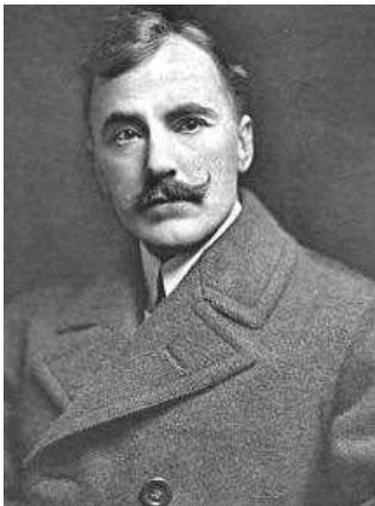


A Gay Century



Sauce for the Gander

Music
by
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Libretto by
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Cast

SIR WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS (tenor; top middle picture)

The Home Secretary. 63, known as Jix, which is much jollier than he is. He is a relic from the Victorian days, and dresses so – frock coat, wing collar. Non-conformist lay preacher, puritan, obsessed with stamping out pleasure. No doubts, no modesty, Shallow. A joke among his colleagues, known as Mussolini Minor.

RADCLYFFE HALL (contralto; top left picture)

Author of lesbian novel *The Well of Loneliness*. 48, known as John. Male-identified. Dressed in male suit and tie. Utterly self-confident and self-righteous, but fundamentally selfish, as a result of having huge amounts of money and always getting her own way. Accompanied by a small dachshund, Wotan, a cardboard cut-out on a string. Wotan is a non-singing part but represented in the orchestra.

Doubles with -

MRS MEYRICK (prologue) A Bright, rather camp not-so-Young Thing – think Judi Dench as Sally Bowles, but an Irish accent.

COMPTON MACKENZIE (bass/baritone; top right picture)

Novelist. 45. Longish hair and beard with upturned moustaches. Wide-brimmed hat and cloak. Very theatrical – has been a touring actor, and father and grandfather were barnstormers. His sister is Fay Compton. Satiric sense of humour. Lives on Jethou in the Channel Islands. Undermined by bad sciatica. Always on verge of bankruptcy. Doubles with -

STANLEY BALDWIN (prologue) 60. “Steady as she goes” – exudes calm and complacency – looks like a prosperous pig farmer.

JAMES DOUGLAS: (Countertenor, shrill; middle left picture)

Homophobic bigot editor of the Sunday Express. Bristly moustaches. A scot like Mackenzie, but of the dour Wee Free school. Like Jix and Hall, utterly humourless. He is Jix’s peppery, yappy West Highland Terrier.

WOTAN: (non-singing) A dachshund

Set

The scene is the Home Office in August 1928. A large ministerial desk, with a phone on it, and a pad and pencil.

Orchestration

I hear brass for Mackenzie, if it won’t drown out in a small space. French Horn, perhaps. The operatic model is Verdi.

Prologue

(Highly stylised. 1918 in Caption. JOYNSON-HICKS is standing for election as MP for Twickenham. He addresses a meeting, singers of HALL and MACKENZIE in the audience, as ordinary punters. Fanfare.)

JIX: You all know me,
 I'm William Joynson-Hicks
 The hero of the motorist
 I back the rights of cars.

AUDIENCE: Hooray!

JIX: The war is over

AUDIENCE: Hooray!

JIX: Germany is defeated

AUDIENCE: Hooray! Peace at last...

JIX: Oh, no, my friends, not peace at last
 A state of watchful readiness
 We must cow the Hun still further
 Bomb his village and his town
 Bring his German hubris down
 We have to punish
 Anything Hunnish

AUDIENCE 1: But that would be to punish
 Innocent civilians
 Helpless and unprotected

JIX: What better time to punish them
 Than when they're unprotected?

AUDIENCE: Hoorah!

[BALDWIN comes forward and congratulates him.]

BALDWIN: Majority eleven thousand
Well done! Well done! Well done!
You've crushed the Labour man and won
Always pays to bash the Hun

JIX: And to bash the Hebrew too
It's time to demonise the Jew.
One moment please
One other thing I want to do

[Turns to audience]

And now a word to all you Maccabeans
Zionists and such like Gallileans
I've lent on your electoral support
With your sustaining hand I fought
But now I have no need to be so winning
I'll climb the greasy pole without you
This is only the beginning
So I say, Jews, *[raspberry]* to the lot of you
I'm heartily glad to be shot of you

BALDWIN: What a fine example
Of our good old British ways
Now we can go back
To the old Victorian days
And good old Victorian prejudice

JIX: A victory for morality
And over bestiality
What next? What next?

