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WEALTHY CHARACTERS
IN
FITZGERALD'S NOVELS

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INTRODUCTION.

A. Motivation of the subject matter.

On reading Fitzgerald's novels one is inevitably struck by his concern with wealthy people. In everyone of his novels the heroes and heroines are always associated with facts of money, with having it or needing it. Some of the characters are fabulously rich themselves. And it seems that the problem of wealth is the major concern of Fitzgerald's work.

We know that all his life Fitzgerald suffered from not having enough money. For he liked to live expensively and frequently he overworked himself in order to get the amusements and the luxuries of the very rich. He was afraid of poverty, and he hated the poor because of their helplessness. To him poverty meant ugliness. Working people were vulgar and dull; they had no imagination, their dwellings were awful, their amusements lacked glamour, they gathered in places

where they 'can take a nice girl', which means,

of course, that everyone has become equally harmless, timid and uninteresting through lack of money and imagination. (1)

He did not like the wealthy either, but he admired them and sought their companionship. He considered the rich a very different kind of persons, that had a different kind of morality and different kinds of amusements and preoccupations. Even if the rich people chose to enjoy the same kinds of entertainments as the poor, if they danced the same steps as the people with "hyphenated occupations", their own charm enhanced their dancing, and they performed "with a certain dignity the movements so horribly burlesqued by clerk and chorus girl all over the country". (2)

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1. The beautiful and Damned, p. 61
 2. Ibid. p: 159

Once he stated in a few expressive words his personal view of the rich:

The rich possess and enjoy early and it does something to them, makes them soft where we are hard, cynical where we are trustful, in a way that unless you are rich it is very difficult to understand. They think deep in their hearts, that they are better than we are because we had to discover the compensations and refuges of life for ourselves. (3)

Moreover, it is not merely a moral difference Fitzgerald found in the rich, self-confidence and grooming gave their physical appearance some unmistakable charm:

... the upper-class men who passed him on the street knew without being told that he was a rich boy and had gone to one of the best schools. (4)

The rich have not only economic independence, they enjoy social independence as well. They have freedom from fixed conventions. Rich people establish for themselves another kind of morality, quite different from the one that society generally imposes.

3. F. Scott Fitzgerald The Diamond as Big as the Ritz and Other Stories. p.p. 139-140

4. Ibid. p. 141

Consequently the lower moral classes are formed by the poor men, because great riches is above immorality.

Fitzgerald saw the decline of national morality that in the 1920's made quick accumulation of wealth possible. There were in those years fabulous fortunes of some people who duplicated their money overnight. Almost every Sunday the society columns of newspapers carried accounts of wealthy young people who were enjoying the expensive pastimes of the very rich. In the same papers the financial section regularly reported the mysterious appearance of the Gatsby-like figures, who had suddenly emerged from the West with millions of dollars at their command. Fitzgerald borrowed some material from newspapers for his fiction. His friends knowing his interest in success stories, also helped him to collect these news, which he so skilfully used in his work.

Wealth appears in Fitzgerald's novels and in his work in general in many forms. Sometimes he portrayed wealth in terms of fantasy or ridicule; an enor-

mous diamond, a whole mountain top, is destroyed by his owner when his illegitimate ownership becomes known (in his short story "A Diamond as Big as the Ritz"); a sick heiress buys her way to health by marrying a psychiatrist (in his novel Tender Is The Night). Although most of his life Fitzgerald was envious of the rich because they could buy everything, even the girl they fancied, on reading his novels one gets the feeling that money after all does not buy anything but tragedy and remorse.

It is very interesting to observe Fitzgerald's treatment of his rich characters, to elicit the reason why they fail after all at the end, to find out what is the motivation of their ambition, of their desire for big money and how it works on them.

It is important to point out that Fitzgerald was not interested in economics or economical problems, still less in social injustices. He exploited the theme of wealth in his fiction because he was fascinated by it all his life, but just from a human point of view, without any social tendency or criti-

cal purpose.

B. Social background: industrialization and progress.

A brief description of the social panorama of his time will help to understand his fiction better, as it was so deeply rooted in the contemporary American life and aspirations in the years immediately following the first World War.

The 1920's were the years characterized by and criticized for the phenomenon of America's industrial wealth and its spiritual poverty. What mattered was prosperity, money, physical well-being. Enormous fortunes had been amassed by common people, by men who had never cared for intellectual values, which were not indispensable to reach a high standing in society.

Tremendous growth in industry had begun in the decades that followed the Civil War. Within half a century big business came to dominate the social life. Industrial society substituted agrarian society. And by the beginning of the twentieth century the United States had become a great industrial po

wer. and had begun competition with Germany and Bri
tain.

The factors which had given impulse to this growth in industry and economic power were many, and among the most important ones it is worth mentioning freedom of trade, the absence of restrictive laws, the liberty of exploiting the natural resources and the right to establish organizations, as well as the principle of opportunity for every citizen.

By 1900 what had formerly been a land of farmers and villages was increasingly becoming a land of cities and roaring industrial towns. And the general standard of living in the United States showed considerable improvement during the years 1900-1940.

At the beginning of the twentieth century enormous fortunes were concentrated in the hands of a few. The rapid changes in industrialism brought many problems, among them serious conflicts between labour and capital, wretched living conditions for many and privileged ones for a few.

Rich people, on the other hand, had more money.

than they knew what to do with. There was a competition among them to see who could toss it about most superbly. In New York and Newport rich people organized splendid dinners where a hundred people or more were served in a few hours. It required, of course, lots of servants. Some of the extravagant parties organized by the millionaires lasted several days. It was fashionable for the wealthy Americans to travel a lot and bring exotic things from their voyages. In their mansions one could find special places for tea, maybe a building in Japanese style, with Japanese service and an exotic garden in front of it.

It was a symbol of distinction that their children were educated at home with teachers from Harvard. Young men just graduated from Harvard could easily get a position "in one of the marble mansions of Newport as tutor for the son of the family". (5)

The period of reform about 1900 to 1916 under the government of Theodore Roosevelt and later of Woodrow Wilson, is known in American history as the 5. Frederick Lewis Allen, The Big Change. p. 33

"progressive Era". In those years the population of the United States enjoyed freedom and material prosperity. And the prosperity had tended to extend through the ranks of society and to improve the living conditions of many. Roosevelt speeches about the "malefactors of wealth" were not economic but moral. He tried to raise the moral standards of the business world, to augment salaries and to get better living conditions for working people.

World War I (1914-1918) was thought by the majority of Americans to be the last one, and it was believed that victory could bring a new day of universal freedom and democracy.

The necessity for industrial products inherent to the war impulsed the growth of productivity to such a degree that the heights it reached had never been dreamed of before. So when the war was over an era of prosperity spread over the United States. The United States were the world's greatest creditor. The experiences of the war, which had stimulated the industrial growth of the country, had caused the Ame-

ricans to become aware of their own happy destiny; to them the age seemed buoyant and challenging. An unprecedented number of Americans were convinced that the attained prosperity must go on for ever, and it seemed almost unpatriotic to throw doubts upon the possibility of their increasing welfare. Most Americans had wonderful dreams of becoming astonishingly rich, of living in marvelous palaces and having lots of wonderful cars, of enjoying the pleasure of endless leisure on such glamorous places as Palm Beach, for ever free of hard work and poverty.

In January, 1920 the prohibition amendment, the 18th amendment to the Constitution, went into effect. It established the total prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcohol. A principal argument for prohibition had been to promote the moral and material condition of the poor. Everybody expected that the prohibition was to put an end once and for all to the era of alcoholic drinking which afflicted America. But the result was the opposite: drinking became heavier. Evasion of prohibition became mainly

a crime of the upper middle classes, and because they would not extend their criminal activities beyond the purchase of an illicit bottle, a great organization grew up to supply them with high priced liquor. And so bootleggers came into life and became the best money makers of the moment. Once the law had been broken nothing could refrain the malefactors from carrying on their remunerative business. A period of murder and terror began.

The president of the United States, the handsome Warren C. Harding was not able to improve anything, for he had not intellectual or moral force. When he died he was succeeded by Calvin Coolidge, who was honest, careful and prudent, but he did not show more capacity to cope with the dreadful situation. Under their government the newspapers were full of scandals, crimes, disasters and human dramas.

There was a great need for inspiring leadership. Theodore Roosevelt would have known how to face the situation. Woodrow Wilson would have sensed the responsibilities of the age and would have expressed

them so as to have influenced men's minds. But Roosevelt and Wilson were both dead.

People, who had had enough of high caused and noble sacrifices decided to take things easy and enjoy themselves. There was a tremendous amount of trivial amusement. Apart from this thirst for pleasure, there was a general desire, in the 1920's, to shake off the restrains that puritanism had maintained over youthful impulses since the establishment of the Pilgrims in America. It brought the failure of the old moral codes.

The old generation failed to understand the younger, and consequently communication between the two generations failed, too. The postwar reaction of the young people took a special force: they thought of themselves as a generation who had been condemned to go through the hell of war because of the mistakes of their elders, who were not to be trusted anymore. So they revolted against everything.

By 1920 the rebellion against puritanism was wide and obvious. In some short years women had changed

unrecognizably in appearance as well as in behavior. Modesty had ceased to be a feminine quality. Women took jobs, they smoked and drank, they enjoyed freely the society of the opposite sex. A playful attitude toward sex was adopted among young people. A more tolerant attitude toward divorce could be perceived, and, indeed, toward extramarital affairs, mostly among young people who considered themselves sophisticated.

Together with the general revolution of customs there was also a wave of religious scepticism. All the moral values of the past were questioned.

The 1920's has been given different names, some people called it a "party"; others called it " the Era of Wonderful Nonsense", or "the Jazz Age". Gertrude Stein called the generation of the 1920's, somewhat misleadingly, "the lost generation" - Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos, Lewis and the rest. Yet they were anything but lost, in the sense of being in uncertainty or doubt.

The general mood was not frustration, on the con-

trary, it was stimulating. In the world of arts there was a feeling that now at last, one could shake off the traditional restraints and could tell the truth. It was the time when American writers could think it possible to make a major work in literature out of American experience.

C. Fitzgerald - the historian.

Fitzgerald has been considered one of the true representatives of the "Jazz Age". He helped to perpetuate the image of the twenties with his fiction. He was the main "historian" of the new type of emerging *débutantes*, and much of his early fiction is devoted to a romantic portrayal of their adventures (a special chapter in his first novel This Side of Paradise, the short story "Bernice Bobs Her Hair", etc.). Fitzgerald's *débutantes* are faithful and accurate descriptions of the wealthy, privileged upper middle class girls of his time. In previous years young girls were quite different from the *débutante* of the 1920's. A young lady spent most of her time at home. She was taught to play piano, to dance, to

be graceful and delicate and to accept to be married to someone of her own class even though she scarcely knew him. She was taught to be delicate in her manners and in her dressing. She was educated to be a submissive, helpless creature that had to be worshipped. She was constantly watched and criticized by her own society. Society and religion restricted her freedom. She scarcely went out of her house, and when she did it was to go to church, to a party, to the theatre but always escorted by someone of her relatives or elders.

After the first World War the débutantes shortened her dresses, bobbed her hair, smoked, drank, went around with her masculine friends with whom she talked loudly and freely. She had utterly revolted against her elder's puritanic conceptions, that women had suffered as an unavoidable chastisement. The new débutante wanted to be free and broke the old prejudices. She became a flirt, shaking the old moral codes and establishing new ones that pleased her better. In This Side of Paradise, Rosalinde smokes, drinks punch and is frequently kissed by her admirers without re-

serves. Amory and Rosalind kiss when they have just exchanged a few phrases after meeting for the first time, because he says he is afraid of a girl until he has kissed her.

Cecilia, notwithstanding her extreme youthfulness, summarizes a girl's aspirations in the most desarming and straight description, when she says to her sister Rosalind on the day of her début:

You are glad so you can get married and live on Long Island with the fast younger married set. You want life to be a chain of flirtation with a man for every link. (6)

And yet the prevailing mood was not so much one of abandonment as of noisy light-hearted gaiety. There was an attitude of letting oneself be carried along by the mad hilarity of the jazz, living only for the excitement of the evening, without worrying about the future. The young generation spent money as speedily as possible and tried to laugh at everything.

6. This Side of Paradise. p. 155

This disposition is remarkably portrayed in Fitzgerald's fiction, especially in the stories collected under the title of Tales of the Jazz Age. He has often been called the "laureate of the Jazz Age" (7). He is, indeed, considered a kind of fictional historian of the years following the first World War, when there was such a marked change in American manners, in the general view of life.

Although his work is valuable as documentary evidence of his age, it must be said that he never simply reported experience. He always sought to recreate experience imaginatively. The people, the events, the objects, the convictions, the amusements on which his imagination worked were profoundly American and of his time. His special field of work was the great story of American wealth. Arthur Mizener emphasized three elements that made his work so akin to real life:

7. Alfred Kazin, F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Man and His Work. The World Publishing Co., 1951 p.23.

There is in his mature work an almost historical objectivity, produced by his acute sense of the pastness of the past; there is also a Proustian minuteness of recollection of the feelings and attitudes which made up the experience as it was lived; and there is finally, cast over both the historically apprehended event and the personal recollection embedded in it, a glow of pathos, the pathos of the irretrievableness of a part of oneself. (8)

More than any other American writer of his time Fitzgerald had the sense of living in history. He did his best to sketch the color of every passing year: its distinctive slang, its dance steps, its songs, the sort of clothes its people wore and the kind of emotions they felt. He had a note-book, where, like Richard Caramel in The Beautiful and Damned, he made notes alphabetically arranged of every new event, or song, or clothes.

On the other hand his work was hailed as a banner. This Side of Paradise was popular for about ten years like a popular song. College boys really read it, and found in the hero an example they would like to imitate. There were young men who saw in Fitzgerald

a hero of art. He was the spokesman and the symbol of his own generation, for his writings were full of its own illusions and disillusionments. He knew his subject matter thoroughly and at first hand.

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD- THE ROMANTIC REALIST.

A. Literary background:

The new generation of American writers found themselves born in an atmosphere which had no spiritual resources in the struggle for survival. Life had no meaning except the pursuit of wealth. The American society was spiritually poor. Intellectuals did not find support in the society of the 1920's. On the contrary they were criticized for their inability to earn money or to undertake some kind of business. The national heroes of the day were men like John D. Rockefeller and Carnegie, who from humble uneducated boys had risen to the richest men in the world. They described themselves as graduates of the school of "Hard Knocks" where they had learned rude lessons that had enabled them to become great.

Good writers were faced with the alternative of deciding whether they were to do "good" writing that would satisfy their own conscience, or "cheap" writing, which would bring them plenty of money. In order

to make a living many young American writers had to work for expensive magazines. They did not produce the work of art they aspired to, instead they wrote just to satisfy the demands of the editor and the reading people. It is well known that Fitzgerald wrote many stories for expensive magazines, under economical pressure. As a result their quality was not what could have been expected from him. He himself even confessed that many of those stories were not exactly good but rather superficial, stories that amused but had no real artistic value.

On the other hand the intellectuals refused to accept the platitudes of the middle class. They had no respect for traditions and tried out any new suggestion that would help explain the nature of man. They tried to find out new ideas, beliefs, convictions, to find some way out of the stagnation. They were open to every new influence that came along, for in most cases there was no intellectual experience as a measure for validity.

In the 1920's the writers and artists went to isolated places, far from industrial life. Chicago, up-

state New York, Connecticut and Cape Cod were important centres of bohemian life.

In order to avoid the pressure of society, many intellectuals went to Europe where they could develop their activities; they were unable to work at home. In America intellectual work was considered useless and unpractical. Some of them went to England, some to Germany, but most of them preferred France, for France was considered the center of literature and art. The exodus to Europe was also a reaction against puritanism. The intellectuals hated puritanism for having suppressed a normal life.

