CHAPTER III

3.1.1 Social Dramas in a Social Plane

Social dramas are those that depict the social life of the people in a realistic manner. These are artistic creations that can be considered as the product of the dramatist's talent, combining itself with his keen power of observation of social environment which finds expression in a realistic dramatisation of a live social event or episode.

Society is found to be the venue for good as well as the bad. People come to clash with each other on some social issue or other and as a result of this, they come across bitter experiences. This can be seen in any social situation. There is a struggle for survival. Of course, there is cooperation and coordination. But competition is conspicuous. Everyone tries to excel the other in one way or other.
As a consequence to this, there is a lot of action, counteraction and reaction. This, in fact, provides the grist to the mill of the dramatist. In almost all the social dramas there is a right between the good and the evil. It is a well known fact that the drama stage is a forceful forum for social reformation.

The annals of history reveal that when lurid and historical dramas began to lose their influence among the masses, the social dramas usurped their place. As and when dramatists realised that the people are for social dramas, the flood gates of the social dramas became wide open. Social dramas were produced in greater number. There was a down to earth approach and the dramatic theme, character, events etc., were through and through social. Very clear social medium could easily imbibe the spirit of the time and bring out excellent dramatic productions which were quite pleasing to the people; hence they were very popular also. Standards of dramatic art were upheld. Care was taken to see to it that entertainment would be both enlightening and elevating.

A good social dramatist begins his work only after making a thorough study of the internal structure of society, the under current and the cross current of forces operating in it, the better as well as the bad aspects, the brighter and also the darker
sides and every mode and shade of social existence. He has to be gifted with a keen power of observation and deep sensitivity. In his work of art he has to reflect life. His presentation of social life through dramatic art should be all absorbing.

Social reformation is his objective. But this should be done in a sober and sublime manner. He has to offer advice to the audience but this must be attempted in a very naive and subtle manner. Arousing a high sense of appreciation and evoking greater awareness, the advice must be administered in a manner as attractive as possible. Very great care or caution has to be taken lest the soft sentiment of any section of people is wounded or offended. Above all, the whole manoeuvre has to be a very pleasant and interesting exercise in artistic articulation of dramatics. Social dramatist must win the spectators and carry conviction, to them. Though deliberate, it has to be delicate. Herein lies the beauty of dramatic creation.

3.1.2 RELIGION

Attempting the reformation of a society which is steeped in superstition and backwardness and suffering from innumerable evils and ills, through an attractive popular art like drama, is indeed a lofty ideal. Social dramas perform this function by following the principle of education through entertainment.
Highlighting the need for adoption of timely reforms, these dramas make a threadbare analysis of the various social problems and suggest remedies to the maladies with which our society is afflicted.

Social reform is a stupendous task. It involves realisation, awareness, awakening, kindling the spirit of reform, the willingness to discard obsolete practices, customs, rituals, beliefs, ceremonies etc., and all these have to be brought through persuasion giving no room for pressurisation. Society is a subtle medium that needs cautious dealing. Dramatic art is the most graceful means for attempting achievement of such an ideal objective.

Everyone knows that we have to tread a long path to reach the goal, the creation of an egalitarian society based on complete social justice. Such a society will be free from all blemishes like castes, creed, religious and linguistic bigotry, inhuman social practices like untouchability, etc.

Social dramas attract the attention of the common people to these problems by presenting them on the stage in the most appealing manner and urging them to think about these appealing aspects of social life with a view to rectify or remove, the flagrant defects found in the social system.
In this context it is pertinent to list out the evils and ills that are rampant in our society. The following are the major maladies that need immediate remedy.

3.1.3 Caste

Caste ridden to the core, our society has to strive hard to extricate itself from this deep-rooted malaise. Caste is a shameful social practice which has caused a lot of havoc. It has divided society into innumerable isolated and unrelated social groups with their own imaginary and baseless hierarchy which breeds bigotry and animosity among the crown of God's creations. It is high time that this unnecessary social practice is put an end to. Social dramas highlight the agony and pain created by caste system and strongly called for the removal of casteism.

Ramaswaminathan's 'Kaja Parambarai' (1976) is an appreciable social drama that deprecates the caste system in strong terms. Kesavamurthy, the retired official and a bachelor takes pity on three poor orphan children and brings them up and of these three, the two boys Lurasamy and Kothandam and the girl Gayatri become graduates. Besides these, the scavenger Narayanan's son Murugappan also is helped to become a graduate. Gayatri the Brahmin girl falls in love with Murugappan.
The dramatist very eloquently pleads for intercaste marriage which is the remedy for casteism. If all castes mingle with each other, castes will be dissipated by themselves. The drama is a very interesting and at the same time thought-provoking one, urging people to do away with the social system of castes.

'Natram' (1975) by N.P. Gurusamy is a pleasant social drama having a good theme. Barber's son Thangavelu who works as a teacher, loves the daughter of the temple priest Ganesan and because of this he is harassed. The dramatist raised his voice against those who propagate caste considerations and wants society to get rid of the caste system. Love is sublime and caste has no place in it. Caste can be thrown to the winds when hearts come together. The message in this drama is meaningful and momentous.

F. Vijayarajan's 'Herinjipu' (1972) is another social drama that draws our attention of the unhealthy practice of caste. The hero, Puthu, son of Marickam Shettiar, is a good sportsman and he marries Selvi, daughter of Thangavelar belonging to another caste. Immediately after the marriage, a series of tragic events take place and people talk of these calamities as happenings due to the intercaste marriage. But the dramatist very excellently exposes the hollowness of such empty talk and makes the spectators realise the importance of such
marriages. Thirty thousand rupees won by Selvi as prize money for her novel and the government bond and insurance money of Rupees Six lakhs received as compensation for the cloth shop that gets gutted, are fitting replies to the talk of illomen associated with auspicious affair like marriage.

Caste is a formidable social evil. It cannot be easily eradicated. However, social dramas add momentum to the movement that gains ground in our country.

3.1.4 \textbf{Untouchability}

Untouchability is an obnoxious social evil that should make everyone feel ashamed. No other society in the world has this inhuman social practice. Hence, it is treated as a heinous social crime. That is why Government has banned this. But quite often people are punished for practising untouchability. Unfortunately this bad practice is still in vogue, especially in rural areas.

Social dramas very graphically present the ill-effects of this social evil in order to eradicate it completely from our society.

\textit{'Agraharattil Keluthai'} (1977) by Venkat Samynathan very effectively portrays the practice of untouchability. The drama has a symbolic significance.
Even an ass is not permitted in the brahmin dwelling area, not to speak of a low caste human being who is never allowed to go anywhere near this sanctified area lest his very presence pollutes the atmosphere. The donkey is brought up by a progressive brahmin, one Prof. Narayanasamy who is forced to quit his job. But the poor donkey becomes a victim to social ostracism. The dramatist presents this revolutionary theme in a very forcef ul manner and he deserves praise for this nice drama.

T. S. Ganemorthy’s 'Thelintha Neerodai' (1969) is a social drama that conveys a powerful message against the evil of untouchability.

Professor Murugan is moved by the pitiable plight of an orphan girl Ramele from the Harijan slum. He buys fruits from the girl and when he comes to know that the old man who has brought up the girl is no more, he readily adopts her and takes her to his own house, undelighful of the opposition raised by the members of his family, he looks after the girl and marries her to the young man whom she loves. The drama highlights the need for a generous mentality so that untouchability may vanish from our social scene.

Untouchability also is a very deep-rooted social malady. Society should have buried this uncivilized practice long age. Social dramas facilitate the process of obviating this terrific social evil.
Dowry is almost a very humiliating evil that is prevalent in our society. This also is conspicuous by its absence in all other societies of the world. This is the deep rooted cause of the misery and persecution to which our womenfolk are subjected in our society. Marriage is a sacred or sacramental bond, but dowry is the social practice that defiles the sanctity of marriage and degenerates the standard of our cultural life. Consistent effort is needed to eradicate this social evil.

Social dramas are also there in the vanguard along with other movements to put up a stiff fight against the practice of dowry.

"Vellamakutty" (1963) by Kandur Nohamkaram is a very effective social drama that makes a scathing attack on the social evil of dowry. Vellankodi is a graceful girl from a middle class family. A diamond nose ring demanded as part of dowry is the hurdle to her marriage. But the dramatist presents the hero Akilan as an ideal character who loves his dear one and sends the diamond nose-ring to his father who realizes the folly at the end and reforms himself. The drama is an excellent one, since it strongly pleads for doing away with the dowry system.
'Thanga Chelangal' (1963) by P.S. Samsiah is another noteworthy social drama that also makes a crusade against this cruel practice. The son-in-law Pothundapandi harasses his father-in-law Swamin the Iyer demanding dowry and drives away his wife Ralyani on this score. The poor father-in-law becomes rich and then the son-in-law, a shameless creature, goes to him and Ralyani, touches her feet and begs her pardon. The drama brings out the agony created by dowry in a very touching manner and it urges all to abolish dowry from our society.

Alegoppan's 'Samiyargal Thirumanam' (1979) also presents the theme of dowry. Parisuthan, son of Raman refuses to marry, but the father is very particular that the son should marry. So also Parimalan, daughter of Govindan wants to lead a life of celibacy. But both make these pretensions to play a ruse on their parents who are very much after dowry. The marriage takes place without dowry and without the knowledge of the parents. The dramatist carries the message with conviction that it is the younger generation which should take bold steps to bury the blur of dowry deep. The drama is a noteworthy one.

'Manamagal Vandal' (1979) by P. Keelakantan, is a revolutionary social drama presented through 33 scenes and it deals with the obnoxious social habit of demanding dowry. The author handles the
theme with great humanism and dramatic skill of
unsurpassed nature. The drama is compelling tale
dealing with memorable characters. The heroine Bushra
is a pathetic victim of a canker which is a pernicious
practice in our society. She is an admirably noble
character which is a tribute to the qualities of
uprightness and endurance of our Indian women. Fast
moving and engrossing, the whole drama is an emotion
packed one. The irony of the whole tragedy, as the
author says is that it is women themselves who support
a bizarre practice that destroys the lofty dignity of
their own sex. This beautiful social drama is a
commendable contribution to the cause of anti-dowry
movement. The dramatist drives home the point that
'dowry is bribery' (page 11). Social dramas of this
type will pave the way for the complete eradication
of the social evil of dowry.

