The Devil's Disciple (1897) is virtually the spadework for *Man and Superman, followed by Back to Methuselah*; and Shaw's dream of the superman was practically conceived in it, as we have already noted in the beginning of the second chapter. The title itself of the play is highly suggestive of the uncompromising pattern of Shavian thought. Essentially a play on religion, Shaw calls it a melodrama. The play, from start to finish, throws ample light on the non-traditional, hysteric, and apparently irreligious view of the playwright. Richard Dudgeon, the so-called disciple of the Devil, in many respects seems to represent Shaw. Richard Dudgeon violates all the existing moral and religious standards. He does not go to the church for making prayers.

contd...
“He wrestles and plays games on Sunday instead of going to church,” complains Judith. Everyone has a complaint against him. He becomes an outcast both from the society as well as from the church.

Richard Judeon, in many respects, approximates Shaw’s image of a superman. He is a self-acting hero; invariably doing the right thing. He does the right thing not because of his respect or fearfulness for the established religious conduct, but he does everything just instinctively. The same is not the case with people like Anthony Anderson, who ultimately does the right thing simply out of his respect and obligation for the established moralities. He does not do anything instinctively. Shaw very distinctly draws a line of demarcation between Richard Judeon and Anthony Anderson. Richard does not do or undo anything at the demand of religious sentiment. That is mainly why everybody misunderstands him. Everyone misconstrues his stand. Finally he is branded as the devil’s disciple. Richard goes to the point of self-sacrifice simply at the dictate of his soul. Judith misunderstands his attempt of self-sacrifice; and misinterprets it as his love towards her. She spurns at the unexpected and cowardly...

1. Judith, Act 1, p. 55 (Penguin)
Flight of her husband, Anthony Anderson. She wants to surrender herself entirely to Richard. But she is disillusioned when Richard told her that he wanted to do everything only for himself alone, unmotivated by any external obligation or fear whatsoever. Such a mental make-up confuses and surprises everyone.

In the first act of the play, Shaw ridicules the character of Mrs. Dudgeon, whom he describes as the "most licentious woman in the parish". But, she has a very high opinion about herself. Shaw describes her thus: "the most licentious woman in the parish on the strength of never having broken the seventh commandment or missed a Sunday at the Presbyterian church". Like any other conventional believer, she also wanted that there should be a distinct line of demarcation between good and evil-doers. She also believed that the wicked people should be punished and the good people rewarded. "We are told that the wicked shall be punished", she says, "why should we do our duty and keep God's law if there is to be no difference made between us and those who follow their own likings and dislikings, and make a jest of us and of their maker's word?" Richard Dudgeon, on the contrary, did not have any such religious belief.

2. Stage direction, p. 43.
3. Mrs. Dudgeon, Act I, p. 49. contd...
He did not even have any sense of superiority of any kind.

When Uncle Williams said "We are all equal before the throne", many women of the privileged stratum of the society did not like the Republican spirit of his statement. Mrs. Dudgeon did not like it. The same was the response from Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Williams. These ladies wanted to maintain their class privileges even in the next world. And hence the clash between Richard Dudgeon and these women.

Shaw deliberately makes Richard Dudgeon the most beautiful man - "He is certainly the best looking member of the family." Maybe, that is mainly in order to strengthen the character of the hero.

Shaw had very little belief in the efficacy of the conventional 'prayers', made on the different occasions. He treated them as purely mechanical. When Richard Dudgeon is arrested by the people of Major Swindon, and when he is about to be hanged, Judith and Anderson express doubt regarding the effectiveness of prayers in that crucial moment in saving him from the noose.

Judith: (Sitting down helplessly) Is it of any

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4. Uncle Williams, Act-I, P-56.
5. Stage direction, Act-I, 58.
use to pray, do you think, Tony?

Anderson: (counting the money) Pray I can we pray

Swindon's rope off Richard's neck?

Anderson, being the minister of church himself, loses confidence in prayers. Instead, he takes up the pistol to fight the opposition, and thereby save Richard from the noose of Major Swindon.

