CHAPTER V
Prefaces to the Religious Plays
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The plays that could be included under the 'religious' heading are *Major Barbara*, *The Shewing-up of Blanco Posnet*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *Back to Methuselah*, *Saint Joan* and *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles*.

*Major Barbara* was written in 1905 and the preface to it was written in 1906, that is, one year later.

Judging from the discussion in the preface as regards the theme of the play, the preface to *Major Barbara* could be regarded as one of the most explanatory prefaces written by Shaw.

*Majob Barbara* is a didactic play and it has several matters to preach. The basic theme of the play is the interrelation between economics and religion, though superficially one may find it to be poverty and its bearing upon religion. Poverty has been made the target of concentrated attack in the play. Both the preface and the play have waged equal attack against poverty. The ills of poverty and the importance of money have been movingly discussed in the preface under the sub-heading *The Gospel of St Andrew Undershaft*. Undershaft has been called a 'saint' and his message has been called 'gospel'. Analyzing Undershaft's attitude to poverty Shaw says that poverty is the greatest of our evils and the worst of our crimes, and the first duty to which all other considerations should be sacrificed is not to be poor. In the preface Shaw condemns the attempts of the traditional religions to uphold poverty as a virtue.
According to Shaw, the thing that should be given topmost priority in life is the acquisition of money. Shaw declares that "the universal regard for money is one hopeful fact in our civilization" (p. 122). Money represents health, strength, stamina, enterprise, education, largeness of heart and all other good things of life. As against this, poverty represents squalor, dirt, disease, cowardice and numerous such evils. According to Shaw, it is the deep realization of the Undershaft the 'mystic' that money is the first need of human life and poverty should be hated as 'vilest sin of man and society' (p. 122).

In the play a strong case has been made by Undershaft for acquisition of money and power as the basis of religion. He believes that poverty is enemy to both life and religion. It is this belief that goads him on to become the greatest financial magnate in England. What is more, Undershaft and his partner Lazarus virtually control the economic reins of Europe. It is Undershaft's firm belief that it is not a weak man but a powerful man that can be really religious. He wants every Englishman to struggle into riches like him. He says, "When it is the history of every Englishman we shall have an England worth living in".

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1 - Stuart E. Baker in his article "Logic and Religion in Major Barbara: The Syllogism of St Andrew Undershaft" has tried to show that there is no confusion or inconsistency in the thesis of the play. "Thus, although Barbara symbolizes the spiritual vision and Undershaft the material reality, they cannot be separate. Barbara and her father are opposite sides of a single coin". Modern Drama, Vol. XXI, No. 3, 1978, p. 250.
Undershaft would have no truck with poverty under any circumstances. He says to Lady Britomart, "I had rather be a thief than a pauper. I had rather be a murderer than a slave" (Act III, p. 499).

A poor man cannot be religious, as his mind is exclusively occupied with the problem of food or livelihood. Poverty destroys character; it turns men into liars and hypocrites. The profession of salvation is turned into a mockery in the 2nd Act where the Salvation Army personnel tries salvation on two poor characters, namely, Rumy Mitchens and Snobby Price, the two inveterate liars. It is poverty that has made them liars. Both exaggerate their guilts in order to give the Army personnel bigger illusion of success with them, and this they do in expectation of getting some extra help from the Army shelter. This shows poor people cannot maintain the integrity of character. Undershaft charges the Salvation Army with bribing the poor and hungry people with bread and treacle for their salvation. Undershaft maintains that it is he who saved the soul of his daughter Major Barbara by making a rich provision for her upbringing and saved her soul from the seven deadly sins. He challenges Major Barbara to stop the cheap business of saving the souls of the poor people in the Army shelters, and instead, take to salvation work among the happy, well fed, well clothed, well housed workers of his model town of Perivale St Andrews. Both Barbara and Adolphous Cusins get converted to the religion of Undershaft. It is brought home to them that a real experiment of salvation of souls can be made only with the economically liberated people. Major Barbara leaves off her job and decides to work among the financially well-off people of her father's model town, instead of working among the financially
worse off people as she did in past, with new hope, vision and inspiration. She says, "My father shall never throw it in my teeth again that my converts were bribed with bread. (She is transfigured). I have got rid of the bribe of heaven. Let God's work be done for its own sake: the work he had to create us to do because it cannot be done except by living men and women."

(Act III, p* 503). The preface has tried to show the acquisition of money as a religious work and the same is regarded as an 'article' in Undershaft's religion. In the preface Shaw notes that 'all genuinely religious people' who understand the purposes of the Life Force in creation of the human race hate poverty and love money (p. 122).

The play blasts the illusion that religious organizations are self-sufficient and the money on which these organizations run is pure. In the second Act of Major Barbara Barbara refuses to accept money from Bill Walker which he offers for expiation of his guilt. Barbara's ground for refusal was that her Army would not be bribed. In the same way she turns down her father Undershaft's offer to subscribe to the Army's collections, because, according to her, her father's money is tainted as it is earned through sale of deadly weapons and explosives meant for killing people. But soon after, her religious air and sense of self-righteousness are shattered to pieces. When she finds Mrs Baines accept ten thousand pounds, five thousand from Undershaft, the munitions maker and the other five thousand from Bodger of the manufacturer of Bodger's whisky, she loses all her grounds of self-confidence. It proves to be the greatest shock in her life. The god of her pure religion dies. She exclaims, "My God: why hast thou forsaken me?" (Act II, p* 485). In capitalistic economy all money is bound up with some kind of exploitation. The idea of pure of money in an
exploitative capitalistic set-up is a sheer illusion. When Stephen says that he will not hear the government of his country insulted, Undershaft snubs him saying that he and Lazarus are the government of England. Undershaft tells Cusins that "all religious organizations exists by selling themselves to the rich". The Salvation Army has to be saved with the money of the two worst exploiters of the country. Barbara learns the truth that religion is directly connected with the economic system. She speaks as a convert, "Turning our backs on Bodge and Undershaft is turning our backs on life." (Act III, p. 502).

The concept of the link of the religious organizations with a country's economy has been elaborately dealt with in the preface also. Shaw says in the preface, "Practically all the spare money in the country consists of a mass of rent, interest, and profit, every penny of which is bound up with crime, drink, prostitution, disease, and all the evil fruits of poverty, as inextricably as with enterprise, wealth, commercial probity and national prosperity." (p. 124). Shaw has illustrated with examples how the so-called respectable people of our society depend on 'tainted money'. Shaw says that some young clergyman may have the illusion of accepting pure money from some sweet old ladies with independent incomes and gentle and lovely ways of life. Shaw suggests such clergyman, "He has only to follow up the income of the sweet ladies to its industrial source, and there he will find Mrs Warren's profession and

the poisonous canned meat and all the rest of it. His own stipend has the same root. He must either share the world's guilt or go to another planet" (p. 125). There is no escape from the 'tainted money' except through complete social reorganisation. Shaw notes in the preface that there is no salvation through "personal righteousness, but only through the redemption of the whole nation from its vicious, lazy, competitive anarchy" (p. 125). The play preaches morality of militarism and acquisition of power for the sake of human rights. One cannot defend or assert one's rights unless one has strength or power. A people cannot reorganise a society unless one has strength or power to fight against the evil forces. Shaw says that the Salvation Army's choice of Blood and Fire for its emblem and their substitution of the drum for the organ only suggest one thing, that they have to fight the devil instead of praying at him. In the play Undershaft preaches the faith of an Armorer which means giving arms to all persons who offer an honest price for them without respect of persons or principles. Undershaft believes that acquisition of might is extremely necessary for all persons who are conscious about their individual rights and for those who sincerely seek change of society. He says that one's preparedness to kill is the ultimate test of one's conviction. He says to Barbara, that killing "is the final test of conviction, the only lever strong enough to overturn a social system, the only way of saying Must."

According to him, the so-called Democracy choosing its leaders with ballot papers is dependent on might. He says, that "the ballot paper that really governs is the paper that has a bullet wrapped up in it." (Act III, p. 499). Cusins finds in Undershaft's outlook on life a new religion- the religion of Dionysos. What Undershaft
means is the combination of acquisition of power with a worship of creation. The religion of Dionysos which keeps pace with the everlasting pace of creation is called by Borgson a 'dynamic religion'. In Undershaft's call to Cusins and Barbara to do salvation work among the economically well-placed workers of his model town, Cusins sees the hope of a new religion that will combine Nietzschean acquisition of power with conquests of spiritual heights. So there was no difficulty on the part of Cusins and Barbara to accept the challenging invitation from 'St Undershaft'.

In the preface Shaw has made a strong case for the doctrine of militarism. He says that he is not willing to subscribe to the prevalent belief that the French Revolution was caused by the writings of Rousseau, Voltaire and the Encyclopedists. Shaw offers to say that it was caused by those people who were prepared to use force against the agents of oppression. Shaw notes that in the nineteenth century despite England's having a galaxy of powerful minds like Bentham, Mill, Dickens, Ruskin, Butler and Morris, social reorganisation was not possible in England. Shaw himself admits that his methods are of no use even if he were Mill, Marx, Voltaire, Rousseau, Ruskin, Butler all rolled into one. Shaw refers to the armed upsurge in Russia against the Tsarist rule, and the incident of throwing bomb at the Spanish Royal couple by a young desperado, and comments that such violence is the natural consequence of our unjust social system. Shaw cautions that morality of militarism may become the "true morality of the moment" unless the social injustices such as social inequalities, unemployment and dehumanising poverty are eradicated before it is too late. Shaw exhorts the religious bodies like the Salvation army to take up the fight in behalf of the oppressed and downtrodden, otherwise they are
bound to be considered "hypocrites and allies of their sweaters and oppressors." (p. 131).

