Chapter II
Drama from 1901-1905.

The Emergence of Harley Granville-Barker as a playwright
The Voysey Inheritance, 1905.
G.B. Shaw: Man and Superman, 1901-1905.
Major Barbara, 1905.

It is not possible to split up the critical account of a theatrical movement into segments with precise chronological beginnings and ends. No complete break in the dramatic tradition of London can, however, be discerned between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The year 1900 does not mark the end of the old and the beginning of something new. Many dramatists whose most important works dated before 1900 continued to produce work for the theatre after that date, while not a few, including even Bernard Shaw, whose chief contributions were made in the era under consideration, had already used the stage for literary purposes in the last century. The plays of Pinero and Jones written during the last years of the nineteenth century reveal little social purpose. Bernard Shaw, on the other hand, was struggling to bring the play of ideas into the theatre, but before 1900 he had not yet reached that high stature that came to him afterwards, and when we look around we realise that even in this early period he stood almost alone as a playwright of contemporary social problems. With the beginning of the new century there arose a group of playwrights including Harley Granville Barker, John Galsworthy, Stanley Houghton, St. John Hankin, St. John Irvine who made definite contributions to the drama of social ferment.

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We now launch on a discussion of Harley Granville Barker playwright, actor and producer. Before we launch on any close examination of his dramaturgy, however, some outline of Granville-Barker's
life may be helpful. Accounts of his life often read like legends in which he figures as the Lost Leader and his second wife as a sinister enchantress. Bio-criticism has tended to portray him as the Man who Gave Up, one with a streak of weakness, too easily seduced by comfort, riches and respectability; a snob who kept his origins in obscurity, cut himself off from his old associates; a political renegade who fell out of the company of Fabians into conservative darkness. The peremptory dismissal of Barker's plays in John Gassner's Masters of the Drama is fairly typical of our day. Raymond Williams' Drama from Ibsen to Eliot makes waste the text of an argument on the limitations of naturalism, but does not discuss Barker's work directly at all. C.B. Purdom in Harley Granville Barker makes numerous incidental remarks on Barker's plays, but he is mainly concerned with the plays as reflections of the character of the man. However, a notable plea for reconsideration of Barker's plays was recently made by Gerald Wales in "The Edwardian Theatre and the Shadow of Shaw", Edwardians and Late Victorians. In these circumstances, a simply factual account may be best, while judgement is reserved until the study of his plays has yielded a more intimate view of his mind.

Born in London on December 25, 1877 he claimed his descent from a family of Hereford where his grandfather was chaplain to the goal. On his mother's side he was descended from a distinguished Italian physician who published a book on the acting of Kemble and attended the great actress Sara Siddons when she suffered from insomnia. His father was an architect of moderate income. His mother was a professional entertainer and an elocutionist, sometimes acting in plays, sometimes reciting and displaying her skill as bird-mimic. Harley made his first appearance on the stage as a small child, together with his mother. The little child would appear in a sailor-suit to supplement his mother's programmes with such pieces as "The wreck of the Hesperus" and gradually he was promoted to delivering Shakespearean extracts.
Nothing is known for certain about his early education. Having decided on a stage career for her son, Mrs. Albert Barker sent him to a fashionable Kensington School, so that he might acquire the right accent and manners. He received very little formal schooling presumably because his parents were short of funds. But he was an eager reader and was ambitious of becoming a scholar of the theatre and a writer of distinction. He became a highly educated and cultured man by his own efforts and interests. In a way, the theatre was his university. At thirteen he was member of a troupe of juvenile actors. At the age of fourteen he was sent to Sarah Thorne's dramatic academy at the Theatre Royal, Margate, a seed-bed of many talents. But his training there lasted only a few months. He went on to Paris in "Romeo and Juliet" with the Thorne company. Henceforward his formal education was confined to professional apprenticeship. It was at Margate that Barker first met Gordon Craig, then guest-actor from Irving's Lyceum. With this training behind him he proceeded in the conventional way to find engagements with various reputable touring companies, among them Ben Greet's Shakespeare Company, in which he met Lillah McCarthy who was later to become his wife, and he played several small parts in undistinguished London productions. Here he made another lucky acquaintance with William Poel who defied the conventions of time, staged Shakespeare without scenery and had strong personal opinions about the speaking of verse.

Barker, Miss Horniman thought, was an understudy during Florence Farr's season at the Avenue Theatre in 1894, which she financed: (2) an historic season which first presented Shaw and Yeats to West End audiences through "Arms and the Man" and "The Land of Heart's Desire." Barker's engagement here was undoubtedly influential in fixing his eyes upon new developments in the contemporary

2. That Granville-Barker was paid thirty shillings a week during Miss Horniman's first theatrical venture was a familiar theme of hers in private conversation when she was totting up the score of her "fruitful failure". cf. C.B. Purdom: Harley Granville-Barker (Rockliff, 1955.).
drama and in introducing him to actors sympathetic to them. Mean-while he read, thought and matured by himself and he found the ordinary type of popular play distasteful and the English Theatre wretchedly inadequate in its presentation of social themes. But he had to wait until 1899 for the two events which marked him out as a youngman with a future of some promise in the theatre. The weather Hen, which he had written in collaboration with Berte Thomas, an older actor whom he first met in Sarah Thorne's Company, received a matinee performance at Terry's Theatre on 29th June and, in consequence, was transferred to the Evening Bill; then in November of the same year, he played Richard II in a production by William Poel. This took place in the lecture room at Barlington house where there was no warmth of a theatre atmosphere. A.B. Walk-ley, the critic of The Times saw him and praised "the pathos that seemed to touch every section of his rather difficult audience".

The Weather Hen was the only one of five plays that Barker and Thomas worked on together, ever to be produced. The first play to be written A comedy of Fools was destroyed and over the last, a dramatisation of Henry Esmond, the partnership broke up. No manuscript of Henry Esmond finished or unfinished, is known. The text of two of the plays are now in the British Museum, the third at the Lord Chamberlain's office; and they afford most valuable evidence of Barker's aims as a dramatist and the nature of the technique that he evolved and the growth of his mind(1).

The foundations of a number of valued friendships were laid in this period. With Mrs. Patrick Compbell's company Barker acted in a short run of Gilbert Murray's melodrama, Carlyon and Sahib and met the author again when, with William Archer he attended the first meeting of a committee to discuss the plan of establishing a National Theatre. Archer himself, the influential theatre-critic and translator and champion of Ibsen, was much struck by the promise of The Weather Hen and became a kindly mentor to the young

1. The source of these pieces of information is C.B. Purdom's Harley Granville-Barker.
actor-dramatist from about this time. In 1900, Barker's performance as Robert in *The Coming of Peace*, a translation of Hauptmann's *Friend enstfest* by Janet Achurch and O.E. Wheeler, brought him a very favourable notice from J.T. Grein the founder of the Independent Theatre; and helped confirm his standing among the reformers of the English Theatre. The same year 1900, he entered the Council of management of the recently founded Stage Society, producing for it a number of plays, acting in others. In July, he acted in Bernard Shaw's *Candida*. The two men had met before this; (1) but it was now that a close association began that was to last until Barker's second marriage, which caused a distance between them, lamented by Shaw to the time of his death.

Such men as Murray, Archer and Shaw made a formidable band and led to further and varied contacts. All, even Murray, an absurdly young professor, were considerably senior to Barker; he sat informally at the feet of them all and learned from them with great rapidity. In an age of self-education, it is understandable that he was never ready to condemn the practice that took children from school and placed them in the theatre at an early age. A voracious reader, even in his days at Margate he was certainly directed to fresh interests and guided in his tastes, to some extent, through these associations. To Archer and Wheeler he certainly owed an extension of his awareness of what was happening in European drama; to Murray, an introduction to Greek drama and a more informed interest in Greek philosophy; to Shaw, among many incalculables, an extension of his acquaintance with political philosophy, a heightened sense of the contemporary demand for social justice, and the encouragement of a lively interest in music, especially in the Wagnerian music-drama. All this was valuable equipment for a budding dramatist who already had the advantage of direct knowledge of the stage and the actor's business.

1. When Barker took part in the first production of *Caesar and Cleopatra* by Mrs. Patrick Campbell's Company at Newcastle on-Tyne, in 1899.
At the same time Barker did not remain aloof from the great social changes that took place around him. He was keenly interested in prominent contemporary social problems such as marriage conventions, the inheritance of tainted money, sex and the position of women. He joined the Fabian Society and served on its Executive from 1907 to 1912, though his attendance at meetings became increasingly irregular. His own lectures to fellow members were usually on some aspect of theatre, but he chaired other meetings, more specifically political. Through his acquaintance with the Webbs, he was introduced to Statesmen and to the recognised intelligentsia, people of the calibre of Sir Oliver Lodge and Bertrand Russell. He had many opportunities to acquire insight into the forces at work in different spheres — social, economic, political. His plays are powerful expressions of his sharp reaction to social questions and in the choice of subjects he shows himself essentially a man of the age viewing with pain the wrongs and injustices of various social institutions.

Barker's first independent play, *The Marrying of Ann Leete* deals with the theme of the movement of classes. The play was written in 1899 and produced by the author for the Stage Society on January 26, 1902, when Barker was twenty-four. That was a private performance limited to members. The play never had a London run; the text was not published until 1907 and then it was five times reprinted within five years.