The personality of General Burgoyne is illustrative of Shavian attitude towards religious martyrdom. In the third act General Burgoyne mocks at the religious martyrs as men 'without ability'. Commenting on the members of the church of England the General says to Swindon:

"What more could you have done if he [Richard] had been a member of the church of England? Martyrdom, Sir, is what these people like; it is the only way in which a man can become famous without ability." 7

Just Richard is to be hanged the Chaplain gracefully reads him some lines from The Bible, telling him about the bliss of the next world, and the reading was accompanied by Handel's music. Richard ferociously opposes it. For him it was nothing but a gross distortion of the gospel of the Bible. The Bible does not even allow the hanging of the evildoers. To the Chaplain he says: 8

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7. General Burgoyne, Act-III, p-96. contd...
"I see little divinity about them or you. You talk to me of Christianity when you are in the act of hanging your enemies. Was there ever such blasphemous nonsense?" (To Swindon, more rudely) You've got up the solemnity of the occasion, as you call it, to impress the people with your own dignity - Handel's music and a clergyman to make murder look like piety! "Richard laughs at the attempt of solemnising and sanctifying his murder with the recitation of the Biblical hymns and the music of Handel. He points to the Biblical saying "Man that is born of woman...thou shall not kill." 9

The significance of the play lies in Shaw's attempt to create a self-acting hero, practically approximating the magnitude of the Superman, envisaged by him. In the character of Richard Judgeon, he makes an attempt to prove that a man defying the age-old religious standards can also be a perfectly religious man. In order to do the right thing a man must get his stimulus from within, and not from without. Regarding religious martyrdom, as is well-known, Shaw has no good opinion. Furthermore, Shaw laughs at the hypocrisy of chanting Biblical hymns even on the occasions like...

9. Chaplain, Act-III, p-112-113. contd...
the hanging of a man, whereas the Bible forbids the killing of even an enemy. He was always against such religious hypocrisies and Biblical distortions.
The Shewing-Un of Blanco Posnet (1909) represents another aspect of Shaw's religious philosophy, although the play marks a distinct departure from the mainstream of his ideas. In the person of Blanco Posnet he highlights his rebellious attitude towards the age-old moral and religious values. He calls this magnificent play "A sermon in crude melodrama", this being the sub-title of the play. The scene of this short play is a place somewhere in the United States of America, representing the rottenness of the world as a whole. In this place there is no justice, no truth, and no healthy religious beliefs. Right from the Jury and the Minister of church down to the woman like Feeey Evans everyone in this place is corrupt and perverted. The Jury is prejudiced, and Elder Daniel, the church father, is a seasoned drunkard and a trader in wine.

Blanco Posnet, the leading man of the play, is convicted of the crime of horse-stealing. The judge wants to lynch him. But, he is not fearful of death and punishment. He has the firm belief and conviction in him that "this is a rotten world"; and, strangely enough, God is also a party to it. In such a state of affairs, and also because of such a belief, he does not find any basic difference between the contd...
conventional virtues and the conventional vices; because both the virtuous and the vicious are equally fraudulent. Furthermore, Blanço Poenêt holds the view that God is the player of cat-and-mouse game with man. In one moment God will give you the chance to hide, says Blanço, and in the next moment He will catch hold of you. Once He will make you strong, and then He will make you miserably weak. So, like a confirmed heretic, Blanço Poenêt wants to be guided by his own will, careless of everything. Like a confirmed heretic, Blanço declares at the top of his voice:

"... because I lived my own life in my own way, and would have no truck with His "Don't do this", and "You mustn't do that" and "You'll go to Hell if you do the other". I gave him the go-by and did without Him all these years. But He caught me out at last".  

Blanço doubts the honesty of God Himself: "He's a sly one. He's a mean one". In this sense, there is practically no meaning in branding a man either as virtuous or as vicious. "We're all frauds. There's none of us real good and none of us real bad". 

"Aider Daniel, the minister of church, is a drunkard and a trader in wine. He brands the unconventional reli-

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1. Blanço; p-593 (The Home Library Club).  
2. Ibid.  

contd...
igious approach of Blanco Poanet as 'spiritual pride'.

Funnily enough, Elder Daniel attempts to justify his drinking habits, saying, "when I was drunk I was in a state of innocence. Temptations and bad company and evil thoughts passed by as like the summer wind as you might say; I was too drunk to notice them." Blanco does not accept the opinions of Elder Daniel. He detects the evil motivations behind the wine business of Elder Daniel: "Don't deceive yourself, Booby. You sell drink because you make a bigger profit out of it than you by selling tea. And you gave up drink yourself because when you got that fit at Edwardstown the doctor told you you'd die the next time; and that frightened you off it." Such acrimonious attacks on the church-fathers are nothing new in this play.

