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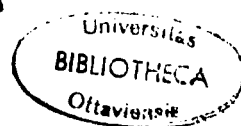
THESIS FOR THE DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

BY

Clare B. Routley

OTTAWA, 1938



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PRO GRATIA

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Mr. Shaw about 1891

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CHAPTER I

"Most people say that they agree with Bernard Shaw or that they do not understand him. I am the only person who understands him, and I do not agree with him."..
.....Chesterton.

This statement coming from the renowned Chesterton who has immortalized himself to posterity, it seems only fitting that we should inquire into the early life of the eccentric character under discussion in an attempt to show that the early life of George Bernard Shaw was, to a large extent, accountable for many of the theories which he propounded in his later years.

George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin, in July, 1856. His later Tongue-in-the-cheek methods had their foundation in his formative years in Dublin where as a red-

headed Irish lad he was deprived of the normal social training of a normal boy. His peculiar "slants" on life, his unconventional reactions to conventions--in a word, his madness, find their explanation in the thwarted childhood and the repression in early life of his natural instincts. Shaw's home was a very mediocre one. His family was certainly such as might have existed anywhere. The Shaw blood was bourgeois blood. In Ireland in those days there were only two classes, the aristocracy and the lower orders. The latter included the workmen, the peasants and the shopkeepers. There was no middle class except in Ulster and there only in Belfast. The father of Bernard Shaw was George Carr

Shaw who had marked traits of indolence and incompetence, was seldom sober and contributed to the qualities of his son by the impressiveness of his bad habits and examples. Speaking of his father, Shaw says he was "in theory a vehement teetotaler, but in practice often a furtive drinker". He never gained any love for his father and as a boy he hoped that some day he would be a pirate or an engine-driver.

The weaknesses that Shaw inherited from his father were offset by the qualities of his mother who was capable and self-reliant. She loved music and sought a retreat from her domestic disappointment in its study to aid her to forget as much as possible of

the drab and sordid life of her home. She had a fine mezzo-soprano voice and her love of singing attracted to her an able teacher of music, George John Vandeleur Lee, who established the Amateur Musical Society and conducted operas in Dublin and practised them in Shaw's home where he lived as a paying guest and Shaw's home always throbbed with music. The boy's home life owing to the intimate relations existing between his mother and Lee and the strained relations existing between his mother and his father were not conducive to a good environment for the impressionable young boy who admits that he had three fathers--George Carr Shaw, Lee and his uncle. Young Bernard Shaw loved his mother and he imbibed her spirit and

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love of music. He says, "If religion is that which binds men to one another and ir-religion that which sunders, then must I testify that I found the religion of my country in its musical genius and its ir-religion in its churches and drawing-rooms".

George Bernard Shaw was always treated in his home as an adult member of the family. At an early age, he knew many operas by heart. His mother took no interest in him after he was six years of age. The rigid supervision subjected to Shaw's mother by her aunt with whom she lived as a girl was responsible for the lack of supervision she gave her young son and he was allowed to go his own way believing that he would not stray far from his own caste of gentility.

Mrs. Shaw felt that children should have every opportunity to develop naturally and freely, but the excess of freedom which was allowed to young Bernard Shaw and the lack of admirable qualities in his father were responsible for the young lad's escape into his own world created by his own thoughts and imagination.

Bernard Shaw had little academic education as a boy. He was sent to school, but never applied himself diligently and was quite content with the lowest gradings. He says, "The vilest abortionist is he who attempts to mould a child's character". At the age of fifteen, he left school having in his heart a hatred of school masters, an impatience of discipline and a disdain of

schools. He wanted to become a great artist and be able to paint like Titian. He even attended the Royal Dublin Society's School of Art, but he soon found he had no talent for drawing.

His first position was in a land office where he was an excellent and industrious clerk earning seven shillings a week. But he hated the discipline of the office and was often taken to task for turning the discipline of the sober office into an amateur opera house. His period of clerkship left him two valuable legacies that he could never have learned from his profligate father: that of a legible and business-like chirography and the habit of regular work.

Shaw's mother bearing a contempt for

her weak husband and disdaining their humble income with the few luxuries it afforded, left Dublin and went to London to seek the companionship of her teacher, Lee, who had left Ireland several months previous. Young Bernard Shaw was thus left with his father who took lodging in cheerless rooms.

With the departure of his mother, the young Shaw, now in the most impressionable years of his life, felt that the sun had gone from his life and he despised the petty hypocrisies and narrow creeds of the middle-class in which he found himself. To aid him to forget his sordid existence, he concentrated on learning the piano.

At the age of ten, Shaw had rebelled against the church which he had been forced

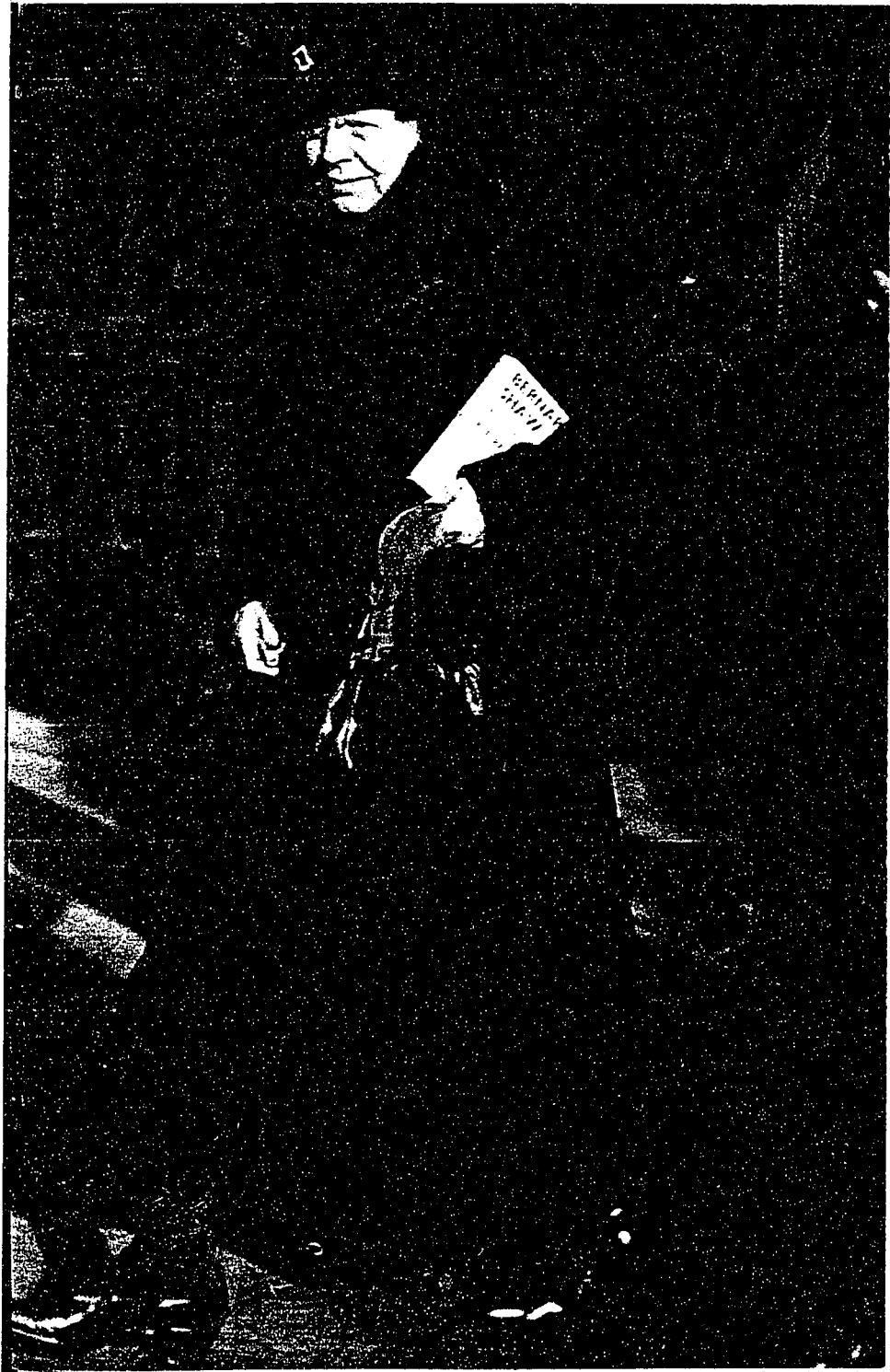
to attend, and became even at that early age an agnostic. In 1875, Moody and Sankey went to Dublin to conduct evangelistic meetings and Shaw was disgusted with the innocent trickery by which they secured crowds and accused them of appealing to the wrong class of sinners and made light of the effect of conversion. He wrote his first letter at this time to "Public Opinion" stating that if this was religion, he was an atheist. He did this to the extreme horror of his numerous aunts and uncles. At this time, Shaw was only nineteen years of age.

His promotion in position and salary in the land office was rapid--he was made treasurer, but his early experience of self-

reliance, cynicism and contempt of traditions made his employment disdainful and he gave up his position and went to London to join his mother. There, he worked for a time in the Edison Telephone Company, but soon abandoned this. He had a high opinion of his ability, but for ten years he did little and lived on his mother's meagre income. He spent much of his time at the National Gallery, the British Museum, joined revolutionary societies and spoke at street corners in support of Socialism, vegetarianism and teetotalism.

From 1879-1883, Shaw wrote five novels which were all failures from a literary standpoint. Thence, he entered into journalism and scored a brilliant success as a

Mrs. G. B. Shaw



reviewer for the Pall Mall Gazette 1885-89; art critic for the London World 1885-88; music critic for the Star 1888-90; music critic for the World 1890-94 where he considers himself the perfect Wagnerite; finally, as dramatic critic for the Saturday Review 1895-98. In April of 1898, he received a foot injury which made him an invalid for a period and a few weeks later, June 1, 1898, he married Charlotte Payne Townshend, a well-to-do Irish woman who nursed him through his illness. His criticisms have a permanent value. Shaw is proud of his achievements in journalism and believes that nothing that is not journalism will survive long as literature. He was a most brilliant critic of music and the public lost a good deal when he gave up

criticism for drama. However, it is hardly likely that his musical criticism will ever be reprinted.

As a dramatic critic, he looked about for something to attack which was not merely powerful or placid, but was unattacked. Chesterton says he was not content to be a common atheist; he wished to blaspheme something in which even the atheists believed. He was not satisfied with being revolutionary; there were so many revolutionists. He wanted to pick out some prominent institution which had been irrationally and instinctively accepted by the most violent and profane. He found it--the great unassailed English institution, Shakespeare. He tried to swing the favoritism of the English public from

Shakespeare to Ibsen, as he believed the idolatry of Shakespeare was an obstacle to the progress of the drama. His attempts only resulted in a greater, rather than a lesser, appreciation of the great Elizabethan dramatist. "The Quintessence of Ibsenism" is perhaps his masterpiece in the field of literary criticism. This volume and "The Perfect Wagnerite" contain most of his criticisms which appeared in the Saturday Review. The criticisms are often brilliant and vivacious and contain much paradoxical humour, but they are not convincing and the publication of the above only separated Shaw and the public still further. Of course, he claims that he and the public disagree because he sees life with normal vision which only ten percent

enjoy; the other ninety percent are abnormal in vision and see things differently from the minority's eyes. In Ibsen, Shaw recognized a kindred spirit. Ibsen insists that conduct must justify itself by its effect upon life and not by its conformity to any rule or ideal. The literary side of the mission in England, Shaw felt, was the rescue of England from its centuries of slavery to Shakespeare. He fought to make Ibsen's type of drama prevail--in them he found epitomized the modern realistic struggle for intellectual and spiritual emancipation and revolt against the machine-made morality of our sordid age.

Shaw's articles to the Saturday Review were written with care. Nothing is less

superficial than his journalism and some of the best literature he has ever written appeared first as journalism. Every paradox is a sermon and every jest is a judgment.

Shaw joined the Zetetical Society and began assaulting Christian doctrines and morals. The Society was a hot-bed of sedition and the discussion of such questions as agnosticism, radicalism, destruction of morality, etc., occupied the attention of the members. While Shaw was earning his living as a journalist, his real intellectual interest lay in social questions which later became the predominant factor in his work. In the Land Reform Union, he met the educated middle class who were hostile to the dogmas of Socialism which he was interested

in and he lent his vigour to theirs in propounding his creed of "equal incomes to all". At this union, he met Shelley who influenced him profoundly. Shaw declared that he was like Shelley, an atheist, a Socialist and a vegetarian. At this time he was very outspoken and allowed himself the utmost license in the expression of his creed.

From criticism, journalism and novels, Shaw launched into drama as the stage was prepared for him, there being no plays written locally and by 1903 he had written ten plays. He enjoyed a small public in England, but was little known elsewhere, except to Socialists. After 1903, his plays were performed in Austria and Germany and were well received. To the amazement of Londoners, he

began to be popular in the United States also.

To-day, Mr. Shaw is almost eighty-two years of age and time has not stilled his pen. True, his propagandist ideas have mellowed with age, but his plays still reach a large public though it is predominantly as a humorist that he finds a public, though many listen to his comedies to catch his bold independent thinking and distrust of tradition.

CHAPTER II

In Shaw's five novels written 1879-83, we can trace his mental development. His "Immaturity" is plotless though it bristles with incident. It is witty and entertaining, but shows that he had little knowledge of the world. His other novels are "The Unsocial Socialist", "Cashel Byron's Profession", "The Irrational Knot" and "Love Among the Artists".

