CHAPTER III
STRANGERS AND BROTHERS

"I wanted to say something about people first and foremost, and then people in society, in quite a different way, and at quite a different level, from anything in this book." 1

Thus writes C. P. Snow in his 'Note' to The Search, his third novel, and to achieve this he has had to find his way to a form which would give him a chance of saying what he wanted to say and this resulted in the sequence of Strangers and Brothers. Snow later confessed that The Search, which he had considered as a 'false start', continued to interest him when he felt that in the Strangers and Brothers sequence he was doing something which he had set out to do originally in The Search.

Jerome Thale pointed out to this when he said:

"The development of Snow's fiction makes it clear that his decision to what kind of novel to write is not haphazard and that he is not insensitive to the fiction of the twentieth century. His experiments with the detective story and the science fiction work, and the various shifts in direction in The Search and the first few novels of the Strangers and Brothers series show pretty clearly that Snow was trying to find the kind of instrument suited to his temper and vision" 2

1 C. P. Snow: 'Note' to The Search
2 Jerome Thale: C. P. Snow: P. 60
All the eleven books of the sequence are so designed that while they stand alone with their self-contained stories they are also part of a whole. Each novel has its separate theme, but the general underlying theme of the 'strangers and brothers' passes through them like a piece of thread so as to unite them while being brought together. Lord Snow refers to this theme when he says:

"I don't think that, during those wartime broodings, I had an inkling that to many it would distract attention from the two primary themes, which were (it should be clear by now) human solitariness and the attempts through various kinds of love to shut out that solitariness".

This general and harmonising theme, however, reflects those thoughts of C.P. Snow which he formed and advocated in his Rede Lecture on 'Two Cultures' that individual condition of each of us is tragic but this does not mean that we should give up our social hope. In each novel of the sequence the crisis is essentially tragic, and yet some hope exists that it can be overcome. Snow believes that man's situation is tragic but his fibres are alive with hope. This concept is the key to Lewis Eliot's moral attitude to life.

3 C.P. Snow: 'Sequence of Novels'
The Times Saturday Review (13 March, 1971)
While dealing with the thematic design of Snow's sequence of novels William Cooper has very rightly pointed out:

"Strangers and Brothers, the title, states at once the deepest theme of the sequence as a whole - that all men, locked away in the isolation of their own selves, are lonely, strangers to each other while in the similarity and resonance between these, in their joys, their aspirations and their sufferings, they are all brothers. And every man exists in his own dynamic equilibrium between the two, sometimes more stranger than brother, sometimes more brother than stranger".4

Snow has tried to see in his sequence of novels how men are solitary in themselves, i.e., how they feel as strangers while in solitude; and how they are brothers in their common experiences. He tried to show this in the behaviours of his characters and in their activities. The whole sequence is an impressive and wholly personal statement about what Snow himself has called 'the power-relations of men in organised society' but this social relationship of the different characters to each other is rather intricate. Snow's theme of 'Strangers and brothers' is built up on this intricacy of their social relationships. Here the traditional family relationships and family connections and class distinctions are

4William Cooper: Culp Snow, P.80
relatively unimportant. Lewis Eliot's family ceased to be important to him once he grew up and his brother, Martin Eliot, is no more than mentioned until he has been established as a professional. We find that it is the strangers who can most readily become brothers.

Hence it is due to this relationship that the narrator - here of the sequence, Lewis Eliot, sometimes, feels like a stranger in some groups but sniffs in a brotherly atmosphere otherwise. In his 'Prefatory Note' to The Conscience of the Rich Snow talks about Lewis Eliot's experience and divides the whole series into two parts. He says that his entire work:

"...consists of a resonance between what Lewis Eliot sees and what he feels. Some of the more important emotional themes he observes through others' experience and finds them enter into his own. The theme of possessive love is introduced through Mr. Marsh's relation to his son; this theme reappears in The Lion Man in Lewis's own experience, through his relation to his brother, and again, still more directly, in Homecomings."

Snow's endeavor was, however, to show in his novels that one of the largest facts of man's existence

C.P. Snow, 'Prefatory Note' to The Conscience of the Rich
is his estrangement from his fellow men which does not negate his capacity for brotherhood. The central story of the sequence, the story of Lewis Eliot, is strong and simple and through it are interwoven the stories of his friends. Lewis Eliot's wide friendship and varied experiences enabled him to test himself against a great variety of men.

The first novel of the series, now called 'Passant', as clarified in his article 'Sequence of Novels' by saw himself, was entitled 'Strangers and Brothers' which suggests the theme of the novel. saw stresses here the fact of our loneliness and the way in which a man like George Passant could make a brother of a stranger. The hero, George Passant, was a solicitor's clerk with much greater talents than prospects. He wanted little for himself but did want to help his friends, a group of young people in a provincial town. Their stirrings of new life and personal ambition were encouraged and stimulated by the hero George Passant, a warm and impatient man. He made brothers out of several strangers, including the narrator Eliot, who would have otherwise remained a stranger.