The artists tried to unify themselves in circles. It gave them strength to strive against the general indifference. There was a spirit of mutual interest among them, and an atmosphere of stimulation brought up by the exchange of ideas, plans, expectations. Portrayals of literary friends were very common among writers. There were editors of avantgarde magazines and journals who offered encouragement to new writers on the experimental prose and poetry. VANITY FAIR,

a very important magazine, may be mentioned as an example. It offered interesting reports about the customs of the time; published serious discussions on intellectual topics and other subjects. Its contributors were well-known writers like D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Ezra Pound, Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser and Virginia Woolf.

The 1920's was a time of cultural change in America characterized by an outburst of creative activity. Among the artists there was an exciting sense of creating something new. World War I had re-established the significance of art itself. The artists were seeking new forms of expression.

Some intellectuals were interested in Marxist philosophy, for what was new in it, and they often thought of capitalism as inhuman. But they were anarchists at heart and resented all forms of systematic intrusion upon their private life. So that in fact they could not accept the Marxist dogma.

The writers of the 1920's did not borrow from the tradition, on the contrary, they forced tradition

to give them precisely what they wanted from it. The restless desire for the new was always motivated by their distrust of the old. Form, then was a major concern. The forms were newly inspired, different and newly seen.

The writers participated actively in the great changes of the period. And the thing that unified all of them was a background of similar experience. All of them were intensively dedicated to the practice of literature.

Most of the writers of the twenties and early thirties were realists. Each recorded with fidelity the events that occurred in his time and place. Some of them portrayed with brutal frankness social injustice, low morality, intellectual dishonesty and material vulgarity that run throughout the nation; such were Theodore Dreiser, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Sinclair Lewis, John Dos Passos, John Steinbeck and others.

There was a minority of American writers that were interested in the growth of human character rather

than in the degeneration of the social system. They interpreted national life more constructively. Such were Willa Cather, Elen Glasgow, Thomas Wolf and others.

Fitzgerald remained faithful to the long-standing realistic tradition in America, which allowed him to extract and to reflect the unique quality of his time, to depict the life-scene and the life-characters which surrounded him truly and yet romantically. For he was essentially a romantic. He conceived life as a romantic adventure in which he had to be a hero, consecrated to a high ideal. According to Lionel Trilling Fitzgerald was

perhaps the last notable writer to affirm the Romantic fantasy, descended from the Renaissance, of personal ambition and heroism, of life committed to, or thrown away for, some ideal of self. (1)

Fitzgerald believed that the author's purpose should be to express emotions he had lived through; his aim should not be to give a mere account of real facts, but to involve them in romance. As he began his li-

1. 1. Alfred Kazin, F. Scott Fitzgerald - The Man and His Work p. 201 (a collection of essays,)

terary career he started developing his romantic conception that the writer must be a man of action, who experiences his material on himself. Not because he has not imagination, not for lack of ideas, but so that he can write about it more intensely. And in fact Fitzgerald never attained a higher degree of mastery in describing the most delicate inner emotions than when he drew them from his own experience.

Fitzgerald's romantic attitude is manifested in the portrayal of his heroes and heroines. He idealizes youth. His heroes are young and they have an illusioned view of life which is produced by an imaginative fusion of the familiar and the strange, the known and the unknown, the real and the ideal. All Fitzgerald's heroes and heroines desire to live as if they were beyond time. Time is the real enemy in the romantic world, because it kills youth, which is the best thing we get from life. Fitzgerald once wrote: "After all life has not much to offer except youth" (2). That is why his characters think that

2. Andrew Turnbull, *The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald*. p. 414.

the present has to be perpetuated, for the passing of time destroys the wonderful dreams of beauty and love. This is the romantic flight from reality to an ideal world where the laws of nature do not apply. If they could arrest time, perpetuate the moment, they could enjoy forever the splendour of youth. Sometimes they place their hopes in a future full of dazzling promises which are never fulfilled. His heroes, like Gatsby dream of

the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us, but that's no matter - tomorrow we will run faster, stretch our arms farther. And one fine morning - (3)

Here time is idealized as an opportunity about to be realized.

Fitzgerald's romantic characters look back with a sense of nostalgia or regret for the misused time, they are filled with remorse for their wasted youth. Desillusionment is the fate of romantic innocence, and Fitzgerald's heroes are romantic. His characters never really grow up, they are misused by the world

before they are overwhelmed by the passing of time.

Fitzgerald turned everything he entered in contact with into romantic adventure. He idealized beautiful girls, football, Princeton, the career of a novelist. he even idealized war and riches. His pursuit of riches was an idealization of the privileges that money might grant. For him money was the means that would help him reach the hightened world that his imagination had created.

Fitzgerald was well acquainted with romantic writers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, one of the initiators of the romantic tradition, and with Lord Byron whose influence is easily traced in This Side of Paradise. Richard D. Lohan points out the parallel between Childe Harold and Amory: both are pessimistic, and yet have not quite lost faith in their strength. Both feel the need to overcome their selfishness. And "both are studies in the process and effect of youthful disillusionment. (4)

4. R.D. Lohan, F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Craft of Fiction. p. 7.

Nevertheless, the poet Fitzgerald most admired and idealized was Keats. He confessed that he never tired of rereading his Odes, and Keats was one of the most considerable influences on Fitzgerald's fiction.

From Brooks' poetry he borrowed the title of This Side of Paradise. Besides there is a quote from Brooks as a preface, and Amory often mentions his interest in the poet's writings, Like Robert Brooks, he disliked old age and felt the horror of the passing of the years which destroy illusion and beauty.

The portrayal of types like Anthony and Amory was greatly influenced by Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray. They were modern types of the dandy set on American soil and in Fitzgerald's days.

In his fiction he developed his romantic views in American terms, he endowed his typical American characters with emotions based on American motives.

Though Fitzgerald was cheerful and good-humored he had the sense of the hopelessness of life and of horror. But above all he adored the beauty of life and he wanted to celebrate it, to glorify it and to

FITZGERALD - his life and work.

Perhaps the most striking trait in Fitzgerald was his deep assurance of the fame that life had in store for him. Being an adolescent, he would tell any friend who cared to listen to it, that it was his fate to develop into a precocious genius. He was convinced that he was a born writer. If it was not predestination, it was at least determination that made him one of the most well-known writers of his time.

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on September 24, 1896. Shortly before his birth his parents had lost their first two children, both girls, in an epidemic. Scott felt the repercussions of his mother's grief and he linked it with his career. He wrote:

Three months before I was born my mother lost her other two children and I think that came first of all, though I don't know how it worked exactly. I think I started then to be a writer. (1)

Scott Fitzgerald's mother, Mollie MacQuillan descended

1. Andrew Turnbull, F. Scott Fitzgerald, p. 7

from an Irish immigrant family. Her father, Philip Francis McQuillan had been a successful businessman. He had died at the age of forty-four and left an estate of three or four hundred thousand dollars. Thanks to the McQuillan's inheritance Fitzgerald got his expensive education in private schools and at Princeton. The McQuillan money was the only support of the family.

The success of his grandfather, McQuillan, was the great social and economic fact in Scott Fitzgerald background. It was the base he had to work from... From grandfather McQuillan, he inherited his self-reliance and his honorable ambition...(2)

His father, Edward Fitzgerald, descended from a seventeenth-century Maryland family. He was a failure in business, but Scott admired him for his gentlemanly ways. He put his admiration into both The Great Gatsby and Tender Is The Night - where the hero's father represents a kind of moral touchstone.

The family traveled a lot through the country, because of business, but at the end, as Edward Fitz-

2. Ibid. p. 4.

gerald failed in his work, they returned to St. Paul and lived under the protection of the McQuillan's money, His father lost his job when Fitzgerald was eleven. This failure was an embarassment to Scott. His mother was a further embarrassment. She dressed oddly and sometimes behaved strangely in public.

When he began writing, his mother was unsympathetic to his literary ambition. She tried in vain to discourage his writing, and until her death in 1935, she took very little interest in his career as an author. She wanted him to be a successful business man. His father on the contrary, helped him to love literature. Scott owed his father his romantic love of the past, and his father's death in 1931 was a shock to him.

In St. Paul Fitzgerald was regarded as an attractive, imaginative, vital boy. At the age of fourteen, when he was sent off to a boarding school in New Jersey, he had already enjoyed plenty of social success.

During his second year at the Saint Paul Academy, when he was thirteen Fitzgerald began publishing in

the school magazine. His first contribution was "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage". It showed the influence of the detective stories he had been devouring. He published three more stories in the next two years. "Reade Substitutes Right-half", "A Debt of Honor", and "The Room with the Green Light" where history and fantasy are mixed: Fitzgerald imagines that John Wilkes has escaped after the assassination of Lincoln and for years has been hiding in a ruined Southern mansion.

At Newman School he was sore for he did not stand up to the mark in athleticism. His sadness was dispelled by the writing of a poem that was published in the Newman News. He discovered that writing could sooth his wounded vanity. If he could not get, he could describe action, and it was a wonderful compensation. The publishing of his poem came to atone for his failure in sports. Afterwards three of his stories were published in the Newman News: "Luckless Santa Claus", "Pain and the Scientist", and "The Trail of the Duke", which already dealt with the very rich people who lived on Fifth Avenue. At Newman he

read indiscriminately everything he could lay hands on, and it was said of him that "he got poor grades because he read so many books" (3)

In the summer before he entered Princeton he wrote The Coward, a drama about the Civil War, which was staged by an amateur Dramatic Club in Saint Paul. It was his second play, the summer before having written The Captured Shadow.

In 1913 Fitzgerald entered Princeton. He was sixteen. He was at Princeton during the liveliest intellectual renaissance. It was John Peal Bishop who first put him in the way of conceiving poetry as a complex art. John Peal Bishop had a deeper knowledge of literature than Fitzgerald and was able to direct his reading. John encouraged him to write serious poetry by himself, and Fitzgerald published ten poems of his own in the Nassau Literary Magazine. His poems were echoes of his favorite poets: Verlaine, Keats,

3. Ibid. p. 42.

Swinburne, Wilde, Rupert, Brooke.

He entered the Triangle Club, a musical comedy organization. It was w formed by literary minded students of the University, who gave representations of their own plays during their summer vacation at Princeton and at provincial towns. His first wide success was due to the lyrics he wrote for a musical comedy, and which the critics considered excellent, even to the extent that he could be compared to "the brightest writers of witty lyrics in America" (4)

During the Christmas Holiday he met Ginevra King, a gorgeous brunette beauty. She was extremely popular and Fitzgerald felt attracted to her at first sight. For the first time he was irrevocably in love. Her charms were enhanced by her wealth and her social position. Ginevra's father was a very rich man, who disliked Fitzgerald as much as Fitzgerald disliked him. He is supposed to have been portrayed as Tom Buchanan in The Great Gatsby. Like Tom he looked at

4. Ibid. p. 54.

the world enthroned in his riches and was hard, cruel and indifferent. Fitzgerald's avowed hatred of the rich was, perhaps, first awakened by the loss of his first love. In his essay "Pasting it Together" he stated that his animosity against the leisure classes was "not the conviction of a revolutionist but the smouldering hatred of a peasant" (5)

At Princeton a group of literary friends and some teachers influenced his literary career. Those who made a deeper impression on him were his friends John Peal Bishop and Edmund Wilson, for his critical seriousness. Fitzgerald admired his professor Christian Gauss, a thoroughly learned man who cared about undergraduates, so that Fitzgerald considered him a "hero in American education". (6)

Though he learned valuable lessons from them he never became a disciple of his friends. He had his own ways and convictions. It must be said, by the

5. Arthur Mizener, The Fitzgerald Reader p. 413.
6. Andrew Turnbull, F. Scott Fitzgerald p. 72

way, that he had much respect for Mencken as a critic and for Lardner as a writer.

By the close of the second year at Princeton Fitzgerald made progress in being popular. But he dedicated too much time to the Triangle Club and was very busy as the editor of the Tiger Magazine. As a result he neglected his academic subjects. There was no doubt that he was going to fail at the examinations. Under cover of an illness he left college at the beginning of the third year, and returned in the fall of 1916. What he learned this year was through his private reading. He read a lot, especially Shaw, Butler and Wells. He read and imitated Tennyson, Swinburne and Brooke. He read Compton Mackenzie's Sinister Street which exerted a lot of influence in the writing of This Side of Paradise.

In November 1917 he left Princeton. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Regular Army. He went to fort Leavenworth where he got a three month's training. He hoped to be sent to Europe.

But his wish to participate in the campaign was never fulfilled, for the armistice was signed before they got overseas. It was one of the greatest disappointments of his life.

In the spring he was sent to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama. There, in July 1918 he met Zelda Sayre, the daughter of a judge. She was a beautiful girl barely eighteen and very ambitious. Men in her life were expected to be handsome and very rich. Fitzgerald possessed the former quality, but not the latter.

In February Fitzgerald was discharged from the Army and went to New York where it would be easy to support himself writing for newspapers and eventually make a fortune. For Zelda had rejected his proposal of marriage, because she did not want to live in poverty.

At first he worked for an advertising agency, but he did not like his job. He thought it inferior to his intellectual capacities and besides he was not satisfied with his meager earnings. Later he worked

in newspapers as a reporter. But it was just a failure. During his stay in New York he sold a single story, though he had sent nineteen to different editors. Zelda lost confidence in him because of his poverty, but her rejection just strengthened his decision to become a famous writer. He had lost his girl, but not his faith in his talent.

He returned to Saint Paul to rewrite his first novel This Side of Paradise which he had started writing at Princeton, and had gone on working on it during his military life.

When the book was at last accepted in 1920 and had a really tremendous success, Zelda married him. During that year Fitzgerald was living the American dream - youth, beauty, money and early success. Zelda and Scott lived in New York and attended the biggest and more luxurious parties, and were the most glamorous couple of the year. They organized orgies in their apartment and were known and popular by their extravagant way of living.

In the summer of 1921 they went to England and France.

By August they returned to St. Paul where their only daughter, Scottie, was born. They lived in St. Paul for a year, during which Fitzgerald finished his comedy The Vegetable. It was a satiric play, to be performed and was not a success. By October they moved to their most memorable house, a large one in Great Neck, Long Island. In this house Fitzgerald's life reached its culmination. Their parties were later recorded in Fitzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby. They spent money so freely that though Fitzgerald earned a good deal they were often in debt.

In 1924 the couple decided to save money and thought that the South of France was the best place to start doing so. By June of the same year they were established in a villa at St. Raphael on the Riviera, and in November Fitzgerald sent to his editor his first manuscript of The Great Gatsby. The book was finally published in April 1925. It is considered the best of his novels.

Continued

In France Zelda suddenly decided to do something. She was envious of her husband's success and she wanted success for herself. She started taking dance classes with a Russian dancer. At the beginning Fitzgerald did not oppose her idea of studying ballet, for he thought it would be a temporary hobby. But when he became aware that it was taken by Zelda with some exaggeration, it was too late and he could not stop her. It was an obsession of hers to become a famous ballerina. She ended in hysteria and at the beginning of 1930 had to be sent to the hospital of Malmaison. In February as she did not recover from her illness, the doctors sent her to the Phipps Clinic in Baltimore.

In 1932 Zelda wrote an autobiographical novel Save Me the Waltz. It was a bitter attack on Fitzgerald. She had sent it to Max Perkins without Fitzgerald's knowledge and it was published by the consent of the physicians who thought that bringing it out, would help to dissipate the jealousy of her husband's success that was one of her most serious obsessions.

Fitzgerald's Tender Is the Night published in the years 1932-1934, was to be both a reply to Save Me the Waltz and a self-defence against his wife's complaints.

Between 1934-1937 his health and his mood declined rapidly. He drank too much, because of his wife's illness. This period is known as the Crack-Up as he himself described it in the essays published under the same title. He first fell ill with tuberculosis and then began drinking heavily and was greatly depressed. In those years he attempted to commit suicide twice. By 1937 at the age of forty-one he had recovered his self-control sufficiently to accept a writing contract in Hollywood. There he met Miss Graham and fell in love with her. Miss Graham helped him to live a quiet life almost for a year after they met. In 1938 his contract as a sketch-writer was not renewed. He was so depressed that he drank himself out and had to be sent to New York Hospital. During the last year of his life Fitzgerald wrote as hard as his health allowed him on the novel

he left half unfinished at his death in December 1940, The Last Tycoon.