3.1.8

GONY OCT 1938

Widows are subjected to indescribable
ill-treatment. A married woman if she becomes a
widow due to the death of her husband, is required by
society to lead a life of misery. Social ostracism
is so much that no widow dares to go against the
dictates of society. A widower can marry, but a
widow marrying a man is resented by others. Such a
cruel custom militates against human nature. A widow,
especially a young girl is an ordinary human being
with all psychological characteristics. Denying family life to such a one is a retrograde step taken by our society.

Widow remarriage is now-a-days slowly gaining ground. Even orthodox families accept the justice implied in this and come forward to celebrate such marriages. Social dramas add momentum to the movement. Dramatists being the torch-bearers of social progress depict the pitiable plight of widows in their artistic creations in order to provoke popular sympathy and to plead for rehabilitation of these poor human.

'Iruvar Kandamar' (1965) by R. Soodamani is a remarkable social drama which won prize in drama competition conducted by the popular Tamil weekly 'Ananda Vikatan' in 1961, graphically depicts the sorrowful condition of a widow, Santha, the young widow, who is the first daughter of a rich family; falls in love with Sundararajan, a young man and succeeds in marrying the man braving the stiff opposition of his kith and kin and other members of the society. This drama very powerfully pleads for the marriage of widows who have every right to lead a normal family life in society. The dramatist's query whether the term 'Kaimpan' (widow in Tamil) has an equal term in masculine gender is a very thought provoking one.

Further, this brings home to us the depth of cruelty permitted in a society like ours in which male domination
Aru Alaguppan's 'Yerukku Kodiyanam' (1973) deals with the life of a young widow, Kalyani, who is the daughter of Somasundaram, a rich guy. Very conservation and conventional in his outlook but very callous by nature, Somasundaram, a widower objects to the marriage of his daughter. But curiously enough the same old fellow marries a young girl shamelessly. The dramatist makes a very fierce attack on rich fellows who mate out in unam treatment to their own daughters if they unfortunately happen to be widows. The drama very strongly pleads for the emancipation of widows.

'Unjal manam' (1973) by Kurasoli Maran also presents the pitiable plight of a Brahmin widow, Leela by name. She falls in love with Chinnathambi marakayar, a Muslim. The drama is a moving tragedy. The initial reluctance of Leela to accept the offer of marriage suggested by her lover is due to her apprehension of social consequences. The dramatist very excellently pleads for the right of widows who should not be persecuted by society for no fault of theirs. Intercaste marriage and widow remarriage, the twin tackled in the drama can be considered as a contribution to a lofty cause.

The anguish with which the widows have to pull on in our society is an absolutely unwarranted one. Widow remarriage must be a very common event in society and such a reform can brook no delay. Social dramas which plead for this noble cause do commendable service to society.
3.1.7 ORTHODOXY

An impalpable impediment that stands in the way of all social progress is orthodoxy in which our society is steeped. Orthodox beliefs and practices have a powerful sway over people. Many of these are baseless, and some of them are quite irrational. Nevertheless, they are followed scrupulously both by the illiterate or ignorant people and by the educated and unlightened ones.

Customs and cants are given some sanctity because of their orthodox quality. A society geared to science and technology for its onward march must extricate itself from the yoke of orthodoxy. It is gratifying to note that the fight against orthodoxy has gained momentum notwithstanding the stiff resistance put up by conservative and conventional forces and elements operating surreptitiously in society.

Social dramas highlight the need for mobilising public opinion against orthodox ways of life. Many of the social evils like caste, untouchability etc., are the products of orthodoxy.

Jyothirātha Giriya has written an illuminating social drama, 'Kriyam Aivanum Antru' (1977). Subburaman, a Sanskrit scholar is a typical orthodox character. A Saivite Brahmin, following all orthodox practices, this person refuses to teach Sanskrit to
others belonging to other communities. His daughter Reena is molested by two drunkards but Raghavan saves her and falls in love with her and marries her without the consent of his parents. The dramatist highlights the force of orthodoxy in this drama and strongly argues for the success of forces which break the barriers created by orthodox ways of life.

'Anugraham' (1977) by Nagercoil Krishnan, is a drama that deals with orthodox nature of society. Manthasvyanam serving as public prosecutor, is a very rich person and his wife Vaidegi is also an advocate. Radha, his sister falls in love with Ramakrishnan and despite the opposition raised by the family, Radha marries her lover at the Registrar's Office. The drama very powerfully pleads for measures which will weaken the forces of orthodoxy.

Orthodox ways of life are against the spirit of the era of 20th century. Much headway could not be made in all walks of life because people succumb to orthodox beliefs, ideas, customs and practices. A society which gives great importance to human values must shed the shackles created by this retrograde aspect of social life.

3.1.3 ALCOHOLISM

Liquor addicts are a terrific menace to our society. There are harrowing tales of misery and
necury perpetrated by this pernicious habit to which many men are found to be victims. A person who takes alcohol burns the candle at both ends. He loses his health as well as wealth. So there is need for a relentless fight against this social evil. A drunkard harasses his wife, illtreats the children, picks quarrel with others, behaves badly in society and becomes a nuisance to himself and to others.

Prohibition is a highly cherished ideal. Gandhiji included this as a major item in his constructive programme. However, governments are not able to strictly enforce this important reform because people especially the laymen and working people do not cooperate with government in eradicating this evil.

Very powerful propaganda is needed to educate people about the evil effect of consuming alcohol. Social dramas do yeomen service in this direction. Very a drama has effectively tackled the theme which brings home to spectators, the irredeemable havoc caused by liquor.

Kora's 'Asaithaan' (1979) is a social drama with a theme on an alcohol addict. Muthu the adopted son of Govindan is a drunkard. In a drunken mood he blabbers some nonsense and causes the death of Govintha who commits suicide. The drama is a moving
tragedy, Kuthu's lady love Logu also dies. The dramatist very eloquently reveals how liquor makes a man senseless to the sentiment to domestic peace and very excellently educates people about the evils of consuming alcoholic drinks. Dramas of this kind will make people think about the dire consequence of drinking liquor and desist from such evil habits.

'Kanevan oru Battaan' (1923) by Seramaguru very graphically depicts the ill effects of liquor. Dr. Asok, a sexmaniac and a terrific drunkard leads a debauched life, misbehaves with many girls and finally marries a girl by name Seema, a post graduate and a social worker. He illtreats her and kills her after a lapse of forty days after marriage. He is not able to escape from the clutches of law, even though he tries hard to make the murder look like a suicide. The dramatist very excellently presents the diabolic nature of a drunkard who happens to be a villainous character also. The drama is a highly commendable contribution to the cause of the crusade against the evil of alcohol.

Drinking alcoholic drinks is a very harmful social evil which should be eradicated lock, stock and barrel. It is a deep rooted malady. Unless and until society is rid of this devilish social evil, there would not be any hope of life for millions of
families, especially those belonging to the down-trodden group. Social creeds have to propagate the merits of prohibition and facilitate the emancipation of our society.

3.1.9 DECADENCE

Prostitution is a universal phenomenon, but a very humiliating social evil that militates against the nobility of human nature. It is a blurr or a blemish that defiles the very honour of the weaker sex. It is the most distressing social practice that clearly reveals the depth to which human beings can degenerate.

Debauchery is a sin. Chastity is a virtue, but unmindful of the fact that man is meant to be a moral being, many a man is ruled by carnal pleasures and seeks sexual gratification through prostitution which is an evil that leads to a number of other social evils. Poverty is the reason for prostitution at the lower rung of society. But it is prevalent among the affluent because moral turpitude is rampant in all sections of society.

A practice prevalent in society from times immemorial, prostitution cannot be eradicated, but can be prevented to the extent possible lest society at large presents itself a picture of perversion. Propaganda against prostitution is essential for strengthening the moral calibre of our society.
'Yarukum Vetkamillai' (1973) written by 'Cho' is an appealing social drama that portrays the pathetic life of a prostitute. Sundaram, the son of millionaire Appadurai, is a womanizer and he traps Framila an innocent girl. He presents a gold ring to her and takes her to a hotel and leaves her there alone where she becomes a prostitute. She gets arrested in a police raid. Sundaram's younger brother Venu, a lawyer without any practice gets her released on bail. But Framila is convicted in the court of law. She commits suicide. The drama is a moving tragedy. The dramatist very vehemently argues for the victims of rich men's sexual hunger.

Framila's words are very revealing and thought provoking (P. 15). She says that a politician and a prostitute cannot reform themselves easily because by the time they come to realize about it, it is already too late.

Ravuther another character says (P. 95) 'a woman cannot become a prostitute all by herself. This society creates a prostitute and then condemns its own creation'.

The drama is a very stringent attack on the social system of ours. The dramatist pleads for prostitutes, these pitiable social beings who are left in the lurch by the affluent section of our society.
M. Selvarajan has written an interesting social drama, 'Kalahasu' (1977) which portrays the intensity of human callousness which is responsible for prostitution. Babu, an antisocial element, runs a brothel house, cheats innocent girls and makes them prostitutes. A very rich person, Chokalingam Pillai, has a son. This chap Ramani loves Radha and marries her. Since the father is against the marriage he takes her to city. But believing the contents of an anonymous letter, he leaves her. Babu takes her to his place and tries to make her a prostitute. But Dr. Gopi saves the girl and makes Ramani accept her. The dramatist very vividly depicts the position of prostitutes and argues that antisocial elements who are responsible for this social evil to flourish should be severely dealt with. Dr. Gopi's words are very appealing. 'Babu is a cock that peddles with the rubbish heap that is the darker side of society. It is better to live by begging than to earn money by means of using girls'.