The plot is simple and conventional enough. Carnaby Leete, an able but turn-coat politician, is approaching a crisis in his career. With a hope of office too distantly in view, he has left the Whigs and is negotiating an alliance with the Tories. He regards the personal lives of his three children, Sarah, George and Ann, as legitimately at the service of his ambitions. Sarah's
marriage to Sir Charles Cottesham cemented an earlier deal with the Whigs; George has disappointed his father's expectations by marrying a farmer's daughter; Ann remains and Carnaby looks to advance his cause with the Tories by marrying her to Lord John Carp. By the end of Act-II Lord John asks Ann to marry him. However, the girl then becomes the observer of her brother and sister, as crises arise in their respective marriages: Charles Cottesham's proposal for a legal separation from his wife, and the birth of twins to George's wife Dolly. Ann's observation is part of her fast travelling experience and it precipitates crisis, an act of rebellion, which implies a social revolution, for she asks the gardener, John Abud, to marry her. The unconventional alliance is celebrated. Ann leaves her home to share her husband's cottage and humble ways of life.

Barker's play reminds one of Shaw's novel Cashel Byron's Profession in which a girl of upper class society marries a Pugilist who, she thinks would make a better husband and father than the gentlemen of her class. A similar motive works in Ann Leete who, inspite of her aristocratic breeding selects as her life-partner, a poor gardener employed in her father's establishment. A similarity of theme between Ann Leete and Strindberg's play Miss Julie again, is suggestive of direct relationship. Julie also is an aristocratic young woman who stoops to love a servant, and both dramatists identify the unconventional alliance that they present with the theme of the movement of classes. Strindberg's is a tense drama strengthened by contrasts between the servants and their mistress, between upper and lower class viewpoints. Miss Julie sadistically cuts her upper-class fiance with her whip and loses him when he rebels. Her libido overwhelming her repugnance, she dances with the menservants and throws herself into the arms of her father's lackey. She almost runs away with him in order to avoid the inevitable scandal; but her repugnance prevailing again she goes to kill herself. In Barker's play, the heroine arrives at the
decision to marry the gardener after much careful thought and is content to accept the life of toil and care she has chosen for herself. The end of the two plays show the difference of attitude of the two writers. Whereas Strindberg's heroine lacked the courage as well as the temperament to reduce herself to a member of the socially inferior class by breaking away from the aristocracy, Barker's heroine is made of sterner stuff and possessed with enough liberality and humanity to cross the barrier of classes. Ann differs fundamentally from Julia in that her decision of marriage is the outcome of a particular philosophy of life evolved through experience of life while Julia's courtship with the servant is a reflection of her temporary mental aberrations.

Ann's marriage is considered by some critics as improbable and unnatural (1). This was certainly the result of an attempt to make the play fit completely into a familiar dramatic category. In fact, the play is an outcome of a particular attitude of its author. It embodies the most significant phenomenon of the early twentieth century e.g. obliteration of class-cleavage through the institution of marriage. The change of Ann's mind is effected in the most convincing way through a series of incidents.

The theme of Ann's marriage is introduced in the first Act. Carnaby Leete has a mind to exploit the marriage of his youngest daughter for serving some political end. Lord John Carp, the son of a Duke and an honourable guest in his house picks up intimacy with Ann and advances as far as to kiss her. But no mutual attachment has yet developed between the two. Asked by her father to speak out her mind about Lord John, Ann says,

Ann. I suppose I love him.
Lord John. I hope not.
Ann. I suppose I love you.
Carnaby. No........no........no........no........no........no........no........no.

Again when Carnaby tries to guage the sentiments of Lord John he hears almost a blunt refusal.

1. Archibald Henderson, European Dramatists, p. 389;
   "...... This eugenic but unnatural solution."
Carnaby. Do you care for my daughter?
Lord John. I could .... at a pinch.

The issue of Ann's marriage is complicated in Act-II. In the presence of Ann, George and Sarah discuss the fate of their father. While Sarah is sympathetic to the cause of her old father, George is more interested in the happiness and well-being of his sister Ann.

Sarah. It would have been most advantageous for us to have formed an alliance with Lord John Carp who stood here for his father and his father's party........ now in opposition.
George. Look upon yourself - not too seriously - Ann as the instrument of political destiny.

These discussions affect Ann's mind and gradually make her conscious of her position. She is beginning to understand things she remained careless of so long. She feels uncomfortable in her present state of a maid's life and hopes to get over the crisis through marriage. When she says, "a woman's profession is marriage", George adds, "Ann, you marry - when you marry - to please yourself".

Several incidents now take place one after another to cause enlightenment of the heroine. The gardener John Abud comes to enquire about Mrs. George Leete, and the conversation now centres on the relation between George and his wife. George is full of love and affection for his wife who, being a farmer's daughter, is much beneath him in social rank. The following conversation between George and Sarah throws light on this:

George. My wayside flower!
Sarah. Why pick it?
George. Sarah, I love my wife.
Sarah. That's easily said.
George. She should be here.
Sarah. George, you married to please yourself.
George. By custom her rank is my own.

Sarah does not approve of the marriage of her brother since it went against the desire of her father and the bride belonged to the lower class. She is not ready to confer upon her the status and
rank of the aristocratic Leetes of Markswayde. But George is free from the narrow bounds of class-distinction and has the liberal attitude to accept the inevitable truth of the equality between man and man. The snobbery of the aristocratic society that ignores human passions of love, sympathy and fellow-feeling and cares only for wealth and rank does not attract the rationalist humanitarian George. The marriage between George and Dolly is a marriage of mutual love and liking whereas the marriage between Sarah and Sir Charles Cottesham proves disastrous to the woman because it was a marriage of convenience. Sir Charles sends his lawyer Mr. Tetgeen to obtain consent of Lady Cottesham (Sarah) for divorce. Sir Charles proposes that on acceptance of the terms of his agreement Lady Cottesham shall get a sum of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum besides a house and regular supply of coal, milk, butter and eggs. The proposal solicits from Sarah the cynical remark:

I could blow it over....... but I won't perhaps. I must smile at my husband's consideration in suppressing even to you..... the man's name. Butter and eggs....... and milk. I should grow fat.

Denied the bliss of conjugal life, she is to be satisfied with feeding herself properly. Nothing could be more unhappy for the poor woman. A marriage of convenience not based on mutual love and understanding is likely to end in unhappiness. To Ann, this is an experience enough to help her decide upon her own marriage.

But things do not go easy and Ann faces a problem when Lord John comes back to woo her and like an infatuated lover implores her to marry him. But Ann's mind travelled a long distance from where it stood at dawn when she allowed Lord John to kiss her. Instead of passive surrender to the wishes of somebody Ann is now bold enough to argue the pros and cons of the affair.

Ann. Why do you want to marry me?
Lord John. I love you.
Ann. Out of place.
Lord John. I love you.
What if Papa were to die?
I want you.
I'm nothing..... I'm nobody..... I'm part of my family.
I want you.
Won't you please forget last night?
I want you. Look straight at me.
(She looks and stays fascinated.)
If I say now that I love you—
I know it.
And love me?
I suppose so.
Make sure.
But I hate you too........ I know that.

The extract clearly reveals the wavering of a mind that is developing. It shows a mind torn by two opposing ideals — one old and outworn, the other yet to take a definite shape. What Ann has already seen and known around her is enough to open her eyes to the hypocrisy of polite society. So she says, "I am growing up. (Then with a sudden tremor.) Sally, don't let me be forced to marry". She now earnestly wishes to run away from the garden and over the hills; for, she thinks "there is something on the other side of the hills". This desire is further strengthened by what Ann now learns about the gardener Abud. Two years ago, this man courted Dolly (now Mrs. George Leete), the daughter of a farmer. But since he was beneath her "Farmer Crowe wouldn't risk his daughter being unhappy". This motive behind this courtship vis-a-vis Abud's attitude to life is clearly stated in the following extract:

Was it ambition that you courted her?
I thought to start housekeeping.
Did you aspire to rise socially?
I wanted a wife to keep house, Sir.
Are you content?
I think so, Sir.
With your humble position?
I'm a gardener, and there'll always be gardens.
Frustrated affections..... I beg your pardon.....
To have been crossed in love should make you bitter and ambitious.
My father was a gardener and my son will be a gardener if he's no worse man than I and no better.

................................
Ann who had been silently listening to the conversation between her brother and the gardener, feels interested in the simple but contented life of a gardener. Left with the gardener alone after the departure of George, Ann picks up a discussion with him. The full discussion has to be quoted for a clear understanding of Ann's motive.