Often, a close similarity is found between Blanco Poanet and Richard Judgeon of The Devil's Disciple. Both of them are heroic and uncompromising. But Blanco's attitude towards God as the player of cat-and-mouse game is undoubtedly something new, and at the same time, a distinct departure from the usual Shavian thought pattern. Richard Judgeon does not hold any opinion about God. He also does not have the elemental morbidity of Blanco Poanet.

3. Blanco; p-593. 4. Elder Daniel; p-593.
The preface to the play is devoted mainly to his vociferous discussion on 'censorship'. Towards the beginning of the play Shaw admits: "This little play is really a religious tract in dramatic form". He also admits that this play is written to deride all "official and conventional sermons". D'Alvarez Posnett, the leading character, repeatedly says - "This is a rotten world" - and he defies and derides the conventional religious utterances of Elder Daniel.

In the chapter, The Definition of Immorality, Shaw defines what immorality really is:

"Whatever is contrary to established manners and customs is immoral. An immoral act or doctrine is not necessarily a sinful one: on the contrary every advance in thought and conduct is by definition immoral until it has converted the majority". 6

This definition itself indicates that the term 'immorality' is a relative one. An immoral act does not necessarily mean a sinful one. The term 'sin' itself is a relative one. So, Shaw does not find any rudimentary difference between morality and immorality. He holds the view that every new idea or act is at first dis-

6 From the Preface, ch. The Definition of Immorality; p-441; The Complete Bernard Shaw Prefaces, Paul Hamlyn, London. contd....
carded as immoral; but for the advancement of our society we must encourage such immoral acts or ideas despite all the oppositions and hostilities against them. He writes:

"For this reason it is of the most enormous importance that immorality should be protected jealously against the attacks of those who have no standard except the standard of custom— that is, on morals—as an attack on society, on religion, and on virtue." 7

It is not immorality, but morality, that does more harm to the society:

"It is immorality, not morality, that needs protection; it is morality, not immorality, that needs restraint; for morality, with all the dead weight of human inertia and superstition to hang on the back of the pioneer, and all the malice of vulgarity and prejudice to threaten him, is responsible for many persecutions and many martyrdoms." 8

8. Ibid.
Shaw illustrates his point of view, saying, that almost all the great men and prophets were previously discarded either as immoralists or heretics, because they defied the conventional moral and religious standards. Luther had to fight against a big opposition to establish the truth he found out. Galileo had to fight a big opposition to establish his point of view. This applies to almost all the great prophets and thinkers of the world; even Jesus and Mahomet not excepted. "Christianity and Mahometism," writes Shaw, "once thought of and dealt with exactly as Anarchism is thought of and dealt with to-day, have become established religions; and fresh immoralities are persecuted in their name."

It is a play with some difference. It mainly concerns Shaw's attitude to God. Blanco, the central character of the play, condemned God to be a 'sly one,' a 'mean one,' and a party to man's misdeeds. God is also said to be a player of cat-and-mouse game with man. Such a view does not represent Shaw's mind, and corroborate his views regarding God as we have already found in our earlier chapters. In all the works God is said to have some definite plans and programmes which

9. From the Preface; Ch. The Definition of Immorality; p-412. The Complete Bernard Shaw Prefaces; Paul Hamlyn, London. contd...
He attempts to execute with the active aid and assistance of man. In this connection, Blenco cannot be said to have represented Shaw.

There is nothing new in the act of decrying the priestly community represented by Elder Daniel in the play. Characters like Elder Daniel abound in Shaw's plays.

An incurable disease of morbidity marks the play from the beginning to the end, when the world is said to be a "rotten one", when God is said to be a 'sly one' and a player of cat-and-mouse game with man, nothing is practically left for man to live for. The universal system itself is condemned to be a negative one. Such an attitude can never be called typically Shawian. Shaw, who remains almost intoxicated with the thought of the Life-force, cannot think of God in such negative and non-creative terms.