The play attacks the system of Confession conducted by the Salvation Army. Snobby Price and Rummy Mitchens deliberately exaggerate their guilt in order to give the Army personnel the satisfaction of a bigger success of soul-saving in return for which they expected greater consideration as regards relief from the Army shelter. Snobby Price also stole one pound from the drum which was left there by Bill Walker after Barbara refused to accept the same as the price of expiation for his guilt. The confessions of people like Snobby Price and Rummy Mitchens do not mean any change of heart. They are just theatricalities: external rituals. They just pass through the ritual of Confession only to get some material assistance.

In the preface Shaw has attacked the practice of Confession in strong terms. The practices of Confession and Atonement cannot turn a sinner into an angel. These ritualities cannot improve human conduct unless they effect actual change of heart. The efforts to disguise human actions by some rituals cannot do society any good. Men have to be cent per cent responsible for all their actions. Unless the rituals of Confession and Expiation can turn human beings into self-responsible creatures, these rituals should better not exist. A ritual cannot undo an evil action. The practice of Confession or Atonement gives licence to the evil doers to continue their evil works because they know that these rituals can officially undo all their misdeeds. Shaw calls the practice of Confession "a nasty lying habit" and says that forgiveness, absolution and atonement are 'figments'. The practices of absolution and atonement destroy men's sense of responsibility. Shaw comments, "You will never get
high morality from people who conceive that their misdeeds are revocable and pardonable, or in a society where absolution and expiation are officially provided for us all" (p. 128).

The penal system has been a subject of attack in both the play and the preface. Shaw says in the preface, "Punishment is only a pretence of cancelling one crime by another" (p. 128). Punishment is only a legalised revenge. The guiding principle of penal system should be the mending of human character. The conventional system of punishment as legalized revenge has been theoretically attacked in the play. Bill Walker assaults Jenny Hill on charge of taking away his girl to another shelter and slaps Rummy Mitchens, an elderly woman, when she tries to interfere in his violence. After this, however, Jenny Hill forgives him, blesses him and prays for him, but Rummy Mitchens retains her revengeful attitude towards him. Bill Walker feels remorse for his action against Jenny Hill and wants to make up for his guilt by paying one pound to the Army, but Barbara refuses to accept his money on the ground that the Army will not be bought off by anybody's money. Bill Walker does not get the satisfaction of paying for his guilt. He feels unnerved and his heart burns with the conviction of his sin. Barbara will accept nothing but his soul which means a complete change of heart on Bill's part. Thus, Bill Walker finds himself in a difficult situation. The Salvation Army will not punish him, nor will it take his money either. Shaw says in the preface that in behaving in this manner the Salvation Army "instinctively grasps the central truth of Christianity and discards its central superstition: that central truth being the vanity of revenge and punishment, and that central superstition the salvation of the world by the gibbet" (p. 128).

But the same Bill Walker, who is at a loss over his action towards Jenny Hill, behaves on the principle of retaliation with Rummy
Mithchens, because she retains her vindictiveness towards him.

Bill Walker is very angry over the loss of his money which he left on the drum and Rummy Mithchens expresses her delight at this loss. At this, Walker hurls a mug at her, however the mug misses the target as she is able to run away quickly in time. Robbing against stealing, flogging against striking and murdering against killing are matters of Crosstianity. Christianity aims at moral or spiritual upliftment, Crosstianity aims at only physical punishment of the people gone astray. Barbara behaves from the angle of Christianity and Rummy behaves from the angle of Crosstianity.

Shaw believes that the world has no moral future as long as Crosstianity persists.

In the beginning of the preface, in an attempt to trace the sources of his ideas, Shaw has referred to a novel entitled A Day's Ride: A Life's Romance written by the Irish novelist Charles Lever and says that the portrait of Potts, the hero of the novel is an illustration of "scientific natural history" (p. 116). Shaw also states in the preface that Barbara's return to the Salvation Army "may yet provide a subject for the dramatic historian of the future" (p. 125). Major Barbara dramatizes the relation between material power and spiritual vision, i.e. economics and religion. 'Saint' Undershaft successfully converts both Barbara and Cusins to a new religion which is inextricably bound up with the material progress of society. This could be called Shaw's own illustration of the 'natural history' of his time.¹ This new

¹ - In the article "The Natural History of Major Barbara" Kurt Tetzeli v Rosador contends, "The seeming paradoxes and contradictions of Major Barbara, can be resolved by relating them to the reality of the Shavian concept of natural history to his Weltanschauung. Modern Drama, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1974, p. 151."
religion of Barbara and Cusins takes material or economic prosperity as the basis for ascension of society from one stage to another higher stage.¹

The preface discusses certain other matters which have little bearing on the play. Among them are, illusion of personal immortality, the distinction between character and circumstances, the equidistribution of national income among the citizens, and how the legal system has been outgrown by the industrial civilization. Apart from these minor discrepancies, it could be safely maintained that the preface to Major Barbara is one of the most well-connected prefaces written by Shaw. Ivor Brown quite rightly observes that Shaw "gave his skill in exposition to the stating of Undershft's case"². This skill is found not only in the play, but also in the preface.

The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet was written in 1909 and the forty one page preface (P.H. ed.) to the play was written in 1910, that is one year later. As regards theme or content, the play and the preface are completely incongruous with each other. It would be wrong to say that the preface has nothing to do with the play - the preface is not about the theme of the play, but about whether the play belongs to the kind deserving of licence for performance. The preface discusses, in general, the problem of selecting plays for

1 - Shaw in his essay The Quintessence of Ibsenism analyzes the nature of social progress. "The point to seize is that social progress takes effect through the replacement of old institutions by new ones; and since every institution involves the recognition of the duty conforming to it, progress must involve the repudiation of an established duty at every step". Major Critical Essays (Constable, London, 1955), p. 17.

licence by the Censor. The preface has exhaustively discussed the different aspects of the system of censorship in England. The preface, is a classic document by Shaw on the principles of censorship on the one hand, and on the problem of morality on the other. The preface, by its dissertation on morality, serves as a guideline for many of the plays of Shaw, because, the problem of morality is an essential ingredient in almost all the plays by him.

The preface discusses the report of the Joint Select Committee on censorship, the advisability and reliability of the Lord Chamberlaine as the Censor, the dangers of enlightened censorship, the efficacy of the Board of Experts to supplement the work of the Lord Chamberlaine, the practicability of the suggestion to institute King's Proctor to give the official legal opinion on plays, the demerits of the proposed Privy Council and the feasibility of instituting a permanent Examiner of plays.

In the preface Shaw has laid down a long list of conditions and principles for the working of censorship in England. Shaw, all along, has insisted that censorship, whatever its kind, must allow for heresy and challenges to morality for the sake of advancement of the social thought.

At the beginning of the preface Shaw has declared that The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet is a "religious tract in dramatic form". The message of the play is doubtlessly religious. The play tries to present a 'rotten world' where everything is 'rotten'. The hero, Blanco Posnet, persistently harps on the rottenness of the world he lives in. Here, everything is rotten - the town is 'rotten', Elder Daniels is 'rottenest liar', the Sheriff is 'rotten', the foremen is 'rotten', the jury is 'rotten', the Vigilance Committee is 'rotten', the horse is 'rottenest', the game is 'rotten', Blanco Posnet himself
is a 'rotten thing', and a 'fraud and failure', and witness Femmy Evans is a 'dirt', a 'painted slut', a 'kept woman' and a 'lying jade'. Femmy Evans has 'immoral relations with every man in this town' including the Sheriff, the judge. Thus, the prevailing atmosphere in this town is overwhelmingly an irreligious and polluted one. One cannot expect a good or a genuinely religious work in such an atmosphere. But the ways of the Providence are inscrutable and mysterious. The unexpected has happened and it has happened through Blanco Posnet who is avowedly irreligious and has "no taste for pious company" and whose usual prayer is "Lord, keep me wicked till I die". It is a cardinal Shavian belief that no man is wholly good or wholly bad. Blanco Posnet says in the play, "We are all frauds. There's none of us real good and none of us real bad" (p. 602). Blanco known to be 'wicked' and irreligious does a good work without any hope of benefit from anybody or any quarter. He is faced with an unknown woman with a sickly child in her arms and the child has to be rushed to a doctor for emergency attendance. He lends out his horse without caring to take her address first. He does not know that the horse he has lent out to the woman does not belong to his brother Elder Daniels, but to the Sheriff of the town from whom the former borrowed it without his knowledge. Blanco risks hanging on the double charge of stealing the horse and then trading it away.

The ways of Providence are so mysterious that the child for whom Blanco risks death, dies and lies like a lead on the lap of his

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1 - About the realist who looks immoral to the convention-ridden people, Shaw says in The Quintessence of Ibsenism, "The man who has risen above the danger and the fear that his acquisitiveness will lead him to theft, his temper to murder, and his affections to debauchery: this is he who is denounced as an arch-scoundrel and libertine, and thus confounded with the lowest because he is the highest", Major Critical Essays (Constable, 1955), p. 30.
mother. Again, despite the over-all rotten atmosphere there are characters who 'go soft' under some inexplicable inspiration. There are two games played— one is the usual 'rotten game' and the other is the 'great game' played by an unseen hand. This double-game gets manifested when Blanco Posnet goes soft on the ailing child, Providence goes hard on the ailing child, Strapper Kemp goes hard on Blanco, Feemy Evans and the Sheriff go soft on Blanco in a criss-cross way. Blanco tells his brother, Elder Daniels, that God has always a 'trick up his sleeve.' Referring to God, Blanco says that He is a 'sly one' and 'mean one' and there is no knowing when He uses people for His purpose by some inspiration of His.