    (He comes back and stands before her too.)
Ann. I am very sorry for you.
Abud. I am very much obligated to you, Miss.
Ann. Both these sayings are meaningless. Say something true about yourself.
Abud. I am not sorry for myself.
Ann. I won't tell. It's very clear you ought to be in a despairing state. Don't stand in the sun with your hat off.
Abud. (putting on his hat), Thank you, Miss.
Ann. Have you nearly finished the rose trees?
Abud. I must work till late this evening.
Ann. Weren't you ambitious for Dolly's sake?
Abud. She thought me good enough.
Ann. I'd have married her.
Abud. She was ambitious for me.
Ann. And are you frightened of the big world?
Abud. Fine things dazzle me sometimes.
Ann. But gardening is all that you are fit for?
Abud. I'm afraid so, Miss.
Ann. But it's great to be a gardener.... to sow seeds and to watch flowers grow and to cut away dead things.
Abud. Yes, Miss.
Ann. And you're in the fresh air all day.
Abud. That's very healthy.
Ann. Are you very poor?
Abud. I get my meals in the house.
Ann. Rough clothes last a long time.
Abud. I've saved money.
Ann. Where do you sleep?
Abud. At Mrs. Hart's .... at a cottage.... it's a mile off.
Ann. And you want no more than food and clothes and a bed and you earn all that with your hands.
Abud. The less a man wants, Miss, the better.
Ann. But you mean to marry?
Abud. Yes.... I've saved money.
Ann. Whom will you marry? Would you rather not say?
Perhaps you don't know yet?
Abud. It's all luck what sort of a maid a man gets fond of. It won't be a widow.

The extract is long enough. But it holds a significant place in the action of the play. There are three important statements by Ann. "Don't stand in the sun with your hat off" is the utterance of a heart, soft and tender enough to feel sympathy for one in trouble. It comes out of a sense of showing respect even to a servant. Ann does not make a distinction between herself and a commoner. Secondly, "It's great to be a gardener" is Ann's appreciation of and respect for the profession of a toiling man. The idle parasitic life led by people of her class has evidently no charm for Ann who looks forward to the simple joys of the activities of a gardener. A life with no more wants than food and clothes and a bed, all earned with one's own hands seems preferable to Ann. Thirdly, Ann's question to Abud, "whom will you marry? .... Perhaps you don't know yet?" betrays the leaning of her mind. The issue of Ann's marriage is henceforth almost a settled matter. The desire remains to be communicated and the marriage to be formally celebrated.

All these happen shortly after midday. At four in the morning of the same day Ann was an innocent girl ignorant of the ways of the world. By the end of the day her mind matures enabling her to think out what is best for her. She becomes bold and strong to propose the gardener:

Ann. John Abud..... you mean to marry. When you marry will you marry me?
(A blank silence into which breaks Carnaby's sick voice)
Carnaby. Take me indore. I heard you ask the gardener to marry you.
Ann. I asked him.
(....................)
Ann. If we two were alone here in this garden and everyone else in the world were dead.... what would you answer?
Abud. (Still amazed) Why........... yes.
Carnaby. Then that's settled.

With Ann's proposal of marriage and its acceptance by the gardener the action reaches its climax. This happens naturally and logically out of the course of events.

The marriage is celebrated most unceremoniously amidst sneers and sobs of the Leetes of Markswyade. Sir George Leete and Lady Leete, the old parents of Carnaby Leete express in unequivocal terms their disapproval of a marriage between a high-born lady and a servant. They stick to their old sense of values and still maintain the distinction between classes. Carnaby Leete, a frustrated man, simply says 'I can do without you'. He passively accepts the incident as something inevitable and interprets it as indicative of the emergence of a new order. "From the meeting of extremes new ideas spring........ new life". The principle of continuity is as inherent in Barker's vision of human life as is the principle of man's social existence. So now Ann takes up and continues the search Carnaby has left and turns his destructive criticism of old into a positive assertion of the new. When she is content to live, he can be content to die. Ann's ten-mile trudge away from Markswyade, in the pouring rain, appears as both a journey from the Waste Land and an expulsion from Paradise into the world of toil and mortality.

Barker had already tried to communicate the experience of the mind's awakening and progress to maturity through the character of Griselda in Our Visitor. He succeeds more completely now. "Wisdom cometh with sorrow, O my sister", was George's prophetic comment, and the mood of the scene at the cottage conveys directly the sense of loss and gain inextricably intermingled, as the greedy desire for happiness, such as life cannot give, yields to acceptance of the burden of knowledge; a fruit paid for in terms of life. It is beauty, not prettiness, that this last scene offers: a beauty touched with the poignancy of mortality.
Acceptance, content, are as strong elements as sadness in the unusual mixed mood. In the bare cleanliness of the place, Abud and Ann are alone, strange to each other and subdued by the strangeness; the chill of winter is in the trembling of Abud's hand and in Ann's shrinking from his kiss. The key is turned in the lock; there is no going back; the escape over the hills has ended in this narrow cell; prison, cloister, grave, the narrow future to which they are now committed. The light of a single candle hardly disperses the shadows. This is no occasion for vivid emotion; they are in the place of reflection, quiescent. 'God help us both', says Abud. They sit hand-in-hand. 'I'll do my part', says Ann, 'something will come of it'. This seems the negation of romantic feeling. Yet it implies a metaphysical spaciousness to counterbalance the apparent bondage to stern circumstances. It is a resolution, not a solution, that the end of the play offers: an opening out of life to undefined possibilities.

Progressive thought in the eighteen-nineties, looked to the 'new woman' to determine the new direction that civilisation was to take. When Ann invites her new husband to sit down and then delivers herself of the meaning that this marriage has for her, we catch an allusion to another new woman, Ibsen's Nora Helmer. Yet Barker seems deliberately to have reversed the last scene of A Doll's House: Ann's marriage is beginning, not ending; she accepts the door locked upon her; and she has chosen the traditional womanly part of sacrifice and patience. Only the intelligence and responsibility of the choosing are not traditional. The new womanhood with which Barker is concerned is evidently different from what most of his contemporaries understood by the phrase. His heroine anticipates Shaw's Ann Whitefield of Man and Superman, first published in 1903 by firmly deciding on the man whom she means to marry and marching him to the altar. In her union with Abud, who is innocence — not the innocence of ignorance, from which she has emerged, but that of a profound and clear-sighted integrity, which her choice implies— honour is restored to the woman and
her new world, generating the power to bring into being a new order of life governed by the principles of social justice.

The major part of the play's statement is made more by the shifting of mood than explicitly. Here is a kinship to Chekhov’s art; and The Cherry Orchard in particular, is most interestingly close to this play in theme and certain aspects of method and symbolism. It is an instance of one of those remotely conceived correspondences that accidents of time so strangely bring forth.

Maeterlinck, from whom the two dramatists, Barker and Chekhov certainly learnt, was an artistic link; the similar awareness shown by the Englishman and the Russian testified to their participation in a culture that spread across Europe at the time: England and Russia in transition had both received the prophecies of Marx and Tolstoy.

The garden of Markswayde and the cherry orchard alike represent the beauty of an aristocratic culture, a costly luxury now in decline. The desire for escape and the fear of exile, hope and despair have warring possession of the characters in both plays. Like the sale of the cherry orchard Carnaby Leete's declaration "Markswayde is to let" signifies the close of an era; and in both plays the young depart in search of new life, yet uncertain of finding it, or of the form it will take. The dance in Chekhov's play has its counterpart in the wedding reception at Markswayde, the sense of dissolution and the frenzy of approaching death hovering about each; the parasites and the new country bourgeois are there in each, ready to dismember the spoil. Both plays open in the pregnant atmosphere of the darkness just before dawn, the extinguished candle serving as an accessory visual symbol. The ambivalent response of Carnaby in the one play, and Lopaskin, in the other, mirror the double value of the climax as end and beginning.

The dialogue of The marrying of Ann Leete amply illustrates Barker's originality. Theories of dramatic dialogue were in the air, at the end of the nineteenth century. A passage in Strindberg's
Preface to Miss Julie (itself reflecting the theories of Zola) is so apposite as to make one wonder if Barker had read that manifesto of naturalism:

I have avoided the symmetrical and mathematical construction of the French dialogue, and have instead permitted the minds to work irregularly, as they do in reality, where during conversation, the cogs of one mind seem more or less haphazardly to engage those of another, and where no topic is fully exhausted. Naturally enough, therefore, the dialogue strays a good deal as, in the opening scenes, it acquires a material that later on is worked over, picked up again, repeated, expounded, and built up like the theme in a musical composition. (1)

It could be said of the dialogue of The Marrying of Ann Leete that 'the cogs of one mind seem more or less haphazardly to engage those of another'. The lines of Barker's text stray about, yet present a musical character in their verbal repetitions. The words dance about, interweave from speech, linking into a pattern lines that seem in isolation abrupt and staccato. The single speech is not a self-sufficient unit; instead, the dialogue falls into paragraphs; and the impression of the characters as moving within a group overrides any sense of their separate individuality. An example taken at random from Act I will serve our purpose:

Lord John. I apologise.  
Ann. Why is it so dark?  
Lord John. Can you hear what I'm saying?  
Ann. Yes.  
Lord John. I apologise for having kissed you....... almost unintentionally.  
Ann. Thank you. Mind the steps down.  
Lord John. I hope I'm sober, but the air.........  
Ann. Shall we sit for a minute? There are several seats to sit on somewhere.  
Lord John. This is a very dark garden.  
(There is a slight pause.)