'Pathimiyin Unnaviratham' (1973) written by Alagappan presents a graphic description of the villainous behaviours of a prostitute and also reveals clearly how prostitutes are stooges in the hands of undesirable characters. Manickam, a very responsible official working in Ambika mill, is a perfect person and he does not indulge in any corrupt practices. Padma
a notorious prostitute requests Manickam to give a job to a person. Since the latter refuses the request, she and others who are against him contrive to bring disrepute to him. When he is gone on leave to attend to his wife who is expecting, the opponents lead a procession headed by the prostitute alleging that Manickam had misbehaved with Padesa.

The villains get Manickam sacked. The dramatist very ingeniously presents the helplessness of innocent persons like Manickam and at the same time wants us to bestow our thoughts on the evil acts committed by immoral characters like Padesa.

Prostitution is a social evil that should make moral beings hang their heads in shame. An ideal society that gives importance to moral and cultural values will have to get rid of social evils like prostitution. A time may come when unholy social practices like prostitution will vanish from our social scene and all members of society will follow high ethical values in life.

3.1.10 SUPERSTITION

Our society is steeped in superstition. A vestige of age old ways of believing and behaving, superstition is a stumbling block to social progress. This is another deeprooted malady with which our society
is afflicted. Many people, often the ignorant ones and even the educated people, possess superstitions beliefs and behaviours. An interesting aspect of this is that many of these beliefs and behaviours are not only baseless and meaningless but also ludicrous and utterly foolish.

People are sometimes aware of the fact that superstition does not deserve any serious consideration. Still, they are apprehensive of some evil effects, hence they give importance to superstition. Illomens, inconspicuous events etc., are those around which superstitions are easily created. They are purely fictitious products of man's fertile imagination. Yet they are so strong in our society that their influence is quite formidable. Earlier superstition is superseded, better it is for society.

'Karmachayug' (1973) by Pon Narasimhur, is a typical social drama that sheds light on superstitious beliefs held by a section of our people. The drama presents a harrowing tale of cruelty. Three innocent children are brutally done to death by some terrific devilish human beings who are inspired to do the dastardly crime because they are thoroughly superstitious. Kolattur village is the place where the incident occurs. Narasimhan the village munsif acts on the advice of his wife who has dreamt that three children first born to parents should
be sacrificed to propitiate the family goddess, Katteri, so that her own children may be saved from death. The dramatist gives a graphic account of the superstitious act and argues vehemently that such superstition should be buried deep. The drama is a very absorbing one.

G Chokalingam’s ‘Vashkai annum Olam’ (1975) brings home the fact that even the educated are unfortunately found to be highly superstitious. Dr. Nuthu is the son of a rich person. Poongudi, a graduate, is a beautiful girl from a middle-class family. Dr. Nuthu loves Poongudi, but the accountant of the house, one Venu, brings in an astrologer and makes him say that there is astrological difficulty in solemnising the marriage. Since the horoscopes do not tally, marriage does not take place. Astronomy is a science, but astrology is a quack science that is consulted much in India. Even educated and enlightened people give importance to horoscopes. The dramatist severely criticises this practice and wants people to give up this superstitious practice.

Superstition is deeply ingrained in our social system on account of its psychological force. It is able to flourish in society because our people refuse to accept a scientific outlook. Many are susceptible to superstitious beliefs even though
they know fully well that they are quite untenable in a scientific age. The spiritual over tone to superstition is a binding force that gives strength to this. It is high time that society realises the folly of engendering superstitions and banishes them altogether.

1.1.11 **Ignorance**

Ignorance is a stark reality, but it is a sorrowful aspect that explains the backwardness of our society. Millions of people in our country are illiterate and ignorant. They are ignorant of many important and essential facts of civilised life. They become the victims of cunnings elements.

They are ignorant and backward. Common people do not realise the importance of education, hence they are not able to escape from ignorance. In fact all other social evils like superstition, cast etc., are the result of people’s ignorance. Mass education is the only remedy for this. Unless and until people get the benefits of education, ignorance will continue to be a bane of society. An ignorant society will be backward, and it can never become forward so long as it is immersed in ignorance. Social dramas add weight to the relentless fight against ignorance.
Vellimolai has written a drama with a title "Dr. Kovir Th.D." (1973) Humorous by nature, the drama reveals the depth of ignorance that is found among our people, especially the rural folk. Dr. Kovir, a professor, wants to lead a peaceful life and moves to a village. There the villagers mistake him to be a medical practitioner and request him to give them treatment. His words that he is not a medical man do not carry conviction and the people entreat him to give medical help. Moved by their plight Dr. Kovir learns homoeopathy and gives treatment to the ailing people in his village.

The drama reveals the ignorance of people and contains the message that common people should be given education so as to make them enlightened and well informed.

Alagappan's 'Yaduvaithiram' (1973) is a social drama that discloses the ignorance of laymen leading to serious health hazards. Namas and Palani are two hut dwellers. They dig out dead bodies buried in cemetery and steal jewels found on them and then bury them back. These two thieves are ignorant of elementary health principles. They dig out the dead body of a person who had a severe attack of small pox. They contract the contagious disease and perish. The ignorance of people about health and hygiene is a very serious problem that creates havoc in society.
Antisocial activities are rampant in our society. There are hard-hearted elements around us who go to any extent in indulging in activities that are detrimental to social security and integrity. A morbid tendency is in evidence in this respect. Society suffers a lot due to the wanton and wilful acts of some people who do all these antisocial acts for self aggrandisement.

There acts which jeopardize social well being are innumerable. However, some of these are of a tangible nature and they can be listed out. Dramatists have tackled them deftly and have voiced their stand against antisocial trends. In fact dramatists, imbued with a high sense of social service are bent upon fighting against reckless elements who commit dastardly acts in society. Given below are some of the antisocial activities on which attention has been focussed by dramatists who have written some excellent dramas.

3.3.1 ADULTERATION

A heinous crime, adulteration is tantamount to wilful homicide. A fellow who adulterates foodstuffs or medicine is no less than a murderer. But such elements are there working fearlessly in business and trade in our country. Notwithstanding the constant vigilance and the cautious measures adopted by the administrative machinery, adulteration flourishes abundantly. Sub-standard
materials are found much in the market and one wonders whether adulteration is an art with these antisocial elements who operate behind the scene, sometimes with the connivance of some unscrupulous officials.

'Kalappadem Kanthasamy' (1974) by late Tamilvannar is an excellent exposition of adulteration. A notorious businessman Kanthasamy earns a name in adulteration. His assistant Palavesen, helps him in adulterating foodgrains. Kanthasamy's son Muthu argues with his father, and since he finds it futile leaves home. But he plunders his own house with the help of others and distributes the foodstuff among poor people. Kanthasamy gets reformed by his own son and stops the evil practices. The dramatist highlights the antisocial activity of adulteration and appeals to those who indulge in this to reform themselves.

Krishnaswamy's play 'Sentror Pashikumvini' (1979) also attracts our attention to adulteration. Kasilingam, a big business magnet, is an adept in adulteration and earns a lot of money by means of this deceitful act. Thillainayagan, a student and Pulavar Ponnambalam are instrumental for reforming Kasilingam and his associates Madasamy and Pakkiam. The drama brings out the adverse effect of adulteration on society, but seems to plead for the reforming of even those who indulge in this antisocial activity.
Adulteration is an apparent antisocial activity. Public opinion must be mobilized against this and there should be deterrent punishment to those who imperil social security. Proponents need for this movement. In this country there should not be any adulteration of any consumable article. This is imperative for the welfare of our society.

3.3.3 BLACK MARKETING

Black marketing is a blemish on the business community. Open market is the system that is very much in vogue meant for the transaction of commodities. But unscrupulous elements among the business men get motivated by unethically profiteering and indulge in black marketing. They hoard commodities and create an artificial scarcity solely to exploit consumers.

An honest tradesman must hang his head in shame and discourage this antisocial tendency, exhibited by some of his fellow tradesman. Society must also be watchful. Thanks to the movements like Consumers Cooperative societies, Vigilance bodies etc., black marketing is kept under check. However, it does operate surreptitiously in society. This clandestine menace poses a problem to social welfare and economic security. It is high time that those who are found indulging in blackmarketing are brought to book.
Social dramas deal with this antisocial activity of the selfish and greedy businessmen in order to put an end to this practice.

Kavingnar Saithiyam has written an interesting social drama, 'Nan Jananayakananal' (1976) presenting the story of a gang who are notorious in blackmarketing. The kingpin of the group is Singaravelu who has invested about twenty five lakhs of rupees in black marketing with the expectation that he would get fifty lakhs out of this. He plays a role in politics also, but all his machinations meet with failure since the opposition party comes to power. The dramatist drives home the point that blackmarket can be thwarted only if proper political forces are strengthened by the people.

'Kamadenuvana Kelaimeedu' (1973) written by Agaman contains a clear account of blackmarketing. Sarmelinger, a businessman is an expert in blackmarketing. He bribes officials and carries on the clandestine activity. He refuses to help even his own brother who is in distress. The dramatist reveals the devilish nature of blackmarketing and strongly pleads for banishing this antisocial activity. The drama is realistic depicting an activity that goes on unabated in our society.
Blackmarketing is a black aspect of trades and commerce in our country. It will jeopardize our entire economy if it is not eradicated. So the government as well as society should act with all vigilance to get rid of this antisocial act. Social dramas add their assistance to the drive against blackmarketing.

3.2.3 Smuggling

Smuggling is akin to black marketing and hoarding. There are racketeers operating in national as well as international levels in the antisocial act of smuggling. This is a highly lucrative business, hence, it is more attractive than blackmarketing or adulteration, to those who are bent upon making a quick buck. Various costly commodities are smuggled in and out of our country by very cunning persons who resort to all sorts of ruse to hoodwink the customs and other officials.

Antisocial elements plan and carry out smuggling operations with meticulous care and caution, mostly successfully and at times without success. Since there is huge money involved in it, dare devils are brave enough to risk their life in such endeavours. Very effective administrative machinery is needed to spot out and weed out this cancer from our society.