The novel began with a trivial scandal in which George saved Jack Cotery, a stranger, from a minor
misfortune and it ended with a major scandal in which George, as a result of Jack's activities, stood in danger of utter ruin.

It was in George's nature to behave like a brother even with strangers and to help them. Jack, for whom he took great risks and when he tried to help to his utmost capacity, was introduced by Lewis. George did not care for his future promotion or for the opposition he would raise against himself by helping Jack. He did more for Jack than a brother could. It was for Jack that

"... He borrowed a few pounds from Martineau and Rachel, pawned his only valuable possession, a gold medal won at school, increased his overdraft by ten pounds, up to the limit allowed by his bank." 6

In these two situations we find C.P. Snow stating his theme in a more emphatic and conspicuous manner than in any of his later novels - the brotherhood that often may exist among strangers, and the strangeness that is felt between brothers or friends. When Lewis came to know from Morcan that George, with his 'group', was in

an awkward position due to an investment scheme organised by Jack Ostery he volunteered to help. However, George did not confide in Lewis; on the contrary, he resented his interference. Lewis, who was an intimate friend and who was also once in his 'group', found himself in the position of a stranger.

George's Diary, in the novel, aggravated this rather complex situation and carried it to still further stage of inversion. George, living intimately among his 'group' and working for them, felt as a stranger and came to a point when he thought that the 'group' was 'a futile invention' of his own. Internally George was not happy with the 'group'. He met many girls in the 'group', tried to become intimate with them, then lost all of them and left him one by one. George had much faith in Martineau but due to Martineau's false information George had to suffer much. With the help of George's Diary we become aware of his inner discontent with his 'group', still outwardly, he behaved as a brother with all of them and shouldered the whole responsibility. Clive, who was from the beginning with George in his 'group', also left him alone.

At the end of the novel, it became very clear that the hero of the novel, George Passant, remained a stranger,
Even his intimate friend was unable to understand him and flinched away from him. Osanya, who created a 'group' and helped all the members like a brother, was left as a stranger and was mentally tortured. He wanted to create a free world and this, in turn, made him an utter stranger to his own friends for whom he sacrificed everything - reputation, money, friends. Lewis, the narrator, analyses Osanya's character well:

"He was Osanya, who contained more living nature than the rest of us whom to see as he was meant an effort from which I, his oldest friend, had flinched the day before. For in the dark, as he answered the question Osanya flinched from the man who was larger than life, and yet capable of any self-deception, who was the most unself-seeking and generous of men, and yet sacrificed everything for his own pleasures, who possessed formidable powers and yet was so far from reality that they were never used; whose aims were noble, and yet whose appetite for degradation was as great as his appetite for life; who, in the depth of his heart, was ill-at-ease, lonely, a diffident stranger in the hostile world of men".7

No doubt, the major themes in The Conscience of the Rich are 'possessive love' and 'conscience', still the banalising theme of 'strangers and brothers' loses large

7C.P. Snow: Strangers and Brothers
throughout the novel, Charles Marsh, the hero, and Lewis Elson, the narrator, belonged to two different faiths but they were friends and stood equal on human grounds as both of them understood the value and meaning of human life. Charles belonged to a Jewish family but could not confine himself to the bounds of the religion and faith of his father and his family. At the starting of novel Charles sets out to conquer the darker and wilder aspects of his own nature in order to achieve his idea of goodness. He, therefore, struggles to emancipate himself from the oppression of the family ties and the traditional background of his faith. He finds a part of his nature strange and difficult to understand, and this is why a time comes when he feels hated for himself:

"We (Charles Marsh) had always been fascinated by the idea of goodness. Was it because he was living constantly with a part of himself which he hated?"

It is the theme of 'conscience', already established in the novel, on the basis of which sir Charles

now dealt with the loneliness of human being. Charles Marsh, respecting the behests of his conscience, is not tempted with the riches of his father. Mr. Leonard Marsh also, even with great affection for his son, is so much attached to his religion and traditional faith that his conscience does not allow him to consider his son's presence essential in the party arranged in his house at the end of the novel. Thus, in response to the call of their consciences the father and the son are now strangers to each other.

In the beginning, sister and brother, Katherine and Charles, got on well together and it was Charles's support which enabled Katherine to marry Francis Giffles, a gentile, but when Charles was faced with the dilemma whether to destroy the papers or not, which, later on, caused the dismissal of their uncle Philip Marsh from Parliamentary secretaryship, he denied his involvement in Anne's affair and this resulted the disruption.

We can easily trace out the theme of 'strangers and brothers' in the relations between the hero and the narrator in the novel The Light and the Dark. They were intimate friends by the time they felt to understand each other and became secretive. Lewis Histi says:
"We knew each other so well; at a glance we knew what the other was feeling, though we were on opposite sides, we were incomparably closer than with an ally. Yet our words were limp, and once or twice a harsh note sounded... He was secretive, hard and restless".