Shaw himself calls his novels "very green things, and most students will agree with him. He wrote them as a daily task and without enjoyment because he knew he must do something or perish and he has hated them ever since. He set himself the task of writing twenty pages daily and wrote this number. All the time he lived in obscurity

and was penniless. He says he was forced to trim his cuffs with his mother's scissors. But Shaw never seemed to question his genius and from the very outset took his genius as a matter of course. "Immaturity" was declined by all publishers. George Meredith, reader for Chapman and Hall, put "NO" on it immediately. The publishers considered that his style was one hundred and fifty years ahead of time. In all his novels there is noted a frivolity of speech and a laboured movement. His ideas, too, are largely incorrect; his powers of observation great, but his range is limited. There is evidence of his inexperience in all of them even in small material details. They are stiff and arid. He seems incapable of

expressing himself and is without the proper tone. The structure of all the novels is loose; the conversation is artificial and stilted and his characters are impractical constructions. The correctness of his English is that of the schoolmaster's. In the "Unsocial Socialist", there is no really live character, but too much Shavian machinery. His power of description was awry and he misdescribes the English middle-class to which his characters belong. Here he missed a great opportunity as he was well acquainted with the English middle class and moved freely among them. He might have portrayed them accurately and his portrayals would then have been valuable, historically. His intercourse with the middle class did,

however, furnish the material for all his fierce generalizations and dramatic characters of his later works.

In the novels, we note much exaggeration which has followed him throughout his career. But the "Unsocial Socialist" attracted readers to Shaw and in America this novel led the book sales of the year. In England, however, his novels did not circulate to any great extent. They are not, therefore, important in themselves, but show the development of his ideas. He was already a rebel against his own class, his creed and his whole inherited equipment of rules and standards. He hated the middle class and became an anarchist and adopted a rebellious creed and a scorn of conventions and

became an arch-rebel of London.

The novels have been called the "novels of his nonage" and are of little literary significance. Shaw gives his own reasons for giving up novel writing: "I had no taste for what is called 'popular art', no respect for popular morality, no belief in popular religion and no admiration for popular heroics. As an Irishman, I could pretend patriotism neither for the country from which I had come nor for the country which had ruined it. As a humane person, I detested violence and slaughter, whether in war, sport, or the butcher's yard. I was a Socialist, detesting our anarchical scramble for money and believing in equality as the only possible permanent basis of social

organization, discipline, subordination, good manners and selection of fit persons for high functions. Fashionable life, open on indulgent terms to unencumbered 'brilliant persons', I could not endure". However true his own reasons for abandoning the novels may be, we know that although "Immaturity" was never finished, the remaining four were printed only in obscure Socialist Reviews. They make tiresome reading and are practically negligible from a literary point of view. The novels which are without a genuine basis of imaginative existence were Shaw's practising ground and we can expect better when we come to his drama. He certainly did nothing to aid the novel in its evolution and place it on a

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higher plane. To-day, Mr. Shaw regards his novels with a good-humoured contempt, modified with a certain pride that such an inexperienced young man as he then was could have written anything so good.

C H A P T E R III

Shaw had studied every theory of Socialism he could find. When he first went to London, he mixed with every kind of revolutionary society. Socialism has really developed since the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Gladstone had been returned to power at the head of a triumphant Liberal Party. The Cabinet was occupied with questions pertaining to Ireland, Egypt and South Africa. The so-called Socialism of Robert Owen had fallen into disfavour and obscurity with his death and Continental Socialism had stopped about 1871, so at this time the field was clear and there are many indications of the revival of Socialist sentiment and activity.

In 1880, Hyndman rallied together the advanced men and women of the day to protest

against Gladstone's policies and rule in Ireland and Egypt. Hyndman had read "Das Kapital" by Karl Marx, in the French translation and formed the acquaintance of Marx who was living obscurely in London and entirely ignored by the English public. Hyndman organized the Democratic Federation which was the first real Socialist political party in Great Britain. The Fabian Society was an outgrowth of the Democratic Federation, but the Fabians, at first, did not describe themselves as Socialists. Shaw was induced by Hyndman to read Marx. As a result, he studied the Marxian theories for five years and became a devout convert. He hastened to tell others and being a skilful orator and debater he spoke to large audiences

from university dons to London washerwomen. He was the first post-Marxian to commit himself unequivocally to equality of income as a fundamental theory in a stable and progressive Society. Later he joined the Fabian Society and became its most aggressive spokesman.

The Fabians, who rigorously excluded emotion from their appeals, had as their motto--"For the right moment you must wait, as Fabius did most patiently when warring against Hannibal, though many censored his delays. But when the time comes you must strike hard, as Fabius did, or your waiting will be in vain and pointless". The Fabian Society dedicated itself with unselfish efforts towards the reconstruction

of Society. At first, Shaw was very ignorant of economics, but being tremendously influenced by Marx he soon swung with the Fabian Society into the economic channel of practical Socialism and from the first it was coloured with his critical temperament and bore the stamp of his personality.

The initial Fabian Tract entitled "Why are the many poor["] was actually the starting point of the Fabian Movement. Two thousand copies of this Tract No. 1 were printed and circulated. Though the start was humble, this Tract gave the Fabians a decisive impetus and as soon as it fell into the hands of Shaw, he gave to the Society his genius and audacity and published Tracts Nos. 2 and 3. These Tracts form an important step

in the history of the Fabians and for that reason Tract No. 2 is given in detail:

"The Fabians are associated for the purpose of spreading the following opinions held by them, and discussing their practical consequences.

That under existing circumstances, wealth cannot be enjoyed without dishonour, or foregone without misery.

That it is the duty of each member of the State to provide for his or her wants by his or her own Labour.

That a life-interest in the Land and Capital of the nation is the birth-right of every individual born within its confines; and that access to this birth-right should not depend upon the will of any private person

other than the person seeking it.

That the most striking result of our present system of farming out the national Land and Capital to private individuals has been the division of Society into hostile classes, with large appetites and no dinners at one extreme and large dinners and no appetites at the other.

That the practice of entrusting the Land of the nation to private persons in the hope that they will make the best of it has been discredited by the consistency with which they have made the worst of it; and that the Nationalization of the Land in some form is a public duty.

That the pretensions of Capitalism to encourage Invention, and to distribute its

benefits in the fairest way attainable, have been discredited by the experience of the nineteenth century.

That, under the existing system of leaving the National Industry to organize itself, Competition has the effect of rendering adulteration, dishonest dealing and inhumanity compulsory.

That since Competition among producers admittedly secures to the public the most satisfactory products, the State should compete with all its might in every department of production.

That such restraints upon Free Competition as the penalties for infringing the Postal monopoly, and the withdrawal of workhouse and prison labour from the markets, should

be abolished.

That no branch of Industry should be carried on at a profit by the central administration.

That the Public Revenue should be raised by a direct Tax; and that the central administration should have no legal power to hold back for the replenishment of the Public Treasury any portion of the proceeds of the Industries administered by them.

That the State should compete with private individuals, especially with parents, in providing happy homes for children, so that every child may have a refuge from the tyranny of neglect of its natural custodians.

That Men no longer need special political privileges to protect them against Women;

and that the sexes should henceforth enjoy equal political rights.

That no individual should enjoy any privilege in consideration of services rendered to the State by his or her parents or other relations.

That the State should secure a liberal education and equal share in the National Industry to each of its units.

That the established Government has no more right to call itself the State than the smoke of London has to call itself the weather.

That we had rather face a Civil War than such another century of suffering as the present one has been".

Although many assert that Mr. Shaw wrote this Tract with his tongue in his cheek, he

carried on his Socialistic propaganda during the later nineteenth century with the utmost vigour. He rejected the theory of surplus value expounded by Marx and in 1887 exposed its weaknesses in a series of articles in the National Reformer. He was not in accord with the theory of class war, another cardinal principle of Marxian Socialism, but he believed in the municipalization of Industry--rent and interest to be paid to the State by instalments.

In 1883-84, Socialism was a fermenting mass of rebellion in London. Socialists were going to break up society, empty the House of Commons and Buckingham Palace and declare a new era of reform. The middle eighties was a time of bad trade and dire

poverty and the unemployed tramped the streets with menacing banners and a revolution threatened. Only the return of prosperity swept away the fears of a Civil War. Thus, the time was ripe for Mr. Shaw's Tract No. 2. In a sense, he states that his Socialism means "equality of income and nothing else". He makes no mention of equality of opportunity, equality of circumstances, etc. Apparently, we are to believe that these are resultant to equality of income. He believes the arguments in favour of the present administration of wealth are utterly insensate and grotesque and says he is convinced that we ought to be tolerant of any sort of crime except unequal distribution of income. But this equality of income would be possible only if it were a criminal

offence to save and invest your surplus income. Otherwise, one would be forced to spend it. Thrift, which is at present considered a virtue, would be swept away. There would be a loss of character and self-respect incurred by the habit of never looking ahead. We would live in the immediate present taking no thought for the future. Mr. Shaw will not allow us to save in his ideal state. He says that savings of private individuals is the foundation of Capitalism and we must spend our all and cannot save even in order to buy something that we might desire more in the future than at the present time. According to Shaw, all would have an equal portion of the earned income

from the time of birth to death. It would be the State's duty to see that each earned the income given to him when he had no earning capacity. He believes that every man and woman should set before them this goal--"that by the labour of their lifetime they should pay off the debt of their rearing, education, and also contribute sufficient for a handsome maintenance during their old age. Shaw would give equal incomes to the lazy, the drunkard, the careless and the foolish. And immediately upon the receipt of their equal portion of the income, the reckless would hasten to spend all and would, within a short time, be in dire straits again. Even if payments were made weekly, and this would demand a lengthy civil list,

the spendthrift who spends his portion of the income upon the receipt thereof would be a charge for the remainder of the week. Shaw's theory of equal incomes is indeed strange and we are amazed that it should come from one who considers himself highly intellectual.

Shaw mentions that one thousand dollars a year should be sufficient payment, but he does not make mention of any standard of living which would be possible with this amount. And we have no assurance that the national income, once the incentive to the acquisition of wealth were removed, would be sufficient to give everyone a decent living wage.

In Mr. Shaw's ideal State, we should

all have the same income, from the village scavenger to the politicians who direct the destinies of nations, but we know that if all receive the same allotment, it would be impossible to purchase services that are of a menial nature. It would also be impossible to entice people to fill unattractive posts since all are paid alike regardless of their work. The parasite class will be done away with as all will have to work to justify their existence. Those who refuse will be sent to the lethal chamber. The Inspiration and ambition to rise to better positions will be lacking insofar as there will be nothing to strive for financially. But equal incomes would be the rankest injustice as human nature and needs are so

diversified that the needs of individuals differ greatly. Shaw is a vegetarian; he needs no money for meat. Occasionally, he can live on one meal a day and this meal may consist of a grated carrot, apple and potato, while another man requires stronger and more nourishing food. Equal incomes would, thus, work a fearful injustice on the whole of Society.

Mr. Shaw estimates the probable amount of labour necessary for each person as four hours daily for a period of thirty-five years, but it does not appear reasonable that such a programme would yield one thousand dollars a year or the minimum amount which he declares necessary. He agrees that it is impossible to measure the respective values of the work

done, compare the work of the doctor and the scavenger, but he does not make approximate distinctions and proportionate rewards. He recognizes that there are many professions, trades, etc., that cannot be carried on at so many hours a day basis; for example, the mother in her care of the children, doctors, etc., but he would allow them holidays in long stretches to compensate. He has, indeed, always placed a high estimate on the work of the mother in the home and indeed, has been unduly criticized for being feminist in politics. He would extend the holiday period in the case of certain individuals, but he makes no explanation how these individuals are to be chosen and how one could judge whether a

short spell of work of mental intensity or a longer one of steady devotion to drudgery deserves a longer or shorter holiday. To the sane thinker, Mr. Shaw's scheme is totally unworkable.

Four hours per day for work would leave at least twelve hours for leisure time. This would tempt, no doubt, the hopelessly lazy, but since there would be no incentive to rise to a higher position there would be no incentive to using this leisure time in self-improvement.

In his theory of equalization of income, Shaw shows that he has little knowledge of human nature. As individuals, we do not relish the idea that we are inferior to others in our same station of life and if we are to

be compelled to accept positions inferior to others regardless of our tastes, we should be highly revolutionary. The whole scheme seems filled with drawbacks, inconsistencies and nonsense.

Equality of income would eliminate the poor. One could acquire personal possessions or material wealth. One might, for instance, spend his income in accumulating art treasures while another buys intangible things and at the end of a definite period, the one would have nothing to show for his expenditures. This would tend, no doubt, to breed envy, hatred and jealousy.

Under the Capitalist System, man is left to make his own choice and such privilege means life itself, but under Mr. Shaw's

Social Government, the State will supply us what it thinks we ought to want. Nationalization of Industry would mean a lessening of the variety of goods available, as the State, being the Protector of the people's money, could not make experiments in new inventions such as is done by private individuals and companies, as the elements of chance and loss would have to be considered. If the State did experiment and failed, our allowance would be reduced as it would be proportionate to the earned revenue for a stated period.

Shaw favours the nationalization of banks. He says that "banking heaps up huge masses of Capital in the bankers' hands for absolutely nothing but the provision of a till to put the money in and the clerk to

keep an account of it". This appears to be another of his meaningless remarks and we shall not pore over it at length. However, we shall not need banks since we cannot exercise thrift and invest our surplus money. Shaw is always ready to strike a blow at Capitalism and cites a case of the government receiving four and a half million pounds in succession duties from a man who made all his money by the labour of men who received twenty-six shillings a week after spending years of apprenticeship to qualify them for their work. Yet, Mr. Shaw thrives under Capitalism; his books sell well; he is a good bargainer. He lives very comfortably in London; can afford a large summer home and has plenty of money to spare. In other

words, he adjusts himself admirably to Capitalism. Benjamin de Casseres in "Mencken & Shaw", says "Shaw has yanked two million dollars out of our pockets and has employed capitalistic lawyers in every corner of the globe to protect his copyrights and now kindly asks us to equalize our incomes". Indeed, his lectures have all been given without monetary consideration, but it is true that as a playwright he has watched the shekels with extreme care. He receives the sum of \$80,000 annually from United States alone in royalties on his plays and in addition receives fifteen percent of the gross receipts on all his plays. The talkies have opened up the prospect of further fortunes for him, because he would never allow his

plays to be filmed.

