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CONCLUSION
CHAPTER SIX

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In the foregoing chapters, an attempt has been made to make a comprehensive study of G.B. Shaw as a critic with special references of his prefaces. Shaw, who presented in himself one of the most baffling composites in the history of English Literature, and who is a highly provocative sand widely discussed dramatist of ideas of our time, was, as a matter of fact, a product of certain influences and the circumstances of his age, which shaped his personality and social philosophy. Being a dissenter, he represented the dark side of his age, and influenced it, to a very great extent, by inspiring his generation through his writings with a new set of ethnological and ethical ideas. He presented not only the social and political vices and follies but also traced them to their root causes and also suggested their ethico-scientific remedies. He hated all types of oppression, which hampered the free and proper growth of a man's personality, and wished for every human being progress both internal and external.

His dramatics reveals clearly that the then society suffered from the false righteousness, state morality, obsolete culture, hollow ideals, religious blindness, baseless superstitions, unscientific concepts, anti-conscience forces, vague romanticism, farcical sentimentalism, and the traditional way of education and culture. These cankers nibbled the social organs like the individuals and the institutions. Materialistic advancement in all walks of life was under the control of a few people of society. It resulted in the birth of
classes of haves and have-nots. The grave disparity between these classes infected the free, fertile, and natural progress of mankind. At the same time, the political life was also beset with its misfortune. It was under the control of plutocrats, demagogues, dupes and duffers. The common interest of the many was being sacrificed at the altar of the selfish interest of a few damned politicians. The sordid spectacle of the political failures particularly the failure of democratic machinery of election, captured the unfailing attention of Shaw.

With a penetrating insight in the causes of human degeneration and the pitiable spectacle of the social and political structure and norms he came to realise that it was more the stupidity of the common than the evil designs of the capitalists which gave rise to capitalism and poverty: that human nature was unscrupulous, unchangeable, and defective and that man's degree of intellect and understanding, his capacity to maintain the higher standard of morality, profound work and sharp evaluation had offered a general decline. According to him, the future society must be peopled with persons of great intellectual keenness whom he called superman, only then the world can have real progress, prosperity and peace. Shaw revealed that mere progress from without was unreal and illusory. As he says in the preface to Man and Superman.

"And since what we call education and culture is for the most part nothing but the substitution of reading for experience, of literature for life, of the obsolete fictitious for the contemporary real, education, ....... destroys, by supplantation, every mind that is not strong enough to see through the
imposture and to use the great Master of Arts as what they really are and no more: ...........

"We must therefore frankly give up the notion that Man as he exists is capable of net progress ...... This is indeed the illusion of illusions; ... Whilst Man remains what he is, there can be no progress beyond the point already attained and fallen headlong from at very attempt at civilization; and since even that point is but a pinnacle to which a few people cling in giddy terror above an abyss of Squalor, mere progress should no longer charm us."  

He warned, "We may as well make up our mind that man will return to his idols and his capacities in spite of all movements and all revolutions, until his nature is changed."  The Life Force and the Evolution which he termed as God and religion respectively of the twentieth century form the main expository trunk of his philosophy in his Man and Superman and Back to Methuselah. His other dramas are merely the branches and leaves of this treo of philosophy which strives to seek the betterment of Life. The Life Force moves forward stumblingly, gropingly and slowly and slowly by fits and starts. It cares for nothing except evolution. It is absolutely unconscious of good and bad, pleasure and pain, moral and immoral. It tries to evolve a special brain, by which man will attain not only self-consciousness but also self understanding. It will be a sort of:

"Mind's eye that shall see, not the physical world, but the purpose of Life, and thereby enable the individual to work for that purpose instead of thwarting and baffling it by setting up short personal aims as present."
A free movement of Life Force only can bring the manifestation of a perfect being i.e. Superman. In order to create conditions, favorable for the free movement of Life Force, it is necessary that the artificial constraints in the form of social as well as political institutions be done away with. This can only be brought about through Eugenics – through selective breeding. The parents of different races produce the best off spring because the result of such a biological blend of the flesh and spirit of two different races is far superior to the inbred children. Nations deteriorate without selective fertilization:

"............. If we begin with inbreeding, we should end with the brains of Borzoi dogs and a general prevalence of paralysis and hemophilia......"^6

Therefore "our breed needs to be crossed with the gutter or the soil once in every three or four generations."^6 According to him, women is the embodiment of the Life Force behind the universe. She has an irresistible impulse not only to perpetuate the species but to procreate a better one. Form her point of view, man is nothing more than an instrument to enable her to replenish the earth. Hence, it is the women who must take initiative in sex affairs. Biologically, woman is primary and man secondary in the evolutionary process. So, Shaw gives women the sole authority for the selection.