'Sanmattama' (1977) written by Kora exposes the life and activities of a smuggler. Veerabahu is a notorious person as a smuggler. He has a humble beginning. He is an illiterate, but smuggling pushes
him up and he begins to live on the Ian of luxury. He ignores his son who ends up as criminal. The son commits a murder. The smuggler confesses his antisocial activity in court of law. The drama is an interesting one and it sheds much light on the life of a smuggler who is an enemy of the society.

Tamilvannan's 'Tharva Thalaikakum' (1964) is another social drama that presents the problem of smuggling. Dharmarajan poses as a very charitable person and gives alms to poor people magnificently. The criminal investigation department receives information that an antisocial element, a man named Karuppan, changing his name as Dharmarajan has come to Madras. CIDs Singaram and Manickam follow him. Dharmarajan indulges in smuggling through fellows who are disguised as Bedhus or samiyars. The smuggler and his gang are arrested. The drama discloses the cunningness with which smugglers operate.

Smuggling is a terrific antisocial activity that adversely affects the country's economy. This evil has to be effectively checked. Social dramas add momentum to the movement against this antisocial activity.
Corruption is yet another canker that is found to be chronic in our society. This is prevalent among officials and other employees who have an itching palm. They receive bribery and spoil the entire administrative system. Bureaucracy is blamed for its corrupt practices.

Society cannot progress if corruption continues. Injustice, favouritism, irregularities, nepotism, etc., are the undesirable aspects of corruption. The agony of the situation is aggravated since corruption is a phenomenon existing everywhere, from top to bottom in our social system. Lack of honesty in public life is the root cause of corruption. This breeds a lot of social evils in its train and it is high time corruption is completely eradicated.

'Hinalkapadam' (1979) by Jayanthan is a drama that reveals the gravity of corruption. Maruthanayagam is a government official in a sensitive position. He receives bribes and gets booked. He blames his wife for this. The family suffers. The dramatist depicts the despicable aspect of a very bad social evil and strongly pleads for deterrent punishment to those who are guilty of perpetrating corruption.
'Cho' has written a popular drama 'Jeevayayi Jave, Jave' (1965) which presents the various kinds of corruption practised by different sections of society. Rajerathnam gives bribes and gets a building contract; Peethambaran is the fellow who abets this, bribe is given for college admission, a minister is blamed by Krishnan of corrupt practices; Panchabakesan evades tax through corruption - all these are presented in a very interesting manner in this drama. The dramatist lists out these cases in order to pinpoint the ubiquitous nature of corruption and strongly pleads for measures to banish corruption from public life.

Corruption is a curse to our society. One wonders whether this can be removed from our social system. This is so deep rooted that no remedy seems to be in sight. People are eloquent when they talk about this antisocial evil, but none is able to do anything against this. There is no salvation for society so long as corruption continues to exist.

3.2.5 GAMBLING:

Gambling is another deep rooted antisocial activity which is a favourite pastime for not only the affluent people but also the poor sections of society. This seems to be a psychological disorder in the case of many. People get addicted to gambling and once they become victim they never seem to escape from it. Some people possess a mania for gambling.
Cards play, horse race etc., are the kinds of gambling which make people poorer. The gambling dens are there in slums as well as in posh areas. People spoil their health and wealth and gambling brings families to ruin. Very powerful propaganda and adequate administrative measures are necessary to fight this social evil.

Social dramas have been written to educate people about the evil effects of gambling.

'Kasigan Nadakangal' (1972) written by V. Nagamohan has a theme on horse race. Venkataraman is a regular race goer. He sells household articles and spends money on horse race. Even when his wife gives her jewel to him to get money for medical expenses of his child, the fellow goes with the 3000 rupees to a race course. He loses the money and the child perishes. The dramatist depicts the evil effect of gambling in a very graphic manner and urges gamblers to realise their folly and to lead a reformed life.

'Jagappan's 'Suthatten' (1973) is a typical drama on gambling. Perumal and Pakkiri are the gamblers who operate in front of a cinema theatre. The drama brings out the gambling activities of antisocial elements who want to cheat others. The dramatist warns people about these characters.
"Bagodai Parmiranda" (1929) by on Paramguru depicts the gambling activity of a person. Veerakesari is a villainous gambler. He cheats gullible people and extorts money. Veerakesari is really an antisocial element from Bangalore. He plays ruse on people but gets caught by police. The dramatist very excellently discloses the diabolic activity perpetrated through gambling and also reveals how the efficient police personnel are able to deal with these elements. The drama is a very interesting one.

Gambling is an antisocial activity that has its clutches deeply imbedded in society. The agony caused by it is indescribable. It is time that preventive measures are adopted to effectively tackle this problem. It must be banished completely.

3.3.6 

Producing fake currency notes and circulating them in society is another diabolic activity of antisocial elements. Counterfeiting is indeed an ingenious art with these treacherous characters. The harm done to the country's economy by this antisocial activity is very grave.

Despite the vigilance with which this crime is investigated by the government, counterfeiting of currency notes continues to exist. Of course the opulent section of our society has a hand in it, though the
culprits are found to be common fellows. Greedy people who want to amass wealth by any dishonest means are operating behind the scene and they know well how they should evade law.

Dramatists deal with this antisocial act in their dramas.

'Kadamai' (1967) by M. Karunanidhi Sundaram is a drama on counterfeiting. Mohan, the mill official, becomes the mill owner and distributes counterfeit currency notes. This vice leads him to immorality. He molests Narasimha who commits suicide. Her brother Rajan, who wants to avenge the outrage on his sister gets six years imprisonment. CID Bekumeran brings to book Mohan, but Mohan shoots himself to death. The drama is a gripping one since the events are we inspiring. The dramatist gives a graphic account of a detestable antisocial activity engendered by a rich chow.

M. Karunanidhi's drama, 'Puratchi—Sleigner' (1973) is another notable drama that deals with a theme on counterfeiting. Sirn Manivarma, a notorious antisocial element, circulates counterfeit currency. Interesting enough, this fellow says that he belongs to the opposition party to the party in power. The culprit meets with the fitting consequences of his crime at the end. The dramatist pleads for strict action against this kind of antisocial activity.
The country's economy would be jeopardized if counterfeiting of currency notes is allowed to continue. There are terrorists criminals who are in the know of all the details of the art of counterfeiting. Thanks to the watchful eyes of the law enforcing machinery in our country, this menace is not allowed to have any impact on our economic system. Nevertheless, the havoc caused by it, is injurious to social security.

3.2.7. **MURDER IN AN ADDITION**

Yet another heinous antisocial activity committed by hardened criminals is kidnapping of kids and abduction of women. This is a criminal act perpetrated by antisocial elements for various purposes such as milking or blinding children in order to make them beggars, extorting ransom from parents, preparing girls as prostitutes, etc.

The most merciless act committed by the dare devils is reported in the media quite often. Kidnapping or rape of children for human sacrifice is also an unfortunate happening in some parts of our country. This happens in urban or metropolitan centres as well as in villages or rural areas. Crime of this kind is not only an unethical act but also a very inhuman act committed by heartless creatures.
'Kattusadu' (1969) written by Shanthu Sundaram depicts abduction of young girls indulged in by a villainous cheat. Vedaachalam, a hotel owner, is the fellow who does this. A very scheming fellow, he abducts girls and sends them to a brothel house in Singapore. His technique is indeed tricky. He gets dead bodies of girls from the mortuary of hospitals and covers them with the cloth worn by girls abducted by his men so as to mislead investigations. But the man gets arrested by police and his antisocial act also comes to an end. The drama is an interesting disclosure of a serious offence committed in society.

Paramaguru's 'Yanamal Pona Karigaikal' (1979) also reveals the gravity of this severe antisocial activity. Venu, a bangle seller and his wife Magammal kill his Careyavathy a young girl who has come home after quarrelling with her husband. The girl is taken to Bombay and sold at the red light area. Police investigation leads to the arrest of the bangle seller and his wife and the restoration of the girl to her parents. The drama throws light on the sinister manipulation with which young girls are abducted and subjected to prostitution. The dramatist has deftly handled the theme in this drama.
'Meendum Varuga' (1773) by L. Shukku Valan presents kidnapping by a criminal group who operate in a frightening manner. Selvam, a small boy is the son of a peasant. He is a bright boy but refuses to study. He runs away from home but a rich man finds him begging, so he takes him to his house, and makes him a factory worker. Selvan is kidnapped by Thirumalai a notorious character who usually kidnaps children and engages them as beggars to make money. But Selvan escapes and saves the good number of children from Thirumalai who gets killed in the end. The drama throws much light on the terrific criminal nature of undesirable elements who kidnap children and make them beggars to exploit them. The dramatist pleads for severe action against criminals who kidnap and harass innocent children.

Kidnapping of children and abducting of young girls is an uncultured act or sinister crime, committed by antisocial elements. This is a worldwide crime. The poignancy of this is very moving to us sincere we, as a society, give a greater importance to love, affection, sympathy and to all such ethical values and virtues. Police force as well as the public should see to it that this highly agonising antisocial activity does not take place in our country.
Rape is an obnoxious outrage committed against feminine modesty in our society. Sex perverts molest women and spoil their chastity. A rape victim is treated as an outcaste by society. Women being weaker, are not able to save themselves from the brutal characters who forcefully attack them and seek sexual gratification.

Society, the legal system, and the police are all sometimes helpless against the terrific act of a devil in human form. Many hapless girls shed tears throughout their life since rape once forever deprives them of their modesty and seldom does someone come forward to marry a rape victim. Rich people, rowdy elements and antisocial elements are guilty of this shameful human behaviour.

Social dramatists tackle this problem with a view to mobilise public opinion against this.

'Kanniyan' (1937) written by Shanmugasundaram, has the theme on rape, but reformist in its nature. Chandran, a politician has a sister Malarivizhi by name. The girl and her mother live together. Their relative Sivasamy also lives with them. He takes the girl to a temple and puts a ring on her finger. He tells her that he has married her. Chandran gets hurt in an accident and gets admitted in the hospital. When the
mother is gone to the hospital, Sivasamy rapes Velarvili. The girl conceives and the matter comes to the notice of others. Sivasamy runs away and joins the army. A child is born to the girl. Sivasamy loses a leg in war and comes home. He marries Velarvili. As a war hero he is honoured by society. Though dramatist depicts rape as a detestable social crime, the reformist spirit gets displayed at the end as the rape victim is accepted by the same person who molested the girl.