The first line 'I apologise', is the equivalent of the first statement of a subject in a musical composition. It is repeated in

1. Translated by C.D. Locock, in August Strindberg, Lucky Peter's Travels and other Plays; PP. 177-78.
extended form: "I apologise for having kissed you.....". The second voice introduces another subject, which the first voice repeats in variant form, at the close of the short passage: "Why is it so dark?" — 'This is a very dark garden'. The evasive replies, or evasive counter-questions, are like slight movements away from the centre, but held always within its orbit.

The reduction of the dialogue to a succession of brief, fragmentary utterances in which certain words and phrases recur insistently, has the effect of giving to the reiterated words a greater emotional resonance than they would have in a context of greater explicitness. In this respect, the dialogue of Ann Leete is reminiscent of Maeterlinck's echoing lines and similarly constitutes a delicate and subtle notation of the course of unexpressed feeling. Simple monosyllables emerge as key words and echo in the mind in isolation, out of any syntactical context: 'dark', 'light', 'ghost', 'rose', 'air', 'rain', 'world', are chief among them. Out of the imprecise and very general response that they arouse in the hearer's consciousness, something that we may call the mood of the play proceeds. This symbolist technique prepares the way for the action to pass, at the play's climax almost completely beyond credible actuality and to take on a primarily symbolic identity.

- III -

Barker's second independent play The Voysey Inheritance written between 1903 and 1905 and produced by himself at the Court Theatre in November of the later year, offer a satirical indictment of Capitalism from the socialist viewpoint, the Voysey family serving to represent bourgeois society. The challenge which the hero faces is similar to that offered to Barbara Undershaft and Cusins in Major Barbara (1): the philosopher is called on to emerge out of his private idealism and pursuit of private virtue, 

1. The Voysey Inheritance was first performed on 7 Nov. 1905, while Shaw was finishing Major Barbara.
in order to accept responsibility for public justice and power over the material world. The play was enthusiastically received on its first performance and in the next sixty years was six times revived in various London theatres with various lengths of run. "Let there be nothing but praise", wrote Max Beerbohm, Shaw's successor as dramatic critic of The Saturday Review. No other play of Barker's has had such critical acclaim and such a popular appeal.

As the play opens we meet old Mr. Voysey, the head of a highly-respected firm of family solicitors. Mr. Voysey is a strong and masterful man; he is also a kind, generous and cheerful one, and a devoted husband and father. But Mr. Voysey is a scoundrel who for years has been using for his own purpose money entrusted to him by his clients. As a matter of fact, the frauds had been started by Mr. Voysey's father more than thirty years ago - that was the beginning of the inheritance that his father had left him. At first he had thrown himself into the task of getting the business back to an honest basis, but in the process he had acquired a taste for the skilful manipulation of money, and had found that he had a genius for it. He has as a result been able to live luxuriously and provide for his family by settling a considerable fortune on each of them. Scruples of conscience do not trouble him at all. But since he is getting old, he wishes to pass on the 'inheritance'. He considers none of his sons excepting Edward who is his partner, fit for the task. And yet Edward lacks the buccaneering spirit of his father. He is a dry, moral, rather self-righteous fellow with, as Mr. Voysey says, "his poetry and sociology and agnosticism and ethics of this and ethics of that". Edward is told the secret, and the theme of the play is based on Edward's horror at the disclosures and the inward struggle that tears him. Should he take the honest course and desert his father or should he desert his principles and become an accessory to fraud? Edward Voysey is tempted to let his father's firm go bankrupt, and so extricate himself from the unpleasant life in which he has become involved. No
retrospective blame could be laid on him. Technically, as a member of the firm, he would be responsible. But he could show that since his entry into the firm there had been no fresh irregularities. On the other hand, if he continued the business, a smash would certainly come sooner or later, and he would be sent to penal servitude. Why should he court imprisonment for doing a thing from which he revolted? There was one highly chivalrous reason. He might, if the smash did not come too soon, gradually rescue the money of the humbler investors. He determines that to this offense he will sacrifice himself.

Several possible sources can be traced that seem to have lent substance to the play. The young dramatist had some knowledge of a perfectly honest solicitors family very like the Voysey's, and even the matrimonial affairs of the artist son. Indeed, two of the sons of that family, George Foss (Hugh) and Charles Fulton (Booth) impersonated themselves in the original production. It is very likely that Ibsen's Pillars of Society furnished a hint for one aspect of the situation. Consul Bernick, the most respected and apparently soundest of the 'pillars' of his community, is discovered to have founded his success and reputation upon a fraud, practised in order to save the family business; Voysey, the prosperous solicitor, has similarly been 'living on a lie', and his self-justification resembles Bernick's in various details. The second probable source is more fully suggestive of the central dramatic conflict on which The Voysey Inheritance turns and may have made a greater contribution to the complex argument. This is Book I of Plato's Republic.

Socrates questions Cephalus upon the origin of his riches, whether inheritance or present acquisition, and receives the reply:

In the art of making money I have been midway between my father and my grandfather; for my grandfather.... doubled and trebled the value of his patrimony, that which he inherited being much what I possess now; but my father Lysanias reduced the property below what it
Socrates is concerned to discover what gives money its value to the possessor and observes that 'the makers of fortunes have a second love of money as a creation of their own, resembling the affection of authors for their own poems, or of parents for their children'. The enquiry into the nature of justice is pursued through consideration of the responsibility given to those who administer the property of others; for Polemarchus grants that the just man is to be preferred when one wishes to place money in trust and keep it safe. 'That is to say', counters Socrates, 'justice is useful when the money which it supervises is useless'. The definition of justice as consisting in 'speaking the truth and paying your debts' has already been propounded and laid aside. A little later Socrates introduces the alternative paradoxes of apparent honesty, which may be false, or genuine honesty, which may not seem so. These correspond to the opposition between the characters of Voysey and his son, Edward, which is central to Barker's dramatic structure; and Edward's discovery of the nature of justice is, in fact, the dramatist's ultimate theme.

Again Voysey's attitude to his business, including the illegal part of it, is the sign of a psychology that Ruskin mentions in his section on "Work" of The Crown of Wild Olive:

.... all healthy-minded people like making money—ought to like it, and to enjoy the sensation of winning it: but the main object of their life is not money; it is something better than money.

This same section has previously defined 'play', going on to declare: 'The first of all English games is the making of money..... no one who engages heartily in that games ever knows why'. References to the playing of games is scattered through the text of The Voysey Inheritance though they seem at first less artistically deliberate than in The Marrying of Ann Leete and usually arise with perfect
naturalness from the realistic context; there is a much frequented billiard-room in the Voysey family house; the room, its table and the cues often enter into the characters' conversation. The dramatist's insistence on these things gains a precise significance if related to Ruskin's comparison of the city to "a huge billiard-table without the cloth, and with pockets as deep as the bottomless pit; but mainly a billiard-table after all".

English socialism was still very conscious, in 1905, of its debt to Ruskinian economics, and Barker was doubtless exploiting the fact, in order to convert a chain of literal references into an allusive imagery. Set against this background, his use of the term, 'pockets', in this play, seems already to anticipate an association—and antithesis—with the symbol of the womb, which becomes habitual in Barker's later work. It may well have had its origin in Ruskin's chief indictment of capitalism; that it filled the moneybags and frustrated the womb of creative labour.

There is plenty of drama in the conflict of ideas and wills in this play. In the first Act, the conflict between Edward and his father is confused and fluctuating, never whole-hearted. An engaging situation is introduced which promises amusing developments: the unscrupulous solicitor Mr. Voysey decides to explain to his morally upright and idealistic son the nature of the business in which he is a partner and the nature of the inheritance that is to come to him. This makes a neat parable of Capitalism as it is viewed with horror by the pure-minded doctrinaire socialist. Edward's conviction, "It's not right," is not only that of the gentle Fabian, however; Like Vivie Warren before him, he is the innocent embodiment of the deluded moral consciousness of respectable society that does not recognise the real principles on which its prosperity is based. Edward's lesson is to be that the economics of Capitalism are the economics of gambling and that the crimes of fraud and theft, in this society, are only extensions of the most respected legitimate activities of money-making with immense con-
fidence and pride in his achievement, Voysey proceeds to open his son's eyes and seeks his approval and co-operation.

The narrative plot is held up in Act-II to offer us a glimpse into the Voysey family. The restless movement of characters off and on, is reminiscent of the wedding scene in *Ann Leete* and the dialogue is so arranged as to give to the themes introduced in Act-I a larger frame of reference. Power, honour, morality and religion, art, the acquisitive instinct, marriage, the dependence and independence of women, impulses and principles, Oliver Cromwell and gardening—all are brought in. The grown up children squabble and have to be controlled as if still in the nursery; 'the children's tea-fight' which the Vicar is to talk over with Mrs. Voysey, is a comic comment on the scene. As a direct portrayal of life in a prosperous Edwardian middle-class home, Act-II of *The Voysey Inheritance* is remarkably full and accurate; the political satire has been firmly related to a vivid and substantial social context. The conflict becomes more tense when Edward says, "Would you mind, Sir, dropping with me for the future all these protestations about putting the firm's affairs straight..... about your anxieties and sacrifices ? I see now ....... a cleverer man than I could have seen it yesterday..... that for sometime, ever since, I suppose, you recovered from the first shock and got used to the double dealing, this hasn't been your object at all". At the end of the Act, Barker returns to the subject of Voysey's fraud, first obliquely in an ominous conversation between him and his old friend George Booth, then directly, when Edward announces his decision to stay with the firm.