Mr. Shaw does digress from his equality of income theory to state that those with exceptional ability, playwrights for example, and no doubt he includes himself, should be allowed to spend their incomes as they see fit, but he states there is no need to worry over them. Here again, he is inconsistent and is really attempting to say that equality of income should not be unduly enforced against creative geniuses. He thinks that education will alter the inequality of ability, but educators know that this is a fallacy and that the more gifted will rise still higher with education and will always constitute a small minority. But Shaw goes on to say that Socialism could be established

in two weeks. In fact, I believe he would shudder if he thought his ideas would be put into practice in his own time. But he cannot resist the opportunity to score a point on any and every side and will abandon a position for the sake of a pose. He cannot endure to find himself in agreement with people. He hits at all parties and the whole party system and has a genius for side-tracking a main issue to score a triumph in irrelevant matters. But Mr. Shaw had few converts to his Socialism and those who became enthused with it soon lost their enthusiasm. There is no one to carry on Shaw's school of thought and he himself has lost a good deal of his enthusiasm for it.

We admire his Socialistic State in that

there will be no poverty, no destitution and no slums. Without money, of course, decency is impossible and he states that the lack of money rather than the love for it has been the root of all evil.) But we shall not give his argument attention unless he can expound some theory of daily payment to all mankind. Even with a daily payment, we should find that what would satisfy one's needs would utterly fail to satisfy the needs of a second party. For what is a luxury to one, may be a necessity to another without which the latter can neither work nor live. Shaw's theory would evidently work better if the equal incomes were based on the maximum of wants of individuals.

The Anti-Shavians, in 1921, accused

Shaw of trying to impose upon England a Socialism as adamant in its restrictions, as tyrannical in its suppression of liberty in religion, thought and action as Fascism or Bolshevism. (Shaw's retort was that it was Capitalism plus party parliamentary government that suppresses liberty. He alleges that Parliament has been the means of defeating tyranny by resisting all public government and enterprise, by handcuffing the king, fettering the feudal barons and paralyzing democracy in its attempts to free itself from the tyranny of private capitalism through Socialism. He says, "The rulers in the modern State must utterly renounce, abjure, abhor, abominate and annihilate private property as the very

worst of all the devil's inventions for the demoralization and damnation of mankind". Surely, this statement shows that Mr. Shaw was labouring under an obsession. To be sure, we see many serious abuses of private property, but we also see many positive values associated with private property and as a journalist said some time ago that if Shaw believes that all private property is an invention of the devil, he might just as reasonably attribute his own fundamental natural conditions of human society to the same source.

Shaw was, for a number of years, a member of the Borough Council of London. His seat was gained by acclamation and he would have found it difficult to secure the re-

quired number of ballots in an election. While a member of the Council, he worked with untiring efforts in behalf of all reforms which tended to better the lot of the poorer classes--better sanitary conditions, equalization of public privileges of men and women, etc. Throughout his term of office as Councillor, he never failed to urge for equalization of income, and he still apparently doesn't believe it unworkable. The success of the scheme would depend entirely upon rigid adhesion to the authority of the multitude in thought, in government and religion. If one became contrary to the prevailing opinion, he would lose his income and be confined for sedition. His ideal State would constitute wholesale despotism

and terrorism. "The Apple Cart" shows the conflict between royalty and democracy and capitalism. It is a conflict in the midst of confusion, unemployment, financial disaster and darkened councils. Shaw shows that Capitalism by its folly, its purposelessness, its greed, its glorification of the material, its rapacious overproduction has brought the world to its present chaos. His solution for the world sickness is men and women of character, politicians and statesmen of capacity, efficient governments with wholesale devolution and redistribution of authority, the elimination of private property and the equal allocation of the national income to every citizen from birth to death--which is Socialism.

There is nothing really new or original in the equality of income idea. In urging this, Socialists including Mr. Shaw, do not practise what they preach. They have a rule for you and me and another one for themselves. Mr. Shaw safeguards his own fortune very carefully. He advises against thrift, but is himself notoriously thrifty. He is perhaps the least social of all Socialists, and the Socialist State that tries to manage him is to be pitied. Equal incomes to all are not possible; indeed they are inconceivable. Equality of any kind--physical, mental or social is impossible. As human nature changes very little from one generation to another, neither can we expect our political or industrial systems to change with any

degree of acceleration. We cannot believe in his theory because we cannot be led to believe that incompetent as well as competent should receive the same assured income. Such would not be compatible with a good life and the freedom of mankind. This creed would never create supermen and would lead to mediocrity, indifference and weakness. Life would be filled with boredom if we were prohibited the privileges of gaining self-satisfaction by means of striving for promotion academically, non-academically, professionally, financially or otherwise. The whole science of ethics would cease to apply to life and the universe would be populated by those who have wealth and position created for them without performing the

functions that pertain to them. Shaw's argument that a man will be made a better man by giving him more money to spend shows that he has little knowledge of psychology and history. Evolution tends toward greater differentiation and variety. Variety, not standardization, is the law of life. Socialism is the opposite of individual democracy.

C H A P T E R I V

By 1904, Shaw's interest in Socialism was waning under the competition of a new enthusiasm for eugenics and he believes that the only fundamental and possible Socialism is the socialism of the selective breeding of man. He treats sex as a religious force and believes that Life invented sex to carry on the race and should be confined to this. Philosophically, he regards love as a blind force, a biological mechanism for race propagation. Love, he says, is only a social and biological phenomenon. He insists that health is of primary importance in marriage and in this idea he reflects Butler. Up to 1900, he condemned marriage unsparingly, ignored moral standards, but recommended no alternative. He has always been fond of

talking of sex questions and seems to be on familiar ground. He appears to consider that marriage means but the secure activity of the sex-relation. He believes that marriage as an institution is a failure and owing to the small families, it is no longer fulfilling the purposes for which it was designed. He sees that artificial sterility is beating natural sterility and according to national censuses, the average number of children produced is one and a half per family. This low figure is due to the large proportion of marriages which are intentionally childless and also the heavy pressure of the cost of rearing children on the scanty incomes of the masses. He believes these conditions will force the State to

liberally endow parentage. He would make all married people financially independent of each other and would dissolve marriages like any other partnerships. His theories have been the cause of breaking up many homes. Women, influenced by "Candida" have written to inform him that he has inspired them to leave their husbands.

Shaw is convinced that the unhappiness in marriages is only endured because of economic necessity and that Socialism and Equal Incomes will do away with this necessity and will break up unhappy marriages. He has always held a liberal attitude towards sex and believes that all humans have a right to sexual experience and every woman has a right to motherhood whether

married or not. But again he is inconsistent as in "Heartbreak House" he says that children are lovely in proportion to the love of the parents for each other, but in the right to motherhood of unmarried women, love does not enter. He would legitimize the children of unmarried mothers because he believes that many women are denied the right to maternity because of the abhorrence of the permanent marriage bond. And yet he does not desire man to be mere animal for that is always associated with incontinence and although Shaw admits himself guilty of incontinence at times, his ideals are usually strict and hygienic. To the sane thinker, however, Shaw's marriage laws would usher in a reign of uncurbed indul-

gence and we who consider the marriage vows among the most solemn will seriously condemn him for these views.

Mr. Shaw says that marriages are seldom ideal and are often disastrous. All husbands irritate their wives. Many find themselves improperly mated, but are driven to endure this unhappy state because of the strictness of the marriage bond. But again, he is inconsistent--he rails against marriage while posing as a happily married man just as he would overthrow Capitalism though he is a Capitalist and in neither is he to be taken seriously.

Shaw has always ridiculed the English home. He says, "The people who talk and write as if the highest attainable state is

that of a family striving in love continuously from the cradle to the grave can hardly have given five minutes' serious consideration to so outrageous a proposition. The love with which they start the home is a transient and exhausting thing, and in later years the situation is only relieved by the husband keeping out of the wife's way, at business, for the greater part of the day and the wife sending the children to school". The trouble with Shaw is that he always seems to be aware only of the minor considerations of marriage. Society is so full of ills that it is easy to attack with denunciation.

Shaw's only remedy for the present state of marriage is divorce and he considers

our present divorce laws the worst possible, only on the grounds of adultery, which he claims is the least important ground. He would make divorce as cheap and easy and private as marriage, obtainable upon the request of either party, with or without the consent of the other and no grounds for the request to be stated. He would leave the power of dissolving marriages for misconduct to the State. It will always be the duty of the State to determine the amount of alimony to be paid, but it cannot cover up the indecent exposure of a private wrong. But for those of us who believe in a religious doctrine of indissoluble marriage can easily comprehend what licentiousness and sensuality would reign in Shaw's ideal State.

Certainly, we think no more of Mr. Shaw for advancing his theories on marriage and divorce. He so plainly lacks even the smallest sense of the delicacy of what he calls the sexual or married relation. He regards love as simply sexual passion. It is hard to believe that he meant us to believe even one small part of the nonsense he has written pertaining to marriage and divorce. His own home life is one of pervasive gaiety and he is himself happily wedded. It would sober him considerably if he thought his plans were about to be adopted.

Shaw overlooks the fact that if divorce is to be so easy, there will be less reason for marrying; also that while it takes two

to make a marriage contract, it will only take one to break it. He fails, also, to consider that marriage is a serious economic disturbance for both man and woman. Since the days of the Great War, 1918, the exodus of women into the business world complicated marriage; marriage now means the giving up and rearrangement of work. Two now live on the income of one and marriage becomes a business partnership, a practical partnership. If such a partnership could be upset by one party, confusion would reign.

Shaw would put the children of divorced parents into institutions, but he has forgotten that all children have a birthright-- the claim for love, shelter and education

from both parents. Our present governments realize the importance of children, the future leaders, and legislate in their behalf, but Mr. Shaw's free divorce would upset the homes of these children. His theories seem imaginary and imperfect to say the least.

Mr. Shaw's exaggeration of the defects of the home is a major weakness. He considers the relations of parents to each other and to the children are prejudicial to the best development of character. He is again talking without experience as his childhood home was broken up at an early age and also because he has never had children of his own. The unpardonable sin that he commits is his raillery against homes in general. He sees the English home life to-day as

neither honourable, virtuous or clean. He fails to tell us, unfortunately, what his own ideal is and we cannot be sure of his meaning as he is the only one who believes he knows what he means. He passes over, with little comment, the millions of happy homes where fidelity, love and co-operation are major elements of the daily routine. He should know that under the best conditions there will probably be friction and distress sometimes, but certainly these are constantly in the foreground.

Mr. Shaw has said so much about marriage but he says nothing of education for marriage which is as broad as education for life itself. No doubt he deemed himself unfit to give a genuine insight into the biological and social values of the family. Yet, youth

needs the wholesome appreciation of the eugenic viewpoint with its desire to improve the natural, physical, mental and temperamental qualities of human kind. It also tends to create a sense of individual responsibility for setting up in a home a fellowship which conserves the finest values in human life. Shaw's view of marital relations are too destructive to advance any constructive ideas even were he experienced enough to do so and middle-class Europe and America who laugh at him have far more experience than he has and they do not believe themselves nearly as stupid as Shaw portrays them to be.

"In Getting Married", Shaw's drama on marriage, he pleads for the rationalizing

of marriage and uses the background of a bishop's home to tell the public his ideas on marriage and divorce. The bishop's daughter refuses to prepare for her wedding although the guests are already assembled when a pamphlet relating to marriage is put into her hand. The conversation which follows, in which the bishop, his wife and guests are the participants, is a satire on the Anglican Church. Polygyny, polyandry, promiscuity and every other sexual arrangement is discussed and the following are offered as practical proposals:

"Make divorce as easy, as cheap, and as private as marriage.

Grant divorce at the request of either party whether the other consents or not; and

admit no other grounds than the request, which should be made without stating any reasons.

Place the work of a wife and mother on the same footing as other work: that is, on the footing of labour worthy of its hire; and provide for unemployment in it exactly as for unemployment in shipbuilding or any other recognized bread-winning trade". But Mr. Shaw speaks with the tongue in his cheek so often and his marriage and divorce creed has won him few converts.

. Mr. Shaw at home .



CHAPTER V

Shaw believes that the greatest problem of Society is the problem of poverty. In "Major Barbara" he asserts that "Security, the chief pretence of civilization cannot exist where the worst of dangers, the danger of poverty, hangs over everyone's head". He considers it one of his principal missions in helping society to eradicate poverty. The idea itself he borrowed from Butler's "Erewhon". He rarely attacks the problem of poverty as it exists among the poor, but tries to expose its pernicious effects among the rich. He criticizes the rich as parasites living on the labour of the poor and it is only because the poor are poisoned in slums that the rich are pampered in castles. But here, Mr. Shaw seems to be putting the cart

before the horse as it is absurd to suggest that people will learn the evils of poverty by reading about the frivolities of the rich.

In "Major Barbara", Shaw enumerates the seven deadly sins as food, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children and describes poverty as the "worst of crimes". He says that all other crimes are virtues beside it; all the other dishonours are chivalry itself by comparison. Poverty blights whole cities; spreads horrible pestilences; strikes dead the very soul of all who come within sight, sound or smell of it. What you call crime is nothing; a murder here and a theft there, a blow now and a curse then: what do they matter? They are only the accidents and illnesses of life;

there are not fifty genuine professional criminals in London. But there are millions of poor people, abject people, dirty people, ill-fed, ill-clothed people. They poison us morally and physically; kill the happiness of society: they force us to do away with our own liberties and to organize unnatural cruelties for fear they should rise against us and drag us down into their abyss. Only fools fear crime; we all fear poverty. These are Shaw's ideas of the most deadly sin, poverty.

