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Topic - Restoration Comedy •

B. A. Part II (Hons)

Sub-English PAPER III

Faculty - Art (Literature)

Q - "Good satire implies an effort to understand". Discuss with citation from *The Way of the World*.

Ans. It is assumed that *The Way of the World* is a good satire, it is as Congreve states, a satire upon expectations of wit, and we may take *Witwoud* and *Petulant* as examples. *Witwoud*, as his name implies, is crazy for showing off his wit. *Petulant* again as his name implies, cracks his by way of contradicting whatever is said. *Witwoud* and *Petulant* often engage in a tussle, and no spleen is generated by it. *Witwoud*

brags of its wit, at least
he believes that he had
the better of it in a wit
combat with Petulant, of
whom he has a very low
contempt. In his opinion,
Petulant has a pretty deal
of an odd sort of "small
wit". Behind Petulant's back
Witwoud discusses his character
and wit. Fainall and Mirabell
listen to him and we
may well ~~imagine~~ imagine,
how they were laughing in
their ~~se~~ sleeves. Witwoud
characterizes Petulant as
"having no more breeding
than a 'bum-bailey'", and
he certainly thinks that
it is a good stroke of
wit. It should be noted
here that Witwoud is
being made ridiculous.

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To appreciate good satire, one should be able to look beneath and beyond, and miss no subtle suggestions. We have a true measure of wit would wit when we recall Mirabell remark as we watch Witwould outburst here. Fainall think that Witwould is a good natured and has something of a wit. Mirabell comment is very pertinent when Fainall comments that if Petulant has any fault, it is that he is "unsincere, it some such trifle." "A wit should be no more than sincere than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as the other of beauty." Petulant, however, has no pretensions like Witwould. The questions of morality seems to be irrelevant - and so it does when we read