In Act-III we see the Voyseys tested by a tragic crisis. It is a contrast to the preceding Act in its physically static quality, the dialogue being conducted round a table. Edward breaks to the mourning family the news of its founder's nefariousness. He points out that it is clearly the duty of the various children, married and unmarried, to surrender their legacies. This notion,
somehow, does not appeal to the Voyseys; and their attempts to reconcile their distaste for it with the honesty on which they pride themselves, their bewildered doubts as to how to reconcile their virtuous indignation against their father with a decorous attitude towards the deceased whom they have been so sincerely mourning, and all the other elements of doubt that are battling in their souls and making them dimly ridiculous even to themselves, suffice to furnish the finest scene of grim ironic comedy in modern English drama. Both in conception and in execution, the scene is the work of a master.

In Act-IV, the scene is laid once more in the Solicitor's office. Edward's manner, as he arrives in the morning, and his clerk's manner to him are a melancholy, devitalised reproduction of the scene in his father's day. The three duologues into which the Act may be analysed confront Edward with three successive demands: for three hundred pounds, Peacey's annual hush-money; then in anti-climax, for 'five bob', so that Hugh may buy himself some lunch (1); and finally George Booth's demand for all his securities, which he has decided to withdraw from the firm. The crash, it seems, has come: the long-postponed climax of the action.

Yet it is the episode with Hugh that marks the thematic climax of the play. He is the most vehement critic of society numbered among the characters, and his completest indictment of it comes in this Act, flowing out in comic exaggeration that is an expression of vitality and carries the scene along at a much more rapid tempo than the hand cut-and-thrust of the preceding and following duologues allows. This episode was the most substantially revised of the whole drama, in 1934 (2) and the re-writing has the effect of making the contrast sharper, as well as lightening the tone of the diatribe:

1. This is the 1934 Version; originally his demand was for a machine-gun.
2. The revision was undertaken for Harcourt William's production at Sadler's Wells, in which Barker had a considerable hand.
Hugh. I want five bob. I left home without a penny. I've walked.
Edward. From highgate?
Hugh. Yes... by Hornsey and Highbury and Hackney and Hoxton. And I must have some lunch.
Edward. I can manage five bob......
(He puts them on the table)
Hugh. And Upper Holloway and Lower Holloway...... and Pentonville..... and Clerkenwell.....
Edward. I don't know any of them.
Hugh. Nobody does.... except the million people who live there. But that's London. And I also, my dear Edward, want it destroyed.
Edward. We are warned that.... under certain circumstances it may be (....). And what about the people who live there?
Hugh. Why should they live there? ..... or anywhere?
Edward. Well, they've their work to do....... most of them.
Hugh. Why should they live at all?
Incidentally.... much as I love your society....... so have I mine. And this morning I'm rather busy.
Hugh. Aha! There's the fatal word. We don't work, Edward, not one in a thousand of us. Work is certain. Is that what an outworn civilisation requires of us? Obviously not. It asks us to keep busy...... and forget that to all these means there is no creative end at all. We've to keep our accounts straight...... as you have to now...... to keep the street clean....... and ourselves clean......

And so it goes on, offering a contrast of characters by no means unimportant in the drama at this point and focusing the central question of ends and means. 'Five bob' is honesty's modest yield.

With Act-V the play returns to the Voysey home at Chis- lehurst. George Booth arrives to tell Edward of his decision not to prosecute and to offer an alternative that the youngman greets with bitter derision. The entry of Honor with a basket of christ- mas gifts— for this is Christmas Eve— frightens the old man away, and it seems as though the outer action, never very effici­ently developed, were now slowing to a complete stop. George Booth does not appear again before the play ends and the bankruptcy, public exposure, trial, imprisonment, which seemed to threaten in Act-I, in Act-III and at the end of Act-IV, are no nearer—
and no further away-, when the last Act is complete.

The play is essentially a discussion of ideas which stimulate a new and critical look at Society, and a study of moral problems facing a principal character. The power of money is the broader theme of the play. Despite the arguments put forward in the play, there could surely be no real doubt in Barker's mind about the immorality of speculating with a client's Capital, however successfully. What is genuinely in question is the right course for Edward to pursue. If he 'comes clean' he will go to prison and everybody will lose money; if he keeps quiet and carries on, he can in time, do justice to some clients, but he may be tempted, as his father was, to help himself. But there emerges a paradox: in our materialist society the successful swindler may inspire more confidence than the honest plodder. George Booth liked and trusted the father but dislikes and distrusts the son. Mr. Voysey's success depended on his display of opulence. He says to Edward:

What has carried me to victory? The confidence of my clients. What has earned me that confidence? A decent life, my integrity, my brains? No—my reputation for wealth—that, and nothing else. Business nowadays is run on the lines of the confidence trick.

This is an astringent comment on the society of Granville-Barker's day—and our own. Mr. Voysey goes on to explain that to have confidence in himself he needed wealth.

My whole public and private life has tended to that. All my surroundings—you and your brothers and sisters that I have brought into, and up, and put into the world so worthily.... you in your turn inspire confidence.

All the evidence of opulence in the Voysey household is relevant to the confidence trick. It also shows how money takes a grip on their lives—a concern for possessions in big things and small. Alice, for example, chooses a cheque for a wedding present ('I think a cheque will give most scope for your generosity') in addition to an allowance of £300 a year; while Booth fusses round
insisting on the right cigars, the Ramon Allones. George Booth is like the Voyseys in his obsession with money, but he has none of their energy and ability. He utters a sort of self-justifying creed about his aim in life and his having done nothing he need regret.

I have not needed to take the bread out of other men's mouths by working. . . . . I have tried to live the life of an English gentleman. . . . and I consider there is no higher. . . . at any rate no more practical ideal.

Hugh, the failed artist is the only one who wants to be free from the corrupting power of money. 'Don't expect me', he exclaims, 'to pay homage to the voysey family feelings. If we must have a hollow traced to kow-tow before, there are many less brassy ones'. But it is not merely the family that he is attacking. It is the upper middle class and its values:

Give a man an income and he passes half his time thinking what can or cannot afford. The money has been a curse to me. How could it belong to me? I didn't create it— or even earn it.

If only he can get free of money he may be able to paint a genuine picture, instead of painting of other paintings. The corrupting power of money enervates the middle class.

We and our like have ceased to exist at all. . . . I found out. . . . when I tried to express myself in art. . . . that there was nothing to express, except a few habits, and tags of other people's thoughts and feelings. There is no Me, that's what's the matter.

Without money he will have to make something of himself. 'Life's a great fun', he says, 'if only you could live it. I mean to live it'.

Barker's art of characterization is naturalistic to suit the theme. The voyseys are ordinary upper-middle-class people, with nothing heroic or larger-than-life about them. Mr. Voysey is a scoundrel, but nobody has suspected it. He is quite likeable, even admirable, for he has charm, ability and force of personality.
It is an interesting paradox—but quite credible—that according to Peacy he was a disagreeable man when he was 'going straight', but once launched on his career of fraud he was 'pleasant and generous to everybody'. His children are differentiated in some detail, to make a genuine family. Trenchard is a cold lawyer who has broken away from his father: Hugh's revulsion from the family is totally different, an artist's reaction against its sterile materialism. Booth is the nearest to a type, the conventional army major, conservative, pompous and obtuse. Everytime he declares that he is not a conceited man or variants of this, he evokes laughter, and an audience enjoys seeing him deflated; but he should not be treated as a caricature, even when he talks of the family and its honour at the very time when its fraudulent basis has been exposed. Edward is in danger of being thought a prig at first, because he is serious-minded and deeply concerned with his duty. The line between rectitude and priggishness is ill-defined, and it is a little hard on Edward to call him a prig because he is shocked by dishonesty. He slightly repels us at first by appearing rather a weakling. Face to face with grim problems, however, he develops great strength and a dry sense of humour. Working out his own sense of right and wrong has made a bigger man of him, as strong a man as his father, and a better one.

The Voysey women tend to accept the submissive role allotted to wives. Mrs. Voysey has been overshadowed by her dominating husband, and takes refuge in reading intellectual journals while she leaves discussion of business to males. Honor is fully occupied trying to please everybody, allowing herself to be bullied by Booth, who has reduced his wife also to subservience. Hugh's wife is different, because she has been brought up to earn money for herself, and earning brings independence. She has the spirit to answer Booth's boomings with mockery which he is not intelligent enough to understand. She is the emerging New Woman, familiar to readers of Ibsen and Shaw. A more strident example of the
Shavian woman is Alice Maitland. When she tells Edward what her guardian said about her money, it is in the characteristic voice of Shaw himself:

"You've no moral right to your money. ... you've not earned it or deserved it in any way. So don't be either surprised or annoyed when any enterprising person tries to get it from you. He has at least as much moral right to it as you. ......... if he can use it better, perhaps he has more."