The novel records Roy's alternating moods of despair and high spirits, and his quest for religious belief, for political faith, for something in which to lose himself. Like Charles March in *The Conscience of the Rich*, Roy Calvert could not cope with his own nature. He was unable to understand himself as he found that there was a part of him to which he was an utter stranger. Roy loved Rosalind and Jean and formed friendship with Lewis Eliot to enjoy life with the vital strength of hope but he was prone to moods of loneliness and despair, because of which he could not gain happiness either from love or from friendship and attempted an escape into death. He loved Rosalind, left her but could not cut himself off from her and ultimately decided to marry her at the time when he had already accepted the path which would decidedly take him to utter destruction. He liked Jean much and loved her but could not make her his own. The struggle with his own nature created in him the feeling of 'self-hatred' and 'longing to escape himself'.
Ray tried to believe in God so that he could get peace of mind but he couldn't, and became restless. He confides in Lewis:

"I've prayed that I might believe in God", 10

He doubts, he had absolute conviction that "God and His world exist" but found that

"...everyone can enter and find their rest. Except me. I'm infinitely far away for ever. I am alone and apart and infinitesimally small - and I can't come near". 11

Resalind goes all out to win Ray as husband but feels strangely unsure of herself. She says to Lewis:

"I never knew where I am with him". 12

Even when much closer to Ray, she feels that Ray is a stranger to her. Lewis, the narrator, also finds the same feelings in both of them.

"...she was living with a stranger. She knew him with her hands and lips; she knew more than most young women about men in their dressing-gowns; yet she did not know, any more than his dinner partners that January in Monte Carlo, two things about him.

11 C.P. Snow: ibid, p. 73
12 C.P. Snow: ibid, p. 119
First he was sometimes removed from her, removed from any human company, by an acute and paralysing fear...she did not know also of his brilliant, insatiable hopes. 13

The loneliness had surrounded Roy and Lewis feared Roy's melancholic state. In this condition Roy told Lewis that even 'love' was not able to take him away from solitude. Here the conversation between Roy and Lewis takes us deeper into the theme of 'Strangers and Brothers':

"'We're all alone, aren't we? Each one of us. Quite alone'. He asked: 'Did boys, how does one reach another human being?'
'Sometimes one thinks one can in love'.
'Just so', he said. After a time he added:
'Yet sometimes after I've made love, I've lain with someone in my arms and felt lonelier than ever in my life.' 14

It was due to Roy's solitary nature that when a war between Germany and England was expected he was in a fix to decide which side he should favour. He started hating himself and wished that he should not live. He felt that he had troubled all who had tried to help him and came near him. He was shaken and torn. He was in

14 C.P. Snow: ibid, p.137
such an advanced condition that he was unable to understand
the self. It was because of this morbid sensibility
that he would make himself scarce and might keep things
from him. This was the rejection of intimacy which was
very hard for Lewis to bear.

with the outbreak of the war the intimacy between
Lewis and Roy returned and Lewis tells us:

"We knew each other all through now, and
we depended on each other more than we
had ever done. For these were times when
only the deepest intimacy was any comfort.
Casual friends could not help; they were more
a tax than strangers. We were each in distress;
in our different ways we were hiding it."

But when Roy was sent to Germany in connection
with a letter which was sent to him by a friend, Lewis
found that his duty as a loyal citizen prevented him
from confiding in Roy. Roy took no time to realize
that Lewis accompanied him not as a friend but as a
spy to watch his activities. He asked Lewis confidently.

"'You came to watch over me, of course',
said Roy, not as a question, but as a
matter of fact.

'Yes'.

15 C.P. Snow: The Light and the Dark
"You needn't have done", said Ray.\textsuperscript{16}

When Ray was unable to reconcile himself with his own nature, and to believe in God and find peace, he decided to join the airforce as the bomber pilot because it was most dangerous and self-destructive. Though he feared death, still he found no other alternative. Lewis tried to persuade him to leave this dangerous path but Ray reminded him:

"Everyone is alone. Dreadfully alone."\textsuperscript{17}

Being alone and a stranger to the world Ray gave up all intimacy with it and met death to escape from despair and solitude.

The \textit{Passage} provides us with a fascinating analysis of a small group of characters. The characters are clearly individualised, and each meeting provides its own conflict. The novel is not the story of one man but of a group of men - college teachers -

\textsuperscript{16} C.P. Snow: \textit{The Light and the Dark} (London: Penguin: Reprint 1963) p.320
\textsuperscript{17} C.P. Snow: \textit{ibid} p.321
engaged in electing a new Master. Although it is the theme of 'power' which dominates the novel, still the general theme of the series - 'strangers and brothers' - is not overlooked.