Bernard Shaw hates charity and has always hated it. His income is several thousand pounds a year and he admits that he has more than he can spend. Yet, it is hardly possible that he is philanthropic as

his advice to millionaires is to give no alms. He counsels them never to give to people anything they want--rather give them something they ought to want and don't. He has always had the most profound respect for pounds, shillings and pence and it is said that no business man can drive a better bargain or is more tenacious of his rights. He is opposed to leaving any more than moderate legacies to children. He finds it difficult to give away money intelligently--advice which few of us would require if we possessed an income commensurate with Mr. Shaw's.

To overcome poverty, Shaw returns to the position that equality of income is the first reform. He has always recognized the

paramount importance of money, in controlling morality and colouring one's entire life. He has repeatedly declared that money is the most important thing in the world and that it controls the destiny of nations. Poverty, to Shaw, is not a misfortune, but it is the worst of crimes.

He is a preferentialist and a protectionist insisting that preference be given to goods that are produced under humane and decent conditions and a duty be put on goods that are produced by slavery. He would tax all unearned incomes to the limit; this limit he sets as 19s. 6d. on the pound.

Shaw has always hated the poor. He hates the rich too, but he tolerates them as this is the class to which he himself belongs. But

the best he can wish for the poor is their extermination. He says he would despair of mankind if it were not that under a system of equal incomes he is satisfied that human nature will alter fundamentally and become good enough for all reasonable purposes. He would transform the existing social order, but he does not believe that a political revolution will suffice to do so. He believes it will effect nothing to change institutions; to set up an economic and scientific domination in place of a military and ecclesiastical governance; or to turn capitalistic rule into proletarian democracy or monarchy into republic. Nor will it suffice, he thinks, to turn romanticism into realism, realism into mysticism or metaphysics into physics. To eliminate poverty,

to transform the existing social order, to transform institutions, etc., is futile unless mankind itself is also transformed.

Thus, Shaw believes that Socialism alone will eliminate poverty; that equal incomes to all will make for ideal conditions and only then will the poor be suitable for anything other than their extermination. But we disregard these outbursts of Mr. Shaw as he seems to see one-sided. He sees only the evils existing among the rich and poor and makes no mention of those admirable virtues found in rich and poor alike--kindness, devotion, loyalty and self-sacrifice.

C H A P T E R VI

Mr. Shaw says that he believes in God because he cannot do without Him. But Shaw's God which he calls the Life-Force, an arid expression, is not all powerful nor all knowing in the sense that the Christian God is. It is an imperfect power striving to become perfect and, therefore, the Life-Force is not God. As a boy, Shaw rejected all religious beliefs and broke away from the Church which he was compelled to attend. In 1880, he called himself an atheist and assaulted Christianity fiercely. Now, he has ceased to call himself an atheist but is still antagonistic to Christian theology. His distorted religious views are, in part, due to early influences. The religious atmosphere of his childhood was narrow and

dreary.

Shaw's Life-Force is a vague power behind the universe directing it and we are all in the grip of this Force. This Life-Force first attained consciousness in man. At the time of creation, it built up the matter of the earth into microbes. It created man, a thinking creature to assist Him in His attempt to become perfect. It goes forward by the process of trial and error. If man, who is still on probation, refuses, by his prejudices and indolence to assist God in His attempts to reach perfection and retards His progress, he will be scrapped and pass into oblivion and God will seek the aid of the lower animals to perfect Him. It is man's duty to produce a Superman by

preventing the continuance of bad stocks and by concentrating on the cultivation of good stocks. Then, in a few generations, the Socialist will have finer material for his State and man will rapidly rise toward the superhuman stage. The Superman alone can aid God to reach perfection and he can never be produced by natural selection. Shaw denounces Darwin's doctrine of evolution as the "most devastating influence that has ever fallen on human thought. Evolution by natural selection is to him an inadequate explanation of the facts of life development. God's call to humanity is, therefore, a challenge and our existence on this earth is to be considered as a duty, not an opportunity. Eventually, the

Life-Force will attain omniscience and omnipotence through the Superman. It is sufficient to add that Mr. Shaw, who poses as an intellectual, certainly has no knowledge of the facts of life on which he bases his creed.

In "Caesar and Cleopatra", Shaw imagines an indignant God, disgusted with mankind and He destroys the world and creates a new species more willing to aid Him. Man's destiny has been given into his own hands and if he so desires, he can so gain by the aid of the Life-Force. A man can only change his moral nature by one means only and that is by means of an idea which pervades the heart. And that pervading idea, Shaw feels should be the true spirit of religion. This

is his creed of Creative Evolution and it is a non-fatalistic one.

Shaw believes that war, poverty, disease, etc., may be part of the Divine Experiment to produce the perfect man or may be due to the indolence and wickedness of man. He refuses to believe that proletarian democracy has any capacity for solving great political problems or even doing ordinary parochial work intelligently and economically. "Therefore", he says, "the need for changing man's nature; to socialize the selective breeding of Man: in other terms, of human evolution".

As the moulding of our own lives and our own future lies in our own hands, Shaw exhorts us not to choose the path of least

resistance, but to steer "divinely-conscious" If man is to be saved, he must save himself. He seems to say that it is the present world and the present time that matters. His is a religion that touches and pervades all our human activities. His Creative Evolution appeals to the reason, to man's courage and intellect. If the Life-Force cannot advance in Its attempt to be all powerful and supplants mankind, it will only have itslef to blame for we have the weapon of defence in our own possession--man's intellect. The highest form that the Life-Force has yet achieved is in the brain of the thinker, the philosophic man. Shaw sees the class in which the Life-Force is best developed, the intellectual class, bent on

frustrating its purpose of fecundity and retarding the appearance of the Superman. He would make marriage, not the rule, but a concession to certain people to aid in the production of the Superman. Individual effort should never end. As we conquer the limitations of the flesh, we approach into the purposes of God. In the whole of Shaw's religious creed, there is no idea of a personal God and his theories do not constitute a religion; there is nothing in them which inspires.

Shaw's God is seeking only self-perfection and is using mankind for this purpose. Shaw is breaking with historical Christianity when he rejects the theory of immortality. He believes that death is only

a means of discontinuing life, when the individual has completed his part in the consummation of the perfection of the Life-Force. The true joy in life is being used for a purpose. The man who is looking out for himself is useless for revolutionary purposes. The man who believes he is only some power made for righteousness is not only useless but obstructive. He who believes there is a purpose in the universe, identifies himself with it and makes the achievement of that purpose an act, not of self-sacrifice for himself, but of self-realization, is the happy and effective man, whether he call the purpose the will of God or Socialism or the religion of humanity. He is the man who knows that nothing intelligent will be

done until somebody does it and who will place the doing of it before all interests.

In "Man and Superman", Mr. Shaw gives us his creed of Creative Evolution which he borrowed from Nietzsche. He makes no attempt to describe the Superman which is the utmost and ultimate aim of the Life-Force, but suggests it will be something beyond anything that we can conceive to-day. The Superman will be produced by sexual selection and the Shavian ideal is to improve by selection. But Shaw's total ignorance of biology makes his creed of the Life-Force very feeble. He has adopted a creed which cannot be promulgated without a profound knowledge of biological science. He knows little of natural selection and his whole position is utterly

indefensible. He is philosophizing on life without any fundamental knowledge of the underlying facts and his psychology is utterly unsound. He is following his own judgment and the result is, to say the least, confusion. One could find few Englishmen, regardless of their love for Shaw, who would resolve to enlist deliberately in the service of the Life-Force to create the Superman, even though he is told repeatedly by Shaw that evolution towards the Superman is slowly advancing and man cannot survive as he exists to-day. Shaw believes that man is rapidly being destroyed by political, economic and international laws. Unless man change his actions and engenders the Superman, he will cease to exist after

a few more wars and mortal crises. Shaw would like to be freed from the burdens of existence to concentrate upon the purpose of existence, which is to consummate the perfection of God. He calls himself a Socialist because he believes that the organized community better than the unco-operative efforts of individuals can reduce the mere impedimenta of life. He would free mankind from material activities that waste his spiritual energies. He would (would) nationalize himself so as to more thoroughly realize his own individuality.

The Christian idea of God is that He is Perfect and man's purpose should be to regain God's grace so that he may himself become perfect, but the Shavian God gives

no assurance that he will require man when he has perfected Him. Also, those who aid the Life-Force in reaching perfection will be scrapped the same as those who give no assistance and there is no promise of a reward for the faithful who do the will of this Life-Force. This type of religion has nothing inspirational in it. There will be no martyrs and no saints and no heaven. No one will want to live for it and no one will want to die believing it and this is perhaps the reason Shaw himself fears death.

Shaw was forced into his belief in an imperfect God in an effort to explain the problem of sin and suffering, unexplained under Christianity. He believes that the highest that the Life-Force has reached in

the creation of a superman is the mind of Einstein. But surely Mr. Shaw is not serious as it is scarcely possible to believe that a man who poses as a great intellectualist should speak jestingly of such a subject as the purposes of human life, the causes of its perversions and the evil that fills the life of humanity to-day. He is, of course, entitled to his own ideas of the Life-Force--but since his theory lacks inspiration and the principle of immortality is disregarded, whatever be our religious affiliations, he will have to make his theories more constructive and more satisfying before he wins a following. G. K. Chesterton made a most happy comparison when he compared Shaw's religion with

coffee. He says, "I have often been haunted with a fancy that the creeds of men might be paralleled and represented in their beverages. Wine might stand for genuine Catholicism and ale for genuine Protestantism; for these at least are real religions with comfort and strength in them. Clean, cold agnosticism would be clear, cold water--an excellent thing if you can get it. Most modern ethical and idealistic movements might be well represented by soda water which is a fuss about nothing. Mr. Bernard Shaw's philosophy is exactly like black coffee--it awakens, but it does not really inspire. Modern materialism is very like cocoa; it would be impossible to express one's contempt for it in stronger terms than that."

Shaw's creative religion has no place in it for the sacredness of individual life. The mystic distinction between man and brute vanishes. If men are incompatible with the State, it is as right and as necessary to take their lives as those of ferocious animals. He never sees the individual as an end in himself, but merely as a link between generations of the same family. In other words, this is a denial of the immortality of the human soul. Mr. Shaw's idea of individuals is that they are only the means to the accomplishment of the purposes of the Life-Force. It is interesting to note that in recent years, Mr. Shaw has said little of the Life-Force. His efforts to provide the 20th century with a new religion

have passed unnoticed. He has lived to see a decrease in the number of his followers owing to his eccentric and non-satisfying religion and he may be beginning to see that his creative evolution religion is not an enlightened up-to-date faith.

C H A P T E R VII

Nowhere does Mr. Shaw write with more vigour than when dealing with the subject of children. In "Misalliance" he exposes the parental relation. He says that the young generation must be liberated from parental control, parental affection and homeliness. "Better than the company of parents is the company of harlots and rioters". Shaw regards every child as a fresh experiment on the part of the Life-Force to produce a perfect man. In all his plays dealing with parents and children he is unsympathetic to parents and is the friend of the children. He believes that no one has yet evolved suitable theories for the training of children. He is a Socialist of the most extreme type and demands that the

child at birth should inherit a fixed income from the State. It is then the State's duty to see that the income is earned when the child reaches maturity.

Shaw's Eugenic Theory has long occupied a commanding place in his mind. In the Preface to "Man and Superman" he says we have disregarded natural selection in the breeding of our most valuable horses, dogs, fruits and flowers, but the propagation of the human race is left to natural selection. Shaw's pessimism for the human race, though he denies that he is a pessimist, is his reason for his Eugenic proposals. He sees no advancement in civilization during the past two thousand years and believes we have not yet reached any improvement on the

civilizations of Rome and Athens. However, it would be difficult to obtain any contemporaries of Shaw who would agree with his belief in contemporary civilization. And we can dismiss his opinions that we are deteriorating. He seems to have little knowledge of the history of ancient civilizations and his grasp on mediaeval and even modern history seems vague; he makes no mention of the social reforms for prisons, child labour, poor laws, enfranchisement, abolition of slavery, etc. Civilization, to-day, is certainly at a higher ebb than every before and at present there is no sign of recession.

Shaw would abandon education and breed a new race. He says, "My school days were

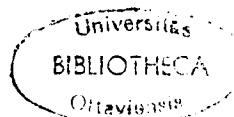
the most completely wasted and mischievous part of my life". He still declares that school did him no good and a great deal of harm. True, he was always near or at the bottom of his classes; was always idle and a cause of idleness in others; distracting them from studying by his comic stories. He believes that one of the greatest crimes is the effort to mould the child, to make it go in the way it should go. He says that parents send their children to school to get rid of them. He believes that education should not start until thirty or forty years of age and thinks civilization is visibly wrecked by educated men. He urges that the child's mind be allowed as much freedom to develop as the flowers in the field. We

should teach children only enough reading and arithmetic to prevent them being nuisances to other people.

Mr. Shaw thinks the Superman may be eventually produced by parents not joined in wedlock or by parents who find it irksome to live together. Yet, we sympathize with children who are bereft of one or both parents. We sympathize with children in institutions, not because they are ill-fed or ill-treated, but because they are not in the same environment as other children and because they are missing the love which only parents can bestow upon them. Shaw would leave the methods for improving the human race to the State or to a private company and he does not seem to realize that this

would mean the disappearance of the finest and best of human sentiments. Mr. Shaw has no children of his own and is, therefore, expressing his ideas without the experience of a parent. His arguments against the home seem very feeble and indefinite and trivial.