It is interesting to note the remarks of Max Beerbohm about the role of Alice. He finds in her a woman with nothing in her soul but abstract ethics. "All young ladies in Mr. Shaw's plays are exactly like her; and however appropriate they may sometimes be to their own setting, a replica of them is just what is not needed and what is injurious here. ...... For Mr. Barker's purpose Miss Maitland ought to have been a woman in whom moral passion was combined with a very strong passion of love for Edward Voysey. Then she would have supplied in herself an interesting conflict that would have added much to the interest of Voysey's own. As it is, she is as undramatic as, he is insufferable". (1)

Barker's real interest here was in exploring the influence on each other of Edward the idealist and Alice the practical person. It is doubtful whether a love affair was really necessary to the theme.

The Ibsenite feature of naturalism of treatment, in settings and dialogue is traceable in The Voysey Inheritance. Each setting of the play looks like a real room a solicitor's office or a country-house dining room. The talk of Alguaazils or other investments, the copy of The Times warming in the fire place, mention of Merrit and James's head clerk and Mr. Leader's letter about the codicil, the touch of frost that is needed for the celery in the first scene, and in the next scene the cracking of nuts, the passing of the port, the comment on Bearman's apples—all this makes the ordinary material world of the voyseys convincing.

The dialogue is more articulate, the sentences more gracefully rounded, the longer speeches more logically constructed than in ordinary conversation. Granville-Barker works self-critically at writing and re-writing his dialogue, searching for the right word in the right place, paying fastidious attention to precise phrasing to make sure it sounded right. "I act it as I write it", he once said. It is very different from what is commonly heard today in the theatre or cinema or on the television, where naturalism has gone much further, but we are not conscious that it is literary or artificial. In the theatre we are ready to believe that this is how people like the Voysey talk—or did talk—years ago.

'There is no greater divider of society' John Galsworthy once said, 'than the difference in viva voce expression'. (1) Since the class element is important in The Voysey Inheritance it is worth while noticing such details as Booth Voysey's, addressing his father as 'Sir' and speaking of him as 'the Pater' which are significant in fixing social status, class and period. When Mr. Voysey affects the ungrammatical speech of the uneducated, saying, "The man who don't know must trust in the man who do", this is upper-class facetiousness with a purpose: he is giving a mildly-jocular tone to a remark which might otherwise sound too solemn or sententious. Peacy, on the other hand, uses language intended to upgrade him, to sustain him in a class a little above his origins, a status appropriate to the father of a Cambridge under-graduate destined for the Bar. Thus he speaks a language subtly different from that of his employers, full of genteesisms and slightly pompous cliches such as 'I must consider my whole position' or 'If I am driven to extremities', to which Edward replies with the abrupt directness of a more self-assured class which has no need to wrap itself up in important sounding words. Naturalism here, is a virtue—at any rate for this kind of play, where the atmosphere is mundane, not heroic or poetie or exalted.

1. In a lecture printed in Castles in Spain.
Despite the continuing and scathing attacks on the workings of capitalism as an inhuman system of exploitation, the undeniable trend in Shaw's work up to Major Barbara (1905) is to find out the means of ensuring social justice by a gradual but radical change not only of existing social conditions but also of the modes of thought and behaviour of people who live in society. Man and Superman (written in 1901-1903) was Bernard Shaw's earliest full statement of his conception of the way of salvation for the human race, through obedience to the Life Force, the term he uses to indicate a power continually working upon the hearts of men and endeavouring to impel them towards a better and fuller life. It is sub-titled 'A Comedy and a Philosophy'. But Man and Superman is not a dramatisation of a philosophy, it is a play in which a philosopher is comically exposed to the realities of his surrounding society. (1)

The idea of writing a Don Juan play came to Shaw in the form of a lighthearted suggestion from Arthur Bingham Walkley. But in thinking about the relation between men and women in the light of the Don Juan Story and of the social history of his time, Shaw was led into a much wider contemplation of the whole nature of human civilisation and political institutions. Why this was so is explained by his analysis of the significance of Don Juan in the Epistle Dedicatory. There, in a rapid sketch of the story from its sixteenth-century Spanish prototype, through Moliere and Mozart to Byron, Shaw maintains that the true Don Juan is not, as he thinks Byron shows him to be, simply a "vagabond libertine"; (2) his true significance lies in his role as critic of Society and enemy of convention, and as the defier of God. Don Juan is not only himself.

1. One is reminded of Tanner in the Preface to Major Barbara where Shaw writes of the "enduring impression" made upon him by Charles Lever's story A Day's Ride, about a romantic hero mocked by reality. Shaw's statement in that context that "I also deal in the tragic-comic irony of the conflict between real life and the romantic imagination" is clearly relevant to Man and Superman. (Preface, P-117)
2. Prefaces P-152.
but Faust and Promethus and a Devil's Disciple in one. In contemporary Shavian terms, he is also, of course, a revolutionary Socialist. But it is precisely at this point that we see a striking difference from Shaw's earlier Socialist thinking. The new revolutionary Socialist is also a profoundly sceptical philosopher who has no confidence in the efficacy of revolutions. In the final analysis even the most enlightened of political systems are powerless in the face of human apathy and evil.

This is in keeping with the change in Shaw's attitude. A comparison of *Man and Superman* (leaving aside for the moment *The Revolutionist's Handbook*, which is not an integral part of the play) with *An Unsocial Socialist* shows the change in Shaw's outlook during the intervening twenty years. The attack on capitalism has been dropped, so has socialism. Of practical socialism there is little in the play. The theoretical socialist is the only socialist with any serious claim to attention in this play. In John Tanner one may well discover a theoretical socialist. It is well known that Shaw took the lineaments of the character from H.M. Hyndman of the Social Democratic Federation, though Granville Barker, playing the part, was made up to look like the dramatist himself. (1) Tanner styles himself a Socialist and puts after his name, the letters M.I.R.C., Member of the Idle Rich Class, and to Mendoza's dignified announcement "I am a brigand: I live by robbing the rich", Tanner promptly replies, "I am a gentleman: I live by robbing the poor". But the fact does not disturb him, and the admission of it is not more than an amusing originality.

There is however, in the play, a caricature of Socialism—Mendoza and his band of tramps and able-bodied paupers (an episode borrowed from a story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle). In the stage direction they are portrayed as the counterpart to the middle-class...

artist and as entitled to the same allowance as he for refusing to
work against the grain.

We misuse our laborers horribly and when a man refuses
to be misused, we have no right to say that he is refusing honest work. Let us be frank in this matter before we go on with our play; so that we may enjoy it without hypocricy.

What we are invited then to enjoy is a stupid, tasteless parody
of the controversies in the socialist movement of the 80's and of
Marxism, in this style:

Mendoza.... well, what is our business here in the
Sierra Nevada, chosen by the Moors as the fairest spot
in Spain? Is it to discuss abstruse questions of politi­
cal economy? No: it is to hold up motor cars and
secure a more equitable distribution of wealth.
The Sulky Social Democrat: All made by labour, m'nd you.
Mendoza. (urbanely) Undoubtedly.

And to complete the ridicule, this gang of social democrats, one
anarchist, and a majority who are "neither Anarchists nor Socia­
lists, but gentlemen and Christians" is in reality a commercial
syndicate, whose shares are quoted on the Stock Exchange and are
bought up by an American billionaire, Hector Malone's father.

What the play altogether embodies is the smothering sense of
security, comfort and complacency that can resist all change. The
society Ann moves in is a plutocracy, where wealth buys idleness
and breeds a certain kind of art and idealism. Shaw remarked in a
letter to Granville-Barker, on the peculiar intimacy of the White­
field-Robinson family circle. (1) Violet Robinson's husband, Hec­
tor Malone, is named with the same irony as Hector Hushabye of
Heartbreak House; his uxoriousness promises to defeat his insu­
fficently strong impulse to be self-supporting by his own work,
and he is doomed to parasitism on the vast commercial empire of
his self-made, Irish-American father. "What is the use of having
money if you have to work for it?" asks Violet. Even Violet's

self-effacing brother, the poetically inclined Octavius, will inherit enough to justify the form in which Ann consoles him:

A broken heart is a very pleasant complaint for a man in London if he has a comfortable income.

Shaw has been at pains to demonstrate that these people are not aristocrats. Malone senior has come in search of something better, and Violet, though she carried her fashion with hauteur, has to meet his objections to her lack of a title:

Violet..... My social position is as good as Hector's to say the least. He admits it. Malone..... Hector's social position in England, Miss Robinson, is just what I choose to buy for him. I have made him a fair offer. Let him pick out the most historic house, castle, or abbey that England contains. The very day he tells me he wants it for a wife worthy of its traditions, I buy it for him, and give him the means of keeping it up...... She must be born to it.

Tanner who styles himself a socialist and has published a Revoluitionist's Handbook, is finally captured by Ann in a slavery that gives scope only to talking - a safety valve that helps keep the money secure. The cry of 'Superman', 'A father for the Superman', with which Ann in the dream sets out on her hunt, coincides with Tanner's awakening but has little genuine bearing on the real Ann's arrival in a motor car. If this Act was omitted we would not have the cry to associate with the match between Ann and Jack. They are two very vital people, but their child will be no specimen of eugenic breeding across class-barriers; on the other hand, it will be the heir to a double accumulation of what Ruskin called Illth.