The old master was dying and the new one was to be elected. There were two candidates for the Mastership - Paul Jago and Crawford. Naturally, the thirteen fellows of the college, who were working together, would have to form themselves into two groups to support the different candidates. The campaign of canvassing started and Brown and Chrystal took much interest in forming a clear majority of: seven votes for their candidate, Paul Jago. Jago was rather surprised to find that Bostock Pilbrow volunteered to vote for him and commented:

"I'm touched to think of dear old Bostock Pilbrow throwing away his prejudices and being ready to support me. I don't suppose we've agreed on a single public issue since I became a fellow. We've disagreed on everything two men could disagree on, yet he is willing to do this for me". 18

However, at the end Pilbrow decided in favour of Crawford, the other candidate. Nightingale also, in the beginning, was a strong supporter of Jags and the intimate friend of Chrystal and Brown, but after a few days, for his own personal and selfish reasons, decided against him. All the friendship and intimacy with Chrystal and Brown disappeared and his behaviour took a strange turn. He did not only withdraw his support but started spreading rumours against Jags.

Lewis Eliot, the narrator, and Francis Otliffe were intimate friends and they, usually, thought alike. But in the matter of election they disagreed with one another. Francis tried to persuade Lewis to vote for Crawford but Lewis decided to stick to Jags. Francis was angry and for the time being, it seemed as if the intimate friendship between the two was lost. Lewis confessed that

"In my three years in the college, we had been allies, trusting each other automatically on the same side in any question that mattered. This was the first time we had disagreed".19

Even the two rivals for the candidature of Mastership, who were supposed to be inimical to one another, were sensible and reached a point of friendship by making a joint statement to abstain from voting. Here Lewis's comment brings in the general theme:

"It was not the first time I had noticed the electric attraction of rivalry: rivals, whether competing for a job, opposing each other in politics, struggling for the same woman, are for mysterious moments closer than any 'friends'"20

The theme of 'strangers and brothers' is seen mainly in the relationship between Brown and Chrystal for whom Lewis said that "they were loyal to each other in public and private".21 The beginning of the novel supports the view that they were such close friends that they could never be separated. The writer constantly refers to them as if they were one personality. Both of them supported Jago and tried to persuade others to vote for him. But just before twenty four hours of the election Chrystal found a change in himself and

20 C.P. Snow: The Masters
21 C.P. Snow: ibid; P. 35
decided to transfer his vote from Jago to Crawford. Chrystal became a stranger to Brown. It was Chrystal who had first proposed for Jago’s candidature, he had been foremost in canvassing for Jago. When Nightingale had decided not to support Jago and ambitious Jago had been upset, it was Chrystal who had assured him that except Eustace Pilbrow “the rest are safe. There’s no other weak spot. They’ll never break five of your votes. You can bank on them.” With all this, at the critical moment, Chrystal decided against the wishes of his intimate friend, Brown. Chrystal was stranger not only to his own intimate friend but also to himself because he could not understand himself for months together while he was trying to form a majority for Jago. It was at the end that he found himself on the side of Crawford. Lewis reflects on how Chrystal must have come to this conclusion without understanding himself:

“I did not know, perhaps I never should know, on what day Chrystal faced himself and saw that he would not vote for Jago. Certainly

not in the first steps which, without his realizing, had started him towards this afternoon, when he began the move to make the candidates vote for each other, his first move to a coalition with the other side, he could still have said to himself, and believed it, that he was pledged to Jago. He did not make any pretence of enthusiasm to Brown or me, and to himself his reluctance, his sheer distaste, kept coming into mind. Yet he would have said to himself that he was going to vote for Jago. He would still have said it when in search of a third candidate - he was going to vote for Jago unless we found another man. On December 17th, when he approached Brown, he would have gone on saying it to himself. He would have said it to himself. But I thought that there are things one says to oneself in all sincerity, statements of intention, which one knows without admitting it that one will never do. I believed it had been like that with Chrystal since the funeral. He believed he would vote for Jago unless he brought off a coup; in some hidden and inadmissible way he knew he never would. 23

In spite of such strange behaviour Chrystal was still trustworthy to Brown because "Brown loved his friends, and knew they were only men. Since they were only men, they could be treacherous - and then next time loyal beyond belief". 24

24 C. P. Snow, Ibid, p.281
Like The Conscience of the Rich, the main themes of The Day One are 'conscience' and 'possessive love'. It studies the conscience of a group of scientists as well as that of an individual, viz., Martin Eliot. Here Lewis Eliot tells the story of a group of atomic scientists working in a government research establishment at a place called Harford. The men started out with the moral responsibility incumbent upon scientists - a moral responsibility to scientific truth and nothing else. They ended at variance with each other and with their own consciences. Then they learnt that, against their wishes, the bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima; they felt morally responsible towards the rest of mankind.

A parallel theme of The Day One is the exploration of brotherly love. Martin was the younger brother of Lewis Eliot. In the beginning Martin worked as a scientist at Harford and both the brothers felt intimacy between them. As a result of intimacy Lewis Eliot was much anxious for Martin's job. When Harford establishment started working Lewis, being a personal assistant to the minister, found a better chance to set his brother there. Nevertheless, at the end Martin believed
strangely when, against the wishes of his brother, he rejected the post of chief superintendent of the establishment. This created a sense of estrangement between the brothers.