[BALDWIN turns over calendar to 1919. Enter contralto as newsboy:]

NEWSBOY: Extra! Extra
Massacre in Amritsar
Unarmed crowd – Colonel Dyer –
Ordered troops to open fire –
Casualties in hundreds, maybe higher *[Exits]*

JIX: Quite right too

We have to show the Indian we're boss
We have English values to put across
And, in case you've all forgotten
We must sell them lots of cotton

BALDWIN: Oh, well done Jix. We'll keep the Empire yet.
Would you like to be a baronet?

JIX: I don't mind if I do.

[Calendar goes to 1923]

BALDWIN: And will you join the cabinet?

JIX: I don't mind if I do

BALDWIN: I think I've got a vacancy
The Home Office – I think it's free

JIX: I'd rather like that too.

BALDWIN: It's yours. *[Turns calendar to 1924]*

[They shake hands. A tremendous chord. JIX is revealed in all his power.]

JIX: I am the Home Secretary!
I am the ruler of the Kingdom now!

BALDWIN: *[Falls back horrified at the monster he's created]*
Great heavens!
I'd rather be back in Worcestershire
Breeding my Tamworth pigs
Than try to keep a muzzle on
Sir William Joynson-Hicks!

[He exits. JIX looks round, self-satisfied.]

JIX: *[Melodramatic self-satisfied declaration]*
Yes, there will be many changes
I am the master now

[Enter JAMES DOUGLAS, Calendar changes to 1926.]

DOUGLAS: Hail, hail, mini-Mussolini
Idol of the Wee Free
We think you're the bee's knees
And whatever vice you're trying to suppress
We guarantee support from the Sunday Express

JIX: Good boy, good boy *[Pats him]*
Now – Fetch!

[DOUGLAS bounds off.]

JIX: Where are the standards?
Where is the respect?
Where is the authority?
Licence is unchecked

[DOUGLAS returns, a newspaper in his mouth. JIX takes it.]

DOUGLAS: Sexy dancing everywhere
Flappers flapping in the air
Charleston – phew! – what a stink!
Culture trembling on the brink

JIX: Frenzied with intoxicating drink
From which all righteous people shrink.

DOUGLAS: Close those clubs!
Arrest those whores!
They've got to learn
Respect for laws

JIX: Round up the aliens
Round up the socialists!

[JIX is frothing and about to get wildly carried away. DOUGLAS worries at his sleeve.]

DOUGLAS: *[prompting]* Drunks.... Drinking on the Sabbath...
Drinking out of hours....

JIX: Oh sin, oh shame
Almost worse than pederasty

DOUGLAS: Sex in the streets... filth!

JIX: *[coming back]* Yes...
I will mop up all the sex in London.

[Enter MRS MEYRICK:]

MRS MEYRICK: You'll need a very large bucket, duckie.

JIX: Who are you, madam?

MRS MEYRICK: Kate Meyrick. Nightclub owner. The 43

DOUGLAS: Notorious haunt of artists and of pansies

MRS MEYRICK: I want to thank you for your good work
Drumming up my trade.
Never was sin made more attractive.
"Come to the 43, for orgies every night!"
They're flocking in.

JIX: I closed you down.

MRS MEYRICK: I know. I just opened up again next door.
That's all you're doing, don't you know.
Beating the poor pederasts from bar to bar
Like pheasants.

JIX: But what about the police?

MRS MEYRICK: The police are doing very nicely too.
The handouts help to supplement their pay
Which is, as you know, not the most generous.

JIX: You should be in prison.

MRS MEYRICK: I have been, thank you very much.
Five times. A proper education, that it was.

JIX: You are an immoral woman.

MRS MEYRICK: No, Sir William, I am a rich woman.
I've had seven children,
Put four of them through public school
And will the other three.
One day they'll marry the nobility.
I just want to say, Keep up the good work.
Harrow and Roedean don't pay for themselves.
Toodle-pip!