Paramaguru's 'Kalladi Killu' (1979) is a noteworthy and also a praiseworthy drama that presents a graphic account of the agony, caused by anbecoming human act. Kittu, a rowdy, owns a car, waits at a cinema theatre, offers lift to a young couple and kidnaps the girl. He rapes her and steals the jewels. Police investigation brings the criminal to book. The drama very excellently reveals how treacherous elements, scheming intelligently, commit the heinous crime of rape. The drama is a lesson to unwary people who are careless to the event as to risk life and property.

Jayakanthan's 'Kilamerangalil Kilamanithargal' (1977) is a moving story that poignantly presents the pathetic life of a girl who unfortunately is a rape victim. Ganga, a college girl is given a lift by Prabhu in his car and the chap rapes the girl. She studies well and becomes a big official. After a lapse of seventeen years she finds out Prabhu who raped her.
Prabhu's daughter Banju gets attached to Ganga. Interestingly enough Ganga continues to love Prabhu and when he refuses to marry her, she becomes mad. The drama is very powerful in depicting the deplorable condition of a rape victim even though she comes up in life. The dramatist in his own characteristic manner vehemently attacks the detestable sexual perversion of young fellows whose brutal acts spoil the life of innocent girls.

Rape is a serious antisocial act that deserves very severe punishment. Social security measures should be there in all vulnerable places so that innocent girls do not fall victims to this inhuman act. Dramas educate people about this and warn them of the antisocial elements who are acting as vultures in society. Prevention is better than punishment, so there should be preventive steps taken in order to thwart the sex perverts, from assaulating the sisters in our society.

3.2.3. **Impostors**

Impostors act as pests in society. Pretentious and highly deceitful, these undesirable characters operate in clandestine but very cunning manner. They are extremely ingenious and resourceful. They know how they should cheat others. They are adepts in people. Curiously enough, even educated and well informed people are taken for a ride by these scheming characters.
They are harmless to the extent that they never indulge in violence. But they are villains of a despicable type against whom society should be very careful. Masters in cheating and deceiving gullible people, they enact their drama in such a manner that many people who unfortunately happen to be victims to these villains relate tales of woe and even police find it difficult to tackle the problem created by impostors.

Bondavaralu's drama 'Kuruchidaivu Balaswamani' (1979) presents a typical imposter. One Dr. Kuresh is an unqualified fellow but continues to be a medical practitioner. He helps pregnant girls to undergo abortion and earns a lot of money. He rapes girls. But he is let down by Vimala who informs police. The criminal investigation reveals the true nature of this cheat and he gets punishment. The drama is a very illuminating one. It very interestingly depicts the diabolical acts of an antisocial element, a destestable imposter. The dramatist warns us to be careful about such elements. 'Undiyal Ulagazanathan' (1964) written by Tamilvanan is another noteworthy drama that contains a graphic account of an imposter who cheats people. Ulagazanathan collects money on one pretext or other sensing the nature of his victim. He collects money for temple, for political party, and for orphanage. But he swallows the entire amount. The fellow ends his career in Jail. His wife is an equal
match to him. She is in the next cell because she has tried to sell brass saying that it is good gold. The drama is humorous, but it throws light on the seemingly innocuous but quite insidious acts of impostors.

The havoc caused by impostors is a headache to police and also the public. Many people are easily duped by these criminals who live by cheating others by pretending to be somebody. The common people go by the words of these fellows and lose their money. Society has to be warned about these impostors and social dramas do this function excellently.

3.2.10 PICKPOCKETING

Pilfering is an antisocial activity which is very inconveniencing to people. Pickpockets are a nuisance to the travelling public. Adepts in picking pockets, these antisocial elements operate as a racket. They are found to be well organised and these gangs choose vulnerable place as their areas of operation. Peak hours are the convenient time for them to carry on their business. In bus and train they travel with people and pick their pockets.

Police have a trying time with these elements. Many of them are in their teen age. Of course others are there behind the scene, managing the whole manoeuvres. Cities and towns are infested with these elements and one has to be very cautious lest he loses his money. In a very adroit manner they work with their fingers and knock away the purses of people.
Social dramas present pickpockets also on the stage. *On par maguru* 'Pickpocket Sonai' (1979) is a horsecart driver, an interesting character. He is the disciple of Moosa, the master who gave training to him in the trade. The signals and the peculiar language of pickpockets are disclosed. The drama throws light on the life of a pickpocket who is driven to this criminal act due to the force of dire circumstances. Sonai's wife and children die and this happens to be a turning point in the man's life. The dramatist depicts the human aspect even in a pickpocket who deserved no sympathy.

Pickpockets have to be tackled effectively by the police. These antisocial elements exploit innocent travellers and hence do harm to society. Travelling itself is nowadays a trying experience. To add to this agony pickpockets deprive people of their hard earned money. It is heartening to note that police are able to detect these elements and check their antisocial activity.

3.2.11 MURDER

Murder is a heinous crime committed by man. Motives apart, murder degenerates man to the level of the brute. Antisocial elements sometimes turn to be murderers. Killing with a preplanned scheme, legally known as wilful homicide, is a culpable crime deserving capital punishment. *Womens, wealth and wine cause murders*, is a meaningful adage.
Killing a human being is the most treacherous and sinful act that one can think of. Sudden emotional urge makes man lose his balance and commit this destribly act. Penitentiaries are there in plenty. Nevertheless, murder continues to be committed in our society. A civilized society that upholds ethical and cultural values should give no room for this crime. However, there is helplessness as far as this is concerned.

Social dramas deal with themes that touch upon murder.

"Kolaikkaka" (1972) written by V.S.P.Manickam is a typical murder story. Kadalalen, an LIC employee and Valivaramban, a bank employee are inseparable friends, very close to each other. Both love Poomalai who is employed in a Bank. But she loves Kadalalen. Valivaramban resents this and gives trouble to the lovers, but gets murdered by his friend. When Poomalai blames him, Kadalalen kills Poomalai also. He gets life imprisonment for the dual murders committed. The drama presents a graphic picture of heartless murder committed by a young man and urges people to desist from this type of callous crime.

Nellai Nambi has written an illuminating social drama, "Mular Birithathu" (1972) which also has the theme on murder caused by family rivalry due to land dispute. Mahadevan pillai and Nagalingam pillai are
such enemies. Santhi is the daughter of the former. Her husband is murdered by the latter's people. Despite the father's advice, the daughter continues to dress like a widow. Her son Raja falls in love with Devi, daughter of Mahalingam Pillai. Mahalingam Pillai tries to shoot Devi. Santhi suffers a heart attack and dies. Mahalingam wrenches the pistol from Mahalingam Pillai and shoots himself. In death the families unite. The drama a consummate tragedy, brings out the agonising experiences caused by murder and enmity. The words of the dramatist are appealing, "One who dips his hand in the blood of another must wash it with his own tears" (P.45).

Murderous tendency is a deep-rooted one in human nature. But education and enlightenment have elevated mankind to a higher plane of love, affection and unity. Religious and cultural institutions all teach everyone that one should not kill another for any cause. Unless and until this crime ceases to be committed by man, Civilisation and culture will continue to lose their significance.

3.5.12 THEN

Thieves thrive in our society. Organised gangs and individual thugs operate with all their talents to steal money or materials from homes and other places. In cities and towns this crime is quite prevalent. Police are very vigilant; yet the thieves and pilferers commit theft quite often.
Not only the affluent but also the poor people become victims of this. When a poor family loses the hard earned money and jewels, it becomes a heartrending occurrence. Thieves are hardened criminals and it seems that 'once a thief, ever a thief' holds good in the case of these antisocial elements. Jails do not reform them. Hence society has to be very careful about these enemies of public safety and security.

Dramas depict events connected with theft and also the life of thieves.

Mohanarangam's play, 'Rampaikollathheergal' (1977), presents the story of a theft committed by Malayan, a medical shop owner. Poovendran draws thousand rupees, the entire saving, from the bank and comes to the medical shop. There he dies due to sudden heart attack. But Malayan makes use of this calamity to steal money from the deceased. This the fellow does to make money for his own daughter's marriage. But fate is against him. His daughter elopes with other fellow, but commits suicide since she finds the fellow a cheat. The drama teaches a very powerful moral lesson. Those who steal other people's property will never enjoy the fruits of theft. Dramas of this kind have a salutary effect on common people. The dramatist deserves praise.
'Kol 'Giluthirutta' (1970) by Donnaremaa'urum sheds much light on a highly detestable act indulged in by antisocial elements. This type of theft is a terrific crime since it is an antisocial act that slings mud on our culture and heritage besides depriving our country of precious antiques of high architectural value. Jibou, an unemployed youth is wasting his time. His mother, Anjali, tries to reform him. But he steals the idol from the verumal temple, conceals it in the river sand and absconds. Police arrest him and recover the idol.

Theft is there in society from time immemorial. However hard society tries to curb this, it does not succeed in this attempt. So many reasons can be attributed to this antisocial act. But it is evident that moral calibre alone is the remedy for this. If all, uphold moral values, none will dare to steal anything. Until and unless that happens, this detestable act will flourish in society.

3.2.13 TREACHERY

Treachurous elements and acts are rampant in society. Innocent and gullible people being in abundance treacherous fellows take them for a ride. Deceitful conduct ends in treachery. Many poor people and families come to grief because of the villainous activities perpetrated by treacherous elements.
All the evil doers hold society to ransom simply to seek selfish benefits. The nitty of the whole matter is sometimes, treacherous people indulge in treachery for its own sake. Iago, the most popular villain caricatured by Shakespeare is a crowning example of treachery. In society we come across Iagoes in different spheres. People have to be very wary of these elements.

Dramatists consider it as an important duty of theirs to expose these elements.