His work:

During his short life Fitzgerald wrote four complete novels besides the one that remained unfinished, and more than a hundred and fifty stories. The nine Basil Duke Lee short stories, eight of which appeared in the Saturday Evening Post in 1928-1929 are the recollection of the author's experiences in his boyhood and adolescence, till he went to Princeton. They show his ability to evoke the precise shade of feeling, and though many years had elapsed he still could call to mind the emotions of his early youth and give a convincing and true account of them.

A great deal of his short stories were written just for the sake of supplying the necessary money so that Fitzgerald and Zelda could lead their extravagant way of living. His aspiration was to write just novels, real works of art, and the writing of short stories seemed to him a valueless toil. Though his stories were rarely taken seriously by writers and

critics that he himself respected, he was highly considered for his portrayal of the epoch and the new generation. According to Arthur Mizener:

His best work in fact grows out of his precise understanding of his time, out of a concentration of the actualities of his world unequalled in the work of any contemporary. (7)

Besides he had a knack for changing ugliness into romance and yet make it seem real. The world in which his heroes live is both real and fantastic. As Andrew Turnbull says:

He had an instinct for quickening life, for taking the slang out of it and making it what in our dreams we think it should be. (8)

His first novel This Side of Paradise, published in 1920, like the Basil stories deals with the author's youthful years. It represents a kind of continuity of the same theme because the Basil's stories end when college life is going to start, while in This Side of Paradise the author is mainly concerned with the growing of the youth into manhood.

7. A. Mizener, F. Scott Fitzgerald a Collection of Essays p. 4

8. A. Turnbull, F. Scott Fitzgerald. p. 173

Before writing this novel the author had become acquainted with several novels that dealt with the theme of youths coming of age. Fitzgerald was acquainted with the best English novels of this genre: Lawrence's Sons and Lovers, and Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. He had also read Mackenzie's novels about English school and University life Youth's Encounter and Sinister Street.

By this time he was enamoured with Wells's novels, notably with Tono-Bungay. From Wells he borrowed the idea that character more than action should be the center of the novel.

This first novel had a great success. It has been considered to be the event that introduced the Jazz Age. The moral let-down enjoyed by the postwar generation, portrayed in the novel, had given the book a scandalous reputation as well as a reputation of being a work of social realism. Fitzgerald makes the hero, Amory Blaine, report from the inside the moral changes of his generation.

In the novel we do not find a continuous action.

but rather a series of episodes related one to the other by the way they affect Amory Blaine, the central character. These episodes constitute collectively the education of the hero, in other words, it is the biography of Amory Blaine during the formative years of his life.

The novel is well written. Fitzgerald has an instinct for graceful and vivid prose. In this book he used various techniques and his rapid transition from one technique to another shows that he was familiar with and able in the use of a variety of methods. He used the question-answer method to dramatize the uncertainties of Amory Blaine's own mind; the stream-of-consciousness method to dramatize Amory's crisis; the letters Fitzgerald uses for panoramic representation, thus passing quickly many events in Amory's life

The novel is divided into two books, showing the process of the growth from "egotist" to the "personage". We see Amory at Princeton trying to imitate models of conduct out of thousand books as well as

put of his contemporaries. And at the end of the novel, for the first time, Amory genuinely distrusts generalizations. What he has learned from books is nothing more than some ideas about life, which he accepts without discussing them. But it is not until he faces life in its naked form that he starts to distrust what he formerly accepted so easily. Then is when he becomes interested in people, in others rather than himself. Frederick Hoffman remarks about Amory that:

True maturity of the hero comes only after he has attended carefully to the facts of love and money. (9)

The theme of love and money and their corruptive relationship was exploited by Fitzgerald more than by any other American novelists. And when Amory is arguing socialism and is defending it, he admits that he does so because he is sick "of a system where the richest man gets the most beautiful girl." (10)

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9. Frederick Hoffman, The Twenties American Writing of the Postwar Generation, p. 105
10. This Side of Paradise. p. 106

The Beautiful and Damned.

This second novel whose first title was The Flight of the Rocket, was published in 1922. It is considered as a novel of transition, and indeed, technically, it is an advance over This Side of Paradise. Commercially it was a success because there were rumors that the novel was autobiographical, that it was about Scott and Zelda's married life. It was not so, and yet a great deal of their own troubles, a touch of their own disastrous relationship and their scandalous behaviour is reflected in the novel.

Reviews recommended this novel to readers as a study on contemporary life during the prohibition in America when the upper middle class staged a perpetuate drunken party. In this novel Fitzgerald gave a very realistic picture of the moral behaviour of the postwar American generation: too many parties with too much liquor; the very noisy behaviour of the young generation who wanted nothing, except enjoying the present time and lived with absolute carelessness about the future, leading an irresponsible idle life.

The book has aroused quite a number of commentaries. One of the critics said that the novel "on somewhat different level... was intended to be a sort of latter-day Vanity Fair, a moral commentary on certain aspects of postwar American society". (11) Which may be accepted as a good interpretation of Fitzgerald's goal, as he himself had asserted, he considered that the writer ought to influence the rising of the moral values, ought to help establish some standard of behaviour.

At the time Fitzgerald was writing this novel, he became acquainted with a new school of realistic writers of naturalistic tendency. The most famous were: Frank Norris, Charles Norris and Theodore Dreiser. Fitzgerald's real model, when he wrote this novel was Frank Norris, especially his novel Vandover and the Brute.

There is a number of parallels between it and The Beautiful and Damned. Perhaps the most obvious is

11. Dan Piper, F. Scott Fitzgerald, a critic portrait. p.88

the atmosphere of moral decay. There are also striking similarities between the two heroes: both came from wealthy families; both went to Harvard; both had affairs with girls from a poorer background and both fell to the lowest depths of degradation at the end: Vandover loses his reason and sinks into bestiality and Anthony falls into a state of childish imbecility.

Although The Beautiful and Damned is indebted to Frank Norris and Dreiser's novels, it cannot be considered a naturalistic novel. It lacks the crudity, the sometimes repulsive details naturalistic writers are so prone to introduce. It is written in a realistic way with some hues of romance.

The story shows the decay of its heroes, husband and wife while awaiting to inherit Anthony's grandfather's millions. They lead an idle life of dissipation and orgies. Their desintegration is accelerated when they are disinherited. After a long court-suit they finally win thirty million dollars, but it is too late for Anthony is broken physically and

mentally and Gloria's beauty is gradually fading away.

Fitzgerald's third novel The Great Gatsby, published in April 1925 is considered by the majority of critics as the best work. It has been affirmed that the structure of the novel has been inspired on Edith Wharton's fiction and through her on Henry James's. It is well known that Fitzgerald felt great admiration for both writers. Among Edith Wharton's novels the only one that can remind us of Gatsby is Ethan Frome. Like this novel The Great Gatsby is short and dramatically structured, and has a similar violent ending. In both novels we find the device of the first-person narrator.

Of Henry James's novels Daisy Miller most resembles Gatsby in form. In both novels there is a character representing a sensitive young man who is trying to understand the social behavior of a compatriot: Frederick Winterbourne - Daisy Miller's behavior, and Nick Carraway - Gatsby's behavior. In both novels the main characters are shown in an unfamiliar for them settings: Gatsby in East Egg, Daisy in Europe.

But Frederick Winterbourne does not tell the story himself as does Nick Carraway. And there is no evidence that Fitzgerald knew this short novel when he wrote The Great Gatsby, although later it became his favorite of all James's novels.

The idea of the first-person narrator probably came neither from Henry James nor Edith Wharton, but rather from Joseph Conrad in those works in which the story is told by Marlow: Lord Jim, Youth, Chance, Victory and Heart of Darkness. Fitzgerald was deeply impressed by Conrad's works. There are some similarities between The Great Gatsby and Heart of Darkness. Both characters Kurtz and Gatsby are alone at the end, both driven to loneliness by their faithfulness to a vision: Gatsby to his love, Kurtz to his greatness.

Fitzgerald was indebted to Conrad for the use of the modified first-person narrator. Modified because it is not the main character who tells his own story but an outsider, who can contemplate the events and judge them more impartially.

Directness and simplicity of style are the fundamental characteristics of the novel. Fitzgerald gives his descriptions with simple, short, vivid, effective sentences that enclose not only the way of dressing of the hero and his physical portrait, but also the psychological aspect of the character.

The novel's structure is a series of episodes or scenes dramatizing the important events of the story and connected by brief passages of interpretation and summary. Although the story takes place in a single summer, the chronology does not move straightforwardly along. Chapter five, the first meeting of Gatsby and Daisy, is at the precise center of the novel, while at the beginning Daisy appears as a young wife and mother.

There are plenty of quick, meaningful dialogues which are used to enhance the dramatic events. And there are several ways by which Nick Carraway informs us of what is happening or has happened: most frequently he presents his eye-witness account; often he gives other people's accounts sometimes in their own words,

sometimes in his own. Through him the author places the reader in direct touch with the action, eliminating himself, as an author, entirely.

Fitzgerald's fourth novel Tender Is the Night was written between 1932-1934. It was a difficult time for him, because of his wife's illness. At that time she was being treated by doctors in Baltimore.

Before publishing his novel, the author wrote two short stories which are miniature treatments of the action in Tender Is the Night. These stories are The Rough Crossing (1929) and One Trip Abroad.

The Rough Crossing is about a young American couple, Adrian and Eva Smith sailing for Europe during the late 1920's. They act ruthlessly, each drunk and jealous of the other. Fitzgerald introduces into the story Betsy D'Amido, who like Rosemary Hoyt in Tender Is the Night represents the spirit of youth and vitality. Betsy wakes in Adrian the old excitement of youth. But at the end Betsy leaves Adrian for her fiancé. The boat arrives in Europe. Adrian and Eva are together at the end - hoping to make a new start.

One Trip Abroad written in 1930 is a more ambitious story and it is directly connected with Tender Is the Night. It is concerned with the gradual decay of an American couple in Europe. Nicole and Nelson Kelly tour North Africa, Italy, Riviera, Paris and Switzerland. After three and half years they are completely deteriorated with foolish living. The story ends in a Switzerland Sanitarium where they are trying to regain their health and where they see another couple whom they met in North Africa. Suddenly they realize that these two embody the spirit of their own decline.

Fitzgerald had difficulties in finding a title for his novel and alternative choices of it were: Dr. Driver's Holiday, Dick and Nicole Diver, Richard Diver, Our Type, The World's Fair, The Melarky Case, The Drunkard's Holiday was the immediate predecessor of Tender Is the Night. Fitzgerald published this novel in 1934 as a serial in Scribner's Magazine and later, after further revision, as a book. There are three published versions of this novel.

The novel is about Dr. Richard Diver, a young American psychiatrist practising in Switzerland. In 1919 he falls in love with his patient Nicole Warren, the youngest daughter of a millionaire from Chicago. He marries her and consecrates his life to cure Nicole. At the end she recovers from her illness, but he is morally ruined. He suffers a kind of moral schizophrenia, for his balance comes to depend on Nicole's need of him.

The Last Tycoon is the most ambitious of all Fitzgerald's novels and it is a pity he could not finish it because of his premature death. The technique is very similar to that of The Great Gatsby. Here the author uses again the technique of the first-person narrator, Cecilia Brady tells Stahr's story. The action is brilliantly conceived and economically executed. The style is precise and very clear.

The background of the novel is Hollywood as an industry and a society. Fitzgerald had always been fascinated by the movie-picture industry as a literary subject-matter, and his novel is considered as

the best one written about this part of the American world.

Monroe Stahr is the central character of the book. He rules a complex industry and produces a powerful popular art form. The plot was to show him fighting for the cause of the powerful and responsible individual against Hollywood's labor gangsters and commercialism.

Monroe Stahr was based on the figure of Irving Thalberg, the M-G-M chief who died suddenly in 1936, when he was only thirty-six years old. He was the genius boy responsible for the Metro-Goldwin-Meyer's position among the movie studios at that time. Fitzgerald admired him sincerely and before writing a novel based on this personage he wrote a short story of him, called Crazy Sunday - a story about a Hollywood writer, Joel Coles, invited to a party at Miles Calman's house, the director of the studio. There he made a fool of himself trying to perform an amusing burlesque which was received coolly by the party. Next Sunday he followed Calman to another rich house and there Calman's wife told him her intimacies.

Calman is the exact picture of Stahr- he is the American director with both artistic talent and an interesting temperament, who paid with his health for his success. But in this short story he is infidel to his wife who at the end becomes Joel's lover. Like Stahr, Calman dies in an air-plane crash and his wife has to be taken to a hospital because of his death, that causes her to break-down.

Unfortunately the novel is unfinished, but the six chapters author left, show the novel's perfection. Not only Fitzgerald masterly developed such a complex theme, but he also achieved a new great development of style.

The autobiographical note in Fitzgerald's novels:

Fitzgerald uses his personal experience in his best fiction: his life - Princeton, Ginevra King, Zelda, The Riviera, Hollywood - becomes the material for his fiction. His plots are based on the events in which the author has himself participated with all his emotion and energy.

This Side of Paradise can be considered autobio-

graphical, for it describes Fitzgerald's own experiences at Princeton. Fitzgerald's failure to win the love of Ginevra King and of Zelda Sayre is Amory's failure to win the love of Isabelle Borge (Ginevra King) and Rosalind (Zelda Sayre). Fitzgerald's failure to get a Princeton degree and his fascination with the perils of war are Amory's too. Fitzgerald's cousin Cecilia, with whom he falls in love when she is a young widow, turns in This Side of Paradise as Clara.

The Beautiful and Damned has also some autobiographical notes. And, indeed, in it Fitzgerald fused in Anthony's feelings his own experiences in his first years of married life, though he had a much better time than Anthony and Cloria. Gloria Gilbert is molded on Ginevra King and Zelda Sayre. Dick Caramel, Anthony's friend is another side of Fitzgerald himself - he is the novelist with an intense sense of purpose, who has written one successful novel, but who is wasting his time writing popular trash for quick money.

In The Great Gatsby the two characters Tom and Gatsby caricature Fitzgerald's own experiences: the dreamer in conflict with the practical man. And Daisy is based on Ginevra's character.

In Tender Is The Night there are also several elements taken from his own life. Nicole is molded on Zelda. Dick is molded on Gerald Murphy a young millionaire who spent his leisure in the Riviera with his young beautiful wife and was a great organizer of magnificent parties. On the other hand, Dick is also Fitzgerald's portrait, the man who traded his ideal, who betrayed his own dream. Certainly, Fitzgerald felt that his marriage to Zelda had spoiled his dream, and he once wrote so in a letter to his daughter. For Zelda had hindered his literary ambitions, because she wanted him to work too much for her and not enough for his dream. Zelda was spoiled as was the main feminine character in the novel, Nicole. And again Fitzgerald like Dick wanted to feel people depending upon him, he wanted to be loved and to be the center of attention.

Fitzgerald's last unfinished novel The Last Tycoon resembles his personal history in Hollywood. Although he molded the image of Monroe Stahr from the figure of Thalberg, the movie producer, nevertheless he fused this image with his own love experiences and feelings. Kathleen Monroe was molded on Sheilah Graham with whom he fell in love while he was working in Hollywood. With Zelda in a North Carolina Institution, Sheilah Graham took her place in Fitzgerald's life, as Kathleen Moore takes the place of Minna, Stahr's deceased wife. The best account of how Fitzgerald felt about Sheilah is the story of Stahr and Kathleen in the novel.

Another autobiographical aspect in his novels is the code of the Southern gentleman which his father taught him: good instincts, honour, courtesy and courage. This code is the same his male characters got from their fathers.

ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS.