We also see that Martin Elst and his brother disagreed over the importance of success in life. The conflict between the two brothers is important for the whole series. We discover that Louis Elst's concern for his brother was, for all its good will, tainted with possessiveness and that part of Martin's development lay in breaking away from his brother's concern. Rightly does Jerome Thale point out:

"The Boy Hex is thematically closer than the other novels of 'observed experience' to Louis Elst's own history, and it carries one of the larger motifs of the series. In the first novel, unknowns and brothers, we saw strangers who were made brothers; in the Boy Hex we see brothers who became strangers before they can become brothers on a new basis". 23

The Affair takes us once more to the familiar atmosphere of a Cambridge College. Tom Cuball became instrumental in bringing Lewis Elst and Laura Howard

23 Jerome Thale: CAPEX5 14:45
together and then awards Lewis Elst devote himself completely to the task of reopening Howard's case. Howard, Laura's husband, had been convicted of scientific fraud and dismissed as per decision of a court of seniors. It was through Lewis's efforts that Ronald Howard regained his fellowship.

We also find that the two brothers - Martin and Lewis - who had become strangers to each other in The New Man are able to regain brotherly understanding. Brown and Crawford, who were in opposite camps in The, are now seen helping one another as friends. After Crawford's election as Master, Brown had been working as a 'confidential secretary' to him:

"Right through his Mastership, for fifteen years Brown had held his hand, told him which letters to write, advised him whose feelings wanted soothing; he had used Brown as a confidential secretary." 36

The central thread of the novel - Howard's affair - also ties up with the general theme because the same court of seniors which had decided against

Howard reconsidered the case and gave decision against its previous judgment. Sheffington disliked Howard and on the basis of his report, along with Nightingale's, Howard was accused of scientific fraud, but strangely enough, it was Sheffington who stood against his own report in every sense and not only did he favour Howard but decided to take the case to the visitor, that is, outside the college, if the seniors were not ready to accept his view. In the beginning Tom Orbell was not in favour of reopening the case and he also did not like Howard, but somehow, he changed his mind later on in favour of Howard. In all other respects he was with Brown, but in Howard's affair he thought and acted differently. New strange that strangers and enemies should all help like brothers and friends! It is this mystery of life which seems large in the novels of snow.

Outrider of Power presents a world of power and politics in which the intimacy is, usually, gained in terms of power. So long as a person wields power he finds many friends clustering round him, but the moment he loses power he has to retire to a world of solitude. Roger Quaife, the main figure in the novel, rises to the rank of a cabinet minister and because of his skill and power gets
the support of many. But when his anti-bank policy becomes known it is feared that this policy would not gain the majority support and he might lose the power. Consequently, many of his supporters like Collingwood and Mesty Cave leave him and he is forced to resign from the ministry. Obviously, his humanitarian attitude was responsible for this estrangement from his political friends.

In The Siren of Messa, our attention is focused on Lewis Eliot's life and we find him re-establishing contact with his brother, Martin, and his friends. It presents the elder generation anxious about the career of the younger ones: Francis is anxious about his daughter's future, Martin and Irene are anxious for Pat; and though Lewis and Margaret are delighted with Charles's progress, they are not satisfied with Maurice who is found not doing so well in his studies. Parents want to see their children make careers.

The book is mainly taken up with two incidents, the seeds of which can well be found in the first book of the series, called Marsters and Brothers, in which George Passant, the hero, advocates freedom, absolute freedom, which in fact means sexual freedom - 'Freedom from their
deemed house, and their deemed parents and their
deemed lives'. The first incident deals with a
couple of young men who are caught sleeping with
girls in a hostel room and are consequently dis-
missed by the vice-chancellor, Arnold Shaw. The
students appeal to the court of the university as
they hold that they have a right to personal free-
dom and that their act does not constitute an
offence.

The second incident relates to the two girls,
Cora Ross and Kitty Peteman, who are accused of
murdering a boy of eight years. It is understood
that Cora and Kitty are lesbians but in this relation-
ship Kitty, who assumed the role of wife, naturally
could not satisfy her maternal instincts and so there
was a gap between fantasy and action. This led them
to plan to get a boy and to behave with him as they
planned. This shows, though indirectly, the influence
of George Passion and his 'group' which believed in
'freedom' from all social conventions.

If we make an analysis of these incidents, the
general prevailing theme of the series will at once
be intelligible. In connection with the first incident Lewis went to see the father of Dick Pateman, one of the students accused of fornication, and found that the father was not much interested in his son's career but talked of his own position and asked Lewis to find some 'opportunity' for himself. Even Dick Pateman, the brother of Kitty Pateman, the accused girl, thought little about the 'trial' of his sister, but started campaigning against Arnold Shaw, the ex-Vice-Chancellor, who was to receive an honorary degree from the University.