[She goes out singing a snatch of a song from a revue:]

Now all you birds come sing a roundelay
Now Mrs Meyrick's out of Holloway.

[DOUGLAS follows her to the door, snapping at her heels. Fade to blackout]

Scene One

[Calendar set to 1928. DOUGLAS reappears with another newspaper in his mouth. Deposits in front of JIX.]

JIX: Ah, the Sunday Express!
 The voice of sanity and cleanliness!

[DOUGLAS points eagerly to it. JIX reads:]

JIX: “*The Well of Loneliness*
 By Miss Radclyffe Hall...
 Unspeakable horror...
 Utterly degrading....
 Rather give a healthy boy or girl
 A phial of prussic acid
 Than this novel.
 Shade of Oscar Wilde....
 Still polluting our novels and our plays....”

DOUGLAS: Sexual inversion! Sexual perversion!

JIX : What’s the difference ?

DOUGLAS: Don’t know. Don’t care. It’s all filth!

[JIX keeps reading. DOUGLAS whips himself into a yapping frenzy.]

Flaunting!
Public places!
Pestilence!
Young lives!
Leprous as dog dirt,
On the streets
Everywhere!

[He sees it on his shoe and tries to rub it off furiously]

On your shoes!
Euch! Euch!
Clean it up!

Clean it up!
Use the law
Sunday Express demands:
Use the law!

[RADCLYFFE HALL appears dramatically, a figure of vengeance like Azucena in Il Trovatore. She has a cardboard cut-out dachshund, WOTAN, on wheels which she pulls on a string].

HALL: Yes, yes, use the law

DOUGLAS: Use the law

HALL: Yes, the law!

DOUGLAS: We demand the law

HALL:

[DOUGLAS does a double take, this is not what he expected.]

DOUGLAS: Miss Hall!

HALL: Yes, I am she whom you have so traduced
Whose name you have so trampled in the dust.
I will have justice
I will have retribution
I will have the law

JIX: I will be the judge of that

HALL: Oh, will you? You miserable maggot of morality
You mite of mediocrity –
Sit, Wotan!

[DOUGLAS bares his teeth and growls]

DOUGLAS: Spawn of Satan!

JIX: Sit, Douglas!

HALL: I have written *Loneliness* in blood.

Yes! In my heart's blood!
It has taken my heart, my lights,
My liver and my soul.
[Fierce] Prosecute me!
Yes, prosecute the poor tormented thousands!
I will stand for all of them
I will stand in the dock and say
"Yes, I am an invert!
Do with me what you will!"
I'll plead for the accursed and the afflicted
We will not be condemned
For that which God has made us!

[To WOTAN] I said sit!

DOUGLAS: Sucker on the teat of turpitude!

JIX: *[to DOUGLAS]* I said sit!

HALL: You cannot silence me
I will have my day in court
And I will be heard.

JIX: Madam, you are immoral!

DOUGLAS: Madam? Sir?
Which? Which?
Monocle!
Catamite!

HALL: *[calm]* Not catamite, not I
A catamite is the invert's mate

DOUGLAS/JIX: Lady Una Troubridge!

HALL: Lady Una is no catamite!
You will not besmirch milady's name.

JIX: You and she – notorious
Your filthy practices
Headlines in the papers
'Lesbians' were on the tongue
Of every woman in London

DOUGLAS: Should have banned 'em!

JIX: Almost did!
House of Lords wouldn't have it
Thought it would give women dangerous ideas –
And now this – vile obscenity
Tries to do the same

HALL: The truth must not be feared
It must be fought for
With the strong desire for justice

JIX: I am the Home Secretary –
What have I to do with justice?

DOUGLAS: Unmitigated filth?

HALL: How can it be filth?
It cost fifteen shillings
To keep it from the hands of chambermaids
And those in search of cheap sensation.

DOUGLAS: Immoral earnings!
Literary whore!

HALL: My thoughts were on higher things
You can tell from the plain black binding

You philistine –
But I can bear it
The shoulders of the invert must be broad
To face the harsh calumny of the world

JIX: You will have all the calumny
Your twisted soul desires
If I can have my way

HALL: Do your worst!
Prosecute me!