Fitzgerald's technique for the portrayal of characters was based on two main devices. First, he considered that the characters must come alive and real by way of their actions. He was convinced that action is the most direct mode of expressing the personal characteristics of the heroes of the novel. Kenneth Eble, one of the commentators on Fitzgerald's work, reports that in his notes for The Last Tycoon the author reminded himself of this important principle: "Action Is Character". (1)

The use of the dialogue in order to express character, was for him the second important device, and he usually succeeded in making his characters speak according to their own peculiarities. Gatsby's way of addressing people with his expression "old sport" is a fair equivalent of a description of his breeding, and idiosyncrasy. The dialogue between Maury and Anthony while they are waiting for Dick on the

1. Kenneth Eble, F. Scott Fitzgerald. p. 93

cool roof of the Ritz-Carlton gives a close picture of their ironical attitude toward Dick, somehow patronizing, somehow disdainful. Besides, it shows their high opinion of themselves.

Fitzgerald does not simply presents real characters. Though he usually has a real model for many of his leading characters, he expands and subtilizes them, he presents highly elaborated images, but they always come alive, and as his editor Maxwell Perkins wrote him once, on reading his books we find ourselves

among a set of characters marvelously palpable and vital - I would know Tom Buchanan if I met him on the street, and would avoid him. (2)

He created striking images of real human beings in order to arouse real emotions that might carry to the reader's mind and feelings the message he had to tell.

Anthony Patch.

Family background.

As a young boy Anthony had always enjoyed a sense

2. Alfred Kazin, F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Man and His Work, p.85

of economical and social security because of his luck of being Adam Patch's grandson. His appearing as the only propable inheritor of the old man's millions ensured him of everybody's regard and courtesy, and though he did not belong to "the very rich" yet, for in fact his income was barely enough to supply the means for the satisfaction of his refined tastes, he had almost the certainty of becoming enormously rich in a near future.

So the rich grandfather played a much more important role in the development of Anthony's character than his own parents did, for having died when he was just a little child, their influence had been very limited. It may be said that he was indebted to his mother just for the little fortune he had got as an inheritance, which gave him material independence and welfare. From his father Anthony had got the good looks, for he was also "spare and handsome" with charming blue eyes and a cleanness which only real handsomeness can attain. The neatness of his personal appearance made him very attractive.

Besides, Anthony was as fond of leisure as his progenitor had been. He enjoyed sitting lazily by the window with a book in his hand, free of cares or responsibilities. And in a way Anthony, like his father, had some dreams of becoming famous by writing, for Uliesses Patch had written a record about New York Society of his epoch. No other serious occupation is known to have taken his time, and as he did not leave his son any fortune of his own; it must be supposed that he did not dedicate his time to remunerative business.

Anthony's father had not been a purposeful, organized man, for he had spent countless hours talking to his son about the pleasure trips they were going to make together but he had never fulfilled his promises; this was another typical trait of Anthony, who always had difficulty in carrying on his purposes. Anthony and his father had made together just one trip, which had been a tragic one for Anthony. Uliesses had taken his son to the other side of the Atlantic, to England and to Switzerland, only to find

his death in the most luxurious hotel in Lucerne. Anthony had watched his father suffer and groan in pain, so that after his death, he was in the grip of sorrow and distress. He had become an orphan and to add to his misery he was scared to find himself absolutely alone among strangers in a foreign country. The terror of the situation produced an emotional shock in his tender soul that was never quite healed. It may, perhaps, account for his becoming a coward in his manhood, an unhealed trauma, that at least partly, was the reason for the fears and terrors that on occasions took hold of him.

Anthony had grown up under his grandfather's guardianship, but had probably not felt the warmth of a family life, for his grandfather was not given to tenderness. As a result of his lonely life he became a shy, introvert, solitary boy, almost affraid of the boys of his own age.

His education.

According to his family resources Anthony got a

thorough education. From the age of fourteen to sixteen he had been living in Europe with a private tutor, going through the "grand tour" typical for the children of moneyed American families. Then following his tutor's advice he went to Harvard, where besides enlarging his knowledge he would have the opportunity of getting acquainted with distinguished boys, of acquiring devoted friends.

At first his own shyness kept him aloof. Having no friends with whom to share thoughts and emotions he was engrossed in himself, in his own person, in buying finery that turned him into a dandy. It was this way of isolated living that earned him the reputation of being a romantic young man " a scholar, a recluse, a tower of erudition" (3), and he was so pleased that he began believing it was all true. His cleverness was further evidenced by his graduating at the age of twenty.

His second trip to Europe, after graduating, was not very profitable for the enlargement of his knowledge. As he was not pressed with the need of working

3. The Beautiful and Damned. p. 13

for a living, nor did he have a spontaneous passion for any branch of learning, or of art, he just kept busy with different kinds of occupations rather for the fun of it than with a definite purpose. He had amused himself in turns with architecture and painting, with playing violin and writing an imitation of Italian sonnets. He did not care about the acquisition of some craft, or about mastering a particular branch of scientific or technical knowledge. Instead he was idling away the best years of his life, till he became at last the kind of intellectual criticized by Mencken, one of those men that display

all the marks of a caste of learned and sagacious men - a great book knowledge... not a few gestures that suggest the aristocrat. But under the surface one quickly discovers that the whole thing is little more than play acting. (4)

The truth was that though he had got a broad education, his learning had never been directed to any special purpose. His knowledge was too general, too

4. William Goldhust, F. Scott Fitzgerald and His Contemporaries. p. 94.

ambiguous to be applied to any kind of task. He had never set himself a goal to reach.

Anthony considered himself very clever, broad-minded, uncommonly learned, but for all his intelligence he was unable to devote himself to the performance of anything profitable. Adam Patch's demands that he dedicate himself to useful work seemed ridiculous to him, just a whim of senility. Anthony seemed to be proud of his laziness, as if it were the distinctive mark of his talent.

His views on life.

Anthony had adopted a convenient philosophical point of view in order to justify his pointless way of living. He asserted that life itself was meaningless and consequently it was not worth doing anything, for nothing was important, nothing mattered.

He was quite convinced of his own value, of his capacity for undertaking any intellectual activity he would choose. The trouble was that he did not find an occupation deserving his efforts.

On the other hand, the proud announcement to his



FLOSOPHIA
E LINGUAS

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grandfather that he was going to write a History of the Middle Ages, had filled him with anguish, for he was unable to give form to an idea that had seemed him so simple. He was tormented with a painful sense of waste. The books he had brought from the library were of no avail to him, and the slipping days brought him no inspiration.

His lack of power for scholarly work made him envious of Richard Caramel, and it was his envy that caused him to hold up to ridicule Richard's passion for writing. He made fun of Richard's habit of taking long notes about the people and the facts he got acquainted with. He criticized him without restraint while talking with Maury Noble. They both felt themselves superior to Caramel, who was easily aroused to enthusiasm about unworthy things. And Richard's creative mind according to their implicit conviction, could not be compared with their superior critical minds. In fact the only use they had for their abilities was the spending of hours and hours on purposeless discussions about the uselessness of life.

And the only conclusion they reached again and again was that it was not worth the effort of writing in a meaningless world, because the very fact of trying to give it purpose was purposeless.

So he tried to justify his laziness. And yet at the back of his mind there lurked the promise he had given his grandfather of dedicating his time to writing. It tortured him and made him feel despicable. His lassitude was stronger than his honour, and all the remorse for the nights gaily spent with his friends could not induce him to begin working on his book, a work that seemed to him almost like slaving.

There is no doubt that it would have pleased his vanity to be acclaimed as the author of some clever treatise on "The Renaissance Popes", to become famous and admired for his History of the Middle Ages, but he could not start a line on the mentioned subjects, as he was unable to submit to discipline.

Anthony's dreams and the crude reality.

Anthony used to dream about the power of big money. Wealth could turn anybody into a mighty person, that is why he despised every kind of work, because after all, he was Adam Patch's prospective heir, he would soon be immensely rich. With a fabulous fortune at his command it would be easy to rise to fame and honours, for he was perfectly convinced of his own qualities, of his brilliance and magnetism, of his bright intelligence, that would open for him the road to greatness. Then he would undertake some conspicuous affair that would raise him above the multitudes.

These day-dreams sometimes helped to dispell the depression that got hold of him because of solitude and lack of purpose. Yet his very reveries belied his theory of the meaninglessness of life, for he expected that there would come a day when life would get a meaning after all, a meaning that he thought would come along together with his grandfather's millions.

But that golden day, which at times seemed quite

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These day-dreams sometimes helped to dispell the depression that got hold of him because of solitude and lack of purpose. Yet his very reveries belied his theory of the meaninglessness of life, for he expected that there would come a day when life would get a meaning after all, a meaning that he thought would come along together with his grandfather's millions.

But that golden day, which at times seemed quite

at hand, as Adam Patch was a decrepit old man, at other times appeared desperately far away. The old man who had consecrated his last days to the moral regeneration of the world, was set on getting Anthony on the path of righteousness: useful work was the necessary condition to keep young people from falling into dissipation and vice. Anthony did not dare stand against his grandfather's will, he did not dare tell him that he thought it was unreasonable to expect that young people should spend the best years of life with the performance of meaningless work. For he did not consider that even the simplest kind of work is directed to the improvement of the general welfare. Work appeared to him just as aimless toiling, a waste of time and strength. Nevertheless he had to submit to his grandfather's will. And Anthony would have submitted gladly to the old man's offer of sending him to Europe as a war correspondent, because this kind of work appealed to him, for in it was involved a promise of adventure. But he failed to make his wife accept a temporary separation, he was too weak to make

his will prevail over hers.

Though Anthony was so proud of his own excellencies, he readily recognized his weakness of character. It was the only reason that made him desire some kind of occupation to absorb him: "If I am essentially weak, I need work to do, work to do!" (5)

There were moments when he was sincere with himself and he admitted that it was unfortunate for a man not to have necessity or ambitions, nothing to compel him to work; not to have even an ideal, something to induce him to engage in some kind of activity. Sometimes he even wished he had dedicated himself to science; but it was too late to begin, because he would have to struggle to acquire the fundamental knowledge of physics and chemistry, which would be too troublesome and unnecessary for him, if after all

on some misty day he would enter a sort of glorified diplomatic service and be envied by princes and prime ministers for his beautiful wife. (6)

So when he was faced with the necessity of striving in order to get something to enliven his purposeless

5. The Beautiful and Damned. p. 49

6. Ibid. p.143

life he turned again to his golden dreams as a justification of his laziness and lack of will.

Yet, as reality was still far away from these enchanting reveries, he had to submit and become a bond salesman, a position that his grandfather considered highly recommendable.

Though all his hopes were set on getting money, Anthony was absolutely ignorant about finances. They were a mystery to him, and he could never grasp the meaning of so much activity and agitation as went on at the office. The striving of so many people who lived with the hope of attaining a chance success highly improbable seemed grotesque to Anthony. He considered dull the usual topic for conversation among the employees: it always turned around fortunes acquired in the most portentous and unexpected ways by men who symbolized "the aspirations of all good Americans" (7)

At the office the most passionate discussions arouse

7. Ibid. p. 191.

about the different methods of making money, of reaching the dizzy heights of financial success. To Anthony the idea of consecrating his life to this narrow field of action became appalling. Notwithstanding his sincere desire of complying with his grandfather's notions he could not stand such a dull position. It was his weakness again that made him quit. This was his second notorious failure.

Gloria.

Her charm and whims:

Before her personal appearance in the scene the reader gets acquainted with Gloria through the opinions expressed by other characters about her. Her most striking trait, the one that nobody failed to appreciate was her extreme beauty. Her loveliness had turned her into a narcissistic being. The main topic of her conversations was herself: her legs, her tan, her tastes and distastes. Yet her comments were so unaffected and spontaneous that young men used to listen to her perfectly charmed.

She was the spoiled child of feeble parents, who had no authority whatever upon her. Without being millionaires they had had the means for giving satisfaction to all her whims. She lived at the best hotel, had the best clothes and needed not worry about anything. As becoming to the new generation she quite ignored her parents, and always acted according to her views and pleasures.

Richard Caramel, without denying her irresistible charm, looked upon her as a silly woman, who lacked a real intelligence. Anthony and Maury Noble, with their more sophisticated minds, on the contrary, regarded her as a wise girl, with a born insight that allowed her to penetrate easily into the real nature of things. She had little formal education, having not gone through college or even high school; but her intuition had given her a conception of the world very much alike to the conception Anthony and Maury avowed to hold themselves. Maury was enraptured with her cleverness when she affirmed that the only lesson to be learned from life was that no lesson could be

learned from it.

She was essentially cold, though coquettish; she accepted men just as a convenient chorus always ready for singing her praises and paying homage to her regal excellence. She rewarded her admirers with her aloof kisses. Kissing was just an art for Gloria, not the external manifestation of any serious feeling, for as she told Anthony,

A woman should be able to kiss a man beautifully and romantically without any desire to be either his wife or his mistress. (8)

So, she thought, young people could enjoy her beauty, for she was generous with her kisses, and yet she remained essentially clean and unattainable.

Anthony was bewitched by her very coldness. Even her childish selfishness seemed becoming. Her simple way of believing that the world had been created for her own pleasure was charming in her.

8. Ibid. p. 96

Anthony and Gloria's conflicts:

Much in love as Anthony and Gloria were it was not long till Anthony discovered her shortcomings. Gloria had a temper that flared unexpectedly and quite often. Consequently it became Anthony's duty to take care of pacifying her anger, that was aroused by trifles such as the lack of hot water for her bath, some insignificant argument with him or any unimportant contradiction of her wishes.

She was capricious and demanding. She had to get certain kind of food, at fixed hours, and prepared in a special way, otherwise she would make a row and become unapproachable. These incidents were mortifying to Anthony and he had to exert himself to keep her content and amiable.

But nothing distressed him so much as her untidiness. She never took care of sending away the laundry in time. Anthony had to busy himself with this unbecoming kind of work, when there were no more clean shirts or handkerchiefs, and because the bathroom used to

become littered with her underwear, sometimes scarcely worn, but thrown into the pile of dirty linen.

On the other hand Gloria began despising him as soon as she discovered that he was a coward. The shameful scene at the hotel during their honeymoon made her feel terribly humiliated; for having a husband who got afraid of the phantoms born in his own imagination. And later there were times when she had to control her temper in order not to tell him in his face that he was a despicable coward.

She was soon aware, as well, of his inefficiency, of his fusing^s about work, of his ostentatious preparations, his begging for silence and solitude because he was going to write on his essays or on his history, just to sit an hour or so behind his desk without much results. It was simply a form of exhibitionism, a way of giving himself airs.

While they still had their hopes of inheriting old Adam's millions, it was easy for her to tease him for being a sham. Even if their finances were getting

worse from day to day, because of thriftless spending -
Gloria was not a good house-wife - their difficulties
were just temporary, for the "old nuisance" could not
last forever.

But notwithstanding his diseases Anthony's grand-
father was not in a hurry to leave this world of
sinners. When he had ascertained himself that his
grandson and his wife were utterly immoral; when he
had witnessed the kind of parties they enjoyed at their
own house, their hopes became dim. Then Gloria did
not hesitate to tell Anthony her mind, for she was
angry with him, with the weakling who had no character
to force his way into the old man's room in order to
beg his forgiveness.

On his part Anthony was resentful for she had not
let him accept the opportunity of going overseas as
a war correspondent. Because of her, they had lost
the best occasion of awakening from the lethargy that
dominated them.

Gloria considered him guilty for having left his

position as a bond salesman. Yet on her part she had done nothing to put an end to the wild drunken parties that had become a habit and left Anthony in the claws of moody despair. How did she expect him to work, to get interested in the office affairs in such a state of mind?

Notwithstanding their eternal quarrels at first, their indifference toward each other later, and their mutual hate at last, Anthony and Gloria had a common weakness which held them together: their thirst for wealth, for the pleasures it may buy. Besides, they were tied to each other by a common guilt, a common sense of ruin, due to the drunken parties that had come to last for days. Endless leisure had led them to dissipation, and dissipation had increased their laziness, their incapability of working. It was a vicious circle, from which there was no way out.