Lewis Elist met Cora Ross, George Pessant's niece, in Mr. Pateman's house. She was staying with Pateman's daughter, Kitty Pateman. When he asked her about George she could only say: 'I like George', and informed him that she had not seen much of George lately. After meeting Cora Ross, Lewis went to see George, his old intimate friend, and felt that intimacy of the past had faded away and that his talk and behaviour had become formal. Lewis knew that George 'liked seeing' him yet he had to admit that he had become quite remote to him. Each time
they not George asked the same sort of hearty mechanical questions. George's detachment from his family is clear when he tells Lewis:

"I've never enquired into the lives of any of my family. And I've never told them anything about my son".27

When Cara Ross, having been accused of the murder of a boy, was in the goal along with her friend, Kitty Pateman, George became anxious and asked Lewis to look after the matter. George himself did not go to see her but requested Lewis to do so; but when Lewis asked him a few questions about her not only did George become angry but told Lewis that he was not ready "to take any responsibility for either of them".28 It is difficult to understand this strange behaviour of George's. At one moment he was anxious about his niece and asked Lewis to look after her but the very next moment he refused to take any responsibility in the matter.

George asked Lewis to remain present at the 'trial' of Cara Ross but when Charles, Lewis's son,

28 C.P. Snow: ibid; p.209
know of George's request he warned his father not to be 'sentimental'. Lewis's going to the 'trial' would link him up with the Passantes and that would be 'horror of horrors'. The opinions of the father and the son were conflicting but Lewis was not prepared 'to abandon an old friend just to avoid a bit of slander'. Margaret supported Lewis in this and the intimacy between the son and the parents was, for the time being, lost.

At the end of the trial Cara and Kitty were found guilty and were sentenced. George felt as if he was responsible for all this. He decided to leave the 'wretched town' without telling any of his friends where he would be going. He would go to a place where he would be a stranger and where no one would recognise him. He complained bitterly against the ways of the world and told Lewis that he (George) must leave because

"It doesn't matter to them that she hasn't spoken to me for a couple of years. They can smear everything I do. They can control every step I take. By God, it would be like having me in a cage for crowds to stare at".29

So far as the relationship between Lewis and Charles was concerned it was satisfactory in spite of casual conflicts over the 'trial'. Lewis and Margaret were satisfied with Charles's progress but when Lewis wanted to decide what Charles should do during the next academic year he found that Charles had already made up his mind months before. The son was independent minded and he himself would plan his career. Charles also told his father that he would 'like to find something useful' and added,

"I don't think it would be very different, even if I hadn't got you on my back".30

The effect of the second incident in the novel provoked Martin to tell Lewis:

"What people feel doesn't matter very much. It's what they do, we've got to think about".31

Lewis was now sad and went on reflecting on himself, Martin, and George Pessant. This brings out Snow's general theme of the series - *strangers and brothers*.

31 C.P. Snow: ibid: p. 276
"We were different men, though we had our links of sympathy. What we had learned from our lives, we had learned in different fashions; we had often been allies, but then events had driven us together perhaps now, in our fifties, we were closer than we had ever been....George, like many radicals of his time, believed passionately, in the perfectibility of man, that I could never do, from the time I first met him, in my teens.... With Martin, it had gone the other way. He had in his youth, accepted the whole doctrine....It hadn't lasted. He was clear-sighted, he couldn't deny his own experience. His vision of life turned jet-black. Yet not completely, not so completely as he spoke or thought. It was what people did that mattered, he had just said, as he had often said before, if that was true, then what he did sometimes betrayed him. After all, it had been he alone of all of us - who had broken his career, just when he had the power and prizes in his clutches. Conscience? Moral impulse? People wondered. They might have accepted that of Francis Galiley, not of Martin, but it was he who had done it. Just as it was he who, under the mask of his pessimism, pretending to himself that he expected nothing, invested so much hope in his son, was wide open to danger through another's life." 32

The Age of Hope is a novel of self-discovery where Lewis Elst, the narrator-here, finds out what

is wrong with his own nature. This self-revelation comes to him through his 'observed experience' from the lives of the persons he came in contact with. In this process, not only do we find that Lewis could not easily come to terms with his own nature but also how intimate persons often behaved as strangers.

At the beginning of the novel we witness Lewis's relation with his mother who did not like to clarify the family position to her son because of her protective instinct and believed that if her son knew of her degrading condition he might not be able to do his best in life. But Lewis sensed that something was wrong with the family and found his mother's behaviour strange and mysterious. Even in the state of bankruptcy Lewis denoted the maximum in his class because his mother was proud and did not want to see her son humiliated in the presence of other boys. At the same time she wanted to hear everything from her son about what the teachers and the students said about his donation. The teachers and the students commented on the wretched condition of Lewis's
father and advised him not to be stingy and expensive. As Lewis did not want to hurt his mother's pride he invented a full story and told a lie to her, but later realized that this lie showed the chaos that existed between them. He felt that it would have been better if he had told the truth. Thus, mother and son, both were intimate and the mother 'wanted to be part' of him but occasionally they also tried to hide a few things from one another and this takes us to the general theme of 'strangers and brothers'.