The message of the play is that good works have to be done for their own sake and not for any benefit. It also says that the rigid distinction between the good and the evil according to our artificial morality is of little avail. The morality of the Life Force is different from the conventional morality of society. That is why Blanco Posnet who declares himself a 'fraud and failure' is capable of a great religious act which very few people could do with 'their life at stake'.

In the preface Shaw maintains that as life is dynamic, morality cannot remain fixed. "An attack on morals may turn out to be the salvation of the race" (p. 413). Advocating a sympathetic attitude to heresy, Shaw says, "The toleration of heresy and shocks to morality on the stage, and even their protection against the prejudices and superstitions which necessarily enter largely into morality and public opinion, are essential to the welfare of the nation" (p. 428). The allegedly blasphemous lines against God in the play to which the Censor objected are not immoral in the sense that, thereby, Shaw wanted to distinguish between the conventional morality of the
society and the original morality of God (by God Shaw only means) the Life Force), in other words, between the 'rotten game' of the conventional society and the bigger game of the Life Force. As regards the Censor's demand for deletion of the allegedly blasphemous lines against God, Shaw says in the preface that such a deletion would deprive the play of its very 'light'. Shaw's objection is quite understandable, because under the apparent trivialities or blasphemies the play contains a solid religious substance. Though the themes of the play and the preface are in greater part, inharmonious, still, Shaw's views on censorship and the question of morality in the preface could enlighten and prepare a reader as to the nature and the spirit of the play.

_Androcles and the Lion_ was written in 1911 and the preface to the play was written in 1916, that is, five years later. The preface is one of the longest, covering fifty seven pages (P. H. ed.) altogether. In the preface Shaw has attempted an elaborate exposition of Christianity in its historical perspective. He has tried to trace the origin and development of historical Christianity from the psychological angle and find a solution to the inconsistencies in the gospels. Shaw has also discussed the apostolic Christianity and its ritualistic overtones. He has shown how the Pauline Christianity with its practices of Confession and Atonement has undermined the essential message of Christianity. Two kinds of Christianity emerge from the long discourse in the preface— one is the Christianity of Christ and the other is the Christianity of the apostles. The preface casts light on the teachings of Christ, equidistribution of income, and universal brotherhood and considers
the feasibility and practicability of his teachings in the context of modern economics and modern situation. Shaw considers the teachings of Christ on the above subjects worth adoption by all modern states.

It is not the preface but the epilogue which casts light on the kind of conflict that the play, Androcles and the Lion dramatises. Shaw says in the epilogue that in Androcles and the Lion he has attempted the dramatization of the conflict not between a false theology and a real one but between the ruling class and the propaganda that threatens to overthrow the ruling class and the established law and order organized and maintained by the ruling class in the name of religion and justice. In other words, it is a picture of conflict between the established morality and the would-be morality that threatens to dislodge the established morality. Shaw further says in the epilogue that his martyrs are martyrs of all time and his persecutors are persecutors of all time. Thereby, Shaw means that the conflict in Androcles and the Lion is of eternal nature which means that the religious conflicts are never the conflicts of abstract religions— they are the conflicts of material interest. The Christians were persecuted by the Romans not because the idolatry of the Romans was supposed to be superior to Christianity, but because Christianity with its new set of moral and social values was a positive threat to the vested interests of the Roman Haves-and-Holders. Thus, it is the question of material interest that made the Romans so dead set against the Christians.

Christianity had several reasons to invite the wrath of the Roman Haves-and-Holders. When Christianity preached equality of all human beings before God, it went against the Roman institution of slavery and made the Roman emperor equal to the lowest of his low subjects. By condemning private property, Christianity could have
infuriated the entire propertied class of the Roman empire. Again, Christianity by advocating dissociation of work from money payments could have infuriated the entire trading class. By preaching that men cannot serve two masters—money and God at the same time and maintaining that the rich men shall never enter heaven, Christianity could naturally have earned the wrath of the propertied class. And also by preaching the dissolution of the family ties and preaching the dark sides of the conjugal ties, Christianity could have outraged men's sense of private property in women and children. However, the play has not cared to dramatize how the teachings of Christianity actually harmed the material interests of the Roman Haves-and-Holders. Dr. Sen Gupta pertinently comments, "It is not clearly shown how the interests of the Haves-and-Holders will be threatened by a propaganda carried on by the missionaries like Androcles, Ferrovius, and Lavinia". Four types of religious characters have been introduced in the play. Lavinia takes to religion in the its actual sense of the term. She has grasped the real spirit of Christianity and is prepared to die 'for something greater than dreams and stories' of religion. She understands life as something to be used for the betterment of the world. When she says that she is going to die for God, she means the Christian conception of God. The Christian conception of God emphasizes the inseparability of man and God. In an analysis of Christian conception of God, Shaw says in the preface, "God is your father: you are here to do God's work: and you and your father are one" (p. 574). Lavinia has the evolutionery urge to

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realize Life's purpose and "strive for the coming of God who is not yet". Shaw says in the preface, "Christianity is a step in moral evolution which is independent of any individual preacher" (p. 548). Ferrovius, a case of Pauline Christianity, is torn between his reckless fighting tendency and Christian pacifism. As a Pauline Christian he believes only in the rituals of Christianity without having the essential religious fire in him. He is always afraid that his instinct of fighting may betray him at any time. Pintho has no real faith in Christianity. He is simply swept off by its wave. He believes that his superficial adherence to Christianity will get him across the gates to heaven. He says, "I'll repent afterwards. I fully mean to die in the arena: I'll die a martyr and go to heaven: but not this time, not now, not until my nerves are better....Oh, will no one tell me where the altar is?" (Act II, p. 695). His Christianity is the worst form of Pauline Christianity that preaches that the rite of Confession is enough to get one a place in the heaven. He is a convert to the stories and miracles of Christianity which are none of its real substance. To Ferovius he says, "If you die in the arena, you will be a martyr: and all the martyrs go to heaven, no matter what they have done" (Act I, p. 692). In the preface Shaw condemns this sort of Christianity in strong terms. He says, "The conviction is spreading that to encourage to believe that though his sin be as scarlet he can be made whiter than snow by an easy exercise of self-conceit is to encourage him to be rascal" (p. 597). In this connection Shaw quotes Ibsen as saying, "Your God is an old man whom you cheat". Pintho is a specimen of such cheats.

Androcles, after whom the play is titled, is described by Shaw in the epilogue as a 'naturalist humanitarian'. He is a Christian
who practises the Christian message of love in letter and spirit. He cares very little about the outer crust of religion. One thing he would never compromise is his love of animals. He identifies himself completely with the cause of the animals. He says, to Ferrovius, "I really dont think I could consent to go to heaven if I thought there were to be no animals there". (Act I, p. 692). It is a "miracle" for him that he can live with his 'tarmagent' wife 'without beating her' (p. 696). This is also an extension of his Christian love. His wife complains of his habit of bringing home 'every stray cat and a lost cur, and a lame duck in the countryside' (p. 685). If love is religion, Androcles could be called a great Christian and a deeply religious man. Love conquers everything and he conquers all sorts of wild animals by his love. Though love of animals is an important part of the theme of the play, the preface does not say anything about the same.1

The preface has highlighted Jesus's disapproval of marriage and family ties. The conjugal and family ties are hindrances to men's personal evolution. Jesus is said to have maintained that a man cannot serve God and his spouse simultaneously. The difficulties of conjugal life have been beautifully expressed through the dramatisation of the relation between Androcles and his wife Maegira. His wife is a regular shrew and remains a source of

1 - About Shaw's love of animals, G. K. Chesterton comments, "He would defy any laws or lose any friends to show mercy to the humblest beast or the most hidden bird. Yet I cannot recall in the whole of his works or in the whole of his conversation a single word of any tenderness with any bird or beast". George Bernard Shaw. Bodley Head, London, 1961, p. 69. Shaw's criticism of vivisection in the preface to The Doctor's Dilemma, his essay "Killing for Sport" and his play Androcles and the Lion which dramatises great love of animals are a few of the cases which disprove Chesterton's contention.
permanent trouble for him. He displays a wonderful Christian patience towards his wife. His wife refuses to be a Christian like him. Androcles's outlook on life is vastly different from that of his wife. She wants her husband to remain a man of the rut like others. Androcles loves animals more than his wife. The wife fails to understand the husband's mind. The husband and the wife belong to the two opposite poles in respects of pursuit and temperament. The conjugal life of Androcles clearly illustrates how marriage can be a curse to certain people. This kind of marriage can be a veritable hell for every thinking man or woman.

The play dramatises certain other matters which have not been mentioned at all in the preface. The ruling class and its morality, religion and culture are supposed to be 'respectable'\(^1\). Maegira requests her husband Androcles to 'sacrifice as all respectable people do'. The people who are opposed to the ruling class are supposed to be people of bad character. Maegira voices the opinion of the ruling class when she says that the Christians are 'the lowest of the low'. Another point dramatised in the play but not mentioned in the preface is the eternal conceit of the ruling class that they are always in the right and the oppositional forces are always in the wrong. The Emperor in the play is the symbol of the ruling class. The ruling class takes every opportunity to defend its interest and is ready to snatch off every credit for its works.

