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THE QUINTESSENCE OF G.B.S.

Other books by S. Winsten

DAYS WITH BERNARD SHAW

G.B.S. 90 (*Editor*)

Portrait bust in bronze by CLARE WINSTEN

THE QUINTESSENCE OF

G.B.S.

The Wit and Wisdom of Bernard Shaw

Selected and with Introduction
by
S. WINSTEN

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CONTENTS

Introduction	*Page* 7
My Natural Place	15
The Influence of Art	23
I Become an Author	33
About Myself	41
I Was a Child	51
As a Youth	65
I am an Irishman	71
A Few English Customs	75
On Being Merry	103
Women	107
Money	153
Truth	167
Happiness	173
Health	179
Animals	183
Country Life	189
Education	197
Culture	215
A World-Betterer	221
The Theatre	249
Books	267
The Critic	275
Professions	281
Religion	301
Foreigners	345
War	355
Imprisonment	371
Extermination	377
Bear in Mind	381
Growing Old	401
Mainly About People	421
Bibliography	477

INTRODUCTION

THOUGH I have known Bernard Shaw as an old man for many years and have discussed every conceivable subject with him, I can say that his childhood has become more real to me than his old age. Not that I knew him then: I don't suppose there is a soul alive who knew him as a child. We are all inclined to think that he never was young, but he has written so vividly of his earliest years that I can trace his deepest convictions to this and that experience before his teens. He was obviously born with predetermined convictions. The fact that he can recall reading the day-to-day news of the American Civil War may throw a light on his long span of life and show that he was born literate; but when the simplest childhood experience is transmuted into conviction, then a new world opens up: the world of the future and not of the past. In fact, when conversing with him, I get the feeling that he is a ghost of the future, that he looks upon the everyday happenings through the eyes of a hundred years hence.

The extraordinary thing is that these early convictions have persisted right through all these years. The best and most reactionary conservatives are only too often those who have had revolutionary youths, but with G.B.S. there is no suggestion of subsidence: reactionaries like Karl Marx are firmly and smilingly put in their place while he goes marching on, shedding his labels and growing younger and more violent with the years. I have heard him lecture, long ago, in my own youth, to learned audiences: a very serious analysis of our social system; but the part which moved bald head and blue stocking was his account of his experience as a child, of his contact with poverty and his determination then to devote his life to the task of exterminating the poor and rendering their resurrection for ever impossible. All the usual pleas that poverty was the reward of sin and the poor we shall always have with us, that human nature being what it is . . . only drove him to fierce indignation and that indignation has found expression in plays that set the world laughing. Again, many years back I listened to a sermon by him when he described how, as a little boy, he was compelled to go to church and how it prejudiced him so violently against religion that he did not regain his moral sense until

he threw off prayer and churchgoing. In fact, he would advise all young people to do something awful like telling the truth or becoming a world-betterer to get the true measure of themselves and society. He himself even defied the advice of all doctors by sleeping with his windows wide open! It was like a snail suddenly determining to cast off its shell and defying death from exposure. I am wrong in comparing G.B.S. with a snail; it is only natural for a snail to think that any evolution which threatens to do away with shells will result in its destruction, but the human race must learn to discard its pet institutions, as a deciduous tree its gold, if there is to be any hope for the world. That is where G.B.S. comes in: no postulate is too sacred to be scrutinised and laughed out of court if necessary.

If, therefore, G.B.S. could leap before he could walk, it was as well that he could laugh before he could cry. He could rise up and sing: "All's wrong with the world" and laugh for all to hear. "Every baby," he declares, "has to discover more in the first years of its life than Roger Bacon discovered in his laboratory." And we could add: and one babe discovered much more explosive material than gunpowder.

Yet it would be wrong to assume that when Bernard Shaw arrived in London at the age of twenty, churches, schools and Houses of Parliament rocked and fell. He left Ireland because there was no future for him there. London was the centre of literature and art and music and Dublin was a desert. Better to starve in an atmosphere of art, in an atmosphere native to him, than to prosper in the stifling atmosphere of an Irish office, where he was not permitted to discuss politics or religion. In London he naturally gravitated to every cranky movement: he worked with everybody, agreed with nobody, never lost his head and ultimately found his feet. He discovered that he was a centipede with a foot in every cause: art, literature, music, politics, religion, drama and whatever else was being disputed. This blonde beast was always cropping up: the violent humanitarian, the religious atheist, the impassioned factualist, the earnest humorist and the respectable vagabond. He was puzzled by the fact that he only had to say a thing as he saw it and the people laughed. He wished they would take him seriously but he consoled himself with the thought that if they did they would lynch him and martyrdom was an unnecessary compliment to a first-rate mind. Laughter was the finest preservative of an original thought. The other evening at the Parish Meeting of the village where we both reside, we were discussing the position of a

water tower which was to supply at last the cottages with tap water. Though we are living in the twentieth century and talk glibly about the advance of science, there are houses within a bomb-throw of London without sanitation and drinking water. All the villagers seemed to take for granted that a water tower must necessarily be an ugly thing and therefore hidden out of sight, if possible. Age prevented G.B.S. from appearing but that did not prevent him from writing to the effect that the water tower should be made beautiful and placed in the middle of the innocent little village. The suggestion was greeted with such immodest laughter that it recalled the response to his more youthful attempts at telling the "obvious" truth. G.B.S. has really proved that truth is funnier than comedy.

But to return to the blonde beast. There is no worse epithet that can be thrown at a truth bearer than that he is a half-truth merchant, as if the discovery of even one half truth would not be a considerable achievement for a mere mortal man. The half truth that he never tires of proclaiming is that sanitation is aesthetic. In a generation when the aesthetes ran from drains as from something evil, he naturally found art in drains and sermons in sewers. To him, living in a world of poor and unhappy people was living in hell. His art consisted mainly in lifting the lid of hell, and creating a new sort of human being. G.B.S. conceives a man who says to himself: I want to be a cultured human being; I want to live in the fullest sense; I require a generous subsistence for that and I expect my country to organize itself to secure me that. In return for that I am willing to give the best service of which I am capable, so that when I die the country shall be the richer for my life.

I sometimes think he is the only optimist left in the world. For a man who sees things so clearly to remain an optimist is one of the most hopeful things in this chaotic universe. The problems of to-day are becoming increasingly complex and demand from us the largest scope of mind, the most unhesitating magnanimity, the most sacred recognition of our spiritual equality, yet conditions are such that they tend instead to produce unscrupulous selfishness, narrow-mindedness and class snobbery. He is convinced that we shall never produce the right kind of human until man lives much longer and wills to become a more highly evolved animal. We die before we have learned how to live and so we have no spiritual heritage to pass on to our children. In the same way as children take to our mechanical inventions as ducks to water, so will they take to our wisdom as soon as humans live

long enough to attain it. There can be no hope while we remain economic lodgers in a spiritual slum. Meanwhile our institutions tend to sink to the level of our impotence: how low they have sunk G.B.S. describes only too vividly:

> Here am I, for instance, by class a respectable man, by common sense a hater of waste and disorder, by intellectual constitution legally minded to the verge of pedantry, and by temperament apprehensive and economically disposed to the limit of old maidishness; yet I am and have always been, and shall now always be, a revolutionary writer, because our laws make law impossible; our liberties destroy all freedom; our property is organized robbery; our morality is an impudent hypocrisy; our wisdom is administered by inexperienced or mal-experienced dupes, our power wielded by cowards and weaklings, and our honour false in all its points.

When the human race has passed out of the famine period of the soul, G.B.S. will be regarded, as he obviously wants to be, as a very normal person.

Read the self-portraits and compare them with the portraits drawn by three very discerning women:

> "At this time also I met George Bernard Shaw, one of the most brilliant of Socialist writers and most provoking of men; a man with a perfect genius for aggravating the enthusiastically earnest and with a passion for representing himself as a scoundrel. On my first experience of him on the platform at South Place Institute he described himself as a loafer, and I gave an angry snarl at him in the Reformer, for a loafer was my detestation, and behold! I found he was very poor, because he was a writer with principles and preferred starving his body to starving his conscience."
>
> ANNIE BESANT, 1884

> "A vegetarian, fastidious but unconventional in his clothes; six feet in height with a lithe, broad-chested figure and laughing blue eyes. Above all a brilliant talker and therefore a delightful companion. To me he has not yet a personality: he is a pleasant but somewhat incongruous group of qualities. Some people would call him a cynic: he is really an idealist of the purest water.
>
> BEATRICE WEBB, 1893

> "I look upon him as a good, kind, gentle creature whose 'brain-storms' are just due to the Irishman's love of a fight; they

never spring from malice or anger. It doesn't answer to take Bernard Shaw seriously. He is not a man of convictions. That is one of the charms of his plays, to me at least. One never knows how the cat is really jumping. But it jumps. Bernard Shaw is alive, with nine lives, like that cat!"

ELLEN TERRY, 1902

As I write in the night, his wireless comes booming into my home. None of us mind as we have learnt to take it for granted as we do the cry of the owl and the sough of the trees. A few hours back he was sitting with us, telling us the story of his new play and we discussed local and national affairs, he listening intently to everything we said and he said. Then we walked together along the lane which bridges our two homes. The thousands of times we have thus walked home together, watching the changing of the seasons and always seeming to say; What a beautiful evening. I know he sits in his chair listening, grateful for the boon of an instrument which brings talk and music to him. He hears at this moment of wars and preparations for wars, he hears of millions decaying of hunger and he hears appeals to work harder and harder in mine and mill. Why does he listen so eagerly to the news? What does he expect to hear? The mystic news from Nowhere? He is not shocked. His philosophy allows for all our shortcomings. God is not infallible. He proceeds by trial and error and His errors are called Evil. God is not omnipotent and can act only through His creations and His creations have not proved much. Here and there he has met real saints like the Webbs and William Morris and they have given him a glimpse of the true human being. They have gone, all his early friends have gone, and he learns of new names, people whom he can never meet, who strike a sympathetic chord in him. He sits, with the comic mask taken off, and is free at last to be himself, to be his real castigating self. He is not lonely. There is far too much to do for so short a life. Our spelling is all wrong, there must be a new alphabet; our terminology is full of inexactitudes; no orchestra has yet done justice to Beethoven and Mozart and the village church is in a bad state of repair. Then he complains that the richer he gets, the poorer he becomes; though his face is known to everybody, he hardly recognizes a single face and must greet everyone when he walks lest he prove discourteous to a person he knows. He would not have missed his old age for worlds. As a child he had

learned to live abundantly and that abundance has overflowed into a stream which widens out into a sea which knows no calm.

Perhaps I should say something about the scheme of this book. There is no hard and fast classification and many of the thoughts in one section might have found happier accommodation in different parts of the book. I was guided by instinct derived from long acquaintanceship with G.B.S. I can almost hear him speaking the various items and I wish you could because it would give an added significance to the thought, not through association but because music can often say things too deep for words. I was tempted to further classifications: for example: it would be interesting to follow up his ideas on Mathematics, a subject which has always intrigued him. Those who are interested will find the stuff here and can go to the original plays for more.

You will ask: can we assume that if a character expresses a thought, it represents what G.B.S. himself thinks? That can only be answered by a person who knows him intimately. I have heard him express these thoughts in argument, often in the identical words. His memory is amazing and as mine is not too bad, it is rarely necessary for me to help him out with a forgotten word. All the same I would not have you conclude that the splendid gallery of characters are all facets of Bernard Shaw. He has never hesitated to use his friends as models: Hyndman, Gilbert Murray, Annie Besant, Sidney Webb, Cunninghame Graham, Ellen Terry, Lawrence of Arabia, right down to local people all appear rather larger than life. Only the other evening G.B.S. was telling me that Ellen Terry could not be persuaded to play *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*. To fall asleep she would get her housekeeper to read a dull book to her in a monotonous voice and naturally when she was suffering from insomnia she chose *Captain Brassbound* to be read as a sure soporific. Ellen was suddenly awakened from her sleep to hear her housekeeper exclaim: "This is you from hair to toe."

Yes, it is dangerous to know Shaw, one cannot hide anything from him. I sometimes wonder how much he has hidden from us, whether a reading of all his works will yield a true and complete composite portrait. He has been frank with himself, refused to be humbugged by appearances, sentiment and nomenclature, gave us things as he saw them, felt them and thought them and if there is a dogmatic

finality in his assertions, he is a most willing student, meeting each new situation, not with an open mind but with a free and well-stored mind. Years ago he said that a conversion of a savage to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery. Well, he has now lived ninety-three years among savages and has seen the coming of the atom bomb and has remained amazingly sane. It makes one say that there must be something in life after all if he can go on laughing. Indeed he promises us a future in which life will be an intellectual ecstasy surpassing the ecstasies of saints, and assures us that even the dullest fools have some glimmer of it.

Born as G.B.S. was in the seventeenth-century atmosphere of nineteenth-century Ireland, he can remember that when men talked about morality, they were suspected of reading Tom Paine; the time will come when people talking freely, frankly and hopefully will be suspected of reading this book, which I hope has done justice to the greatness of the author and his works. Here I should like to express the gratitude of my publisher and myself for the special permission to quote freely from all the published writings of Bernard Shaw.

It used to be said of philosophy that it was misery dissolved in thought, but G.B.S., who considers himself a philosopher, would define it as thought transmuted into ecstasy; it used to be said of economics that it was a dismal science, but in the hands of G.B.S. it appears as a science of well-being; it used to be said of religion that it concerned itself with the after-life, but with Bernard Shaw it comes right down to living here and now. Behind the lighthearted, lilting sentence there is the thought: contemplation is the sap which feeds his laughter. In short, he is an artist and it is an artist he wanted to be ever since he read the Bible as a child.

My Natural Place

ON FINDING ONE'S PLACE

Everyone is ill at ease until he has found his natural place, whether it be above or below his birthplace. The overrated inheritor of a position for which he has no capacity, and the underrated nobody who is a born genius, are alike shy because they are alike out of place. Besides, this finding of one's place may be made very puzzling by the fact that there is no place in ordinary society for extraordinary individuals. For the worldly wiseman, with common ambitions, the matter is simple enough: money, title, precedence, a seat in Parliament, a portfolio in the Cabinet, will mean success both to him and his circle. But what about people like St. Francis and St. Clare? Of what use to them are the means to live the life of the country house and the west end mansion? They have literally no business in them, and must necessarily cut an unhappy and ridiculous figure there. They have to make a society of Franciscans and Poor Clares for themselves before they can work or live socially. It is true that those who are called saints are not saintly all the time and in everything. In eating and drinking, lodging and sleeping, chatting and playing: in short, in everything but working out their destiny as saints, what is good enough for a ploughman is good enough for a poet, a philosopher, a saint, or a higher mathematician. But Hodge's work is not good enough for Newton, nor Falstaff's conversation holy enough for Shelley.

IMMATURITY

ON BUILDING UP A REPUTATION

The critics were the victims of the long course of hypnotic suggestion by which G.B.S. the journalist manufactured an

unconventional reputation for Bernard Shaw the author. In England as elsewhere the spontaneous recognition of really original work begins with a mere handful of people, and propagates itself so slowly that it has become a commonplace to say that genius demanding bread, is given a stone after its possessor's death. The remedy for this is sedulous advertisement. Accordingly, I have advertised myself so well that I find myself, whilst still in middle life, almost as legendary a person as the Flying Dutchman. Critics, like other people, see what they look for, not what is actually before them. In my plays they look for my legendary qualities, and find originality and brilliancy in my most hackneyed claptraps. Were I to republish Buckstone's *Wreck Ashore* as my latest comedy, it would be hailed as a masterpiece of perverse paradox and scintillating satire. Not, of course, by the really able critics—for example, you, my friend, now reading this sentence.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

AS I REALLY AM

You must take me as I am, a reasonable, patient, consistent, apologetic, laborious person, with the temperament of a schoolmaster and the pursuits of a vestryman. No doubt that literary knack of mine which happens to amuse the British public distracts attention from my character; but the character is there none the less, solid as bricks. My conscience is the genuine pulpit article: it annoys me to see people comfortable when they ought to be uncomfortable; and I insist on making them think in order to bring them to conviction of sin. If you don't like my preaching you must lump it. I really cannot help it.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

I FIT NO PIGEON HOLES

I am very tidy in my bedroom, and so untidy in my study that though I have installed elaborate filing systems I lose hours looking for mislaid papers. You can classify me by my age, my height, my native language, the color of my eyes, the length and breadth of my head, for these facts are ascertainable and manageable; but when critics and biographers try to classify me as an author I smile. I fit none of their pigeon-holes.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

I SUFFER AGONIES OF SHYNESS

I found myself invited to visit the Lawsons, who were at home in Cheyne Walk every Sunday evening. I suffered such agonies of shyness that I sometimes walked up and down the Embankment for twenty minutes or more before venturing to knock at the door: indeed I should have funked it altogether, and hurried home asking myself what was the use of torturing myself when it was so easy to run away, if I had not been instinctively aware that I must never let myself off in this manner if I meant ever to do anything in the world. Few men can have suffered more than I did in my youth from simple cowardice or been more horribly ashamed of it. I shirked and hid when the peril, real or imaginary, was of the sort that I had no vital interest in facing; but when such an interest was at stake, I went ahead and suffered accordingly.

IMMATURITY

IF I CARED

16th March, 1896.

Acting is her destiny. It cannot be put aside in her case as I can put aside, for instance, my own fondness for music, which made me desire to be a singer and player. Nature gave me slow, clumsy fingers and a mongrel, worthless voice, two effectual corkers to such vanity. And I did not care enough about my fancy to overcome these as I overcame the obstacles to my becoming a speaker and a writer. If I had cared enough I should have overcome them.

Letter to Janet Achurch

WE WERE DROPPED SOCIALLY

Now a convivial drunkard may be exhilarating in convivial company. Even a quarrelsome or boastful drunkard may be found entertaining by people who are not particular. But a miserable drunkard—and my father, in theory a teetotaller, was racked with shame and remorse even in his cups—is unbearable. We were finally dropped socially. After my early childhood I cannot remember ever paying a visit at a relative's house. If my mother and father had dined out, or gone to a party, their children would have been much more astonished than if the house had caught fire.

IMMATURITY

MY CHOSEN JOB

Only the fictions of fine art gave me any satisfaction; and it became my chosen job to bring these fictions to life, and meanwhile to live as a Bohemian, as a rebel, as an enemy, not of mankind, but of the perversions of mankind produced by private property plus the industrial revolution. The precept "Love one another" was impossible with human society divided into detestably unlovable classes.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

BY PROFESSION AN ORIGINAL THINKER

I am myself by profession what is called an original thinker, my business being to question and test all the established creeds and codes to see how far they are still valid and how far worn out or superseded, and even to draft new creeds and codes. But creeds and codes are only two out of the hundreds of useful articles that make for a good life. All the other articles I have to take as they are offered to me on the authority of those who understand them; so that though many people who cannot bear to have an established creed or code questioned regard me as a dangerous revolutionary and a most insubordinate fellow, I have to be in most matters as docile a creature as you could desire to meet. When a railway porter directs me to number ten platform I do not strike him to earth with a shout of "Down with tyranny!" and rush violently to number one platform. I accept his direction. . . .

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

A SLAVE OF CONVENTION ALL MY LIFE

Another effect of this book on me is to make me realize what a slave of convention I have been all my life. When I think of the way I worked tamely for my living during all those years when Mr. Davies, a free knight of the highway, lived like a pet bird on titbits, I feel that I have been duped out of my natural liberty. Why had I not the luck, at the outset of my career, to meet the tramp who came to Mr. Davies, like Evangelist to Christian, on the first day of his American pilgrim's progress, and saved him on the very brink of looking for a job, by bidding him to take no thought for the morrow; to ask and it should be given to him; to knock and it should be opened to him;

and to free himself from the middle-class assumption that only through taking a ticket can one take a train. Let every youth into whose hands this book falls ponder its lesson well, and, when next his parents and guardians attempt to drive him into some inhuman imprisonment and drudgery under the pretext that he should earn his own living, think of the hospitable countrysides of America, with their farmhouses overflowing with milk and honey for the tramp, and their offers of adoption for every day laborer with a dash of poetry in him.

Preface to THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SUPERTRAMP

I COULD NOT ENDURE "FASHIONABLE LIFE"

As a humane person I detested violence and slaughter, whether in war, sport, or the butcher's yard. I was a Socialist, detesting our anarchical scramble for money, and believing in equality as the only possible permanent basis of social organization, discipline, subordination, good manners, and selection of fit persons for high functions. Fashionable life, open on indulgent terms to unencumbered "brilliant" persons, I could not endure, even if I had not feared its demoralizing effect on a character which required looking after as much as my own. I was neither a sceptic nor a cynic in these matters: I simply understood life differently from the average respectable man; and as I certainly enjoyed myself more—mostly in ways which would have made him unbearably miserable—I was not splenetic over our variance.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

I DID NOT EXPECT PEOPLE TO LOVE ME

Sim-ple-ton! Do you expect stupid people to love you for shewing them up? Do blundering old military dug-outs love the successful young captains who supersede them? Do ambitious politicians love the climbers who take the front seats from them? Do archbishops enjoy being played off their own altars, even by saints?

DUNOIS *in* SAINT JOAN

AND STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THEY READ ME

I have in my hand a copy of the most infamous, the most scandalous, the most mischievous, the most blackguardly book

that ever escaped burning at the hands of the common hangman. I have not read it: I would not soil my mind with such filth; but I have read what the papers say of it. The title is quite enough for me.

RAMSDEN *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

I AM A CRITIC

Criticism is not only medicinally salutary: it has positive popular attractions in its cruelty, its gladiatorship, and the gratification given to envy by its attacks on the great, and to enthusiasm by its praises. It may say things which many would like to say, but dare not, and indeed for want of skill could not even if they durst. Its iconoclasms, seditions, and blasphemies, if well turned, tickle those whom they shock; so that the critic adds the privileges of the court jester to those of the confessor.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

AM I A SADIST?

Now critics, like dentists, are a good deal occupied in hurting sensitive people in sensitive places; and as they have to do it in an entertaining manner, which no doubt gives them an air of enjoying it, they produce an impression of Sadism.

ELLEN TERRY

THE PRIVILEGE OF GENIUS

. . . it is necessary for the welfare of society that genius should be privileged to utter sedition, to blaspheme, to outrage good taste, to corrupt the youthful mind, and, generally, to scandalize one's uncles.

THE SANITY OF ART

THE NATURE OF GENIUS

In really contemporary situations, your genius is ever 1 part genius and 99 parts Tory.

THE SANITY OF ART

I CAN KEEP MY TEMPER BUT NOT WHEN QUESTIONS OF ART ARE CONCERNED

I can keep my temper as well as most people; for my double training as a critic of highly sensitive living persons and a propa-

gandist of seditious, not to say subversive, political views kept me constantly on my guard against letting my temper get the better of me or my manners the worse of me: in short, against the least indulgence of personal malice. Besides, I am tolerant in matters of morals which provoke most people to censoriousness; for to me a great deal of current morality is unsound and mischievous. But when questions of art are concerned I am really malicious. Retrogressive art and wasted or unworthily used talent (the theatre is full of both) make me aware that I am capable of something as near to hatred as any emotion can be that has no taint of fear in it.

ELLEN TERRY

I HAVE HAD NO HEROIC ADVENTURES

Things have not happened to me; on the contrary it is I who have happened to them, and all my happenings have taken the form of books and plays.

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

The Influence of Art

ACADEMIC ART

All this academic art is far worse than the trade in sham antique furniture; for the man who sells me an oaken chest which he swears was made in the XIII century, though as a matter of fact he made it himself only yesterday, at least does not pretend there are any modern ideas in it; whereas your academic copier of fossils offers them to you as the latest outpouring of the human spirit and, worst of all, kidnaps young people as pupils and persuades them that his limitations are rules; his observances dexterities, his timidities, good taste, and his emptiness purities. And when he declares that art should not be didactic, all the people who have nothing to teach and all the people who dont want to learn agree with him emphatically.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

INSTRUMENT OF MORAL PROPAGANDA

I am convinced that fine art is the subtlest, the most seductive, the most effective instrument of moral propaganda in the world, excepting only the example of personal conduct; and I waive even this exception in favour of the art of the stage, because it works by exhibiting examples of personal conduct made intelligible and moving to crowds of unobservant unreflecting people to whom real life means nothing.

The Author's Apology

In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

WITHIN THE REACH OF EVERYBODY

In short, there is a vast body of art now within the reach of everybody. The difficulty is that this art, which alone can educate

us in grace of body and soul, and which alone can make the history of the past live for us or the hope of the future shine for us, which alone can give delicacy and nobility to our crude lusts, which is the appointed vehicle of inspiration and the method of the communion of saints, is actually branded as sinful among us because, wherever it arises, there is resistance to tyranny, breaking of fetters, and the breath of freedom. The attempt to suppress art is not wholly successful: we might as well try to suppress oxygen. But it is carried far enough to inflict on huge numbers of people a most injurious art starvation, and to corrupt a great deal of the art that is tolerated. You will find in England plenty of rich families with little more culture than their dogs and horses. And you will find poor families, cut off by poverty and town life from the contemplation of the beauty of the earth, with its dresses of leaves, its scarves of cloud, and its contours of hill and valley, who would positively be happier as hogs, so little have they cultivated their humanity by the only effective instrument of culture: art.

Art Teaching
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

PROPAGANDA

All great Art and Literature is propaganda.

Figment Of The Selfregarding Action
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

WHAT IS ART?

CAESAR: Apollodorus: I leave the art of Egypt in your charge. Remember: Rome loves art and will encourage it ungrudgingly.

APOLLODORUS: I understand, Caesar. Rome will produce no art itself; but it will buy up and take away whatever the other nations produce.

CAESAR: What! Rome produce no art! Is peace not an art? is war not an art? is government not an art? is civilization not an art? All these we give you in exchange for a few ornaments. You will have the best of the bargain.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

. . . the way to get at the merits of a case is not to listen to the fool who imagines himself impartial, but to get it argued with reckless bias for and against. To understand a saint, you must hear the devil's advocate; and the same is true of the artist.

THE SANITY OF ART

PRAISE

All artsmen know what it is to be enthusiastically praised for something so easy that they are half ashamed of it, and to receive not a word of encouragement for their finest strokes.

LONDON MUSIC

THE TEACHING OF ART

By art teaching I hasten to say that I do not mean giving children lessons in freehand drawing and perspective. I am simply calling attention to the fact that fine art is the only teacher except torture. I have already pointed out that nobody, except under threat of torture, can read a school book. The reason is that a school book is not a work of art. Similarly, you cannot listen to a lesson or a sermon unless the teacher or the preacher is an artist. You cannot read the Bible if you have no sense of literary art. The reason why the continental European is, to the Englishman or American, so surprisingly ignorant of the Bible, is that the authorized English version is a great work of literary art, and the continental versions are comparatively artless. To read a dull book; to listen to a tedious play or prosy sermon or lecture; to stare at uninteresting pictures or ugly buildings: nothing, short of disease, is more dreadful than this. The violence done to our souls by it leaves injuries and produces subtle maladies which have never been properly studied by psychopathologists.

Art Teaching
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE SECRET OF SELF-RESPECT

No man who is occupied in doing a very difficult thing, and doing it very well, ever loses his self-respect.

The Psychology of Self-Respect in Surgeons
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

Any fool can play the flute, or play anything else, if he practises enough; but sculpture is a creative art, not a mere business of whistling into a pipe. The sculptor must have something of the god in him. From his hand comes a form which reflects a spirit. He does not make it to please you, nor even to please himself, but because he must. You must take what he gives you, or leave it if—you are not worthy of it.

ARJILLAX *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

HORRIBLY LONELY

That is what all poets do: they talk to themselves out loud; and the world overhears them. But its horribly lonely not to hear someone else talk sometimes.

MARCHBANKS *in* CANDIDA

I DREAD SUCCESS

I dread success. To have succeeded is to have finished one's business on earth, like the male spider, who is killed by the female the moment he has succeeded in his courtship. I like a state of continual becoming, with a goal in front and not behind. Then, too, I like fighting successful people; attacking them; rousing them; trying their mettle; kicking down their sand castles so as to make them build stone ones, and so on. It develops one's muscles. Besides, one learns from it. A man never tells you anything until you contradict him.

Letter to Ellen Terry

WHEN I CONTEMPLATE

When I contemplate what I know and have done (not that I ever do) I have a high opinion of myself. When I contemplate what I dont know and cannot do (which I am often forced to do) I feel as a worm might if it knew how big the world is.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT

WHO BECOMES RICH?

Have we not already noted how the capitalist system leaves men of extraordinary and beneficent talent poor whilst making nonentities and greedy money hunters absurdly rich?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

AND YET . . .

Without art, the crudeness of reality would make the world unbearable.

ECRASIA *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

GRATITUDE

Now in art, as in politics, there is no such thing as gratitude.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

I HAD A KEEN SENSE OF BEAUTY

Now though nobody gave me credit for it in those days (very few do even now) I had a keen sense of beauty, not at all blunted by the extent to which my poverty had obliged me to starve it as far as my private accommodations were concerned. But I also had a searching analytical faculty which was the secret of my subsequent success as a professional critic. The combination, I am afraid, is rare. Some people, going into Morris's house, and finding it remarkably unlike their own house, would say "What a queer place!" Others with a more cultivated sense of beauty, would say "How very nice!" But neither of them would necessarily have seen what I saw at once, that there was an extraordinary discrimination at work in this magical house.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

READY MADE RULES USELESS

The severity of artistic discipline is produced by the fact that in creative art no ready made rules can help you. There is nothing to guide you to the right expression for your thought except your own sense of beauty and fitness; and as you advance upon those who went before you, that sense of beauty and fitness is necessarily often in conflict, not with fixed rules, because there are no rules, but, with precedents.

THE SANITY OF ART

THE CLASSICAL

What I mean by classical is that he can present a dramatic hero as a man whose passions are those which have produced the philosophy, the poetry, the art, and the statecraft of the world, and not merely those which have produced its weddings, coroners' inquests, and executions.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

MY CLAIM TO BE A CRITIC

You brought tears to my eyes, not, you will understand, by the imaginary sorrows of the lunatic (sorrow does not make me cry, even when it is real) but by doing the thing beautifully. My whole claim to be a critic of art is that I can be touched in that way.

Letter to Ellen Terry

HOW *YOU* REGARD AN ARTIST

A wit is to them a man who is laughing at them: an artist is a man of loose character who lives by telling lying stories and pandering to the voluptuous passions. What they like to read is the police intelligence, especially the murder cases and divorce cases. The invented murders and divorces of the novelists and playwrights do not satisfy them, because they cannot believe in them; and belief that the horror or scandal actually occurred, that real people are shedding real blood and real tears, is indispensable to their enjoyment.

Jack The Ripper
Preface to THREE PLAYS by BRIEUX

DANGEROUS

. . . it is more dangerous to be a great prophet or poet than to promote twenty companies for swindling simple folk out of their savings.

Art Teaching
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

HOW TO REMAIN SANE

I paint pictures to make me feel sane. Dealing with men and women makes me feel mad. Humanity always fails me: Nature never.

TALLBOYS *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

HAPPINESS

I have found a happiness in art that real life has never given me. I am intensely in earnest about art.

ECRASIA *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE ULTIMATE

Yes, child: art is the magic mirror you make to reflect your invisible dreams in visible pictures. You use a glass mirror to see your face: you use works of art to see your soul. But we who are older use neither glass mirrors nor works of art. We have a direct sense of life. When you gain that you will put aside your mirrors and statues, your toys and your dolls.

THE SHE-ANCIENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

HOW THE WORLD LEARNS

KNELLER: Your Majesty: the world must learn from its artists because God made the world as an artist. Your philosophers steal all their boasted discoveries from the artists; and then pretend they have deduced them from figures which they call equations, invented for that dishonest purpose. This man talks of Copernicus, who pretended to discover that the earth goes round the sun instead of the sun going round the earth.

Sir: Copernicus was a painter before he became an astronomer. He found astronomy easier. But his discovery was made by the great Italian painter Leonardo, born twenty-one years before him, who told all his intimates that the earth is a moon of the sun.

NEWTON: Did he prove it?

KNELLER: Man: artists do not prove things. They do not need to. They know them.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

RELISH FOR ART

Young genius has rather a habit, by the way, of writing to my editor to denounce me as flippant and unenlightened, and to demand that I also shall tear round and proclaim the working man as the true knower and seer in Art. If I did, the working man would not think any the better of me; for he knows well enough that society is not divided into "animated clothes-pegs" on the one hand and lovers of Beethoven in ligatured corduroys on the other.

For Beethoven purposes society is divided into people who can afford to keep a piano and go to operas and concerts, and people who cannot. Mr. Marshall-Hall's idea that the people

who cannot are nevertheless screwed up to concert pitch by honest, thorough, manly toil, shews that, though he be an expert in the music question, in the labor question he is a greenhorn.