The antithesis of Anthony and Gloria.

As an antithesis to Anthony and Gloria there is Bloeckman, who with his steadiness of purpose had

reached the greatest success just with his personal effort. A poor boy who had grown up from a humble peanut vendor in a traveling circus to a prosperous and dignified movie producer. While Anthony and Gloria were descending step by step to the depths of the social bottom, Bloeckman went on rising up and up. On their first meeting Anthony had looked at him scornfully, for Bloeckman had seemed to him an "underdone man", "boiled looking". (9). He had detested him for intending to obtain Gloria's love.

Afterwards, every time they met, Bloeckman appeared "infinitesimally improved, of subtler intonation, of more convincing ease" (10), while Anthony was becoming a prey of alcoholism. They were following two opposite directions: while Bloeckman was working his way upward, Anthony was being drawn downwards by his laziness and inefficiency. We see them confronted when Bloeckman was an honoured and wealthy gentleman and Anthony had reached the last stage of his decay.

Bloeckman energetical, purposeful had gained wealth

9. Ibid. p. 81

10. Ibid. p. 176

and power with his own efforts, had taken on respectability and style. Anthony, the smart dandy, spoiled by riches and the expectation of an easy life had reached the lowest degree in the social scale, had degenerated into a drunkard and had finally become an imbecile.

Women's influence on Anthony.

In the days of his decay Anthony held the conviction that most of his misfortunes had befallen him through his relationship with women; such were his thoughts:

All the distress he had ever known, the sorrow and the pain, had been because of women. It was something that in different ways they did to him, unconsciously, almost casually - perhaps finding him tender-minded and afraid, they killed the things in him that menaced their absolute sway. (11)

In the army his lack of character had induced him to a false step. His entanglement with Dorothy had led him to violate the military discipline, for she had taken advantage of his credulity and his cowardice. He could not stand his merited punishment without the

11. Ibid. p. 360

consolation of alcohol and when he had to undergo a new trial he had no power of resistance left. He lost the little self-control remaining him. He seemed half crazy and he believed himself that he was going mad. He was terribly afraid of the confusion in his mind:

It was as though there were a quantity of dark vivid personalities in his mind, some of them familiar, some of them strange and terrible, held in check by a little monitor, who sat aloft somewhere and looked on. (12)

Maxwell Geismar (13) assumes that the "monitor" who kept the nightmare from becoming utter madness was the image which Anthony had created of Gloria as the symbol of perfection, the woman to whom he had believed he could dedicate his whole life. But Anthony was worried, because it seemed to him that the monitor was sick, and he could hardly hold out his watch. If we go on with the image suggested by Maxwell Geismar we may reach the conclusion that the long separation from Gloria, the strain under which their relations had been during the last months of their life together,

12. Ibid. p. 285

13. p. 304 Maxwell Geismar, The Last of the Provincials.

had led him to feel that the monitor had difficulties in fulfilling his role of maintaining things within control. Perhaps he realized in his subconscious that behind his absolute idealization of Gloria he had been screening his own temperament from himself, That is why he appeared in all his worthlessness, his lack of character, his feebleness and irresoluteness.

Dorothy, the vulgar little girl who brought up the disclosure of his real self remained in his mind as the symbol of his degradation. He could not stand seeing her or hearing her voice. He had fainted when Dorothy had appeared beside him. Her eyes and her voice had provoked a wild terror that had made him lose consciousness. And it was her unexpected calling on his New York apartment that had made him sink into real madness.

GATSBY.

A Puzzling Man.

Gatsby is introduced as a romantic uncanny figure, standing alone in the dark warm night and holding out his arms toward the sea in an almost religious ecstasy. It is an enigmatic attitude to the casual witness: a solitary man looking fervently at a single green light at the other side of the bay, as if it were a symbol of hope, a promise of happiness.

An aureola of secrecy surrounded Gatsby, for his origins were a mystery which puzzled those who accepted his hospitality. This was a circumstance that gave birth to the most fabulous speculations about his past. Who was he? Where did he come from? Nobody knew. He was just an enormously wealthy man named Gatsby, who gave big parties in his magnificent mansion, attended by people who had been invited, people who had been just brought and people who simply came; people who, as Daisy remarked, forced their way in and Gatsby was too considered to express disapproval.

His hospitable mansion was open to the general enjoyment.

A diversified set of people attended his parties. Fashionable, curious, eccentric, ambitious, bored people who entertained themselves each according to his capacities and tastes. They danced, sang, drank, ate Gatsby's food, bathed in his swimming-pool or at his beach, kissed, quarreled, gossiped. While Gatsby, often unnoticed by his indifferent guests, soberly watched the human folly with dignified calm. A lonely figure amidst the general gaiety.

When the 'Jazz History of the World' was over, girls were putting their heads on men's shoulders in a puppyish, convivial way, girls were swooning backward playfully into men's arms, even into groups, knowing that someone would arrest their fall - but no one swooned backward on Gatsby, and no French bob touched Gatsby's shoulder, and no singing quartets were formed with Gatsby's head for one link. (14)

Could it be that the awe he inspired was due to some undiscovered taint hidden beneath his clean, simple appearance and correct behaviour? Thrilling tales of

his having killed a man, of his having been a German spy during the war were whispered at his very parties, by his very guests.

It had even been supposed that he was a nephew or a cousin of Kaiser Wilhelm, It had been said that he was involved in the underground pipeline to Canada, a legend of the time. He was well aware of the tales people spread about himself, but it did not disturb his calm. The calm of a man who had to reach a definite goal and dedicated all his power to its attainment, without bothering about gossips and trivialities.

A Dual Personality.

Retrospective flashes on Gatsby's life help us to get acquainted with his two different personalities, besides the one fabricated by his casual curious guests.

First, there is James Gatz, the poor farm boy from North Dakota, and secondly, Jay Gatsby he had created himself, according to his aspirations and designs.

His first revelations to Nick are a mixture of reality and fantasy. In fact he was a child of the

wonderous American West, that land which for years had nurtured the hopes of thousands of impulsive men determined to make the virgin lands yield them the fecundity of their soil; men of endless energies that had gone into the settling of the continent. Gatsby's parents had not had the luck or the efficiency to make a fortune. They had remained poor farmers to the end of their lives.

Already in his early youth Gatsby had been a hard-working man, who did not despise the most humble occupations in order to get himself food and shelter. He would do anything, any job was good to keep alive while in his own mind he was creating a future to his liking.

About his clothes he need not care, for he lived in the heart of nature, where no fashions or proprieties establish their tyranny, requiring a nice attire. At the age of seventeen he had been rambling along Lake Superior shore in a torn green jersey and a pair of canvas pants. But he did not surrender to the rural environment, he did not submit to everlasting poverty.

He was a dreamer by nature, and he nourished great aspirations toward refinement, he wanted beauty and grace:

his heart was in constant turbulent riot. The most grotesque and fantastic conceits haunted him in his bed at night. A universe of ineffable gaudiness spun itself out in his brain while the clock ticked on the wash-stand. (15)

His strong will was centered on reaching the entrance to the brilliant world of his fancy. He wanted to study and had entered the small Lutheran college of St. Olaf's in Southern Minnesota. He had accepted the job of janitor in order to be able to pay for his studies. Yet he had not stayed long, because the menial work had been humiliating to his free nature.

His steadiness of purpose was reflected in the schedule he had drawn for himself at the age of fourteen. It shows his idea of the value of time and discipline, it demonstrates his will of self-improvement. His moral principles are hinted at his decision: "Be better to parents", that he wrote on the same sheet of paper.

15. Ibid. p. 99

He was already aware that the foundation of success is money, so he had imposed upon himself the obligation of saving, even though his resources were extremely limited. This is the kind of boy James Gatz was, the living image of the American boy incarnating the ideals the venerable fathers of the Republic had preached. As Richard D. Lehan remarks "one knows that Gatsby read and accepted Benjamin Franklin's dictums to the good and successful life" (16)

Dan Cody's appearance on the shores of Lake Superior offered the hero the chance of bringing to life the Jay Gatsby that James had been moulding during his persistent dreams. And so he got rid at once of his unsuccessful parents, whom his fancy had never accepted as such, and of his dreary past. In truth the Jay Gatsby of West Egg, at whom so many people wondered, had surged from "his Platonic conception of himself. He was a son of God..." (17)

16. p. 40 Richard D. Lehan, F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Craft of Fiction.

17. The Great Gatsby. p. 99

He had created for himself a fabulous family background - his parents and his forefathers had been illustrious people, highly educated. All of them had studied at Oxford, where, following the family tradition, Gatsby had been, too. He accounted for his fortune as a family inheritance.

The business he had got his money with did not form part of his dream either, so he had erased it from his own biography. It is clear that according to his dream his money did not bear the stain of sweat and hardships. It was clean, dignified money. This does not mean that he was not satisfied with his own achievements, for he had come to be the wealthy man of his reveries, he had got the material power that had seemed so enviable to him. He had freed himself from dull, degrading poverty and had become the owner of magnificent possessions: a fanciful car, a hydroplane, a dazzling palace, which, as he declared, had been bought with easy earned money, forgetting that he was contradicting his statement about his inheritance. For Gatsby his words were not an untruth. He was just

carrying on the dream that constituted his life, the creation of his own self, so as to be capable of reaching the aristocratic world which his devotion was directed. He was sensitive and considered with people. He would never offend anyone on purpose. But at Nick's question about the business he was in, he answered with unusual rudeness that it was his own affair.

The real nature of his business is never explained in plain words. It is skilfully suggested that Gatsby as Wolfsheim "lieutenant" had been involved in illicit transactions of different kinds. The frequent telephone calls from Chicago and other far away places, his reticence on answering the telephone while Daisy was at his side, and the most revealing call Nick answered after Gatsby's death, are as many hints of his dark affairs.

But all was fair with Gatsby because these surreptitious deals were the only means that could help him reach his goal, that would make his dream come true.

Daisy had become the embodiment of his wonderful vision for the future because she was the first "nice" girl

he had ever known. Her house was the first luxurious house Gatsby had ever been in, and he

was overwhelmingly aware of the youth and the mystery that wealth imprisons and preserves, of the freshness of many clothes, and of Daisy gleaming like silver, safe and proud above the hot struggle of the poor. (18)

Gatsby had fallen into the "deception of the senses" which Emerson describes when speaking about the illusions that govern and determine our lives, and of which we are seldom conscious:

There is the illusion of love, which attributes to the beloved person all which that person shares with his or her family, sex, age or condition, nay with the human mind itself. It's these which the lover loves... (19)

For Gatsby it was Daisy who got the credit of the wealthy world she inhabited. She was for him the condensation of the bliss that had haunted him during the years spent in his own world of poverty and need. Having loved her, he would never be able to forget her or to renounce her. She had become his life-long aspiration and desire: a marvelous vision he had

18. The Great Gatsby. p. 150

19. p. 354 Ralph Waldo Emerson, The Heart of Emerson's Essays .

created and turned into an image of perfection.

Gatsby's accomplishments and shortcomings:

Gatsby was not self-confident. Though he was attractive and his physical qualities were enhanced with the distinction that the military uniform confers, he did not expect to make any deep impression on Daisy, when he met her for the first time. He was humble with the consciousness of his humble origins. He confessed that he thought she would throw him over.

He was sensible and did not become vain because of her admiration for him. She thought that he was clever, and he believed it was just because he knew different things from her, that she had got that idea. He knew himself well and was modest.

Besides he was brave. He gave a simple account of his military deeds, he was not boastful, but simply attributed his courage to his indifference for life, because of something very sad that had happened to him. For his extraordinary valour, he had got the military degree of major, and every allied government had given him a decoration.

It was probably due to his brilliant services that he had been sent to Oxford, after the Armistice had been signed. It was an opportunity they gave to some officers. They could go to any university in England or France. Hence the photograph he had shown Nick as a token of his having been educated at this old university, according to the "family tradition". So it was true that he had been at Oxford, though he was not quite an "Oxford man". In fact he had stayed there some five months only, for he was anxious to come back to Daisy.

His lack of sound learning was betrayed by his deficiency in topics for conversation, by his way of speaking in elaborate sentences. He gave the impression that he was choosing his words carefully, with the deplorable result that sometimes his formality of speech was on the verge of sounding absurd.

That he was a "parvenu", which did not belong to the society layer of the privileged, one easily discovers from his want of taste in dressing. It could be traced, as well, in the gaudiness of his house and his car, which Tom called "circus wagon" suggesting

his scorn for Gatsby's showiness.

But Gatsby had higher accomplishments than the refinement of those born to the aristocratic world. He was admirable for the steadiness and purity of his feelings, for the loftiness of his mixed dreams of beauty and wealth. Five years had elapsed since the day he met Daisy, and yet his feelings were as intense and pure as when he had had to depart for Europe, leaving Daisy behind. It was to get Daisy back he had become involved in a base kind of affairs, for after the war he was literally in the gutter, without means to supply his most elementary needs. It was then that Wolfsheim had met him and had seen in him the convenient man for his business. He had been attracted to Gatsby for his fine, gentlemanly appearance and character.

Gatsby had to prove to Daisy that he was worthy of her, and the only way of making her understand was by accumulating a fortune to put at her feet. He had to rescue her, to convince her that she belonged to him, that in her heart she had never really loved anybody, but him, even if circumstances alien to her

will had led her to marry a wealthy man from Chicago.

DAISY.

A Hollow Rich Doll.

The sad truth that Gatsby never realized, was that a rich girl like Daisy, grown up in a world of luxury, pleasure and snobbery, had never had the occasion of fighting for something, for getting something, or of sticking hard to some purpose: she could get everything she wanted at once, and such an easy life had not helped to make her character strong. She had been in love with Gatsby, and this love had made her quarrel with her own family for preventing her going to New York to say good-bye to him on the day of his departure from America to the war.

But some months had elapsed and relieved her grief. Half a year later she was not sad anymore, and suddenly she was again paying attention to half a dozen of her always numerous admirers. Gatsby had become a memory of the past, and though she had cried on receiving his letter, it did not stop her marriage, for Tom was the real present, with tangible money and promises of

luxury. She was far from being an idealist, she had never lived of dreams, but of substantial realities.

The revival of her love for Gatsby had been just a way of enlivening the monotony of her uneventful days. For Tom was a careless husband, engulfed in his own pleasures.

So that Gatsby was easily defeated for Daisy had returned to him without knowing anything about his life. She was not a high spirited woman, and the hard accusations she heard against Gatsby were enough to make her doubt him and retreat. In fact, she had never thought of leaving her home as Gatsby expected. Notwithstanding her complaints, she was contented with her lot. On the occasion when she had made Nick the confident of her troubles, he had detected the basic insincerity of her words. Her sadness was just a pose, a desire of appearing sophisticated, enduring, but the expression of her face had betrayed her real feelings.

She was unable to appreciate the ^{ne} finess of Gatsby's

character. She was narrow-minded and selfish, for she would not risk her tranquillity, she did not want to lose her secure comfortable world. She had accepted Gatsby's devotion just as a homage to her beauty,

TOM BUCHANAN

The Rich Brute.

Tom was the opposite of Gatsby in all senses. He came from an enormously wealthy family and had always had a great deal of ready money at his command. Nick remembered that even in college his way of spending had been the object of censure.

His behaviour reveals the degeneration that sometimes takes place among persons belonging to the old moneyed families, among people who feel on top of the world because they have never had to strive in order to reach well-being. They don't need anybody. They don't have any fulfilled wish. Consequently, they are deprived of any stimulus for getting busy or interested in some kind of useful activity. Absolute leisure is - Fitzgerald seems to say - the beginning of moral decay.

Tom was cruel and his cruelty transpired even in the expansion of his powerful body, with great packs of muscles that showed through his clothes. He was cruel and mean, for he was not ashamed of hitting a woman, of humiliating Mirtle in front of her guests. He had been rude to her when on buying the puppy she had carefully avoided the word "bitch" out of a sense of delicacy. But Tom had potulantly used the nasty word ignoring her feeling of unpropriety. His way of making public fun of her weak, miserable husband did not show him in a better light either.