In his ideal State, the home is to disappear. The children will be placed in communal residences and will be cared for by professional or trained officials. Youth will be taught in spheres outside the small domestic realm. Yet he does not intimate who is to do the teaching as he flays our teachers mercilessly. He says, "He who can, does; he who cannot, teachers". In the Preface to "Getting Married" he



contrasts the excellence of religious teachers with our "comparatively ruffianly, elementary teachers". So in a sentence he passes over the members of the most honourable profession and apparently expects that we shall take him seriously. It would seem that his knowledge of our present educational facilities is scant. He may be basing his theory on education in the 1860's when the aim of the schools was to cram academic facts into the minds of the children and the youth who could repeat verbatim the greatest number of printed pages was considered to be highly efficient. However, our present educational institutions have long since abandoned this cramming-of-factual-knowledge methods and have supplanted it

with education that has a varied appeal to the child's mind and which prepares him to take his place in the community as a useful citizen. Shaw's insistence, therefore, for a more varied appeal to the child's mind is not at all new to educationalists and he seems to know nothing of the function of our schools to provide for the youth a stimulating environment in which his natural tendencies will be directed into useful abilities and desirable attitudes. He says, "Do not give your children moral and religious instruction unless you are quite sure they will not take it seriously". Here it is his general theory of morality which compels him to resent the moral teaching of children, but he has not been taken seriously as

foremost educators are united in their opinions that the curricula of our schools should be pervaded by the spirit of religion. Shaw would give each child his share of the unearned income--the same amount as would be given to the adult. The child on reaching maturity would be compelled to earn what had been given to him. Just how he would force the ne'er-do-wells and the indolent to work he gives no suggestions. He mentions the lethal chamber for these, but in that he cannot be serious.

Apparently when writing about children some isolated case comes to Mr. Shaw's attention and he makes himself believe that such conditions are general. He urges all men and women to face the scientifically

ascertained facts of sex, heredity and evolution, and that all should allow to each other and to their children, freedom to develop their own individualities and thus they would be able to co-operate with the Life-Force in its process of trial and error. He reveals the imperfection of the existing state of society and shows us how people bully each other and their children from sheer stupidity and lack of understanding.

England has always been a land of homes and the English are justly proud of their sacred homes where children grow up in an environment of refinement and culture and where maternal and paternal affection are the rule rather than the exception. But Mr. Shaw comes along and assaults the home,

shakes it to its very foundations, strips it of its beauty and charm, assaults the stupidity and ignorance of parents, particularly the middle-class, until we say to him, "Mr. Shaw, you are opposed to parents in their treatment of children, but we cannot take your counsel seriously as you have never been a father and your advice has no practical experience behind it".

C H A P T E R VIII

Shaw is a revolutionist. If he had lived at an earlier age he would be ekeing out the last years of his life in prison, if he had not already been burned at the stake. He refuses to distinguish between crime and punishment, marriage and prostitution, between religion and superstition. He always had a distaste for the physical which is manifest in his vegetarianism, his total abstinence from tobacco and intoxicating liquors and in his horror of death.

He assails men for placing too much confidence in doctors as he says most of them have no honour and no conscience. From his Socialism, he believed that diseases are generally caused by

poverty and overwork and he holds it the duty of society to cure them by introducing Socialism. He has stated, "Nothing is more dangerous than a poor doctor, not even a poor employer or a poor landlord. Of all the anti-social vested interests the worst is the vested interest in ill-health".

A poor doctor to Mr. Shaw is one of the most dangerous things on earth, because he has to live on the diseases of others; even has to invent and prescribe medicines when unnecessary in order to please their patients. He doubts that the surgeons have greater personal honour than the other doctors, because they often operate when unnecessary to do so.

Yet people trust them implicitly to operate upon them. He assails the whole medical profession by saying that they are no more scientific than tailors and that they encourage imaginary invalids and treat really well patients for the sake of the fee. He does not believe in prevention by inoculation and the science of bacteriology is to him a superfluous science. He would make the doctor a civil servant with a respectable living wage paid out of public funds. In other words, he would establish state medicine for the people's protection.

In 1896 he began his attacks on vivisection in the Saturday Review. He

unhesitatingly damns the vivisectionist who performs painful experiments upon animals. He calls the vivisectionist an infinite scoundrel. His reason for this is because he is on the side of life and creation. He admits that dangerous beasts and poisonous reptiles must be killed for the protection of man. He would defy any laws or lose any friends to show mercy to the humblest beast or the frailest bird. Yet in his works, he rarely if ever makes mention of any tenderness or intimacy with any bird or beast. He makes no mention whether he thinks the vivisectionist has promoted the skill of the surgeon and benefited mankind, but would be opposed to animal suffering even if

the experiments did relieve mankind. Yet he must know that the guinea pig has little intelligence compared to man's intelligence and has little consciousness of pain compared to man's consciousness of pain.

Shaw would reform criminals if possible and if not he would commit them to the lethal chamber. He believes that some criminals are incorrigible. He says, "It is senseless to punish men for being abnormal. Cure them if possible and if incurable, destroy. Society must be protected". He has said so often that imprisonment makes criminals and at times criminals have tried to justify their actions by claiming to

be disciples of Shaw. He would endow the government with the right to exterminate all who exhibit "incorrigible social incompatibility". But such a plan is utter nonsense as it places too much power in the hands of the ruling party. Party abuses would be bound to follow. Such wholesale lethal killings would usher in a reign of barbarism and our civilization would be destroyed.

Shaw would make life in the prison as much as possible like life outside and the primary aim of the prison should be to prepare prisoners for life outside the prison.

In all his theories of prisons, criminals, etc., Shaw entirely overlooks

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the enormous advance made in the treatment of prisoners during the past century. He recently led an outcry against the flogging in England of a couple of heartless young criminals. He says that the flogging of these fellows was for the gratification and encouragement of "all our sadists and flagellomaniacs". This is Shavian nonsense again. Of course, the flogging was carried on for no one took much notice of Mr. Shaw's remark. There was no public outcry in England against the whipping of these crooks. In spite of Shaw's advice, the British courts took a very serious view of the atrocious crime of robbery with violence of which these youths were

guilty and were not influenced by the turgid sentimentality of Mr. Shaw.

According to Shaw, all that humanity needs to do is to will to live two hundred years and the wish will be realized. However, we know that this is not true individually. Our moral nature is not affected by the period of time we expect we may live. Unless physical stamina did not wane with advancing years as at present, longevity would be no asset to mankind. On the subject of longevity Mr. Shaw is inconsistent. He advocates many times that all should work to justify their existence on earth and in fact should work to the point of wearing out. However, in the Preface to "Misalliance" he cautions against overwork. Such

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inconsistencies make him hard to follow. It is reported that he rests little, exercises a small part of the day and devotes eighteen hours each day to study and writing. In other words, he preaches one thing and practises another.

Mr. Shaw has always had the most profound regard for dictators, provided they are efficient and ruthless and mean to govern. He extols the virtues of Mussolini and defends Mussolini's inroads into Ethiopia on the same grounds on which he defended the British in South Africa at the time of the Boer War--that they were bringing civilization to backward races. He believes that the League of Nations should never have interfered.

Shaw is always ready to condone the extermination of large masses of mankind because they do not agree with the intentions of those who happen to be temporarily dictating. "If we desire a certain type of civilization and culture, we must

exterminate the sort of people who do not fit into it". And the question naturally comes to us--How would Shaw react if he were forced to agree with the opinions of a servile dictator? He would be the first to be committed to his "lethal chamber" as we cannot imagine him humbling himself to accept or act upon a suggestion contrary to his eccentric views. And a community will not thrive which is intolerant of its minorities. Curtailing of the freedom of speech and imprisoning the man on the corner trying to tell his vital message to the passers-by will not curbe individuals from their desires to flaunt their ideas and will not make for a peaceful State. The man who in the expounding of his ideas, feels he has improved

Society and has thus satisfied himself is not the man who will cringe under persecution. Therefore, he will not rise in authority and persecute those whom he believes to be unpopular to his will.

On returning from a visit to Russia, Mr. Shaw declared that other governments would do well to follow the Russian Government's example and allow individuals to live decently only if they proved efficient servants of society. At various other times, too, he has attempted to keep his Socialistic ideas before the public.

At one time, Shaw was a democrat and believed that by putting a clear view of the economic solution before the people that they would demand Socialism. But he saw

that Democracy meant nothing if it meant government by the people. He saw the futility of trying to convert the majority so he took the point of view that the select minority must force the majority to do its will. But he took this point of view only when Democracy seemed hopelessly incompetent. The extension of the franchise to anybody and everybody, Shaw has declared, is "making civilization a rush of Gadarene swine down a steep hill into the sea". Popular election he thinks is impotent as a means of selecting first-rate men; indeed, he points out, it is absolutely impossible to select the best men by this method because the impulse of the ordinary citizen when he meets a superior man is to tar and feather him, not

to vote for him. He does not advance any constructive data as to how to select candidates for government positions, but he is confident that if a method could be discovered, one would have an easy time forming a government. He says, "You could form panels of persons eligible for the different grades of political work: for instance, Panel A, of persons capable of diplomacy and finance; Panel B, persons capable of general Congress work, as representatives, etc., Panel C, of State legislature representation; Panel D, municipal affairs; Panel E, village councils, etc. You could then let your voters elect to Congress from Panel B, to State legislatures from Panel C, to city corporations from Panel D, and when they had

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elected these bodies within these limits, you could limit the Cabinets to Panel A. The people would welcome such a guide to capacity; they know now by experience that the men who get round them most easily under the present indiscriminate system are either humbugs or blackguards".

CHAPTER IX

During the last century, style was looked upon as a most important thing. R. L. Stevenson, Oscar Wilde and others advocated style for style's sake. Shaw says, "For art's sake alone, I would not face the toil of writing a single line". Yet it is primarily as an artist that Shaw has made his impression on the modern world, though he is really more of a social reformer than an artist. He fears art and distrusts it except as it is controlled by some strong ethical purpose. He regards criticism of current morality as the outstanding function of all art. He has always mentioned that intellectual activity and moral idealism are the things to be sought in art-- not sensuous enjoyment. Shaw uses his art

to gather a crowd in order to preach his social doctrines to them.

Shaw is a dramatist, a novelist, a philosopher, a Fabian Socialist, etc., etc., and he looks upon himself as a remarkable phenomenon and highly beneficial to the world. He is a most mysterious creature--approachable in many ways, but difficult to agree with and most difficult to understand. He has said so many things in so many ways that he remains a puzzle to those who would understand him. He loves to be in the public eye and spares no efforts to advertize himself and never ceases to talk about his own beliefs and doctrines and is all the more pleased if they are met with disapproval. He says

little that is absolutely new as he thinks no man can be original in the early twentieth century. He is very original in that he has refused to accept the conventional standards of good and evil, but reads his own meaning into life and gives his own interpretation to Life. He is original, too, in his observation of life, even if he does see it with a distorted eye. His language is natural, without being casual, and correct without being literary. He uses the ordinary abbreviations of colloquial speech very sparingly. As a realist, he has the courage to face the truth. He sees society based on a wrong understanding of the Life-Force.

When a journalist invited Mr. Shaw, early in his career to define himself, he

replied, "Shaw is a bachelor, an Irishman, a vegetarian, a fluent liar, a social-democrat, a lecturer and debater, a lover of music, a fierce opponent of the present status of women and an insister on the seriousness of art". This shows us Shaw's peculiar trick of obtaining a comic effect by stating the truth simply and cynically.

To make people listen to him, he has had to pass himself off as a madman. He puts into the mouths of his characters long lectures on marriage, prostitution, Protestantism, evolution, etc. His invariable method is assault and tract or masterpiece reveal this method. He can write none other. He has been listened to because his ideas were couched in interesting language and

his audiences were always kept in a state of expectancy as to whom he would next attempt to flail. His characters are made to express his hidden thoughts and this gives a comic element which is simple but quite effective. In almost every line, there is an element of exaggeration of the vices which he denounces. Of these, respectability is most often the butt of his wit. Some of his prefaces are masterpieces in the stern boldness of their ideas and vigorous form, but the more lengthy ones make tedious reading and will seldom be read a second time. He has encyclopaedic knowledge of art and literature, but does not make use of it to good advantage. The fusion of a light tone and the vivacity of his style are

noteable. He seldom creates characters-- chooses tiresome, stock characters, but occasionally has an element of original comedy. He sees men as walking ideas. He occasionally has some gifts of characterization, for example, Candida, but most of his characters are mere burlesques, with just enough life to convey some creed that comes to his attention. To bring his ideas to the public's attention, he laughed sentimentality and romance off the stage and teased the English for their slowness and pomposity and self-infatuation. He made parents ridiculous and to him only the young are wise. There is a complete lack of balance in most of his plays. Emotional qualities are submerged by the rational faculty

which dominates him to the exclusion of all others. Sentiment means nothing to him. His ideas flow continuously and tediously-- it is his brain speaking. And his works, stimulating as they are at first, end by wearying us as we search through his network of ideas for the fundamental thought.

It is not the business of art to teach or to preach; but it is the business of art to understand and portray. Mr. Shaw is too much of a preacher to be an artist. The only fair approach to his works is through the study of the ideas which alone, in his view, give his plays their excuse for being. He goes to extraordinary lengths to secure oddity into his work. Often he is very extravagant with his statements on various

subjects and this makes him unconvincing as well as exaggerative. Speaking of Christmas Day, he says, "Christmas Day is only a conspiracy kept up by poulterers and wine merchants for strictly business motives". His Life-Force will allow him to make such a statement and although we know that Christmas has taken on a commercial aspect, such a wholesale statement is certainly absurd and foolish.