Take a laborer's son; let him do his board-schooling mostly on an empty stomach; bring him up in a rookery tenement; take him away from school at thirteen; offer him the alternative of starvation or 12 to 16 hours work a day at jerry building, adulterated manufacturers, coupling railway waggons, collecting tramway fares, field labor, or what not, in return for food and lodging which no "animated clothes-peg" would offer to his hunter; bully him; slave-drive him; teach him by every word and look that he is not wanted among respectable people, and that his children are not fit to be spoken to by their children. This is a pretty receipt for making an appreciator of Beethoven.

The truth is, that in the innumerable grades of culture and comfort between the millionaire on the one hand, and the casual laborer on the other, there is a maximum of relish for art somewhere. That somewhere is certainly not among the idle rich, whose appetites for enjoyment are not sharpened by work, nor is it among those who, worn out by heavy muscular toil, fall asleep if they sit quiet and silent for five minutes of an evening. Professional and business men of musical tastes who work hard, and whose brains are of such a quality that a Beethoven symphony is a recreation to them instead of an increased strain on their mental powers, are keen patrons of music, though, in outward seeming, they belong to the animated clothes-peg section. Middle-class young ladies, to whom there is no path to glory except that of the pianist or prima donna, frequent St. James's Hall with astonishing persistence, and eventually form musical habits which outlast their musical hopes.

The musical public is the shilling public, by which I mean the people who can afford to pay not more than a shilling once a week or so for a concert without going short of more immediately necessary things. Music can be better nourished on shilling, sixpenny, and threepenny seats than on the St. James's Hall scale. The laborers are so enormously numerous that the absolute number of their exceptional men—men who will buy books out of 13s. a week in the country and 18 in a town, and find time to read them while working 12 hours a day—is considerable.

The more comfortable members of the artisan class can often afford a shilling much better than the poorer middle-class families; but it has a certain customary and traditional scale of expenditure, in which concerts stand at threepence or sixpence, shillings being reserved for the gallery of a West-end theatre, and half-crowns for Sunday trips to Epping Forest and for extra refreshments.

After these come the innumerable "poor devils" of the middle-class, always craving in an unaccountable way for music, and crowding the Promenade Concerts on classical nights, the Albert Hall gallery, and wherever else decent music is to be heard cheaply. To these three classes Mr. Marshall-Hall must look for the little that is now possible in the way of a musical public. Even when we have supplied all three with as much music as they can stomach the laborer in ligatured corduroys will still open his eyes to darkness, and the vapid snob grub like a blind puppy in the light. What we want is not music for the people, but bread for the people, rest for the people, immunity from robbery and scorn for the people, hope for them, enjoyment, equal respect and consideration, life and aspiration, instead of drudgery and despair. When we get that I imagine the people will make tolerable music for themselves, even if all Beethoven's scores perish in the interim.

LONDON MUSIC

I Become an Author

FOR ALL TIME

. . . journalism can claim to be the highest form of literature; for all the highest literature is journalism. The writer who aims at producing the platitudes which are "not for an age, but for all time" has his reward in being unreadable in all ages; whilst Plato and Aristophanes trying to knock some sense into the Athens of their day, Shakespear peopling that same Athens with Elizabethan mechanics and Warwickshire hunts, Ibsen photographing the local doctors and vestrymen of a Norwegian parish, Carpaccio painting the life of St. Ursula exactly as if she were a lady living in the next street to him, are still alive and at home everywhere among the dust and ashes of many thousands of academic, punctilious, most archaeologically correct men of letters and art who spent their lives haughtily avoiding the journalist's vulgar obsession with the ephemeral. I also am a journalist, proud of it, deliberately cutting out of the works all that is not journalism, convinced that nothing that is not journalism will live long as literature, or be of any use whilst it does live. I deal with all periods; but I never study any period but the present, which I have not yet mastered and never shall; and as a dramatist I have no clue to any historical or other personage save that part of him which is also myself, and which may be nine tenths of him or ninety-nine hundredths, as the case may be (if, indeed, I do not transcend the creature), but which, anyhow, is all that can ever come within my knowledge of his soul. The man who writes about himself and his own time is the only man who writes about all people and about all time.

THE SANITY OF ART

NATURAL TO ME

It happened when I was a child that one of the books I delighted in was an illustrated Shakespear, with a picture and two or three lines of text underneath it on every third or fourth page. Ever since, Shakespearean blank verse has been to me as natural a form of literary expression as the Augustan English to which I was brought up in Dublin, or the latest London fashion in dialogue.

Foreword to CYMBELINE

MY AMBITION

My ambition was to be a great painter like Michael Angelo (one of my heroes); but my attempts to obtain instruction in his art at the School of Design presided over by the South Kensington Department of Science and Art only prevented me from learning anything except how to earn five shilling grants for the masters (payment by results) by filling up ridiculous examination papers in practical geometry and what they called freehand drawing.

With a competent instruction I daresay I could have become a painter and draughtsman of sorts; but the School of Design convinced me that I was a hopeless failure in that direction on no better ground than that I found I could not draw like Michael Angelo or paint like Titian at the first attempt without knowing how. But teaching of art and everything else, was and still is so little understood by our professional instructors (mostly themselves failures) that only the readymade geniuses make good; and even they are as often as not the worse for their academic contacts.

LONDON MUSIC

BUT INSTEAD I WRITE

In art a man was what he was and did what he could; and what was the use of arguing about it?

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

MY STYLE

I have never aimed at style in my life: style is a sort of melody that comes into my sentences by itself. If a writer says what he has to say as accurately and effectively as he can, his

style will take care of itself, if he has a style. But I did set up one condition in my early days. I resolved that I would write nothing that should not be intelligible to a foreigner with a dictionary, like the French of Voltaire; and I therefore avoided idiom. (Later on I came to seek idiom as being the most highly vitalized form of language.)

IMMATURITY

IMAGINATION

. . . imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire; you will what you imagine; and at last you create what you will.

THE SERPENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

MY SUCCESS

The years of professional success are usually preceded by a long struggle with scanty means. I myself am held to be a conspicuous example of success in the most lucrative branch of the literary profession; but until I was thirty I could not make even a bare living by my pen. At thirty-eight I thought myself passing rich on six or seven pounds a week; and even now, when I am seventy, and have achieved all that can be achieved commercially at my job, I see in the paper every day, under the heading Wills and Bequests, that the widow of some successful man of business, wholly unknown to fame, has died leaving a fortune which reduces my gains to insignificance.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

LET US COME DOWN TO TIN TACKS

There is no need for you to remain equally in the dark about me; and you had better know whom you are dealing with. I am a landlord and capitalist, rich enough to be supertaxed; and in addition I have a special sort of property called literary property, for the use of which I charge people exactly as a landlord charges rent for his land. I object to inequality of income not as a man with a small income; but as one with a middling big one. But I know what it is to be a proletarian, and a poor one at that. I have worked in an office; and I have pulled through years of professional unemployment, some of the hardest of them at the expense of my mother. I have known the extremes of failure

and of success. The class in which I was born was that most unlucky of all classes: the class that claim gentility and is expected to keep up its appearances without more than the barest scrap and remnant of property to do it on. I intrude these confidences on you because it is as well that you be able to allow for my personal bias. The rich often write about the poor, and the poor about the rich, without really knowing what they are writing about. I know the whole gamut from personal experience, short of actual hunger and homelessness, which should never be experienced by anybody. If I cry sour grapes, you need not suspect that they are only out of my reach: they are all in my hand at their ripest and best.

So now let us come down to tin tacks.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

RESPECTABILITY

I have always managed to keep out of the casual ward and the police court; and this gives me an ineffable sense of superior respectability.

Preface to THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SUPERTRAMP

WHETHER HE POSSESSES THEM OR NOT

. . . his artist's power of appealing to the imagination gains him credit for all sorts of qualities and powers, whether he possesses them or not.

About LOUIS DUBEDAT *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

MY NATURAL CIVILITY

As my manners in this respect were no better than other people's and my satirical powers much more formidable, I can only hope that my natural civility, which led me to draw back when I found I was hurting people's feelings, may have mitigated my offensiveness in those early days when I still regarded controversy as admitting of no quarter. I lacked both cruelty and will-to-victory.

IMMATURITY

MY EMINENCE

I attribute my own eminence, such as it is, to the fact that I am much better educated than the public school and university products, by whose reckoning I am wholly uneducated. By this

is meant that though I began with an extensive knowledge of music, English, German, and Italian, from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth, not by reading books about it but by listening to it and singing it; though I knew the nine symphonies of Beethoven and the three greatest of Mozart's as well as I knew "Pop Goes The Weazel"; though I had looked at pictures and engravings of pictures until I could recognize the handiwork of the greatest painters at a glance, yet I could not read the *Satires of Juvenal* in the original Latin, my imprisonment for years in a school where nothing was counted as educational except Latin and Greek having left me unable to read the most conventional Latin epitaph without guessing, or to write a single Ciceronian sentence. I possess Dryden's translation of the Satires and have dipped into them enough to know that it is impossible to read more than a page or two of such a mass of ignorance, vulgarity, bad manners, and filth; and though, thanks mainly to Gilbert Murray, I know as much as anyone need know of the ancient Greek drama, and have learnt all that is now to be learnt from Homer and Virgil from Lord Derby, Morris, Dryden, and Salt, yet I consider myself lucky in having had my mind first well stocked in my nonage by Michael Angelo and Handel, Beethoven and Mozart, Shakespear and Dickens and their like, and not by Latin versemongers and cricketers.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AN EDUCATED GENTLEMAN

After all, nobody can say a word against Greek: it stamps a man at once as an educated gentleman.

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

I HAD SOMETHING TO SAY

My friend: when a man has anything to tell in this world, the difficulty is not to make him tell it, but to prevent him from telling it too often.

CAESAR *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

AND HAD NOT THE MODEST COUGH OF A MINOR POET

ELIZABETH: You have an overweening conceit of yourself, sir, that displeases your Queen.

SHAKESPEAR: Oh, madam, can I go about with the modest

cough of a minor poet, belittling my inspiration and making the mightiest wonder of your reign a thing of nought? I have said that "not marble nor the gilded monuments of princes shall outlive" the words with which I make the world glorious or foolish at my will.

THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS

OVERSTATE YOUR CASE

It is always necessary to overstate a case startlingly to make people sit up and listen to it, and to frighten them into acting on it. I do this myself habitually and deliberately.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MY FIRST ASSAULT

Not until *Immaturity* was finished, late in 1879, did I for the first time rise to my feet in a little debating club called The Zetetical Society, to make, in a condition of heartbreaking nervousness, my first assault on an audience.

IMMATURITY

A DISAGREEABLE CHARACTER

Now you, Jamie, became that very disagreeable character a man of principle.

CHARLES *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

MY PENURY PHASE OVER

Except for a day or two in 1881, when I earned a few pounds by counting the votes at an election in Leyton, I was an Unemployable, an ablebodied pauper in fact if not in law, until the year 1885, when for the first time I earned enough money directly by my pen to pay my way. My income for that year amounted to £112; and from that time until the war of 1914-18 momentarily threatened us all with bankruptcy, I had no pecuniary anxieties except those produced by the possession of money, not by the lack of it. My penury phase was over.

IMMATURITY

£4,000 AS A MINIMUM INCOME

This passes off as a characteristic Shavian joke; and I enjoy the fun it makes; but the real joke is that I am quite in earnest. To enable me to devote myself entirely to my professional work

I have everything else done for me as if I were a baby. Those who do it for me must also have their incomes to live on; and this I have to provide out of what I call my pocket-money. I can only hope I am worth the work they have to do to take care of me and of themselves. Mr. Wells's estimate of £4,000 as a minimum income is laughed at as long as it is thought of as the means of a single person. If you think of it as the family income of a citizen earning it by the exercise of a profession or craft which occupies all his or her working time and energy, your laughter will fade out, as Ecclesiastes puts it, "like the crackling of thorns under a pot." All the breadwinners' domestic work has to be done for them and paid for by them: they have not time to make their own clothes, bake their own muffins, cook their own meals, roll their own lawns, dig their own gardens, nor even polish their own shoes and make their own beds. I say nothing about their having to support and educate their children besides surrendering an enormous percentage of their incomes to ground landlords who in return give them nothing but permission to live on the earth, because these are charges which may conceivably be undertaken by a Socialist State; but even when relieved from them the £4,000 a year may have to support not one person only but half a dozen directly and a row of shops indirectly and partially. The £4,000 a year per family becomes at most £600 per head. This may seem affluence to a laborer who is expected to bring up a family on £104 (when he can get it); but no State can be highly civilized with a majority of its citizens in such poverty: it needs family incomes of at least £15 a week, and must get them produced by hook or crook.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

EQUALITY

Equality, which in practice means intermarriageability, is based on the hard facts that the greatest genius costs no more to feed and clothe and lodge than the narrowest minded duffer, and at a pinch can do with less, and that the most limited craftsman or laborer who can do nothing without direction from a thinker, is, if worth employing at all, as necessary and important socially as the ablest director. Equality between them is either equality of income and of income only or an obvious lie.

Preface to GENEVA

About Myself

MY COSTUME

And you have nothing but that Norfolk jacket. How are they to know that you are well connected if you do not shew it by your costume?

COKANE *in* WIDOWERS' HOUSES

EMINENCE

I have achieved eminence by sheer gravitation; and I hereby warn all peasant lads not to be duped by my pretended example into regarding their present servitude as a practicable first step to a celebrity so dazzling that its subject cannot even suppress his own bad novels.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

UNDISCOURAGEABLE

I sent the five novels to all the publishers in London and some in America. None would venture on them. Fifty or sixty refusals without a single acceptance forced me into a fierce self-sufficiency. I became undiscourageable, acquiring a superhuman insensitiveness to praise or blame which has been useful to me at times since, though at other times it has retarded my business affairs by making me indifferent to the publication and performances of my works, and even impatient of them as an unwelcome interruption to the labor of writing their successors. Instead of seizing every opportunity of bringing them before the public, I have often, on plausible but really trivial pretexts, put off proposals which I should have embraced with all the normal author's keenness for publicity.

IMMATURITY

MY NORMAL EYES

All I had to do was to open my normal eyes, and with my utmost literary skill put the case exactly as it struck me, or describe the thing exactly as I saw it, to be applauded as the most humorously extravagant paradoxer in London. The only reproach with which I became familiar was the everlasting "Why can you not be serious?" Soon my privileges were enormous and my wealth immense.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

MY IRON NERVE

Whatever faults the St. James's Hall audience may have, susceptibility to panic is not one of them. Although the cooking arrangements connected with the restaurant occasionally scorch the concert-room and produce the most terrifying odors of shrivelling paint and reddening iron, nobody budges. On Tuesday night I sat trembling, convinced that the whole building was in flames, until a lady gently slipped out and came back with an assurance from the attendants that there was no danger, a smell of fire being one of the well-known attractions of the hall. Then my past life ceased to run panoramically before my mind's eye; and I settled down to listen to the music. But I respectfully submit that everybody is not gifted with my iron nerve, and that in a very heavy crush the consequences of an inopportune scorch might be disastrous.

LONDON MUSIC

NO MOCK MODESTY

When an actress writes her memoirs, she impresses on you in every chapter how cruelly it tried her feelings to exhibit her person to the public gaze; but she does not forget to decorate the book with a dozen portraits of herself. I really cannot respond to this demand for mock-modesty. I am ashamed neither of my work nor of the way it is done. I like explaining its merits to the huge majority who dont know good work from bad. It does them good; and it does me good, curing me of nervousness, laziness, and snobbishness. I write prefaces as Dryden did, and treatises as Wagner, because I *can*; and I would give half a dozen of Shakespear's plays for one of the prefaces he ought to have written. I leave the delicacies of retirement to those who are

gentle first and literary workmen afterwards. The cart and trumpet for me.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

NICE

As if people with any force in them ever were altogether nice!

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

MY PLAYS

I have spared no pains to make known that my plays are built to induce not voluptuous reverie but intellectual interest, not romantic rhapsody but humane concern.

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

VOCABULARY

. . . to me the whole vocabulary of English literature, from Shakespear to the latest edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is so completely and instantaneously at my call that I have never had to consult even a thesaurus except once or twice when for some reason I wanted a third or fourth synonym.

The Miracle of Condensed Recapitulation
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

I AM

I am a natural-born mountebank.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

I TELL YOU

Please do not revile me for telling you what I felt instead of what I ought to have felt.

KILLING FOR SPORT

EARLY IN LIFE

I made up my mind early in life never to let myself be persuaded that I am enjoying myself gloriously when I am, as a matter of fact, being bored and pestered and plundered and worried and tired.

Trying It For An Hour
Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

I AM WHAT I AM

If I am to be no mere copper wire amateur but a luminous author, I must also be a most intensely refractory person, liable to go out and to go wrong at inconvenient moments, and with incendiary possibilities. These are the faults of my qualities; and I assure you that I sometimes dislike myself so much that when some irritable reviewer chances at that moment to pitch into me with zest, I feel unspeakably relieved and obliged. But I never dream of reforming, knowing that I must take myself as I am and get what work I can out of myself.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

INDISPENSABLE

Nobody likes me: I am held in awe. Capable persons are never liked, I am not likeable; but I am indispensable.

CONFUCIUS *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

MY SPECIALITY

My speciality is being right when other people are wrong. If you agreed with me I should be no use here.

BOHUN *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

MY SPECIAL FACULTY

Look at me! I seem a man like other men, because nine tenths of me is common humanity. But the other tenth is a faculty for seeing things as they are that no other man possesses.

NAPOLEON *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

SELF-SUFFICIENT

. . . forced him to be self-sufficient and to understand that to such men as he is the world will give nothing that he cannot take from it by force.

THE MAN OF DESTINY

THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

I must recognize, as even the Ancient Mariner did, that I must tell my story entertainingly if I am to hold the wedding guest spellbound in spite of the siren sounds of the loud bassoon.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

LAUGHTER

By laughter only can you destroy evil without malice and affirm good fellowship without mawkishness.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

CONTINUALLY IN HOT WATER

My career as a revolutionary critic of our most respected social institutions kept me continually in hot water.

Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

GOOD FOR PEOPLE TO BE SHOCKED

The plain working truth is that it is not only good for people to be shocked occasionally, but absolutely necessary to the progress of society that they should be shocked pretty often.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

MY KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD

I must add that the mere rawness which so soon rubs off was complicated by a deeper strangeness which has made me all my life a sojourner on this planet rather than a native of it. Whether it be that I was born mad or a little too sane, my kingdom was not of this world: I was at home only in the realm of my imagination and at my ease only with the mighty dead. Therefore I had to become an actor, and create for myself a fantastic personality fit and apt for dealing with men, and adaptable to the various parts I had to play as author, journalist, orator, politician, committee man, man of the world, and so forth. In this I succeeded later on only too well.

IMMATURITY

FAILURE

My reputation grows with every failure. . . .

Letter to Frank Harris

THE LEAST AMBITIOUS OF MEN

On this question of ambition let me say a word. In the ordinary connotation of the word I am the least ambitious of men. I have said, and I confirm it here, that I am so poor a hand at pushing and struggling, and so little interested in their rewards,

that I have risen by sheer gravitation, too industrious by acquired habit to stop working (I work as my father drank), and too lazy and timid by nature to lay hold of half the opportunities or a tenth of the money that a conventionally ambitious man would have grasped strenuously. I never thought of myself as destined to become what is called a great man: indeed I was diffident to the most distressing degree; and I was ridiculously credulous as to the claims of others to superior knowledge and authority. But one day in the office I had a shock. One of the apprentices, by name C. J. Smyth, older than I and more a man of the world, remarked that every young chap thought he was going to be a great man. On a really modest youth this commonplace would have had no effect. It gave me so perceptible a jar that I suddenly became aware that I had never thought I was to be a great man simply because I had always taken it as a matter of course. The incident passed without leaving any preoccupation with it to hamper me; and I remained as diffident as ever because I was still as incompetent as ever. But I doubt whether I ever recovered my former complete innocence of subconscious intention to devote myself to the class of work that only a few men excel in, and to accept the responsibilities that attach to its dignity.

IMMATURITY

PRAISE

Woe unto me when all men praise me!

JOAN *in* SAINT JOAN

I DO NOT CONCEAL MY MEANING

No great writer uses his skill to conceal his meaning.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

MY HABITS

If I had adopted their habits, a startling deterioration would have appeared in my writing before the end of a fortnight, and frightened me back to what they would have considered an impossible asceticism.

A Forgotten Conference of Married Men
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

THE DANGER OF GREATNESS

All the great artists enter into a terrible struggle with the public, often involving bitter poverty and personal humiliation, and always involving calumny and persecution.

The Pedantry of Paris
In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

DEADLY SERIOUSNESS

When an author's works produce violent controversy, and are new, people are apt to read them with that sort of seriousness which is very appropriately called deadly: that is, with a sort of solemn paralysis of every sense except a quite abstract and baseless momentousness which has no more to do with the contents of the author's works than the horrors of a man in delirium tremens have to do with real rats and snakes.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

. . . the most effective way of shutting our minds against a great man's ideas is to take them for granted and admit he was great and have done with him. It really matters very little whether Ibsen was a great man or not: what does matter is his message and the need of it.

Preface: 1913
THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE MILDNESS OF AN ICONOCLAST

Later on, when I had made a public reputation as an iconoclast, people who met me in private were surprised at my mildness and sociability.

IMMATURITY

ON BEING GREAT

But do not pretend that people become great by doing great things. They do great things because they are great, if the great things come along. But they are great just the same when the great things do not come along.

ORINTHIA *in* THE APPLE CART

WHY I WASN'T LYNCHED

. . . a generation which could read all Shakespear and Molière, Dickens and Dumas, from end to end without the smallest intellectual or ethical perturbation, was unable to get through a play by Ibsen or a novel by Tolstoy without having its intellectual and moral complacency upset, its religious faith shattered, and its notions of right and wrong conduct thrown into confusion and sometimes even reversed. It is as if these modern men had a spiritual force that was lacking in even the greatest of their forerunners. And yet, what evidence is there in the lives of Wagner, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Strindberg, Gorki, Tchekov, and Brieux, that they were or are better men in any sense than Shakespear, Molière, Dickens and Dumas?

I myself have been told by people that the reading of a single book of mine or the witnessing of a single play has changed their whole lives; and among these are some who tell me that they cannot read Dickens at all, whilst all of them have read books and seen plays by authors obviously quite as gifted as I am, without finding anything more in them than pastime.

The explanation is to be found in what I believe to be a general law of the evolution of ideas. "Every jest is an earnest in the womb of time," says Peter Keegan in *John Bull's Other Island*. "There's many a true word spoken in Jest," says the first villager you engage in philosophic discussion. All very serious revolutionary propositions begin as huge jokes. Otherwise they would be stamped out by the lynching of their first exponents. Even these exponents themselves have their revelations broken to them mysteriously through their sense of humor. Two friends of mine, travelling in remote parts of Spain, were asked by the shepherds what their religion was. "Our religion," replied one of them, a very highly cultivated author and traveller with a sardonic turn, "is that there is no God." This reckless remark, taken seriously, might have provided nineteenth century scepticism with a martyr. As it was, the countryside rang with laughter for days afterwards as the stupendous joke was handed round. But it was just by tolerating the blasphemy as a joke that the shepherds began to build it into the fabric of their minds. Being now safely lodged there, it will in due time develop its earnestness.

MY SINGULAR FATE

I realise the full significance of the singular fate which has led me to play with all the serious things of life and to deal seriously with all its plays.

Letter to Janet Achurch

MY FRIVOLITY

There is more method in my frivolity than you think. . . .

Letter

A NEW SECT

The Great Man idea will bear a more detailed examination, which I undertake with some authority, as I happen to be classed by the sect of Shavians as a Great Man myself.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DIVINATION

In all walks of life men are to be found who seem to have powers of divination. For example, you propound a complicated arithmetical problem: say the cubing of a number containing four digits. Give me a slate and half an hour's time, and I can produce a wrong answer. But there are men to whom the right answer is instantly obvious without any consciousness of calculation on their part. Ask such a man to write a description or put a somewhat complicated thought into words for half an hour, finally putting down the wrong ones; whilst for a Shakespear the words are there in due style and measure as soon as the consciousness of the thing to be described or the formation of the thought.

CASHEL BYRON'S PROFESSION

I HAVE ESCAPED FROM MYSELF

Ive been myself. Ive not been afraid of myself. And at last I have escaped from myself, and am become a voice for them that are afraid to speak, and a cry for the hearts that break in silence.

MRS GEORGE *in* GETTING MARRIED

A HOPE

I hope men will be the better for remembering me.

JOAN *in* SAINT JOAN

GENESIS

Physiologists inform us that the substance of our bodies (and consequently of our souls) is shed and renewed at such a rate that no part of us lasts longer than eight years: I am therefore not now in any atom of me the person who wrote *The Irrational Knot* in 1880. The last of that author perished in 1888; and two of his successors have since joined the majority. Fourth of his line, I cannot be expected to take any very lively interest in the novels of my literary great-grandfather. Even my personal recollections of him are becoming vague and overlaid with those most misleading of all traditions, the traditions founded on the lies a man tells, and at last comes to believe, about himself *to* himself.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

MY GENERATION

Why was I born into such a generation of duffers!

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

CIRCUMSTANCES

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I dont believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they cant find them, make them.

VIVIE *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

NO RESENTMENT

Resent! O thou foolish Egyptian, what have I to do with resentment? Do I resent the wind when it chills me, or the night when it makes me stumble in the darkness? Shall I resent youth when it turns from age, and ambition when it turns from servitude? To tell me such a story as this is but to tell me that the sun will rise tomorrow.

CAESAR *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

SELF

I'm so sorry. I get so interested in myself that I thrust myself into the front of every discussion in the most insufferable way.

HOTCHKISS *in* GETTING MARRIED

I Was a Child

I WAS BORN LITERATE

I can remember no time at which a page of print was not intelligible to me, and can only suppose that I was born literate.

LONDON MUSIC

A FREETHINKER

I was brought up anarchically, and was a Freethinker before I knew how to think.

BERNARD'S BRETHEREN

THE FAMILY

. . . the family, far from being a school of reverence for me, was rather a mine from which I could dig highly amusing material without the trouble of inventing a single incident.

IMMATURITY

A FRIGHTFUL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

I have a morbid horror of any ill treatment of children; but I believe that love and the more touching sorts of happiness are wasted on them: they are really not capable of them. Nobody is until they've earned them. In my own case I am afraid that though I was not ill treated—my parents being quite incapable of any sort of inhumanity—the fact that nobody cared for me particularly gave me a frightful self-sufficiency, or rather a power of starving on imaginary feasts, that may have delayed my development a great deal, and leaves me to this hour a treacherous brute in matters of pure affection. But I am quite sure that people with happy childhoods usually say—what is incomprehensible to

me—that their childhood was the happiest part of their lives. Tell Edy that the two things that worthless people sacrifice everything for are happiness and freedom, and that their punishment is that they get both only to find that they have no capacity for the happiness and no use for the freedom.

Letter to Janet Achurch

NO DOMINANCE

I was never afraid of my father, and have no unkindly recollections of him. Neither he nor my mother were capable of beating a child under any sort of provocation. There was no dominance in our household.

BERNARD'S BRETHEREN

OUR FAMILY

In our family we did not bother about conventionalities or sentimentalities.

IMMATURITY

SERVANTS

Note, by the way, that I should have been much more decently brought up if my parents had been too poor to afford servants.

LONDON MUSIC

HAD I BEEN BORN A PEASANT!

Had I been born a peasant, I should now be a tramp.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

MOTHER

My mother, I may say here, had no comedic impulses, and never uttered an epigram in her life: all my comedy is a Shavian inheritance. She had plenty of imagination, and really lived in it and on it.

IMMATURITY

A DOWNSTART

My father was second cousin to a baronet, and my mother the daughter of a country gentleman whose rule was, when in difficulties, mortgage. That was my sort of poverty. The Shaws

were younger sons from the beginning, as I shall shew when I reveal my full pedigree. Even the baronetcy was founded on the fortunes of a fifth son who came to Dublin and made that city his oyster. Let who will preen himself on his Mother Hubbard's bare cupboard, and play for sympathy as an upstart: I was a downstart and the son of a downstart. But for the accident of a lucrative talent I should today be poorer than Spinoza; for he at least knew how to grind lenses, whereas I could not afford to learn any art. Luckily Nature taught me one.

IMMATURITY

MY MOTHER

My mother worked for my living instead of preaching that it was my duty to work for hers: Therefore take off your hat to her, and blush.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

OMNISCIENT

When I was a child tormenting my elders with endless whats and wheres and whens and hows and whos, the nursemaids said, "Ask no questions and you will be told no lies," which was true, but not edifying. My father, who was to me omniscient and infallible, was my chief victim; and one of the miracles which still puzzles me is the extent to which, under this pressure, he imparted to me so much information on matters in which he must have been ignorant as myself. The child's final question, which is always Why, is unanswerable, and should perhaps be always answered by a frank "Nobody knows," though stupid scientists put themselves out of court too often by mistaking hows for whys.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

STRANGERS

The child and the parent are strangers to one another necessarily, because their ages must differ widely. Read Goethe's autobiography; and note that though he was happy in his parents and had exceptional powers of observation, divination, and story-telling, he knew less about his father and mother than about most of the other people he mentions. I myself was never on bad terms with my mother: we lived together until I was forty-

two years old, absolutely without the smallest friction of any kind; yet when her death set me thinking curiously about our relations, I realized that I knew very little about her. Introduce me to a strange woman who was a child when I was a child, a girl when I was a boy, an adolescent when I was an adolescent; and if we take naturally to one another I will know more of her and she of me at the end of forty days (I had almost said of forty minutes) than I knew of my mother at the end of forty years. A contemporary stranger is a novelty and an enigma, also a possibility; but a mother is like a broomstick or like the sun in the heavens, it does not matter which as far as one's knowledge of her is concerned: the broomstick is there and the sun is there; and whether the child is beaten by it or warned and enlightened by it, it accepts it as a fact in nature, and does not conceive it as having had youth, passions, and weaknesses, or as still growing, yearning, suffering, and learning.

How Little We Know About Our Parents
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

ANCESTORS

One of my grandfathers was clever with his hands. His "study" was fitted like a carpenter's shop. He built his own boats, and would have been a valuable member of society as a craftsman living by his talent. Unfortunately his station was that of a country gentleman, forbidden to make money by his gift of manual dexterity. For the management of his landed estate he had not the smallest aptitude. He did not even live on it: as sport was not good there he moved to another and wilder county, where he hunted and shot and fished (in the boat he built for himself) consummately; for he could ride any horse, however unmanageable, and was a dead shot with any sort of firearm. Meanwhile all he did as a landlord was to leave his estate in charge of an agent, and mortgage it until it was completely insolvent. He was not naturally incompetent or inactive, very much the reverse: he was a square peg in a round hole. In a sensibly organized society he would have had a useful and prosperous career as a craftsman. As a member of the landed gentry he was—what he was.

One of my greatgrandfathers did much better by practising an extraordinary social imposture. To all appearances he was

a country gentleman intermarrying with the best county blood in Ireland. Yet all the time he was amassing riches by secretly carrying on the business of a pawnbroker in one of the poorest quarters in Dublin. His life should have been chronicled by Samuel Smiles as an example of Self Help. How he contrived to have a greatgrandson so utterly destitute of his qualities as I am remains a biological mystery. I should hardly have weathered my early years of rejection by the publishers but for what was left of the profits of his pawnbroking.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AT FIFTEEN

At 15 I had nothing childish left about me. . . .

BERNARD'S BRETHEREN

MY POLITENESS

. . . you will wonder at my politeness.

LONDON MUSIC

ABANDONED TO THE SERVANTS

We children (I had two sisters older than myself and no brothers) were abandoned entirely to the servants, who, with the exception of Nurse Williams, who was a good and honest woman, were utterly unfit to be trusted with the charge of three cats, much less three children. I had my meals in the kitchen, mostly of stewed beef, which I loathed, badly cooked potatoes, sound or diseased as the case might be, and much too much tea out of brown delft teapots left to "draw" on the hob until it was pure tannin. Sugar I stole. I was never hungry, because my father, often insufficiently fed in his childhood, had such a horror of child hunger that he insisted on unlimited bread and butter being always within our reach. When I was troublesome a servant thumped me on the head until one day, greatly daring, I rebelled, and, on finding her collapse abjectly, became thenceforth uncontrollable. I hated the servants and liked my mother because, on the one or two rare and delightful occasions when she buttered my bread for me, she buttered it thickly instead of merely wiping a knife on it. Her almost complete neglect of me had the advantage that I could idolize her to the utmost pitch

of my imagination and had no sordid or disillusioning contacts with her. It was a privilege to be taken for a walk or a visit with her, or on an excursion.

LONDON MUSIC

THE FOUNDATIONS LAID

My ordinary exercise whilst I was still young to be allowed out by myself was to be taken out by a servant, who was supposed to air me on the banks of the canal or round the fashionable squares where the atmosphere was esteemed salubrious and the surroundings gentlemanly. Actually she took me into the slums to visit her private friends, who dwelt in squalid tenements. When she met a generous male acquaintance who insisted on treating her she took me into the public house bars, where I was regaled with lemonade and ginger-beer; but I did not enjoy these treats, because my father's eloquence on the evil of drink had given me an impression that a public house was a wicked place into which I should not have been taken. Thus were laid the foundations of my lifelong hatred of poverty, and the devotion of all my public life to the task of exterminating the poor and rendering their resurrection for ever impossible.