"If a woman can, be careful selection of a father, and nourishment of herself, produce a citizen with efficient senses, sound organs, and a good digestion, she should clearly be secured a sufficient reward for that natural service to make her willing to undertake and repeat it."^7
In fact, there should be full freedom in sexual selection from either side irrespective of class, sect religion, race and nation, and without shame, hesitation and fear. As he says:

"I do not believe, you will even have any improvement in the human race, until you make it as wide as the numbers of the community make it ...... I walk down oxford Street, let me say, as a Youngman. I see a young woman, who takes my fancy, I fall in love with her. It would seem very sensible in an intelligent community, that I should take off my hat, and say to this lady, "Will you excuse me, but you attract me very strongly, and if you are not already engaged, would you mind taking my name and address and considering whether you would care to marry me?" 8

He say again

"The only fundamental and possible Socialism is the Socialization of the selective breeding of man: in other terms, of human evolution." 9

This improvement of mankind through selective breeding and inter-marriage ability, presuppose the establishment of a socialistic system of society, based on equal income, work and leisure and governed by rational justice higher morality and culture. This system will hold its basic ethical ideal that we must consume less than what we produce and what we must breed better than we are. According to Shaw, Socialism is the economic democracy because it requires the deliberate, conscious and permanent direction by and control of Society over production and distribution of wealth. That is why socialism involves state control, which can be successful only through the high-brow
democratic set up composed of talented persons. The maximum good of the maximum number can be possible only through the talented governors of an ideal democratic state, which should concentrate on social justice and equality in the distribution of wealth, work and leisure. It will carefully watch whether the parents are giving proper and natural nurturing to their children. The will of the people will be fully represented in the political institutions and the laws of the land will be in conformity with the rationality of man. The leaders of the State will be endowed with the sense of religious responsibility and a credible religion of universal nature will be ushered in for achieving all these social ends.

Shaw hopes that Superman will come bouncing on earth. Then, the rulers and the ruled both will have a nature and intellect different from that of the men of the present. They will in their turn save the human species from its doom. Under their stewardship in Society, maximum possible peace, progress- both internal and external- and prosperity will be brought about. Men will by and by reach the stage of perfection. Then, men will be the real embodiment of will power. In the end, Spirit may be redeemed from Matter i.e. fleshly body; Man may come to exist eternally in the world of pure thought.

So, to pass judgment on a dramatist of ideas like G.B. Shaw is really difficult in that it shall need a passage of time to determine the result of his dramatics, which does not contain empty fireworks but the solid suggestions for the edification of the age. He has dazzled the people, taking their heads off and has trod his way to the higher plane of metaphysics.
As a dramatist of social and political ideas, he has cleared his way through the goose-cackling of the critics and has made dramatics a potential force to put forward his ideas. His dramas cannot be divorced from his thinking. He is keen to remove the social garbage. He is for cleaner morals and as such, has done a good deal of laundering in that sphere. Moreover he does not look interested in the type of life, which pulsates in human beings. The emotions, ambitions, feelings, sadistic and masochistic tendencies etc. leave him cold. But he seems extremely interested in cleaning the social and political stables. Shaw is more of a social and political propagandist than an illusory artist. He has sacrificed art for the sake of solving the problems of the day. This is the main reason why he has been criticised vehemently. But literature cannot be divorced from life, nor can it be studied without reference to its social and political background. If he describes what he observes, expresses intensely about the problems of the day, presents what he considers to be their solution, and if he does all this with the aid of the aesthetic and dramatic technique of his craft, there is no reason why his problem plays should not be considered great literature.