\(^1\) The idea of 'respectability' of the ruling class can be related to Marx's famous statement, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas". Marx & Engels. Selected Works. Vol: I (P.P. Moscow, 1969), p. 47. Deducing from the same premise Bertrand Russell says, "A good man is one whose opinions and activities are pleasing to the holders of power". Sceptical Essays (Unwin, London, 1977), p. 87.
When the Emperor finds Ferrovius a dangerous fighter, he decides to recruit him for his Praetorian Guard. When Lavinia asks the Emperor whether her friends should die after her brother's recruitment, the Emperor promptly says, "There has never been the slightest idea of harming them" (Act II, p. 700). The ruling class always values its defenders above every other thing. The Emperor declares when he finds the persecution unnecessary, "We cannot afford to throw away lions as if they were mere slaves" (p. 702).

When the Emperor finds the lion stronger than the gladiators, he is compelled to release both Androcles and the lion. The Emperor takes full credit for his release and says, "You see, how magnanimous we Romans are, Androcles. We suffer you to go in peace" (p. 702). In the Epilogue Shaw holds that the Emperor who has 'no sense of the value of Common people's lives, and amuses himself with killing as carelessly as with sparing' is a 'silly-clever-gentleman' who can be made 'a monster' by idolizing him. He is a specimen of the imperial power that hides its monstrous selfishness under the coat of innocence.

A. C. Ward comments that 'More than most of Shaw's plays Androcles and the Lion needs to be considered in close relation to its preface if its serious purpose is not to be underestimated.'

As the preface is a long dissertation on the different aspects of Christianity, the necessity of considering the play in 'close relation' to the preface cannot be denied, but when one compares the themes of the play and the preface it is difficult to find the 'close relation' between the play and the preface.

The prologue dramatises the conjugal relation between Androcles
and his wife Maegira. As said before, this bears relation to the preface because in the preface Shaw has elaborately dealt with Jesus's disapproval of the conjugal and family ties. In the 1st Act the Captain announces to the prisoners their impending martyrdom and also tells them about the alternative of saving themselves by throwing incense at the altar of the Gods. The exchange between the Captain and the Lavinia brings out the essential religious zeal of Lavinia. The preface does not attempt to analyze how the Christians were more religious than the Romans though there is a criticism of the Pauline Christianity. Shaw attributes many of the lapses of the Pauline Christianity to Paul's Roman legacy (pp. 589-91). The preface also does not shed any light on the compelling force behind all martyrdoms. The 2nd Act shows the different kinds of response and reaction from the four Christian prisoners faced with imminent martyrdom. The preface does not directly concern itself with this aspect of the play but contains sharp criticism of the Pauline Christianity and its impact on the character of the people. The comic episode of the lion in the last part of the play provides fun, but it also reveals animal psychology of which Androcles has good command. The preface does not say anything about the love of animals or animal psychology at all. The preface is principally concerned with the two kinds of Christianity— the Christianity of Christ and the Christianity of Paul and examines the practicability of the teachings of Christ in the modern age. The play is about the problem of martyrdom and different kinds of response and reaction in the Christians facing martyrdom. Thus, the relation between the play and the preface is not 'close' as one expects, rather a bit distant. Rather, the postscript to the play with its comments on the eternal nature of martyrdom, the kind of conflict
in the play and its comments on the characters and their responses is directly and vitally linked with the theme of the play.

*Back to Methuselah* begun in 1919 was finished in 1921. The forty six page preface to the play (P. H. ed.) was written in 1921. The preface is a passionate discourse upon the history of the theory of evolution and Shaw's own philosophy of *Creative Evolution*.

In the beginning of the preface Shaw has criticised the modern education system and the 'diabolical efficiency' of technical education, and has referred to the neglect of political science as a branch of study in his time. Shaw, then, engages in a review of the history of the theories of evolution. According to Shaw, the Darwinian theory of evolution is a theory of blind, mechanical and fatalistic evolution in which the will or mind has no part to play. Shaw attributes the first world war to the Darwinian mechanical theory of evolution. Against Darwinism, Shaw upholds the Lamarckian theory of evolution and holds that the will is the basic thing behind evolution. Shaw contends that man can will into existence his desired kind of evolution. Shaw says that Creative evolution is unmistakeably the religion of twentieth century and it is expected to be the religion for mankind from twentieth century onward. He maintains that problem is not of a 'new religion' but of distilling the eternal spirit of religion and extricating it from the 'sludgy residue of temporalities and legends that are making belief impossible' (p. 538). Creative evolution as a science of metabiology fulfils the first condition of all religions taking hold of humanity. It is a synthesised religion with the essentials of all religions. A new religion requires many parables and legends, and accordingly, *Man and Superman* was offered as the parable of the religion of *Creative Evolution*. In the same way
Back to Methuselah has been offered as the 'second legend' and also as the 'beginning of a Bible' for the religion of Creative Evolution.

In the first part of Back to Methuselah called In the Beginning, Shaw takes up the story of Adam and Eve in his bid to portray the beginning of human life and its morality: the nucleus of human civilisation. The serpent teaches Adam and Eve as to how to get rid of the boredom of one single, unbroken eternal life. It teaches them that continuation of life is possible through death and birth. All they require is mere will. In the preface Shaw holds that will is the prime mover behind every act of evolution. In the first part of Back to Methuselah Shaw has tried to show the singular importance of willing and hoping behind the growth of the early human civilisation and its morality. Lilith created Adam and Eve out of her own body by dint of willing. The Serpent says, "When Lilith told me what she had imagined in our silent language (for there were no words then) I bade her desire it and will it: and then, to our great wonder, the thing she had desired and willed created itself in her under the urging of her will..." (p. 858). The Serpent also willed into getting a second snake out of her own body. The Serpent admits that she had her new hood and new snake through sheer willing. The Serpent says to Eve, "...And I am very wilful, and must have what I want: and I have willed and willed and willed. And I have eaten strange things: stones and apples that you are afraid to eat" (p. 856). The Serpent maintains that Adam and Eve can procreate children if they will. Eve also admits, "The thought that we must not cease to be comes from within" (p. 856). In the preface Shaw says with reference to Weismann's experiment on mice that an
'urgent conviction' is necessary on the part of the subject for acquiring or transmitting any kind of physical change (p. 525). The Serpent says that Adam and Eve's joint willing is necessary for begetting a second generation of Adams and Eves. The Serpent says to Eve about the necessity of caring and willing, "...It is silly to say you do not care. You do care. It is that care that will prompt your imagination: inflame your desires: make your will irresistible: and create out of nothing" (p. 359). Adam and Eve invent death by willing and procreate children because they are goaded to do so by their will.

When new Adams and new Eves appear, the problems of morality begin to arise. The characters suffer from fear arising from the uncertainty about their relations. They decide to bind future by coming to certain decisions and get rid of uncertainty. The first part of the Pentateuch shows the evolution of morality, though the preface does not deal with the problems of morality at all.

Cain takes to fighting and killing while Adam is left in his profession of digging and gardening. Tubal takes to pottery and Enoch takes to religious meditation. With Cain, Life takes a destructive drift. He moves from adventure to adventure and hungers for abundance of life. Cain is the first formidable weapon used by will for its further expression. In the preface Shaw has argued in favour of Lamarcho-Schopenhauerian conception of the world as an expression of Will and has also referred to Christ's exhortation of the people to live 'more abundantly' (p. 514).

Both Adam and Eve are distressed at the destructive drift of Cain, but the fact remains that Cain is just an instrument in the hands of Will, or the Life Force. Shaw's contention in the preface that the offsprings repeat in condensed form the earlier history
of progress and makes further progress than is achieved by the ancestor has been sought to be dramatised through the relation between Cain and Adam. Cain says to Adam, "...I have not lived as long as you; but I know all there is to be known of the craft of digging. By quitting it I have set myself free to learn nobler crafts of which you know nothing." (pp. 865-66) Eve, anxious about the preservation and better expression of Life, is not satisfied at her own spinning, or her husband's digging or Cain's profession of killing. She expects higher works. She says, "Man does not live by bread alone. There is something else. We do not yet know what it is; but someday we shall find out..." (p. 869). This longing for putting life to better use is in keeping with Shaw's religion of Creative Evolution as propounded in the preface. Thus, the first part of Back to Methuselah can be said to have strong links with the preface.

In the second part entitled The Gospel of the Brothers Barnabas, the reaction to a proposal for fixing the span of human life at three hundred years among politicians and ordinary men has been dramatised. The cure that the two biologists, Franklyn Barnabas and his brother Conrad Barnabas, suggest is that the span of human life should be raised to three hundred years because the present span of three score and ten is too insufficient a time for any kind of meaningful existence. The rulers, according to Franklyn, require "a couple of hundred years training and experience" (p. 884). In the preface Shaw contends that the question of raising the span of human life to three hundred years is a matter of willing. He says, "If on opportunist grounds Man fixes the term of his life at three score and ten years, he can equally fix it at three hundred or three thousand, or even at the genuine circumstantial limit..."
When the Barnabas brothers announce their scheme of three hundred years' span of human life, Burge and Lubin, the two leading demagogues of the British democracy, begin to consider the impact of the scheme on the coming election and their political career. Henry Hopkins Lubin finds the proposal 'all moonshine' and considers Franklyn 'the maddest of all cranks' for it. According to Lubin, the plan has no bearing upon 'practical politics' and considers it to be a joke. On the other hand, Joyce Burge foresees great election benefits from the scheme. He decides to launch a Back to Methuselah campaign and take the opposition right out of its depth. Both the politicians fail to look beyond their selfish personal matters or consider the repercussions of the scheme on human life and civilisation. In the preface Shaw has criticised the role of the unthinking European politicians of his time. Commenting on the contemporary politics Shaw says in the preface, "Neither the rulers nor the ruled understand high politics. They do not even know that there is such a branch of knowledge as political science". The Prime Ministers also according to Shaw 'though rated as mature, devote their time between golf course and the Treasury Bench in Parliament'. Both the politicians in the play fail to give due consideration to the scheme of the Barnabas brothers affecting the whole human civilisation.