Nagercoil Krishnan's drama 'Hidambara Rahasiyam' (1978) presents a powerful portrayal of a treacherous character. Gajapathy, the landlord of Kulanuthoor, runs Lakshmi trust, an institution established for the welfare of the village. His father Sathyamorythy expires while his son is gone to Singapore. Bhooopathy is the chap to whom the property is entrusted. This fellow swindles the money and lavishly spends it. He leads a debaucherous life also. He conspires to murder Gajapathy. But Gajapathy for gives him and accepts his daughter as his daughter-in-law. The drama is an excellent exposition of the treacherous deeds of a fellow who betrays his own friend. The end of it is also a nice one since it emphasizes the generous act of forgiving even the foe who not only cheats a good person but also tries to kill him.
"Thandangi" (1973) by Tamil Nadutani is about a bank agent who is a typical cheat. He secretly takes ten thousand rupees from the cashier. This man wants to use the money for the marriage of his daughter Tusaha. The cashier requests for time to make good the loss. God's will prevails. The daughter Tusaha is involved in a car accident. The bank agent tells the cashier that he need not worry about the loss and tells him the truth. The drama is a very illuminating one. The dramatist discloses the treachery of a person who is expected to be a responsible person. The drama is a good lesson to erring human beings whose treachery quite often boomerangs.

Treachery is a double-edged weapon. It will harm the person who plans harm to others.

Society would have been a beautiful garden full of the grandeur of goodness but for the treacherous acts of antisocial elements. Despite the advancement achieved by man in all realms of life, treachery continues to hold its sway over human nature. The fight against social evil will end when treachery gets rooted out.

3.3.14 DELINQUENCY OF DUTY

Duty, dignity and discipline the triple moral values emphasised by Aringer Anna have their relevance
to all social situations. But unfortunately dereliction of duty is found to be apparent. Ignoring one’s duty is a bane of our social system. Duty consciousness is part and parcel of the life style of westerners, thinking the responsibility is looked upon as a serious loose on the part of an individual.

In our society many a social calamity or catastrophe is caused by people who ignore their duty. Aware of the agony caused to many, people in position as well as the laymen do not bother about duty. Irresponsibility breeds indescribable social handicaps. None seems to be worried about this. ‘Doing one’s duty’ is a must for every one. A developing society cannot afford to have the luxury of dereliction of duty.

‘Kalaintha megam’ (1933) written by Alagappan, depicts the dereliction of duty of two important officials. Dr. Thiagarajan and Police Inspector Rajan are classmates and thick friends. Both love Meena a college lecturer and the two responsible officials neglect their duty and cause a lot of havoc. Patients suffer and clients feel helpless. The drama has a very interesting turn of event. The sudden demise of Meena make the doctor and the police inspector come to their sense. The postmortem report reveals that Meena is pregnant. But both the doctor and the Inspector have nothing to do with that. Meena has had an affair with
somebody else also. The dramatist makes a scathing attack on two responsible officials who behave in a very irresponsible manner simply because they want to please a girl of a questionable character. The dramatist deserves praise for his nice treatment of the theme.

Muthusamy's 'Kalsamkalamaga' (1974) also presents the problem of neglect of duty of a doctor who does not bother about the condition of a patient who is suffering from chronic ailment. The doctor's assistant Vaidyanathan is a callous human being who does not consider the request of a patient who is in a serious condition. The doctor doesn't care anything about the suffering of the poor people. Such dereliction of duty is a highly objectionable behaviour of a medical practitioner. The dramatist criticises the indifference shown by doctors whose neglect of duty causes death of a human being whose life is very precious.

Dereliction of duty is a serious lapse on the part of many people in our country. Duty consciousness is a laudable moral quality. Unfortunately this is lacking in our society. Colossal waste of time, effort and wealth causing misery to millions is the after effect of dereliction of duty. Social progress would be accelerated when this social evil vanishes from our midst.
Many people are found to be fond of slander. Talking ill of others seems to be a pastime with people. So sipping may be harmless. But scandal mongering is a pernicious social trait. Holding others to disrepute is a social behaviour which has to be discouraged. Baseless blaming of others is definitely bad behaviour. Rumours are spread by some people purposely.

Newspapers are often hauled to court of law for libel. Disparaging remarks are published in papers. This involves scurrilous writing. Journalism should have nothing to do with scandal mongering. A society which cherishes higher moral values should provide no room for such an undesirable social trait that breeds bigotry.

Dramas highlight this aspect of life in order to put an end to such a belittling social trait.

Cohanarangam's drama, 'Kanithane Dumithanavali' (1977), deals with this. Veeramony, a cloth merchant, gives advertisements to papers and brings a cine actress to his shop to boost sales. Ponisdu is a journalist. He demands money from Veeramony to write about him in his paper. When the latter refuses to oblige his behest the journalist writes ill of Veeramony and spoils his business. The dramatist attacks journalists who indulge in unbecoming behaviour. Journalism is a mass media forum that must never stoop to scandal mongering.
'Penne oru Kavithai' (1975) by Zachiasan

is an interesting drama on scandal mongering. Selvan
an advocate lives happily with his wife Grimathy. Ettapran,
the uncle of Grimathy, returns from Singapore. This
fellow had a desire to marry Grimathy formerly. Now,
as it is impossible, he talks slanderously of Grimathy
casting aspersions on her character. The advocate
believes these words and abandons his wife. Ettapran
contracts leprosy and prompted by his sense of remorse
tells the truth to Selvan who receives his wife back.
The dramatist shed light on the terrible after effect
of scandal mongering which proves to be detrimental to
domestic bliss.

Scandal mongering is a vicious quality of
human nature. It can cause a lot of havoc. The
illwill generated by it makes social life very unpleasant.
The hallmark of education and culture is the refusal
to listen to scandals as well as the reluctance to
indulge in slandering.

3.2.16 HYPOCRISY:

Hypocrites are scotfree in our society. They
occupy various walks of life. A man or woman who
appears to be virtuous or good while really not being
so is a hypocrite. Many so called great men are
really hypocrites. They pretend to be great, but
greatness has nothing to do with them. Similarly many
'men of eminence' shine in 'borrowed feathers'.
Hypocrisy is a disgusting social behaviour. Hypocrites should be treated with slight and no respect or regard should be shown to them. Their true colour should be revealed to society so that they may not mislead others.

Dramatists severely deal with hypocrites.

Alagapoo’s drama ‘Ezhuthuventhari Elamarchi’ (1973) is about a hypocrite who dupes others. Elamarchi who is the Managing Director of a factory, earns fame as a great writer. But really he engages other persons to write for him. A great function is got up to facilitate this ‘literary luminary’. His own teacher Ariyanayagan goes to his house to congratulate him. But he overhears a conversation that goes on inside the house. Elamarchi bargains with Balasundaran who is one of the writers who write for him. Disgusted with the disgraceful act of the hypocrite, the poor teacher tears off the garlands he had brought with him and walks out. The dramatist deserves praise for the hard hitting attack on hypocrisy which is unfortunately found even in the world of literature.

‘Puthumayakam’ (1977) written by K. Krishnan is also about hypocrisy. Suthakar and Trebakar are brothers, the former is a writer and the later a violinist. Jessie, the daughter of a rich man, writes a letter to
her friend Lujatha, but by mistake it reaches Luthaker, who goes to the railway station to receive her. He pretends to be a rich person, goes to her house borrowing an imported costly car from a friend and makes her believe that he is a rich guy. Really the chap is very poor. But he succeeds in getting the love of the girl and he marries her. The dramatist has a dig at people who resort to hypocrisy even in love making.

Hypocrisy is an art with some people. No wonder, hypocrites have a heyday in society. Many hypocrites are harmless. However, hypocrisy speaks volumes about the people who lack honesty in a great measure. Hence hypocrisy is a detestable social trait that should be discouraged.

3.2.17 

Honesty is a noble virtue. But unfortunately dishonesty is rampant in society. Dishonest people come up in life. So people resort to dishonest ways in all their dealings, since they are aware that dishonesty alone pays. A society based on morality can never brook dishonesty.

Demoralisation has set in public life and in the personal life of people because men wish to achieve their objectives by hook or by crook. It is time that steps are taken to curb this rot. Social life itself will go to dogs if dishonesty is allowed to thrive. Hence dramatists wage a war against dishonesty.
Kora's drama, 'Neethiviseranai' (1977) deals with the dishonesty of a minister. A railway accident results in the death of four hundred people including the son of the Prime Minister. An enquiry is instituted and it reveals the depth of dishonesty of people in power. Nithyananthan is the brother of Nathivathana-mochini a famous film actress and this is the fellow who got a contract for forty lakhs of rupees for the construction of a Railway bridge. But actually the construction was a substandard one which led to a major rail accident. Gonal the son of the finance minister was the person who carried out the construction. He bought adulterated cement from a firm run by the wife of defence minister. The drama highlights the dishonest dealings of the people who indulge in clandestine activities under the protection of people in power.

'Thaadi vathiyar' (1965) written by Poornam Viswanathan presents the dishonesty practised by a teacher. Teacher Anjaneyar is a popular tuition master. Raja, son of Panchami and Gomathi, is slack in studies. So he is sent to Anjaneyar for private tuition. But the tuition master is not honest in his work. He engages the boys to collect fire wood and to do other domestic chores. In fact he asks his son to coach the boys and he goes to the Zamindar's house to teach his son. The dramatist severely criticizes the dishonesty of a teacher who is expected to be very honest in his dealings.
Dishonesty is a disgraceful characteristic of human behaviour. Motivated by selfish desires, men indulge in dishonest acts, unmindful of the havoc caused by such dishonesty. 'Honesty is the best policy' is a wise adage. But a society which gives ample room for crooks cannot easily follow this ideal policy. Social life will be miserable if there is a let up as far as this ideal is concerned.

3.2.18 DISPARITY

Disparity between the rich and the poor is the root cause of many social maladies. The gap between the affluent and the miserable continues and it is not easy or possible to bridge this gap. The opulent section of people live on the lap of luxury whereas the toiling and toiling millions wallow in poverty.

Disparity between the two sections of society has its impact on the social, economic and even the psychological aspects of life. The saying 'East is east, west is west' seems to hold good in this. The rich are rich and poor will have to be poor.