The other person who came in contact with Lewis was George Passant who helped Lewis and took much interest in forming his career. In due course both of them became intimate but when Lewis did not accept George's advice of getting articled in the firm of Eden and Martinez and decided to read for the Bar examination George felt, as Lewis himself did, that his behaviour amounted to 'a denial of friendship and affection'. The relations between George and Lewis can clearly be understood in the narrator's words:

"In due course I parted from George on almost all of the profound human questions. For all his massive intelligence, his vision of life was so different from mine that we could not
for long speak the same mental language...
As I have said, we parted on all the profound human questions — except one. Though I could not for long think happily as he did of the human condition, I also could not forget how robustly he stood by the side of his human brothers against the dark and cold. Human beings were brothers to him — not only brothers to love, but brothers to hate with violence. When he hated them, they were still men, men of flesh and bone — and he was one among them in their sweet and bewilderment and folly."33

Even strangers to each other in so many ways, they had, no doubt, brotherly resonance in their general behaviour.

The relationship between Lewis and Sheila is not ordinarily intelligible but Snow's general theme of 'strangers and brothers' may take us to the point where we can bridge the gap in understanding their relations. Sheila Knight was Lewis's fiance and, later on, became his wife. Eliot loved her passionately but Sheila could only confess:

"I don't love you, but I trust you".34

34 C.P. Snow: ibid; p. 177
It is in Lewis's relations with Sheila that we knew the struggling nature of both. Looking to her behaviour Lewis felt that she would never love him, she could even be icy in his life. Sheila, on the other hand, could only trust him but was unable to love him, she was unable to understand her own nature. Even when Lewis was repeatedly bored and hurt by Sheila's behaviour, his love for her was so passionate that he was confused with two different thoughts:

"The first was, I must dismiss her from my mind, I must forget her once - and, as I get more tired, I kept holding to that resolve. The second was, how soon would she write to me, so that I could see her again?" 35

These thoughts led him to a struggle with his own nature. With immeasurable ups and downs in their relations Lewis was not sure of himself and his own behaviour. Sometimes he decided not to see, or write to, Sheila, but the next moment he was impatient to have a glimpse of her. On the other hand, Sheila seemed indifferent to Lewis. She might accompany Lewis or be

35 C.P. Snow: Time of Ilka
with him but had no feeling for him. Even after deciding not to see Sheila Lewis was tempted to write to her again and make her share the joy in his success at the Bar Examination. Lewis's reflection presents a perfect picture of his struggle with his own nature and also of his relation with Sheila:

"since the examination I had known that if she did not break the silence, I should. Despite the rebellions of my pride, Despite Jack Cater's cautionary voice, saying:
"Why waste you fall in love with someone who can only make you miserable? She'll do you harm. She can only do you harm'.
Despite my sense of self-preservation, Despite any part of me that was sensible and controlled. From within myself and without, I was told the consequences.
Yet, as I took a sheet of the hotel notepaper and began to write, I felt as though I were coming home. "It was surrender to her, unconditional surrender. I had sent her away, and now I was coming back, she would be certain in the future that I could not live without her. She would have nothing to restrain her. She would have no use of her own terms. That I knew with absolute lucidity.

"Was it also another surrender, a surrender within myself? I was writing that letter as a man in love... Yet was it a surrender within myself?" 36

Even after the marriage the intimacy was not gained. The things were not good in Lewis's life. His

36 C.P. Snow: Time of星星
most intimate friend, George Pessant, was entangled in some fixed case and Lewis would, at any cost, have to help him. He was anxious. He wanted to confide in some one, who would have been more intimate than Shalla, the wife? But Lewis found no friendly resonance in her. There was none of the give and take of two hearts between them.

At the end of the novel also we find that Lewis is exhausted with Shalla's love, wants to be free from her and asks her to leave him alone. But when Shalla prepared to go he implored her to stay with him. With all this the narrator - here surveys his life:

"I had longed for a better world, for fame, for love. I had longed for a better world and this was the summer of 1933. I had longed for fame and I was a second-rate lawyer. I had longed for love and I was bound for life to a woman who never had love for me and who had exhausted mine." 37

Ultimately he accepted that it was because he could not 'perceive the full truth of' what his nature needed. Exactly, it was his struggle with the self because of

which sometimes he behaved strangely even with his intimate friends and at the next moment found himself bound with the feelings of brotherhood.

As in Time of Hope, in Munemusa Lewis Kiett tells his own story and both the novels constitute a single story which is at the centre of the whole sequence, Astræus and Aethena.

The beginning of Munemusa stresses the fact that Lewis was not on intimate terms with his wife and he, therefore, was not sure of her temperament. On his returning home after an absence of four days Lewis found in his wife a rather disturbing lack of inquisitiveness in his activities. This was clearly unsuited behaviour and it points to certain inscrutable elements in Sheila's character. 'In an atmosphere of growing coldness and dread, she spends most of her time alone' and one day Lewis is summoned home 'to find that she has been able to bear the loneliness no longer. She had killed herself'.