There is a distinct topsy-turveyism about all of Shaw's works. He puts matters in such a way as to make people who would otherwise hang him, believe he is joking. He cares much more for a quarrel than for a play. In the "Doctor's Dilemma", Louis the artist says, "I don't believe in morality."

I'm a disciple of Bernard Shaw". His dialogue is often quite admirable, but sometimes, particularly in his later plays, he allows his clear conviction to spoil his dialogue and it becomes weak. His plays are kept alive by their remarkable buoyancy and with less of this buoyancy they would be detestable, if not nauseating. He is always distorting and inverting the normal or natural and exploring the unexpected. A dramatist has no right to write an epilogue as was done in "Joan". His excuse for doing this was because it is the idea and not the form that interests him. "Joan" would be better without the epilogue and Shaw would do well to adopt the wholesome virtue of self-restraint.

Shaw is a master of compression and can put a conception more completely than any other writer. He was born a talker. In him is an erratic levity which has made him many enemies. From first to last, he has been nothing but a conversationalist. He talks to some extent to find out what he thinks. His aptitude for quick-spirited speech was a natural one. As soon as he got hold of a new idea, he hastened to tell the world about it, but he has told us whatever came to his attention and when he wished to be taken seriously, his public was not ready for him. He has written with the utmost facility and always makes slight use of colloquialisms. Occasionally, he becomes eloquent and we find long passages

of rhetoric and impassioned eloquence. His dialogue is his strong point and often reaches the superb. He is, at times, master of the spoken word. He writes problem plays and states the problem dryly in terms of comedy and debate. In some plays, we find long static passages of debate or even of one-man "set speech". He makes comedy, and even farce, a vehicle for his ideas by which to preach his ethical and social doctrines to the modern world, and he has taught the theatre-going public to look for dramatic excitement in ideas as well as emotions. He pokes fun at his own times and at the audience which attends his performance--this may be his method of getting our attention. His pages bristle with ideas

and every idea is a challenge. He asks many questions, but answers none. In other words, he is destructive.

His plays have world-wide renown for their incomparable verve and wit. He is always bubbling over with laughter and gaiety and his sense of humour is acutely developed. He has a peculiar weakness for cheap jokes--in "Man and Superman" we have the following example:

"Tanner: It is the tame elephants who enjoy capturing the wild ones.

Ann: I am getting on. Yesterday I was a boa-constrictor: to-day I am an elephant.

Tanner: Yes. So pack up your trunk and be gone. I have no more to say to you."

He says he uses his cheap jokes to get an audience and they have, no doubt, attracted most theatre-goers to his plays, but they look for the jokes only and do not see behind them the meaning and ideas which he says he wishes to convey. His wit is always thoroughly enjoyable, but it is quickly forgotten. While speaking in Dublin he said, "If you hiss me again, I'll deliver my lecture in Irish and not one of you will understand a word of it". But one seldom quotes Shaw--even is it rare to hear his most witty passages quoted. His wit and satire have always been liabilities to him as well as assets insofar as they attract the crowds, but fail to make them believers. But his wit has many times been his salvation

and has often served him well as a body-guard. It has allowed him, often, to laugh at his own misfortunes when they became hopeless. His later wit shows a lack of control. Often his advice was needed and Shaw gave it at length, but he could never keep his wit in control and his readers were not able to take him seriously as they did not know wherein he was adviser or jester. With him, wit always comes first. He will sacrifice dramatic effect to propound a doctrine and he will sacrifice dramatic effect and doctrine to make a joke. The reader interested in some fine passage is always in danger of a complete right-about-face and rudely aroused by some paltry joke. But the brilliance of his wit is

always palatable. It is said that one evening when he was making a debut after the staging of one of his plays, he was greeted by a loud booh from one of the box patrons, but he quickly mastered the situation by telling the critic that he heartily agreed with him, but what did the two of them mean among so many. Naturally the applause was accelerated. But his wit, when it can be dissociated from his thought is imperishable, but his thought is not. His chief happiness comes from the thought that he was born to set the world right and he has had a good time lecturing humanity. We, his audience, enjoy his wit and no doubt he chuckles over it many times before he gives it to us. But we cannot take him seriously

for he has such a gift of wit and paradox that he seems desirous of appearing frivolous. He has the ability to clown great ideas taken from Aristophanes and Ibsen and his receptivity, memory and ability to mimic others comically is enormous. His plays all seem crowded with wit on first acquaintance, but they are very tiresome on a second acquaintance and few of them will bear reading a third time. He rarely leaves much to the readers' or audiences' intelligence. He must elaborate so profusely lest his ideas pass over us, until we finally become exasperated because he will not hint only and leave the rest to our conjecture. But he continues to blatantly expound lest our "limited" intelligence be too limited

to guess the intended meaning. His wit, however, is a part of him to endure rather than to admire; often it is particularly offensive, trivial and vulgar. He himself admits the handicap of professional jesting in the following confession: "Some people are born with a terrible desire to be laughed at: this has prevented me from becoming a great author". Henderson, who wrote his biography states that Shaw's wit has many times saved Shaw from a tight corner and says that if the public suspected how serious Mr. Shaw is beneath the masquerade of humor, he would long ago have been forced to drink the hemlock. The average reader of Shaw strongly condemns the extremely solemn passages which he intersperses with

mocking laughter and often in the midst of the most hilarious mirth he finds himself jerked to his feet by some attention-arresting injunction or prophecy. His audiences are left amazed at the suddenness of the transition and rarely get on their feet again before losing their balance again. From the public platform, Mr. Shaw hurls the most aggravating insults at his hearers, but couches them in such amusing style and geniality that instead of being dragged out of the hall, his audience chuckle with delight and applaud for more.

C H A P T E R X

"A play", says Mr. Shaw, "is anything which interests an audience for two hours and a half, on the stage of a theatre". It is true that many of Mr. Shaw's plays have interested, but they do not linger long in the memory of the patron after he has left the theatre. Many of Shaw's plays were written to get actresses and actors out of difficulties. "Captain Brassbound's Conversion" was written for Ellen Terry. "Pygmalion" for Mrs. Patrick Campbell; "The Apple Cart" for Sir Barry Jackson, etc. These plays were, therefore, not spontaneous and it is a question whether Shaw would every have written plays if there had been no theatre to be kept open and no actors to be obliged.

The British drama in the nineteenth century had sunk to a depth of decay. The public looked for sentimental claptrap, dances, costumes and burlesque. The theatre was an intellectual vacuum. Between 1640-1892, the only dramas written that continue to arouse are those of Goldsmith and Sheridan. In 1879, Matthew Arnold said, "In England we have no drama at all. Our vast society is not homogeneous enough, not sufficiently united, even any large portion of it, in a common view of life, & common ideal capable of serving as a basis for modern English drama". A. B. Walkley, another famous London critic, stigmatized the early Victorian theatre as without ideas, so ephemeral, so paltry and jejune, that it

was impossible to think of it without a yawn. The majority of the public took its theatrical amusement in small pieces. It was a public without patience, without the capacity for sustained attention. It had no taste. This public understood nothing of the art of the drama and did not desire to learn.

Late in the '80's, the cultured class of English Society became exacting in its demands for more modern forms of drama than they were hearing at the theatres. And the tameness of the London theatre was soon to be disturbed for Shaw came along with the comedy of ideas, spiced with Dublin wit and irony, something of which Oscar Wilde had exhibited before. The production of Ibsen's "A Doll's House" was the inauguration of

a new movement. The lesser public demanded a native drama based on the form of Ibsen's.

Mr. J. T. Grein who was staging English modern dramas ran out of suitable material as most English modern plays lacked inspiration and proved a failure. Shaw had always entertained very decisive views regarding the function of the theatre. He looked upon it as a forum for advancing ideas on prevailing social, economic, scientific and religious problems. He waged a continual warfare in behalf of the higher drama, the vehicle for constructive and reformatory ideas about current institutions. He took to drama through necessity. After having created among English theatre-goers a certain desire for something different in

drama from what was being offered, he became a dramatist from a sense of duty rather than because he felt himself attracted to drama. And, as he was a born talker, he believed the theatre would prove a natural outlet for his ideas.

In 1885, Mr. Shaw attempted to write a play, "Rhinégold", in collaboration with Wm. Archer, who was at that time engaged in the translation of Ibsen. Archer made the scenario and Shaw composed the dialogue for the first two acts before shelving it for a time. When Shaw read the first draft of this drama to Mr. Archer, it threw the latter into a sound slumber--an incident which convinced Shaw that he could not write drama. Shaw had not made use of any original ideas in this play, but his presentation of ideas was orig-

inal, but it did not prevent Archer from lapsing into a profound sleep. As Mr. Grein was still clamouring for modern plays, Mr. Shaw came to his rescue with his unfinished play, added another act and called it "Widowers' Houses". It was produced, but was immediately withdrawn. Shaw said he had not achieved a success, but he had provoked an uproar. The play was a realistic exposure of slum landlordism and Shaw admits he had not taken the theatre seriously. The hero and heroine whose love affair supplies what little plot there is, are remarkably unromantic and unsympathetic. There are occasional flashes of wit interspersed in the dialogue. The caste was unpaid; the heterogeneous audience

applauded furiously, but others assailed it with hoots and jeers. It was a drama of ideas and was new to the English public. Sartorius, the slum landlord, pities his slum tenants and explains how hopeless it is to help them. "No, gentlemen, when people are born poor, you cannot help them, no matter how much you may sympathize with them. It does them more harm than good in the long run. I prefer to save my money in order to provide additional houses for the homeless; and to lay by a little for Blanche". "Widowers' Houses" was loudly applauded by Socialistic admirers, but the artistic public condemned it. What really condemned it, however, was its offensive caricature of the middle classes.

Mr. Shaw was not discouraged when "Widowers' Houses" was withdrawn. He was determined to produce plays that would be vehicles for his ideas and he was likewise determined that these plays should be acted. He knew that there was something in him that the public did not like. He was caricaturing life and pretending that it was realism. He chose a number of subjects. Some of these subjects he thinks unpleasant and calls the plays unpleasant, but it is the conduct of the play which is unpleasant. Shaw really didn't know very clearly which plays were pleasant and which were unpleasant. Indeed, the word 'pleasant' means little to him. With the possible exception of one of these plays, "Mrs. Warren's

Profession", there is no reason why any of the plays should be considered written to please or displease. At last Shaw found a publisher for his plays and the first seven of them were published under the title, "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant". Some of these plays are definitely socialistic in tendency and are an attempt to cure the evils of the present state of affairs by the adoption of the equality of income theory. The "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant" were published with elaborate stage directions and elaborate prefaces intended for the edification of the readers and the success of this venture, gave Shaw access to the English reading public all over the world.

"The Philanderers" was written to

champion Ibsen. Shaw tried to show up certain misconceptions that existed regarding Ibsen. He indulges his prejudices against vivisection, and the medical profession. The dialogue is an improvement on that of "Widowers' Houses", but the characters are mechanical and the plot is extremely slender. There are sparkles of wit and paradox, but Mr. Grein would have nothing to do with it and to-day it is one of the most obscure of Shaw's plays.

Not to be discouraged, Shaw produced in 1894, "Mrs. Warren's Profession", which showed a decided improvement over his previous plays in character and drama. The British censor prohibited its performance and Shaw carried on a lengthy newspaper

Mr. Shaw in action



correspondence assailing censors. The characters in "Mrs. Warren's Profession" are precise, piquant and varied. The play shows how prostitution is woven into the grimy fabric of society and how the refusal to face this fact inevitably taints the moral sense and what a horror of harm is done by trying to cloak prostitution by the pretence that the lives of its victims are associated with luxury, refinement and romance. He asserts that modern economic pressure upon women is so bad that there is no choice for poor girls to earn a livelihood other than by resorting to prostitution. The censor believed that prostitution was not a fit subject for the theatre. True, the

objectors could stay away, but the public must be protected. However, it is hard to believe that Mr. Shaw believes what he is saying about prostitution. Rather let us think he is saying it simply to prove his theory of the economic oppression of women. Certainly we know that such a statement of the social conditions of the poorer classes is false and absurd and that those who now resort to prostitution do so, not for economic reasons, but because they are blind to the squalid future of so many who resort to it. "Mrs. Warren's Profession" was staged in New York and later at the Regent in London and was received warmly. This lapse of thirty years shows the difference in social outlook over that period.

"Arms and the Man" enjoyed a three months run in London and has been popular ever since in United States and Canada. The dialogue is particularly easy and sparkling. Shaw attempted to expose ideals in regard to warfare and soldiers. The characters are Bulgarians and the British public were not offended by the exposures of hypocrisy and fraud which it contains.

"Candida" is the best play that Shaw ever wrote. There is little argument, no propagandists' ideas and little heavy satire. This is one of the few of Mr. Shaw's plays that will live. Although the London theatres at first refused to produce it, it enjoyed a long run in New York. The play contains amusing discussions on love, marriage, Socialism, art and Christianity. The plot is

so simple that it can hardly be called a plot. "Candida" deals with certain realities usually considered outside the scope of Shaw; especially the reality of the normal wife's attitude to the normal husband. The play contains a very realistic picture of the domestic life of a busy urban vicar.

"The Doctor's Dilemma" is a peculiar mixture of tragedy and comedy. The public on hearing it for the first time didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Shaw rails against doctors experimenting on people, against vivisection, etc. He portrays the doctor as a person considering himself infallible, many of them having a craze for operations. He discusses medical poverty and the perils of inoculation. His theme

was, of course, a dangerous one and he could not keep it within bounds.

Shaw had been so severely criticized by the critics that he resolved to turn the laugh upon them. He exposes them in "Fanny's First Play". He ridiculed them at great lengths and the public reacted favourably and laughed the critics to scorn. So completely did Shaw emerge as the victor that "Fanny's First Play" gave him an eminent place among contemporary British dramatists.

