

# **DRAMATIC PORTRAITS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649216390

Dramatic portraits by P. P. Howe

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**P. P. HOWE**

**DRAMATIC  
PORTRAITS**





DRAMATIC  
PORTRAITS

BY P. P. HOWE



NEW YORK  
MITCHELL KENNERLEY  
MCMXIII

*A critic should be taught to criticize a work of art without making any reference to the personality of the author. This, in fact, is the beginning of criticism.*

WILDE: A Letter on "Dorian Gray"

*Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself.*

BUTLER: "The Way of All Flesh"



PR  
113  
831

22/11/03  
LIBRARY  
187  
187

### NOTE

THROUGHOUT this book a particular point of view has been adhered to, a point of view from which the dramatic art is looked upon as a separate art from the literary, and from which especial attention is given to the manner of its practice. Thus, the works of nearly all the dramatists passed under review are to be read—a complete list of the books will be found in the Bibliography at the end—but I have spoken of them, as far as possible, in terms of their presentation in the theatre.

Four of the chapters first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, and I wish to make to the Editor of that periodical full acknowledgment of his courtesy.

P. P. H.



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. ARTHUR PINERO	11
II. HENRY ARTHUR JONES	53
III. OSCAR WILDE	83
IV. J. M. BARRIE	115
V. BERNARD SHAW	133
VI. ST. JOHN HANKIN	163
VII. GRANVILLE BARKER	185
VIII. HUBERT HENRY DAVIES	209
IX. JOHN GALSWORTHY	231
CHRONOLOGY OF PLAYS	257
BIBLIOGRAPHY	263

# I

## ARTHUR PINERO

**I**N the third act of the thirty-third play of Sir Arthur Pinero, we read :

**HILARY.** Come, Mrs. Filmer ! Let us believe, if we can—if it makes us better, and gentler, and more merciful !—let us believe that in all this there was the hand of God !

**NINA** [*harshly*]. Very well ; let us believe it. [*Looking him in the face defiantly and measuring her words.*] Only we must believe equally that it's the hand of God that has brought these letters from their hiding-place and has delivered them to me.

Since this is to be an inquiry into drama, and not an inquiry into theology or philosophy, we must assume at the outset that it was not the hand of God that caused the first Mrs. Filmer Jesson and her lover to write incriminating letters to one another while they were in the same house, that caused her to store them behind the loose boarding in a cupboard in her boudoir, that killed her in a carriage accident, and that delivered the letters three years later into the possession of her successor ; but the hand of Sir Arthur Pinero. The

## DRAMATIC PORTRAITS

drama must have reality, but the first essential to our understanding of an art is that we should not believe it to be actual life. The spectator who shouts his warning and advice to the heroine when the villain is approaching is, in the theatre, the only true believer in the hand of God ; and he is liable to find it in a drama lower than the best. Let us believe that it is the hand of Sir Arthur Pinero we are to talk about. And let us, for the moment, place on one side the fourteen or fifteen farces and comic plays, from *The Schoolmistress* and *The Magistrate* to *A Wife without a Smile* and *Preserving Mr. Panmure*. No one would think of looking for the hand of God in these.

An inquiry into the serious art of this dramatist is an inquiry into upwards of thirty years of the English theatre. The work of Sir Arthur Pinero's prentice hand is shrouded in an obscurity which one must believe to be deliberate. The present generation may know only of *Daisy's Escape* and *Bygones* as dwelling "as happy blendings of humour and pathos" in the memory of Mr. William Archer, a critic of the period. We must rest content to call them bygones, these.

With a third play, *Hester's Mystery*, the hand of Sir Arthur Pinero comes into the light. It is a play in one act, with a "rural setting" and "rustic dialogue," of the stage. There is a nice young man causing great mystery at the farm of Hester's mother, because he is so obviously