LONDON MUSIC

THE IMPACT OF LEE

My mother was enabled to bear a disappointing marriage by the addition to our household of a musician of genius who gave her a career as a singer, and plenty of occupation as his partner in all his general musical activities, and especially in a technique of singing which was an article of faith with her. I had therefore, to my own great advantage, been brought up in a ménage à trois. . . .

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

THROUGH LEE THEY MOVE TO DALKEY

I was far too busy educating myself out of school by reading every book I could lay hands on, and clambering all over Killiney hill looking at the endless pictures nature painted for me, meanwhile keeping my mind busy by telling myself all sorts of stories, to puzzle about my vocabulary lesson, as the punishments were as futile as the teaching. At the end of my schooling I knew nothing of what the school professed to teach; but I was a highly

educated boy all the same. I could sing and whistle from end to end leading works by Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi. I was saturated with English literature, from Shakespear and Bunyan to Byron and Dickens. And I was so susceptible to natural beauty that, having had some glimpse of the Dalkey scenery on an excursion, I still remember the moment when my mother told me that we were going to live there as the happiest of my life.

LONDON MUSIC

I REMEMBER

I remember using tallow candles which needed trimming with a scissors called a snuffers to light me to bed, and smelly oil burners to read by in the evenings. I have had a tooth cavity scraped out with a spike. I have lived to have my teeth (when I had any) drilled by electricity, my hair cut by electricity, my rooms not only lighted but swept and dusted by electricity turned on from a tap in the wall.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

IF I HAD PLENTY OF MONEY!

When I was a small boy and an arrant coward I represented myself by fantastic lying as an invincible fighter. When I was taken to the theatre to see a costume play I was interested as much in the swords of the actors as in the play. When I looked forward, as all boys do, to what I should buy when I was grown up and had plenty of money I had not a moment's doubt that my first and most cherished purchase would be a revolver. If anyone had prophesied that I should grow up and have plenty of money and reach my eighty-eighth year without having ever bought a firearm, I could not have believed him. The literature that stirred my blood with the thunder of the captains and the shouting in the Bible, and the combat of Christian with Apollyon and Greatheart with the giants in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, could still stir me in Gilbert Chesterton's war song of Lepanto. Gilbert grew up to be a man of enormous size; but at his biggest he still played with a bayonet like a boy. In 1914, in my fifty-ninth year, I was astonished and scandalized to find traces of war excitement still stirring in me.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MY PROWESS

When I was a very small boy, my romantic imagination, stimulated by early doses of fiction, led me to brag to a still smaller boy so outrageously that he, being a simple soul, really believed me to be an invincible hero. I cannot remember whether this pleased me much; but I do remember very distinctly that one day this admirer of mine, who had a pet goat, found the animal in the hands of a larger boy than either of us, who mocked him and refused to restore the animal to his rightful owner. Whereupon, naturally, he came weeping to me, and demanded that I should rescue the goat and annihilate the aggressor. My terror was beyond description: fortunately for me, it imparted such a ghastliness to my voice and aspect as I, under the eye of my poor little dupe, advanced on the enemy with that hideous extremity of cowardice which is called the courage of despair, and said "You let go that goat," that he abandoned his prey and fled, to my unforgettable, unspeakable relief. I have never since exaggerated my prowess in bodily combat.

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

LEE'S IDEAS ASTONISHED US

And all this I owed to the meteoric impact of Lee, with his music, his method, his impetuous enterprise and his magnetism, upon the little Shaw household where a thoroughly disgusted and disillusioned woman was suffering from a hopelessly disappointing husband and three uninteresting children grown too old to be petted like the animals and birds she was so fond of, to say nothing of the humiliating inadequacy of my father's income. We never felt any affection for Lee; for he was too excessively unlike us, too completely a phenomenon, to rouse any primitive human feeling in us. When my mother introduced him to me, he played with me for the first and last time; but as his notion of play was to decorate my face with moustaches and whiskers in burnt cork in spite of the most furious resistance I could put up, our encounter was not a success; and the defensive attitude in which it left me lasted, though without the least bitterness, until the decay of his energies and the growth of mine put us on more than equal terms. He never read anything except Tyndall on Sound, which he kept in his bedroom for years. He complained that an edition of Shakespear which I

lent him was incomplete because it did not contain *The School for Scandal*, which for some reason he wanted to read; and when I talked of Carlyle he understood me to mean the Viceroy of that name who had graciously attended his concerts in the Antient Concert Rooms. Although he supplanted my father as the dominant factor in the household, and appropriated all the activity and interest of my mother, he was so completely absorbed in his musical affairs that there was no friction and hardly any intimate personal contacts between the two men: certainly no unpleasantness. At first his ideas astonished us. He said that people should sleep with their windows open. The daring of this appealed to me; and I have done so ever since. He ate brown bread instead of white: a startling eccentricity. He had no faith in doctors, and when my mother had a serious illness took her case in hand unhesitatingly and at the end of a week or so gave my trembling father leave to call in a leading Dublin doctor, who simply said, "My work is done" and took his hat. As to the apothecary and his squills, he could not exist in Lee's atmosphere; and I was never attended by a doctor again until I caught the smallpox in the epidemic of 1881. He took no interest in pictures or in any art but his own; and even in music his interest was limited to vocal music: I did not know that such things as string quartets or symphonies existed until I began, at sixteen, to investigate music for myself. Beethoven's sonatas and the classical operatic overtures were all I knew of what Wagner called absolute music. I should be tempted to say that none of us knew of the existence of Bach were it not that my mother sang "My Heart Ever Faithful," the banjo like obbligato of which amused me very irreverently.

Lee was like all artists whose knowledge is solely a working knowledge: there were holes in his culture which I had to fill up for myself. Fortunately his richer pupils sometimes presented him with expensive illustrated books. He never opened them; but I did. He was so destitute of any literary bent that when he published a book entitled *The Voice*, it was written for him by a scamp of a derelict doctor whom he entertained for that purpose, just as in later years his prospectuses and press articles were written by me. He never visited the Dublin National Gallery, one of the finest collections of its size in Europe, with the usual full set of casts from what was called the antique, mean-

ing ancient Greek sculpture. It was by prowling in this gallery that I learnt to recognize the work of the old masters at sight. I learnt French history from the novels of Dumas père, and English history from Shakespear and Walter Scott. Good boys were meanwhile learning lessons out of schoolbooks and receiving marks at examinations: a process which left them pious barbarians whilst I was acquiring an equipment which enabled me not only to pose as Corno di Bassetto when the chance arrived, but to add the criticism of pictures to the various strings I had to my bow as a feuilletonist.

LONDON MUSIC

SOCIAL PRETENSIONS

I myself began as a downstart with social pretensions which I had no means of supporting, and am therefore acutely conscious of downstart snobbery and impecuniosity. I escaped from it into professional celebrity by the rare accident of being gifted with a lucrative artistic talent. The upstarts escape when they, too, happen to possess lucrative talents, especially the talent for business. But the main body of the half educated, having no lucrative talent exceptional enough to enrich them, have to stay as they are, poor, pretentious, unorganizable because they are on speaking terms neither with the laborers nor the leisured, and consequently so restricted in their matrimonial opportunities that they are not only half educated but half bred.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

CHURCH

In my small boyhood I was a victim of the inhuman and absurd custom of compelling young children to sit out morning service every Sunday. To sit motionless and speechless in your best suit in a dark stuffy church on a morning that is fine outside the building, with your young limbs aching with unnatural quiet, your restless imagination tired of speculating about the same grown-up people in the same pews every Sunday, your conscience heavy with the illusion that you are the only reprobate present sufficiently wicked to long for the benediction, and to wish that they would sing something out of an opera instead of Jackson in F, not to mention hating the clergyman as a sanctimonious bore, and dreading the sexton as a man likely to turn

bad boys out and possibly to know them at sight by official inspiration: all this is enough to lead any sensitive youth to resolve that when he grows up and can do as he likes, the first use he will make of his liberty will be to stay away from church. Anyhow, I have not attended a service seven times in the last twenty-five years, nor do I propose to stir up gloomy memories and wrathful passions by altering my practice in this respect.

LONDON MUSIC

MY FATHER'S CHUCKLE

When my father, after conscientiously fulfilling his parental duty by expatiating to me on the supreme excellence and authority of the Bible as a source of enlightment and instruction, was tempted by his love of anti-climax to add that it is "the damndest parcel of lies ever invented," he was not uttering a blasphemous falsehood: he was only exaggerating a fact for the sake of a chuckle.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A MAN OF FAMILY AND A GENTLEMAN

I remember wondering when I was a lad at a man who was in my father's employment as a miller. He could neither read nor write nor cipher (that is, do sums on paper); but his natural faculty for calculation was so great that he could solve instantly all the arithmetical problems that arose in the course of his work: for instance, if it were a question of so many sacks of flour at so much a sack, he could tell you the answer straight off without thinking, which was more than my father or his clerks could do. But because he did not know his alphabet, and could not put pen to paper, and had not the speech and manners and habits and dress without which he would not have been admitted into the company of merchants and manufacturers, or of lawyers, doctors, and clergymen, he lived and died a poor employee, without the slightest chance of rising into the middle class, or the faintest pretension to social equality with my father. And my father, though he was propertyless, and worked as a middle class civil servant and subsequently as a merchant, was not at all proud of being a member of the middle class: on the contrary, he resented that description, holding on to his connection with the propertied class as a younger son of many former younger sons,

and therefore, though unfortunately reduced to living not very successfully by his wits, a man of family and a gentleman.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

LEE TURNS CHARLATAN

She was not unkind: she tolerated Lee the charlatan as she had tolerated Shaw the dipsomaniac because, as I guess, her early motherless privation of affection and her many disappointments in other people had thrown her back on her own considerable internal resources and developed her self-sufficiency and power of solitude to an extent which kept her up under circumstances that would have crushed or embittered any woman who was the least bit of a clinger. She dropped Lee very gently: at first he came and went at Victoria Grove, Fulham Road; and she went and came at 13 Park Lane, helping with the music there at his At Homes, and even singing the part of Donna Anna for him (elderly prima donnas were then tolerated as matters of course) at an amateur performance of *Don Giovanni*. But my sister, who had quarrelled with him as a child when he tried to give her piano lessons, and had never liked him, could not bear him at all in his new phase, and, when she found that he could not really advance her prospects of becoming a prima donna, broke with him completely and made it difficult for him to continue his visits. When he died we had not seen him for some years; and my mother did not display the slightest emotion at the news. He had been dead for her ever since he had ceased to be an honest teacher of singing and a mesmeric conductor.

LONDON MUSIC

REMORSE

When I look back on all the banging, whistling, roaring, and growling inflicted on nervous neighbors during this process of education, I am consumed with useless remorse. But what else could I have done? Today there is the wireless, which enables me to hear from all over Europe more good music in a week than I could then hear in ten years, if at all. When, after my five years' office slavery, I joined my mother in London and lived with her for twenty years until my marriage, I used to drive her nearly crazy by my favorite selections from Wagner's Ring, which to her was "all recitative," and horribly discordant at

that. She never complained at the time, but confessed it after we separated, and said that she had sometimes gone away to cry. If I had committed a murder I do not think it would trouble my conscience very much; but this I cannot bear to think of. If I had to live my life over again I should devote it to the establishment of some arrangement of headphones and microphones or the like whereby the noises made by musical maniacs should be audible to themselves only.

LONDON MUSIC

INCAPABLE OF STRUGGLING

I never struggled. I was and am incapable of struggling. My incapacity amounts to imbecility. I could write; and I wrote every day. I could qualify myself as a public speaker and preach my doctrine at the street corner when I had no more exclusive invitations. But as to struggling towards fame or even towards daily bread for the household, a South American sloth would have shamed me.

BERNARD'S BRETHEREN

NOTEWORTHY

I began, as all serious artist-authors had to in the eighteen-eighties, by writing novels (the theatre being mentally dust and ashes) and actually produced five jejune samples in that genre. The first two I wrote on lines of the science of that time, the hero of the second being a complete Rationalist practising electrical engineering as a profession. Then, finding I could get no further in this direction, I quite deliberately and consciously abandoned it, and made the hero of my next novel a totally unreasonable musical composer, like Beethoven. This is noteworthy, not as a Shavian personal incident, but because it was happening to the world as well, or going to happen to it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

FAMILY LIFE

Old people and young people cannot walk at the same pace without distress and final loss of health to one of the parties. When they are sitting indoors they cannot endure the same degrees of temperature and the same supplies of fresh air. Even if the main factors of noise, restlessness, and inquisitiveness are

left out of account, children can stand with indifference sights sounds, smells, and disorders that would make an adult of fifty utterly miserable; whilst on the other hand such adults find a tranquil happiness in conditions which to children mean unspeakable boredom. And since our system is nevertheless to pack them all into the same house and pretend that they are happy, and that this particular sort of happiness is the foundation of virtue, it is found that in discussing family life we never speak of actual adults or actual children, or of realities of any sort, but always of ideals such as The Home, a Mother's Influence, a Father's Care, Filial Piety, Duty, Affection, Family Life, etc., etc., which are no doubt very comfroting phrases, but which beg the question of what a home and a mother's influence and a father's care and so forth really come to in practice.

Children As Nuisances.
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

MY MANNERS

I am myself the fruit of an unsuitable marriage between two quite amiable people who finally separated in the friendliest fashion and saw no more of one another after spending years together in the same house without sharing one another's tastes, activities, or interests. They and their three children never quarrelled: though not an emotional household it was not an unkindly one. Its atmosphere of good music and free thought was healthy; but as an example of parental competence to guide, educate and develop children it was so laughably absurd that I have been trying ever since to get something done about it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

As a Youth

SOCIAL TRAINING

I, cut off from the social drill which puts one at one's ease in private society, grew up frightfully shy and utterly ignorant of social routine. My mother, who had been as carefully brought up as Queen Victoria, was too humane to inflict what she had suffered on any child; besides, I think she imagined that correct behavior is inborn, and that much of what she had been taught was natural to her. Anyhow, she never taught it to us, leaving us wholly to the promptings of our blood's blueness, with results which may be imagined.

IMMATURITY

ALL TOMMY ROT BUT BRILLIANT

BROADBENT: Now you know, Larry, that would never have occurred to me. You Irish people are amazingly clever. Of course it's all tommy rot; but it's so brilliant, you know! How the dickens do you think of such things! You really must write an article about it: they'll pay you something for it. If Nature wont have it, I can get it into Engineering for you: I know the editor.

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE LAWSON ATMOSPHERE

I have no doubt the Lawsons found me discordant, crudely self-assertive, and insufferable. I hope they, and all the others on whom I jarred at this time, forgave me in later years, when it turned out that I really had something to assert after all. The house and its artistic atmosphere were most congenial to me.

IMMATURITY

NOT IMPOSED ON

The Shaws were not physical fighters; but they were not superstitious nor imposed on by imaginary dangers.

BERNARD'S BRETHEREN

MEN AS CITIZENS

. . . most men today are reasonably good friends and fathers, but execrable citizens.

WIDOWERS' HOUSES

LIFE IN LONDON

Whilst I am dressing and undressing I do all my reading, the book lies open on the table. I never shut it, but put the next book on top of it long before it's finished. After some months there is a mountain of buried books, all wide open, so that all my library is distinguished by a page with the stain of a quarter's dust, or soot on it. The blacks are dreadful; for my window is always open, winter and summer. The work of cleaning up rests my mind, tires my back, and begrimes my face and hands.

5th March, 1897.

Letter

WHERE I LIVED

I live in Fitzroy Square, on the second floor in a most repulsive house, because I cant afford to live anywhere better within reach of my bread and butter.

Letter

THE CURSE OF LONDON

The curse of London is its dirt. Also its lack of light. My much ridiculed Jaegersuit is an attempt at cleanliness and pureness: I want my body to breathe. I have long resigned myself to dust and dirt and squalor in external matters: if seven maids with seven mops swept my den for half a century they would make no impression on it; but I always have the window wide open night and day; I shun cotton and linen and all filmy fabrics that collect odours, as far as my person is concerned; and I never eat dead—oh, I forgot: you do. Shame!

31st Dec., 1897

Letter to Ellen Terry

I LEND A HOPEFUL EAR

My own education has been gained from discussions: that is why I am so much less cocksure than the dogmatists, and why I find it impossible to take their pretences seriously, though I lend a comparatively hopeful ear to amateurs, artists and athletes who have discovered curative techniques (yogas) by experiments on themselves, naturopaths, and generally all therapists who are boycotted and despised by the registered professionals.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WELL-CONNECTED

B.B.: I shouldnt be at all surprised to learn that he's well connected. Whenever I meet dignity and self-possession without any discoverable basis, I diagnose good family.

RIDGEON: Diagnose artistic genius, B.B. Thats what saves his self-respect.

SIR PATRICK: The world is made like that. The decent fellows are always being lectured and put out of countenance by the snobs.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

I do not rank bumptiousness high as an artistic quality: perhaps because I am myself singularly free from it.

LONDON MUSIC

AMBITION

I would give anything to play the drum.

LONDON MUSIC

ATTITUDE TO GENIUS

I know no harder practical question than how much selfishness one ought to stand from a gifted person for the sake of his gifts or on the chance of his being right in the long run. The Superman will certainly come like a thief in the night, and be shot at accordingly; but we cannot leave our property wholly undefended on that account.

THE SANITY OF ART

I REFUSE A STOOL

When a man who is born a poet refuses a stool in a stockbroker's office, and starves in a garret, spunging on a poor landlady or on his friends and relatives sooner than work against his grain; or when a lady, because she is a lady, will face any extremity of parasitic dependence rather than take a situation as cook or parlormaid, we make large allowances for them.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

HUMILIATION

When a young man has achieved nothing and is doing nothing, and when he is obviously so poor that he ought to be doing something very energetically, it is rather trying to find him assuming an authority in conversation, and an equality in terms, which only conspicuous success and distinguished ability could make becoming.

IMMATURITY

THE SUMMIT

Man can climb to the highest summits; but he cannot dwell there long.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

CASTLES IN THE AIR

It is actually desirable to have individuals here and there with money to throw about not only on stone castles but on castles in the air, an important branch of building in which governments cannot indulge. If they threaten mischief they can always be dealt with by surtaxation and death duties. It does not matter whether they are prima donnas or champion pugilists: as long as they are scarce they do no harm except occasionally to themselves. Gracie Fields and John McCormack, Gene Tunney and Joe Louis, Charles Chaplin and Greta Garbo may pile up hundreds of dollars for every cent the rest of us can earn, with nobody the worse and their fans highly pleased. Even the few authors and playwrights who make more than a very ordinary and precarious livelihood by their pens may be left alone to keep literature alive by luring others into making a profession of it.

All these art workers get their money by sweating themselves, not by sweating other people. They get it by amusing, enter-

taining, cultivating the leisure of their industrial neighbors, and may be left to make their own bargains, provided always that the right to ordinary employment and leisure remains open to them whilst they are making their artistic reputations or losing them. Their social value is great; but it is so incalculable and disorderly that the Government can do little but look on and let them have their own way, subject, of course, to the general police regulations, which in their case need not be too vigilantly or rigidly administered. Rent of artistic ability may be classed as politically negligible; but statesmen must understand this, and not be simply ignorant in the matter.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MY EARNINGS

My earnings for nine years were exactly fifteen shillings.

4th Nov., 1896

Letter

A ROGUE AND A VAGABOND

APOLLODORUS: Hail, great Caesar! I am Apollodorus the Sicilian, an artist.

BRITANNUS: An artist! Why have they admitted this vagabond?

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

WORK

My office training had left me with a habit of doing something regularly every day as a fundamental condition of industry as distinguished from idleness. I knew I was making no headway unless I was doing this, and that I should never produce a book in any other fashion. I bought supplies of white paper, demy size, by sixpennorths at a time; folded it in quarto: and condemned myself to fill five pages of it a day, rain or shine, dull or inspired. I had so much of the schoolboy and the clerk still in me that if my five pages ended in the middle of a sentence I did not finish it until next day. On the other hand, if I missed a day, I made up for it by doing a double task on the morrow. On this plan I produced five novels in five years.

IMMATURITY

OVERWORK

I do not know what happens to you in this respect; but in my own case, in spite of the most fervent resolutions to order my work more sensibly, and of the fact that an author's work can as a rule quite well be divided into limited daily periods, I am usually obliged to work myself to the verge of a complete standstill and then go away for many weeks to recuperate. Eight or nine months overwork, and three or four months change and overleisure, is very common among professional persons.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

BETTER THAN FORMING FOURS

When I say that in my private opinion I am better employed in writing books and plays than in forming fours in a barrack square or playing battles as a Home Guard, or stabbing and shooting young persons who may be incipient Goethes or Beethovens, I am on the same footing as any woman who pleads that she is better employed in domestic work than in filling shells, or a man who claims a return of deducted income tax on the ground that he is too poor to afford it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

FALLOW

Mentally, fallow is as important as seedtime. Even bodies can be exhausted by overcultivation.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

I am an Irishman

I AM A PRODUCT OF DALKEY'S OUTLOOK

For brilliancy of color, making rocks raining pools, and herbage look like terrestrial jewellery, I have seen nothing like the heights above Sligo Bay. And for magic that takes you out, far out, of this time and this world, there is Skellig Michael, ten miles off the Kerry Coast, shooting straight up six hundred feet, sheer out of the Atlantic. Whoever has not stood in the graveyards at the summit of that cliff among those beehive dwellings and their beehive oratory does not know Ireland through and through. It is the beauty of Ireland that has made us what we are. I am a product of Dalkey's outlook.

THE BEAUTY OF IRELAND

AN IRISHMAN'S IMAGINATION

No, no: the climate is different. Here, if the life is dull, you can be dull too, and no great harm done. But your wits cant thicken in that soft moist air, on those white springy roads, in those misty rushes and brown bogs, on those hillsides of granite rocks and magenta heather. Youve no such colors in the sky, no such lure in the distances, no such sadness in the evenings. Oh, the dreaming! the dreaming! the torturing, heart-scalding never satisfying dreaming, dreaming, dreaming, dreaming! No debauchery that ever coarsened and brutalized an Englishman can take the worth and usefulness out of him like that dreaming. An Irishman's imagination never lets him alone, never convinces him, never satisfies him; but it makes him that he cant face reality nor deal with it nor handle it nor conquer it: he can only sneer at them that do, and be "agreeable to strangers,"

like a good-for-nothing woman on the streets. It's all dreaming, all imagination. He cant be religious. The inspired Churchman that teaches him the sanctity of life, and the importance of conduct is sent away empty; while the poor village priest that gives him a miracle or a sentimental story of a saint, has cathedrals built for him out of the pennies of the poor. He cant be intelligently political: he dreams of what the Shan Van Vocht said in ninety-eight. If you want to interest him in Ireland youve got to call the unfortunate island Kathleen ni Hoolihan and pretend she's a little old woman. It saves thinking. It saves working. It saves everything except imagination, imagination, imagination; and imagination's such a torture that you cant bear it without whisky. At last you get that you can bear nothing real at all: youd rather starve than cook a meal; youd rather go shabby and dirty than set your mind to take care of your clothes and wash yourself; you nag and squabble at home because your wife isnt an angel, and she despises you because youre not a hero; and you hate the whole lot round you because theyre only poor slovenly useless devils like yourself. And all the while there goes on a horrible, senseless, mischievous laughter. When youre young, you exchange drinks with other young men; and you exchange vile stories with them; and as youre too futile to be able to help or cheer them, you chaff and sneer and taunt them for not doing the things you darent do yourself. And all the time you laugh! laugh! laugh! eternal derision, eternal envy, eternal folly, eternal fouling and staining and degrading, until, when you come at last to a country where men take a question seriously and give a serious answer to it, you deride them for having no sense of humor, and plume yourself on your own worthlessness as if it made you better than them.

DOYLE *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

I LEARN TO RESPECT BLOCKHEADS

On the other hand, it takes an Irishman years of residence in England to learn to respect and like a blockhead. An Englishman will not respect nor like anyone else. Every English statesman has to maintain his popularity by pretending to be ruder, more ignorant, more sentimental, more superstitious, more stupid than any man who has lived behind the scenes of public life for ten minutes can possibly be. Nobody dares to publish really intimate

memoirs of him or really private letters of his until his whole generation has passed away, and his party can no longer be compromised by the discovery that the platitudinizing twaddler and hypocritical opportunist was really a man of some perception as well as of strong constitution, peg-away industry, personal ambition, and party keenness.

Our Temperaments Contrasted.

Preface to JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

A Few English Customs

THE ENGLISH

The English are a race apart. No Englishman is too low to have scruples: no Englishman is high enough to be free from their tyranny. But every Englishman is born with a certain miraculous power that makes him master of the world. When he wants a thing, he never tells himself that he wants it. He waits patiently until there comes into his mind, no one knows how, a burning conviction that it is his moral and religious duty to conquer those who possess the thing he wants. Then he becomes irresistible. Like the aristocrat, he does what pleases him and grabs what he covets: like the shop-keeper, he pursues his purpose with the industry and steadfastness that come from strong religious conviction and deep sense of moral responsibility. He is never at a loss for an effective moral attitude. As the great champion of freedom and national independence, he conquers and annexes half the world, and calls it Colonization. When he wants a new market for his adulterated Manchester goods, he sends a missionary to teach the natives the Gospel of Peace. The natives kill the missionary: he flies to arms in defence of Christianity; fights for it; conquers for it; and takes the market as a reward from heaven. In defence of his island shores, he puts a chaplain on board his ship; nails a flag with a cross on it to his top-gallant mast; and sails to the ends of the earth, sinking, burning, and destroying all who dispute the empire of the seas with him. He boasts that a slave is free the moment his foot touches British soil; and he sells the children of his poor at six years of age to work under the lash in his factories for sixteen hours a day. He makes two revolutions, and then declares war

on our one in the name of law and order. There is nothing so bad or so good that you will not find Englishmen doing it; but you will never find an Englishman in the wrong. He does everything on principle. He fights you on patriotic principles; he robs you on business principles; he enslaves you on imperial principles; he bullies you on manly principles; he supports his king on loyal principles; and cuts off his king's head on republican principles. His watchword is always Duty; and he never forgets that the nation which lets its duty get on the opposite side to its interest is lost.

NAPOLEON *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

ENGLISH STATESMANSHIP

BATTLER: And you call yourself a statesman!

SIR O.: I assure you I do not. The word is hardly in use in England. I am a member of the Cabinet, and in my modest amateur way a diplomatist. When you ask me what will happen if British interests are seriously menaced you ask me to ford the stream before we come to it. We never do that in England. But when we come to the stream we ford it or bridge it or dry it up. And when we have done that it is too late to think about it. We have found that we can get on without thinking. You see, thinking is very little use unless you know the facts. And we never do know the political facts until twenty years after. Sometimes a hundred and fifty.

JUDGE: Still, Sir Midlander, you know that such an activity as thought exists.

SIR O.: You alarm me, my lord. I am intensely reluctant to lose my grip of the realities of the moment and sit down to think. It is dangerous. It is unEnglish. It leads to theories, to speculative policies, to dreams and visions. If I may say so, I think my position is a more comfortable one than that of the two eminent leaders who are gracing these proceedings by their presence here today. Their remarks are most entertaining: every sentence is an epigram: I, who am only a stupid Englishman, feel quite abashed by my commonplaceness. But if you ask me what their intentions are I must frankly say that I dont know. Where do they stand with us? I dont know. But they know what England intends. They know

what to expect from us. We have no speculative plans. We shall simply stick to our beloved British Empire, and undertake any larger cares that Providence may impose on us. Meanwhile we should feel very uneasy if any other Power or combinations of Powers were to place us in a position of military or naval inferiority, especially naval inferiority. I warn you—I beg you—do not frighten us. We are a simple wellmeaning folk, easily frightened. And when we are frightened we are capable of anything, even of things we hardly care to remember afterwards. Do not drive us in that direction. Take us as we are; and let be. Pardon my dull little speech. I must not take more of your time.

GENEVA

RESPECT

We may be as idle as we please if only we have money in our pockets; and the more we look as if we had never done a day's work in our lives and never intend to, the more we are respected by every official we come in contact with, and the more we are envied, courted, and deferred to by everybody. If we enter a village school the children all rise and stand respectfully to receive us, whereas the entrance of a plumber or carpenter leaves them unmoved. The mother who secures a rich idler as a husband for her daughter is proud of it: the father who makes a million uses it to make rich idlers of his children. That work is a curse is part of our religion: that it is a disgrace is the first article in our social code. To carry a parcel through the streets is not only a trouble, but a derogation from one's rank. Where there are blacks to carry them, as in South Africa, it is virtually impossible for a white to be seen doing such a thing. In London we condem these colonial extremes of snobbery; but how many ladies could we persuade to carry a jug of milk down Bond Street on a May afternoon, even for a bet?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE SERVANT

In a factory town it is often impossible to get a handy and intelligent domestic servant, or indeed to get a servant at all. That is not because the servant need work harder or put up with

worse treatment than the factory girl or the shop assistant, but because she has no time she can call her own. She is always waiting on the doorbell even when you dare not ring the drawing-room bell lest she should rush up and give notice. To induce her to stay, you have to give her an evening out every fortnight; then one every week; then an afternoon a week as well; then two afternoons a week; then leave to entertain her friends in the drawingroom and use the piano occasionally (at which times you must clear out of your own house); and the end is that, long before you have come to the end of the concessions you are expected to make, you discover that it is not worth keeping a servant at all on such terms, and take to doing the housework yourself.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

LAWS

Here is a little example. A friend of mine who employed some girls in an artistic business in which there was not competition enough to compel him to do his worst in the way of sweating them, took a nice old riverside house, and decorated it very prettily with Morris wall-papers, furnishing it in such a way that the girls could have their tea comfortably in their workrooms, which he made as homelike as possible. All went well until one day a gentleman walked in and announced himself to my friend as the factory inspector. He looked round him, evidently much puzzled, and asked where the women worked. "Here," replied my friend, with justifiable pride, confident that the inspector had never seen anything so creditable in the way of a factory before. But what the inspector said was "Where is the copy of the factory regulations which you are obliged by law to post up on your walls in full view of your employees?" "Surely you dont expect me to stick up a beastly ugly thing like that in a room furnished like a drawing room," said my friend. "Why, that paper on the wall is a Morris paper: I cant disfigure it by pasting up a big placard on it." "You are liable to severe penalties," replied the inspector "for having not only omitted to post the regulations, but for putting paper on your walls instead of having them limewashed at the intervals prescribed by law." "But hang it all!" my friend remonstrated, "I want to make the place homely and beautiful. You forget

that the girls are not always working. They take their tea here." "For allowing your employees to take meals in the room where they work you have incurred an additional penalty," said the inspector. "It is a gross breach of the Factory Acts." And he walked out, leaving my friend an abashed criminal caught red-handed.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

TEA

THE SECRETARY: The world is mad. Quite mad.

SIR O.: Pooh! you need a cup of tea. Nothing wrong with the world: nothing whatever.

THE SECRETARY: Tea for two, please.

GENEVA

WHAT "THEY" TALK ABOUT

MRS. TARLETON: Well, the things they talk about.

HYPATIA: Oh! scandalmongering?

MRS. TARLETON: Oh no; we all do that; thats only human nature. But you know theyve no notion of decency. I shall never forget the first day I spent with a marchioness, two duchesses, and no end of Ladies This and That. Of course it was only a committee: theyd put me on to get a big subscription out of John. I'd never heard such talk in my life. The things they mentioned! And it was the marchioness that started it.

HYPATIA: What sort of things?

MRS. TARLETON: Drainage!! She'd tried three systems in her castle; and she was going to do away with them all and try another. I didnt know which way to look when she began talking about it: I thought theyd all have got up and gone out of the room. But not a bit of it, if you please. They were all just as bad as she. They all had systems; and each of them swore by her own system. I sat there with my cheeks burning until one of the duchesses, thinking I looked out of it, I suppose, asked me what system I had. I said I was sure I knew nothing about such things, and hadnt we better change the subject. Then the fat was in the fire, I can tell you. There was a regular terror of a countess with an anaerobic system;

and she told me, downright brutally, that I'd better learn something about them before my children died of diphtheria. That was just two months after I'd buried poor little Bobby; and that was the very thing he died of, poor little lamb! I burst out crying: I couldnt help it. It was as good as telling me I'd killed my own child. I had to go away; but before I was out of the door one of the duchesses—quite a young woman—began talking about what sour milk did in her inside and how she expected to live to be over a hundred if she took it regularly. And me listening to her, that had never dared to think that a duchess could have anything so common as an inside! I shouldnt have minded if it had been children's insides: we have to talk about them. But grown-up people! I was glad to get away that time.