[A clap of thunder. In silhouette COMPTON MACKENZIE, a ridiculously melodramatic figure, in cloak and broad brimmed hat. It is a bit like the knocking of the Commendatore at the end of Don Giovanni]

MACKENZIE: Prosecute me!

HALL/MAC: Prosecute me!

[A little canon on this – Me – me – me; it is very competitive]

JIX: Who, sir, are you?

MAC: Edward Montague Compton Mackenzie
OBE, Legion d'Honneur,
Serbian Order of the White Eagle
Greek Order of the Redeemer
Master spy, war hero,
Novelist and historian,
Founder editor of the Gramophone Magazine
Founder too of the National Party of Scotland
President of the Siamese Cat Club

[The dog barks.]

HALL: Quiet, Wotan!
He does that when you mention cats

MAC: Journalist
Billiards player
Master of the croquet mallet
Island owner
Follower of West Bromwich Albion

JIX: What is - ?

MAC: *[To JIX]* West Bromwich Albion
I love it for the name.

You know me, James, of course
I've worked for you down the years

DOUGLAS: Mackenzie, by golly

HALL: You worked for – that – thing ?

MAC: A man has to live, John.
It's very fine for you
With your enormous trust fund
Your retinue of servants
Your regular dividends
You can afford the luxury
Of writing as and when.
I have massive debts
I have Jethou to maintain
An island costs a lot, you know.
I have an independent wife
Who likes to travel.

HALL: How is Faith?
I saw her in Capri
With Romaine Brooks

MAC: I have to write for Douglas
Or anyone
A jobbing hack, that's me
I write my way out of debt
Fifteen novels since the war
Two a year.
I'll be clear by nineteen-thirty.

Seen my latest?

[Flourishes it under the noses of DOUGLAS and JIX]

Extraordinary Women
Mmm – smell the scent of Sappho!
The intermingled perfumes
Of lesbians in love

[He inhales deeply, DOUGLAS AND JIX recoil in horror]

So, prosecute it!
I'd love to have the chance
To cross-examine you in court,

Show you up
For the self-righteous humbugs that you are!
Besides, the public needs a laugh

HALL: *[picking up Mackenzie's novel]*
A malicious work
It dares to treat the invert as a joke

MAC: It treats life as a joke
That is what a comic novel does

HALL: You trample my desires in the dust.

MAC: Your self-indulgence, rather.

John be reasonable.
You don't need publicity, but I do.
You can afford to take your time
I can't.
Look how long your damn book is!
Five hundred and twelve pages,
And mine a mere two-forty.
You can have the extra pages
The double length and more
Because you have five thousand pounds a year
Of unearned income.

[To JIX] Prosecute me, I beg you
I need the money.
Why should she get all the glory
All the fun?
All that martyrdom will turn her head
And make her even more impossible.
You're making sure her sickly guff
Will never be forgotten.

HALL: And quite right too
It is a work of genius.

MAC: It is tedious and absolutely humourless

HALL: Inversion –

JIX: Any version, it's still obscene

MAC: The only thing obscene is the idea
That a woman rolling in money
With a country estate
Who rides and hunts and treats her servants badly
Doing whatever she damn well likes
Is one of the rejected of the Lord.
Try telling that to my compatriots
In the Gorbals tenemented slums

DOUGLAS: She is an instrument of corruption

JIX: Where Radclyffe Hall leads, other will follow

MAC: How can she lead girls astray
Giving her heroine such a rotten time?
Here she describes her kind – listen ! –
"A miserable army despised of the world
Who must despise themselves
Beyond all hope of salvation
With those haunted yet tormented
Eyes of the invert"

HALL: Magnificent. So powerful.
Sometimes I can move myself to tears.

[WOTAN howls.]

See, even Wotan is stirred

MAC: The dog must be a literary critic.

[Reads again]

"There are so many of us
With no right to love
Maimed, hideously maimed and ugly"
Is that you, John?

Are you hideously maimed and ugly?

HALL: I am maimed inside, for lack of love

MAC: I think your Una might think otherwise
And all the others you seduced.
In truth, you know exactly who you are
And what you want
And nothing ever stops you getting it.
You're nothing but a spoilt brat.

HALL: Do you hear this, Wotan?

MAC: A middle-aged brat

HALL: Oh the coarse, the cruel barbs

[WOTAN growls, MACKENZIE threatens to kick him. HALL intervenes.]