His affair with Mirtle was just one of the many liaisons he had been driven into by his uncontrollable lust. He indulged himself into lascivious passions never feeling any sense of guilt, neither before his wife, nor before the woman he seduced. Three months had hardly elapsed since his marriage when he got into the car accident while driving with a chambermaid from the very hotel where he had spent his honeymoon with Daisy.

He was a liar, too. When it was necessary for him

to get out of trouble he did not hesitate in telling a lie. In order to get rid of Mirtle's pretences of marrying him, Tom had convinced her that Daisy was a Catholic, which made a divorce impossible. Nick had been impressed and even shocked at the elaborateness of the lie, for Daisy had never dreamed of being a Catholic.

Tom lacked the most elemental human feelings, because when his daughter was being born, he was not at his wife's side. Daisy did not know where he was, probably he was enjoying some little adventure, as usual. To enhance the picture of his licentiousness there is Daisy's remark during the violent scene between Tom and Gatsby at the Plaza Hotel in New York. She suggested that some sinister deed of his had caused them to leave Chicago in order to avoid a greater scandal. It could not have been any small adventure that had forced a man of Tom's social standing to leave his native town, for wealth may cover many a sin.

One of the most typical traits of men of this kind, of men who, like Tom, tread on any moral code, was

his intolerance toward other people's transgressions. When he discovered that Daisy, whom he had neglected, had found something to fill her empty life, had turned to an old love of her youth, he flew into a violent rage and stormed against modern ways of life that made it possible for such things to happen. He turned at once into a family man, adopting the pose of a person of severe morality.

The panic of losing the comfort of his established household had taken possession of him, and had suddenly turned him from a licentious man into a moralist. He is ridiculous and disgusting. If we compare his behaviour with Gatsby's temperance, his respect for women, his faithfulness, we see a whole abyss separating the two men.

Tom used all his malice and cruelty in order to defeat Gatsby. He made rude and scornful remarks, he became furious and used the most vulgar language to be imagined.

Daisy with her hollowness and Tom with his brutality killed Gatsby's dream. Both, the Buchanans belonged

to the same kind of world, while Gatsby was an outsider who had dared to interfere with their established routine. Tom and Daisy were not happy together, and yet they belonged to each other, for both were careless people, amoral and rich. Tom and Daisy were both selfish, indifferent to what their actions might mean for other people, even if somebody had to suffer the consequences of their own ruthless behaviour. Gatsby fell, a victim of Tom's malice and Daisy's cowardice. As to them, they felt safe, protected with the hard shell of their money.

The narrator's sympathy is with Gatsby. "They are a rotten crowd", Nick Carraway tells Gatsby, "You're worth the whole bunch put together". (20)

Gatsby and the American dream.

All the critics agree on the fact that Gatsby's dream does not simply represent the dream of an individual, nor of a type or a class of persons. It has

a much wider meaning, it is the symbol of the American dream of success. John Henry Raleigh asserts that

F. Scott Fitzgerald's character Gatsby, as has often been said, represents the irony of American history and the corruption of ^{the} American dream." (21)

John Henry Raleigh regards Gatsby as an allegory of the two main streams that impelled the development of America: mercantilism and idealism, which were often so tightly intertwined that it was hard to find the boundaries between the two. The story of Gatsby seems to express that America had produced such an exalted idealism that it had lost touch with reality (Gatsby), and a materialism so hard that it was cruel (Tom).

Lionel Trilling suggested that probably no better symbol could have been used to represent the restless pursuit of the "American Dream" than the green light in Daisy's dock, which is one of the enchanted things that keeps Gatsby's hope alive.

We are told that Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island

"had sprang from his platonic conception of himself", and he must be in "the service of a vast, vulgar, meretricious beauty" (22). According to Lionel Trilling's interpretation this means that Fitzgerald wanted us to turn our mind "to the thought of the Nation that had sprung from its platonic conception of itself".

To the world it is anomalous in America, just as in the novel it is anomalous in Gatsby, that so much raw power should be haunted by envisioned romance. Yet in that anomaly lies for the good or for the bad much of the truth of our national life, as at the present moment we think of it. (23)

Daisy's most fascinating feature, that suggested her loveliness and desirability was her golden voice that bewitched those who had lent their ear to its charming sounds. It promised gaiety and excitement, and besides there was something difficult to define in it. When Nick was searching for an epithet Gatsby readily suggested that her voice was full of money, the very charm that had attracted to America people from the world around.

22. The Great Gatsby. p. 99

23. p. 17. Mizener, F. Scott Fitzgerald. A collection of essays.

As Daisy was the incarnation of Gatsby's dream, we may presume as well that she was the personification of the American dream, which had raised the hopes of men with promises of gaiety and excitement, as well as with assurances of achievement and riches.

Among other critics, Marius Bewley points out that the American Dream is anti-Calvinistic and believes in the goodness of nature and man. Consequently it must be considered "a product of the frontier and the West rather than of the Puritan Tradition" (24)

In the novel the East represents corruption: East Egg is symbolically the place inhabited by the ancient aristocracy. The West is young, inhabited by people full of energy and decision. They are virtuous and morally healthy. Gatsby comes from the West and has his dwelling in West Egg. Tom and Daisy live in East Egg, since they are really better adapted to Eastern life, and belong to the ancient wealthy classes.

24. p. 125. Mizener. F. Scott Fitzgerald, A Collection of Essays.

DICK DIVER AND THE WARRENS.

Dick Diver, like Anthony Patch stands for the image of a man whose life ends in decay and degradation. Nevertheless there is a big difference between the two characters and the reasons for their deterioration. Though both cases are related with money, their downward fall originates from quite different situations. Anthony had never had any definite aspirations or aims, because of his reckoning too blindly on his grandfather's riches. His confidence of becoming fantastically rich had killed his initiative and had been the seed that had developed into degeneration.

Dick Diver did not have any such hopes of becoming rich through inheritances or the like. Neither did he belong to a rich family. His father was a modest and retired clergyman. It is true that he was a member of the gentility of the land, for ^{his} grandfather had been governor of North Carolina, so that Dick, like Fitzgerald himself, came from impoverished gentility. When Scott Fitzgerald was drawing the outline for

Tender Is the Night he remarked:

The hero born in 1891 is a man like myself brought up in a family sunk from haute bourgeoisie to petite bourgeoisie, yet expensively educated. He has all the gifts, and goes through Yale almost succeeding but not quite. (25)

Besides having had a chance of getting a good education Dick Diver was gifted with a clear mind and a prodigious memory, on which he could rely so entirely that he did not hesitate to burn some hundred books for fuel, when things were hard in Europe because of the war. He was absolutely sure he would be able to remember their contents five years later and if it were necessary he could even write a summary of them, for he considered himself "a digest of what was within the book". (26)

To climb his way up Dick Diver could not depend on anybody's help, except himself. Thus he had grown to be a hard-working scientist with great potentialities. In 1917, at the age of twenty-six he was already

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25. Kenneth Eugene Eble, F. Scott Fitzgerald, p. 136
26. Tender Is the Night p. 20

considered too valuable in the scientific world to be sent to war. So he had been spared and sent to Zürich, in Switzerland, so he could carry on his studies as a promising psychiatrist. Because of his merits, after he was discharged from the Army, the American Government kept paying him his officer's fee for a whole year so that he could go on studying at a European University. Dick regarded it as a token of the greatness of his government, "a government on the grand scale that knows its future great men" (27) He did not doubt that he was going to become one. He had already written a book and had collected the material for a new one. He was entirely engrossed in his work and nothing else seemed to interest him. He believed that it was the duty of a talented man to go on cultivating his own mind continuously, because "when he stops knowing things he is like anybody else" (28), and his talents dwindle and fade

27. Ibid. p. 38

28. Ibid. p. 68

away. A gifted man must have a goal. Consequently he dedicated most of his time to the widening of his knowledge on the field of psychiatry. He had great ambitions. His purpose was to "be a very good psychologist - maybe the greatest one that ever lived" (29)

He had chosen a highly human profession, for he took care of people deprived of their normal mental faculties, and he helped them return to normal life and full understanding of their surroundings. He had the advantage that the strength of his mind was paralleled by the strength of his body, which he duly cultivated.

So Dick Diver is introduced to the reader as a fine man of great promise who had almost reached perfection. Of course, as perfection does not exist in this world of ours, he had his weaknesses too.

His weaknesses were few, but quite dangerous, for up to a certain extent they were his virtues also. He was over-confident, for he had the illusion that

29. Ibid. p. 37.

his strength, his bright memory, his good sense, his health were going to last forever, without imagining that hostile forces might soon break them. Besides he held the belief that people were good by nature, and that one could trust them. Dick's illusions were profoundly American, They

were the illusions of a nation, the lies of generations of frontier mothers who had to croon falsely that there were no wolves outside the cabin door. (30)

While he was living the fine quiet life of a scholar it sometimes seemed disturbing to him that he had no conflicts. He supposed that the fact that he had remained so thoroughly intact was a result of his "incompleteness" (31)

Though he was so dedicated to his work and wanted above all to be useful to the suffering human beings; though he wanted to be brave and wise, deep in his heart he knew that "he wanted to be loved, too, if he could fit it in". (32). This was the most fateful of his aspirations for a short chance meeting with

30. Ibid. p.22

31. Ibid. p.21

32. Ibid. p.39

one of Doctor Dohmler's patients caused his grandiose plans and his glorious career to take quite a different turn.

The patient was a young girl who by taking a fancy to him, to his good looks, to his American military uniform involved him in her clinical case. The doctors considered that the letters she began writing him as "the unknown soldier" were an outlet for her distorted emotions which would help her greatly on finding her way back to normality. And here began the conflict Dick Diver had been missing. For though he was well aware that he ought not ^{to} let her attraction take hold of him "he was not so hard boiled" (33) as to be indifferent to youth and beauty. The unhappy creature extraordinary handsomeness arose emotions in him that he hardly dared stifle. Moreover, his conscience told him it was an evil act to refuse her candid youthful love. His interest in her was a mix-

ture of physical attraction and pity for her young crippled soul. As a scientist he was well aware of the strain he would submit himself to if he took a wife that was going to be his patient as well. But all his knowledge was of no avail to him since he gave predominance to his feelings over his intellect. It was no news to him when Dr. Franz Gregorovious protested that he should not devote his life "to being doctor and nurse and all" (34) to a single patient. But Nicole was so helpless, so youthful and attractive, and loved him so much that it seemed wicked to run away from her. It was pathetic for Dick to listen to Nicole while she was giving him a detailed account of her accomplishments, so that she seemed to present them to him as "gifts of sacrificial ambrosia, of worshipping mirtle" (35).

His own good looks, his courteous regard for the sick young girl, the consideration he always had for

34. Ibid. p. 46

35. Ibid. p.43

other people's feelings, his politeness, all his accomplishments had turned out to be the trap that had caught him and brought him into predicament, the more troublesome that besides putting at a stake his profession, connected him with a family of extreme wealth and dubious moral wholesomeness. For the Warrens belonged to the old American aristocracy.

They were an American ducal family without a title - the very name written in an hotel register, signed to an introduction, used in a difficult situation, caused a psychological metamorphosis in people. (36)

The fortune had been amassed by their grandfather so that they had just to harvest the benefits of their position. Thus they belonged to the absolutely leisure class, the class that has no goals to reach, no ambitions except getting as much pleasure from life as money can afford.

They led the kind of easy life that more often than not leads to dissipation. It explains the degeneration of Mr. Devereux Warren, Nicole's father,

36. Ibid. p. 65

whose desintegration had brought about his daughter's mental illness. His remorse was smothered by his sense of power: he was so rich that there would be a way to buy back his daughter's sanity. "Money is no object" he says to Dr. Domhler on leaving Nicole (37) in his hands, and washing his own of further responsibility. Nicole's sister, Baby Warren, thought likewise

that when Nicole would get out of the clinic the best she herself could do for her younger sister would be to buy her a doctor-husband who would look after her, and so she would be free of anxiety and concern. For Baby thought there could be no doubt that many a young doctor would "jump at the chance" (38) of marrying such a rich girl, even if she was mentally unhealthy and needed special care.

That was exactly the hardest thing for Dick. He loved Nicole for herself and could not stand the thought that he may be considered a fortune-hunter.

37. Ibid. p. 33

38. Ibid. p. 58

And he made it quite clear that he would not take any of Nicole's money. He was able to keep a family with his own earnings. They would lead a modest life. They were going to stay in Zürich for two years at least, living so quietly that they would not need any of Nicole's money. Nicole accepted an allowance just for some fancies she might have: clothes or anything special she might desire. That was the initial agreement between them. In fact, little, by little, Nicole got back to the luxurious life she had been used to from childhood. It would not have been wise to deprive Nicole of certain advantages that might hasten her cure: traveling expenses, the buying of a villa where to live in a peaceful atmosphere. One of Nicole's entertainment was to go shopping. She enjoyed buying anything that caught her fancy. Rosemary was amused watching her when they went together to make some purchases.

Rosemary who had earned with hard work the money she spent, could not help admiring Nicole's free way of throwing away money. Why should she care about it, when there was so much of it? There were the big brilliant parties with innumerable guests, that had

transformed Dick into "an organizer of private gaiety, curator of richly incrustated happiness". (39)

Dick had tried hard to maintain his financial independence in the midst of the constant flowing of money. He had paid for his work house and the ground it stood on in the villa, he paid for his clothes and his personal expenses, for liquor and his son's education. He was careful with money. Nevertheless it was difficult to keep clean from the constant "trickling of goods and money" (40). For Nicole wanted to have him for herself and she did her best to encourage his spending more than he could afford, in order to have him in full dependence of the Warren's money.

When Franz suggested that he and Dick might open a clinic in Zürich, Baby Warren was eager to make him take the money in order to secure their economical influence on him. Her interfering in his personal matters revolted Dick, who notwithstanding his lack

39. Ibid. p. 144

40. Ibid. p. 189

of malice just hated Baby for her "rich insolence" (41).

And yet, fighting all his scruples he accepted Franz's proposal and the Warren's money in order to have his own clinic and resume his work as ^a psychiatrist. The life they had been leading had almost incapacitated him for scientific writing. The care about Nicole and the strength wasted in social life, on being nice and courteous to everybody had sucked such an amount of vitality from him, that there had been little progress with his work. He would try a new way of living, getting deeply involved with his work again, in seclusion, surrounded by patients and doctors. The change would be better for Nicole as well, because their way of living contrived a series of strains it was difficult for her to stand. But for him there was no escape for:

The dualism in his view of her, that of the husband, that of the psychiatrist - was increasingly paralyzing his faculties. In these nine years she had several times carried him over the line with her disarming him by exciting emotional pity or by a flow of wit, fantastic and dissociated so that only after the episode did he realize, with the consciousness of his own relaxation from tension, that she succeeded in getting a point against his better judgement. (42)

41. Ibid. p. 197

42. Ibid. p. 217

After a nine-year period of being Nicole's support, he felt that a profound shift of values had taken place in himself. He was not the same man, neither morally nor physically. During his trip through Europe, away from Nicole, Dick meditated upon it trying to find out the reasons for his decay. It was hard to discover the real motives for what had happened to him, to understand how he had got into that mess. He remembered that being a young man he had never been naturally interested in riches. Only the healthy wish of getting free from such a hard struggle as his father had had to fight in poor parishes, had awakened in him the consciousness of the value money has, of its importance in a man's life. He kept a clear recollection of the fact that when he had married Nicole, in his mind there had not been a single thought of securing his economical position by an advantageous marriage. For at that time he had felt absolutely confident in himself, in his capacity.

for clinical and scientific work. A broad path was open before him and he did not need any outside support. Try as he would he could not understand why

he had been swallowed up like a gigolo and had somehow permitted his arsenal to be locked up in the Warren' safety-deposit vaults. (43)

However the fact existed and made him desolate. His energy had been wasted, his dream had turned out to be a frustration. Lately the Warren's money had been increasing so fast that it had belittled his own work. And Baby never lost the opportunity of reminding him of the fact. She insisted that it ought to be used to get Nicole well. When Dick told her that Nicole's cure was perhaps retarded because he had not been the right man for her, because she relied on him too thoroughly, which kept her from growing independent and strong, Baby had had a swift reaction, and expressing her thought aloud had exclaimed that if somebody else would be more adequated it could be easily arranged. Dick's love for Nicole did not

43.Ibid. p. 221.

mean anything to her. He had been just used and if he could not bring good and fast results, he ought to be discarded. Such was her reasoning. She was so secure of the power of money that she did not even take care of maintaining an appearance of decency. She did not consider that even rich people must keep some rules of behaviour. Though Dick had laughed at her cynicism, he was quite depressed. That night he got so drunk that he became entangled in a disastrous row that ended with the greatest humiliation for him.