MISALLIANCE

WHY WE DO THINGS BADLY

We sometimes even do things badly on purpose because those who do them well are classed as our inferiors. For example, a foolish young gentleman of property will write badly because clerks write well; and the ambassador of a republic will wear trousers instead of knee-breeches and silk stockings at court, because, though breeches and stockings are handsomer, they are a livery; and republicans consider liveries servile.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

CLOTHES

Men are judged mostly by the clothes they wear. Our nudists sometimes forget that if navvies and kings went naked, the navvy would have to resume his cap and the king his crown as a matter of social convenience even if navvies had come to be considered more respectable than kings. The circus clown whose profession it is to appear lazy, cowardly, thievish, gluttonous, drunken, mischievous, and in every possible way ignominiously ridiculous, and to trip himself up and fall or be beaten and kicked, has to wear a ridiculous and ignominious costume and paint his face absurdly to achieve these effects. In the gaiters of a dean or the ermine of a judge, though in the lapse of time these have become hardly less quaint than the clown's motley, his clowning would

be impossible even if the authorities would tolerate it. An actor having to play the part of a general on the stage must not wear the general's uniform: there must be some inaccurate detail to distinguish the real from the simulated. And this is not peculiar to the player: it is only the application to the art of acting of the general law that citizens must not put on the insignia of rank or sex other than those to which they are officially or naturally entitled.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ACQUAINTANCES

If you're going to pick and choose your acquaintances on moral principles, youd better clear out of this country, unless you want to cut yourself out of all decent society.

CROFTS *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

CUSTOMS IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE

It would not be correct for a French girl to go about alone and speak to men as English and American girls do. That is why I so immensely admire the English people. You are so free—so unprejudiced—your women are so brave and frank—their minds are so—how do you say?—wholesome. I intend to have my daughters educated in England. Nowhere else in the world could I have met in a Variety Theatre a charming young lady of perfect respectability, and enjoyed a dance with her at a public dancing saloon. And where else are women trained to box and knock out the teeth of policemen as a protest against injustice and violence? Your daughter, madam, is superb. Your country is a model to the rest of Europe. If you were a Frenchman, stifled in prudery, hypocrisy and the tyranny of the family and the home, you would understand how an enlightened Frenchman admires and envies your freedom, your broadmindedness, and the fact that home life can hardly be said to exist in England. You have made an end of the despotism of the parent; the family council is unknown to you; everywhere in these islands one can enjoy the exhilarating, the soul-liberating spectacle of men quarrelling with their brothers, defying their fathers, refusing to speak to their mothers. In France we are not men: we are only sons—grown-up children. Here one is a human being—

an end in himself. Oh, Mrs. Knox, if only your military genius were equal to your moral genius—if that conquest of Europe by France which inaugurated the new age after the Revolution had only been an English conquest, how much more enlightened the world would have been now! We, alas, can only fight. France is unconquerable. We impose our narrow ideas, our prejudices, our obsolete institutions, our insufferable pedantry on the world by brute force—by that stupid quality of military heroism which shews how little we have evolved from the savage: nay, from the beast. We can charge like bulls; we can spring on our foes like gamecocks; when we are overpowered by treason, we can die fighting like rats. And we are foolish enough to be proud of it! Why should we be? Does the bull progress? Can you civilize the gamecock? Is there any future for the rat? We never fight intelligently: when we lose battles, it is because we have not sense enough to know when we are beaten. At Waterloo had we known when we were beaten, we should have retreated; tried another plan; and won the battle. But no: we were too pigheaded to admit that there is anything impossible to a Frenchman: we were quite satisfied when our Marshals had six horses shot under them, and our stupid old grognards died fighting rather than surrender like reasonable beings. Think of your great Wellington: think of his inspiring words, when the lady asked him whether British soldiers ever ran away. "All soldiers run away, madam," he said; "but if there are supports for them to fall back on it does not matter." Think of your illustrious Nelson, always beaten on land, always victorious at sea, where his men could not run away. You are not dazzled and misled by false ideals of patriotic enthusiasm: your honest and sensible statesmen demand for England a two-power standard, even a three-power standard, frankly admitting that it is wise to fight three to one: whilst we, fools and braggarts as we are, declare that every Frenchman is a host in himself, and that when one Frenchman attacks three Englishmen he is guilty of an act of cowardice comparable to that of the man who strikes a woman. It is folly: it is nonsense: a Frenchman is not really stronger than a German, than an Italian, even than an Englishman. Sir: if all French-women were like your daughter—if all Frenchmen had the good sense, the power of seeing things as they really are, the calm judgment, the open mind, the philosophic grasp, the

foresight and true courage, which are so natural to you as an Englishman that you are hardly conscious of possessing them, France would become the greatest nation in the world.

DUVALLET *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

REMORSE

First, then, as to the constantly recurring question whether the practice of musical instruments is likely to annoy the neighbors. There can be no doubt whatever that it is; and when the man next door sends in to complain there is no use in quarrelling over the point. Admit promptly and frankly that the noise is horrible, promise to cease practising after half-past twelve at night, except when you have visitors; and confess that if he in self-defence takes up another instrument you will be bound to suffer in turn for the sake of his health and culture as he is now suffering for yours. This is far more sensible and social than to place the bell of your instrument against the partition wall and blow strident fanfares in defiance of his nerves, as I foolishly did when a complaint of the kind was made to me. But I was little more than a boy at the time, and I have never since thought of it without remorse.

LONDON MUSIC

A CURIOUS BELIEF

. . . we have in England a curious belief in first rate people, meaning all the people we do not know; and this consoles us for the undeniable second-rateness of the people we do know, besides saving the credit of aristocracy as an institution. The unmet aristocrat is devoutly believed in; but he is always round the corner, never at hand.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

THE DEEPEST GULF

But you have no idea how frightfully interesting it is to take a human being and change her into a quite different human being by creating a new speech for her. Its filling up the deepest gulf that separates class from class and soul from soul.

HIGGINS *in* PYGMALION

DIFFERENT HABITS AND SPEECH

My own excessively sedentary occupation makes me long to be a half-time navvy. I find myself begging my gardener, who is a glutton for work, to leave me a few rough jobs to do when I have written myself to a standstill; for I cannot go out and take a hand with the navvies, because I should be taking the bread out of a poor man's mouth; nor should we be very comfortable company for one another with our different habits and speech and bringing-up.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

COMMERCE

BURGOYNE: Well, Mr. Dudgeon, what I wanted to ask you is this. Who is William Maindeck Parshotter?

RICHARD: He is the Mayor of Springtown.

BURGOYNE: Is William—Maindeck and so on—a man of his word?

RICHARD: Is he selling you anything?

BURGOYNE: No.

RICHARD: Then you may depend on him.

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

THE LAWS OF NATURE

BRITANNUS: Caesar: this is not proper.

THEODOTUS: How!

CAESAR: Pardon him, Theodotus: he is a barbarian, and thinks that the customs of his tribe and island are the laws of nature.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

THE LAW

SIR HOWARD: Whenever you wish to do anything against the law, Cicely, always consult a good solicitor first.

LADY CICELY: So I do.

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

NERVES

Curious how the nerves seem to give out in the afternoon without a cup of tea.

WAITER *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

SHAME

Yet even I cannot wholly conquer shame. We live in an atmosphere of shame. We are ashamed of everything that is real about us; ashamed of ourselves, of our relatives, of our incomes, of our accents, of our opinions, of our experience, just as we are ashamed of our naked skins. Good Lord, my dear Ramsden, we are ashamed to walk, ashamed to ride in an omnibus, ashamed to hire a hansom instead of keeping a carriage, ashamed of keeping one horse instead of two and a groom-gardener instead of a coachman and footman. The more things a man is ashamed of, the more respectable he is.

TANNER *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

MORALITY

But the English really do not seem to know when they are thoroughly miserable. An Englishman thinks he is moral when he is only uncomfortable.

THE DEVIL *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

CONVENTIONALITY

Freedom, my good girl, means being able to count on how other people will behave. If every man who dislikes me is to throw a handful of mud in my face, and every woman who likes me is to behave like Potiphar's wife, then I shall be a slave: the slave of uncertainty: the slave of fear: the worst of all slaveries. How would you like it if every laborer you met in the road were to make love to you? No. Give me the blessed protection of a good stiff conventionality among thoroughly well-brought up ladies and gentlemen.

PERCIVAL *in* MISALLIANCE

THE BLACK-COAT

THE MAN: Do you know what my life is? I spend my days from nine to six—nine hours of daylight and fresh air—in a stuffy little den counting another man's money. Ive an intellect: a mind and a brain and a soul; and the use he makes of them is to fix them on his tuppences and his eighteenpences and his two pound seventeen and tenpences and see how much they come to at the end of the day and take care that

no one steals them. I enter and enter, and add and add, and take money and give change, and fill cheques and stamp receipts; and not a penny of that money is my own: not one of those transactions has the smallest interest for me or anyone else in the world but him; and even he couldnt stand it if he had to do it all himself. And I'm envied: aye, envied for the variety and liveliness of my job, by the poor devil of a bookkeeper that has to copy all my entries over again. Fifty thousand entries a year that poor wretch makes; and not ten out of the fifty thousand ever has to be referred to again; and when all the figures are counted up and the balance sheet made out, the boss isnt a penny the richer than he'd be if bookkeeping had never been invented. Of all the damnable waste of human life that ever was invented, clerking is the very worst.

MISALLIANCE

RESPECTABILITY

Well, dearie, men have to do some awfully mean things to keep up their respectability.

DORA *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

HOUSE FULL

If the Government decided to throw persons of unpopular or eccentric views to the lions in the Albert Hall or the Earl's Court Stadium tomorrow, can you doubt that all the seats would be crammed, mostly by people who could not give you the most superficial account of the views in question. Much less unlikely things have happened.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

WHY THINGS ARE DONE

Let me add that if you do things merely because you think some other fool expects you to do them, and he expects you to do them because he thinks you expect him to expect you to do them, it will end in everybody doing what nobody wants to do, which is in my opinion a silly state of things.

GREGORY *in* OVERRULED

CLASS CONVENTION

I look back on the oddest class conventions. Sixty years ago, before knockers disappeared from house doors, and wrenching them off at night was a sport of young bloods, I, ranking myself as a gentleman, demanded admission with a volley of raps in a pattern that I could design for myself. It resembled a burst of machine gun fire. But a common person was permitted a single knock only, unless he were a postman, in which case he gave two knocks, peremptory and violent in virtue of his office. As pre-electric bells could not be manipulated in this way, a gentleman's house had two bell pulls, one for visitors and one for tradesmen. To give a knock or ring a bell improper to one's rank was unthinkable. Inevitably we began by associating a single knock with poverty, quite reasonably, and ended, quite unreasonably, by respecting the person who knocked like a machine gun, and despising the single knockist even when the latter was the richer of the two.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

HONESTY

If I become an honest man I shall become a poor man; and then nobody will respect me: nobody will admire me: nobody will say thank you to me. If on the contrary I am bold, unscrupulous, acquisitive, successful and rich, everyone will respect me, admire me, court me, grovel before me. Then no doubt I shall be able to afford the luxury of honesty.

AUBREY *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

THE TREATMENT OF SERVANTS

English people, especially English ladies, are so individualistically brought up that the moment they are convinced that anything is right they are apt to announce that they are going to begin practising it at once, and to order their children and servants to do the same. I have known women of exceptional natural intelligence and energy who believed firmly that the world can be made good by independent displays of coercive personal righteousness. When they became convinced of the righteousness of equality, they proceeded to do ridiculous things like commanding their servants to take their meals with the family

(forgetting that the servants had not bargained for their intimacy and might strongly object to it), with Heaven knows what other foolishness, until the servants gave notice, and their husbands threatened to run away, and sometimes even did.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HOW TO TREAT A WEAKNESS

My Uncle Phil was a teetotaler. My father used to say to me: Rob, he says, dont you ever have a weakness. If you find one getting a hold on you, make a merit of it, he says. Your Uncle Phil doesnt like spirits; and he makes a merit of it, and is chairman of the Blue Ribbon Committee. I do like spirits; and I make a merit of it, and I'm the King Cockatoo of the Convivial Cockatoos. Never put yourself in the wrong, he says. I used to boast about what a good boy Bobby was. Now I swank about what a dog he is; and it pleases people just as well. What a world it is!

GILBERT *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

INSULT

You will soon come up against it if you accuse any Russian of being a lady or gentleman.

Natural Limit to Extermination
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

THE TOTALISATOR

The odds against a poor person becoming a millionaire are of astronomical magnitude; but they are sufficient to establish and maintain the Totalisator as a national institution, and to produce unlimited daydreams of bequests from imaginary long lost uncles in Australia or a lucky ticket in the Calcutta or Irish Sweeps.

Delusions Of Poverty
Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

HOW TO DISGUISE A VICE

Our habit of disguising our vices by giving polite names to

the offences we are determined to commit, does not, unfortunately for my own comfort, impose on me.

Our Own Cruelties
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

MONARCHS

Very clever men who have come into contact with monarchs have been so impressed that they have attributed to them extraordinary natural qualifications which they, as now visible to us in historical perspective, clearly did not possess.

Preface to THE APPLE CART

SPORT

The Puritan saw that it was not important that we should be men of pleasure, and it was enormously important that we should be men of honour. . . .

I lived for a time on the south Slope of the Hog's Back; and every Sunday morning rabbits were coursed within earshot of me. And I noticed that it was quite impossible to distinguish the cries of the excited terriers from the cries of the sportsmen, although ordinarily the voice of a man is no more like the voice of a dog than like the voice of a nightingale. Sport reduced them all, men and terriers alike, to a common denominator of bestiality.

KILLING FOR SPORT

HUMANITARIANS

My own pursuits as a critic and as a castigator of morals by ridicule (otherwise a writer of comedies) are so cruel that in point of giving pain to many worthy I can hold my own with most dentists, and beat a skilful sportsman hollow. I know many sportsmen; and none of them are ferocious. I know several humanitarians; and they are all ferocious. No book of sport breathes such a wrathful spirit as this book of humanity.

KILLING FOR SPORT

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

I am not taken in by Tennyson's notion that we live in a land where a man can say the thing he will. There is no such country.

Toleration Mostly Illusory
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

PERFECT LIBERTY

The perfect liberty of which slaves dream because they have no experience of its horrors. . . .

Miseries Of The Vagrant Root-Less Rich
Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

COUNTRY LIFE

The quarrels that make country life so very unarcadian are picked mostly because the quarrelers have not enough friction in their lives to keep them goodhumored.

Possibilities Of Therapeutic Treatment
In IMPRISONMENT

STARCHED SHIRT

The modern gentleman who is too lazy to daub his face with vermillion as a symbol of bravery employs a laundress to daub his shirt with starch as a symbol of cleanliness.

The Conceit Of Civilization
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

A MATTER OF COURSE

We are all too apt to take our lives as a matter of course. In a civilized community life is not a matter of course: it can be maintained only on complicated artificial conditions; and whoever enlarges his life by violating these conditions enlarges it at the expense of the lives of others.

Man in Society Must Justify His Existence
In IMPRISONMENT

ROMANCE

We should die of idiocy through disuse of our mental faculties if we did not fill our heads with romantic nonsense out of illustrated newspapers and novels and plays and films. Such stuff keeps us alive; but it falsifies everything for us so absurdly that it leaves us more or less dangerous lunatics in the real world.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

PRECEDENT

There are so many directions in which new ground can be broken that the rule "When in doubt do what was done last

time" should be discarded for doing nothing that was done last time. We can only do the best we can as a beginning for the moment. The task is quite beyond me; but I may as well have a shot at a few items to begin with.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

HOW TO TREAT AN ENEMY

The old rule, "Treat your friend as one who may some day be your enemy, and your enemy as one who may some day be your friend," is hardly the golden rule; but it is a sound one for those who scorn golden rules.

FAMILY LIFE IN GERMANY UNDER THE BLOCKADE

"NOT PARTICULAR"

They were capable of discussing each other's solvency and respectability with some shrewdness, and could carry out quite complicated systems of paying visits and "knowing" one another. They felt a little vulgar when they spent a day at Margate, and quite distinguished and travelled when they spent it at Boulogne. They were, except as to their clothes, "not particular": that is, they could put up with ugly sights and sounds, unhealthy smells, and inconvenient houses, with inhuman apathy and callousness. They had, as to adults, a theory that human nature is so poor that it is useless to try to make the world any better, whilst as to children they believed that if they were only sufficiently lectured and whipped, they could be brought to a state of moral perfection such as no fanatic has ever ascribed to his deity.

A Forgotten Conference of Married Men

In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

OPERATIONS

There is a fashion in operations as there is in sleeves and skirts.

The Craze For Operations

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE BOOKMAKER

I can testify from personal experience that excellent public work is done with money subscribed by bookmakers.

The Author's Apology

In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

THE GENTLEMAN

The gentleman beats the criminal hollow in the magnitude of his operations and the number of people employed in them.

Prevalence Of Criminal Characteristics In Polite Society
In IMPRISONMENT

MISTAKES

A life spent in making mistakes is not only more honorable but more useful than a life spent doing nothing.

The Technical Problem
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE TREATMENT OF CHILDREN

Francis Place tells us that he kept out of his father's way because his father never passed a child within his reach without striking it; and though the case was an extreme one, it was an extreme that illustrated a tendency. Sir Walter Scott's father, when his son incautiously expressed some relish for his porridge, dashed a handful of salt into it with an instinctive sense that it was his duty as a father to prevent his son enjoying himself. Ruskin's mother gratified the sensual side of her maternal passion not by cuddling her son, but by whipping him when he fell downstairs or was slack in learning the Bible off by heart; and this grotesque safety-valve for voluptuousness, mischievous as it was in many ways, had at least the advantage that the child did not enjoy it and was not debauched by it, as he would have been by transports of sentimentality.

Large and Small Families
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Yet another foreign language—that of Amurrica!

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

A SURPRISE FOR THE MAN-ABOUT-TOWN

The moment we cease asking whether men are good or bad, and ascertain simply whether they are pulling their weight in the social boat, our persistent evildoers may have a very unpleasant surprise. Far from having an easy time under a

Government of softhearted sentimentalists cooing that "to understand everything is to pardon everything," they may find themselves disciplined to an extent at present undreamed of by the average man-about-town.

Man In Society Must Justify His Existence
In IMPRISONMENT

THE TRUTH

The truth is the one thing nobody will believe.

LADY *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

CONTRACEPTION

Our bishops and cardinals may abhor contraception (so do I, by the way); but which of them would not say, when put to it like St. Paul, "Better have no children, by whatever means, than have them and kill them as we are killing them at present."

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HOME LIFE

Home life as we understand it is no more natural to us than a cage is natural to a cockatoo.

Hearth and Home
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

THE HOTEL

Being able to call your servants your own is a very poor compensation for not being able to call your soul your own. That is why, even as it is, you run away from your comfortable house to live in hotels (if you can afford it), because, when you have paid your bill and tipped the waiter and the chambermaid, you are finished with them, and have not to be a sort of matriarch to them as well.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

UNCONVENTIONAL PEOPLE

You must have noticed among your acquaintances that the very conventional ones have all the same old opinions, and are quite impervious to new ones, whilst the unconventional ones

are all over the shop with all sorts of opinions, and disagree with and despise one another furiously.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

READING

Ten years of cheap reading have changed the English from the most stolid nation in Europe to the most theatrical and hysterical.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

INCOME

I am myself a landlord, and, what is worse, an absentee landlord. Since I inherited my property some thirty years ago I once spent a few hours in its neighborhood without entering or identifying a single house on it. Yet I pocket a modest income from it, earned by the labor of its inhabitants, who have never seen me nor received any service from me. A grosser malversation can hardly be imagined; but it is not my fault: I have to accept it as the law of the land; for there is no alternative open to me. I am strongly in favor of this little estate of mine being municipalized; but I expect to be paid as much for it as I could obtain by private sale to a private purchaser. For why should I be left destitute by an unadjusted seizure of my scrap of the town when the landlords of my next-door neighbors are left not only enjoying their rents as before, but finally raising them by the value of the improvements effected through my extinction?

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

CADS

A real gentleman is not supposed to sell himself to the highest bidder: he asks his country for a sufficient provision and a dignified position in return for the best work he can do for it. A real lady can say no less. But in capitalist commerce they are both forced to be cads.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

DOMESTIC INTERIOR

These English domestic interiors are very interesting.

DUVALLET *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

UPSTARTS

This is an age of upstarts. Men begin in Kentish Town with £80 a year, and end in Park Lane with a hundred thousand. They want to drop Kentish Town; but they give themselves away every time they open their mouths.

THE NOTE TAKER *in* PYGMALION

THE DIVINE GIFT

Remember that you are a human being with a soul and the divine gift of articulate speech: that your native language is the language of Shakespear and Milton and The Bible; and dont sit there crooning like a bilious pigeon.

THE NOTE TAKER *in* PYGMALION

SENTIMENT

When silly people (writers, I regret to say, some of them) tell you that a loving heart is enough, remind them that fools are more dangerous than rogues, and that women with loving hearts are often pitiable fools. The finding of the right way is not sentimental work: it is scientific work, requiring observation, reasoning, and intellectual conscientiousness.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MURDER

Surely if a president kills anyone it's an execution; but if anyone kills a president it's an assassination.

SHE *in* GENEVA

IF I WERE AN OMNIPOTENT CREATOR

Well, if I were an Omnipotent Creator I could stop the war in a week by letting loose a few billion locusts and white ants in every acre of territory in the countries of the belligerents. Next day they would be fighting, not each other, but armies of tiny creatures advancing on them heroically wave upon wave over the bodies of their dead comrades in countless numbers with indomitable discipline, and making an end of human food and human furniture so fast that even the pallid spirochete and the anopheles mosquito would be forgotten in the general terror. There would be no Semites and anti-Semites then, no British

and Germans, no Americans and Japanese, no proletarians and proprietors, no democrats and plutocrats, Moslems and Hindus, blacks and whites, yellows and reds, no Irishmen even, nothing but men and women fighting frantically for human life against a war of aggression known before only by little samples of its possibility.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE VALUE OF CONVENTION

But do not undervalue the sheepish wisdom of the conventional. Nobody can live in society without conventions. The reason why sensible people are as conventional as they can bear to be is that conventionality saves so much time and thought and trouble and social friction of one sort or another that it leaves them much more leisure for freedom than unconventionality does. Believe me, unless you intend to devote your life to preaching unconventionality and thus make it your profession, the more conventional you are, short of being silly or slavish or miserable, the easier life will be for you. Even as a professional reformer you had better be content to preach one form of unconventionality at a time. For instance, if you rebel against high-heeled shoes, take care to do it in a very smart hat.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

TRAVEL

Everybody can now travel third class in England without being physically disgusted by their fellow-travellers. I can remember when second class carriages, now extinct, were middle class necessities.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

LUXURY

. . . human animal No. 2, luxuriously housed in a spacious mansion in a fashionable London square, build a palatial shooting lodge in the Highlands, a castle in the Lowlands, a seaside country house to bathe from, a princely pied à terre on the Riviera, and a first-class steam yacht to take the air on the open sea?

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

KEEPING UP A POSITION

Catechize No. 2, and he will probably resent your impertinences and order his servants to shew you out and not to admit you again. But he may be enough of a philosopher to have asked himself why he acts as he does; and in that case he may be disposed to discuss his conduct with you, and even to admit your right, if you have reasonable credentials, to call him to account for it. You ask him why, being able to live in only one house at a time, he builds or buys four or five. As likely as not he will tell you that as a matter of fact he lives mostly in hotels and sleeping cars, and keeps up four or five houses with their staffs of troublesome servants (waiting mostly on each other) because society is organized in such a way that he must do it "to keep up his position," and because he finds himself esteemed and confirmed in his self-respect in proportion to his expenditure on superfluities. He may add, "I cannot sack all these people who are dependent on me. They would starve, knowing no other service but the service of the rich, to which they have been brought up. In defence of that service they would fight to the death, just as they now vote for it." There are several Number Twos who would add, "I am myself a man of simple needs and tastes that money cannot gratify; and I hate this whole damned business of fashionable society and wish I had been born in Russia; so get out and dont bother me. Talk to the Government and the democracy about it, since only they can change it all."

Do not be put off: press your question by demanding why when he has spent every penny that society obliges him to spend he tries to increase his superfluous income by investing continually in stocks and shares. He retorts by asking you what else he is to do with it. If he does not lend it out at interest his bankers will. If in desperation you fall back on "Sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor," his answer is that if he sells his stocks and shares he will only be substituting some other shareholder for himself, and that even if he could find a means of giving the price to "the submerged tenth" of a modern proletarian population the dividend would not buy them a single meal apiece, and the only effect of the transaction would be to add himself to the number of the destitute. It is a demonstrable truth that in a capitalist system the wisest practicable economic

advice to the rich is "Invest all thou canst spare at the highest rate of interest compatible with reasonable security."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

FIVE P.M.

An exhibition of the cleverest men and women in London at five p.m. with the afternoon tea cut off, would shatter many illusions.

ON GOING TO CHURCH

OLD ENGLISH CUSTOMS

When you find some country gentleman keeping up the old English customs at Christmas and so forth, who is he? An American who has bought the place.

VANHATTAN *in* THE APPLE CART

TEN MINUTES AFTER

A respectable man will lie daily, in speech and in print, about the qualities of the article he lives by selling, because it is customary to do so.

Routine

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

ON BEING DIFFERENT

I was old enough to know and fear the ferocious hatred with which human animals, like all other animals, turn upon any unhappy individual who has the misfortune to be unlike themselves in every respect: to be unnatural, as they call it.

THE ARCHBISHOP *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

LIKE A BIT OF STRETCHED ELASTIC

Talk to an Englishman about anything serious, and he listens to you curiously for a moment just as he listens to a chap playing classical music. Then he goes back to his marine golf, or motoring, or flying, or women, just like a bit of stretched elastic when you let it go.

BURGE-LUBIN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

RESPECTABILITY

I was brought up to be respectable. I dont mind the women dyeing their hair and the men drinking: it's human nature.

But it's not human nature to tell everybody about it. Every time one of you opens your mouth I go like this afraid of what will come next. How are we to have any self-respect if we dont keep it up that we're better than we really are?

MANGAN *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE RIGHT PEOPLE

There are only two classes in good society in England: the equestrian classes and the neurotic classes. It isnt mere convention: everybody can see that the people who hunt are the right people and the people who dont are the wrong ones.

LADY UTTERWORD *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

RESPECTABILITY

. . . respectability has broke all the spirit out of her.

DOOLITTLE *in* PYGMALION

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English have no respect for their language, and will not teach their children to speak it. They spell it so abominably that no man can teach himself what it sounds like. It is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman hate or despise him. German and Spanish are accessible to foreigners: English is not accessible even to Englishmen.

A PROFESSOR OF PHONETICS

THE SUMMIT OF CIVILIZATION

The XIX century, perhaps the most villainous page of recorded history, regarded itself as the very summit of civilization, and talked of the past as a cruel gloom that had been dispelled for ever by the railway and the electric telegraph.

How The XIX Century Found Itself Out

Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

FOREIGNERS

There is only one epithet in universal use for foreigners, that epithet is dirty.

Taboo

In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

CULTURE

Culture penniless and profiteers rolling in money but indifferent to culture. . . .

Letter to Frank Harris

CRUELTY

Let us face these questions boldly, not shrinking from the fact that cruelty is one of the primitive pleasures of mankind, and that the detection of its Protean disguises as law, education, medicine, discipline, sport and so forth, is one of the most difficult of the amending tasks of the legislator.

Cruelty For Its Own Sake

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

MEN

Theres something pathetic to me about men: I find myself calling them poor So-and-So when theres nothing whatever the matter with them.

MRS. JUNO *in* OVERRULED

FREAKS

The apparent freaks of nature called Great Men mark not human attainment but human possibility and hope. They prove that though we in the mass are only child Yahoos it is possible for creatures built exactly like us, bred from our unions and developed from our seeds, to reach the heights of these towering heads. For the moment, however, when we are not violently persecuting them we are like Goldsmith's villagers, wondering how their little heads can carry all they know and ranking them as passing rich on four hundred pounds a year when they are lucky enough to get paid for their work instead of persecuted.

Preface to GENEVA

DANGER

My dear: in this world there is always danger for those who are afraid of it. Theres a danger that the house will catch fire in the night; but we shant sleep any the less soundly for that.

ANDERSON *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

SUBJECTS GREAT MEN TALK ABOUT

NAPOLEON: I forbid you to talk to me about myself.

GIUSEPPE: Pardon. Your excellency is so unlike other great men. It is the subject they like best.

NAPOLEON: Well, talk to me about the subject they like next best, whatever that may be.

GIUSEPPE: Willingly, your excellency. Has your excellency by any chance caught a glimpse of the lady upstairs?

THE MAN OF DESTINY

On Being Merry

WHY NOT?

NORA: I dont know how you can laugh. Do you, Mr. Keegan?

KEEGAN: Why not? There is danger, destruction, torment!
What more do we need to make us merry?

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE POWER OF LAUGHTER

. . . the power of laughter is astonishing. It is not enough to say merely that men enable themselves to endure the unbearablest nuisances and the deadliest scourges by setting up a merry convention that they are amusing. We must go further and face that they actually are amused by them—that they are not laughing with the wrong side of the mouth. If you doubt it, read the popular fiction of the pre-Dickensian age, from the novels of Smollett to *Tom Cringle's Log*. Poverty in rags is a joke, yellow fever is a joke, drunkenness is a joke, dysentery is a joke, kickings, floggings, falls, frights, humiliations and painful accidents of all sorts are jokes. Henpecked husbands and termagant mothers-in-law are prime jokes. The infirmities of age and the inexperience and shyness of youth are jokes; and it is first-rate fun to insult and torment those that suffer from them.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

HOW TO PREVENT MURDER

IMOGEN: Oh, do not make me laugh.
Laughter dissolves too many just resentments,
Pardons too many sins.

IACHIMO: And saves the world
A many thousand murders.

CYMBELINE

THESE CHRISTIANS!

Thats what we have to put up with from these Christians every day, sir. Theyre always laughing and joking something scandalous. Theyve no religion: thats how it is.

CENTURION *in* ANDROCLES AND THE LION

FUN

Yes. Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh.

RIDGEON *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE PURITAN

Enjoy themselves! Did ever anybody hear of such a thing?

MRS. GILBEY *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

THE NEW ORDER

The only use he can find for sacred things is to make a jest of them. That's the New Order. Thank Heaven, we belong to the Old Order.

CUTHBERTSON *in* THE PHILANDERER

EVERY JEST AN EARNEST

Every dream is a prophecy: every jest is an earnest in the womb of Time.

KEEGAN *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE CLOWN

Vulgarity is a necessary part of a complete author's equipment; and the clown is sometimes the best part of the cirus.

LONDON MUSIC

THE PURIFIER

The truth is, humor is one of the great purifiers of religion even when it is itself anything but pure.

IMMATURITY

A DIVINE ATTRIBUTE

Since we are both funny people, let us not forget that humor is a divine attribute.

THE BISHOP *in* GETTING MARRIED

REVOLUTIONARY TRUTHS

Like all revolutionary truths, it began as a joke.

THE ARCHBISHOP *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE HIDDEN TRUTH

When a thing is funny, search it for a hidden truth.

THE HE-ANCIENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE MELTING MOOD

When a comedy is performed, it is nothing to me that the spectators laugh; any fool can make an audience laugh. I want to see how many of them, laughing or grave, are in the melting mood.

PLAYS PLEASANT

NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY

. . . always ending up with the asurance that he did not take me seriously, and knew that my real object was simply to give him a hearty laugh. . . .

DEATH OF AN OLD REVOLUTIONARY HERO

THE TRAGEDY AND COMEDY OF LIFE

There is nothing that marks the born dramatist more unmistakably than this discovery of comedy in his own misfortunes almost in proportion to the pathos with which the ordinary man announces their tragedy.

GAIETY OF GENIUS

LAUGHTER

. . . unless comedy touches me as well as amuses me, it leaves me with a sense of having wasted my evening. I go to the theatre to be moved to laughter, not to be tickled or bustled into it; and that is why, though I laugh as much as anybody at a farcical comedy, I am out of spirits before the end of the second act, and out of temper before the end of the third, my miserable mechanical laughter intensifying these symptoms at every outburst. If the public ever becomes intelligent enough to know when it is really enjoying itself and when it is not, there will be an end of farcical comedy.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

Women

MARRYING AT FORTY

You do not understand the nature of Charlotte's objection to you. It is not a question of like and dislike in the ordinary sense; she has exactly the same objection to my mother, and sister and everybody who forms part of the past in which she has no part. The moment you walk into the room where I am you create a world in which you and I are at home and she is a stranger. That is the real difficulty of marrying at forty.