Looking to Lewis's relation with Margaret Davidson we find that they were in love, but to achieve true love a dissolving battle lay ahead of them.
Though they were thought to be intimate, still Lewis was unable to confide in Margaret — he had concealed from her the fact that Sheila's death was a suicide. Realizing the fact that Lewis had some secrets which he was not prepared to share with her Margaret gave him up and married someone else. All the same, after they met some years later the intimacy between the two returned and they became husband and wife with full faith in one another. The reason behind this was that gradually Lewis understood more of himself and was finally willing to accept love. Jerome Thale remarks:

"The fulfilment in love, the new response to emotions, bring a resolution to the tensions of the preceding novels and also to the theme of Stranger and Brothers, for Lewis Eliot in The Brothers becomes a brother not a stranger." 30

The problem of the new generation is again taken up in The Last Things, the last novel of the series, dealing with Lewis's personal experience. 31

30 Jerome Thale: C.P. Snow: p. 61
and the writer, stressing the gap between the older and younger generations, adroitly draws us to the general theme of the series - **Ancestors and Ruthless**. As the thoughts and feelings of the two generations are in natural conflict parents find their children drift away from them and there is a consequent loss of resonance:

"I sometimes wondered how much different was the way they lived their lives from their parents' way; was the gap bigger than other such gaps?

Often I was irritated with them as though I were the wrong distance away, half-involved, half-remote; and it was Charles's self-control, not mine, which prevented us from quarrelling."  

Once again Lewis suffered from a retinal detachment of the left eye. Charles went to see him in the hospital after he was operated upon. Even though they were father and son their talk was formal. Their behaviour did not accord with the behaviour of the father and the son:

"It was unlike him, or both of us, together, to be silent. There was a constraint between us right from the beginning....

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39 *C.P. Snow: Last Things*  
(London: Macmillan, 1970) p.76
We were talking like strangers, impersonally impressed by a medical advance: we were concentrated upon eye-surgery, more eager not to deviate from it, than if we had been strangers.

Another pause, as though we had forgotten the trick of talking, at which people thought we were both so easy. 80

With all his activities, Charles's behaviour remained strange to his parents. He moved away from his parents' house to Charter Row where Marjorie resided and at the end left all - parents, Marjorie and friends - for an unknown place because he wanted to do things which would actually affect people's lives quite quickly. Though the parents were not happy with Charles's decision, they knew that Charles would not alter it. Lewis now realised that:

"...affections, especially in families, didn't carry the same weight on either side. I ought to have known that, from the way I behaved to my mother. It was a kind of vanity to suggest that another's choices depended on his relations with oneself. Choices, lives, were less real than that. Charles was making a choice less real than most of ours had been." 41

With Charles's departure Lewis felt lonely to reflect:

40 C. P. Snow: Last Things
41 C. P. Snow: ibid. p.326
"It might have seemed so and, but not to me, and not perhaps, to him. We might have known already, what had taken us so much longer to know, that we made marks and shapes and patterns in our minds but that we didn't live our lives like that. We couldn't do so, because the forces inherent in our lives was as strong and mere unity than anything we could tell ourselves about it,...

"I had thought, in some of the corners of my life, that if all went wrong, I should be finally, and once for all, alone. Now I knew that was one of the shapes and sounds with which we deceived ourselves, giving our life a status and perhaps a certain kind of dignity, that it couldn't in fact possess. In the hospital room I had been as nearly alone as I could get. I had imagined, and spoken of, what it would be like, but what I had imagined was nothing like the here and now, the continuous creation, the thrust of looking for the next moment which belonged to oneself and spread beyond the limits of oneself. When one is as alone as one can get, there's still no end".42

Lewis Gregory (Pat) was Martin's favourite child and he might have "cost his father disappointment and suffering: there had been quarrels, lies, deceit; but in the midst of it all there was, and still remained, a kind of communication, so that in trouble he went back, shameless and confiding, and gave Martin a new lease of hope."43 All the same, Martin was not happy

43 C.P. Snow: ibid p.82
with his son’s behaviour and felt extremely sorry when his marriage with Muriel was broken.

After the divorce, Muriel settled at Chester Row and not only did she form intimacy with Charles but fell in love with him. Though Charles liked her, showed affection for her yet she was not definite about what Charles would do in future. Charles was rather secretive and at the end left her without telling where he was going.

Finally, when we consider the central character of the series we find his dissatisfied with his life. "If I had been given the option, I should have chosen to eliminate the first half of my life and try again." These were Lewis’s words when he was lying awake in the hospital. He looked into his past life and found himself guilty in his relations with others. He wished that he should have behaved differently. George Peasant was his intimate friend and his life had been unhappy. Lewis considered himself responsible for that because, as he believed, if he had used his own realism, he could have broken up the ‘group’ of George’s

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inner paradise. He also believed that if he had not been Sheila's husband she would not have committed suicide. Thus, all the novels of the series emphasise the basic theme of the novelist that so far as human behaviour is concerned it is based on a certain mystery in resonance between two human beings whose appearance and disappearance strangely converts brothers into strangers and strangers into brothers.