Dramatists being humanists cannot play a passive role in this context. They do use their pen powerfully to put an end to this disparity.
Inaintha Ullam (1935) written by Kalaiselvan is an illuminating drama. Panchanan a very rich fellow is a very cruel person. His son Vasu falls in love with Saroja the daughter of the accountant. The father dislikes this, so he sends his son to England for higher studies. In the meantime he arranges the marriage of Saroja. The girl dies after giving birth to a child. Vasu comes back and refuses to marry any other girl. The drama powerfully depicts the mentality of the rich people to seek marriage alliance only with other rich families. Love is the most sublime sentiment of the human heart. But it is helpless when it is confronted with the disparity that exists between the rich and the poor.

Udumalai Muthu’s drama 'Athiraparththa Mudivu' (1933) has the theme on this disparity. Sundar is a poor young man, but very bright. Mirmala, the daughter of a mill owner loves him. The mill owner is against this love. He implicates Sundar in a false case and the young man spends his days in jail. As the father is adamant in his attitude, the daughter dies. Sundar after his release from jail, takes to social service. The drama very excellently emphasises the hard-hearted nature of rich people who give importance to wealth, status and honour and ignore love, affection and tenderness.
The disparity that exists between the well-to-do and the downtrodden is an age-old social evil. Much of our social tension is caused by this. Unless and until an egalitarian society is created this will continue to hamper social progress. Literacy men have to put up a stiff fight along with the progressive forces in our society against this artificial distinction that is found existing between the 'haves' and have-nots'.

3.3.13 EXPLOITATION

Exploitation is an evil that has brought about a lot of disharmony in our society. Selfishness being a formidable psychic factor among human beings, vie with one another to indulge in some exploitation or other. The most flagrant type of exploitation is economic exploitation of the poor by the rich people.

Socioeconomic system of ours is such that it provides opportunity for exploitation. The dominant section which yields money and power can easily exploit the suffering section. Social exploitation in other forms are also there. The Britishers could easily exploit us because our country and people could not resist their manoeuvres.

Dramas have to educate people, especially the common people, about exploitation so that they may pave the path for social amelioration.
'Kapilan's Pooyavilaku' (1977) exposes exploitation in the world of journalism. Palani is a good writer of stories. He sends his stories to journals. But his stories are published with changed titles by the editors. He doesn't get any income. Sinthanaiyalar is the person who cheats him most. Palani falls ill and dies. Even after death he is exploited by others. Thillainayagam publishes the biography of this poor chap and earns a lot. The drama is a very illuminating one and it brings out the inhuman tendency of people who exploit the weaker ones. The dramatist deserves praise for his bold treatment of a theme which is a pungent attack on bad journalism.

It is imperative that the ushering in of a Social system that has no place for exploitation is expedited. All forms of social exploitation should be prevented. Education and greater awakening among the masses would lead to the effective checking of exploitation. Social backwardness should be banished. Then, there would be no room for exploitation. Social dramas facilitate this process.

3.2.20. UNEMPLOYMENT

A chronic social evil with which the community is afflicted is unemployment. Many people are unemployed in our country. Unemployment among the educated youth is the crux of the problem. An idle mind is the
devil's workshop; so goes the proverb. Unemployment among people is fraught with serious consequences.

Unrest is an outcome of unemployment. If people cannot engage themselves in some vocation or other and eke out an honest living, they may become a big problem to the nation. None can predict what will happen, when the volcano of this idle task force erupts. Hence it is essential to take urgent measures to fruitfully tackle this problem, since it involves social security, let alone social progress.

Dramatists very effectively deal with this problem in order to mobilise public opinion for the solution of the burning problem.

'Jyaka Vidhi' (1976), by Jayanthan, is an illuminating social drama that depicts unemployment and its consequences. Unemployed youth indulge in an orgy of violence. They are graduates but they do all antisocial activities like arson, illicit liquor brewing, smuggling etc. At the convocation they receive degrees and tear them shouting, 'give us jobs'. As they swell, their activities also increase. The dramatist very forcefully draws the attention of all to the most dangerous problem of unemployment. The drama has a realistic touch. The dramatist pleads for remedial measures for this problem which may endanger the very edifice of our society.
M.S. Gopal's (*Theerpu* (1973) also tackles this problem. Ramalingam is a college professor. His friend Mahalingam's son Dharmalingam is an unemployed graduate. He becomes a drug addict and organises a hippie group. He takes the servant girl also with him. Mahalingam suffers heart attack and gets admitted in a hospital. But the son doesn't come to see him even at the time of the father's death. The dramatist brings out the evil effect of unemployment which makes a youth lose every human emotion which binds a son to his father. The drama reveals that unemployment will make people resort to undesirable ways of living.

Unemployment is the root cause of unrest. People without fruitful employment pose a big problem to themselves and to society. A production oriented society must fully utilise its manpower potential. If unemployment cannot be solved, poverty and all other social evils will continue to exist. Hence, it is essential that measures are taken on a war footing to provide employment to everyone. In fact, the fundamental birth right of every citizen is food, clothing, shelter, education and employment.

3.3.0. PROPAGANDA:

Propaganda is the means and method for bringing about social reform. Various devices and techniques are employed to make propaganda very effective. This, in face, is the procedure for mass education.
Propaganda is the only way to educate common people who unfortunately are ignorant and illiterate. If measures can be taken, mass media appeal propaganda would prove to be very effective and society can be reformed on the desired lines. Many a misconception will disappear from man when he comes to know that it is wrong. Hence propaganda is given great importance.

Social dramas serve as effective media for propaganda purposes. They do propagate popular concepts among common people to reform society.

3.3.1. **POLITICAL PROPAGANDA**

Political propaganda is essential for the successful functioning of our democratic set up. Party system is in vogue in every democracy. Each party indulges in propaganda to seek mass support. Politicians are engaged in full-time propaganda.

Kora Sundaram's drama, 'Mathiyugi Machaan' (1969), has its theme on political propaganda. Maran, an ordinary political worker and his friend Sooriyyan publish a newspaper. Maran's propaganda techniques make him very popular. He organises his own political party and does political work. He becomes a Member of the Legislative Assembly also. The dramatist depicts the effect of political propaganda and the drama discloses how an ordinary person is able to come up in life through
political propaganda which now-a-days is found to be very broad based and very much influencing our life in its own way.

Political propaganda is very extensively carried out in our country. Social dramas have themes embracing this, since dramatists are fully aware of the impact of political propaganda.

3.2.2. RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA

Religious propaganda is found to be part of a well organised movement in our country. People of different faiths popularise their faith and mode of worship through propaganda. This propaganda is powerful, as many of us being religious by nature, are much swayed by it.

'Karkal' (1973), written by Francis Dhayanandan, presents an incident from the life of Jesus and Stephen. The events leading to the crucifixion of Jesus are very graphically depicted in the drama. The drama is a moving one and it is very appealing to all. However, christians can very much appreciate this drama. Though the theme is a familiar one, the treatment is found to be absorbing. The drama is very helpful for religious propaganda.
Social dramas present religious topics so as to foster religious faith and sentiments in the followers of particular religions. This kind of propaganda is indulged in by all religions and dramas provide a forum for this.

3.3.3. PROPAGANDA FOR FAMILY PLANNING:

All the social welfare measures, strenuously undertaken by the Government, become null and void because of the tremendous growth of our population. Our country struggles hard since it is not able to procure food and other basic amenities to millions. Family planning is a very essential programme of action for our nation. So propaganda for family welfare is being organised on a grand scale.

'Arasai Aattiya Adimai' (1963), by Kovai Ilancheran, presents the problem of population explosion in a very powerful manner. Kumunchi Koman is the ruler of a country suffering with excessive population growth. The Ministers Masappar and Kasappar offer wise conselling to the ruler. They say that unless population is controlled the country cannot prosper. So the ruler takes straight steps and controls the population of the country. The drama is of very excellent propaganda value. It appeals to all to realise the importance of family planning. The dramatist puts his view through his character very forcefully, "A good country, a good government and a good economy but people multiply like worms and this erodes the entire economy." (P.150).
Propaganda for population control is indeed a very important service rendered to our country. Social dramas do this essential work in a very excellent manner. There are many dramas which carry this message to the masses.

3.3.4. PROPAGANDA FOR GREEN REVOLUTION

Food production is the most important factor that guarantees social existence. Our country needs millions of tons of food materials for the consumption of the 68 crores of people. Government has launched the laudable scheme of Green revolution to bring about greater production in the field. For this the peasants must have better know how to make agriculture an enterprising endeavour.

Panditha Rattina Velayutham's drama, 'Munnetra Patai' (1971), is a good social drama that won first prize from the Government of Tamil Nadu. Karunakaran Pillai is a landlord and a money lender. He exploits the poor peasants. But his son Pugazhenthi, a graduate, comes to village and helps the peasants to cultivate the lands by converting dry land into wet land. He spreads the message of green revolution among the peasants and saves them from the misery of worry. The drama is a very good propaganda for green revolution.
Social dramas depict the life of the poor farmers with a view to uplift their condition. The tillers are the backbone of a nation. It is they who feed the people. They toil and moil day and night so that there may not be any problem with regard to food. So the propaganda for green revolution is a praiseworthy one.

3.3.5. PROPAGANDA FOR TREE PLANTING

Deforestation is a wanton act of destruction done by man. Trees are cut indiscriminately and forests are denuded. The bleak barren lands without any green vegetation are an eye sore on many parts of this country. This has generated a lot of havoc resulting in environmental and ecological imbalance.

'Maperum Aram', (1975) written by K.Perumal, which has the theme touching tree planting, appeals to fellowmen to plant different kinds of trees. It emphasizes the use of ordinary plants like drumstick, cocoonut, gooseberry etc. But our people are lethargic. So those, who propagate tree planting must themselves plant trees. Then people may begin to emulate them. The drama is a very illuminating and interesting one. The dramatist makes a very powerful appeal to people to plant trees and to derive benefit from them.
Planting trees is organised as a movement for arousing mass involvement. Each family is exhorted to rear a plant. "One tree for each family" is an attractive slogan and at the same time a very highly feasible proposition. Social dramas exhort people to put to practice this noble task.