Letter

WHAT WOMEN KNOW

Women know instinctively, even when they are echoing male glory stuff, that communities live not by slaughter and by daring death, but by creating life and nursing it to its highest possibilities. When Ibsen said that the hope of the world lay in the women and the workers he was neither a sentimentalist nor a demagogue. You cannot have read this far (unless you have skipped recklessly) without discovering that I know as well as Ibsen did, or as you do that women are not angels. They are as foolish as men in many ways; but they have had to devote themselves to life whilst men have had to devote themselves to death; and that makes a vital difference in male and female religion. Women have been forced to fear whilst men have been forced to dare: the heroism of a woman is to nurse and protect life, and of a man to destroy it and court death. But the homicidal heroes are often abject cowards in the face of new ideas, and veritable Weary Willies when they are asked to think. Their heroism is politically mischievous and useless. Knowing

instinctively that if they thought about what they do they might find themselves unable to do it, they are afraid to think. That is why the heroine has to think for them, even to the extent of often having no time left for herself. She needs more and not less courage than a man; and this she must get from a creed that will bear thinking of without becoming incredible.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE DEVILISH SIDE

TANNER: Tavy: thats the devilish side of a woman's fascination: she makes you will your own destruction.

OCTAVIUS: But it's not destruction: It's fulfilment.

TANNER: Yes, of her purpose; and that purpose is neither her happiness nor yours, but Nature's. Vitality in a woman is a blind fury of creation. She sacrifices herself to it: do you think she will hesitate to sacrifice you?

OCTAVIUS: Why, it is just because she is self-sacrificing that she will not sacrifice those she loves.

TANNER: That is the profoundest of mistakes, Tavy. It is the self-sacrificing women that sacrifice others most recklessly. Because they are unselfish, they are kind in little things. Because they have a purpose which is not their own purpose, but that of the whole universe, a man is nothing to them but an instrument of that purpose.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE PHILOSOPHER'S VIEW

NEWTON: Women enter a philosopher's life only to disturb it. They expect too much attention.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

CHANGEABLE WOMEN

Now motion is not a bad thing: it is life as opposed to stagnation, paralysis, and death. It is novelty as opposed to monotony; and novelty is so necessary to use that if you take the best thing within your reach (say the best food, the best music, the best book, the best state of mind, or the best anything that remains the same always), and if you stick to it long enough you will come to loathe it. Changeable women, for instance, are more endurable than monotonous ones, however unpleasant some of

their changes may be: they are sometimes murdered but seldom deserted; and it is the ups and downs of married life that make it bearable. When people shake their heads because we are living in a restless age, ask them how they would like to live in a stationary one and do without change. Nobody who buys a motor car says "the slower the better." Motion is delightful when we can control it, guide it, and stop it when it is taking us into danger.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HOME-BRED WOMEN

. . . most women are so thoroughly home-bred as to be unfit for human society.

Hearth and Home
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

A WALKING SERMON

112284

She has only one manner, and that is the manner of an old family nurse to a child just after it has learnt to walk. She has used her ugliness to secure indulgences unattainable by Cleopatra or Fair Rosamund and has the further great advantage over them that age increases her qualification instead of impairing it. Being an industrious, agreeable, and popular old soul, she is a walking sermon on the vanity of feminine prettiness.

ABOUT EMMY *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

DOCILITY

Our mental laziness is a guarantee of our docility: the mother who says "How dare you go out without asking my leave?" presently finds herself exclaiming "Why cant you think for yourself instead of running to me for everything?" But she would be greatly astonished if a rude motor car manufacturer said to her "Why cant you make a car for yourself instead of running to me for it?"

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THINKING FOR MYSELF

This comes of James teaching me to think for myself, and never to hold back out of fear of what other people may think of me. It works beautifully as long as I think the same things as

he does. But now! because I have just thought something different! look at him! Just look!

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

ALL MIXED

People dont have their virtues and vices in sets: they have them anyhow: all mixed.

MRS. HUSHABYE *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

FASHIONS

Fashions, after all, are only induced epidemics, proving that epidemics can be induced by tradesmen.

The Reforms Also Come From The Laity

In the Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

CHARMING WOMEN

I know lots of charming women; but the worst of it is, theyre all married. Women dont become charming, to my taste, until theyre fully developed; and by that time, if theyre really nice, theyre snapped up and married. And then, because I am a good man, I have to place a limit to my regard for them. I may be fortunate enough to gain friendship and even very warm affection from them; but my loyalty to their husbands and their hearths and their happiness obliges me to draw a line and not overstep it. Of course I value such affectionate regard very highly indeed. I am surrounded with women who are most dear to me. But every one of them has a post sticking up, if I may put it that way, with the inscription: Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted. How we all loathe that notice! In every lovely garden, in every dell full of primroses, on every fair hillside, we meet that confounded board; and there is always a gamekeeper round the corner. But what is that to the horror of meeting it on every beautiful woman, and knowing that there is a husband round the corner? I have had this accursed board standing between me and every dear and desirable woman until I thought I had lost the power of letting myself fall really and wholeheartedly in love.

GREGORY *in* OVERRULED

BEAUTIFUL

The epithet beautiful is used by surgeons to describe operations which their patients describe as ghastly, by physicists to describe methods of measurement which leave sentimentalists cold, by lawyers to describe cases which ruin all the parties to them, and by lovers to describe the objects of their infatuation, however unattractive they may appear to the unaffected spectators.

ELLEN TERRY

LOVE

When we want to read of the deeds that are done for love, whither do we turn? To the murder column; and there we are rarely disappointed.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

CURE FOR LUST

What we need are not pills and potions, prophylactic inoculations, physical jerks, and the like. The most liberal supplies of chalk and opium will not abolish cholera. We need agreeable surroundings, the satisfaction of physical cravings before they become mental anxieties, poetry, music, pictures, books, and leisure to enjoy them and acquire a taste for them. Without such tastes we have no pleasures but those of gluttony, drunkenness, and the sexual lust which becomes importunate for some years before it is wholesome to indulge it, and is irresistible in the absence of aesthetic counter-attractions to sublimate it at best and at worst make it too fastidious for the streets. An overcrowded mass of people who know nothing of the fine arts, and have neither money nor leisure for thinking, or for hunting, shooting, skating, boxing, golfing, cricket, or football, is a hotbed not only of syphilis but of all the other diseases as well. Overcrowding is in fact more deadly than hunger or cold. Today the newspapers announce the building by the State of 30,000 cottages in which no inhabitant will have a separate room. And the Prime Minister simultaneously calls for larger families! When will we begin to understand that One Citizen One Room is far more pressing than One Man One Vote?

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NUDE WOMAN: POLICE!

We have among us a certain number of people who are morbidly sensitive to sexual impressions, and quite insensible to artistic ones. We have certain sects in which such a condition is artificially induced as a matter of religious duty. Children have their affections repressed, and their susceptibility to emotional excitement nursed on sin, wrath, terror, and vengeance, whilst they are forbidden to go to the theatre or to amuse themselves with stories or "profane" pictures. Naturally, when such people grow up, life becomes to them a prolonged temptation of St. Anthony. You try to please them by a picture which appeals to their delight in graceful form and bright warm color, to their share in the romance which peoples the woods and streams with sylphs and water maidens, to the innocent and highly recreative love of personal beauty, which is one of the great advantages of having a sex at all. To your horror and discomposure, you are met by a shriek of "Nude woman: nude woman: police!"

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

YOU CANNOT FALL IN LOVE WITH A SPRITE

It is not the small things that women miss in me, but the big things. My pockets are always full of the small change of love-making; but it is magic money, not real money. Mrs. Webb, who is a remarkably shrewd woman, explains her freedom from the fascination to which she sees all the others succumb by saying "You cannot fall in love with a sprite; and Shaw is a sprite in such matters, not a real person." Perhaps you can divine the truth in this: I am too lazy to explain it now, even if I understood it. It is certainly true: I am fond of women (or one in a thousand, say); but I am in earnest about quite other things, to most women one man and one lifetime makes a world. I require whole populations and historical epochs to engage my interests seriously and make the writing machine (for that is what G.B.S. is) work at full speed and pressure: love is only diversion and recreation to me.

8th Sept., 1897
Letter

CLOTHES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Up to the time I was 29, actually twenty-nine I was too shabby for any woman to tolerate me. I stalked about in a decaying green coat, cuffs trimmed with the scissors, terrible boots, and so on. Then I got a job to do and bought a suit of clothes with the proceeds. A lady immediately invited me to tea, threw her arms round me, and said she adored me.

12th Oct., 1896
Letter

SENSUALITY AND PROGRESS

MRS. ETTEEN: Oh yes: I am as great a coward, as futile a creature as you: you dont think I dont know it. Shall I tell you why that is?

IMMENSO: You evidently will, whether I say yes or no.

MRS. ETTEEN: It is because we have not really finished with the sensualities, the crudities, the vulgarities and superstitions that are holding us back. We have not had time to exhaust them, to survive them, to be forced to provide for a special future on earth when they are all dead in us, just as we are forced to provide for bread in our present old age. We do not live long enough. . . .

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

SEX ATTRACTION AND BEAUTY

This sex attraction, though it is so useful for keeping the world peopled, has nothing to do with beauty: it blinds us to ugliness instead of opening our eyes to beauty. It is what enables us to endure a world full of ugly sights and sounds and people. You can do without the Venus of Milo because the young lady at the refreshment bar can make you forget her. I dont want to talk about such attractions: they are only the bait in the trap of marriage: they vanish when they have served their turn. But have you never known really beautiful people, beautiful as girls, beautiful as matrons, beautiful as grandmothers, or men to match them? Do you not want a world of such beautiful people, instead of what the gentleman in Mr. Granville Barker's play calls "this farmyard world of sex"? Will you dare to tell me that the world was no worse when the lords of creation were monkeys than it is now that they are men, ugly as most of them are?

Do you really want us all to become like ants and bees because ants and bees are industrious and goody goody?

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

DILEMMA

Can any dilemma be more complete? Love is assumed to be the only theme that touches all your audience infallibly, young and old, rich and poor. And yet love is the one subject that the drawing room drama dare not present.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

WHY COUPLES BEHAVE HORRIDLY

GREGORY: Do you know why half the couples who find themselves situated as we are now behave horridly?

MRS. JUNO: Because they cant help it if they let things go too far.

GREGORY: Not a bit of it. It's because they have nothing else to do, and no other way of entertaining each other. You dont know what it is to be alone with a woman who has little beauty and less conversation. What is a man to do? She cant talk interestingly; and if he talks that way himself she doesnt understand him. He cant look at her: if he does, he only finds out that she isnt beautiful. Before the end of five minutes they are both hideously bored. Theres only one thing that can save the situation; and thats what you call being horrid. With a beautiful, witty, kind woman, theres no time for such follies. It's so delightful to look at her, to listen to her voice, to hear all she has to say, that nothing else happens. That is why the woman who is supposed to have a thousand lovers seldom has one; whilst the stupid, graceless animals of women have dozens.

MRS. JUNO: I wonder! It's quite true that when one feels in danger one talks like mad to stave it off, even when one doesn't quite want to stave it off.

GREGORY: One never does quite want to stave it off. Danger is delicious. But death isnt. We court the danger; but the real delight is in escaping, after all.

MRS. JUNO: I dont think we'll talk about it any more. Danger is all very well when you do escape; but sometimes one

doesnt. I tell you frankly I dont feel as safe as you do—if you really do.

OVERRULED

THE NURTURE AND EDUCATION OF SEX

Sex is a necessary and healthy instinct; and its nurture and education is one of the most important uses of all art, and for the present at all events the chief use of the theatre.

Why The Unmentionable Must Be Mentioned

In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

ONE FLESH AND ONE SPIRIT

Well, what more can you ask? Do not let us fall into the common mistake of expecting to become one flesh and one spirit. Every star has its own orbit; and between it and its nearest neighbor there is not only a powerful attraction but an infinite distance. When the attraction becomes stronger than the distance the two do not embrace: they crash together in ruin. We two also have our orbits, and must keep an infinite distance between us to avoid a disastrous collision. Keeping our distance is the whole secret of good manners; and without good manners human society is intolerable and impossible.

MAGNUS *in* THE APPLE CART

FRIENDS

The only service a friend can really render is to keep up your courage by holding up to you a mirror in which you can see a noble image of yourself. The moment the image loses its elevation, then away with the friend; however remorseful he may be, he has become a malignant influence in your life.

Letter

BIRTH OF MORAL PASSION

TANNER: But now I began to have scruples, to feel obligations, to find that veracity and honor were no longer goody-goody expressions in the mouths of grown-up people, but compelling principle in myself.

ANN: Yes. I suppose youre right. You were beginning to be a man, and I to be a woman.

TANNER: Are you sure it was not that we were beginning to

be something more? What does the beginning of manhood and womanhood mean in most people's mouths? You know: it means the beginning of love. But love began long before that for me. Love played its part in the earliest dreams and follies and romances I can remember—may I say the earliest follies and romances we can remember?—though we did not understand it at the time. No: the change that came to me was the birth in me of moral passion; and I declare that according to my experience moral passion is the only real passion.

ANN: All passions ought to be moral, Jack.

TANNER: Ought! Do you think that anything is strong enough to impose oughts on a passion except a stronger passion still?

ANN: Our moral sense controls passion, Jack. Dont be stupid.

TANNER: Our moral sense! And is that not a passion? Is the devil to have all the passions as well as all the good tunes? If it were not a passion—if it were not the mightiest of the passions, all the other passions would sweep it away like a leaf before a hurricane. It is the birth of that passion that turns a child into a man.

ANN: There are other passions, Jack. Very strong ones.

TANNER: All the other passions were in me before; but they were idle and aimless—mere childish greedinesses and cruelties, curiosities and fancies, habits and superstitions, grotesque and ridiculous to the mature intelligence. When they suddenly began to shine like newly lit flames it was by no light of their own, but by the radiance of the dawning moral passion. That passion dignified them, gave them conscience and meaning, found them a mob of appetites and organized them into an army of purposes and principles. My soul was born of that passion.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

TWO TYRANNOUS PHYSICAL PASSIONS

We have two tyrannous physical passions: concupiscence and chastity. We become mad in pursuit of sex: we become equally mad in the persecution of that pursuit. Unless we gratify our desire the race is lost: unless we restrain it we destroy ourselves.

Inconsistency Of The Sex Instinct

In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

BLUESTOCKING

A bluestocking is a woman who has a mania for intellectual subjects without having a ray of intellect.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

HEART'S DESIRE

Sir: there are two tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart's desire. The other is to gain it.

MENDOZA *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

LOVE IS NOT ENOUGH

Anyhow, Shaw's teaching is much more interesting than his personal adventures, if he ever had any. The teaching is unquestionably in very strong reaction against what he has called Nineteenth century Amorism. He is not one of your suburban Love is Enough fanatics. He maintains that chastity is so powerful an instinct that its denial and starvation on the scale on which the opposite impulse has been starved and denied would wreck any civilization. He insists that intellect is a passion, and that the modern notion that passion means only sex is as crude and barbarous as the ploughman's idea that art is simply bawdiness. He points out that art can flourish splendidly when sex is absolutely barred, as it was, for example, in the Victorian literature which produced Dickens. He compares Giulio Romano, a shameless pornographer, pupil of Raphael and brilliant draughtsman, with Raphael himself, who was so sensitive that though he never painted a draped figure without first drawing it in the nude, he always paid the Blessed Virgin the quaint tribute of a caleçon in his studies of her, and contrived to decorate the villa of a voluptuary with the story of Cupid and Psyche without either shrinking from the uttermost frankness or losing his dignity and innocence. Shaw contends that when art passed from Raphael to Giulio it fell into an abyss and became not only disgusting but dull.

The eternal triangle of the Paris stage he rejects as proving adultery to be the driest of subjects. He wrote *Plays for Puritans* to show how independent he was of it. He demands scornfully whether genuine virility can be satisfied with stories and pictures, and declares that the fleshly school in art is the consolation of the impotent.

Yet there are passages in his plays which urge that imaginary love plays an important part in civilized life. A handsome hero

says to a man who is jealous of him: "Do not waste your jealousy on me: the imaginary rival is the dangerous one." In *Getting Married*, the lady who refuses to marry because she cannot endure masculine untidiness and the smell of tobacco, hints that her imagination provides her with a series of adventures which beggar reality. Shaw says that the thousand and three conquests of Don Juan consist of two or three squalid intrigues and a thousand imaginative fictions.

How Frank Harris Ought to Have Done It
in SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

MEN ALWAYS LIE TO WOMEN

If I said—to please you—that I did what I did ever so little for your sake, I lied as men always lie to women. You know how much I have lived with worthless men—aye, and worthless women too. Well, they could all rise to some sort of goodness and kindness when they were in love. That has taught me to set very little store by the goodness that only comes out red hot. What I did last night, I did in cold blood, caring not half so much for your husband, or for you as I do for myself. I had no motive and no interest: All I can tell you is that when it came to the point whether I would take my neck out of the noose and put another man's into it, I could not do it. I dont know why not: I see myself as a fool for my pains; but I could not and I cannot. I have been brought up standing by the law of my own nature; and I may not go against it, gallows or no gallows. I should have done the same for any other man in the town, or any other man's wife. Do you understand that?

RICHARD *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

EMOTION AND PASSION IN MY PLAYS

I will let emotion and passion have all the play in my characters. But you must recollect that there is distinction even in emotion and passion; and that the finer kinds will not run through the wellworn channels of speech. They make new intellectual speech channels; and for some time these will necessarily appear so strange and artificial, that it will be supposed that they are incapable of conveying emotion. They said for many years, remember, that Wagner's endless melody was nothing but discord.

A Letter

IF I HAD FALLEN FOR A DUCHESS

I, always on the heroic plane imaginatively, had two disgusting faults which I did not recognize as faults because I could not help them. I was poor and (by day) shabby. I therefore tolerated the gross error that poverty, though an inconvenience and a trial, is not a sin and a disgrace; and I stood for my self-respect on the things I had: probity, ability, knowledge of art, laboriousness and whatever else came cheaply to me. Because I could walk into Hampton Court Palace and the National Gallery (on free days) and enjoy Mantegna and Michael Angelo whilst millionaires were yawning miserably over inept gluttonies; because I could suffer more by hearing a movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony taken at a wrong tempo than a duchess by losing a diamond necklace, I was indifferent to the repulsive fact that if I had fallen in love with the duchess I did not possess a morning suit in which I could reasonably have expected her to touch me with the furthest protended pair of tongs.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

UNTIL DEATH

The actual result is that when two people are under the influence of the most violent, most insane, most delusive, and most transient of passions, they are required to swear that they will remain in that excited, abnormal, and exhausting condition continuously until death do them part.

For Better For Worse
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

ONE ROOM FOR TWO PEOPLE

It seemed entirely proper and natural to them that out of every twenty-four hours of their lives they should pass eight shut up in one room with their wives alone, and this, not bird-like, for the mating season, but all the year round and every year. How they settled even such minor questions as to which party should decide whether and how much the window should be open and how many blankets should be on the bed, and at what hour they should go to bed and get up so as to avoid disturbing one another's sleep, seemed insoluble questions to me. But the members of the conference did not seem to mind. They were content to have the whole national housing problem

treated on a basis of one room for two people. That was the essence of marriage for them.

A Forgotten Conference of Married Men
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

FAMILY LOVE

That atmosphere is usually described as an atmosphere of love; and this definition should be sufficient to put any sane person on guard against it. The people who talk and write as if the highest attainable state is that of a family stewing in love continuously from the cradle to the grave, can hardly have given five minutes serious consideration to so outrageous a proposition. They cannot have even made up their minds as to what they mean by love; for when they expatiate on their thesis they are sometimes talking about kindness, and sometimes about mere appetite.

In either sense they are equally far from the realities of life. No healthy man or animal is occupied with love in any sense for more than a very small fraction indeed of the time he devotes to business and to recreations wholly unconnected with love. A wife entirely preoccupied with her affection for her husband, a mother entirely preoccupied with her affection for her children, may be all very well in a book (for people who like that kind of book); but in actual life she is a nuisance. Husbands may escape from her when their business compels them to be away from home all day; but young children may be, and quite often are, killed by her cuddling and coddling and doctoring and preaching: above all, by her continuous attempts to excite precocious sentimentality, a practice as objectionable, and possibly as mischievous, as the worst tricks of the worst nursemaids.

Too Much of a Good Thing
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

THE VOICE OF NATURE

The sex attraction (I like the sensation when it comes to me) means something. If that attraction meant something destructive and ruinous to the human race, the human race would have been wiped out of existence long ago. It is what you call the Voice of Nature.

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

I LIKED SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

I found sex hopeless as a basis for permanent relations, and never dreamt of marriage in connection with it. I put everything else before it, and never refused or broke an engagement to speak on Socialism to pass a gallant evening. I liked sexual intercourse because of its amazing power of producing a celestial flood of emotion and exaltation of existence which, however momentary, gave me a sample of what may one day be the normal state of being for mankind in intellectual ecstasy.

Letter

ROMANCE

Just as I cannot remember any time when I could not read and write so I cannot remember any time when I did not exercise my overwhelming imagination in telling myself stories about women.

Letter

FAITHFUL

Just as good mothers and fathers love all lovable children, so good wives and husbands love all lovable husbands and wives. People with this gift of heart are not prevented from marrying by Don Juan's difficulty: they can be faithful to one without being unfaithful to all the rest.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

WOMAN'S SELF-SACRIFICE

Now of all the idealist abominations that make society pestiferous, I doubt if there be any so mean as that of forcing self-sacrifice on a woman under pretence that she likes it; and, if she ventures to contradict the pretence, declaring her no true woman.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

IMAGINARY PARADISE

I was, as all young people should be, a votary of the Uranian Venus. I was steeped in romantic music from my childhood. I knew all the pictures and statues in the National Gallery of Ireland (a very good one) by heart. I read everything I could lay my hands on. Dumas père made French history like an opera

by Meyerbeer for me. From our cottage on Dalkey Hill I contemplated an eternal Shelleyan vision of sea, sky and mountain. Real life was only a squalid interruption to an imaginary paradise. I was overfed on honey-dew. The Uranian Venus was beautiful.

"The difficulty about the Uranian Venus is that, though she saves you from squalid debaucheries, and enables you to prolong your physical virginity long after your adolescence, she may sterilize you by giving you imaginary amours on the plains of heaven with goddesses and angels, and even devils, so enchanting that they spoil you for real women or, if you are a woman, for real men. You become inhuman through a surfeit of beauty and an excess of voluptuousness. You end as an ascetic, a saint, an old maid, an old bachelor (in short, a celibate), because, like Heine, you cannot ravish the Venus of Milo or be ravished by the Hermes of Praxiteles. Your love-poems are like Shelley's Epipsychidion, irritating to terre à terre sensual women, who know at once that you are making them palatable by pretending they are something that they are not, and cannot stand comparison with.

Letter to Frank Harris

ANXIOUS CONSIDERATION

A popular anecdote describes a well known actor manager as saying one day at rehearsal to an actress of distinguished beauty: "Let us give Shaw a beefsteak and put some red blood into him."

"For Heaven's sake dont," exclaimed the actress: "he is bad enough as it is; but if you give him meat no woman in London will be safe."

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

WHAT ONE FORGETS

Do not forget that all marriages are different. . . .

Letter to Frank Harris

PARENTS

My mother was also very kind, incapable of striking a child or an animal, hating to see a flower thrown away or picked to pieces. Many women with her provocation would have hated my father: she was not in the least bitter about him. She had no respect for him in the common sense of the word, as he could do nothing dramatically interesting or effective; but she took him

as he was, in the kindly Irish fashion, without trumping up a moral case against him or blaming him. We were all like that, more or less: his position in the household was just what he was capable of taking: he was Papa in the fullest sense always; and the dynamic Lee got none of the affection Papa inspired.

Lee's failure in London, disguised as it was by a few years of fashionable success, was due wholly to the social conditions which compelled him to be a humbug or to starve. My mother, who followed him to London to take up music as a profession and launch my sister Lucy as a *prima donna*, was as available as in Dublin. But the moment she found he had abandoned "The Method" . . . she gave him up, and had not seen him for years when he died: an event which did not disturb her one jot. No more, for the matter, did my father's.

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

PROSAIC AND MERCENARY MARRIAGE

I hated the idea of a prosaic and even mercenary marriage: that somehow was not on the plane of the Mystic Betrothal.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

SIX MONTHS AFTER

. . . if she had known as much about marriage the day before her wedding as she did six months after, it would have been extremely hard to induce her to get married at all.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

MALE HYPOCRISY

We throw the whole drudgery of creation on one sex, and then imply that no female of any womanliness or delicacy would initiate any effort in that direction. There are no limits to male hypocrisy in that matter.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

DECENCY

We are not taught to think decently on these subjects, and consequently we have no language for them except indecent language.

Prudery Explained

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

If we adopt the common romantic assumption that the object of marriage is bliss, then the very strongest reason for dissolving a marriage is that it shall be disagreeable to one or other or both of the parties. If we accept the view that the object of marriage is to provide for the production and rearing of children, then childlessness should be a conclusive reason for dissolution. As neither of these causes entitles married persons to divorce it is at once clear that our marriage law is not founded on either assumption. What it is really founded on is the morality of the tenth commandment, which Englishwomen will one day succeed in obliterating from the walls of our churches by refusing to enter any building where they are publicly classed with a man's house, his ox, and his ass, as his purchased chattels.

Survivals of Sex Slavery
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

ADVERTISEMENT

I will put an end to it all by marrying. Do you know a reasonably healthy woman of about sixty, accustomed to plain vegetarian cooking, and able to read and write enough to forward letters when her husband is away, but otherwise uneducated? Must be plain featured, and of an easy, unjealous temperament. No relatives, if possible. Must not be a lady. One who has never been in a theatre preferred.

14th July, 1897
Letter

DOMESTICITY

Though a glance at the legal conditions of marriage in different Christian countries shews that marriage varies legally from frontier to frontier, domesticity varies so little that most people believe their own marriage laws to be universal.

Property And Marriage
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

MY MARRIAGE

The truth is, she is a clever woman. She knows the value of her unencumbered independence, having suffered a good deal from family bonds and conventionality before the death of her

mother and the marriage of her sister left her free. The idea of tying herself up again by a marriage before she knows anything—before she has exploited her freedom and money power to the utmost—seems to her intellect to be unbearably foolish. Her theory is that she wont do it. She picked up a broken heart somewhere a few years ago, and made the most of it (she is very sentimental) until she happened to read *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, in which she found, as she thought, gospel, salvation, freedom, emancipation, self-respect and so on. Later on, she met the author, who is, as you know, able to make himself tolerable as a correspondent. He is also a bearable companion on bicycle rides, especially in a country house where there is nobody else to pair with. She got fond of me and did not coquet or pretend that she wasnt. I got fond of her, because she was a comfort to me down there. . . .

5th Nov., 1896
Letter

SHAKESPEARS

"I meant Lady Mac to be really awful; but she turned into my wife, who never committed a murder in her life, at least not a quick one."

"Your wife! Ann Hathaway!! Was she like Lady Macbeth?"

"Very," said Shakespear, with conviction. "If you notice, Lady Macbeth has only one consistent characteristic, which is, that she thinks everything her husband does is wrong and that she can do it better. If I'd ever murdered anybody she'd have bullied me for making a mess of it and gone upstairs to improve on it herself. Whenever we gave a party, she apologized to the company for my behavior. Apart from that, I defy you to find any sort of sense in Lady Macbeth. I couldn't conceive anybody murdering a man like that. All I could do when it came to the point was just to brazen it out that she did it, and then give her a little touch of nature or two, from Ann, to make people believe she was real."

"I am disillusioned, disenchanted, disgusted," said the lady. "You might at least have held your tongue about it until after the Ball."

"You ought to think the better of me for it," said the bust (of Shakespear). "I was really a gentle creature. It was so awful

to be born about ten times as clever as anyone else, to like people and yet to have to despise their vanities and illusions. People are such fools, even the most likeable ones, as far as brains go I wasn't cruel enough to enjoy my superiority."

"Such conceit!" said the lady, turning up her nose.

"What's a man to do?" said the Bard. "Do you suppose I could go round pretending to be an ordinary person?"

A DRESSING ROOM SECRET

CHRONIC LIFELONG LOVE

. . . healthy marriages are partnerships of companionable and affectionate friendship; that cases of chronic lifelong love, whether sentimental or sensual, ought to be sent to the doctor if not to the executioner.

The Criminology of Marriage
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

It takes all sorts to make a world; and the notion of a Government department trying to make out how many different types were necessary, and how many persons of each type, and proceeding to breed them by appropriate marriages, is amusing but not practicable. There is nothing for it but to let people choose their mates for themselves, and trust to Nature to produce a good result.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WOMEN'S SOULS

Men are waking up to the perception that in killing women's souls they have killed their own.

Preface: 1913
THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

ONE LAW FOR THE WOMAN, ANOTHER FOR THE MAN

. . . to have one conception of humanity for the woman and another for the man, or one law for the woman and another for the man, or one artistic convention for woman and another for man, or, for the matter of that, a skirt for the woman and a pair of breeches for the man, is as unnatural, and in the long

run as unworkable, as one law for the mare and another for the horse.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

ON BEING MASCULINE

Let me illustrate by reference to a fictitious case: the one imagined in my own play *Candida* will do as well as another. Here a young man who had been received as a friend into the house of a clergyman falls in love with the clergyman's wife, and, being young and inexperienced, declares his feelings, and claims that he, and not the clergyman, is the more suitable mate for the lady. The clergyman, who has a temper, is first tempted to hurl the youth into the street by bodily violence: an impulse natural, perhaps, but vulgar and improper, and not open, on consideration, to decent men. Even coarse and inconsiderate men are restrained from it by the fact that the sympathy of the woman turns naturally to the victim of physical brutality and against the bully, the Thackerayan notion to the contrary being one of the illusions of literary masculinity. Besides, the husband is not necessarily the stronger man: and appeal to force has resulted in the ignominious defeat of the husband quite as often as in poetic justice as conceived in the conventional novelet.

The Personal Sentimental Basis of Monogamy
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

EQUALITY

Equality is essential to good breeding; and equality, as all economists know, is incompatible with property.

Property And Marriage
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE LIAR

ELLIE: . . . But how can you love a liar?

MRS. HUSHABYE: I dont know. But you can fortunately. Otherwise there wouldnt be much love in the world.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE IDEAL WIFE

. . . she would have made a most comfortable wife. Pleasant-looking, good-natured, able to see everything within six inches

of her nose and nothing beyond. A domestic paragon: a political idiot. In short, an ideal wife.

THE SECRETARY *in* GENEVA

THE TYPICAL BRITISH HUSBAND

The typical British husband sees much less of his wife than he does of his business partner, his fellow clerk, or whoever works beside him day by day. Man and wife do not, as a rule, live together: they only breakfast together, dine together, and sleep in the same room. In most cases the woman knows nothing of the man's working life and he knows nothing of her working life (he calls it her home life).

For Better For Worse
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

A FORM OF SUICIDE

The greatest sacrifice in marriage is the sacrifice of the adventurous attitude towards life: the being settled. Those who are born tired may crave for settlement; but to fresher and stronger spirits it is a form of suicide.

Celibacy No Remedy
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

THE SUCCESSFUL WOOER

Love loses its charm when it is not free; and whether the compulsion is that of custom and law, or of infatuation, the effect is the same: it becomes valueless and even abhorrent, like the caresses of a maniac. The desire to give inspires no affection unless there is also the power to withhold; and the successful wooer, in both sexes alike, is the one who can stand for honorable conditions, and, failing them, go without.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

HOME MANNERS

There are women who, through total disuse, have lost the power of kindly human speech and can only scold and complain: there are men who grumble and nag from inveterate habit even when they are comfortable. But their unfortunate spouses and children cannot escape from them.

Home Manners are Bad Manners
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

MARRYING A GENIUS

We observe in the man of genius all the unscrupulousness and all the "self-sacrifice" (the two things are the same) of Woman. He will risk the stake and the cross; starve, when necessary in a garret all his life; study women and live on their work and care as Darwin studied worms and lived upon sheep; work his nerves into rags without payment, a sublime altruist in his disregard of himself, an atrocious egotist in his disregard of others. Here Woman meets a purpose as impersonal, as irresistible as her own; and the clash is sometimes tragic.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

LOVE AFFAIRS

NORA: An d'ye mean to tell me to me face that youve ever been in love before?

BROADBENT: Lord! yes.

NORA: I'm not your first love!

BROADBENT: First love is only a little foolishness and a lot of curiosity: no really self-respecting woman would take advantage of it. No, my dear Nora: Ive done with all that long ago. Love affairs always end in rows. We're not going to have any rows: we're going to have a solid four-square home: man and wife: comfort and common sense. And plenty of affection, eh?

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE PROPHET

The prophet is without honor in his own family.

CONRAD *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THAT'S THE MAN FOR ME

I suppose so. You see, Sir Arthur, I am not like David. I am a reading thinking modern woman; and I know how to look at these things objectively and scientifically. You know the way you meet thousands of people and they mean nothing to you sexually: you wouldnt touch one of them with a barge pole. Then all of a sudden you pick out one, and feel sexy all over. If he's not nice you feel ashamed of yourself and run away. But if he is nice you say "Thats the man for me."

ALOYSIA *in* ON THE ROCKS

WHO COULD RISK MARRYING A MAN FOR LOVE?