By showing the relativity of morality and immorality Shaw wants to do justice to what may be called unpalatable and unacceptable ideas. Religious bigotry does more harm to man, and immoralities turn into moralities in course of time. In this sense, Shaw wants

contd...
Christianity to develop a sense of toleration and a sense of acceptance. Christianity, says Shaw, should keep its door open for any fresh idea, however unpalatable it seems at the first look.
TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

The play, Too True To Be Good, published in the year 1931, by itself has nothing to offer regarding Shaw's attitude to religion. It is essentially a play on politics. Shaw himself calls it a "political extravaganza". He has only made some casual comments on the subject of religion in the prefatory chapters, and nothing more than that. Some of the prefatory chapters of the play highlight Shaw's complaint against the undemocratic tendencies of the Christian churches.

He points to the essential democratic principles behind the formation of the churches, such as to "save the souls of all persons without regard to their age, sex, nationality, class, or color". But, due to the monetary greed of the priestly class, the church is wedded to the propertied class, having severed all relationships with the people smarting under poverty.

In this connection, Shaw points to Soviet Russia's successful rediscovery and remodelling of the church.


contd....
system by transforming it into the communist party:
"turning its cathedrals into historical museums illustrating the infamies of ecclesiastical history and expressly entitling them anti-religious".2 Soviet Russia, Shas believes, has been able to level up all the man-made distinctions of men, steamrolling them into one class — man. That is to say, what the church divided into many, was united into one by Russia.

That religion is inextricably connected with man's economic condition is the fact which is ignored by the priestly community: "because the old priests' ignorance of economics and political science blinded them to the mischief latent in the selfishness of the private property in the physical earth".3 The church became a good inlet for financial gains to the priestly community, ultimately aligning them with the privileged class, Shas expressly declares: "the church was being corrupted by its own property".4

Finally, the church is transfigured into a titanic power employed in robbing the poor by tantalizing them with divine bliss. This infection with the virus of property has virtually defeated all the original noble purposes of the church system.

2. Reference: Russia rediscovers the church system, p. 348.
4. Ibid.
(iv)

ON THE HUCKS

_The_Monkey_ (1933) is essentially a "political comedy" in the words of Shaw himself. In the preface to the play he critically examines the issue of having a "standardised religion", conducive to every human group. The way Jesus Christ was cruelly treated by Pilate has been objectionable to him, who is intolerant of cruelty of any kind: "I dislike cruelty, even cruelty to other people, and should therefore like to see all cruel people exterminated."

Shaw also objects to the cruelty involved in the sight of the crucifix. A crucifix is said to be the living symbol of cruelty. He objects to the fact that a crucifix is kept by every Christian, and every church, and every court of justice, and every sacred institution. In this connection, he writes: "A typical acknowledgement of it was the hanging of a crucifix above the seat of the judge who was sentencing evil doers to be broken on the wheels."

He laughs at this fashion popularised on religious ground and calls it humorously, "Croatianity". In this case, Christianity must be said to have violated the

1. Preface, Ch. Leading Case of Jesus Christ, p-388. (Complete Prefaces, Hamlyn).

contd...
sixth Mosaic commandment from the incipient stage of its birth itself. The similar idea was emphasised by him in his preface to imprisonment (English Local Government, by Sidney and Beatrice Webb) in the chapter, The Sixth Commandment.

Regarding the making of a standardised religion Shaw points out that we are interested in finding a standard educational curriculum, whereas we are reluctant to find a standard religion. Religion should aim at uplifting every root and branch of the society, regardless of caste, creed, colour, and geographical boundary. He also realises the difficulty involved in finding a common religion: “But all will not agree on a standard religion. Yet a standard religion is indispensable, however completely it may shed the old theologies.” In the selection of a standard religion Shaw holds a very liberal attitude. Every religious theology, he holds, must be subject to further revision and further investigation.

As the son of an Irish Protestant gentleman Shaw was taught to believe that “all Roman Catholics go to hell when they die.” Out, with the advancement of his age he realized the baselessness of such beliefs.


contd...
"Now that I am older I cannot regard this as anything more than a provisional hypothesis which, on consideration, I must definitely reject." Then, what should be the standard religion? In the preface to *Back to Methuselah* Shaw has repeatedly stated that his is the religion of creative evolution. But, he becomes softer in his later statements, "But I do not present my creed of creative evolution as anything more than another provisional hypothesis".  

He also admits that all provisional hypotheses will be effective till they are replaced by another reasonable hypothesis. "All the provisional hypotheses may be illusions," writes Shaw, "but if they *conduce* to beneficial conduct they must be inculcated and acted on by Governments until better ones arrive". But, at all costs he is for a standardised religion.