HALL: Strike not the poor defenceless brute.

MAC: Jix, can't you see? John is on your side.
It's a warning to young normal girls.
John, read the last page, if you're so proud of it.

HALL: I do not need to read.

[Starts softly, builds:]

"Who were they, these strangers
With the miserable eyes?
The marred and ghastly faces
With the glassy melancholy eyes
Of the invert.
'Stephen, speak with your God,
Ask why he has left us forsaken.'
Rockets of pain
All welded in some great consuming agony.
"God, rise up," she gasped
Rise up and defend us
Acknowledge us before the world

Give us, too, the right to our existence.”

DOUGLAS: Right? What right do devils have?

JIX: Zero tolerance, now and always.

MAC: You are made for one another,
You and Hall.
This is utterly conventional.

I, by contrast, have real lesbians

HALL: What do you know of lesbians?

MAC: My wife's a lesbian
Romaine Brooks had an affair with her

HALL: Romaine has affairs with everyone
With anyone who's anyone

MAC: My wife is always generous
With her affections, especially in the Arts
There was a Roman pianist as well...

HALL: Aren't you jealous?

MAC: What would be the point?
We are still good friends
And friendship will last longer far than passion.

HALL: I'd kill my Una if I found her out

JIX: Jealousy cements a marriage.

MAC: See what I mean? Utterly conventional, the pair of you.
[to HALL] And what of your own adventures?

HALL: That's different. I'm an artist.

MAC: You are in my book.
With Romaine, and Ethel Smyth

All your set from Paris and Capri -
And you are real, and you are funny.

JIX: Perversion is no laughing matter.

DOUGLAS: Hear! Hear!

MAC: You know not how to laugh.
If you smiled, your faces all would crack.

HALL: Inverts earn respect, not laughs,
Through their never-ending misery

MAC: My lesbians have no never-ending misery
Misery is dispelled
By life, love, laughter
A fine meal, a rare vintage

I'll show you.

[He hands HALL a copy of 'Extraordinary Women'.]

You are Rory –
Bowler hat and monocle –

HALL: I have never worn a monocle!

MAC: Trains female boxers and breeds bulldogs –

HALL: Dachshunds –

MAC: Artistic licence –

And here you are,
Deserted by your lover

HALL: Deserted? Me? The idea!

MAC: Deserted on Capri,
Sitting in the debris of the villa
Where both of you were going to live,

And eating a cheese sandwich.

HALL: What? No proper picnic basket?

MAC: You watch the turquoise sea
Across the bay
You breathe the pine-filled air
And soothe your bruised affections.
The sun beats on the rocks
The waves beat on the shore

Now go from there...

HALL: *[as before, it starts quiet, but grows in confidence and force]*

The beauty of the view
Pines and sun and sea
Erased all thoughts of land and home
One was not English
One was not in the world
All one had was this eternal present
Suspended here in time.
The windless gold of this October day
Diffused a richer peace
Deep in the eternal now,
Billowed on a muted murmur
Of late industrious bees.
All are as one now
Roses and lovers
The ache of disappointed love
Fades into the distance
Like a boat heading to the far horizon.
Love is a folly
Resting with the other follies
Of a thousand years
Here, now, she was complete
Secure, herself,
Settled on a warm rock
With bread and cheese.
Only one thing did she lack –
A cup of tea!

She ached for tea
As ordinary women longed for tea
All over England at this very time.
And as for love, she did not give a fig
If it was gone or not.

MAC: You see? You see?
"As ordinary women longed for tea"
She shares her thirst with ordinary women

HALL: Where's the grand passion?
Where the true and faithful love?

MAC: You cannot stand the thought that you are normal
You need the sting of martyrdom
To sanction your existence.

JIX: You read that very prettily, Miss Hall.
Nothing to offend at all

[To MACKENZIE] Not perverse, only – eccentric

MAC: You miss the point completely.
My lesbian with her healthy sanity
Her truly English sanity,
May lose her love, but yet still need her tea.
This is not a tortured Sapphic
But a woman who can love,
Yet live with loss of love.
There is nothing strange about her
Or others like her
But what is forced on them
By Jix and Douglas and their ilk.
They live, they laugh, they love
And when they love –
"What fools these mortals be."