In the play Haslam and Savvy want to know about the kind of persons that would materialise the scheme of living for three hundred years. Conrad replies that there is no knowing about that and the 'first man to live three hundred years may not have the slightest notion that he is going to do it, and may be the loudest laughter of the lot'. When Haslam maintains that they might not be among the first inaugurators of the scheme, Franklyn
replies that none could say anything about that. The Life Force
would select some people with necessary vitality and intensity of
will required for living for three centuries. In his discussion
with Burge and Lubin, Franklyn says, "...Man is not God's last
word: God can still create. If you cannot do His work He will
produce some being who can" (p. 888). In the preface Shaw has
argued that the present shape of human civilization is disappoint-
ing and there is possibility of replacement of the human race by
a better species with a longer span of life. Shaw says in the
preface, "The power that produced Man when monkey was not up to the
mark, can produce a higher creature than Man if Man does not come
up to the mark" (p. 506).

It is clear that the proposal of the scheme of raising the
span of human life up to three hundred years as dramatised in this
part of Back to Methuselah is completely in tune with Shaw's argu-
ment in the preface.

In the third part of Back to Methuselah called The Thing
Happens the conflict of the existing laws of the society of the
short-livers with average span of seventy years and the challenge
coming to the existing laws from the growing evolution of the
long-livers with the average span of three hundred years has been
dramatised.

The cinema show arranged by the record office for the enter-
tainment of the American inventor reveals a startling story: the
four persons that previously died by drowning, namely, Archbishop
Haslam, Archbishop Stickit, President Dickension, General Bullyboy
were none other than the present living Archbishop of York. When
confronted with President Burge-Lubin, Accountant-General Barnabas
and Chief Secretary Confucius, Archbishop of York admits that the
matter was true and says that he had to stage all these deaths only to escape the troubles imposed upon him by the existing law. Archbishop of York further reveals that he is now two hundred eighty three and is expecting to complete three centuries. He ascribes his inner inspiration for three hundred years' span of life to a book entitled *The Gospel of Brothers Barnabas* written in 1924. The existing law retires a person at forty three and Archbishop Haslam was condemned to unemployment after forty three, though he was not old in any sense of the term. Still, he had two kinds of difficulties—on the one hand, he retained unusual vitality and youthfulness and was quite fit for working and, on the other hand, his claim for pension was not entertained because he could not prove his old age. Hence, he had to make use of the invention of breathing under water for staging several deaths and live the lives of four additional characters besides his real one. Domestic Minister Mrs Lutestring who is now two hundred seventy four years old also admits that she too also had to stage different lives in different places and recounts her long years of drudgery and pension difficulties because she 'looked younger and younger' though her years increased.

President Burge-Lubin, a happy-go-lucky and philandering sort of fellow who leaves his official works to others, is astounded at every revelation of the long-livers. Accountant General Barnabas, a satire on the British bureaucracy, is hysterical in his reaction against the growth of the long-livers creating serious administrative problems. The preface which speaks about the necessity of raising the span of human life does not say anything about the possible reaction among the short-livers against the evolution of long livers in their society threatening eventual replacement of the short-livers by the long-livers. Of course, in the preface
Shaw has indicted the governing classes of Europe for their lack of religion and false education. The wisdom of Chief Secretary Confucius has been contrasted with the ignorance and foolishness of Accountant General Barnabas and President Burge-Lubin, and thereby, the deficiencies of the English race have been sought to be showed up. The preface which has slashed out at the Neo-Darwinian civilization of Europe and the false education of the governing classes to whom fighting was a 'religion and killing an accomplishment' has not dwelt upon the deficiencies of the English race in particular.

Mrs Lutestring regrets that she could not meet a single grown-up person in her life time. She considers the political leaders like Burge-Lubin 'all such children'. She also reveals that her second husband was a painter and he died at the highest state of his powers. He took fifty years to learn his trade, but death snatched him before he could put to use the knowledge and experience that he gathered through fifty years of his life. Mrs Lutestring also holds that he would have been the greatest painter of all time if he could have lived as long as she. Archbishop Haslam says that people live in 'confusion, and immaturity and primitive animalism' for the first hundred years of their life. This has reference to the preface in which Shaw maintains that long life is extremely essential for fruitful use of human life. He says "...Men do not live long enough; they are for all purposes of high civilization, mere children when they die" (p. 506). Shaw has also referred to Sidney and Beatrice Webb "the most devoted and indefatigable students" of political science in England who required forty years of preliminary work to publish some treatises 'comparable to Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, to formulate a political constitution
adequate to modern needs. Thus, it will be seen that the problem of the evolution of long-livers with three hundred years' span of life dramatised in this part of *Back to Methuselah* has links with Shaw's thesis in the preface. But the fun created by the foolish reaction of the short-livers against the evolution of long livers and the deficiencies and defaults of the English race presented in this part of the pentateuch have almost nothing to do with the preface.

The fourth part of *Back to Methuselah* entitled The tragedy of the Elderly Gentleman attempts a dramatisation of the conflict between the culture and civilization of the short-livers with those of the long livers around the year 3000 A.D. When the Elderly Gentleman revisits Ireland, the land of his ancestors, he chances to meet some long-livers who fail to understand no fewer than sixteen words and phrases used by him, such as, pilgrimage, decency, pauper, trespass, landlord, sneer, shilling, introduction, improper female, civilized country, family relationship, nap, putting a friend in his place, marriage, embarrassment blush etc. This shows that the way of thinking and the outlook on life of the long-livers are different from those of the short livers and the difference in the way of thinking has also affected their vocabulary. In his talks with Zoo, a long-liver in her Primary, the Elderly Gentleman criticises the men of science, medical profession, and the practice of vivisection in his society. His views are in concord with Shaw's views on these subjects as expressed in the prefaces to *Back to Methuselah*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *The Heartbreak House*, and *Saint Joan*. The capital of the British Empire has been shifted to Baghdad of Middle East. Neither the play nor the preface gives any reason for this shift of the British capital to Baghdad from London. The
Elderly Gentleman further reveals that in between the twentieth century and the thirtieth century, the Irish and the Jewish races, after a period of itineration through the world vanish from human knowledge. The preface does not say anything about the future extinction of the Irish and the Jewish races from the earth. Zoo also tells the Elderly Gentleman that in her land the persons reverting to short life are weeded out by killing them because of several faults of theirs. Among the faults of the short-livers are their lack of self-control, their being 'tormented by depraved appetites and superstitions' and their inability to 'keep free from pain and depression' (p. 725). The preface which emphasizes the necessity of long life has not dwelt upon the actual differences between short life and long life. In the preface Shaw has made note of the fact that relapse occurs in the course of every evolution of a thing or a being. "We can lose a habit and discard an organ when we no longer need them, just as we acquired them; but this process is slow and broken by relapses" (p. 510-11).

In the second part of The Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman Cain Adamson Napoleon, a war—hero, who is pathologically inclined to fighting and winning victories, is shot at by the Oracle when the former asks the latter about the way he should live so that he could die in glory and satisfy his genius for fighting until he dies. The man who takes to killing human beings for his glory reacts sharply against the Oracle's action of shooting at him and maintains ridiculously that the Oracle has no 'sense of sacredness of human life' and 'no thought' for his 'wife and children'. This episode satirises the war-heroes and shows that the long-livers have rejected war and war-faddists from their scheme of the universe. In the preface Shaw has criticised the 'romantic school
boy patriots of England to whom 'fighting is a religion and killing an accomplishment' (p. 505). When the Envoy from Baghdad, the capital of the British Commonwealth, seeks an interview with the Oracle of the temple of Galway, the Oracle expresses her hatred for the power-politics of the demagogues of Baghdad. When he asks for some suggestions as to the way the government should face the coming election, the Oracle repeats what she said to the British Prime Minister, Sir Fuller Eastwind fifteen years ago, 'Go home, poor fool'. By this remark, the Oracle expresses her deep hatred for the unprincipled power politics of the short-livers of Baghdad.

In the preface Shaw has discussed the ignorance of the European politicians of his time and calls them all 'defectives' (p. 505). The Elderly Gentleman asks for the permission of the Oracle to stay back in the land of his forefathers, and stands facing her in expectation of an answer. The Oracle gazes into his eyes and her very look kills him. This shows that the long-livers attain unfathomable mental and physical powers of which the short-livers are quite incapable. The short-livers cannot even withstand the very look of the Oracle. The Preface which has advocated long life has not thrown any light on the range of physical and mental powers that the long-livers might attain in future.

It will be seen that this part of Back to Methuselah is connected with the doctrine of long life enunciated in the preface, though one cannot get any guidance from the preface as regards other details such as the way of life of the long-livers and the causes of extraordinary mental and physical powers of the long-living oracles.