HYPATIA: I can imagine all sorts of men I could fall in love with; but I never seem to meet them. The real ones are too small, like Bunny, or too silly, like Jerry. Of course one can get into a state about any man: fall in love with him if you like to call it that. But who would risk marrying a man for love? I shouldnt. I remember three girls at school who agreed that the one man you should never marry was the man you were in love with, because it would make a perfect slave of you. Theres a sort of instinct against it, I think, thats just as strong as the other instinct. One of them, to my certain knowledge, refused a man she was in love with, and married another who was in love with her; and it turned out very well.

MRS. TARLETON: Does all that mean that youre not in love with Bunny?

HYPATIA: Oh, how could anybody be in love with Bunny? I like him to kiss me just as I like a baby to kiss me. I'm fond of him; and he never bores me; and I see that he's very clever; but I'm not what you call gone about him, if thats what you mean.

MISALLIANCE

WHY MARRY

MRS. TARLETON: Then why need you marry him?

HYPATIA: What better can I do? I must marry somebody, I suppose. Ive realized that since I was twenty-three. I always used to take it as a matter of course that I should be married before I was twenty.

MISALLIANCE

STILL HER OWN MISTRESS

LESBIA: To think that after all the dangers of the morning I am still unmarried! still independent! still my own mistress! still a glorious strongminded old maid of old England!

THE GENERAL: Do you find any real happiness in being your own mistress? Would it not be more generous—would you not be happier as someone else's mistress——

LESBIA: Boxer!

THE GENERAL: No, no, you must know, my dear Lesbia, that I was not using the word in its improper sense. I am sometimes unfortunate in my choice of expressions; but you know what I mean. I feel sure you would be happier as my wife.

LESBIA: I daresay I should, in a frowsty sort of way. But I prefer my dignity and my independence. I'm afraid I think this rage for happiness rather vulgar.

THE GENERAL: Oh, very well, Lesbia. I shall not ask you again.

LESBIA: You will, Boxer; but it will be no use. Some day I hope to make a friend of you; and then we shall get on very nicely.

GETTING MARRIED

EXAGGERATED

Like all young men, you greatly exaggerate the difference between one young woman and another.

UNDERSHAFT *in* MAJOR BARBARA

A CLASS AFFAIR

Worst of all, marriage becomes a class affair: the infinite variety of choice which nature offers to the young in search of a mate is narrowed to a handful of persons of similar income: and beauty and health become the dreams of artists and the advertisements of quacks instead of the normal conditions of life.

The Political And Biological Objections To Inequality
In ANDROCLES AND THE LION

GOOD RESULTS

There is no evidence that the best citizens are the offspring of congenial marriages, or that a conflict of temperament is not a highly important part of what breeders call crossing. On the contrary, it is quite sufficiently probable that good results may be obtained from parents who would be extremely unsuitable companions and partners, to make it certain that the experiment in mating them will sooner be tried purposely almost as often as it is now tried accidentally.

Property And Marriage
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

MARRIED!

I solemnly say that I am not a happy man. Ann looks happy; but she is only triumphant, successful, victorious. That is not happiness, but the price for which the strong sell their happiness. What we have both done this afternoon is to renounce happiness, renounce freedom, renounce tranquillity, above all, renounce the romantic possibilities of an unknown future, for the cares of a household and a family. I beg that no man may seize the occasion to get half drunk and utter imbecile speeches and coarse pleasantries at my expense. We propose to furnish our own house according to our own taste; and I hereby give notice that the seven or eight travelling clocks, the four or five dressing cases, the carvers and fish slices, the copies of Patmore's *Angel in the House* in extra morocco, and the other articles you are preparing to heap upon us, will be instantly sold.

TANNER *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

HOME

I am thinking. It is all so strange to me. I can see the beauty and peace of this home: I think I have never been more at rest in my life than at this moment; and yet I know quite well I could never live here. It's not in my nature, I suppose, to be domesticated. But it's very beautiful: it's almost holy.

RICHARD *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

MOTHER INFLUENCE

If an imaginative boy has a sufficiently rich mother who has intelligence, personal grace, dignity of character without harshness, and a cultivated sense of the best art of her time to enable her to make her house beautiful, she sets a standard for him against which very few women can struggle, besides effecting for him a disengagement of his affections, his sense of beauty, and his idealism from his specifically sexual impulses. This makes him a standing puzzle to the huge number of uncultivated people who have been brought up in tasteless homes by commonplace or disagreeable parents, and to whom, consequently, literature, painting, sculpture, music, and affectionate personal relations come as modes of sex if they come at all. The word passion means nothing else to them; and that Higgins could have a passion for phonetics and idealize his mother instead of

Eliza, would seem to them absurd and unnatural. Nevertheless when we look round and see that hardly anyone is too ugly or disagreeable to find a wife or a husband if he or she wants one, whilst many old maids and bachelors are above the average in quality and culture, we cannot help suspecting that the disentanglement of sex from the associations with which it is so commonly confused, a disentanglement which persons of genius achieve by sheer intellectual analysis, is sometimes produced or aided by parental fascination.

PYGMALION

FATHER AND DAUGHTER

Perhaps she will listen to you. You are not her father.

FRANKLYN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

NOT ALL OF ONE SORT

Well my lord, you see people do persist in talking as if marriages was all of one sort. But theres almost as many different sorts of marriages as theres different sorts of people. Theres the young things that marry for love, not knowing what theyre doing, and the old things that marry for money and comfort and companionship. Theres the people that dont intend to have children and that arnt fit to have them. Theres the people that marry because theyre so much run after by the other sex that they have to put a stop to it somehow. Theres the people that want to try a new experience, and the people that want to have done with experiences. How are you to please them all? Why, youll want half a dozen different sorts of contract.

COLLINS *in* GETTING MARRIED

THINGS WE AVOID

Jemima has her limitations, as you have observed. And I have mine. Now if our limitations exactly corresponded I should never want to talk to anyone else; and neither would she. But as that never happens, we are like all other married couples: that is, there are subjects which can never be discussed between us because they are sore subjects. There are people we avoid mentioning to one another because one of us likes them and the other doesnt. Not only individuals, but whole sorts of people.

MAGNUS *in* THE APPLE CART

INEVITABLES

I am fed up with him to that degree that I sometimes feel I could almost marry him, just to put him on the list of the inevitables that I must put up with willynilly, like getting up in the morning, and washing and dressing and eating and drinking: things you darent let yourself get tired of because if you did theyd drive you mad.

THE COUNTESS *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

MARRIED HABITS

A married man forms married habits and becomes dependent on marriage just as a sailor becomes dependent on the sea.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

SEXUAL ATTRACTION

. . . the strongest sexual attraction may exist between persons so incompatible in tastes and capacities that they could not endure living together for a week much less a lifetime, and therefore should not marry one another even though their offspring, which is what Nature aims at, might be eugenically first rate and their sexual union therefore highly desirable from the public point of view. They are not even warned against venereal disease, and, when they contract it, can only raise the old cry, "Why was I not told?"

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ON SELECTING A WIFE

One of my three fathers (the priest) has married hundreds of couples: couples selected by one another, couples selected by the parents, couples forced to marry one another by circumstances of one kind or another; and he assures me that if marriages were made by putting all the men's names into one sack and the women's names into another, and having them taken out by a blindfolded child like lottery numbers, there would be just as high a percentage of happy marriages as we have here in England. He said Cupid was nothing but the blindfolded child: pretty idea that, I think! I shall have as good a chance with Patsy as with anyone else. Mind: I'm not bigoted about it. I'm not a doctrinaire: not the slave of a theory. You and Lord Summerhays are experienced married men. If you can tell me of any trust-

worthy method of selecting a wife, I shall be happy to make use of it. I await your suggestions.

PERCIVAL *in* MISALLIANCE

RESPECTABILITY

My good girl, all biological necessities have to be made respectable whether we like it or not.

CONRAD *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

WASHING UP

Washing up's no trouble when there are two people to do it.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

DISAGREEABLE AND GOOD

She is an elderly matron who has worked hard and got nothing by it except dominion and detestation in her sordid home, and an unquestioned reputation for piety and respectability among her neighbors, to whom drink and debauchery are still so much more tempting than religion and rectitude, that they conceive goodness simply as self-denial. This conception is easily extended to others—denial and finally generalized as covering anything disagreeable. So Mrs. Dudgeon, being exceedingly disagreeable, is held to be exceedingly good.

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

HAPPY IN SHAMELESS DEGRADATION

You find a wife distracted because her husband drinks and is ruining her and her children; yet when you induce him to take the pledge, you find presently that she has tempted him to drink again because he is so morose when he is sober that she cannot endure living with him. And to make his drunkenness bearable she takes to drink herself, and lives happily in shameless degradation with him until they both drink themselves dead.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

UNWISE

CRAMPTON: Then, Mr. Bohun, you dont think this match an unwise one?

BOHUN: Yes I do: all matches are unwise. It's unwise to be born; it's unwise to be married; it's unwise to live; and it's wise to die.

WAITER: Then, if I may respectfully put a word in, sir, so much the worse for wisdom!

YOU NEVER CAN TELL

A BROKEN HEART

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

ANN *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

CONVERSATION PIECE

PROTEUS: There is nothing more to be said.

AMANDA: That means another half hour at least.

THE APPLE CART

IN THE CLUTCHES

MRS. HUSHABYE: Have you no heart? Have you no sense? Look at the brute! Think of poor weak innocent Ellie in the clutches of this slavedriver, who spends his life making thousands of rough violent workmen bend to his will and sweat for him: a man accustomed to have great masses of iron beaten into shape for him by steam-hammers! to fight with women and girls over a halfpenny an hour ruthlessly! a captain of industry, I think you call him, dont you? Are you going to fling your delicate, sweet, helpless child into such a beast's claws just because he will keep her in an expensive house and make her wear diamonds to shew how rich he is?

MAZZINI: Bless you, dear Mrs. Hushabye, what romantic ideas of business you have! Poor dear Mangan isnt a bit like that.

MRS. HUSHABYE: Poor dear Mangan indeed!

MAZZINI: But he doesnt know anything about machinery. He never goes near the men: he couldnt manage them: he is afraid of them. I never can get him to take the least interest in the works: he hardly knows more about them than you do. People are cruelly unjust to Mangan: they think he is all rugged strength just because his manners are bad.

MRS. HUSHABYE: Do you mean to tell me he isnt strong enough to crush poor little Ellie?

MAZZINI: Of course it's very hard to say how any marriage will turn out; but speaking for myself, I should say that he wont have a dog's chance against Ellie. You know, Ellie has

remarkable strength of character. I think it is because I taught her to like Shakespear when she was very young.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

LABELS

I was christened Oliver Cromwell Soames. My father had no right to do it. I have taken the name of Anthony. When you become parents, young gentlemen, be very careful not to label a helpless child with views which it may come to hold in abhorrence.

SOAMES *in* GETTING MARRIED

IMMORALITY

MRS. JUNO: Am I to speak only to men who dislike me?

JUNO: Yes: I think that is, properly speaking, a married woman's duty.

MRS. JUNO: Then I wont do it: Thats flat. I like to be liked. I like to be loved. I want everyone round me to love me. I dont want to meet or speak to anyone who doesnt like me.

JUNO: But, my precious, this is the most horrible immorality.

OVERRULED

IF THEY HAD KNOWN

I was married myself before I'd thought about it; and even if I had thought about it I was too much in love with Alice to let anything stand in the way. But, you know, Ive seen one of our daughters after another—Ethel, Jane, Fanny, and Christina and Florence—go out of that door in their veils and orange blossoms; and Ive always wondered whether theyd have gone quietly if theyd known what they were doing. Ive a horrible misgiving about that pamphlet. All progress means war with Society.

THE BISHOP *in* GETTING MARRIED

"TOUT COMPRENDRE, C'EST TOUT PARDONNER"

All her fussing is about little things; but she often calls them by big names, such as Art, the Divine Spark, the world, motherhood, good breeding, the Universe, the Creator, or anything else that happens to strike her imagination as sounding intellectually important. She has more than common imagination and no more than common conception and penetration; so that she is always on the high horse about words and always in the perambu-

lator about things. Considering herself clever, thoughtful, and superior to ordinary weaknesses and prejudices, she recklessly attaches herself to clever men on that understanding, with the result that they are first delighted, then exasperated, and finally bored. When marrying Reginald she told her friends that there was a great deal in him which needed bringing out. If she were a middle-aged man she would be the terror of his club. Being a pretty young woman, she is forgiven everything, proving that "tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner" is an error, the fact being that the secret of forgiving everything is to undetstand nothing.

About LEO *in* GETTING MARRIED

I'D DO IT AGAIN

Cheer up, sir, cheer up. Every man is frightened of marriage when it comes to the point; but it often turns out very comfortable, very enjoyable and happy indeed, sir—from time to time. *I* never was master in my own house, sir: my wife was like your young lady: she was of a commanding and masterful disposition, which my son has inherited. But if I had my life to live twice over, I'd do it again: I'd do it again, I assure you.

WAITER *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

NOT WORTH CHANGING

You see, my dear, youll exhaust Sinjon's conversation too in a week or so. A man is like a phonograph with half-a-dozen records. You soon get tired of them all; and yet you have to sit at table whilst he reels them off to every new visitor. In the end you have to be content with his common humanity; and when you come down to that, you find out about men what a great English poet of my acquaintance used to say about women: That they all taste alike. Marry whom you please: at the end of a month he'll be Reginald over again. It wasnt worth changing: indeed it wasnt.

THE BISHOP *in* GETTING MARRIED

THEY CANT

Take care, Aloysia. All young women begin by believing they can change and reform the men they marry. They cant.

SIR ARTHUR *in* ON THE ROCKS

THE MAN!

There you have the man! Always clever and unanswerable when he was defending nonsense and wickedness: always awkward and sullen when he had to behave sensibly and decently!

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

BELIEVE ME

Let me make one last appeal. Mrs. Clandon: believe me there are men who have a good deal of feeling, and kind feeling too, which they are not able to express. What you miss in Crampton is that mere veneer of civilization, the art of shewing worthless attentions and paying insincere compliments in a kindly charming way. If you lived in London, where the whole system is one of false good-fellowship, and you may know a man for twenty years without finding out that he hates you like poison, you would soon have your eyes opened. There we do unkind things in a kind way: we say bitter things in a sweet voice: we always give our friends chloroform when we tear them to pieces. But think of the other side of it! Think of the people who do kind things in an unkind way! people whose touch hurts, whose voices jar, whose tempers play them false, who wound and worry the people they love in the very act of trying to conciliate them, and who yet need affection as much as the rest of us. Crampton has an abominable temper, I admit. He has no manners, no tact, no grace. He'll never be able to gain anyone's affection unless they will take his desire for it on trust. Is he to have none? not even pity? from his own flesh and blood?

M'COMAS *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

AMONG THE DAMNED

CROFTS: Believe me, Miss Vivie, the world isnt such a bad place as the croakers make out. As long as you dont fly openly in the face of society, society doesnt ask any inconvenient questions; and it makes precious short work of the cads who do. There are no secrets better kept than the secrets everybody guesses. In the class of people I can introduce you to, no lady or gentleman would so far forget themselves as to discuss my business affairs or your mother's. No man can offer you a safer position.

VIVIE: I suppose you really think youre getting on famously with me.

CROFTS: Well, I hope I may flatter myself that you think better of me than you did at first.

VIVIE: I hardly find you worth thinking about at all now. When I think of the society that tolerates you, and the laws that protect you! when I think of how helpless nine out of ten young girls would be in the hands of you and my mother! the unmentionable woman and her capitalist bully——

CROFTS: Damn you!

VIVIE: You need not. I feel among the damned already.

MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

PAY HEAVEN

Ah, my boy, get married: get married to a good woman; and then youll understand. Thats a foretaste of what will be best in the Kingdom of Heaven we are trying to establish on earth. That will cure you of dawdling. An honest man feels that he must pay Heaven for every hour of happiness with a good spell of hard unselfish work to make others happy. We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it. Get a wife like my Candida; and youll always be in arrear with your repayment.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

WHO GETS MARRIED

LESBIA: The Chinese know what a man is like when he is cut into a thousand pieces, or boiled in oil. That sort of knowledge is of no use to me. I'm afraid we shall never get on with one another, Mrs. George. I live like a fencer, always on guard. I like to be confronted with people who are always on guard. I hate sloppy people, slovenly people, people who cant sit up straight, sentimental people!

MRS. GEORGE: Oh, sentimental your grandmother! You dont learn to hold your own in the world by standing on guard, but by attacking and getting well hammered yourself.

LESBIA: I'm not a prize-fighter, Mrs. Collins. If I cant get a thing without the indignity of fighting for it, I do without it.

MRS. GEORGE: Do you? Does it strike you that if we were all as clever as you at doing without, there wouldnt be much to live for, would there?

THE GENERAL: I'm afraid, Lesbia, the things you do without are the things you dont want.

LESBIA: Thats not bad for the silly soldier man. Yes, Boxer: the truth is, I dont want you enough to make the very unreasonable sacrifices required by marriage. And yet that is exactly why I ought to be married. Just because I have the qualities my country wants most I shall go barren to my grave; whilst the women who have neither the strength to resist marriage nor the intelligence to understand its infinite dishonor will make the England of the future.

GETTING MARRIED

NOT ON ONE PLANE

Being a man, I have my share of the masculine silliness and vulgarity on the subject of sex which so astonishes women, to whom sex is a serious matter. I am not an archbishop, and do not pretend to pass my life on one plane or in one mood, and that the highest.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

A VERY COMMON CASE

My case is a very common one, Mr. Valentine. I married before I was old enough to know what I was doing. As you have seen for yourself, the result was a bitter disappointment for both my husband and myself. So you see, though I am a married woman, I have never been in love; I have never had a love affair; and to be quite frank with you, Mr. Valentine, what I have seen of the love affairs of other people has not led me to regret that deficiency in my experience.

MRS. CLANDON *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

WHEN THE WORK IS DONE

That is the injustice of a woman's lot. A woman has to bring up her children; and that means to restrain them, to deny them things they want, to set them tasks, to punish them when they do wrong, to do all the unpleasant things. And then the father, who has nothing to do but pet them and spoil them, comes in when all her work is done and steals their affection from her.

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

SAFE

Would you believe it that quite a lot of women have flirted with me because I am quite safe? But they get tired of me for the same reason.

MAZZINI *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE REASON

Women dont always marry for happiness, sir. They often marry because they wish to be married women and not old maids.

JUGGINS *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

UNCONVENTIONAL!

How conventional all you unconventional people are!

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

IN THE AGREEMENT

Yes: I must have my own separate house, or my own separate part of a house. Boxer smokes: I cant endure tobacco. Boxer believes that an open window means death from cold and exposure to the night air: I must have fresh air always. We can be friends; but we cant live together; and that must be put in the agreement.

LESBIA *in* GETTING MARRIED

VOLCANIC WOMEN

Men do fall in love with me. They all seem to think me a creature with volcanic passions: I'm sure I dont know why; for all the volcanic women I know are plain little creatures with sandy hair.

MRS. LUNN *in* OVERRULED

FATHER AND SON

LADY CHAVENDER: Miss Brollikins: I am sorry; but there are two things that I cannot bring myself to take the smallest interest in: parliamentary affairs and love affairs. They both bore me to distraction.

ALOYSIA: Well, dont you take an interest in David?

SIR ARTHUR: David is at the age at which young men have to break loose from their fathers. They are very sensitive about being interfered with at that age. He would regard my taking an interest in him as parental tyranny. Therefore I am particularly careful not to take any interest in him.

ON THE ROCKS

FATHER

This is my father, Mrs. Baines. Try what you can do with him. He wont listen to me, because he remembers what a fool I was when I was a baby.

BARBARA *in* MAJOR BARBARA

WHAT NEXT?

Treat my own daughter with respect! What next, pray!

MRS. WARREN *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

THE ONLY POSSIBLE WOMAN

Yours is a thoroughbred heart: you dont scream and cry every time it's pinched. That's why you are the only possible woman for me.

CHARTERIS *in* THE PHILANDERER

SEWING AND FUMING

it soon becomes clear that a tranquil woman can go on sewing longer than an angry man can go on fuming.

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

FATHER

Dont you remember me at all? You were only a tiny child when you were taken away from me; but you took plenty of notice of things. Cant you remember someone whom you loved, or at least liked in a childish way? Come! someone who let you stay in his study and look at his toy boats, as you thought them? Someone who let you do as you liked there, and never said a word to you except to tell you that you must sit still and not speak? Someone who was something that no one else was to you—who was your father?

CRAMPTON *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

POWER

. . . in oligarchies women exercise so much influence privately and irresponsibly that the cleverest of them are for giving all power to the men, knowing that they can get round them without being hampered by the female majority whose world is the kitchen, the nursery, and the drawing-room if such a luxury is within their reach.

Preface to IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

IT DEPENDS ON THE WOMAN

Dont you see? It will depend on how he comes to learn what love really is. I mean on the sort of woman who will teach it to him.

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

HEAVEN

I want you to look beautiful. I want people to see in your eyes that you were married to me. The people in Italy used to point at Dante and say "There goes the man who has been in hell." I want them to point at you and say "There goes a woman who has been in heaven." It has been heaven, darling, hasnt it—*sometimes?*

LOUIS *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

PURGATORY

When I was your age, young men and women were afraid of each other: there was no good fellowship. Nothing real. Only gallantry copied out of novels, and as vulgar and affected as it could be. Maidenly reserve! gentlemanly chivalry! always saying no when you meant yes! simple purgatory for shy and sincere souls.

PRAED *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

ON SAYING WHAT YOU THINK

All timid women are conventional: we must be conventional, Jack, or we are so cruelly, so vilely misunderstood. Even you, who are a man, cannot say what you think without being misunderstood and vilified.

ANN *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

THINGS TO UNLEARN

Mr. Valentine: you must excuse us all. Women have to unlearn the false good manners of their slavery before they acquire the genuine good manners of their freedom. Dont think Gloria vulgar: she is not really so.

MRS. CLANDON *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

THE MAJORITY

The majority of married couples never get to know one another at all.

For Better For Worse
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

HATE AND LOVE

Think of how some of our married friends worry one another, tax one another, are jealous of one another, cant bear to let one

another out of sight for a day, are more like jailers and slave-owners than lovers. Think of those very same people with their enemies, scrupulous, lofty, self-respecting, determined to be independent of one another, careful of how they speak of one another—pooh! havnt you often thought that if they only knew it, they were better friends to their enemies than to their own husbands and wives?

ANDERSON *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

WHY WOMEN LOVE HOTELS

There is one thing that we all desire; and that is freedom. By this we mean freedom from any obligation to do anything except just what we like, without a thought of tomorrow's dinner or any other of the necessities that make slaves of us. We are free only as long as we can say "My time is my own." When workers working ten hours a day agitate for an eight-hour day, what they really want is not eight hours work instead of ten, but sixteen hours off duty instead of fourteen. And out of this sixteen hours must come eight hours sleep and a few hours for eating and drinking, dressing and undressing, washing and resting; so that even with an eight hours working day the real leisure of the workers: that is, the time they have after they are properly rested and fed and cleaned up and ready for any adventures or amusements or hobbies they care for, is no more than a few hours; and these few are reduced in value by the shortness of daylight in winter, and cut down by the time it takes to get into the country or wherever is the best place to enjoy oneself. Married women, whose working place is the man's home, want to get away from home for recreation, just as men want to get away from the places where they work: in fact a good deal of our domestic quarrelling arises because the man wants to spend his leisure at home whilst the woman wants to spend hers abroad. Women love hotels: men hate them.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WOMAN'S WORK

THE CHAPLAIN: If you are so clever at woman's work why do you not stay at home and do it?

JOAN: There are plenty of other women to do it; but there is nobody to do my work.

SAINT JOAN

HALF THEIR LIVES

Oh, women spend half their lives telling little lies for men, and sometimes big ones.

LADY CICELY *in* CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

THE REAL LADY

The real lady will be the woman who does more than her bit, and thereby leaves her country richer than she found it. Today nobody knows what a real lady is; but the dignity is assumed most confidently by the women who ostentatiously take as much and give as nearly nothing as they can.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

CAESAR'S EXAMPLE

Who are those we love. Only those whom we do not hate: all people are strangers and enemies to us except those we love. But it is not so with Caesar. He has no hatred in him: he makes friends with everyone as he does with dogs and children. His kindness to me is a wonder: neither mother, father, nor nurse have ever taken so much care for me, or thrown open their thoughts to me so freely.

CLEOPATRA *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

ADVANCED VIEWS

Did I not find out, before our friendship was a fortnight old, that all your advanced views were merely a fashion picked up and followed like any other fashion, without understanding or meaning a word of them?

CHARTERIS *in* THE PHILANDERER

WHAT THEY INVOLVE

Advanced views, Julia, involve advanced duties.

CHARTERIS *in* THE PHILANDERER

A REGULAR OLD MAID

LESBIA: I'm a regular old maid. I'm very particular about my belongings. I like to have my own house, and to have it to myself. I have a very keen sense of beauty and fitness and cleanliness and order. I am proud of my independence and

jealous for it. I have a sufficiently well-stocked mind to be very good company for myself if I have plenty of books and music. The one thing I never could stand is a great lout of a man smoking all over my house and going to sleep in his chair after dinner, and untidying everything. Ugh!

THE GENERAL: But love——

LESBIA: Oh, Love! Have you no imagination? Do you think I have never been in love with wonderful men? heroes! archangels! princes! sages! even fascinating rascals! and had the strangest adventures with them? Do you know what it is to look at a mere real man after that? a man with his boots in every corner, and the smell of his tobacco in every curtain?

THE GENERAL: Well but—excuse my mentioning it—dont you want children?

LESBIA: I ought to have children. I should be a good mother to children. I believe it would pay the country very well to pay me very well to have children. But the country tells me that I cant have a child in my house without a man in it too; so I tell the country that it will have to do without my children. If I am to be a mother, I really cannot have a man bothering me to be a wife at the same time.

THE GENERAL: My Dear Lesbia: you know I dont wish to be impertinent; but these are not correct views for an English lady to express.

LESBIA: That is why I dont express them, except to gentlemen who wont take any other answer. The difficulty, you see, is that I really am an English lady, and am particularly proud of being one.

THE GENERAL: I'm sure of that, Lesbia: quite sure of it. I never meant——

LESBIA: Oh, my dear Boxer, do please try to think of something else than whether you have offended me, and whether you are doing the correct thing as an English gentleman. You are faultless, and very dull.

THE GENERAL: Ha! thats whats the matter with me. Not clever. A poor silly soldier man.

LESBIA: The whole matter is very simple. As I say, I am an English lady, by which I mean that I have been trained to do without what I cant have on honorable terms, no matter what it is.

THE GENERAL: I really dont understand you, Lesbia.

LESBIA: Then why on earth do you want to marry a woman you dont understand?

THE GENERAL: I dont know. I suppose I love you.

LESBIA: Well, Boxer, you can love me as much as you like, provided you look happy about it and dont bore me. But you cant marry me; and thats all about it.

THE GENERAL: It's so frightfully difficult to argue the matter fairly with you without wounding your delicacy by overstepping the bounds of good taste. But surely there are calls of nature——

LESBIA: Dont be ridiculous, Boxer.

THE GENERAL: Well how am I to express it? Hang it all, Lesbia, dont you want a husband?

LESBIA: No. I want children; and I want to devote myself entirely to my children, and not to their father. The law will not allow me to do that; so I have made up my mind to have neither husband nor children.

THE GENERAL: But, great Heavens, the natural appetites——

GETTING MARRIED

LOVE LETTER

LADY: . . . a letter that means disgrace, infamy——

NAPOLEON: A love letter?

LADY: What else but a love letter could stir up so much hate?

THE MAN OF DESTINY

SUCCESS WITH WOMEN

What I mean is that you never bother about their being only women: you talk to them just as you do to me or any other fellow. That's the secret of your success. You cant think how sick they get of being treated with the respect due to their sex.

SYLVIA *in* THE PHILANDERER

SHE LOVES OUR SOULS

A woman like that has divine insight: she loves our souls, and not our follies and vanities and illusions, nor our collars and coats, nor any other of the rags and tatters we are rolled up in.

MARCHBANKS *in* CANDIDA

COMPETENT PARENTS

Prince Peter Kropotkin, a comprehensive thinker, far above the average in wisdom and kindliness, said of children: "you can only look on."

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

FAMILY LIFE

There are two sorts of family life, Phil; and your experience of human nature only extends, so far, to one of them. The sort you know is based on mutual respect, on recognition of the right of every member of the household to independence and privacy in their personal concerns. And because you have always enjoyed that, it seems such a matter of course to you that you dont value it. But there is another sort of family life: a life in which husbands open their wives' letters, and call on them to account for every farthing of their expenditure and every moment of their time; in which women do the same to their children; in which no room is private and no hour sacred; in which duty, obedience, affection, home, morality and religion are detestable tyrannies, and life is a vulgar round of punishments and lies, coercion and rebellion, jealousy, suspicion, recrimination—Oh! I cannot describe it to you: fortunately for you, you know nothing about it.

MRS. CLANDON *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

DAUGHTER

Has it really never occurred to you, mother, that I have a way of life like other people?

VIVIE *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

LOVE

When you loved me I gave you the whole sun and stars to play with. I gave you eternity in a single moment, strength of the mountains in one clasp of your arms, and the volume of all the seas in one impulse of your souls. A moment only; but was it not enough? Were you not paid then for all the rest of your struggle on earth? Must I mend your clothes and sweep your floors as well? Was it not enough? I paid the price without bargaining: I bore the children without flinching: was that a reason for heaping fresh burdens on me? I carried the child in my arms: must I carry the father too? When I opened the gates of paradise, were you blind? was it nothing to you? When all

the stars sang in your ears and all the winds swept you into the heart of heaven, were you deaf? were you dull? was I no more to you than a bone to a dog? Was it not enough? We spent eternity together; and you ask me for a little lifetime more. We possessed all the universe together; and you ask me to give you my scanty wages as well. I have given you the greatest of all things; and you ask me to give you little things. I gave you your own soul: you ask me for my body as a plaything. Was it not enough? Was it not enough?

MRS GEORGE *in* GETTING MARRIED

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRIFLES

M'Comas: there will be no difficulty about the important questions. There never is. It is the trifles that will wreck you at the harbor mouth.

BOHUN *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

BROTHER!

But to have a person imposed on us as a brother merely because he happens to have the same parents is unbearable when, as may easily happen, he is the sort of person we should carefully avoid if he were anyone else's brother.

Family Affection
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

PAPER COURTSHIP

Finding her delightful as a correspondent, and having some gifts in that way myself, I improved the opportunity to such purpose that we presently became occupied with one another in a paper courtship, which is perhaps the pleasantest, as it is the most enduring, of all courtships. We both felt instinctively that a meeting might spoil it.

ELLEN TERRY

PARENTAL DUTIES

A gentleman once wrote to me and said, with an obvious conviction that he was being most reasonable and highminded, that the only thing he beat his children for was failure in perfect obedience and perfect truthfulness. On these virtues, he said, he must insist. As one of them is not a virtue at all, and the other

is the attribute of a god, one can imagine what the lives of this gentleman's children would have been if it had been possible for him to live down to his monstrous and foolish pretensions. And yet he might have written his letter to *The Times* (he very nearly did, by the way) without incurring any danger of being removed to an asylum, or even losing his reputation for taking a very proper view of his parental duties.

The Sin of Nadab and Abihu
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

HOW ONE IS TREATED

The difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated. I shall always be a flower girl to Professor Higgins, because he always treats me as a flower girl, and always will; but I know I can be a lady to you, because you always treat me as a lady, and always will.

ELIZA *in* PYGMALION

WHEN THE MAN IS SUPERFLUOUS

If there are any children, the man must be cleared completely out of the house for two years on each occasion. At such times he is superfluous, importunate, and ridiculous.

LESBIA *in* GETTING MARRIED

THE WORST SIN

Come, dear, youre not so wicked as you think. The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them; thats the essence of inhumanity. After all, my dear, if you watch people carefully, youll be surprised to find how like hate is to love. Yes: I'm quite in earnest.

ANDERSON *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

FOR THE SAKE OF THE PRISONERS

The books and music cannot be kept out, because they alone can make the hideous boredom of the hearth bearable. If its victims may not live real lives, they may at least read about imaginary ones, and perhaps learn from them to doubt whether a class that not only submits to home life, but actually boasts about it, is really a class worth belonging to. For the sake of

the unhappy prisoners of the home, then, let my plays be printed as well as acted.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

THE COUPLED VOTE

Democracy for women, a vital political necessity (women are much more practical and less Party ridden, being trained managerially by housekeeping and childbearing) must be secured by a Constitutional Amendment making the electoral unit a man and a woman (call it the Coupled Vote); for all authoritative public bodies should consist of men and women in equal numbers if authority is to be democratic. I cannot foresee to what extent this suggestion can be carried; but Fabians can hardly oppose it. The Coupled Vote would at least make a landslide into matriarchy impossible. Matriarchy is at present in such extensive private practice that clever and attractive women do not want votes. They are willing to let men govern as long as they govern men.