Having helped him to get out of the entanglement Baby Warren was triumphant. Dick would never again be an example of high morality and the Warrens would never again feel morally inferior to him, while his usefulness to them would make it necessary for them to keep him.

As for Dick, he was sure he could never recover his self-estimation. In fact, he never did. He who had easily won everybody with his charm and politeness, became rude and annoying: his self-control turned

to surprising bursts of temper; he was displeased with everything. Though Nicole was sorrowful on sensing the change, she started resenting him. She noticed Dick's growing indifference, which was expressed by too much drinking. As she was getting stronger and healthier she was not worried about herself. And besides her true nature was always ready for novelty:

Nicole had been designed for change, for flight, with money as fins and wings. (44)

With her money and her beauty, with her mind restored to normality she would not have to care about a lost husband. Besides, Tommy who had been waiting for her during five years was at her disposal.

Dick was quite conscious of the hastening progress of his deterioration, he knew that it had begun a long time ago, he could not tell exactly when or how, but as he told Rosemary:

The change came a long way back - but at first it didn't show. The manner remained intact for some time after the morale cracks. (45)

44. Ibid. p. 299

45. Ibid. 304.

As to Nicole, she sometimes recognized that it had been for her sake that he had put himself under such a strain, because for a long time she had had spells when she suddenly became a person to whom

nothing need be explained and to whom nothing could be explained. It was necessary to treat her with active and affirmative insistence, keeping the world of reality always open, making the road to escape harder going. (46)

While she was still depending on him, needing his help, she owned that it had been a hard job for him to attend her in her schizophrenic fits, which with longer or shorter intervals had been torturing her for many years, until at last the tension had broken his strong organism. He was physically destroyed, and she was recovering. Her attitude toward him changed when she realized that she reached a full recovery. She was no more identified with Dick's personality, She was a Warren again, selfish and rich, interested in their own pleasure and used to get rid of anyone that bothered them. With their money they were omnipotent. Besides ---

46. Ibid. p. 211

Nicole had faith in her sister, who disliked Dick and would support her "unscrupulousness against his moralities" (47) So Nicole accused him of cowardice, of trying to blame on her the failure he himself had made of his life. She was cynical enough to tell him that without her he could resume his work again and get better results once free from worrying about her.

All that Baby Warren had to say about Dick, all her thankfulness for his having restored her sister's health, was a heartless commentary that showed the rottenness of her clan:

We should have let him confine to his bicycle excursions... When people are taken out of their depths they lose their heads, no matter how charming a bluff they put up. (48)

That he had performed any generous gesture did not seem true to Baby, she looked at his effort as an obligation, as a job he had to perform, because, as she affirmed, he had been educated for it.

47.Ibid. p. 321.

48.Ibid. p. 331

STARR AND KATHLEEN.

Starr, like Gatsby is a self-made man, with the only difference that he had reached his high status with an honourable occupation.

Although Starr came from a poor family he had by his own effort become a great tycoon without any outside help. He went on his great career just pushed by his extraordinary intellectual capacity and physical energy. When he was just a young boy he had already managed to be the leader of his gang in Bronx, where

he walked always at the head of his gang, this rather frail boy, occasionally throwing a command backward out of the corner of his mouth. (49)

He had not had the chance of getting a sound formal education. All his knowledge "was founded on nothing more than a night-school course in stenography" (50) Nevertheless "he had long time ago run ahead through trackless wastes of perception into fields where very few men were able to follow him" (ibid.). He was a

49. Ibid. p. 20

50. Ibid. p. 22.

rationalist by nature, he had been endowed with a clear mind and he could make his own reasoning without the help of books.

At the age of twenty-two he had been working for the movie industry as Brady's partner, who was already a millionaire at that time. At thirty-four Stahr had already got at the top as a leader in this industry, which under his initiative had reached new heights. His competitors watched him constantly with the hope of guessing what his next movements were going to be, what novelties in taste or direction he was going to introduce. For he was a genius, "he was a maker in industry like Edison and Lumière and Griffith and Chaplin." (51)

Contrasting with Anthony's inactivity, so characteristic of a young man spoiled by good fortune, Stahr was an indefatigable worker. There was no end to his activities. He worked to exhaustion, with absolute forgetfulness of his delicate health, for he enjoyed planning, organizing, commanding.

He had been born with a genial knack for approaching people, he could arise their thoughts, could direct their work without giving straight commands, he knew how to rise despondent spirits, how to improve everything. He was kind and fatherly toward his employees. And the simplicity of his treatment gave them courage and confidence. They did not hesitate to bring him their personal problems. They looked for Stahr when they were in trouble because he never denied them his help. So that he had become a hero among them:

There is no world so but it has its heroes, and Stahr was the hero. Most of these men had been here a long time - through the beginning and the great upset, when sound came, and the three years of depression, he had seen that no harm came to them. (52)

Like Dick Diver, Stahr gave much thought to people; he restored Peter Zavras to the work that had been denied to him through somebody's ill-will. He found a way of raising the courage of the actor Mr. Roderiguez, who was in bad personal trouble. He gave wonder-

ful advice to writers and directors. In a word, he was the very soul of the studio.

He too, like Dick, wanted to be loved and admired though he was not over-sentimental, for as he states, he did not wear his heart in his sleeve:

I like people and I like them to like me, but I wear my heart where God put it - on the inside. (53)

In other words he liked to help people, solve their problems, but he never let people know what was going inside him. He was an introverted man. Nobody knew how lonely he was, how he missed his dead wife, who had been a famous actress and that the people of the studio already seemed to have forgotten.

A distinguished critic says that Fitzgerald in , portraying his hero had planned to emphasize certain parallels between Stahr and two eminent American political executives: Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Jackson:

53 Ibid. p. 21.

Jackson was intended to illustrate the ruthless autocratic elements in Stahr's personality... In his single-minded struggle to maintain independent authority over his organization... (54)

And indeed we can appreciate Stahr's ruthlessness when at the beginning of the novel he brutally snubbed Mr. Schwartz, a producer who tried to warn him against his enemies. Some hours later Schwartz committed suicide, because he considered that if Stahr thought him useless, it meant that he would never again be the man he had been in his best years. And symbolical-ly enough he shot himself at the home of Andrew Jackson. According to the same critic:

Stahr was also to be an expert political strategist, an artist in human relationship. Instead of removing his enemies, for instance, Stahr follows Lincoln's practice and keeps them where he can watch what they are doing. (54)

One of his worst enemies was his own partner Mr. Brady, who was envious of Stahr and wanted to have all the power in his hands. Taking advantage of Stahr's absence due to a business trip to Washington, Brady spoiled the labor relations, which had already become a trouble

54. Henry D. Piper. F. Scott Fitzgerald. A Critical Portrait. p. 268-9

for the industry, thus making it more difficult for Stahr to get things under control. Stahr, like Abraham Lincoln, had to fight in a great diversity of fronts, and likewise, as circumstances had made Lincoln a general of necessity, so Stahr, had had to become an artist driven by the con^straining power of the circumstances.

Stahr was very smart and only thanks to his natural gifts he had been able to create such an enormous industry. To it he had to dedicate all his time and all his faculties to keep it working. On the other hand his work helped him to forget his own troubles, did not leave time for personal grief or desolation:

Since the death of his beloved wife he had, as a kind of compensation driven himself in his work to the point of emotional and physical exhaustion. (55)

Stahr had always been cold by nature, and though his marriage with Minna, his deceased wife, had been one of the best matches one can imagine, he had never lost his head for her. Only when she got ill and he saw

55. J.E. Miller. F. Scott Fitzgerald, his Art and his Technique. p. 150

her going away from him for ever, only then,

just before she died, all unwillingly and surprised, his tenderness had burst and surged forward and he had been in love with her. In love with her and death together - with the world in which she looked so alone that he wanted to go with her there. (56)

So that he had given himself entirely to his work, as the only way of causing his melancholy thoughts to recede. He could become so engrossed in his work that everything else faded away.

Then the marvelous meeting with Kathleen, the living image of his deceased wife, their love-affair, brought him a kind of relaxation from his unrelenting activities, introduced a welcome change in his life, for

If he was going to die soon, like the two doctors said, he wanted to stop being Stahr for a while and hunt for love like men who had no gifts to give, like young nameless men who looked along the streets in the dark. (57)

Yet, only a woman who absolutely resembled his lost wife, could attract him, for he remained faithful to his wife's memory. His love affair with Kathleen reminds us of Gatsby's story. Here we have Stahr's attach-

56. The Last Tycoon. p.117

57. Ibid. p. 110

ment to his deceased wife, Minna, that draws him to Kathleen. Stahr acts like Gatsby in his determined pursuit of Daisy. Both men try in some way to regain possession of the past. Although Stahr's main dream was not exactly Kathleen, for he let her marry another man. His real dream was his industry, his creation, the concentrated effort of so many years. He was proud of his achievement, not just because he had reached the top of the social scale, not because of the money it brought him; he was interested in it as an artist because he had made it. The quality of some pictures he had made was superior to the plays in Broadway and sometimes he was even ready to lose money in order to make pictures of great value, pictures that would give fame to Hollywood.

When he met the girl who arose his emotions a series of inner conflicts started. He needed her and yet he could not bring himself to marry her. First of all, because he was unable to devote himself unselfishly to another human creature, and besides, because she

was not of his own status. There was something that prevented him from taking a decision. His name had always been associated with distinguished personalities, and Kathleen was poor, unfortunate "and tagged with a middle class exterior which does not fit with the grandeur Stahr demands of life" (58) Until she wrote him that she had married the American, Stahr did not realize how much he needed her.

In contrast with the rest of Fitzgerald's heroines, that had the glamour which riches lends to natural beauty, Kathleen came from a very poor English family. When her parents died they did not leave her anything but poverty and ignorance. Living with her stepmother, also of poor origin and as ignorant as her own parents, ^{not} had done her any good either. When the old woman had died Kathleen had not become a street-walker because she was too weak for it. Nevertheless an uncle of hers had taken advantage of her helpless situation. She had tried working on several jobs in order to earn her living. It had been difficult for her, because

58. Ibid. p.169

she was conscious that a girl of her beauty was sometimes admitted for her looks and not for her abilities. After several failures she found an easier way of living. She became the mistress of a wealthy married man, who had a passion for educating her. With him she had traveled the world around and had picked a little education from here and there. She did not care about getting knowledge, as Stahr did. She told him that at the time she was trying patiently to forget everything she had learned with the man. Stahr protested, he had a lot of respect for learning and learned people. Kathleen had lived in cities whose names Stahr had never heard before. She mentioned writers and philosophers whose existence Stahr did not know. He had to ask his writers when he wanted to know something, and could not stand the idea of throwing away the knowledge that had been acquired by learning.

Afterwards Kathleen had met another man, the American, who had helped her to run away from the first

one, who having become a drunkard, had tried to force her on his friends. She was going to marry the American, so that she would become a kept woman again though this time under the title of "wife". She told Stahr that she was going to marry the American because it had already been arranged so. But Stahr understood that she wanted to find out if he was in love with her and would marry her. In fact, he wanted to keep her for himself, she could save him, make him strong again; but he decided to "sleep on it as an adult" (58a)

Kathleen had had an indifferent, cold way with men. She was confident in her own beauty and had lived by exploiting it. With Stahr she held a different attitude. For the first time she was not indifferent, but passionate. She had fallen in love and gave herself to Stahr generously. It was the first time when she forgot about herself in her feelings for another human creature. She was willing to dedicate her attentions to Stahr, to take care of him and to break her engagement because of him. But when she realized that

Stahr was not ready to marry her, she left him

not because he has no legal intentions toward her but because of the hurt of it, the remainder of a vanity from which she had considered herself free. (59)

Her beauty had usually been enough to conquer a man whenever she had decided so. There were many men ready to accept her, and that Stahr should hesitate before taking a decisive step was rather painful for her.

Besides, being the first poor heroine that appears in Fitzgerald's novels, Kathleen is as well the only one who is not selfish and has several values that all the other women lacked. She is affectionate, may offer companionship and understanding. Stahr had forfeited all her qualities by his single-minded devotion to his magnificent creation. While for Gatsby his work was only a means of reaching his love-dream, for Stahr work is the main spring of life. In the first place Kathleen was not his first love, and besides

• 59. Ibid. p. 169

he was not a young person - he was a mature man, too reflective. When the moment to take a decision concerning Kathleen came, he could not pronounce the necessary words:

He could have said it then, said 'It is a new life' for he knew it was, he knew he could not let her go now; but something else said to sleep on it as an adult, no romantic. (60)

On losing her he lost the opportunity of coming back to life, for he would have had to take care of himself in order to be able to protect her. He would get back his strength to dedicate to his passion for creating artistic values.

^{'s}
Kathleen's marriage was a hard and unexpected blow for him. The growing labour troubles never seemed to have worried him so much as they did on those days. And when he met with one of the organizers of the Communist Party, he drunk too many cocktails and whiskies and started a fight from which he came out badly. He did not look like the correct Stahr who



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never used to lose his head.

In the synopsis Fitzgerald kept for the further development of the novel, he points out at the increasing difficulties which the changes that were taking place in the country with the rising of the Trade Unions brought to Stahr. He did not think that the Unions were necessary, for he had never tried to cheat his employees out of their rights. He could not cope with the new ways of managements. The industry he had created so lovingly had become an enormous monster that threatened to devour him. He was doomed to be the last of the princes of business, the Last Tycoon, who lived his last days under the menace of vile plots against his life and against his dream. He was destroyed by the changes in the business organization that his own talents had created, by the industry he had so passionately loved.

CONCLUSIONS.

A. Fitzgerald's attitude toward wealth.

Fitzgerald's writings are on the whole dedicated to depict the life of American wealthy people during one of the most singular periods of history - the years between the two world wars - as seen by the author. He drew a great deal of material from the boom years, that had caused a tremendous commotion in American society during the 20's, when so many people swiftly climbed to the top of the social ladder, and it was believed that there would be no end to prosperity and enjoyment.

The Great Gatsby is the portrayal of a romantic bootlegger of those years. The Beautiful and Damned refers to the years preceding the First World War, including the development and the end of the war. It was in a training camp that Anthony appeared as a really worthless man. Military discipline had divested him of the polish that wealth lent him and that made him feel superior to common people. The Last

Tycoon lets the reader have a glance at the change
ne
America had undergone after the big depression. It
reflects the rising of the Trade Unions during the
thirties, as a secondary theme to the description
of the powerful movie industry that had developed
in Hollywood. It may be said that in this novel he
gave the first literary portrait of the great American
businessman.

It cannot be denied that at first glance there is
a certain ambiguity in Fitzgerald's attitude toward
the "very rich", whom he admired and detested at the
same time. Nevertheless after a close examination of
the rich characters in his novels one observes two
kinds: those who awaken his contempt and the sort of
rich men he fully admired.

As to wealth itself, he regarded it as a means
of rising above the vulgarity of life. The possession
of riches conferred a kind of nobility, it was some-
thing akin to aristocracy for him, because it could
allow the enjoyment of beauty, and thanks to it one
could avoid the coarseness of humble life. His views

on riches had a romantic quality, for behind it he seemed to catch a glimpse of paradise..