3.3.6. PROPAGANDA FOR 'LAND GIFT' (Bhoodhan Movement)

Bhoodhan movement, launched by Vinobhaji, is a very significant social reform which aims at bringing about an agrarian revolution through land gift. Landlords possess vast stretches of land. But land less labourers are there in plenty. This is a paradoxical position in our country.

'puthupunal' (1961), by Shanmugasundaram, is a good drama that deals with land gift. Veerappan Chettiar of Sullivalasu village is a rich landlord. With the assistance of the village munsif, he buys the land of poor peasants. He indulges in gambling also and makes other involved in gambling. He makes them paupers. At the end this man gets reformed. The Bhoodhan movement people cajole him to give back the lands to the poor people. The drama highlights the importance of Bhoodhan movement. Land gift movement is an appreciable attempt at solving the problem of landless people's pitiable plight. If those who have lands in abundance come forward to share the land with those who do not have any
land, the misery of the landless people can be minimised. Being a Gandhian ideal which aims at the social revolution, through peaceful means, this movement is a commendable one. Dramas highlight the great service rendered by it.

3.3.7. PROPAGANDA FOR COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Cooperative movement is a mass campaign in our country. This is one of the significant welfare measures, meant for the progress and development of our society. 'One for all, and all for one' is the ideal behind this. It brings about radical changes in our social functioning. If it gets strengthened, it will pave the path for prosperity.

Varadarajan's 'Parvathipuram' (1969) presents the victory of cooperative movement. Chidambara Mudaliar, a rich landlord, lives in Parvathipuram Village. He harasses poor labourers. To drive them out, he changes the crop from paddy to sugarcane. Muthaiyan, a graduate, conducts an adult school and organises stiff resistance to the landlord's malice. The landlord plots to murder Muthaiyan. But by mistake, his own son gets murdered. This proves to be a turning point in the life of the landlord. He gives his land to the peasants who do the agricultural operations on a cooperative basis. The drama is a good one, as it popularises the movement.
Cooperative movement must be organised as intensive mass-based movement, so that, the benefits of this effective organisational set up may uplift the common people. Dramas do propaganda for this in order to accelerate the process of social reformation.

3.3.8. PROPAGANDA FOR NATIONAL-INTEGRATION

India is a great nation with its unity in diversity. The linguistic, provincial, social and cultural barriers do not divide but unite the people as one community living with the same traditional values that have withstood the ravages of time and the onslaughts on its integrity. Hence, national integration is an ideal cherished by all of us. Everyone has to propagate this high ideal. Dramas do this with all dynamism.

'Kumari muthal Kashmir varai' (1968), written by Narayana Thuraikannan, excellently espouses this cause. Sivanandam is a Law College student. He is a freedom fighter. He fights for country's freedom. While he evades arrest, he joins the army. He gets discharged since, he gets injured in war at Kashmir. The Government presents meritorious awards to him. The dramatist pleads for loyalty to our nation and appeals to all to serve our country and promote national integration. The drama deserves all praise for its very nice treatment of a very likeable theme.
Propaganda for patriotism and national integration is an act of great national service. When we feel one with this great country, which we worship as Mother India, we feel elated. This feeling has to be engendered in one and all. Social dramas arouse and promote such a noble emotional attachment to our Mother land.

3.3.9. PROPAGANDA FOR PROHIBITION

Fight against liquor is a formidable one in our country. People become alcohol addicts and burn the candle at both ends. Very effective propaganda is essential to thwart this pernicious social evil. This propaganda is meant to be against smoking and other injurious habits also. Let a person be in the know-how of things which would dig his grave. This may prevent him from pursuing that evil habit further.

'Thiruppanam' (1979), by S.A. Anbanathan, is a good drama which highlights the evil of liquor. Rama, a factory worker is a chronic drunkard and beats his wife Nagammal, a very humble and obedient housewife. The daughter Chandra, an educated girl, tries her best to save her father from the evil effect of alcohol. The wife gets murdered by Rama, who hits her hard with a bottle after drinking liquor. The son of this man is a drug addict. However Rama and his son have a turning point in their lives and both give up the bad habits and
become better people. The dramatist possesses a high spirit for reform. The drama teaches a good lesson to drunkards and appeals to all such people to lead a reformed life.

Prohibition is a very important social welfare measure. Better than taking penal action against prohibition offenders, preventing them through propaganda is the most useful positive pragmatic approach to this problem. Dramas bring home to the common people the evil effects of alcoholism through the stage. This indeed is a praise-worthy act of the dramatists.

3.3.10. **PROPAGANDA FOR SAVINGS**

Small savings drive is an important social welfare scheme. Extravagant expenditure is a bane of our social style of living. People spend money without the least thought about the rainy day. Saving money for family is a matter of moral obligation to which mankind is committed. Propaganda for small savings has to be organised to safeguard the interests of common people.

'Kovil Vayil', (1976) written by Kokila Sundaram, propagates the ideal of savings. Ponnammal is a house wife but she doesn't feel the pinch of the purse. Mangalam complains to her about her pecuniary difficulties. The former offers wise counselling to the
latter and advises her how she should save money curtailing all her unnecessary expenses. The drama is a powerful propaganda in favour of small savings scheme.

Saving habit should be inculcated in the public. All people, especially those of the lower rungs of society, should be exhorted to save money so that they may keep the wolf away from the door in future. Dramas arouse this awareness in an appreciable manner.

3.4.0. ENTERTAINMENT

Social dramas provide entertainment to readers and spectators who long for recreation. Spectators are fond of entertainment and enjoyment. "To relax after the day's toil and to get relief from woes and worries, the layman comes to the theatre with great expectations."¹

Hence the stage provides the most suitable situation to educate through entertainment. The people, who witness and enjoy a drama, forget themselves and bestow all their attention on the dramatic events. They seem to be passive recipients and they believe everything that happens on the stage. Their involvement is all the

¹ Dr. PARUMAL, A.N., "The Origin and Development of Tamil Drama", Aniyagam, Madras-30 (1977) P. 144.
more high. If the dramatic stage realistically presents characters, events and incidents they come across in their everyday life, their expectations will become greater and enjoyment, higher. They will definitely accept and assimilate all that is presented to them through the stage. Such an opportunity is the best one for imparting information and conveying good messages.

In this situation, education through entertainment becomes feasible. The element of enjoyment enable the acceptance of ideas and concepts by the common people. Hence, just like the class room, the theatre is a better and effective learning situation. It makes men and women laugh at the follies of mankind but at the same time they learn from them. Every erring one can be easily lead to turn of a new leaf on life.

Drama furnishes entertainment through different devices. The purpose is served by means of the techniques applied.

3.4.1. ENTERTAINMENT THROUGH HUMOUR

A hearty chuckle refreshes everybody. Humour is enjoyed by everyone. Social dramas arouse laughter. People like dramas which are full of humour. A humorous scene or even a character is very much relished. No wonder, comedians are popular with people. Laughter releases tension and invigorates the mind. Dramas with
humourous characters, witty dialogue and funny events are very much liked and appreciated.

'Oor Vambu' (1975), written by Mareena, is replete with humour. Ganesan lives with his wife Lalitha. Pattambi is the servant in the house. This chap works in other houses also. He is the fellow, who carries tale from home to home.

Ayyasamy Iyer, the retired person, is fond of gossip. He tips Pattambi and gets grist to his mill. Kamalambal is a shrew. She is instigated to fall out with her daughter-in-law. All the gossip of the locality is spread by the gossip mongers. The drama is very hilarious and the humorous characters, scenes and dialogue make us laugh loudly. The drama is very enjoyable.

Humour makes the drama all the more enjoyable. A dull dreary and drab drama, even if it is good in other respects, fails to make its impact on readers or spectators, whereas a drama of an average standard leaves a good impression in people simply because it makes them laugh. Hence humour is given importance because it makes people merry and forget their worry.

3.4.2. ENTERTAINMENT THROUGH RIDICULE

Ridiculous is that, which evolves much laughter. Dramas present ridiculous situations and events that may cause peels of laughter in the audience.
The absurdity observed, always makes us laugh and feel happy. Entertainment becomes more enjoyable, where the element of ridicule is introduced in a pleasant manner. Many dramatists have skilfully applied this technique and their dramas are found to be very appreciable to the audience.

Cho's 'Manam Oru Kurangu' (1961) is a drama in which ridicule is very conspicuous. Maruthai, a vegetable vender, is given an opportunity to act in a drama. She becomes popular. Then she enters cine world. Maruthai gets metamorphosed as Mallika. As a very famous cine actress, Mallika Devi declines the offer of marriage of the cine director. She wants to marry Murugesan, her own cousin, but the latter refuses to accept her. The drama abounds in ridicules, the characters and scenes are very ridiculous. Hence it is very entertaining.

Entertainment through ridicule is more powerful than that of movie humour. The ridiculous situations, by their sheer absurdity, make people laugh and this is found to be more enjoyable. Dramas that deal with the frivolous with all absurdity are enjoyable. Hence they are liked much by people.

3.4.3. ENTERTAINMENT THROUGH PARODY

A ludicrous imitation arouses laughter and provides entertainment of a peculiar nature. Fun and frolic will be very pungent but very pleasant also.
Imitative behaviour is always laughter provoking. Hence, dramatists write parody to provide entertainment.

'Kannakbyo Mathavi' (1976), by Kor, is a pleasant parody. Kothai a young widow, who claims herself as the twentieth century Kannagi, the queen of chastity, dies and goes to 'Yamaloga'. Kannagi, the renowned heroine of the great epic Silapathigaram, who lives in heaven, questions Kothai who argues her case very strongly. She says that Yama has repeated the wrong again as in the case of Kannagi. The drama is very entertaining. The scene enacted in Yamaloga is very enjoyable.

Parody makes enjoyment more appealing to the audience. When imitation is employed in a light way, laughter becomes spontaneous. Entertainment through parody is pleasant because of this.