SIXTY YEARS OF FABIANISM

EQUALITY

When we all become socially intermarriageable we shall be for all political purposes equal, even though a few of us may be unlucky enough to have fifty thousand a year instead of five thousand.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

FAMILY LIFE

This is not quarrelling, Lesbia; it's only English family life.

THE BISHOP *in* GETTING MARRIED

THE BLESSING

Life with a blessing! that is what I want. Now I know the real reason why I couldnt marry Mr. Mangan: there would be no blessing on our marriage. There is a blessing on my broken heart. There is a blessing on your beauty, Hesione. There is a blessing on your father's spirit. Even on the lies of Marcus there is a blessing; but on Mr. Mangan's money there is none.

ELLIE *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

Money

UNNATURAL

We all know by instinct that it is unnatural to marry for money or social position instead of for love; yet we have arranged matters so that we must all marry more or less for money or social position or both. It is easy to say to Miss Smith or Miss Jones "Follow the promptings of your heart, my dear; and marry the dustman or marry the duke, whichever you prefer." But she cannot marry the dustman; and the duke cannot marry her; because they and their relatives have not the same manners and habits; and people with different manners and habits cannot live together. And it is difference of income that makes difference of manners and habits.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NOBODY CAN ASK LESS TO LIVE ON THAN I

When reproached on the strength of fantastic newspaper reports for being a millionaire wallowing in luxury, I have always replied that nobody can ask less to live on than I. Give me a convenient flat in town and a comfortable villa in the country with a few acres of lawn and garden, a couple of cars for long and short distance travel, and a supply of pocket money not necessarily exceeding a couple of thousand pounds, and there is not a more contented man on earth than I.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

EASIER

. . . how much easier it is to please a great man than a little one.

CASHEL BYRON'S PROFESSION

WE SHALL ALWAYS FEEL POOR

What is enough for the life of a tramp is not enough for a highly civilized life, with its personal refinements and its atmosphere of music, art, literature, religion, science, and philosophy. Of these things we can never have enough: there is always something new to be discovered and something old to be bettered. In short, there is no such thing as enough civilization, though there may be enough of any particular thing like bread or boots at any particular moment. If being poor means wanting something better than we have—and it is hard to say what else feeling poor means—then we shall always feel poor no matter how much money we have, because, though we may have enough of this thing or that thing, we shall never have enough of everything.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE ONE HOPEFUL FACT

The universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience. Money is the most important thing in the world. It represents health, strength, honor, generosity, and beauty as conspicuously and undeniably as the want of it represents illness, weakness, disgrace, meanness, and ugliness. Not the least of its virtues is that it destroys base people as certainly as it fortifies and dignifies noble people.

The Gospel Of St. Andrew Undershaft
In Preface to MAJOR BARBARA

MONEY AND MARRIAGE

VIOLET: We cant afford it. You can be as romantic as you please about love, Hector; but you mustnt be romantic about money.

HECTOR: Thats very English. Violet: dad's bound to find us out someday.

VIOLET: Oh yes, later on of course. But dont lets go over this every time we meet, dear. You promised——

HECTOR: All right, all right, I——

VIOLET: It is I and not you who suffer by this concealment; and as to facing a struggle and poverty and all that sort of thing I simply will not do it. It's too silly.

HECTOR: You shall not. I'll sort of borrow the money from my dad until I get on my own feet; and then I can own up and pay up at the same time.

VIOLET: Do you mean to work? Do you want to spoil our marriage?

MAN AND SUPERMAN

WEALTH

BLUNTSCHILL: I have. I have nine thousand six hundred pairs of sheets and blankets, with two thousand four hundred eiderdown quilts. I have ten thousand knives and forks, and the same quantity of dessert spoons. I have three hundred servants. I have six palatial establishments, besides two livery stables, a tea garden, and a private house. I have four medals for distinguished services; I have the rank of an officer and the standing of a gentleman; and I have three native languages. Shew me any man in Bulgaria that can offer as much!

PETKOFF: Are you the Emperor of Switzerland?

BLUNTSCHILL: My rank is the highest known in Switzerland: I am a free citizen.

ARMS AND THE MAN

A SOUL IS EXPENSIVE

ELLIE: Old-fashioned people think you can have a soul without money. They think the less money you have, the more soul you have. Young people nowadays know better. A soul is a very expensive thing to keep: much more so than a motor car.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: Is it? How much does your soul eat?

ELLIE: Oh, a lot. It eats music and pictures and books and mountains and lakes and beautiful things to wear and nice people to be with. In this country you cant have them without lots of money: that is why our souls are so horribly starved.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: Mangan's soul lives on pigs' food.

ELLIE: Yes: money is thrown away on him. I suppose his soul was starved when he was young. But it will not be thrown away on me. It is just because I want to save my soul that I am marrying for money. All the women who are not fools do.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: *There are other ways of getting money. Why dont you steal it?*

ELLIE: Because I dont want to go to prison.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: Is that the only reason? Are you quite sure honesty has nothing to do with it?

ELLIE: Oh, you are very very old-fashioned, Captain. Does any modern girl believe that the legal and illegal ways of getting money are the honest and dishonest ways? Mangan robbed my father and my father's friends. I should rob all the money back from Mangan if the police would let me. As they wont, I must get it back by marrying him.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: I can't argue: I'm too old: my mind is made up and finished. All I can tell you is that, old-fashioned or new-fashioned, if you sell yourself, you deal your soul a blow that all the books and pictures and concerts and scenery in the world wont heal.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

TOO BUSY

I am far too busy to enjoy money: I have more than I want and I have had nothing; and the difference in happiness has been negligible.

Letter to Frank Harris

I DONT LIKE IT

I would and could live the life of the idle rich if I liked it; and my sole reason for not living it is that I dont like it. I have every opportunity of observing it both in its daily practice and its remoter results; and I know that a year of it would make me more unhappy than anything else of an accepted kind that I can imagine. For, just as the beanfeaster can live like a lord for an afternoon, and the Lancashire factory operative have a gorgeous week at Blackpool when the wakes are on, so I have had my afternoons as an idle rich man, and know only too well what it is like. It makes me feel suicidal.

Trying It For An Hour

Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

THE USE OF MONEY

That is the use of money: it enables us to get what we want instead of what other people think we want. When a young

lady is married, her friends give her wedding presents instead of giving her money; and the consequence is that she finds herself loaded up with six fish-slices, seven or eight travelling clocks, and not a single pair of silk stockings. If her friends had the sense to give her money (I always do), and she had the sense to take it (she always does), she would have one fish-slice, one travelling clock (if she wanted such a thing), and plenty of stockings. Money is the most convenient thing in the world: we could not possibly do without it. We are told that the love of money is the root of all evil; but money itself is one of the most useful contrivances ever invented: it is not its fault that some people are foolish or miserly enough to be fonder of it than of their souls.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WHAT PEOPLE HUNGER FOR

. . . we pass our lives among people who, whatever creeds they may repeat, and in whatever temples they may avouch their respectability and wear their Sunday clothes, have robust consciences, and hunger and thirst, not for righteousness, but for rich feeding and comfort and social position and attractive mates and ease and pleasure and respect and consideration: in short, for love and money.

Worldliness Of The Majority

In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

AUTHORITY

Yet experience shews that authority is not proportionate to income. No person in Europe is approached with such awe as the Pope; but nobody thinks of the Pope as a rich man; sometimes his parents and brothers and sisters are very humble people, and he himself is poorer than his tailor or grocer. The captain of a liner sits at table every day with scores of people who could afford to throw his pay into the sea and not miss it; yet his authority is so absolute that the most insolent passenger dares not treat him disrespectfully. The village rector may not have a fifth of the income of his farmer churchwarden. The colonel of a regiment may be the poorest man at the mess table: everyone of his subalterns may have far more than double his income; but he is their superior in authority for all that. Money is not the secret of command.

Those who exercise personal authority among us are by no means our richest people. Millionaires in expensive cars obey policemen. In our social scale noblemen take precedence of country gentlemen, country gentlemen take precedence of professional men, professional men of traders, wholesale traders of retail traders, retail traders of skilled workmen, and skilled workmen of laborers; but if social precedence were according to income all this would be completely upset; for the tradesmen would take precedence of everybody; and the Pope and the King would have to touch their hats to distillers and pork packers.

When we speak of the power of the rich, we are speaking of a very real thing, because a rich man can discharge anyone in his employment who displeases him, and can take away his custom from any tradesman who is disrespectful to him. But the advantage a man gets by his power to ruin another is a quite different thing from the authority that is necessary to maintain law and order in society. You may obey the highwayman who puts a pistol to your head and demands your money or your life. Similarly you may obey the landlord who orders you to pay more rent or take yourself and your brats into the street. But that is not obedience to authority: it is submission to a threat. Real authority has nothing to do with money; and it is in fact exercised by persons who, from the King to the village constable, are poorer than many of the people who obey their orders.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

AN ENEMY OF LIFE

Money is indeed the most important thing in the world; and all sound and successful personal and national morality should have this fact for its basis. Every teacher or twaddler who denies it or suppresses it, is an enemy of life.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

WHICH IS THE GREATER OBSTRUCTION?

All I can say is that our social system is so thoughtlessly arranged that it is impossible to say which is the greater obstruction to the development of a writer, money or the want of it. I could not undertake to re-write *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Fors Clavigera* as if Ruskin had been a tinsmith and Bunyan a gentleman of independent means.

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

£4,000,000,000 OWED TO ME AND PAID UP

I was owed by these countries sums sufficient to support me for the rest of my days; and they paid me in paper money, four thousand million pounds of which was worth exactly twopence halfpenny in English money.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

EQUALITY OF INCOME

There is so little personal advantage in being ten times as rich as one's next-door neighbor that millionaires like Carnegie and Pierpont Morgan, Ford and Morris, give away their surpluses and found Rockefeller Trusts, Pilgrim Trusts, and the like, to get rid of their unneeded money and "do good" with it. A legacy of twenty thousand pounds, which is the golden dream of a poor man, makes a rich one swear because it gives him the trouble of claiming and investing it. Consequently, when the entire population is brought up to our five thousand level, the main objects of equality of income will be secured; and the Government, though it must still take care that no class gets poorer, need not prevent any individual becoming richer if he or she can, and thinks it worth the trouble.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

HOW THE RICH LIVE

The general run of rich people do not know what to do with themselves; and the end of it is that they have to join a round of social duties and pleasures mostly manufactured by West End shopkeepers, and so tedious that at the end of a fashionable season the rich are more worn out than their servants and tradesmen. They may have no taste for sport; but they are forced by their social position to go to the great race meetings and ride to hounds. They may have no taste for music; but they have to go to the Opera and to the fashionable concerts. They may not dress as they please nor do what they please. Because they are rich they must do what all the other rich people are doing, there being nothing else for them to do except work, which would immediately reduce them to the condition of ordinary people. So, as they cannot do what they like, they must contrive to like what they do, and imagine that they are having a splendid time of it when they are in fact being bored by their amusements,

humbugged by their doctors, pillaged by their tradesmen, and forced to console themselves unamiably for being snubbed by richer people by snubbing poorer people.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE CROWNING IRONY

And now comes the crowning irony of it all, which many intelligent women to whom irony means nothing will prefer to call the judgement of God. When we have conferred on these people the coveted privilege of having plenty of money and nothing to do (our idiotic receipt for perfect happiness and perfect freedom) we find that we have made them so wretched and unhealthy that instead of doing nothing they are always doing something "to keep themselves fit" for doing nothing; and instead of doing what they like, they bind themselves to a laborious routine of what they call society and pleasure which you could not impose on a parlormaid without receiving notice instantly, or on a Trappist without driving him to turn atheist to escape from it. Only one part of it, the Red Indian part, the frank return to primitive life, the hunting and shooting and country life, is bearable; and one has to be by nature half a savage to enjoy that continually. So much for the exertions of the idle rich!

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE SUFFERING RICH

That rich people do suffer a great deal is plain enough to anyone who has an intimate knowledge of their lives. They are so unhealthy that they are always running after cures and surgical operations of one sort or another. When they are not really ill they imagine they are. They are worried by their property, by their servants, by their poor relations, by their investments, by the need for keeping up their social position, and, when they have several children, by the impossibility of leaving these children enough to enable them to live as they have been brought up to live; for we must not forget that if a married couple with fifty thousand a year have five children, they can leave only ten thousand a year to each after bringing them up to live at the rate of fifty thousand, and launching them into the sort of society that lives at that rate, the result being that unless these children

can make rich marriages they live beyond their incomes (not knowing how to live more cheaply) and are presently head over ears in debt. They hand on their costly habits and rich friends and debts to their children with very little else; so that the trouble becomes worse and worse from generation to generation; and this is how we meet everywhere with ladies and gentlemen who have no means of keeping up their position, and are therefore much more miserable than the common poor.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MONEY AND UNHAPPINESS

Money can cure hunger: it cannot cure unhappiness. Food can satisfy the appetite, but not the soul.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

IF THEY ONLY KNEW

Havnt you noticed that people always exaggerate the value of the things they havnt got? The poor think they need nothing but riches to be quite happy and good. Everybody worships truth, purity, unselfishness, for the same reason: because they have no experience of them. Oh, if they only knew!

LADY *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

CONSTITUTIONAL

. . . poor people, when they are not suffering from acute hunger and severe cold, are not more unhappy than rich people: they are often much happier. You can easily find people who are ten times as rich at sixty as they were at twenty; but not one of them will tell you that they are ten times as happy. All the thoughtful ones will assure you that happiness and unhappiness are constitutional, and have nothing to do with money.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

A SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

I plead for a science of happiness to cure us of the miserable delusion that we can achieve it by becoming richer than our neighbors.

The Old Soldier And The Public House
Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

MY HUSBAND

Now I want you to look at this other boy here: my boy! spoiled from his cradle. We go once a fortnight to see his parents. You should come with us, Eugene, to see the pictures of the hero of that household. James as a baby! the most wonderful of all babies. James holding his first school prize, won at the ripe age of eight! James as the captain of his eleven! James in his first frock coat! James under all sorts of glorious circumstances! You know how strong he is (I hope he didnt hurt you): how clever he is: how happy. Ask James's mother and his three sisters what it cost to save James the trouble of doing anything but be strong and clever and happy. Ask me what it costs to be James's mother and three sisters and wife and mother to his children all in one. Ask Prossy and Maria how troublesome the house is even when we have no visitors to help us to slice the onions. Ask the tradesmen who want to worry James and spoil his beautiful sermons who it is that puts them off. When there is money to give, he gives it: when there is money to refuse, I refuse it. I build a castle of comfort and indulgence and love for him, and stand sentinel always to keep little vulgar cares out. I make him master here, though he does not know it, and could not tell you a moment ago how it came to be so.

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

THE TRUE GENTLEMAN

To define a gentleman is simple. A gentleman is a man who makes certain claims for himself; for instance, that he shall be able to live a handsome and dignified life, a life that will develop his faculties to the utmost and place him in a respected and honorable position. In return the gentleman is willing to do the utmost for his country that he is capable of, and would scorn the idea of a money value being put upon his services. Our system refuses him the position and denies him the opportunity of the service, though it will let him do its political and military dirty work for nothing if he, as it would say, is fool enough.

MODERN RELIGION

PROOF!

It is easy to prove that the wearing of tallhats and the carrying of umbrellas enlarges the chest, prolongs life, and confers com-

parative immunity from disease; for the statistics shew that the classes which use these articles are bigger, healthier, and live longer than the class which never dreams of possessing such things.

Statistical Illusions
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

QUITE CONTENT WITH THE BEST

I know your quiet, simple, refined, poetic people like Adolphus: quite content with the best of everything! They cost more than your extravagant people, who are always as mean as they are second rate.

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

A MAN OF PROPERTY

Though I am in theory a communist, and by profession a playwright, I am in fact and in rank a landlord, and an absentee landlord at that; for my estate is in Ireland. When I inherited it I was a responsible married adult; and had I lived under William he would have expected me to administer justice between my tenants like a cadi under a palm tree, to lead them to battle in his wars, to control and direct the cultivation of my land, and to bear my share of financing him in various ways. I dare say I could have done this at least as well as some of his barons; but the first things I discovered were that my estate did not belong to me at all, and that I had no power to control it or direct its management. Instead of the title deeds I received a bundle of mortgages and a packet of pawn tickets.

I was not greatly surprised: for my uncle, from whom I inherited, had died shabby and almost indigent, the medical practice he had purchased and once lived prosperously by in attendance on the county squires having been ruined by the conversion of the country houses and parks into rows of small houses inhabited by city clerks with salaries of fifteen shillings a week. The wages of his one faithful servant were seventeen years in arrear; and his gold watch had been pawned, leaving him to count pulses by a silver one which he had presented me with many years before, and was afterwards obliged to borrow from me. I had been with him when he bought the gold watch for £30.

He had pawned it for £3 10s., and for years clung to the right to redeem it by borrowing the interest on that sum from my mother.

Inheriting this right, I took the ticket to the pawnbroker and redeemed the watch. I then took it to a place in London where I handed it in for sale by auction. It sold for £3 10s., which I duly got back less the auctioneer's commission. Having made no profit on that transaction, and lost the commission, I accepted this result as typical and dropped all the other pawn tickets into the waste-paper basket. I then bought the estate which was supposed to be my property from the mortgagees by paying them off, and thus became in effect myself the mortgagee and the real proprietor. This I could not have done had I not had other resources unconnected with the estate.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DESIRABLE PATIENTS

Many very desirable patients in country houses have lately been persuaded that their first duty is to get up at six in the morning and begin the day by taking a walk barefoot through the dewy grass.

The Reforms Also Come From The Laity
In the Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

MAYFAIR

Better the wards of the most terrible of field hospitals than a drawingroom in Mayfair: better the South Pole at its blackest six months winter night and its most murderous extremities of cold rain than Sunday by the Serpentine in the height of the season.

Trying It For An Hour
Preface to TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

VIRTUE

The industrial revolution had turned numbers of greedy dullards into monstrously rich men. Nothing could be more humiliating and threatening to them than the view that the falling of a shower of gold into their pockets was as pure an accident as the falling of a shower of hail on their umbrellas, and happened alike to the just and unjust. Nothing could be more

flattering and fortifying to them than the assumption that they were rich because they were virtuous.

Why Darwin Pleased The Socialists
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

TAKE MY OWN CASE

It seems simple to take the millionaires by the scruffs of their necks and ruin them; but as we cannot do it without ruining Bond Street and Bournemouth as well, besides having to find jobs for their butlers and housekeepers, their cooks and housemaids, we are finding ourselves in a devil of a mess instead of in an earthly paradise. Take my own case, for example. Thirty years ago I spent some months of my spare time writing a play called *Pygmalion*, for which, thanks to the Copyright Acts, I have been enormously overpaid in comparison with the actors and scene-painters and stage staffs who were doing all the work. Thanks to the invention of the cinematograph (which, by the way, I did not invent) I lately received a further windfall of £29,000, on account of my film rights. The financial result was that I had to pay £50,000 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer within two years. And the result of that catastrophe is that I am now using my copyrights not to have my plays filmed and thereby give employment and enjoyment to my fellow citizens, but to forbid and suppress them in order to reduce my income to a point at which it will be possible for me to live on it. And though the war is calling on everyone to work hard to the utmost that nature can bear to avert defeat by German Nazidom, workmen in all directions are refusing to work overtime lest they should earn enough to become subject to income tax.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

PITY THE RICH

Meanwhile the rich dread poverty even more than the poor, who are used to it. Even millionaires can never be sure that they will not die paupers. Their incomes may be extinguished by bankruptcy, by discoveries and inventions, or, even when all their securities are giltedged, by the enormous taxation and inflation involved by modern wars. The dread of this makes continual preoccupation with their private interests compulsory,

and makes perfect public integrity suicidal. Both rich and poor have common cares and opposed interests.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE BURGLAR'S PHILOSOPHY

No burglar contends that as it is admittedly important to have money to spend, and as the object of burglary is to provide the burglar with money to spend, and as in many instances it has achieved this object, therefore the burglar is a public benefactor and the police are ignorant sentimentalists.

An Argument Which Would Defend Any Crime

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE USE OF BOOTS

When we find a castaway at sea chewing his boots to appease his hunger, we do not stigmatize him as a creature too degraded to appreciate the right use of boots: we take him aboard and relieve his hunger, after which he wears his boots as appreciatively as a West End gentleman.

WIDOWERS' HOUSES

DRIFT

For the most part men drift with the society into which they are born, and make the best of its accidents without changing its morals or understanding its principles.

IMMATURITY

THE DIFFERENCE

I see my daughters and their men living foolish lives of romance and sentiment and snobbery. I see you, the younger generation, turning from their romance and sentiment and snobbery to money and comfort and hard common sense. I was ten times happier on the bridge in the typhoon, or frozen into Artic ice for months in darkness, than you or they have ever been. You are looking for a rich husband. At your age I looked for hardship, danger, horror, and death, that I might feel the life in me more intensely. I did not let the fear of death govern my life; and my reward was, I had my life. You are going to let the fear of poverty govern your life and your reward will be that you will eat, but you will not live.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

Truth

SUPERSTITION

You have only to search an emancipated man's mind long enough to come upon an abyss of superstition somewhere, nowadays generally scientific.

Letter

VISITORS FROM ANOTHER WORLD

. . . the romancers who sit alone and arrange the world out of their own heads, uncontradicted and unedited, never, unless they have a strong sense of humor, learn how to live in political society, and have to be indulged by statesmen as visitors from another world. The explanation seems to be that freedom from economic pressure makes room for an excessive development of individuality in people who have any individuality to develop and are not, like soldiers, specially trained not to think for themselves.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE IMAGINARY VACUUM

Contact with truth hurts and frightens you: you escape from it into an imaginary vacuum in which you can indulge your desires and hopes and loves and hates without any obstruction from the solid facts of life. You love to throw dust in your own eyes.

ZOO *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

REALITY GLORIOUS

And reality is pretty brutal, pretty filthy, when you come to grips with it. Yet its glorious all the same. Its so real and satisfactory.

MARGARET *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

FACTS AND DREAMS

Live in contact with dreams and you will get something of their charm: live in contact with facts and you will get something of their brutality. I wish I could find a country to live in where the facts were not brutal and the dreams not unreal.

DOYLE *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

AN AMATEUR LIAR

I am not a professional liar; I am even ashamed of the extent to which in my human infirmity I have been an amateur one.

LOVE AMONG THE ARTISTS

NOT SO OBVIOUS

Like many men of genius he could not understand why things obvious to him should not be so at once to other people and found it easier to believe that they were corrupt than that they could be so stupid.

Preface to THE APPLE CART

THE TRUTH

Make any statement that is so true that it has been staring us in the face all our lives, and the whole world will rise up and passionately contradict you. If you dont withdraw and apologize, it will be the worse for you. But just tell a thundering silly lie that everyone knows is a lie, and a murmur of pleased assent will hum up from every quarter of the globe.

AUBREY *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

THE DIFFICULT QUESTION

. . . no question is so difficult to answer as that to which the answer is obvious.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

TOLERATION

The deeper ground for Toleration is the nature of creation, which, as we now know, proceeds by experiment; and this

finding of the way varies according to the stage of development reached, from the blindest groping along the line of least resistance to conscious intellectual speculation, with its routine of hypothesis and verification, induction and deduction; or even into so rapid and intuitive an integration of all these processes in a single brain that we get the inspired guess of the man of genius and the fanatical resolution of the teacher of new truths who is first slain as a blasphemous apostate and then worshipped as a prophet.

The Common Sense of Toleration

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

FREEDOM OF CRITICISM

The entire freedom of criticism which I, as a layman, enjoy.

The Latest Theories

In the Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE LIE

Now when a lie is popular, as all fairy tales of miracles are, it is impossible to overtake it once it gets a start. However often and authoritatively it may be disproved, ignorant people keep repeating it, and journalists keep copying from one another, until they cease to want to believe it. Then, and not until then, it dies a natural death. But the death is a very lingering one: it may easily last a century and a half if I may judge from the number of lies found out and exposed in my boyhood which are still rampant at the end of my long life.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NEW IDEAS

It is often said, by the heedless, that we are a conservative species, impervious to new ideas. I have not found it so. I am often appalled at the avidity and credulity with which new ideas are snatched at and adopted without a scrap of sound evidence. People will believe anything that amuses them, gratifies them, or promises them some sort of profit. I console myself, as Stuart Mill did, with the notion that in time the silly ideas will lose their charm and drop out of fashion and out of existence, that the false promises, when broken, will pass through cynical derision into oblivion; and that after this sifting process the sound ideas, being indestructible (for even if suppressed or forgotten they are rediscovered again and again) will survive and be added

to the body of ascertained knowledge we call Science. In this way we acquire a well tested stock of ideas to furnish our minds, such furnishing being education proper as distinguished from the pseudo-education of the schools and universities.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK GIRL IN HER SEARCH FOR GOD

THE ARTIST

The artist divines by inspiration all the truths that the so-called scientist grubs up in his laboratory slowly and stupidly long afterwards.

ECRASIA *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

FACTS

My experience as an enlightener, which is considerable, is that what is wrong with the average citizen is not altogether deficient political capacity. It is largely ignorance of facts, creating a vacuum into which all sorts of romantic antiquarian junk and cast-off primitive religion rushes. I have to enlighten sects describing themselves as Conservatives, Socialists, Protestants, Catholics, Communists, Fascists, Fabians, Friends (Quakers), Ritualists, all bearing labels which none of them can define, and which indicate tenets which none of them accept as practical rules of life and many of them repudiate with abhorrence when they are presented without their labels. I was baptized as a member of the then established Protestant Episcopal Church in Ireland. My religious education left me convinced that I was entitled to call myself a Protestant because I believed that Catholics were an inferior species who would all go to hell when they died; and I daresay the Roman Catholic children with whom I was forbidden to play believed that the same eternity of torment awaited me in spite of Pope Pius the Ninth's humane instruction to them to absolve me on the plea of invincible ignorance. We were both taught to worship "a tenth rate tribal deity" of the most vindictive, jealous, and ruthless pugnacity, equally with his Christlike son. Just so today Conservatives know nothing of the Tory creed, but are convinced that the rulers of Russia are bloodstained tyrants, robbers and murderers, and their subjects slaves without rights or liberties. All good Russians believe equally that the capitalist rulers of the Western plutocracies are ruthless despots

out for nothing but exploiting labor in pursuit of surplus value, as Marx called rent, interest, and profit. They group themselves in political parties and clubs in which none of them knows what he or she is talking about. Some of them have Utopian aspirations, and have read the prophets and sages, from Moses to Marx, and from Plato to Ruskin and Inge; but a question as to a point of existing law or the function of a County Council strikes them dumb. They are more dangerous than simpletons and illiterates because on the strength of their irrelevant schooling they believe themselves politically educated, and are accepted as authorities on political subjects accordingly.

Preface to GENEVA

GENIUS

Long before any such understanding can be reached, the eyes of men begin to turn towards the distant light of the new age. Discernible at first only by the eyes of the man of genius, it must be focussed by him on the speculum of a work of art, and flashed back from that into the eyes of the common man. Nay, the artist himself has no other way of making himself conscious of the ray: it is by a blind instinct that he keeps on building up his masterpieces until their pinnacles catch the glint of the unrisen sun. Ask him to explain himself prosaically, and you find that he "writes like an angel and talks like poor Poll," and is himself the first to make that epigram at his own expense.

PLAYS PLEASANT

THE BRAIN

THE STATUE: Thank you: thats very good of you. Even in heaven, I never quite got out of my old military habits of speech. What I was going to ask Juan was why Life should bother itself about getting a brain. Why should it want to understand itself? Why not be content to enjoy itself?

DON JUAN: Without a brain, Commander, you would enjoy yourself without knowing it, and so lose all the fun.

THE STATUE: True, most true. But I am quite content with brain enough to know that I'm enjoying myself. I dont want to understand why. In fact, I'd rather not. My experience is that one's pleasures dont bear thinking about.

DON JUAN: That is why intellect is so unpopular. But to Life,

the force behind the Man, intellect is a necessity, because without it he blunders into death. Just as Life, after ages of struggle, evolved that wonderful bodily organ the eye, so that the living organism could see where it was going and what was coming to help or threaten it, and thus avoid a thousand dangers that formerly slew it, so it is evolving today a mind's eye that shall see, not the physical world, but the purpose of Life, and thereby enable the individual to work for that purpose instead of thwarting and baffling it by setting up shortsighted personal aims as at present. Even as it is, only one sort of man has ever been happy, has ever been universally respected among all the conflicts of interests and illusions.

THE STATUE: You mean the military man.

DON JUAN: Commander: I do not mean the military man. When the military man approaches, the world locks up its spoons and packs off its womankind. No: I sing, not arms and the hero, but the philosophic man: he who seeks in contemplation to discover the inner will of the world, in invention to discover the means of fulfilling that will, and in action to do that will by the so-discovered means. Of all other sorts of men I declare myself tired. They are tedious failures.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

Happiness

HOW TO BE MISERABLE

The secret of being miserable is to have leisure to bother about whether you are happy or not. The cure for it is occupation, because occupation means preoccupation; and the preoccupied person is neither happy nor unhappy, but simply alive and active, which is pleasanter than any happiness until you are tired of it. That is why it is necessary to happiness that one should be tired. Music after dinner is pleasant: music before breakfast is so unpleasant as to be clearly unnatural. To people who are not overworked holidays are a nuisance. To people who are, and who can afford them, they are a troublesome necessity. A perpetual holiday is a good working definition of hell.

Children's Happiness
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE SECRET

Oh, there is no fear. He has learnt to live without happiness.

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

THE MOST TEDIOUS THING IN THE WORLD

Happiness! Happiness is the most tedious thing in the world to me. Should I be what I am if I cared for happiness?

NAPOLEON *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

WAKING

Once or twice in my life I have dreamed that I was exquisitely happy and blessed. But oh! the misgiving at the first stir of consciousness! the stab of reality! the prison walls of the bedroom! the bitter, bitter disappointment of waking!

HE *in* HOW HE LIED TO HER HUSBAND

I STOOD ALONE

BRASSBOUND: Look you: when you and I first met, I was a man with a purpose. I stood alone: I saddled no friend, woman or man, with that purpose, because it was against law, against religion, against my own credit and safety. But I believed in it; and I stood alone for it, as a man should stand for his belief, against law and religion as much as against wickedness and selfishness. Whatever I may be, I am none of your fair-weather sailors thatll do nothing for their creed but go to Heaven for it. I was ready to go to hell for mine. Perhaps you dont understand that.

LADY CICELY: Oh bless you, yes. Its so very like a certain sort of man.

BRASSBOUND: I daresay; but Ive not met many of that sort. Anyhow, that was what I was like. I dont say I was happy in it; but I wasnt unhappy, because I wasnt drifting. I was steering a course and had work in hand. Give a man health and a course to steer; and he'll never stop to trouble about whether he's happy or not.

LADY CICELY: Sometimes he wont even stop to trouble about whether other people are happy or not.

BRASSBOUND: I dont deny that: nothing makes a man so selfish as work. But I was not self-seeking: it seemed to me that I had put justice above self. I tell you life meant something to me then.

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

GAMES

Games are for people who can neither read nor think. Men trifle with their business and their politics; but they never trifle with their games. Golf gives them at least a week-end of earnest concentration. It brings truth home to them. They cannot pretend that they have won when they have lost, nor that they made a magnificent drive when they foozled it. The Englishman is at his best on the links, and at his worst in the Cabinet. But what your country needs is not your body but your mind. And I solemnly warn you that unless you exercise your mind you will lose it. A brain underexercised is far more injurious to health than an underexercised body. You know how men become bone lazy for want of bodily exercise. Well, they become

brain lazy for want of mental exercise; and if nature meant them to be thinkers the results are disastrous. All sorts of bodily diseases are produced by half used minds; for it is the mind that makes the body: that is my secret, and the secret of all the true healers.

THE LADY *in* ON THE ROCKS

HOW I KEEP SANE

Take my own case; for I can speak on that with some authority. I can write plays better than I can do anything else. On Cobdenite principles, I should do nothing all day but write plays or dictate them. Every other sort of labor should be done for me; and every moment during which I was occupied in any other way should be regarded as an unpatriotic waste of my time. Yet I spend some of my day doing the work of a gardener's laborer or a woodman to keep myself sane and sound just as our eminent statesmen play golf, cut down trees, lay bricks, or paint pictures. I have to attend to the business of my profession as well as to its direct exercise. If I were to specialize completely my plays would deteriorate; and I should die before my time. Slaters and riveters who have nails and every other accessory handed to them so that they do nothing except that bit of the work which employs their peculiar skill would go mad if they did nothing else. Women in factories where machinery and "scientific management" (sometimes called rationalization) has reduced their labor to a single operation repeated continuously and performed with the utmost economy of time and effort, have to give it up because they soon begin to dream of it and be haunted by it until their lives become unbearable, and its relatively high earnings no longer tempt them to be robots doing only one thing.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE BEGINNING OF PEACE

His heart is breaking: that is all. It is a curious sensation: the sort of pain that goes mercifully beyond our powers of feeling. When your heart is broken, your boats are burned: nothing matters any more. It is the end of happiness and the beginning of peace.