Henry Straker is the only character in the play who works for his living and is to that extent careless of inherited fortunes, as he is careless of traditional class-divisions. Through him Shaw introduces a modern Social phenomenon e.g. the New Man perhaps after H.G. Wells. Straker, Tanner's chauffeur, has lost his novelty as a stage character only because the earth now teems
with Strakers. They are the men who have cast off the differential manner of the nineteenth century 'workman' and adopted some measure of the proletarian class consciousness with which the present day 'worker' has been indoctrinated. But though Starker is no longer novel, he remains an original and holds a prominent place in the Shaw gallery. He shows a startling independence of manner based on his indispensability in the running of the industrial system, he is the skilled mechanic, in short supply still, and he has not yet made up his mind which side of the political fence it will best pay him to be on. His interests are technical, not political; but as Tanner tells Octavius, Starker is 'swollen with the pride of class' and is more of an intellectual snob about his Board School and Polytechnic education, than an Upper-class youth would be about Eton and Oxford. 'Very nice sort of place, Oxford,' responds Starker, 'people that like that sort of place. They teach you to be gentlemen there. In the Polytechnic they teach you to be an engineer or such like. See?' Tanner interprets this observation as a sarcastic indication of Starker's snobbish contempt for gentlemen and his arrogant pride in being an engineer.

Whereas in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Shaw has presented the New woman in the character of Vivie, in *Ann Whitefield* he represents the Old Woman, the one is a modern product thrown up by social stresses, the other belongs to Nature and all the ages. Hedda's rejection of motherhood (though it is specifically a rejection of Tesman's child) links her with the negative aspect of New Womanhood the aspect Shaw had portrayed in Vivie Warren. But Ann's ordained function is to be a mother—and for Ann, as a 'perfectly lady-like' young woman, that means becoming a wife; but not simply a wife, nor even the wife of Octavius who adores and at length proposes to her. As a young woman who is not only perfectly lady like but also the human channel of the evolutionary process towards a higher creation, she has willy-nilly to impose herself as wife upon the one man to whom her instinct drives
her as the sole fit instrument of her destiny. Life force is Shaw's rationalizing term for what in Ann Whitefield appears as mere pro-genitive instinct. It works in man to save him from 'the force of Death and Degeneration':

Life is a force which has made innumerable experiments in organizing itself; ..., the mammoth and the man, the mouse and the megatherium, the flies and the fleas and the Fathers of the Church, are all more or less successful attempts to build up that raw force into higher and higher individuals, the ideal individual being omnipotent, omniscient, infallible, and with all completely, unillumined self-conscious; in short a god.

Our task, in Juan's philosophy, is to co-operate in 'the work of helping life in its struggle upward'. The philosopher's brain, he asserts, is the special instrument evolved by the Life Force to serve and operate its purpose of producing a more efficient and a nobler creature than man now is. Woman's energy is drained by 'the exhausting labour of gestation'; while man's energy, of which only an infinitesimal fraction is expended in procreation, is available for the imaginative and mental activities which produced civilisation and which animate Juan to declare:

As long as I can conceive something better than myself I cannot be easy unless I am striving to bring it into existence or clearing the way for it. That is the law of my life. That is the working within me of Life's incessant aspiration to higher organisation, wider, deeper, intense self-consciousness, and clearer self-understanding.

In the last Act of Man and Superman Tanner, in the grip of the Life Force, finds himself impelled irresistibly into the arms of Ann Whitefield. The light-hearted humour in this act rounds off the play with which Bernard Shaw established in English drama a new genre— the Comedy of Purpose—and demonstrated that it could be as entertaining as the Comedy of Manners, and incomparably more satisfying to the metaphysical appetite. Using ideas formed from Nietzsche, Samuel Bulter, and Bergson, Shaw was in the
end to develop a kind of religion of human self-transcendence which took the achievement of human progress out of the arena of reformist politics altogether.

- V -

Shaw turns to fuller treatment of the theme of social justice in *Major Barbara*, one of his best known plays. Composed in 1905, the play deals with the problem of tainted money—the money earned by the rich in ways and means that conventional standards of morality would not approve of; for the earning of such money begets many social injustices. Shaw points out that tainted money is so widespread that it cannot be escaped anywhere. In a corrupt social order everything is defiled by the same pitch and there is no chance for individual salvation except in the cleansing of the whole society. Cheap and easy philanthropy is as effective as painting cancer with mercuriochrome. Major Barbara of the Salvation Army approaches this conclusion when she discovers that her benevolent organisation receives money from distillers like Mr. Bodger and munition-makers like her father Andrew Undershaft—in other words, from the very industries that produce more evil than a thousand salvation Armies can ever cancel.

The story unfolded is that Lady Britomart, wife of the millionaire Andrew Undershaft has arranged a meeting between her son and two daughters and their father whom they have not seen since childhood. Her plan is to extract a larger allowance from him for the family. She also wants him to give up the family-tradition which is that the Undershaft business should be left not to his son but to a foundling. When Undershaft meets his daughters and prospective sons-in-law, he is greatly attracted by Barbara, his daughter and her youngman, the former being a major in the salvation Army, the latter a professor of Greek. He accepts Barbara's
invitation to see the work of the Army at West Ham and afterwards gets her and others to see how his workmen live in his model village. Undershaft explains his doctrine of work and money which is too much for Barbara who believes in the doctrine of God and Salvation. The acceptance of a cheque for £5,000 from Undershaft and another from the whisky dealer Bodger by the authority of the Salvation Army is a great shock to Barbara's conscience so much so that she ends her connection with the Army and goes to live in her father's model village. She learns that "there is no wicked side to life" and that God's work is to be done for its own sake, not for the sake of bribes, either the Salvationist's promise of heaven or the employer's offer of bread.

Shaw's original intention of calling the play Andrew Undershaft's Profession implied the working of the pun already employed in Cashel Byron's Profession and Mrs. Warren's Profession, so as to bring out the relation between a trade or occupation and the creed implicit in its pursuit. In each instance (and this also applied to Widowers' Houses) practice of the occupation is permitted or even relied on by society while official morality disapproves. On the realistic level, the munitions firm of Undershaft and Lazarus and Bodger's whisky firm represent Capitalist enterprise exploiting human weakness for pecuniary gain and producing further social evils destructive to humanity. Undershaft, the manufacturer of armaments is in a different relation to society from Sartorius, the slum-landlord of Widowers' Houses or Mrs. Warren, owner - director of an international chain of brothels. Whereas those earlier creations remain prisoners of society, cutcasts from respectability and in presentation are touched with the pathos of melodrama, the nature of the commodity Undershaft traffics in, makes him a master of society and gives him the confidence and authority to set up his sign, 'UNASHAMED' implying a total rejection of guilt on all fronts.
Slum-landlordism demonstrates, in general, the vicious exploitation of the poor, more precisely, it illustrates a socialist theory of rents and profits. In contrast to Sartorius, Andrew Undershaft is an industrialist; so that Major Barbara can explore the question of relations between employer and workpeople as well as the ethics of investment in destruction. The 'amenities' for which Sartorius charges his victims are shoddy and injurious to health; the negative fact that his tenants are powerless either to demand better or withhold payment is underlined by the change of policy— the intention of improving the property for the sake of compensation— when a public authority, itself equipped with money and power, may start to bargain. It is power that Undershaft and Lazarus trade in, physical force— the weapons of war— a genuine product of labour and an efficiently organized society, with nothing shoddy about it; however, it is not force for peaceful, constructive uses, but for brigandage or defence against it, for the tenants against their landlords, or the workers against their bosses, if they can pay the fair price which is not just money but will (in the Schopenhauerian sense) — though Shaw does not forget that the control of money is an essential instrument of power in actual society.

As in Mrs. Warren's Profession, the basic conflict of opposites is again enacted within a child-parent relationship; the innocence of society's dupes is confronted with the disillusion of its exploiters. But this time the parent and the child are of opposite sexes, and experience does not simply destroy innocence; it complements it and produces new strength. The dramatic crisis towards which the play moves, is related to the action of Barbara Undersh shaft leaving the established church of the established social order to join the Salvation Army. Her views and opinions are at cross purposes with those of her father. With her idealistic bent of mind she regards her father's wealth as tainted money.
She is interested entirely in the soul. But her materialistic-minded father Undershaft has accepted the gospel of money and power. He is instrumental in destruction of life by manufacturing deadly weapons of war. In course of his visit to the Salvation Army Shelter he speaks of his religion to Barbara.

Barbara. By the way, papa, what is your religion?
Undershaft. My religion? Well, my dear, I am a Millionaire. That's my religion.

The same attitude is revealed in the following conversation between Undershaft and Cusins, Barbara's fiance:

Cusins. ........ Have you any religion?
Undershaft. Yes.
Cusins. Anything out of the common?
Undershaft. Only that there are two things necessary to salvation.
Cusins. (disappointed but polite) Ah, the church Catechism; Charles Lomax also belongs to the Established Church.
Undershaft. The two things are—
Cusins. Baptism and—
Cusins. (surprised but interested) That is the general opinion of our governing classes. The novelty is in hearing any man confess it.
Undershaft. Just so.
Cusins. Excuse me; is there any place in your religion for honour, justice, truth, love, mercy and so forth?
Undershaft. Yes; they are the graces and luxuries of a rich, strong and safe life.
Cusins. Suppose one is forced to choose between them and money or gunpowder?
Undershaft. Choose money and gunpowder, for without enough of both you cannot afford the others.
Cusins. That is your religion?
Undershaft. Yes.