But, Shaw does not seem to be very much clear as to what he really means by his "standardised religion". Nowhere does he set forth any specific requisite of the so-called standardised religion. He has not said anything definite about it. Here an element of vagueness stands.

5. Preface, Ch. Importance of Free Thought, P-367.
THE SIMPLETON OF THE UNEXPECTED ISLES

The play, *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles*, written in 1934-35, is undoubtedly a prolongation of what Shaw has already stated in *Man and Superman* and *Back to Methuselah* with some new additions. This time he has tried to look at religion mainly from the eugenic point of view. This is also another scientific way of looking at the vitality of religion. But, the grimness that does exist in *Back to Methuselah* is to a large extent neutralised in this play. Perhaps, age has sobered him at his late seventies. But, he has not budged even an inch from his despatched belief in the creative purpose behind what he calls 'Life-force'. And, his seriousness and sincerity in the presentation of his beliefs are still undiminished and unscathed.

In this play also Shaw once again repeats his usual emphasis on 'purpose', which everyone must bear in mind for the larger interest of 'Life-force'. Behind the creation of man, Shaw asserts, there is a definite plan; and despite our approvals and disapprovals 'Life-force' will have its own way while executing its plan. In this process nature will overrule and overpower man, if he does not coordinate and cooperate with its contd....
creative drive. If man fails to assist life-force in its onward march he simply ceases to exist. On the day of judgement he will be tried, and his contribution valued: "The Day of Judgement is not the end of the world, but the end of its childhood and the beginning of its responsible maturity".  

"The beginning of world's 'responsible maturity' cannot be averted; however we do oppose it. Those who oppose it will simply 'fade out':

"The angels are executing a judgement. The lives which have no use, no meaning, no purpose, will fade out. You will have to justify your existence or perish, only the elect shall survive". 

What is the implication of judgement? We define judgement in the given words: "Judgement is valuation. Civilization live by their valuations. If the valuations are false, the civilization perishes as all the ancient ones we knew of did. We are not being punished to-day: we are being valued. That is the newest Dispensation". 

To put briefly, we must live only to fulfil the plans and aspirations of God, which Shae calls Life-force. People, who are purposeless and irresponsible to

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2. Ibid

contd...
the plan of God will be dissolved into nothingness.
we must constantly bear in mind - "we shall have to
justify our existence or perish. we shall live under
a constant sense of that responsibility". 4 Maybe, that
is why, the line "Let life come to you" is repeated
again and again in the play.

(II)

In the preface to the play Shaw clearly de¬
lares that "religion is the mother of scepticism; 
science is the mother of credulity". 5 So, he tries to
offer a scientific explanation of the basic problems
of religion.

So far as the practicability of the use of
force and intimidation is concerned, Shaw believes that
it has its limited scope in its power of making people
properly understand the real substance of what they
are required and expected to do in the larger interest
of the cosmic force. Humanet was an exemplar of this
point. "The belief in hell", writes Shaw, "did not prevent
even the most superstitious people from committing
the most damnable crimes. But though we know of these


contd...
failures of infernal terrorism we have no record of its successes. This, Shaw thinks, is the result of a lack of happy inter-relationship between science and religion.

Explaining the four lovely phantasma, Kanchin, Janga, Vashti, and Maya, he says that these four lovely phantasma "embody all the artistic, romantic, and military ideals of our cultivated suburbs. On the Day of judgement not merely do they cease to exist like the useless and predatory people; it becomes apparent that they never did exist."

These adored ideals prove to be mere illusions, without any substantial value. As these ideals have nothing to do with the designs of God they simply perish into nothingness. As they cannot contribute towards the 'beginning' of world's 'responsible maturity', and as they cannot "justify their existence" they vanish like illusions.

(III)

regardless of the dramatic or technical importance, the Prologue throws a great deal of light on

7. Ibid, p. 643-644. contd...
Shae's religious philosophy. The Emigration Officer and the young woman and the lady tourist represent the conventional blind idolatry; while the priest and the priestess represent the true religious spirit, leading to the actual understanding of the oneness of God and His supreme power. The Priest finds the young Emigration Officer despondent, whom he blames: "...they worship strange ancient gods; and they play games with balls marvellously well; but of the great game of life they are ignorant." 8

In the third scene we find a married priestess. Shae does not have any complaint against a priestess being married. The young woman is astonished with this:

The Young Woman: But then you're a priestess; so I suppose it doesn't matter to you, as you cannot marry.

