where Asa has a vision of the "encircled moment" in a "sleep which is not sleep." Vision and its consequences are discussed below more thoroughly in Chapter V . Asa's vision is philosophically a part of the "winged light" which pierces the shadows and sweeps "unerringly, across the wide arch of sky," in the final sentence of the novel.

12. Sabine, in A History of Political Theory, op. cit., says:

> (Mill) achieved a considerable degree of sympathy and appreciation, but hardly a critical understanding, from an antithetical philosophy derived from German idealism which he associated with Wordsworth. In the first third of the nineteenth century this philosophy was represented in England chiefly by the rather formless metaphysical speculation and the personal influence of Coleridge. . . . With rare intellectual perceptivity Mill sensed in Coleridge's philosophy

> a regard for the institutional nature of society and for the historical evolution of institutions which he felt to be lacking in the tradition of British Empiricism. (p. 706)

13. Ibid., p. 605.

14. Mill was attracted through Coleridge by the institutional nature of society. (note 12, above.) Glasgow is really following him in this. In "I Believe," an essay printed in I Believe, The Personal Philosophies of Certain Eminent Men and Women of Our Time, ed. Clifton Fadiman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1939) Glasgow says:

> And I dislike, too, the fetish that science has made of natural law, as if all things natural were excellent. It is not that I deny the ordinances of Heaven . . . .
>
> it is more agreeable, I confess, to regard oneself, not as a biological accident, but either as a thought in the mind of God or as a unit with an appointed harmonious place in the vast rhythm of creation. (p. 107.)

15. Ellen Glasgow, Life and Gabriella, The Story of a Woman's Courage (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1916) p. 395. Future references to this book will be included in the text and will be identified by the letters, L.G.

16. William James, "Pragmatism," in Readings in Western Civilization, ed. George H. Knoles and Rixford K. Snyder (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1951) p. 717.

17. This is discussed more fully in Chapter IV.

18. See page 165 of The Sheltered Life, op. cit. This vision is discussed more fully in Chapter V.

19. See above, p. 47.

20. For an example, see The Woman Within, op. cit., p. 27 ff.

21. Glasgow concludes with the passage quoted in footnote 14 above:

> Nevertheless it is more agreeable, I confess, to regard oneself, not as a biological

> accident, but either as a thought in the mind of God or as a unit with an appointed harmonious place in the vast rhythm of creation. (I believe, p. 107.)

The belief expressed in "I Believe" that the moral order is not imposed by "supernatural decree" but has been "slowly evolving from the mind of man," can be accommodated both to evolutionary philosophy and to Neo-Platonism.

22. Simple goodness is discussed more fully in Chapter V.

23. In speaking of Virginia in A Certain Measure, Glasgow says:

> . . . and so, in this minor tragedy of a woman's life, we see the effect of the years wearing away and obliterating a single dream of identity, an individual illusion of happiness, which is encircled by the wider curve and sweep of time, as time wears away and obliterates yet one other discarded mould of perfection. (C.M., 96.)

24. Glasgow asks of negroes what she asks of all men, that they awaken to the evasive idealism holding them prisoner, and with fortitude, explore the demands of the ideal in terms of the present. Parry has her respect for a time because he aspires to become a lawyer. However, when put in jail, he lacks the fortitude to come back and try again. Joan Santas, who claims that Parry has "his full share of emotions, capabilities and aspiration" as a person who "deserves full membership rights in any human community," (Santas, op. cit., p. 114.) might consider that Asa sees other defeated souls around him in the white community as having only a limited reflection of the beaten look in Parry's face. In Barren Ground, Glasgow refers to the negro as being "by temperament a happiness hunter," (B.G., 455) but it is Dorinda's servant and friend, Fluvanna, a negress, who by dint of close association with Dorinda, has become conscientious and industrious, and who succeeds in driving the other negroes, "inveterate pleasure seekers," to productive work on the farm. It would appear that negroes have, for Glasgow, special problems, even though the demand that they become civilized is put upon them as upon all men.

CHAPTER IV

1. McDowell, op. cit., p. 59.

2. W.T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1952) p. 271.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 269.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 270.