An 'extremely interesting' opposition is put to this by the idealistic attitude of Barbara. Hers is a dedicated life. She finds fulfilment of the purpose of life in the service of the Salvation Army. She goes into raptures over the confession of Snobby Price before a gathering of men. Honesty, Justice, Truth, Mercy and Forgiveness are the motto she practises in her life and activities.
Shaw creates a dramatic situation by placing the heroine and for that matter the Salvation Army in acute want of money. Barbara admits that she "cannot talk religion to a man with bodily hunger in his eyes". But her idealism prevents her from taking even two pence from her father. When her father offers to pay more, she bluntly says:

"Two million millions would not be enough. There is bad blood on your hands; and nothing but good blood can cleanse them. Money is no use. Take it away."

But almost in the same breath she asks Cusins to write to the Papers evidently for collection of funds. She explains the difficulty without any reserve.

"The starvation this winter is beating us: everybody is unemployed. The general says we must close this shelter if we cannot get more money. I force the collection at the meetings until I am ashamed."

Undershaft offers a cheque for £5,000, as a matching share for the promised donation of another £5,000 from the whisky dealer Mr. Bodger. But the strongest opposition comes from Barbara. As her father is going to write the cheque she interferes:

"Barbara. Stop. (Undershaft stops writing; they all turn to her in surprise). Mrs. Baines: are you really going to take this money?"

"MRS. Baines. (astonished) Why not, dear?"

"Barbara. Why not! Do you know what my father is? Have you forgotten that Lord Saxmudham is Bodger the whisky man? Do you remember how we implored the county council to stop him from writing Bodger's whisky in letters of fire against the sky; so that the poor drink-ruined creatures on the Embankment could not wake up from their snatch of sleep without being reminded of their deadly thirst by that wicked sky sign? Do you know that the worst thing I had to fight here is not the devil, but Bodger, Bodger, Bodger, with his whisky, his distilleries, and his tied houses? Are you going to make our shelter another tied house for him, and ask me to keep it?"

The acceptance of Undershaft's money by the authority of the Army shelter breaks the heart of Barbara and shakes the ground at her
She takes off her badge and uniform and leaves the Army for ever.

To the opposition between Undershaft and Barbara there has been added an independent opposition between Undershaft and Cusins. Of course, there are various examples of a basic conflict between idealism and realism. But the placing of the two in the progress of the drama must absolve Shaw from any charge of tautology. Barbara, the indubitable protagonist of Act-II subsides into watchfulness in Act-III, while Cusins takes over from her, is put to the test and makes the crucial decision; her endorsement of this in last moment of the play lends strength to the impression that he has indeed been deputizing for her. It is dramatically necessary after her defeat by Undershaft in Act-II, that the initiative should pass from Barbara. Cusins carries the play into its final movement, as he makes his pact with Undershaft. This has the effect of restoring Barbara to her proper centrality, though now in alliance with her former opponents. As the representative of spirituality, she returns to inform and bless the compact between reason and energy and the paradox of good in evil, heaven in hell. Cusins' function has been to introduce the dialectical synthesis. The reconciliation he proposes between power and service, realism and idealism, corresponds, of course, to the Platonic advocacy of the philosopher-king.

The simple dialectical plan, in which Barbara's heavenly counsel and Undershaft's hellish standpoint fight it out, was complicated in the process of writing, when Shaw transformed the heroine's fiance from a young man-about-town comparable to Charles Romax, to a Professor of Greek. Perhaps Cusins was at first envisaged as playing a minor, or choric, role comparable to Franks in the earlier play: that of an observer and commentator who also sets the comic tone of the drama. In his character of observer, the Professor of Greek is qualified to identify for us the philosophical issues and the mythopoetic analogues as they arise. His
intellectual quality does not entirely obscure the lineaments of
the clown; but he plays the ironical fool to Lomax's 'natural'.
As a more considerable and distinguished member of society, he
is also fitted to become one of the main points of the dramatic
scheme. The extension in the play's significances which has fol­
lowed from this later conception of the character culminates in a
scrap of dialogue inserted as an after thought in the longland
text of Act-III.

Undershaft. Remember the words of Plato.
Cusine. (Starting). Plato! You dare to quote Plato to me?
Undershaft. Plato says, my friend, that society cannot be
saved until either the Professors of Greek take to
making gunpowder, or else the makers of gunpowder be­
come Professors of Greek.

The peculiarly Shawian variety of Ibsenite dramatic structure,
imitated from the Platonic dialogues, is evident in the verbal
debates, rationally conceived and conducted to a great extent—
especially in the last act— in abstract terms. This is the drama
of ideas in exemplary form. But there is much more to the play
than this. The realism of its settings— the library in Wilton
Crescent, the Salvation Army Shelter in Canning Town, and the es­
pecially topical Garden City (1) establishes it as a critique of
actual society that reveals the spectrum of class and its cruel
contrasts, as Man and Superman did not. Changes of setting are
matched by changes of dramatic style. Wealth, aristocracy and the
culture that goes with them play out a comedy of manners in Act-I,
Dickensian realism verging on melodrama invades Act-II, in the
Salvation Army Shelter, bare and chill, with its horse-trough as
derisive comment on the poorly dressed wretches at their free
meal; Act-III presents a utopia designed by contemporary paterna­
lism and theory reigns there— a front for the Satanic mills that

1. The fact that Ebenzer Howard, as originator of the Garden City
idea, was an exponent of Smiles's Self-Help attitude to the
working class, drawing the teeth of revolt, is relevant to the
interpretation of Shaw's play. Perivale St. Andrews is still
more suggestive of the philanthropy of George Cadbury, founder
of Bourneville.
produce the wealth of Wilton Crescent, or that, differently directed, could blow the whole unequal system sky-high. Metaphysically, Perivale St. Andrews represents the spiritual cosmos, heaven and hell and the battlefield of the world (in its fort with dummy soldiers), corresponding to the emotional range-touching tragedy and ecstasy— that the play embraces.

The action of Major Barbara contains thinly disguised versions of folk lore quests and divine rituals as well as sharp clashes of personality to set off the philosophy. The dialectical scheme is strongly supported by mythopoetic patterns and humanised by a rich assortment of characters. The second Act in particular with its centrally placed sub-plot involving Barbara with a character from a sub-group, Bill Walker, is highly exciting in the pace of its symbolically weighted action and the intense sense of crisis it conveys. Barbara's spiritual pilgrimage takes her through disillusion and despair to a rebirth of hope and a new vision. Her private emotional experience enforces the recognition that the way of life lies through the factory of death, that destruction has its proper place in a healthy scheme of things, and even religion and morality must change in order to survive (1). Her spiritual death and resurrection contain the promise of a new social order: the money for which she was betrayed brought the freedom of Bill Walker's soul. What this freedom implies is given rational definition in Cusins's declaration of his own new-found purpose.(2)

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1. Among the best known lines in the play are Undershaft's "...... you have made for yourself something that you call a morality or a religion or what not. It does not fit the facts. Well, scrap it, Scrap it and get one that does fit".
2. There are here some parallels of thought and idea with Yeats's Calvary, also indebted to Nietzsche.
It is worthwhile to observe here the change in Shaw's attitude to Capitalism and money since *An Unsocial Socialist*. For Trefusis, his money is tainted by its origin in the exploitation of the workers; he uses it first to help their struggle and then to carry on his own attack against the members of his class. Trench, in *Widowers' Houses* is horrified to find that he has been living on the slums, but accepts the parasitism as unalterable necessity. Mrs. Warren, with no alternative but lead-poisoning in a factory, accumulates capital by loans and prostitution, and then opens her chain of brothels; and since society left her no choice, she was not ashamed, though it was only good manners to pretend to be. Undershaft, with no choice but starvation in the East End, swore he would kill other men rather than starve; and when he succeeded to the Undershaft inheritance and wrote his motto beneath those of his predecessors, it was "Unashamed".

There is a parallel development also in the attitude to the workers and to socialism. In *An Unsocial Socialist*, the proletariat was potentially a revolutionary class, though the hope placed in it proved vain. In *Widowers' Houses* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, the proletariat was still an exploited class, but no longer revolutionary; its more energetic members, like Mrs. Warren, Lickcheese and Sartorius, made themselves capitalists. In *John Bull's Other Island*, Ireland is exploited by England; but from the other plays the theme of exploitation has disappeared. In *Candida*, the socialist forgets his socialism; in *Man and Superman*, the socialist movement and Marxism are caricatured in the capitalist financed syndicate of quarrelling social-democrats and anarchists; the workers become comic cockneys, like Drinkwater; rebellion against capitalist injustice is merely the sentimental romanticism of a boy's penny dreadful. In *Major Barbara* itself, the issue of capitalism and socialism is confused by the word "money"; and the workers, though they may be named after Chartist leaders, are either hooligans, like Bronterre O'Brien Price, or docile conservatives. Then men of energy and courage are the capitalists.