The inadequacy of Shaw's father's income to the social rank he claimed has a great deal to do with the impassioned philosophy in "Major Barbara". He denounced poverty as the source of all evil. He

denounced also the Salvation Army. His characters are extremely weak, none of them resemble human beings. It has good dialogue, but was never intended to be taken serious. The theatre-goers were attracted by the fun and wit.

This concludes a short resumé of the major plays of Shaw. There are many others; many of these plays will not survive their author. "Candida" is practically the only one that will continue to be enjoyed.

CHAPTER XI

Shaw has always been careless about plot construction. His aim has been not to tell a story, but to convey ideas. He talks through ten mouths instead of one. "Getting Married" is nothing but gossip. Shaw accuses Shakespeare of being a pilferer of plots, not because he was too lazy to invent them, but because he had no message to deliver. He believed it is dangerous to make plots and plans and a play should not be constructed, but should grow and if it is let grow, it will construct itself more wonderfully than any "well-made" play. He says he avoids plots as he would avoid the plague. He warns young playwrights again and again that a plot is like a jigsaw puzzle, enthralling to the man who is

putting it together, but maddeningly dull to the locker-on. He says, "Stories are interesting; the exhibition of character in action is very much more interesting and for stage purposes is the source of the story's interest; but plots are the deadest of dead wood.

With Shaw, the play is never an end in itself. It is only a means to an end. Primarily, his plays are not plays, but only tracts in dramatic form. He speaks of his plays as immoral and glories in their immorality, but to him immoral means contrary to established customs. A number of Mr. Shaw's plays make interesting reading and provide stimulating reading if picked up at random. But in others there is no

consistent argument from one act to another and we become confused and even hopelessly muddled. Inconsistencies and contradictions are frequent and the conclusions sometimes refuse to blend with the play as a whole. His work as a critic should have shown him many ways to avoid failure in the drama. His plays have been spoiled by his attempt to propagate his ideas. Every play he has ever written is a play with a purpose. Most of them are argumentative theses for he was concerned, primarily, with ideas and expresses these ideas with force and directness. He occasionally leaves out a very important consideration, sometimes the human element, to make his point. If he had confined his propagandist ideas

to his prefaces and given us some living men and women, our enjoyment on reading his plays would be greatly enhanced. But Mr. Shaw is not interested in art and whether it be play, preface or platform, his economic and political views are predominantly in the forefront.

Shaw's range is very great. He writes of the folly of romance, the crime of capital punishment, the economic oppression of women, the fickleness of the medical profession, in fact he wrote on a great variety of subjects from art to vivisection. He goes back to Julius Caesar in history and creates a new type of historical drama, in which ancient figures were brought to life by treating them as if they were

contemporaries, and with realistic, ironic humour. In this, his influence in modern drama and modern historical literature and biography is felt. He has never ceased to be a dramatist of ideas, a creator of intellectual rather than emotional interest. His chief aim in writing drama has been the exploitation of some idea or conception and he considers the dramatic part of the business of minor importance. Thus he can never be preeminently successful on the stage. And he does not present his ideas dramatically--they appear as they happen to be stated in the drama. He makes no attempt to polish these ideas and this is a grave fault for a dramatist. The drama has one serious drawback as a means of presenting ideas and that

is lack of space. The author can make up this defect by having action, situation and characters to carry the thing, but Shaw merely has characters on the stage talking to each other. We may remember what strikes us forcibly at the time, but we do not remember more than we would from ordinary conversation.

It has been said that if Shaw is all right, we are all wrong. He has always been an agitator, in every sense of the word. He will sacrifice a nation for a theory put forward, as he believes, in humanity's behalf. Play-writing was to him, at first, only a pastime, but his plays which were received favourably buoyed him up and he kept on agitating. He says he

agitates to correct the social ills, but if this is the reason he is a highly paid agitator and enjoys the significant distinction of being most highly paid by those whom he agitates most uncomfortably.

Wm. Archer declared that Mr. Shaw's plays reek with sex, but Shaw maintains that his interest is in problems of conduct and character which have universal interest. He attempts to expose current morality hinting that it would be wise to scrap it and resort to another kind. His statement that people have told him that his plays have made them alter their whole view of life is a most heinous exaggeration and possibly an illusion. His dramas have been acted all over the world. They have been

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translated into Swedish, Danish, Magyar, Polish, Russian and Dutch and Shaw has won international renown as a playwright who can fill theatres regardless of the city in which his drama is staged.

Mr. Shaw never interests us in the private lives of his characters, but the interest is the thought they suggest about the common fate of us all--not to be taken seriously, of course. He sees man as ideas walking. He cannot think of mankind with tolerance and patience and because of this he has a special faculty for putting the world in the wrong. The thorough discontent which reveals itself at times is plainly evident in the Preface to Fanny's First Play in which he advises young people "to do something that will get you into trouble". Shaw is wholly subjective and each play and person represents him, speaking his own ideas. There is really one great character, George Bernard Shaw, and

in play after play he performs infinite variations upon it. He cannot afford to let the characters speak for themselves since his plays do not arise from the development and opposition of character. The characters must play into each other's hands as they have no ideas of their own. He uses every means to reveal himself. The brilliance of his characters is his own brilliancy; most of them are verbal contradictions of one another. He is not an artist because he cannot create vital, pulsing humans. The majority of them are creations of his fertile and original imagination. Most of them could not live or certainly did not live in the flesh. His characters rarely belong to the poor or the very

well-to-do class, but belong to the middle class. They talk about love, but never give the impression of being in love; their other emotions, too, seem unreal, something added externally rather than natural emotions. Perhaps few living writers have covered such a wide variety of characters as has Shaw and this alone is stimulating. His characters have movement, but they are not living. They appear before us ready-made and we know no more of them than they tell us themselves. There is no character development in any of his plays. The characters are either static or subject to one violent and final revolution. They seem to represent people to whom the unexpected is always happening and the normal course

of events never occurs. They may be freakishly true portraits of certain actual persons, but they are not true within nature, because his plays are illustrations of ideas and have no natural origin. And yet, these plays of ideas would be highly absurd if the characters were made more human. He views his characters as if they were the merest marionettes, and wise and foolish alike, they suffer disgust, shock and exasperation when their master, the author, directs them. He shows up one character at the expense of another--they are in constant conflict with each other and he rarely allows one character to speak for itself and by itself.

Candida is perhaps Shaw's greatest

character. Yet even here he could not resist the temptation to make her the exponent of his ideas, whims and paradoxes; and from the first act to the last his men and women all have the same form--not themselves, but the exponents of his Socialism. Shaw will not allow the characters to be themselves; they must be he. He is always upon the stage whether as the university co-ed, the parson's wife, the parson himself or the prostitute of the sordid tenements. He seems to consist of a large number of persons and it is difficult at times to find the real one. He is the critic, the poet, the dramatist, the actor, the doctor, the wit and all these different characters seem to be meeting and tripping over one another

and the reader is left in confusion. His women characters are often bad-tempered, cruel, hard and bold. One never finds the refined drawing-room ladies in his plays. He insists that they are ignorant and void and says he prefers the unsentimental business-like type of girl. Barring Candida and Lady Cicely, two characters with Ellen Terry as the original model, his women characters are unpleasant, practically unsexed women, lifeless and uninteresting. The villain in Shaw's plays is civilization and the discussion of what's wrong with present day civilization constitutes his drama. His drama might be called a "debated drama" in which the action consists of a valuable discussion of the mental resolutions

and spiritual conversions which take place in the minds and souls of the characters. If Mr. Shaw is familiar with a certain type of character, he can portray it with a minor degree of accuracy, but when he has to rely upon his imagination we find his characters unconvincing. This is true, particularly, of his historical characters; Joan of Arc, Caesar, Cleopatra.

Many people know Mr. Shaw as a man who writes a very long preface to a very short play. Indeed, he is a very prefatory sort of person--giving the explanation before the incident. The prefaces are, to say the least, unique in the history of literature. They were written because of the necessity for him to explain why he had published his plays as if they were really works of literature. They are not always better than his plays, but they sometimes are. He has spent as much time on the art of prefatory writing as he has on the art of the drama. In the prefaces he has amassed an amazing number of facts.

The Prefaces are often as long or longer than the plays. He writes a preface of 94 pages to "The Doctor's Dilemma"; one of 80 pages upon marriage and divorce to "Getting Married" and a 74-page preface on the British censorship to "The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnet". Rarely in his prefaces does he impress us with his ideas which are often conspicuously false and unjust. Neither does he shock us and often bores us to the extent that we never reach the end of the preface. He wanted to fit all he had to say into a comparatively short space and he took license with style to say what he wished in a short space. The chief characteristic of his prefaces

is celerity. He employs gigantic sentences, avoids paragraphing and discards the use of the adjective. All these tricks effect the reader to the detriment of the author. The reader is compelled to go so quickly that he can catch only a small part of what is meant. Therefore, it is necessary to reread several times in order to obtain the full significance, but few will take the time to read the prefaces again and again. The impression resultant is that Shaw is superficial and that he writes at random and with little thought.

Mr. Shaw has been greatly influenced by his predecessors, but he does not try to conceal this and admits that he has little originality. He acknowledges his debt to Samuel Butler and it is clear that he was profoundly affected by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. He owes his Socialism to Marx and Bellamy. He admits that he is like Shelley-- a Socialist, an atheist and a vegetarian. His mysticism takes us to Blake and his religion savours of Fox and Knox. He acknowledges that he lifts characters "bodily" from the pages of Dickens. He certainly quotes Dickens more often than any other English author except Shakespeare. He says that Mozart has

had a larger influence on the structure of his work than any English dramatist, Shakespeare excepted. He admits, too, a spiritual sympathy with Bunyan, Hogarth and Turner; incidentally, he puts Bunyan above Shakespeare. He was attracted by Goethe, Ibsen, Tolstoy and Wm. Morris and his methods are largely the methods of Moliere.

C H A P T E R XII

In the Saturday Review, Shaw wrote an article in which he said, "Down with Shakespeare; great is Ibsen". He frequently compares Shakespeare and Ibsen to the former's discredit. In "Caesar and Cleopatra", 1898, he sets out to correct Shakespeare. He deliberately challenges comparison with the great Bard and seems to say that he is superior to him. He says that he could write a better play than Shakespeare's "As You Like It" and actually has written much better ones. He has not told us, however, which of his plays he considers better, but the English public are not seriously concerned with this prattle, but we do not deny that he has gone to

absurd lengths in his depreciation of Shakespeare. At another time he said that Shakespeare is a very incompetent thinker like most Englishmen bred in private houses. Speaking of him, he says, "Shakespeare was born a snob, lived a snob and died a snob. (Do not imagine that Shakespeare was a democratic character. He had no religious belief and his philosophy was that evil is greater than good.) His plays are crowded with kings and nobles and the members of the lower classes in them are always servants; Shakespeare is for an afternoon, not for all time".

Shaw is convinced that if he had been born three hundred years ago he

would have taken to blank verse and given Shakespeare a hard run. Henderson who has written the biography of Mr. Shaw says that no vegetarian could have given Shakespeare a run for his money and that "Shaw would have to eat red meat, drink deep potations and spout mighty oaths to please the Elizabethans". But he thinks that Shakespeare is so antiquated that someone ought to write his plays into modern English. Indeed, he says that he has often thought of putting Macbeth into living Scottish speech. He did attempt to polish Shakespeare's "Cymbeline" and the manner in which he accomplished the task sent the crowds scurrying for

tickets at the Embassy. He cut the last act of "Cymbeline" from fifty to fifteen pages, retained less than one hundred lines written by Shakespeare and wrote the last of the act himself in blank verse.

Shaw complains that Shakespeare has no constructive ideas in his work; his plays are uneven and he lacks compelling thought and inspiration. He thinks Shakespeare has much to show and little to teach; that he never understood courage and virtue and could do nothing with a serious positive character. He believes Shakespeare was an inferior artist because he was not a moralist and a philosopher. These

remarks we can scarcely call ideas; let us rather call them the notions of Mr. Shaw; notions which he presents with so much vigour, insistence and repetition and with so much perplexity that we turn away from him to read Hamlet and Macbeth still another time.

Shaw's explanation of his anti-Shakespearean campaign is, of course, Ibsen. He was judging everything by Ibsen's standard. He admits that Shakespeare is a great poet, humorist and story-teller, but he damns his studies of character and society as crushingly inadequate, flat and disappointing. He tries to defend his attack on Shakespeare by saying that the English were idolizing

him too much and that idolatry was bad for them. He believes no country should think they have a native poet who is above criticism. He says, "The intensity of my impatience with Shakespeare occasionally reaches such a pitch that it would positively be a relief to me to dig him up and throw stones at him". In a saner mood, Mr. Shaw recoils and praises "Twelfth Night" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" as the crown jewels of dramatic poetry. Again, he says that King Lear cannot be excelled as a tragedy, and in "Dramatic Opinions" he declares that "Shakespeare was king of dramatists". Mr. Shaw is inconsistent so often that all his crushing remarks hailed at our

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English bard mean nothing to us. Shaw will, to many, remain greater than Shakespeare in modernity and voluptuousness, and both of these are fatal weaknesses, but Shakespeare will continue to be Shakespeare.

CHAPTER XIII

Mr. Shaw was never a sportsman. In the first published sketch of him in "Who's Who", he gave as his favourite diversion, "Anything but sport". He is by nature an individualist, a rebel, a free lance, a destructive critic, a Radical, A revolutionist, a Socialist. He says, "I am a moral revolutionist, interested, not in class war, but in the struggle between human vitality and the artificial system of morality". To many, he seems like a nuisance. He shocks us and because of this we read his books as soon as they are off the press. Though we forget them soon, they do brighten the monotony of our lives at the time of reading. He is a great comedian and

impersonator, but not a great writer or thinker to be taken seriously. He is certainly the master of his impersonations and many regard him as a freak. He is unique, fantastic, utterly unlike anybody that ever has lived heretofore, hopelessly unnatural and void of real passion. He has an utter lack of jealousy and it is said that such a monster could do no harm, even were his example evil, which it never is. He has a deliberate policy of exaggeration; he is totally blind to our virtues and enlarges our faults and is always delighted when he compares us with earlier generations with which he is little acquainted.