HALL: I am made immortal by my love

MAC: - in perpetual opposition

JIX: A love never to be countenanced

DOUGLAS: Outcast!

MAC: Where is your ease?
Where is your joy in life?

HALL: I desire no joy, if I have my love

MAC: But love is joy
And joy the goal of all
The right of all
You shall have it...

JIX: Not while I live

DOUGLAS: Nor me

MAC: If you accept that all are similar
Men and women
Except for the trifling object of their love

JIX/DOUGLAS: Never!

HALL: Never!

MAC: The three of you agree, then?
She is monstrous, strange?

HALL: I shall be strange if I want –
But I shall be accepted

MAC: That is but grudging toleration
I am the true revolutionary
I draw the woman in every lesbian
And the lesbian in every woman.
I say again –
Prosecute me!

HALL: No, me!
I have the right to martyrdom.

MAC: Who wants to follow you to misery?
Follow me to delight.
Prosecute me – prosecute us both
That's only fair
What's sauce for the goose...

JIX: You have not the foul sweet odour
Of corruption and decay.
I open up *The Well of Loneliness*
To the stench of rotting orchids

HALL: The smell's the smell of incense
My work is religious.

JIX: Not smell, stench

DOUGLAS: Stench of Wilde!

MAC: Stench? You know nothing
You wave a stick
At demons of your own devising.
I knew Oscar's chums

When I was a schoolboy.
The smell was all geranium and rose
Lavender and jasmin
Mouchoir de monsieur by Guerlin [*He sniffs*]
I smell it yet, the scent
Of Oscar's dazzling friends –
Reggie Turner, Robbie Ross
And Bosie

DOUGLAS: Bosie Douglas – oh the shame
On the name of Douglas
I blush to share his clan

MAC: I remember bright lights
And brighter laughter
Beautiful clothes
Rich damask waistcoats

Silken ties with shining diamond pins
Gold topped canes
Signet rings
Sparkling jewels
With sparkling wit to match.

DOUGLAS: He was seduced

JIX: Such men are always on the prowl
For youth they can corrupt

MAC: No, not corrupted. Enchanted,
By a world beyond my school
By the possibilities of pleasure.

DOUGLAS: Debauched!

JIX: Pleasure indeed! Whoever heard of such a thing?

MAC: No-one laid a hand on me.
Robbie said to Reggie
"You and I cannot compete with nymphs",
When I showed that I was not –
In the parlance of the times – so.
Bosie thought me serious
When he took me out to dinner and the halls.
He listened to my pushy, flashy talk,
Pompous beyond my sixteen years,
As if I was important.
He made me feel I was a man.

Think of Oscar's circle,
One word comes to mind
Foreign to you both, I'm sure
That word is – kindness.

JIX: Kindness?

DOUGLAS: Kindness?

HALL: Kindness? *[A kind of round]*

DOUGLASS: You can seduce with kindness

MAC: You have a dirty mind.

HALL: So you will prosecute?
Prosecute us both?

MAC: Yes, prosecute. Let's all appear
At the theatre of Boulevard Comedy
Known as the Old Bailey
I will play Harlequin
To John's Columbine
And you can be the fools
The old man Pantaloon and the Clown.

JIX: You, Miss Hall, will bring
The nation's motherhood to barren ruin.
The meagre population,
Depleted by the late war
And the Spanish influenza,
Never can replenish
While women worship
At the shrine of the clitoris [*stress 2nd syllable*]

MAC: Pantaloon indeed.

DOUGLAS: But hang on, Jix, a moment...
Think....

JIX: I'll make sure that you both end up in prison
And imitate your idol, Oscar Wilde.

DOUGLAS: Wait! What if they win?

JIX: How can they win, when I have charged them
This sink of sinfulness
This barrel of baseness?
I say that they are guilty
And I am never wrong

DOUGLAS: Jury may not think –

Juries unreliable –

JIX: They will do what the Sunday Express
Tells them they should do

DOUGLAS: Juries may not read the Sunday Express –
Lackaday! Lackaday!

JIX: Really?