In As Far As Thought Can Reach the fifth part of Back to Methuselah Shaw has tried to portray the highly evolved human
society of the year 31920 A.D. In that distant society of future
the human beings are shown to have dispensed with the painful
process of procreation by developing a process of begetting children
from eggs. This means that they have turned from mammals into
oviparous animals. The preface does not say anything about the
possibility of evolution of human beings into oviparous animals in
distant future.¹ The Ancients who are of Methuselic age seem to
spend their days in meditation in woods and have outgrown all
interest in dancing, singing, laughing and other kinds of merry-
making. They appear to be possessed of extraordinary mental power.
The preface which preaches the religion of Creative Evolution does
not say in what ways the Ancients of the future would differ from
the present human beings. Again, in that distant future the
children are shown to have attained maturity fast enough even when
they are only three or four years of age. A maiden called Chloe
disappoints her lover by outgrowing her passions when she is only
four years old. Even Strephon's talk of love is an 'unbearable waste
of time' for her. She is so much taken up with her thoughts that at
the age of four she has become a 'little hard set and flat-chested
and thin on the top' (p.941). The Newly Born girl that has just
broken out of the shell is seen to progress from one stage to another
every minute. The preface does not say anything about the children or

1 - According to the Darwinian theory of evolution use and
disuse play an important part in the matter of heredity.
The law of use and disuse cannot be expected to turn a
mammal into an oviparous animal. The theory of evolution
considers such a transformation regressive. Biologists
forecasting men's future do not hint at such possibility.
Dodson, Edward. Evolution : Product and Process (East-West
Press, New Delhi, 1964), p. 335." Man is a viviparous
mammal and viviparous animals have "embryos which develop
within the maternal organism and derive nutriment by close
contact with maternal tissues, frequently by a placenta,
without interposition of any egg-membranes". Abercrombie,
the standard of intelligence of the children that would evolve in the distant future of three hundred twentieth century. Of course, the rapid maturity of the future children and their passing through the short phases of loving and dancing are in keeping with the laws of evolution as discussed by Shaw in the preface. The passing of the children through the brief phases of loving and dancing, in that distant age is a case of condensed recapitulation which is restored to by the members of every species during evolution of its later generations. This is also called relapse and in the preface to Back to Methuselah Shaw has discussed the problems of relapse and condensed recapitulation and says, "The relapsing from generation to generation is an invariable characteristic of the evolutionary process" (p. 510).

The episode of the art exhibitions by two artists, Arjilax and Martellus attempts to portray the difference between art and reality and also between art and science. Arjilax gives up carving statues of youth and nymph and takes to 'horribly realistic studies' of the ancients. Martellus surprises Arjilax by declaring that he has rejected art altogether in favour of Life itself, because "anything alive is better than anything that is only pretending to be alive". For him 'art is false and life alone is true'. Martellus also declares that they have been surpassed in art by a super-artist called Pygmalion who has made artificial human beings. The artificial human beings made by Pygmalion are perfect examples of reflex action. Pygmalion charges the artists with lack of intellect, but the artificial human beings, the proud achievements of his intellect, however, have no conscience or self-control. While the artificial creatures are exhibited, they get engaged in a quarrel and the master, while trying to disengage them, gets badly bitten in the
hand by the female figure and dies instantly. The episode of the artificial human beings is a caustic satire on the Neo-darwinian and Pavlovian mechanical conception of biology. In the preface Shaw maintains that Darwinism and Neo-Darwinism have denied free will and self-control, and thereby, they have denied one of the greatest instruments of survival used by all creatures in their struggle for existence. Shaw comments that by denying self-control to all creatures in their struggle for existence, Neo-Darwinism "shewed the most pitiable want of mastery of their own subject, the dullest lack of observation of the forces upon which Natural Selection works" (p. 527). The artificial human beings—"the most wonderful works of art in the world"—fill everybody with feelings of disgust and loathing. The He-Ancient finds them 'loathsome', the She Ancient calls them 'abominations', and Ecrasia considers them 'noisome' and the Newly Born also loathes them. Though they are capable of various responses or reflex actions, they lack two cardinal things— one is conscience and the other is self-control. Thus, Pygmalion's highest achievement in art suffers from lack of religious inspiration. In the preface Shaw insists that no art can be great or useful without religious inspiration and comments, "It will be seen that the revival of religion on a scientific basis does not mean the death of art, but glorious rebirth of it. Indeed art has never been great when it was not providing an iconography for a live religion" (p. 542).

In the play art is rejected by Martellus and the Ancients alike. According to the He-Ancient, an artist can create nothing but himself. Art is expectation, art is anticipation, but never the reality. The Ancients do not require the glass-mirrors of art. They have 'the direct sense of life'. The She-Ancient smashes down
The Ancients want to get rid of their bodies and overthrow their slavery to matter altogether. A time might come when there would be no bodies, but will or vortexes. The will would remain independently and remain immortal.¹ The She-Ancient says that a 'day will come when there will be no people, only thought'. Martellus remarks that the ancients are 'damnably inartistic'. Some of the older Ancients have 'forgotten how to speak; how to read; even how to read in the conventional fashion. In the preface Shaw has tried to establish that Will is the real driving power behind all acts of evolution and Will struggles with matter and circumstance for its self-expression on the trial and error method, but it has not said anywhere that the ultimate result of evolution will be complete abandonment of matter by Will. The idea of existence of will independently of matter is

¹ - The Shavian belief that man could be a living idea by dispensing with the body completely, goes against the Darwinian law of use and disuse that controls heredity. It is hard to believe that a time would come when the human body would be idle and unused in a manner so as to warrant total extinction of the human body. Shaw's belief is based on Lamarckism and Lamarckism with its conception of 'inheritance of acquired characteristics' remains "not proven". Moody, Paul Amos. Introduction to Evolution (New Delhi, Kalyani Publishers, 1978), p. 381.
the result of Shaw's belief in Will as an absolute entity\(^1\). In the preface Shaw has referred to the Schopenhauerian conception of the world as will and has built his religion of creative evolution on the basis of the creative will.

The primary characters responsible for the creation of a human race, namely, Adam, Eve, Cain, the Serpent, and Lilith are all brought forth and each tries to justify his or her historical role. Delivering the concluding speech, Lilith, the mother of Life, says that the enslavement of the living soul by matter has come to an end, but the onward march of Life would continue, because 'of Life only there is no end'. In the preface Shaw has spoken of will or vitality as the pivotal force behind all acts of evolution, but the idea of the march of the Life Force through eternity has not been sufficiently elaborated.

It will be seen that though the last part of *Back to Methuselah* is connected with Shaw's religion of Creative Evolution as enunciated in the preface, still, there are certain matters in the play, such as, the rejection of art by the ancients and men's transformation into mere vortexes which have not been made subjects of discussion in the preface.

Commenting upon the relation between the play and the preface, Desmond MacCarthy observes, that although the preface insists on...

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the "paramount importance of the religion for the individual and for the race" still in the five plays "there is hardly a gleam of religious emotion" that influences or inspires any one. It may be noted in this connection that for Shaw, advancement of Life itself is the religion. The characters cannot be expected to have any private religion apart from the cosmic religion of the Life Force. They, as instruments, only play their parts within the scheme of the Life Force. The five plays dramatise the march of life in the period between the dawn of creation and the year 31920 A.D. and ends with the assertion of the creed of the eternal advancement of Life.

It may be concluded that the preface to Back to Methuselah which is a discourse on the theories of evolution and the religion of Creative Evolution serves as a background to the play with its five parts taken together.

Saint Joan was written in 1923 and the preface to the play was written one year later, that is, 1924. The thirty-one page preface (P. Hamlyn ed.) deals with the various aspects of Saint Joan's life and her trial and also contains some important comments upon the play. In the preface Shaw has maintained that Saint Joan's martyrdom was the result of the conflict between two positive forces, the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant. As law of change is the law of God, God's Church cannot be static. Hence, Joan was the victim of the conflict between the established Church and the growing Church of God. Shaw also says in the preface that there


2 - Shaw says, "The Creatures are so various that they suggest instruments rather than final achievement". Everybody's Political What is What (London, Constable, 1950), p. 236.
is no villain in the play. The Life Force which is on its march for eternal self-expression is never satisfied with a particular stage of evolution or expression. The later stages of evolution reject the earlier stages of evolution. Thus, there is a conflict between two stages of evolution. Shaw maintains that a conflict between a hero and a villain may only provide "a mere police court sensation". Such a 'mechanical' conflict may be interesting only as a mechanism' (p. 631). Joan was killed by 'normally innocent people' who had full faith in the conventional morality and the established Catholic Church. Thus, the tragedy of Saint Joan occurred through the conflict between the good that is and the good that would be. When such conflict results in murder, such murders are "judicial murders, pious murders; and this contradiction at once brings an element of comedy into tragedy: the angels may weep at the murder, but the gods laugh at the murderers" (p. 631). The tragedy of Saint Joan was the tragedy of a mental genius who was much ahead of her time. Joan was charged with heresy of defying the established canons of the Catholic Church. Cauchon in scene IV and the Inquisitor in scene VI have elaborately expressed the nature of heresy of which Joan was held guilty. By launching war against the English for the liberation of the French speaking areas of Europe, Joan championed the cause of French nationalism and again by speaking of her direct communion with God she upheld the right of private judgement in direct opposition to the claim of the Catholic Church as the only medium for communicating with God. Cauchon considers Joan's concept of French nationalism 'essentially anti-Catholic and unChristian and says, "The Catholic Church knows only one realm, and that is the realm of Christ's kingdom. Divide that kingdom into nations, and you dethrone Christ" (Scene IV,
p. 98). In scene VI the Inquisitor tries to analyze the nature of Joan's heresy. He says that heresy begins with people who are not persons of bad character, but persons endowed with all the positive qualities of good character. He says, "But we are confronted to-day throughout Europe with a heresy that is spreading among not weak in mind nor disease in brain: may the stronger the mind, the more obstinate the character". In the course of his long speech, the Inquisitor admits that the fault of Joan is not of irreligion, but of excess of religion and says, "...There is abundant testimony that her excesses have been excesses of religion and charity and not of worldliness and wantonness" (Scene VI, p.993). In the preface Shaw says that the basic guilt of Joan was her claim of private communication with God which the Catholic Church did not allow. Shaw says that her "notion of a Catholic Church was one in which the Pope was Pope Joan" (p. 619). The play has emphasized this aspect of Joan's heresy.