His aristocratic nature forbids him to take part in democratic enterprises. He is fond of motoring, reading, swimming and walking. Each of these amusements or exercises is either exclusively or almost exclusively a solitary pastime. He does not like doing things in groups. He has many enemies and his friends do not like him. We no longer consider him as startling and the modern generation are inclined to treat him as a mellowed old man, old fashioned and behind the times.

He has a habit of going to an empty cathedral to pray. He says, "There I find rest without languor and recreation without excitement, both of a

quality unknown to the traveller who turns from the village church to the village inn and seeks to renew himself with shandygaff. Any place where men dwell, village or city, is a reflection of the consciousness of every single man. In my consciousness there is a market, a garden, a dwelling, a worship, a lover's walk--above all a Cathedral. My appeal to the master builder is: Mirror this Cathedral for me in enduring stone; make it with hands; let it direct its clear and sure appeal to my senses, so that when my spirit is vaguely groping after an elusive mood my eye shall be caught by the skyward tower, showing me where within the Cathedral, I may find

my way to the Cathedral within me". He further says that in the presence of a great cathedral he forgets himself and is the equal to the beggar at the door. This is another side of Mr. Shaw--another of his inconsistencies: at one time he poses as the ascetic mystic who walks with God and at another the follower of the creed of creative evolution which recognizes no personal God. He encourages everyone to preach in open controversy whatsoever they like, but insists that it shall be done without bitterness and without calling the other fellow immoral. The British tradition of free speech, no doubt, assisted him in the formation of this opinion. He believes in Conscience as the only

morality and urges obedience to conscience rather than to a ready-made morality. He really loves to commune with nature and for this reason bought a country retreat in Hertfordshire so that he might escape from the smoke of London. Here he lives simply, enjoys the beauty of the earth with all the colourings of the trees and sky, the contours of the landscape and the sweet perfumes of the country lanes.

Shaw has many idiosyncracies. He believes that unless you say a thing in an irritating way that no one will listen to you. He follows what he preaches for he attacks all audiences, all nationalities, all denominations, all readers with

bitter rancour. On one occasion he said, "I refuse to agree with anybody about anything. I do not want any followers or disciples". He is perhaps the most baffling composite in the history of literature. He is not affected by love, romance, sentiment, sexual passion, patriotism, fidelity. If you agree with him, he is likely to disagree with you. He seems to fly from agreement and to have as few followers as possible.

In everyday life Mr. Shaw is neat and business-like. He has often been called a Bohemian, but he hates and despises Bohemianism. He likes regularity in everything; is immensely fond of being photographed; likes photography. He

differs from the Stoic and Epicurean in that he would make activity the aim of life. He is unaffected by public sentiment or public opinion. He cares not what we may say. He resents being called a jester, but prefers it to being followed literally. He will go to any lengths to make himself popular with the younger generation, but he is not the smallest bit concerned with what posterity will say of him. He really thinks he will live because of the beauty of his phrasing, but the almost total lack of historical interest, the tedious prefaces and the Shavian characters will never earn him a place among English men of letters.

Mr. Shaw, The Octogenarian

C H A P T E R X I V

Mr. Shaw has always been an advertizer of George Bernard Shaw. He has a genius for publicity. Chesterton says, "I have a very great admiration and even affection for Bernard Shaw, but I have no great admiration for his admiration of Bernard Shaw". To illustrate Chesterton's remarks, it is essential to quote the remarks of Mr. Shaw made in 1900 when speaking of the fame which he had attained: "I find myself still in middle life, almost as legendary a person as the Flying Dutchman. Critics, like other people, see what they look for, not what is actually before them. In my plays they look for my legendary qualities, and find originality and brilliancy in my most hackneyed claptrap. Were I to republish

Buckstone's 'Wreck Ashore' as my latest comedy, it would be hailed as a masterpiece of perverse paradox and scintillating satire".

In the Preface to "Major Barbara", Shaw says the English do not deserve to have great men and in the Saturday Review he intimates that for ten years with an unprecedented pertinacity and obstinacy he has been dinning into the public head that he is an extraordinarily witty and brilliant and clever man". The two quotations above are evidence of his colossal self-conceit. He seems to have felt it his duty to cure middle-class England of its dangerous conceits and has never ceased to make fun of them. He has spent a large

part of his life telling other people how to conduct their lives and manage their own affairs and has been called the Irish mischief-maker. The Irish have always hated him and he has had little love for them. Many of the Irish are, of course, jealous of his success, but they hate him principally because he freely criticizes Ireland and the Irish of all races dislike criticism. Of course, there are thousands of Irish who have never heard of Shaw, but many who do know him, mention his name with a sneer. The foolish despise him as a fool and the more intelligent consider him a crank.

In "John Bull's Other Island", Shaw advocates Home Rule for England as well

as for Ireland and Scotland. He advocates separate national parliaments and an imperial parliament to which the four countries will send representatives to discuss imperial and foreign questions.

The public no longer care what Mr. Shaw says. His ideas bear no influence, but the public delight in his mental quirks and his fantastic turns of thought. Enjoyment of his ever sparkling wit is not conditioned upon the necessity for accepting his philosophy. He holds everyone, even himself, up to ridicule. His plays are filled with quips and cranks, eccentricities and whimsicalities, yet he gives them an air of novelty and originality and they seldom fail to make laughter in an audience.

He jumps from one theme to another rather bewilderingly and we are amazed by the acceleration of ideas, but we seem to feel the lack of guidance and direction. He very seriously distrusts the ability of the average man to think for himself. He thinks he has neither the brains nor the imagination to be original in such matters as getting married or what he should do for his neighbour. He denounces the fallacies and hypocrisies of mankind, but instead of losing his temper he laughs at them. He believed this method would attract the crowds and the public would advertize him as a great genius. But his public has described him as a mounteback, a cheapjack, a poseur who is bent on advertising himself. The

average reader or theatre-goer finds it impossible to feel he is in earnest about anything, that he has any convictions, any consistent doctrine and is nothing more than a clever buffoon ready to say anything that will delight an audience. For this he is to blame himself and even when he does attempt to speak in earnest, which is seldom, the public remains unconvinced..

Nothing is more remarkable than Shaw's reputation for original and daring speculation. He is a great satirist using his pen and platform to tell his contemporaries what he thinks of them. He has been given immense importance in the past three decades. He is sometimes a useful stimulant, an occasional nuisance and a frequent

entertainer. He believes mankind enjoy being told that they are in a state of decay. He hates poverty and inefficiency and this is the reason for his popularizing Mussolini and other dictators. It explains, too, his remarkable self-confidence which further accounts for him going about saying and doing the sort of thing that make enemies. He believes that popular election absolutely excludes the best men, because the impulse of the ordinary citizen when he meets a superior is to be jealous of him.

Shaw is easily the best living pamphleteer. In the early days of his drama he did much to shock the English theatre into admitting the possibility that ideas might be as much a part of a dramatist's

material as romance. There is nothing in him of romantic illusion or emotional patience. He hews his way to the goal and cares nothing for the fate of the victims on the way. He has been a great tonic to his age--he has compelled mankind to look at its hypocrisies and its shams, but not seriously, of course. He has always loved a good fight and still enjoys giving hard knocks. He is man enough not to flinch when the hard knocks are flung at him. He has come through many verbal scrimmages and they do not seem to have affected him. He has popularized philosophy and has created discussion on economics. He is responsible for the Renaissance which has taken place in the English drama since 1910. He

has helped to stir the inertia of the theatre.

Mr. Shaw is perhaps better known by sight than any other resident in London and the name "Shaw" and the adjective "Shavian" are universally known. Shaw certainly has his place in the history of the English theatre and in the history of English pamphleteering and in the extremely comic history of what Socialists thought they thought. His plays have filled the theatre. To-day, all classes go to hear Shaw--aristocrats, militarists, dictators, politicians, business men, the clergy, etc. Few of them look upon Shaw as an enemy, but they come to enjoy his wit, his irony, his unorthodox teaching and his philosophy

even when they are the targets and he satirizes their opinions and their lives. He is always more critical than constructive. Few of his plays will be enjoyed as long as twenty years after his death and his leading articles do not improve by indefinite keeping. Up to the present, Shaw's plays have been kept alive, but it is the stage societies, theatres and amateur clubs, etc., that have kept them alive. After his death, most of his plays will not long survive as they lack that independent vitality which characterizes all great art and express the views rather than the personality of the author. While he is not a great dramatist, he has been a great critic. His prefaces though

tedious have force and are veritable torrents of argument. He has proved that it is possible in England to have a theatre that is both serious and entertaining.

It is significant that as time has weakened his sight, it has mellowed his judgment and made him more human and tolerant. Occasionally, we may become serious-minded enough to believe that Shaw has wanted us to do something more than laugh, but we have not done it. Taking up the drama when he did, he could not fail to write better plays than had been written for a century, but he has left no beaten path for the advancement of the English drama. His drama is too personal to have any future after his death. His

impatience to put forth his ideas is too great for his writing to rank high.

Shaw has largely failed to move us although he has never ceased to try. His vegetarianism has not reduced the consumption of meat. His clamour for easy divorce has not reduced the number of happy marriages. His Life-Force has not made us forsake the religion of our early training. His raillery against the institution of the family has not quelled the maternal and paternal instincts which in the average home are daily refortified. He has ridiculed our homes, our churches, our social state and we have laughed at him and have gone on as before. Although some regard him as the boldest, most courageous

and most vital thinker of our time, the majority look upon him as a public entertainer and a common discussion is whether he should be taken seriously. We are all agreed, I think, that he is no prophet.

He is a living force in the modern German drama of ideas. His plays frequently appear in Germany and the leaders of modern German drama study him with zeal. He has done little, however, to create the modern attitude towards morals and civilization in general. To him, art has been less important than the propagation of ideas and opinions. He would not cure the diseases that afflict modern society--poverty, dishonesty, corruption, etc., with religion or by an existing party in the political

world, but by common sense, determination and a planned future. He says that to want a better world is to will it, but all his criticisms of existing social institutions have not changed us.

Shaw, the octogenarian, is much more human and tolerant than he was in 1910. The fact that he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1926 shows that he has won recognition, let us say, for his part in revolutionizing the English stage. And the fact that he gave back the Nobel Prize money with the request that the money be funded and the annual proceeds be used to encourage intercourse and understanding in literature between Sweden and the British Isles shows that his interest in literature was

not waning at that time.

Collis states that people are beginning to feel anxious about Shaw because he is becoming "disagreeably agreeable" and they are afraid he is going soft. Let us rather say, however, that this is an example of his mellowness. He says, "Man will return to his idols and his cupidities in spite of all movements, all revolutions, until his nature is changed". Rather an amazing statement after all his lengthy lectures and his tiresome prefaces! This then is to be the end? Men are simply to change their hearts and all will be well with them.

Critics have said that they never saw a really bored audience at a Shaw play

though they might have stated so the next day. Shaw certainly brought back into English drama all the streams of fact or tendency which are commonly called undramatic. They were there in Shakespeare's time, but they have scarcely been there since until Shaw. This philosophy which he brought back is the freedom to think about what one likes.

In spite of all the criticisms hurled at him, Shaw will be satisfied if someone takes up the torch for humanity where he will be forced to lay it down and continue to assail society to make this world a more beautiful place to live in. But posterity will always wonder why Shaw did not leave us some realistic picture of the

society of his own times instead of all the prefaces and talks and plays and gibes and quirks which twenty years from now will interest nobody and will be read by nobody. Shawism has ruined him. He could portray a single character without creating this character. His characters exist simply to propound his ideas and they have no human interest. His dramatic works have become pure journalism, popular for a while but soon to be swallowed up in oblivion. His latest plays show that he is losing his form. They seem to begin well, but soon we are led astray and the central theme is swallowed up by some small tributary and we are not returned to it again. Occasionally we see something of the old wit

for the comic gift has always been strong with him.

There is no school of Bernard Shaw. He has no followers. He has not encouraged a movement. He took his place in drama because the place was made for him and he has consummated the rejuvenation of the early twentieth century drama. Improvement of society is the one idea that predominates his works. He lacks inspiration and rarely reaches genius. There is nothing in his plays that would bear the stamp of greatness. One can enjoy an evening with Shaw, but he cannot expect a better time than with a good cinema. He has stimulated thought and has made the stage the means

of instruction. But one soon forgets him. It is difficult to quote him as nothing impresses itself indelibly upon the mind. Though he has been perhaps the wittiest in English literature and has been in the foreground for fifty years, it would be false to say that he has been an important figure outside of the part played in the modern drama. His Socialism and propaganda leave no effect whatever. His advice has been rarely followed. He has not earned immortality because he has given nothing to the world to secure it for him. His philosophy contains no new or vital truths; his religion is lacking in vision. Though he thinks he will be an important

figure in English literature during the next three hundred years, his estimation of his effect upon posterity is grossly exaggerated. He is not as popular today as he was fifteen years ago. He has left no character that haunts the memory; is not an original thinker nor a great dramatist, but he has and still is a great personality, an unique personality, a many-sided personality and it is as this marked personality that he will be remembered for a time. One London theatre gave five hundred performances of his plays in three years and this alone shows his popularity as an entertainer. His audiences, however, do not regard his plays as social propaganda

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and the majority of theatre-goers are very vague about his ideas and rarely does one hear of any conversions to his views.

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