DOUGLAS: Not everybody does

JIX: I had no idea

DOUGLAS: If they read – grrrr – the *Telegraph*?
The Telegraph said
'A work of art finely conceived
And finely written'

HALL: *[to MACKENZIE, smug]* My book, not yours

JIX: Are there pansies even at the *Telegraph*?
What is the world coming to?

DOUGLAS: She might call witnesses -
Literary merit –

HALL: Literary merit? – No, literary magnificence!

DOUGLAS: All that guff from Freud –

HALL: "Notable psychological significance"
- Arnold Bennett

JIX: Another long-haired aesthete

MAC: Are you mad?
Bennett writes about the Potteries
There are no aesthetes in Stoke-on-Trent

DOUGLAS: Can't rely on juries.

Besides, they'd have to read the book!
Who knows what they'd say?
You dare not risk it.

JIX: There has to be a way...
Keep the author out of court
Oh, where is Mussolini when you need him?

DOUGLAS: Try the book, not the author

JIX: Seize the books, destroy the books

[WOTAN growls threateningly]

JIX: That goes for dogs as well

[WOTAN growls again. DOUGLAS's remarks are punctuated by WOTAN barks, so it's two dogs yapping at each other.]

DOUGLAS: Shut up! Quiet!
Horrid mutt!
German!
Disgusting!
Little legs!
Stupid faces!

[Over all this, HALL tries to get a word in:]

HALL: As the author – as the author –
I have the right

DOUGLAS: Authors have no rights –
I eat authors for breakfast

MAC: *[gloomy]* It's true. He does.

JIX: I – will – destroy – the – books

[They try to tear 'The Well of Loneliness' to pieces. The action should exactly mirror Mrs. DALTON's attempted destruction of ALFRED]

DOUGLAS's poems in 'Fishing'. DOUGLAS grabs an end of the book, they try to tear it between them, but it's pretty tough.]

DOUGLAS: Obscene libel –

JIX: Trial by magistrate -

DOUGLAS: No jury, just a beak –

JIX: A magistrate will order the book to be destroyed

DOUGLAS: Bye bye!
No more lesbians!

DOUGLAS: Grrrr

HALL: You see, I am indestructible
My work will live for ever

MAC: *[Joins in and tries to wrest the book from the other two.]*
Forget that sickly trash, take mine.

[He offers them 'Extraordinary Women' – they look at it for a moment – DOUGLAS sniffs it – then turn back to worrying 'Well of Loneliness']

MAC: Oh, come on Jix, have a heart.

JIX: A frivolous and sniggering book.
Does not deserve the honour of a trial
My mind is fixed

MAC: No one's mind more fixed than yours,
That's true

DOUGLAS: Gathers dust – remaindered – pulped
And then is quite forgotten

Hail Jix! Hail Jix!
Who drove the Sapphics out of Britain!
Made our nation clean again,

Clean as in Victoria's day
When family was all.

JIX: No, never can rest
Only a battle in the war
Against the ever rising tide of filth

[A war cry]

Next stop Lady Chatterley!

[He and DOUGLAS rush out, waving 'The Well of Loneliness']

MAC: And so I'll stagger on
To one more book to write
One more cause to fight
More adventures
And more debt
There's more fun
To be having yet
What larks, eh, Pip?
What larks

HALL: At least you will be free
I will have this weight around my neck
Never, never will I write again

MAC: You're no wilting violet
You'll write again, I guarantee that
And even worse than you did before

HALL: But I have been silenced
I have been torn to shreds

MAC: And you will play it to the hilt
Incorrigible ham that you are.

HALL: *[Outraged]* Me? A ham?

MAC: Takes one to know one, m'dear
John, I wish you joy
Of your miserable martyrdom
It's not a club I'd want to join.

HALL: Mine will be the name all lesbians know
 When yours is long forgotten

MAC: I fear you tell the truth

[DOUGLAS and JIX join in offstage to turn this into a quartet]

BOTH: That's the way that we'll finesse it
 As a book we can suppress it
 And that's how we'll insist
 That lesbians don't exist

HALL: I have my purpose to fulfil
 I must defy the world
 I'll show the young and scared
 Much can be done if much is dared

MAC: For life is fun
 Whoever you may love
 Life is fun
 Whatever knocks you back.
 Life is fun
 Grab it while it's nigh
 Don't let it pass you by
 Grab the fruit
 And suck its juices dry.