The duality of his feelings toward people of immense pecuniary resources had, perhaps, its foundation in the social origin of the author. Having been born in a family that came from rich ancestors, but that at the time of his birth did not belong any more to the upper class, since his parents were just what was known as impoverished gentility, he had an education superior to the family resources. So, because of his ancestry and because of his education, he had always moved among people of higher rank than his own. This circumstance had given birth to the morbid duality of his feelings toward rich people that we find in his novels. On the one hand he was attracted by the orderly world of wealth, where human needs are not just satisfied, but where their satisfaction is turned into radiant pleasures. On the other hand in his native town, at college and afterwards among the rich people with whom he usually associated, he always became painfully conscious of the inferiority of his monetary

resources. He had never forgotten Ginevra King's father, the haughty man who had disdained him for his poverty.

When Fitzgerald succeeded as a writer and had almost as much money as he wanted, he spent it recklessly, extravagantly, creating again the old feeling of deprivation and inferiority every time he went out of funds, and even into debt.

Thus came out the two sort of rich characters so clearly delineated in his novels: the real heroes of his liking - Stahr, Gatsby, men who like himself had acquired wealth by their own efforts, thanks to their strong will and capacities; and the negative rich characters, those who presented the traits he detested - the Buchanans, the Warrens, Brady, the nasty rich who had lost a great deal of good human qualities, because their extreme riches, got without struggle or the exertion of personal talents had hardened them, had made them cruel, supercilious and dull.

All the heroines of his novels, except Kathleen,

belong to the second sort of rich people. All of them Gloria, Nicole and Daisy had a single positive quality: their beauty. They had always been social parasites, they were good-for-nothing. This type of woman came also from Fitzgerald's personal experience. In one of the letters he wrote to his daughter in the last years of his life, he insisted in her going through college and getting a profession. He told her that he had often hated his mother-in-law for not having taught her daughter anything useful. He believed that if his wife had had a useful occupation she would not have fallen victim of her terrible illness. Zelda had been aware herself of the harm of absolute leisure, but when she had tried to acquire some craft it was too late. Fitzgerald prophesied that in his daughter's life-time most women in the United States would be able to work in order to earn their own living, thus getting independence and self-respect.

Few critics fail to recognize that Fitzgerald's attempt to define the rich was a legitimate and peculiarly appropriate subject for an American writer. His dis-

taste for poverty was as natural as his admiration of wealth, for in America, the land of promises and expectations, it was not expected to be unavoidable. It was not expected to exist by those who all over the world looked at that country as if it were a beacon. And Fitzgerald's works seem to affirm, that indeed, men of courage and will found the merited reward there.

B.- The desirability of youth.

Fitzgerald believed that literary work to be valuable must explore human character, must pursue the examination into human emotions. In his novels his own incursions into human emotions are limited to young people, to their youthful dreams and aspirations, to their capacity for facing what real life offers them in contrast with what they want to get.

Though he was so drawn toward riches and luxury Fitzgerald regarded youth as the only really valuable possession for human beings. For him it was youth that gave meaning to life.

Old people appear just as a background., In these

novels, for the sake of giving a broader picture of the characters, details are sometimes given about the heroes' childhood and adolescence, but the plot is always centered on events referring to early manhood and womanhood. Even if the story comprises a long period it is never so long that we may see them involved in the troubles of old age, or even middle age, for the eldest of his heroes reaches the age of thirty-seven.

Being a young man Fitzgerald felt such a horror of becoming old himself that once he stated his belief that it was worth living just to the age of thirty. It seemed to him that ugliness and general decay were unavoidable if one lived longer. For him time was the fiercest enemy, the one that turned romance into tragedy.

According to his idea, old people lacked vitality and were mentally slow. Old age meant the end of expectations. No future to dream of, no more wide horizons for adventure and success. The abhorrence toward a too long life had crept into Fitzgerald's mind in his childhood. He was just eleven years old when his father

lost his job, a shock that had turned Edward Fitzgerald into an old man, broken man. This fact had left in his son a perennial discomfort connected with the fear of old age. Fitzgerald seemed to feel that it was not death that put an end to living, it was the loss of youthful illusions.

The eldest person to enter the pages of Fitzgerald's novels is Adam Patch, who after having gathered his riches without moral scruples, became a moral reformer. For all his wealth, he was just a repulsive man, who had become a prey of stale ideas and imaginary preoccupations. The physical description Fitzgerald gives of the old man is a high condensation of the utter ugliness of old age. A man like Adam Patch, who had had the energy and ability to amass a fortune of seventy-five million dollars had turned into a feeble, unintelligent creature, for old age had debilitated his mind as well as his body. He ascribes to Anthony's grandfather every mental and physical failing that he most feared himself.

So that not even great wealth, not even the enormous

fortune of Adam Patch, such a desirable possession for an intelligent young man, can compensate the loss of youth. Money is not important for itself, though it is very necessary as a complement to the vitality of youth, because it makes possible the full enjoyment of life.

Consequently there is nothing to write about old people once they begin to decay. Young people on the other hand, have a world to conquer, a land of promise spreads before them and there is a lot to tell about the different paths they follow in order to reach the same end: disenchantment and the loss of youth. For all his heroes, in one way or another, come to this end.

The menace of old age haunts his feminine characters and his male characters as well. The men are afraid for themselves and for the women they love, for time will rob ^{them} of their charms and kill their happiness.

C.- His worship of beauty.

Fitzgerald's idea of youth was tightly linked with the idea of beauty. All Fitzgerald's heroines have an

exquisite beauty. The writer regarded beauty as an attribute of youth and his heroines are so beautiful because they are always very young. Nicole was seventeen when Dr. Diver saw her at the clinic for the first time. Gloria was just twenty-two when Anthony married her, and she was already afraid of the proximity of old age. Daisy got acquainted with Gatsby at the age of seventeen. For his heroines to be young and beautiful was all the meaning of life. The idea of becoming old filled them with anguish.

The world of loveliness that Fitzgerald created in his novels not only depended on youth, it owed a great deal to riches. The possession of wealth accounted for the brightness of the girls' appearance. Make up and clothes can do a great deal to enhance beauty, and theirs were expensive. Their wardrobe was carefully chosen and had the exclusive style of which only grand couturiers know the secret. Consequently leisure and money were two important factors that helped to intensify and preserve their good looks. Working girls could not pretend to rival in loveliness with women

belonging to the leisure class.

Fitzgerald's idea of beauty was the blending of a perfect body with a clear mind. A woman was really attractive when her features were illuminated by the light of a quick understanding. In fact the main feminine characters in his novels possess the kind of beauty that is strongly linked with spirit. They are clever and witty, though nobody has ever taken much care of their intellectual education.

Notwithstanding his idolization of beauty Fitzgerald pointed at its dual nature: it is delightful and evil at the same time. Beauty is the temptation that makes men abandon the path of virtue and leads them to destruction. His moral concern and the sense of evil lurking in beauty, that we find in all Fitzgerald's serious work were perhaps a reminiscence of his religious upbringing and his friendship with Monsignor Fay, who had remained one of his most valuable friends through his life. Monsignor Fay had always affirmed that at heart Fitzgerald would always be a religious man - even if he was not a practicing Catholic any more -

because it is impossible to be a romantic, as he was, without religion.

D.- Women as an evil force.

In his novels Fitzgerald did not dedicate much space to the feminine characters as to the male characters. Nevertheless they do play an important role in them. This importance consists mainly in their direct contribution in the deterioration that the men undergo throughout their lives. All the lovely women appear as a destructive force working for the ruin of the main masculine characters: Gloria was fatal for Anthony, and though he was conscious of the danger of falling for a spoiled girl, though he wanted to run away from her, the force of her loveliness was stronger than his will. His degradation began with his marriage. Dick Diver was perfectly aware that it would be a mistake for a psychiatrist to marry a mental patient, yet Nicole's beauty haunted him and he surrendered to his fate, because it was like a supernatural force that dominated him. Likewise Daisy was the reason for the annihilation of

Gatsby. Gatsby is punished for having been faithful to beauty and having let his infatuation consume him.

The only partial exception to the evil role of women is Kathleen. She is quite different from the other women - first, she is poor, second, she is not so young, then she is not proud. She is not an American woman and feels greatly honoured at being selected by Stahr from among so many glamorous girls that surrounded him. She had nothing to do with the forces that destroyed Stahr, and yet she inflicted him a rude blow.

The men in Fitzgerald's fiction are often astonished by the fearlessness and recklessness of women. Dick Diver, for example, is finally aware of the deceitfulness and amorality of Nicole. Anthony comes to hate Gloria, and Gatsby must have felt the wickedness of Daisy before dying.

E.- The adequacy of the settings.

In Fitzgerald's novels the settings are sparingly outlined and only when they may help to bring forth the idiosyncrasy of the main characters they are given

in full length. By the detailed description of the places a character moves in, we may guess about his likings and dislikings, about his customs. Anthony's reproachless apartment is precisely the place for a dandy with expensive tastes and free of cares, except the care of his body and the satisfaction of his fancies.

Sometimes the setting reflects the character's mood. The "grey house" that in the first summer that Anthony and Gloria spent in it had seemed so attractive to them, in their third summer Gloria thought that it was haunted by "horror". The rooms that had seemed so pleasant had become threatening, as the horror of their own way of living had depressed her. All her fancies about the house were the effect of the dejection produced by the winter months of debauchery.

On placing both Gatsby and the Buchanans on Long Island, the fact that they all belong to the layer of the "very rich" is punctuated; on placing them at the opposite borders of the "Courtesy Bay" the difference of their social standing is emphasized.

To say that East Egg is more fashionable than West Egg is not all. Besides, there is quite a sinister contrast between the two places. In West Egg the buildings are mixed in style, because the people who owns these buildings are not long-established families, with refined tastes, but the newly rich, "the parvenues", those who grasping the opportunities of the moment have become rich by any means, honourable or dishonourable. The Buchanans house in East Egg, with flowing curtains, rosy sunny porches and a series of connecting verandas evoked the idea of life free from too deep or serious emotions, light and graceful. On the contrary Gatsby's mansion on West Egg was an enormous heavy building inspired on models of a long past time. Gatsby's house was not static. It seemed to have a soul. At first it was gay with music and swarms of guests, with servants and other working people. It is as full of sounds as Gatsby is full of hopes, while awaiting for the renewal of his happiness. Then on the eve of his meeting with Daisy, after a five year separation, the house appear^{ed} blazing, lit

from tower to cellar, yet hushed and expectant for the marvel to come. Later, under Daisy's glance the splendor of the rooms was wrapped in breathless silence, as if it were an enchanted palace. Thencefore Gatsby's mansion remained dark on week-ends. The silence and quietness into which the house had sunk seemed a premonition of the utter abandonment that was to come.

Tom Buchanan's apartment in New York was an adequate frame for the grossness of the relationship with Mirtle. It was a conspicuous evidence of her pretentiousness and vulgarity. To move about " was quite a task, because it was over-furnished and over-decorated. The narrator's dislike for the place is explicitly evidenced by his ironical description of the only picture adorning the walls, a tasteless photograph over-enlarged and blurred. The place was a proper setting for the ensuing rude scene between Tom and Mirtle. A sordid background for a base affair, for mean characters who fit in it so perfectly that the

reader finds their parts in the following events quite in harmony with the image so created.

The turn of the story, the moment in which Gatsby feels pushed to take a decisive step for what he thinks to be the deliverance of Daisy, is set on neutral ground, in a splendid parlour, a stuffy room hellishly hot, where Tom like a real devil set upon destroying Daisy's illusions about Gatsby, with the most rude and offensive statements. As an ironical prelude to the blow to be inflicted on Gatsby, the chords of Mendelssohn's wedding march from the ball-room below are echoed into the parlour as a symbol of the vanishing dream.

With Dick and Nickle the reader is shown all the gorgeous places in Europe that the rich North American expatriates used to prefer for the enjoyment of their leisure. In a swift succession of pictures we follow them from Zürich to the French Riviera, Cannes, Nice, The Swis Alps, Paris, Munich, Rome; from restaurant to restaurant, from party to party, great wealth, leisure and the search for pleasure - that is the

synthesis of their existence.

The wonderful Diver's Villa at the Riviera is the triumph of Nicole's luxurious habits over Dick's purpose of living according to his own means.

If in Tender Is the Night we have a glimpse of the places that Fitzgerald frequented during his long stay in Europe, with The Last Tycoon he ushers us to California and offers us a picture of Hollywood. The main background are the movie studios, where we can appreciate the full stature of Stahr. There he spent his days and his evenings, for his work was his real passion. Stahr's personal life was so unimportant for him that his own home did not matter at all. It was just a place to sleep in, for a short rest. The house he was building without any definite purpose, did not have a roof yet, which was, perhaps, a symbol that though he loved Kathleen, he could not offer her the protection she really needed.

It may be said that the description of the settings in Fitzgerald's novels is quite realistic, in accordance with the real places in which the plots evolve. Yet

his descriptive prose is sometimes tinted by the emotions that fill his characters at a given moment and turn their perceptions into fanciful, unreal impressions.

Fitzgerald is not prone to long descriptions of places. Here and there he throws short remarks about the surrounding scene, and they are often worded so imaginatively that they may evoke a romantic disposition. His scarce descriptions of scenery are always full of vivid images. He depicts the places with such a florid realism that infuses a nuance of fantasy to the most life-like places.

....

After the long wave of sweeping popularity that Fitzgerald had reached with his first novels and stories, he was severely criticized by some critics and then completely forgotten. But lately the respectability of the novel of manners increased and Fitzgerald's merits have been recognized, and he has been given a place beside such writers as Edith Wharton and Henry James as a very sharp observer of American

society. Fitzgerald had a wonderful capacity of hitting upon details which suggest an atmosphere much larger than their own, as it is, for example, Dick's musing about the interest that usually arose any speech coming from an American psychiatrist in Europe, just because he was a citizen of a powerful, rich country.

Though it was undeniable that Fitzgerald was a realistic writer he has been generally regarded as a romantic, a romantic-realist. His main merit consisted in the vivid portrayal of a social group in a definite epoch. So here we meet again a duality of attitude which may seem contradictory. Perhaps we could explain it considering that as a writer he was a realist, who took his material from society, from the American environment in his country sometimes and on other occasions from the one the rich Americans had created in Europe.

But as a man he was a romantic. Some of his critics consider that his romanticism was a trait inherited from his Irish ancestors. And his romantic nature

infiltrated his writings, giving a touch of romanticism to the most real images. Gatsby is a fair example of it, for though he is ^a typical product of the 20's, he reminds us of the kind, generous bandits painted by the romantic writers of the XIX century. The ideal image of Daisy, that Gatsby had created himself and adored, is a flight from reality into the realm of fantasy. In all Fitzgerald's novels there is a tinge of idealization, a heightened colouring of people, or events, or situations, which is due to his own romantic views on life. In his declining years he became a pessimist, because all the illusions he had nourished had turned into disappointments.

He declared then, that one must not expect to find satisfaction in pleasure, but in the struggle for becoming valuable. The value he attributed to creative work can be easily traced in his novels. He regarded work as an important activity for the development of the personality. And in fact, the only real happiness one can attain in this world- he told his daughter - is the harvesting of one's fruitful work.

His best characters are those who have found a vocation, a mission to fulfill. Work dignifies them, gives them strength and character. While Dick Diver was dedicated to science he was an almost perfect man; on slackening his scientific work and letting himself be driven to a leisure life, his own degradation started. Among Fitzgerald's heroes Stahr is the highest standing figure, he is the one most unrelentingly consecrated to his great creation, and the writer admires him.

The really ennobling work is the one a man carries on without thinking much of retributions other than the satisfaction of having created a real value. Fitzgerald himself regretted the time wasted writing worthless stories, and complained of his mistake, because he had not kept on the path he had entered on writing the Great Gatsby, the work which alone would have been enough to make him famous. And his conviction of the elevating character of work he expressed in his novels.

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