The Priestess: I am married.

The Young Woman: Oh! And you are a priestess?

The Priestess: I could not be a priestess if we were not married. How could I presume to teach others without a completed human experience? How could I deal with

8. The Priest; Sc. III; P-1223.
children if I were not a mother?

The Young Woman: But that is not right. My sister was a teacher; but when she married they took her job away from her and wouldn't let her teach any more.

The Priestess: The rulers of your country must be mad.

Thus, Shaw frees himself and tries to free others from the conventional belief that the priest or priestess cannot marry. He does not find anything specially religious in bachelorhood. He laughs at such believers as 'mad'.

Shaw firmly believed in the oneness of God. God, according to him, might manifest his variegated powers in different forms, symbolized by different Gods; but that does not mean that there is a principal God and some subordinate Gods under his power. The English Lady failed to understand this. The Priest makes the actual position clear:

The L.T: Excuse me; but can you tell me which...
of these figures is the principal God?

The Priest: The principal one? I do not understand.

The L.T. : I get lost among all these different Gods; it is so difficult to know which is which.

The Priest: They are not different Gods. They are all Gods.

The L.T. : But how can that be? The figures are different.

The Priest: God has many aspects.

The L.T. : But all these names in the guide book?

The Priest: God has many names.

The L.T. : Not with us, you know.

The Priest: Yes; even with us. The father, the son, the spirit, the Immaculate Mother—

The L.T. : Excuse me. We are not Catholics.

The Priest: Are your temples then labelled "For men only"? 10

The Priestess calls the believers of such kind "heathen idolaters". The Priest clears the vagueness further: "These images are not idols: they are personifications of the forces of nature by which we all are live. But of course to an idolater they/Idols". 11

10 Sc.IIIp=1224.
11 = Ibid = contd....
This consciousness of the many-sidedness of God can be acquired only through a correct and adequate sense of religion. In that sense, the concept of religion as a guiding principle cannot be detached from life. Consciousness about life automatically leads towards religion:

The Y.N: You talk a lot about religion here. Cannot you think of something livelier? I always say let life come to you, and don't bother about religion.

The Priestess: An excellent rule. But the more you let life come to you, the more you will find yourself bothering about religion. 12

Does not Shaw hereby want to mean that religion is inextricably linked with the real spirit of life and vice versa? Religion, then, as he wants to mean, makes man conscious; and this consciousness leads to his inner transformation. Religion does not mean conforming to the conventional religious setup; it is rather what St. Paul said: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God." 13 That is why, Shaw believed that we are not sufficiently living up to the required

13. Romans, Ch. 12; v. 2. (The Bible) contd....
standard. "You are not sufficiently regenerated, but you may hope." 14

(IV)

The ludicrous presentation of Mr. Hammingtap (in First Act), an English clergyman, is highly indicative of the Shavian hatred towards that class. Mr. Hammingtap is full of prejudices. Being the Chaplain, earning a meagre income, he wants to be promoted to the position of Bishop, mainly for monetary gains: "I should like to have a Bishop's salary, certainly. But unfortunately I am weak-minded." 15

Mr. Hammingtap becomes mad after Ayes and Vashti, both emotionally and sexually. He is forgetful of the Christian principles like restraint and religious austerity. Despite his physical and emotional weakness the English clergyman calls himself to be a true Christian:

Prole: All men and women are experiments. What is your religion?

The Clergyman: The Christian religion, of course.

I am a clergyman.

Prole: What is the Christian religion?

14 Priestess; Sc. III; p. 1225.
15 Hammingtap; Act. I; p. 1230.
(The Clergyman) contd...
The clergyman: Well, it is well, I suppose it is the Christian religion. I thought everybody knew. But then of course you are a heathen.

Proteus: What does Christian religion mean to you?