7. Glasgow tended to be an Anglophile, especially during her early career. In A Certain Measure she speaks of "rustic farmers, grafted from a robust Anglo-Saxon stock." She adds that the South has a "long inheritance of English tradition and culture behind it," and wonders why, with such an inheritance "the South (especially Virginia) (provided) almost every mortal dwelling, except a retreat for the imagination of man?" (C.M., 133.) Glasgow concludes that much of this heritage has gone to waste in the Protestant Episcopal Church which has degenerated in the soft climate of the South "to a healthful moral exercise and a comfortable sense of Divine favour." (C.M., 136.) Later, in reference to Barren Ground, Glasgow speaks favourably of both "the Scotch-Irish and the English conquerors of the wilderness." (C.M., 156.) In One Man in His Time, as we see later in the chapter, Glasgow relies on an assembly of English or Anglo-Saxon origin to give fair play to the hero of the novel. There are many instances in the novels and elsewhere of Glasgow's interest in and sympathy for her English heritage and for the English literature which nurtured her faith in the Ideal.

8. Horney, op. cit., p. 285.

9. Ellen Glasgow, "Heroes and Monsters," The Saturday Review of Literature, (May 4, 1935), p. 3.

10. Ibid., p. 4.

11. Ibid.

12. C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, Vol. IX, A History of the South, ed. Stephenson and Coulter (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1951) p. 157.

13. Ibid., p. 168.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 436.

17. Jones, op. cit., p. 140.

18. Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, Daniel Aaron, The Structure of American History (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965) p. 287.

19. Ibid., p. 261.

20. Vann Woodward, op. cit., p. 175.

21. Ibid.

22. The Structure of American History, op. cit., p. 261 ff.

23. McDowell, op. cit., p. 60.

24. Ibid., p. 57.

25. Vann Woodward, op. cit., p. 175 ff.

26. McDowell, op. cit., p. 59.

27. Ibid., pp. 56, 57.

28. The problems of the farmer and the battle of the Ideal to bring them to resolution is presented in a number of Glasgow's novels of the agricultural South. We have already discussed the fortitude of Dorinda's successful attempt to overcome the broomsedge of the dying farmland of Queen Elizabeth county. In The Deliverance Christopher Blake wins a victory, again by means of the Ideal, over both the land and the elemental forces of his own nature, as will be discussed in the following chapter. In The Miller of Old Church, the miller, Abel Revercomb, is one of a group of country folk who draw their living from the land. Abel educates himself and "farms diligently according to improved methods, and goes beyond his class to become financially prosperous and politically influential." Abel represents, as he does so, a more egalitarian democracy than he finds in his home district of Virginia. The problems of the land

concern Glasgow's final novel, Beyond Defeat, where the land helps to produce the moral Idealism contained in Kate Oliver's simple goodness.

29. McDowell, op. cit., p. 140.

30. Ellen Glasgow, The Builders (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1919) p. 228. Future references to this work will be included in the text, and will be identified by the letters, T.B.

31. McDowell, op. cit., p. 140.

32. Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York: Random House, 1948) p. 271.

CHAPTER V

1. American Political Tradition, op. cit., p. 39.

2. Ellen Glasgow, The Deliverance (New York: Doubleday, Page, and Co., 1920) p. 80. Future references to this novel will be included in the text.

3. The influence of Wuthering Heights is apparent in this gesture; Maria is like the young Cathy Earnshaw who attempts to educate Heathcliff's surly son, Hareton. Of the connection between the two novels Glasgow speaks when she says in the Introduction to The Deliverance:

> In looking back on The Deliverance after thirty-four years, I can but realize that the theme was not completely developed. . . . For the pure romancer, intuition may be all that is necessary, especially when, as with Emily Bronte, it is the intuition of genius. But I was never a pure romancer any more than I was a pure realist. (C.M., 27.)

4. No Place on Earth; Ellen Glasgow, James Branch Cabell and Richmond-in Virginia, op. cit., p. 46.

5. Ellen Glasgow Centennial Essays, op. cit., p. 185.

6. This is the charm which cloaks the sort of selfishness we see in Mrs. Gay of The Miller of Old Church who secures her own position at the expense of her son and everyone else around her. This charm of manner also produced the isolated and rejected spinsters which appear in a number of Glasgow's novels. Some of these have been carried by charm to the point of folly, so that, like Aunt Angela Wilde of The Wheel of Life, they yield "unmarried . . . to a lover." (W.L., 23.) In Aunt Angela's case this has meant that she has not "reached the fulfillment of a singularly charming beauty, she (has) condemned herself to the life of a solitary prisoner within four walls." Such charm, then, merely bolsters a cruel and inhumane virtue based on custom and the double standard, for one cannot imagine that Aunt Angela's lover relegated himself to a similar cloistered experience. Charm can also mean the rejection of the woman of unusual talent, like Aunt Kesiah of The Miller of Old Church, who has desired to be a painter in her youth but has been stopped because a Virginia lady cannot go to Paris and paint nudes. Aunt Kesiah is flat-chested and lacks charm of manner. In her resigned middle age she is left to muse that the indignities which she has suffered cannot really be remedied because:

> in the countless novels that acclaimed hysterically the wrongs of her sex . . . beneath the hysterics . . . the newer woman who grasped successfully the right to live, was as lavishly endowed as her elder sister who had petitioned merely for the privilege to love. The modern heroine could still charm even after she had ceased to desire to. Neither in the new fiction nor in the old was there a place for the unhappy woman who desired to charm but could not . . . . (M.O.C., 80.)

And then, of course, there are the women who, like Eva Birdsong or Virginia, continue to be charming and evasive in spite of a need for straight thinking and straight talk. Virginia, Glasgow tells us, has "made the way too easy for others; she had never exacted of them; she had never held them to the austerity of their ideals." (Virginia, 444.)

Stanley Timberlake also has a charm of appearance and of manner, except when someone stands between her and "something she (wants)." Stanley's charm appeals more to Lavinia than does Roy's "hardness," which is the result of Roy's "courage, truthfulness, . . . tolerant sense of humor, (and) loyalty to impersonal ends," qualities which put her in company with Glasgow's Idealists.

CONCLUSION

1. The phrase comes from Robert A. Hipkiss, Jack Kerouac, Prophet of the New Romanticism (Lawrence, Kansas: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1976.)

2. Ellen Glasgow, "Literary Realism or Nominalism; An Unpublished Essay." Edited by Luther Y. Gore. American Literature, XXXIV (March, 1962), p. 74.

3. Ibid., p. 78.

4. Ellen Glasgow, The Romantic Comedians (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1926) p. 341.

5. Edward Albee, "Which Theatre is the Absurd One," New York Times Magazine (February 25, 1962), p. 31.

6. Ibid.

7. However, Kerouac, who is represented by his hero, Ray Smith in The Dharma Bums, withdraws in the novel to a mountain peak where he acts the part of a Buddhist saint, who leaves the world to realize more fully his unity with all existence and to meditate on the Supreme Being which, as in Plotinus, is Everything and Nothing. This ascetic withdrawal from the unclean pleasures of the world, which Kerouac tells us he has tried before, results in a universal compassion. The act of withdrawal for the Buddhist saint and for Ray Smith is an act of prayer for all mankind. Therefore, Kerouac tells us that Ray is visited one night "in a meditation vision" by Avalokitesvara, the Hearer and Answerer of Prayer, who tells Ray that he is "empowered to remind people that they are utterly free." (Jack Kerouac, The Dharma Bums (New York: The Viking Press, 1958) p. 239.) Later, as Ray thinks of all the people in the world, his eyes fill with tears and he says to himself, "'Okay world . . . I'll love ya.'" (The Dharma Bums, 239.) Ray Smith is like Glasgow's sages to an extent: he feels universal compassion; he is more interested in brotherly love than in competition and success; his life is lived as an example to others, which is apparent when he tells us that Japhy Ryder, Ray's Buddhist companion in the novel, is the new hero of American society. It is also apparent that Kerouac means to set an example when he writes:

> But there was a wisdom in it all, as you'll see if you take a walk some night on a suburban street and pass house after house on both sides of the street each with the lamplight of the living room shining golden, and inside the little blue square of the television, each living family riveting its attention on probably one show; nobody talking; silence in the yards; dogs barking at you because you pass on human feet instead of on wheels. You'll see what I mean when it begins to appear like everybody in the world is soon going to be thinking the same way and the Zen Lunatics have long joined dust, laughter on their dust lips. (The Dharma Bums, 104.)

Perhaps Monique Parent Frazee would see Ray Smith as a weak man; however, he was not created by a female writer.

8. Paul Goodman, Growing Up Absurd (New York: Random House, 1960) p. 100.

9. Ibid., pp. 220-221.

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