In the preface Shaw holds that Joan was tried not as a political offender, but as a religious heresiarch. He says that Joan's offences were "not political offences against England, not against the Burgundian faction in France, but against God and against the common morality of Christendom" (p. 619). Shaw, further, maintains that the offence of advocating French nationalism against the then English feudalism was 'not so urged' (p. 619). In the play Shaw has ignored the political and material aspects of the trial and shown her religious offence as the basis of the conflict. Accordingly, he has isolated the ecclesiastical part of the trial from other issues and shown that it was the Protestantism of Joan which led to her martyrdom. Cauchon is said to be externed from his cathedral by the Dauphin and the Maid and Jean de 'Estivet was driven
out of his diocese by the French, consequently both Cauchon and Jean de'Estivet had reasons for hatred against Joan. Shaw has ignored the vested interests of people like Cauchon and Jean de'Estivet as factors contributing to the tragic fate of Joan. In the preface Shaw says that it is "unreasonable to suppose that the political bias of a body of Frenchmen like the assessor would on this point have run strongly in favour of the English foreigners... against a Frenchwoman who had vanquished them" (p. 619). Chaplain Stogumber, in his talk with Cauchon and Warwick, accuses Joan of depriving the English of the benefits of her "legitimate conquests given her by God because of her peculiar fitness to rule over the less civilized countries for their own good" (Scene IV, p. 984). The English had a vested interest in killing off Joan and Warwick's feudalistic hold on the soil of France was also threatened by the irresistible army of Joan. However, Joan's trial in the play concentrates on Joan's ecclesiastical offences to complete exclusion of her political offences.

In the preface Shaw has tried to give a psychological explanation of Joan's 'voices and visions'. Shaw maintains that voices heard and the visions seen by Joan were the results of her 'dramatic imagination'. Shaw rejects the medico-legal superstition that the criminal who see visions or hear voices should be all regarded as insane. Shaw says that the saints who see visions or mathematicians who see diagrams before them are not mad people. Shaw maintains, "The test of sanity is not the normality of the method but the reasonableness of the discovery" (p. 609). Shaw rejects the fashion of regarding Joan as being cracked on this score as nonsense and pleads that Joan should be regarded as at least as sane as Florence Nightingale. Like all serious thinkers Joan had power of
visualization and Shaw offers to call Joan a Galtonic visualizer. Joan's voices and visions play an important part in the theme of the play. In the first scene Joan tells Captain Robert de Baudricourt that she was hearing the voices of Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret who asked her to undertake God's work of freeing France from the subjugation by England. In the second act Joan tells Charles that it is God's will that she should free France from the Clutches of England and crown Charles in Rheims Cathedral as God's king of France. In the trial Joan is accused of being in league with the evil spirits and hearing voices from them, but Joan denies all that and reiterates that the voices she heard were actually from Saint Catherine, Saint Margaret and Archangel Michael. She also says that her wearing of man's clothes was dictated by St Catherine herself. Joan's burning sense of patriotism and her anxiety to liberate France led her to have dramatic forms of visions and voices. There was nothing insane or devilish in her dream of liberating France, and her wearing of man's dress was what practical sense demanded. War requires promptness and alertness from the soldiers and a man's dress only helps in acquiring those virtues. Besides, she was living among the soldiers and she had to appear as soldier to them.

In the preface Shaw has discussed the question of Joan's immaturity and ignorance that hastened her death. Shaw has taken care to show in the play how certain powerful factions were displeased with Joan and heartily disliked her for her immaturity and inexperience in certain fields. After the coronation of Charles VII in the Cathedral of Rheims, Joan announces her plan of Paris campaign, but both Charles and Dunois cold-shoulder her on the proposal. She fails to take note of the delicate position of the French army and also of the growing resentment among the Church
people against her religious stand. Charles exclaims with a sense of weariness over her insistence on the Paris Campaign, "If only she would keep quiet, or go home" (Scene V, p. 990). Joan also fails to feel the deep resentment among the top officials of the army after they were superseded by her. She also fails to realize how the court favourites are displeased with her after they are superseded in royal favour: also Dunois is offended when Charles fails to mention his part in the anti-English campaigns in his proclamation which takes full note of Joan's achievements. Joan displays human vanities when she says to Dunois, "You donot know how to begin a battle: and you don't know how to use your cannons. And I do" (Scene V, p. 987). Her knowledge of State economy is pitiably poor. When she hears that the English Earl of Quareek has announced an award of sixteen thousand pounds to anybody that would capture her, she exclaims in disbelief that "there cannot be so much money in the world". The Archbishop is exasperated beyond measure when she asks for the Church's help in her Paris campaign at a time when the Catholic Church is dying for her head for her sin of heresy. She does not comprehend at all the fatal nature of her heresy and the fatal contradiction between the voice she hears and the voice of the Church Militant. She does not comprehend at all where she stands; Dunois says in an embarrassing tone, "It always comes back to the same thing. She is right; and everyone else is wrong" (Scene V, p. 989). In the preface Shaw says that Joan lacked the knowledge of human vanities and also of the weight and the proportion of the social forces. Shaw says, "She knew nothing of iron hands in velvet gloves: she just used her fists" (p.615). She does not understand why anybody having a parallel will to that of the Church Militant should be burnt at all. Shaw says in the preface
that Joan had "a horror of heretics without suspecting that she was herself a heresiarch, one of the precursors of a schism that rent Europe in two..." (p. 615). She also did not understand how the idea of liberating the French speaking people of Europe from English rule brought her into conflict with Catholicism and Feudalism.

In the preface Shaw maintains that Joan's first trial was quite 'valid' (p. 620). Shaw also holds that Joan "got a far fairer trial from the Church and the Inquisition than any prisoner of her type and in her situation gets nowadays in any special secular court; and the decision was strictly according to law" (p. 606). Joan was tried not as a political offender but as a heretic who used to rely on her private judgement and on the voices she heard from different saints and on the inspiration she had from her direct communion with God in complete disregard of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church as a divine institution on earth. She says to Cauchon at the trial in defence of her right to private judgement, "What other judgment can I judge by but my own?" (Scene VI, p. 997). Joan's claim of the right to private will parallel to that of the Roman Catholic Church was a serious offence in the middle ages. People indulging in such heresy were usually excommunicated and burnt. At the trial the Inquisitor makes it a point to stick to the charge of heresy. The Inquisitor says to his fellows at the trial, "...Stick to the heresy, gentlemen; and leave other matters alone" (Scene VI, p. 993). Two principal charges labelled against her at the Court were Joan's claim of private communion with God, saints and angels, and her wearing of men's dress. The Court was willing to spare her life if she recanted her faith in the voices. Joan recanted her faith in the voices in the hope of getting acquittal, but when a sentence of life imprisonment is passed on her, she promptly
withdraws her recantation and reasserts her original faith in the voices and her private judgement. And there is nothing left for the court but to excommunicate her and hand her over to the secular authorities to burn her to death. Shaw says in the preface that the "Church could not tolerate her pretensions without either waiving its authority or giving her a place beside the Trinity during her lifetime and in her teens, which was unthinkable. Thus an irresistible force met an immovable obstacle, and developed the heat that consumed poor Joan" (p. 620). As regards the constitution that of the Court Shaw says, "there was nothing wrong with it and comments, "A trial by Joan's French partisans would have been as unfair as the trial by her French opponents; and an equally mixed tribunal would have produced a deadlock" (p. 618). Joan's judges gave her full freedom of defence and judged from modern judicial standards Joan's trial can be said to be quite fair.

In the preface Shaw has justified the addition of the Epilogue to the play to which many a critic objected. Shaw says that the Epilogue is necessary to show the difference between the canonized Joan and the incinerated one because death by burning is one thing and getting canonized is another thing. The Epilogue concentrates on the eternal nature of martyrdom. Martyrs are persons who with their progressive world outlook and progressive set of moral values come into conflict with the established set of moral values and

1 - Shaw's defence of the Epilogue in the preface has been in reply to the criticism of the critics who found that the Epilogue was unnecessary. James Agate finds the epilogue "wholly unnecessary" and it is, according to him, "implicit in all that has gone before". "Sunday Times", 30th March, 1924. Shaw, the Critical Heritage, ed. Evans, F. T. Routledge & Paul, London, 1976), p. 289.
have to court death in the hands of the forces of the stronger conservative world. Shaw says that "a genius is a person who, seeing farther and probing deeper than other people, has a different set of ethical valuations from theirs, and has energy enough to give effect to this extra vision and its valuations in whatever manner best suits his or her specific talents" (p. 606). In Joan's case her genius expressed itself in soldiering and politics. In the Epilogue to Androcles and the Lion Shaw says, "...My martyrs are martyrs of all time, and my persecutors are persecutors of all time" (p. 703). In Saint Joan Shaw has put emphasis on the eternal nature of conflict that leads to martyrdom. Joan's progressive views about militarism, about national independence and about the right to free will and private judgement came into sharp conflict with the conservative views of the Roman Catholic Church. It is seen that the martyrs are looked upon in a comparatively detached manner by the people only after their death, but as long as they remain alive with their advanced views among the men of the rut who always form the bulk of the population, they are not tolerated by them. Geniuses advance the cause of progress, but they have to pay heavy price. In the dream scene in the Epilogue a penitent but enlightened Cauchon asks, "Must then a Christ perish in torment in every age to save those that have no imagination" (p. 1007). In the same scene all the persons connected with Joan's life and martyrdom appear and ask for Joan's pardon for their sins in a penitent manner, but when Joan proposes to return to their society again, all the characters shy away on some excuse or other. Cauchon again speaks the truth, "The heretic is always better dead. And mortal eyes cannot distinguish the saint from the heretic. Spare them" (Epilogue, p. 1008). The worldly people cannot...
tolerate or understand the saints in their lifetime. Charles says to Ladvenu in the Epilogue, "...If you could bring her back to life, they would burn her again within six months, for all their adoration of her. And you hold up the cross, too, just the same." (pp. 1003-4). Thus, the Epilogue helps in bringing out the eternal tragedy of the saints.