The clergyman: Oh, to me it means everything that is good and lovely and kind and holy. I don't profess to go any further than that. 16

Mr. Hammingtap himself is not clear about what he really means by Christianity. Hereby, Shaw seems to mean that practically every Christian is no better or worse than Mr. Hammingtap. The church-fathers of the kind of Mr. Hammingtap are guided more by monetary considerations than by anything genuinely religious. Shaw laughs at them:

"For he on honey dew hath fed—
—and drunk the milk of paradise". 17

Shaw accounts for the miserable failure of the eugenic experiments carried on by Proteus and Proteus in association with their co-partners. Here, biological union between East and West cannot result in spiritual per-

17. Dark one and Fair one, Act. I; P-1228. contd...
faction of man. The result of the biological union between the East and the West leads to the birth of the four wonder-children: Maya, Vashti, Janga, and Kanchin. These four wonder-children have all the physical excellences. "All their glands are scientifically nourished." 10 But "they have not between the whole four of them a scrap of moral conscience". 19

This failure of the eugenic experiments initiated by Pra and Prala is mainly due to their wrong notion concerning perfection in creation. "Moral conscience", writes Shaw, cannot be achieved through the physical union between the East and the West. Such a union, of course, might lead to physical magnificence, what Shaw calls "artistic conscience". More "artistic excellence" devoid of "moral excellence" is meaningless and absolutely useless.

Pra and Prala could understand this lack of "moral conscience" for acquiring of this moral conscience, they indulged in the eugenic experiments by marrying Mr. Hemmingtap to Maya and Vashti. Their purpose was to achieve the happy synthesis between "artistic conscience" and "moral conscience". Mr. Hemmingtap is thought to have possessed this "moral conscience". In this case they

19. Ibid contd...
must be said to have committed a mistake. Because, they
wrongly ascribed "moral conscience" to one of the
priestly community.

The English Chaplain (in the 2nd Act) proves
himself to be impotent and barren both physically and
morally, eventually leading to the utter failure of the
eugenic experiments. Mr. Hammingtap is pestilence itself.
From pestilence nothing creative can be attained. This
English Chaplain practically represents the moral barren-
ness of the entire priestly class. This 'impotent simple-
ton' tries every member of the family:

Vashti : The world is tired of Iddy (Mr. Hammingtap).
Maya : I am tired of Iddy.
Vashti : Iddy is a pestilence.
Maya : Iddy is a bore.
Vashti : Let us throw ourselves into the sea to
        escape from Iddy.
Maya : Let us throw Iddy into the sea that he
        may escape from himself.

Funnily enough, despite his biological as well as
moral impotency Mr. Hammingtap wants to write a sermon on
eternity: "I am writing a sermon about it. It is a
sermon on eternity." He is laughed at as 'fool', 'Salmon',

20. Act. II; p-1236.
21. Iddy, Act. II; p-1236. contd....
"Liar", "Baby", "Bastard", and "Hypocrite".

Shaw strikes another note. He attacks blind idolatry. The four wonder-children make a fetish of Praia, and that anyone has:

"Will you provoke me to box your ears; you abominable idolaters? Get up this instant. Go and scrub the floors. Do anything that is dirty and grubby and smell enough to show that you live in a world and not in a fool's paradise. If I catch you grumbling to me, a creature of the same clay as yourselves, but fortunately for you with a little more common sense, I will beat the slavishness out of your bones". 22

Even towards the end of the play Shaw once again harps on the importance of man's creative reciprocity with Life-force. We must be "worth our salt". If not "then you simply disappear: that is all. You must no longer exist". 23 Creation will survive man's destructiveness. The Angel expressly declares: "The lives which have no use, no meaning, no purpose, will fade out. You will have to justify your existence or perish. Only the elect shall survive". 24 Here the Angel

23. The Angel; Act. II; A. 1240.
24. Ibid., A. 1241. contd...
is no other than Bernard Shaw himself.

The 'Simpleton' play, on the whale, stresses man's creative reciprocity with nature in the smooth and purposeful execution of its well-designed programmes. This creative reciprocity is possible only when man is endowed with moral conscience, which is nothing but a higher understanding and superrealization. This superrealization cannot be achieved through the traditional form of Christianity. It is a mistake to attribute "moral conscience" to the priestly class, which is impotent itself.

As creation is a long process of experiments man's creative participation is an organic necessity. So, man must justify his existence, or he will be treated as unnecessary or as waste products. Man must be morally as well as creatively responsible to Life-force and also to himself. Only then human life will be meaningful and full of higher possibilities. That is why, the strain rings again and again: "Let life come to you".