

*whidder* story, because of the greater variety of incident. The humour, pathos, and strong feeling of the natural are, however, equally pronounced in both works, which must be regarded as Galt's masterpieces. He never excelled them in compression of style or in whimsical charm.

Galt, encouraged by the fame which had come to him through the "*Annals*" in 1821, managed to write three books during the next year. His industry and rapidity of production almost equalled that of Scott himself. In 1822 appeared along with "*The Provost*," "*The Steamboat*" and "*Sir Andrew Wylie*." "*The Steamboat*" is a miserably designed book, and is valuable only for those chapters in which the author, with roaring humour, describes the coronation of George IV. "*Sir Andrew Wylie*" describes the rise and progress of a Scotchman in the world of London. There is a faithful portraiture of English life and manners in this novel which achieved for it more popularity in England than any other of Galt's narratives.

In 1823 Galt's amazing assiduity and fertility of invention were shown in the publication of no less than three novels, each of them, in the fashion of the time, filling three volumes. The mere manual labour of penning nine volumes in one year must have required indomitable will-power and cruel application. These works were "*The Entail*," "*Ringhan Gilhaize*," and "*The Spaewife*." "*The Entail*," although very defective in plot, was a great character novel, and it is particularly interesting because it is the last of Galt's efforts in his own peculiar field, the depiction of the life of the Scotch middle classes. It is his most ambitious attempt and the eulogies of Scott and Byron, as we have already noted, testified to the interest which it evoked. As far as psychological insight into character is concerned, we

believe that it is superior to anything of the period, not excepting the novels of the Wizard of the North. It is a curious commentary on the fortunes of authors that "*The Entail*" should have been so well received, while "*Ringhan Gilhaize*" should have fallen almost unnoticed by the wayside. "*The Entail*" is the last of Galt's real successes. Although he received for "*Ringhan Gilhaize*" the comfortable sum of £300, the public would have none of it. It was an historical novel, a story of the days of the Covenanters, and was intended to be an antidote, or, at least, a corrective to Scott's "*Old Mortality*." Galt considered that Scott had done an injustice to the Presbyterian ministers and the rank and file of the opponents of prelacy. In plot and conception, "*The Spaewife*," although the title is almost as uninviting as "*Ringhan Gilhaize*"—Galt had no skill in devising pleasing titles—was more successful, at least, in point of theme and execution. It is an historical novel, bearing on the time of James I. of Scotland, and, although very prolix, drew a high encomium from Maria Edgeworth.

In 1824 Galt was obliged to huddle up the conclusion of another historical novel, "*Rothelan*," in order that he might set sail for America as one of five commissioners appointed by the British Government to institute inquiries regarding the resources of the Province of Upper Canada. While engaged in this business, Galt conceived the idea that an English company should buy up extensive lands from the Crown and undertake the work of colonisation, opening up new districts and selling farms to the settlers. Galt's proposal took shape and resulted in the formation of the Canada Company, of which he was appointed secretary. For the next five years most of his time was spent in Upper Canada in superintending the work of settlement, in making voyages of discovery on Lake Huron,