In the preface Shaw has discussed the difference between the modern and medieval times in respect of three important matters - cruelty, credulity and toleration. Shaw has shown that in respect of the above matters, the modern age is no better than the Middle ages. Only the forms of cruelty, credulity and intolerance have changed, but the things are there. New sophisticated forms of punishment have replaced the older crude methods of punishment. Men's blind faith in medical science and doctors has taken the place of the blind faith in priests. Compulsory inoculation has replaced compulsory baptism. Shaw's discussion on the above matters in the preface helps a reader in viewing the question of Joan's martyrdom in the perspective of her age.

It will be seen from the above that the preface to Saint Joan is one of the most explanatory prefaces written by Shaw and in theme directly connected with the play.

The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles was written in 1934 and the preface to the play was written one year later, that is, in 1935. The preface entitled 'Preface on Days of Judgement' contains discussion of matters, such as, criticism of the play by some journalist critics, popular credulity regarding science and religion, the capitalistic morality of exploitation and parasitism, the working of the Russian Inquisition called Tcheka, the ills of private property, the criterion of judging the worth of human existence and group marriage.
In *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* the central figure is Prola, a priestess. The play is about the vision of Pra and Prola, the married priest and priestess, concerning the future of humanity. Pra and Prola embark upon an experiment in a new kind of human civilization. Both are free from the conventional taboos regarding sexual morality. They have an original view of sex and are sincerely concerned about the problem of realising Life's purposes on earth. Shaw has not said anything about the celibacy of the priests in the preface to *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles*, but has discussed the subject earlier in the prefaces to *Androcles and the Lion*¹ and *Too True to be Good*² where he has disapproved of the celibacy of the priests and school mistresses, because Shaw believes that without the experience of sex one's experience of life remains incomplete, and with 'uncompleted experience of life' a preacher or a teacher cannot impart proper teaching. For Pra and Prola sex is not a taboo, but an indispensable thing for continuation of life.

In the play, six persons, namely, Pra and Prola, Sir Charles Farwaters and Lady Farwaters and Mr and Mrs Byering form a family of six parents and embark upon an 'eugenic experiment' in an attempt to evolve a new race. Its object is to try out 'the result of the biological blend of the flesh and spirit of the west with the flesh and spirit of the east' (Act I, p. 1230). They produce four children, namely, Maya, Vasthi, Janga and Kanchin none of whom has anybody in particular for mother or father. This is a kind of group marriage after the manner of the platonic scheme in *The Republic*.

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² - The Preface to *Too True to be Good* (Ibid.), p. 350.
In the preface to *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* Shaw says that by introducing group marriage in the play he is not advocating the immediate adoption of the same in social life. He says that group marriage is "form of marriage like any other" and marriage in the east differs from the marriage in the west. In the preface to *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* the problem of marriage or the sexual relation has not been elaborately discussed though it is an important part of theme of the play. British clergyman, brought up on nitrogen, is perplexed to see the morality of the experimenters in eugenics when he finds himself among them in the Unexpected Isles. The purpose of adding a clergyman to the society of eugenic experimenters is to satirise the Christian view of marriage and sex. Shaw does not consider polygamy or polyandry or any other kind of group marriage as thing bad in itself. In the preface to *Getting Married* Shaw says, "There is something to be said for the polygynous and polyandrous household as a school for children: children do really suffer from having too few parents: that is why uncles and aunts, tutors and governesses are often so good for children" (p. 1232). Again in *The Revolutionists* Handbook Shaw has advocated selective breeding in preference to procreation through conventional marriage. Clergyman Iddy is perplexed to see the morality of the eugenic experimenters for, though he falls in love with Maya, he has to marry both the sisters, May and Vasthi. From the point of view of the experimenters, "they are not two women: they are one. Vasthi is Maya; and Maya is Vasthi" (Act I, p. 1232).

The preface to *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* has

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1 - The preface to *Man and Superman* (The Complete Prefaces of Bernard Shaw), pp. 185-86.
not explained this kind of human relationship. Loving two ladies at the same time goes against the conventional system of love in which a lover can love only one person only. In the preface to Getting Married Shaw says, "We often do not fall in love at all; and when we do we fall in love with one person, and remain indifferent to thousands of others who pass before our eyes every day." It appears that the eugenic experimenters of the Unexpected Isles cannot afford the conventional sentimental and romantic love.

It is a part of the romantic plot of the play that the imperial government of Great Britain threatens dire military action against the Unexpected Isles if the local government of the Isles fails to hand over British clergyman Iddy alias Phosphor Hammingtap, the "polygamist adulterer" and "the abominable libertine and damnable apostate" to the British government by "noon on the 13th". The crime of the British clergyman Phosphor Hammingtap has been that he indulged in polygamy by marrying two girls, Maya and Vasthi. According to the Church of England, clergyman Hammingtap has committed the sin of polygamy and brought the Church into disrepute. Polygamy is not a sin in the east; hence, the Bombay Squadron, at the behest of the Indian Government demands "unequivocal guarantee of the safety and liberty" of Mr Hammingtap from the regime of the Unexpected Isles. This part of the play satirises the conventional morality of marriage in England. Shaw says at the end of the preface to The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles, "Group marriage is a form of marriage like any other; and it is just as well to remind our western and very insular imperialists that marriage in the British Empire is startlingly different in the east from marriage.

in the British Isles" (p. 613). Shaw has discussed the question of variability of marriage in the prefaces to Getting Married and Misalliance. In the preface to Misalliance Shaw comments, "Marriage is not a single invariable institution: it changes from civilization to civilization, from religion to religion, from civil code to civil code, from frontier to frontier" (p. 92).

Both Maya and Vasthi get tired of Iddy because his permanent love becomes a tyranny for them. Iddy also admits that permanent love like permanent music becomes nauseating after a time. As regards Prola Iddy says, "I love Prola because she is far above loving and hating me" (Act II, p. 1237). In the preface to Getting Married Shaw has rejected the idea of permanent love as unrealistic.

When the proclamation of the dissolution of the British Empire is made, Mr Hyering announces his intention of declaring the Unexpected Isles an independent state. Iddy proposes that Prola should be enthroned as the queen of the Island. Maya, Vasthi, Kanchin and Janga, all express their complete allegiance to Prola and announce their willingness to behave all along in perfect conformity to her wishes, leaving the entire burden of thinking and deciding to her. Prola gets annoyed at the talk of the unthinking children of hers. She gets all the more disappointed when she hears the four children talk of fighting for their 'flag', their 'country', their 'native soil', and their 'women' like the ordinary run of the people of the rest of the world.

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1 - The Preface to Getting Married (The Complete Prefaces of Bernard Shaw), cf. pp. 9, 37.
The Apocalypse begins and the English speaking people of the world are judged the first day. Thousands of unworthy people go out of existence for offences like idleness, parasitism and exploitation through private property and indulgence in anti-life activities. In the preface to The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles Shaw has made a comparative study of the life in communist Russia and the life in the western capitalist countries and dwelt upon the applicability of the idea of the Apocalypse in real life. According to Shaw, the right qualification for the right to existence is to produce the exact equivalent or more of what one consumes. In the prefaces to Major Barbara and Too True To Be Good also, Shaw has insisted on the same condition for a citizen's right to existence in a civilized society. Preaching a religion of complete self-responsibility Shaw says, "In a living society every day is a day of judgement; and its recognition as such is not the end of all things but the beginning of a real civilization" (p. 642). In the play, the four children, Maya, Vasthi, Kanchin, and Janga go out of existence because they are no better than the ordinary run of the people that form the bulk of the world's population. The preface does not say anything as to why the eugenic experiment in the Unexpected Isles resulted in the production of unworthy children.

Pra is disappointed at his failure, but Prola assures Pra that her attempts at better life will go on for ever. For Prola, life must be an unending series of adventure and routine is death to her. Prola asserts that she requires Pra for her continuous

1 - The Complete Prefaces of Bernard Shaw - p. 136
struggle of life. The preface to The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles does not say anything about the specific roles of man and woman under the scheme of the Life Force. It is only in the preface to Man and Superman that Shaw has tried to spell out the specific roles of man and woman under the scheme of the Life Force and says that while man incarnates intellectual consciousness of Life, woman incarnates the fecundity of Life. Woman's role is greater in the sense that she passes through the ordeal of procreation and suffers indescribable pain of childbirth. Towards the end of The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles Prola says that the 'fountain of life' is within her, but the play ends with the promise of Pra and Prola to march forward jointly bearing up the torch of life along their way.

It will be seen from the above that though the preface is well-connected with the play thematically, still it cannot account for all the aspects of the play; one has to refer to other prefaces for guidance.