ELLIE *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

NEVER TIRED OF LIFE

How could anyone ever get tired of life?

THE NEWLY BORN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

WHERE IS THE LAND?

Go, Boss Mangan; and when you have found the land where there is happiness and where there are no women, send me its latitude and longitude; and I will join you there.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

GREATNESS

. . . it is no use my liking or disliking: I do what must be done, and have no time to attend to myself. That is not happiness but it is greatness.

CLEOPATRA *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

NOW I'M DOING WRONG

Oh, Ive been so miserable all the evening, because I was doing right. Now I'm doing wrong; and I'm happy.

MARCHBANKS *in* CANDIDA

A HOLIDAY

There are twenty-four concerts this week. Consequently I give myself a holiday; for if anyone asks me what I thought of this or that performance, I reply, "How can I possibly be in twenty-four places at the same time? The particular concert you are curious about is one of those which I was unable to attend."

LONDON MUSIC

THE ELIXIR OF LIFE

It is unjust to blame the nearest apothecary for not being prepared to supply you with sixpenny-worth of the elixir of life, or the nearest garage for not having perpetual motion on sale in gallon tins.

Recoil Of The Dogma Of Medical Infallibility On The Doctor

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

AMUSEMENTS

. . . life would be tolerable but for its amusements.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE TRUTH IS

The glories of nature dont last any decently active person a week, unless theyre professional naturalists or mathematicians or a painter or something. I want something sensible to do. A beaver has a jolly time because it has to build its dam and bring up its family. I want my little job like the beaver. If I do nothing but contemplate the universe there is so much in it that is cruel and terrible and wantonly evil, and so much more that is oppressively astronomical and endless and inconceivable and impossible, that I shall just go stark raving mad and be taken back to my mother with straws in my hair. The truth is, I am free; I am healthy; I am happy; and I am utterly miserable.

THE PATIENT *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

Health

INFECTING THE MICROBES

These humans are full of horrid diseases: they infect us poor microbes with them.

THE MONSTER *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

AN OBJECT OF SCORN

. . . made me an object of public scorn! a miserable vegetarian and teetotaller.

CRAVEN *in* THE PHILANDERER

WHEN I WAS TOO WEAK TO WORK

I fell from heights and broke my limbs in pieces. The doctors said: This man has not eaten meat for twenty years: he must eat it or die. I said: This man has been going to London theatres for three years; and the soul of him has become inane and is feeding unnaturally on his body. And I was right. I did not change my diet; but I had myself carried up into the mountain where there was no theatre; and there I began to revive. Too weak to work, I wrote books and plays.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

NUTRIMENT

. . . a mind of the calibre of mine cannot derive its nutriment from cows.

LONDON MUSIC

DOCTORS STILL TAKE THE SAME LINE

It is nearly fifty years since I was assured by a conclave of doctors that if I did not eat meat I should die of starvation; and

doctors still take the same line professionally as if all the vegetarians, including myself, had died of starvation in the meantime. I recall a symposium of eminent physicians who gravely decided that alcohol in the form of distilled or fermented drinks is an indispensable factor in human diet.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

PEOPLE LIKE MYSELF

There are people like myself who drink neither beer nor even tea, and will eat neither fish, flesh, nor fowl.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

"IT WOULD DO YOU GOOD"

. . . the ozone had made me so ragingly hungry that I burst from the train and ran all the way to Nuckell's Place, where, to my unspeakable horror and loathing, they triumphantly brought me up a turkey with sausages. "Surely, sir," they said, as if remonstrating with me for some exhibition of depravity, "*surely* you eat meat on *Christmas* Day." "I tell you," I screamed, "that I never eat meat." "Not even a little gravy, sir? I think it would do you good." I put a fearful constraint on myself, and politely refused. Yet they came up again, as fresh as paint, with a discolored mess of suet scorched in flaming brandy; and when I conveyed to them, as considerately as I could, that I thought the distinction between suet and meat, burnt brandy and spirits, too fine to be worth insisting on, they evidently regarded me as hardly reasonable. There can be no doubt that the people here are mentally enfeebled. The keen air causes such rapid waste of tissue that they dare not add to it by thinking. They are always recuperating—that is to say eating—mostly cows.

LONDON MUSIC

THE ANIMALS WILL EAT US

A French fencing-master said to me, when he was told that I never eat meat, "But, sir, if we do not eat the animals the animals will eat us." Eating, however, will not keep them all down; for we refuse to eat cats as the Chinese do and frogs as the French do, whilst the Germans refuse to eat rabbits as we do, and all Europeans refuse to eat beetles as Africans do.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

IF I WERE A DESPOT

If I were an omnipotent despot I should enforce such a distribution of the material conditions of natural vitality as to make my subjects independent of analgesics, intoxicants, stimulants, tobacco, fish, flesh, and fowl for their endurance of life. I should try to abolish trade in these things. Cackle about Freedom of Diet, and cries of "Better England drunk in freedom than sober in slavery" would not move me in the least. But I neither aspire to be a British Tsar nor care to risk being lynched. I am properly classed as too good to govern a nation too poor to stand the strain of combining goodness with poverty. A genial good-natured connoisseur in whisky, cigars, and horses, with plenty of energy and no intellect, would be much more popular than I can ever hope to be. He would not provoke a regicidal revolution as I probably should. Even if I died a natural death, it would be followed by a reaction compared to which the one that followed the death of Cromwell would seem trifling.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHY I DID NOT SUCCEED IN FICTION

I got a clue to my real condition from a friend of mine, a physician who had devoted himself specially to ophthalmic surgery. He tested my eyesight one evening, and informed me that it was quite uninteresting to him because it was normal. I naturally took this to mean that it was like everybody else's; but he rejected this construction as paradoxical, and hastened to explain to me that I was an exceptional and highly fortunate person optically, normal sight conferring the power of seeing things accurately, and being enjoyed by only about ten per cent of the population, the remaining ninety per cent being abnormal. I immediately perceived the explanation of my want of success in fiction. My mind's eye, like my body's, was "normal": it saw things differently from other people's eyes, and saw them better.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

ON HEARING VOICES

RIDGEON: Scraps of tunes come into my head that seem to me very pretty, though theyre quite commonplace.

SIR PATRICK: Do you hear voices?

RIDGEON: No.

SIR PATRICK: I'm glad of that. When my patients tell me that theyve made a greater discovery than Harvey, and that they hear voices, I lock them up.

RIDGEON: You think I'm mad! Thats just the suspicion that has come across me once or twice. Tell me the truth: I can bear it.

SIR PATRICK: Youre sure there are no voices?

RIDGEON: Quite sure.

SIR PATRICK: Then it's only foolishness.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

DANGEROUS TO YOUR MIND

If this book owed any of its quality to alcohol or to any other drug, it might amuse you more; but it would be enormously less conscientious intellectually, and therefore much more dangerous to your mind.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

Animals

IF YOU ARE CRUEL

Do you not sin against your own soul if you are unjust or cruel to the least of those whom St. Francis called his little brothers?

The Old Line Between Man And Beast
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

IS IT FAIR?

FERROVIUS: Pray this instant, you dog, you rotten hound, you slimy snake, you beastly goat, or——

SPINTHIO: Yes: beat me: kick me. I forgive you: mind that.

FERROVIUS: Yah!

ANDROCLES: Dear brother: if you wouldnt mind—just for my sake——

FERROVIUS: Well?

ANDROCLES: Dont call him by the names of the animals. Weve no right to. Ive had such friends in dogs. A pet snake is the best of company. I was nursed on goat's milk. Is it fair to them to call the like of him a dog or a snake or a goat?

FERROVIUS: I only meant that they have no souls.

ANDROCLES: Oh, believe me, they have. Just the same as you and me. I really dont think I could consent to go to heaven if I thought there were to be no animals there. Think of what they suffer here.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

SHE IS NEVER MISTAKEN

CHARLES: After you, Mr. Fox. The spiritual powers before the temporal.

FOX: You are very civil, sir; and you speak very justly. I thank you.

FOX: Am I addressing the philosopher Isaac Newton?

NEWTON: You are, sir. Will your noble friend do me the honor to be seated in my humble dwelling?

FOX: I must not impose on you by claiming the gentleman as my friend. We met by chance at your door; and his favourite dog was kind enough to take a fancy to me.

CHARLES: She is never mistaken, sir. Her friends are my friends, if so damaged a character as mine can claim any friends.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

I CANNOT ENDURE PERFORMING ANIMALS

I still abstain from circuses, though I should enjoy what in my childhood I called The Horsemanship, because I cannot endure seeing animals performing unnatural tricks at the command of trainers whom I should shoot at sight if I could be sure of a verdict of justifiable homicide.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ADDICTIONS

MEGAERA: Youd much better have remained a drunkard. I can forgive a man being addicted to drink: its only natural; and I dont deny I like a drop myself sometimes. What I cant stand is your being addicted to Christianity. And whats worse again you being addicted to animals. How is any woman to keep her house clean when you bring in every stray cat and lost cur and lame duck in the whole countryside? You took the bread out of my mouth to feed them: you know you did: dont attempt to deny it.

ANDROCLES: Only when they were hungry and you were getting too stout, dearie.

MEGAERA: Yes: insult me, do. Oh! I wont bear it another moment. You used to sit and talk to those dumb brute beasts for hours, when you hadnt a word for me.

ANDROCLES: They never answered back, darling.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

ON BEING DUMB

HYPATIA: At last. Oh, if I might only have a holiday in an asylum for the dumb. How I envy the animals! They cant

talk. If Johnny could only put back his ears or wag his tail instead of laying down the law, how much better it would be! We should know when he was cross and when he was pleased; and thats all we know now, with all his talk. It never stops: talk, talk, talk, talk. Thats my life. All the day I listen to mamma talking; at dinner I listen to papa talking; and when papa stops for breath I listen to Johnny talking.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: You make me feel very guilty. I talk too, I'm afraid.

HYPATIA: Oh, I dont mind that, because your talk is a novelty. But it must have been dreadful for your daughters.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: I suppose so.

HYPATIA: If parents would only realize how they bore their children. Three or four times in the last half hour Ive been on the point of screaming.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Were we very dull?

HYPATIA: Not at all: you were very clever. Thats whats so hard to bear, because it makes it so difficult to avoid listening. You see, I'm young; and I do so want something to happen. My mother tells me that when I'm her age, I shall be only too glad that nothing's happened; but I'm not her age; so what good is that to me? Theres my father in the garden, meditating on his destiny. All very well for him: He's had a destiny to meditate on; but I havnt had any destiny yet. Everything's happened to him: nothing's happened to me. Thats why this unending talk is so maddeningly uninteresting to me.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: It would be worse if we sat in silence.

HYPATIA: No it wouldnt. If you all sat in silence, as if you were waiting for something to happen, then there would be hope even if nothing did happen. But this eternal cackle, cackle, cackle about things in general is only fit for old, old, OLD people. I suppose it means something to them: theyve had their fling. All I listen for is some sign of it ending in something; but just when it seems to be coming to a point, Johnny or papa just starts another hare; and it all begins over again; and I realize that it's never going to lead anywhere and never going to stop. Thats when I want to scream. I wonder how you can stand it.

HOW TO DEAL WITH A WILD ANIMAL

Never be afraid of animals, your worship: thats the great secret. He'll be as gentle as a lamb when he knows that you are his friend. Stand quite still; and smile; and let him smell you all over just to reassure him; for, you see, he's afraid of you; and he must examine you thoroughly before he gives you his confidence.

ANDROCLES *in* ANDROCLES AND THE LION

No: give me English birds and English trees, English dogs and Irish horses, English rivers and English ships; but English men! No, no, NO.

CHARLES *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

BRUTES

Do you know, doctor, that some of the dearest and most faithful friends I ever had were only brutes! You would have vivisected them. The dearest and greatest of all my friends had a sort of beauty and affectionateness that only animals have. I hope you may never feel what I felt when I had to put him into the hands of men who defend the torture of animals because they are only brutes.

JENNIFER *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A FALSE DISTINCTION

When I was a child and was told that our dog and our parrot with whom I was on intimate terms, were not creatures like myself, but were brutal whilst I was reasonable, I not only did not believe it, but quite consciously and intellectually formed the opinion that the distinction was false.

How One Touch Of Darwin Makes The Whole World Kin

Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

FOUR-FOOTED FRIENDS

When I lived in a cave methought a palace
Must be a glorious place, peopled with men
Renowned as councillors, mighty as soldiers,
As saints a pattern of holy living,
And all at my command were I a prince.
This was my dream. I am awake to-day.

I am to be, forsooth, another Cloten,
Plagued by the chatter of his train of flatterers,
Compelled to worship priest invented gods,
Not free to wed the woman of my choice,
Being stopped at every turn by some old fool
Crying "You must not," or, still worse, "You must."
Oh no, sir: give me back the dear old cave
And my unflattering four footed friends.

GUIDERIUS *in* CYMBELINE

ANIMALS UNDERSTAND

Oh dont talk like that, sir. He understands every word you say: all animals do: they take it from the tone of your voice.

ANDROCLES *in* ANDROCLES AND THE LION

MY KINSHIP WITH ANIMALS

I am driven to the conclusion that my sense of kinship with animals is greater than most people feel. It amuses me to talk to animals in a sort of jargon, I have invented for them; and it seems to me that it amuses them to be talked to, and they respond to the tone of the conversation, though its intellectual content may to some extent escape them. . . . I find it impossible to associate with animals on any other terms. Further, it gives me extraordinary gratification to find a wild bird treating me with confidence, as robins sometimes do. It pleases me to conciliate an animal who is hostile to me. . . . It seems to me that the plea of the humanitarian is a plea for widening the range of fellow-feeling.

KILLING FOR SPORT

THE WISDOM OF BEASTS

There is a great wisdom in the simplicity of a beast, let me tell you; and sometimes great foolishness in the wisdom of scholars.

JOAN *in* SAINT JOAN

Country Life

THE CATERPILLAR

DOYLE: That the idiot and the genius should be the same man! how is that possible? By Jove, I see it all now. I'll write an article about it, and send it to Nature.

BROADBENT: What on earth——

DOYLE: Its quite simple. You know that a caterpillar——

BROADBENT: A caterpillar!!!

DOYLE: Yes, a caterpillar. Now give your mind to what I am going to say; for its a new and important scientific theory of the English national character. A caterpillar——

BROADBENT: Look here, Larry: dont be an ass.

DOYLE: I say a caterpillar and I mean a caterpillar. Youll understand presently. A caterpillar when it gets into a tree, instinctively makes itself look exactly like a leaf; so that both its enemies and its prey may mistake it for one and think it not worth bothering about.

BROADBENT: Whats that got to do with our English national character?

DOYLE: I'll tell you. The world is as full of fools as a tree is full of leaves. Well, the Englishman does what the caterpillar does. He instinctively makes himself look like a fool, and eats up all the real fools at his ease while his enemies let him alone and laugh at him for being a fool like the rest. Oh, nature is cunning! cunning!

THE COUNTRYSIDE

As I am not a born cockney I have no illusions on the subject

of the country. The uneven, ankle twisting roads; the dusty hedges; the ditch with its dead dogs, rank weeds, and swarms of poisonous flies; the group of children torturing something; *the dull, toil-broken, prematurely old agricultural laborer; the* savage tramp; the manure heaps with their horrible odor; the chain of milestones from inn to inn, from cemetery to cemetery: all these I pass heavily by until a distant telegraph pole or signal-post tells me that the blessed rescuing train is at hand. From the village street into the railway station is a leap across five centuries from the brutalizing torpor of Nature's tyranny over Man into the order and alertness of Man's organized dominion over Nature. And yet last week I allowed myself to be persuaded by my friend Henry Salt and his wife to "come down and stay until Monday" among the Surrey Hills.

A SUNDAY ON THE SURREY HILLS

WITHOUT THESE I CANNOT LIVE

You promised me my life; but you lied. You think that life is nothing but not being stone dead. It is not the bread and water I fear: I can live on bread: when have I asked for more? It is no hardship to drink water if the water be clean. Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers; to chain my feet so that I can never again ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep from me everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him: all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times. I could do without my warhorse; I could drag about in a skirt; I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.

JOAN *in* SAINT JOAN

WHICH IS THE WORST?

O lord! I dont know which is the worst of the country, the walking or the sitting at home with nothing to do.

MRS. WARREN *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

NATURE THE TYRANT

Once for all, we are not born free; and we never can be free. When all the human tyrants are slain or deposed there will still be the supreme tyrant that can never be slain or deposed, and that tyrant is Nature. However easygoing Nature may be in the South Sea Islands, where you can bask in the sun and have food for the trouble of picking it up, even there you have to build yourself a hut, and, being a woman, to bear and rear children with travail and trouble. And, as the men are handsome and quarrelsome and jealous, and, having little else to do except make love, combine exercise with sport by killing one another, you have to defend yourself with your own hands.

But in our latitudes Nature is a hard taskmaster.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NOT NATURAL

BROADBENT: I assure you I like the open air.

AUNT JUDY: Ah galong! How can you like whats not natural?

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

PLUCKING FLOWERS

. . . dont pick the little flower. If it was a pretty baby you wouldnt want to pull its head off and stick it in a vawse o water to look at.

KEEGAN *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE MAGIC OF THE WOODS

These woods of yours are full of magic. There was a confounded fern owl. Did you ever hear it create a sudden silence by ceasing? Did you ever hear it call its mate by striking its wings together twice and whistling that single note that no nightingale can imitate?

PERCIVAL *in* MISALLIANCE

OUR CITY POPULATIONS

Our present city-populations are so savage that they drive even the most public-spirited country people to put up barbed wire all over the place. They mean no harm; but if you let them near a bank of violets they leave it a mere dust heap, and are no more to be trusted with trees and animals than a baby can be trusted with a butterfly.

Letter

OUR INTELLECTUAL LAZINESS

It is no use depending on the millionaires: what we have to do is to sit down and try to settle how many people should be let live on an acre of ground, and then pass a Building Act to enforce our conclusions. What maddens me is not so much to see houses cropping up over the old Sunday-outing places, but to see that they are cropping up in such a way as to form the beginnings of slums. It is our infernal improvidence and intellectual laziness that prevent us from stopping the reproduction in the country under our eyes of the evils that we have had such bitter experience of in towns.

Letter

NATURE AND THE HUMAN EXPERIMENT

Man must save himself. There seems no compelling reason why he should be saved. He is by no means an ideal creature. At his present best many of his ways are so unpleasant that they are unmentionable in polite society, and so painful that he is compelled to pretend that pain is often a good. Nature holds no brief for the human experiment: it must stand or fall by its results. If Man will not serve, Nature will try another experiment.

Flimsiness Of Civilization

Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

AN INCORRIGIBLE KANGAROO

The old axiom that Nature never jumps has given way to a doubt whether Nature is not an incorrigible kangaroo. What is certain is that new faculties, however long they may be dreamt of and desired come at last suddenly and miraculously like the balancing of the bicyclist, the skater, and the acrobat. The development of homo sapiens into a competent political animal may occur in the same way.

Preface to GENEVA

THE VILLAGE

Our villages would be improved by a little of this division of labor; for it is a great disadvantage in country life that a farmer is expected to do so many different things: he has not only to grow crops and raise stock (two separate arts to begin with, and difficult ones too), but to be a man of business, keeping complicated accounts and selling his crops and his cattle, which is a different sort of job, needing a different sort of man. And, as if this were not enough, he has to keep his dwelling house as part of his business; so that he is expected to be a professional man, a man of business, and a sort of country gentleman all at once; and the consequence is that farming is all a muddle: the good farmer is poor because he is a bad man of business; the good man of business is poor because he is a bad farmer; and both of them are often bad husbands because their work is not separate from their home, and they bring all their worries into the house with them instead of locking them up in a city office and thinking no more about them until they go back there next morning. In a city business one set of men does the manual work; another set keeps the accounts; another chooses the markets for buying and selling; and all of them leave their work behind them when they go home.

The same trouble is found in a woman's housekeeping. She is expected to do too many different things. She may be a very good housekeeper and a very bad cook. In a French town this would not matter, because the whole family would take all the meals that require any serious cooking in the nearest restaurant; but in the country the woman must do both the housekeeping and the cooking unless she can afford to keep a cook. She may be both a good housekeeper and a good cook, but be unable to manage children; and here again, if she cannot afford a capable nurse, she has to do the thing she does badly along with the things she does well, and has her life muddled and spoilt accordingly. It is a mercy both to her and the children that the school (which is a bit of Communism) takes them off her hands for most of the day. It is clear that the woman who is helped out by servants or by restaurants and schools has a much better chance in life than the woman who is expected to do three very different things at once.

Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by

anybody to the country and to mankind is to bring up a family. But here again, because there is nothing to sell, there is a very general disposition to regard a married woman's work as no work at all, and to take it as a matter of course that she should not be paid for it.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

AN EXCITING EVENT

. . . a word with a stranger seems an almost exciting event in a place where hardly anything else happens except the motion of the earth.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NATURE FOLLOWS ART

I have noticed that when a certain type of feature appears in painting and is admired as beautiful, it presently becomes common in nature; so that the Beatrices and Francescas in the picture galleries of one generation, to whom minor poets address verses entitled "To My Lady," come to life as the parlormaids and waitresses of the next.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

CRUEL PEOPLE SHOULD BE EXTERMINATED

I dislike cruelty, even cruelty to other people, and should therefore like to see all cruel people exterminated. But I should recoil with horror from a proposal to punish them.

Leading Case Of Jesus Christ
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

THE CASE OF THE RUSSIAN PEASANT

You can exterminate any human class not only by summary violence but by bringing up its children to be different. In the case of the Russian peasantry the father lives in a lousy kennel, at no man's call but his own, and extracts a subsistence by primitive methods from a strip of land on which a tractor could hardly turn even if he could afford such a luxury, but which is his very own. His book is a book of Nature, from which all wisdom can be gathered by those who have been taught to read it by due practice on printed books; but he has not been so practised, and for cultural purposes has to be classed as ignorant, though he

knows things that university professors do not know. He is brutalized by excessive muscular labor; is dirty; his freedom from civilized control leaves him so unprotected from the tyranny of Nature that it becomes evident to his children that the highly regulated people in the nearest collectivist farm, where thousands of acres are cultivated by dozens of tractors, and nobody can put his foot on one of the acres or his hand on one of the tractors and say "This is my own to do what I like with," are better fed and housed, nicer, and much more leisured, and consequently freer than he ever is.

A Peasant Victory Is A Victory For Private Property
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

Education

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CHILDREN

And this right to live includes, and in fact is, the right to be what the child likes and can, to do what it likes and can, to make what it likes and can, to think what it likes and can, to smash what it dislikes and can, and generally to behave in an altogether unaccountable manner within the limits imposed by the similar rights of its neighbors. And the rights of society over it clearly extend to requiring it to qualify itself to live in society without wasting other people's time: that is, it must know the rules of the road, be able to read placards and proclamations, fill voting papers, compose and send letters and telegrams, purchase food and clothing and railway tickets for itself, count money and give and take change, and generally, know how many beans make five. It must know some law, were it only a simple set of commandments, some political economy, agriculture enough to shut the gates of fields with cattle in them and not to trample on growing crops, sanitation enough not to defile its haunts, and religion enough to have some idea of why it is allowed its rights and why it must respect the rights of others. And the rest of its education must consist of anything else it can pick up; for beyond this society cannot go with any certainty, and indeed can only go this far rather apologetically and provisionally, as doing the best it can on very uncertain ground.

Children's Rights And Duties
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

AWE

When I was a child I was dominated and intimidated by people whom I now know to have been weaker and sillier than

I, because there was some mysterious quality in their mere age that overawed me. I confess that, though I have kept up appearances, I have always been afraid of the Archbishop.

CONFUCIUS *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE IMPOSITION OF NOBLER BELIEFS

. . . all progress consists in imposing on children nobler beliefs and better institutions than those at present inculcated and established.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

A CHILD WORLD

What the child needs is not only a school and an adult home, but a child world of which it can be a little citizen, with laws, rights, duties and recreations suited to childish abilities and disabilities.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ON PRESSING PEOPLE TO LEARN THINGS

I am firmly persuaded that every unnatural activity of the brain is as mischievous as any unnatural activity of the body, and that pressing people to learn things they do not want to know is as unwholesome and disastrous as feeding them on sawdust. Civilization is always wrecked by giving the governing classes what is called secondary education, which produces invincible ignorance and intellectual and moral imbecility as a result of unnatural abuse of the apprehensive faculty. No child would ever learn to walk or dress itself if its hands and feet were kept in irons and allowed to move only when and as its guardians pulled and pushed them.

I somehow knew this when I began.

IMMATURITY

CRUEL AND MISCHIEVOUS

Outside the criminal law I can imagine nothing more cruel and mischievous than to force a boy who has the tastes of a naturalist, poet, painter, musician or mathematician to slave at cricket and football when he should be roaming or sketching in the country, or reading or playing an instrument, or listening to the wireless orchestra.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

BETTER EDUCATED

Middle class children brought up in a not unbearably overcrowded house with books and a piano and a few pictures in it and taught to read and write easily, can pick up all the knowledge they are capable of and care for, a process which, as it goes on all their lives, and is not restricted to school-hours (which often simply interrupt it), leaves them much better educated than the average Bachelors of Arts. Their half education is the better half.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MORAL IMBECILITY

Child training as we know it produces moral imbecility.

Prevalence Of Criminal Characteristics In Polite Society

In IMPRISONMENT

A FALSE POSITION

We educate one another; and we cannot do this if half of us consider the other half not good enough to talk to.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

TOOTS IS NO JOKE

. . . it is not surprising that those who have been "educated" least know most. It is gravely injurious both to children and adults to be forced to study subjects for which they have no natural aptitude even when some ulterior object which they have at heart gives them a fictitious keenness to master it. Mental disablement caused in this way is common in the modern examination-passing classes. Dickens's Mr. Toots is not a mere figure of fun: he is an authentic instance of a sort of imbecility that is dangerously prevalent in our public school and university products. Toots is no joke.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

DULL AND CONSCIENTIOUS

Thousands of dull, conscientious people beat their children conscientiously, because they were beaten themselves and think children ought to be beaten.

Routine

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

TO LIVE MORE ABUNDANTLY

Children should be educated to live more abundantly, not apprenticed to a life sentence of penal servitude.

Education is not concerned with childhood alone. I am in my 88th year, and have still much to learn even within my own very limited capacity.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT WE DO CONSCIENTIOUSLY

Everything that can make birth a misfortune to the parents as well as a danger to the mother is conscientiously done.

Prudery Explained
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

IN THE ARMS OF THE SCULLERY MAID

You are so careful of your boy's morals, knowing how troublesome they may be, that you keep him away from the Venus of Milo only to find him in the arms of the scullery maid or someone much worse.

Art Teaching
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE CHILD'S RIGHTS

Every child has a right to its own bent. It has a right to be a Plymouth Brother though its parents be convinced atheists. It has a right to dislike its mother or father or sister or brother or uncle or aunt if they are antipathetic to it. It has a right to find its own way and go its own way, whether that way seems wise or foolish to others, exactly as an adult has. It has a right to privacy as to its own doings and its own affairs as much as if it were its own father.

The Manufacture Of Monsters
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

A WARNING TO CHILDREN

If you must hold yourself up to your children as an object lesson (which is not at all necessary), hold yourself up as a warning and not as an example.

The Manufacture Of Monsters
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

IF YOU WASH A CAT

It is said that if you wash a cat it will never again wash itself. This may or may not be true: what is certain is that if you teach a man anything he will never learn it; and if you cure him of a disease he will be unable to cure himself the next time it attacks him.

Homeopathic Education
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

WARNED AGAINST WORK

All the people who have really worked (Herbert Spencer for instance) warn us against work as earnestly as some people warn us against drink. When learning is placed on the voluntary footing of sport, the teacher will find himself saying every day "Run away and play: you have worked as much as is good for you."

The Pursuit Of Learning
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

MY FIRST REFORM

I had only one conflict with the school discipline. Some offence was committed; and the master, to discover whom to punish, asked each boy in succession whether he was the culprit. I refused to answer on the ground that no boy was legally bound to criminate himself, and that the interrogation was a temptation to boys to lie. A day or two passed during which I was supposed to be doomed to some appalling punishment; but I heard no more of it: the situation was new to the teaching staff. When authorities do not know what to do, they can only do what was done last time. As I had created an unprecedented situation, they did nothing: but there were no more such interrogatories. It was my first reform.

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

BORN ABLE TO READ AND WRITE

I have no recollection of being taught to read or write; so I presume I was born with both faculties; but many people seem

to have bitter recollections of being forced reluctantly to acquire them. And though I have the uttermost contempt for a teacher so ill-mannered and incompetent as to be unable to make a child learn to read and write without also making it cry, still I am prepared to admit that I had rather have been compelled to learn to read and write with tears by an incompetent and ill-mannered person than left in ignorance.

Docility And Dependence

INCESSANT NOISE

I am sure that if people had to choose between living where the noise of children never stopped and where it was never heard, all the goodnatured and sound people would prefer the incessant noise to the incessant silence.

Children As Nuisances
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE CHILD PLAYS, THE ADULT WORKS

The child at play is noisy and ought to be noisy: Sir Isaac Newton at work is quiet and ought to be quiet. And the child should spend most of its time at play, whilst the adult should spend most of his time at work.

Children As Nuisances
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

MY SCHOOLING A COMPLETE FAILURE

It is evident that my schooling was a complete failure, and that the aesthetic education I received out of school was my salvation. My excuse for describing it here as a matter of public importance is that it is typical of the economic class to which I belonged, which may be defined roughly as the impecunious younger-son hangers-on of the propertied class: the gentlemen without the incomes of gentlemen. They cannot afford to send their sons to the public schools and universities, and would lose caste if they sent them to the ungentlemanly proletarian schools. They must therefore send them to cheap private adventure day schools, where they are not really taught at all, but are set school tasks (called "lessons") and subsequently catechized to ascertain whether they have memorized them, failing which they are punished, though seldom severely enough (that would be too

much trouble for the executioners and too repugnant except to born Sadists) to overcome their preference for doing something more agreeable to their tastes and appetites. The teachers are unskilled and untrained as such; and the classes are too large. I can remember sitting in a row of about fifty boys in alphabetical order called a history class. Each day we were set a chapter in The Student's Hume. The teacher would go through the chapter and through the alphabet, asking questions about the facts and dates mentioned in it. As my name began with the letter S, I could calculate within ten lines or so what question would fall to me. I can remember that in the chapter about the Peninsular War the answer to the question that always came was "The retreat from Burgos." From the ten lines hastily read on my way to the classroom I was even able to afford a prompt to the boy next to me if he had not been equally studious.

Now though I cannot deny that on these occasions I not only gave my enemy the teacher an excuse for pretending to believe that I had exhumed the whole history of the Peninsular War, but learnt that there had been a retreat from Burgos, it can hardly be claimed that I was learning history, whereas when I was at home reading *Quentin Durward*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, or *The Three Musketeers*, I was learning it very agreeably. And inasmuch as attendance at school kept me away from such books for half the day, I must affirm that my schooling not only failed to teach me what it professed to be teaching, but prevented me from being educated to an extent which infuriates me when I think of all I might have learnt at home by myself.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A CHILD'S SOUL

My schooling did me a great deal of harm and no good whatever: it was simply dragging a child's soul through the dirt.

School

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

I WAS A GANGSTER

I must add that as I was a day boy and never a boarder, and under no sort of control from my amiable and most uncoercive parents in my free time, which included some long intervals between one school and another, my relations with other boys

were those of gangsters, rather worse in fact, because gangsters presumably work for plunder, whereas we made mischief for its own sake in mere bravado. Just as we had been in a conspiracy against our schoolmasters we were in a conspiracy against the police, into whose hands I should probably have fallen had I been in the streets instead of, as it happened, mostly a solitary wanderer in enchanting scenery to the magic of which I was very susceptible. All the same, when I visited a Russian penal settlement in 1931, and was asked to address some edifying remarks to a crowd of juvenile delinquents (boy thieves mostly), I felt obliged to tell them that though I was a very distinguished and "successful" person, I should have been taken up by the police in my boyhood but that by chance I had not been found out.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MY TABLE MANNERS

I was frightfully undertrained civically and socially. Even my table manners and company manners I got from a most useful volume called *The Manners and Tone of Good Society*, an admirable textbook which is, I hope, still current and up to date. With this equipment I was able to hold my own to the extent of my parents' straitened means (I had no means of my own, as I preferred penniless unemployability to any more prison); but all the work of educating, disciplining and forming myself, which should have been done for me when I was a child I had to do for myself as an adult. But for the aesthetic education I had gathered at home through my mother's musical activities, and the rare chance that Nature had endowed me with a talent of the Shakesperean kind that began to be lucrative before my parents died, I might have ended as a tramp.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AT FIVE YEARS OF AGE I COULD NOT UNDERSTAND MARX

I could read *The Pilgrim's Progress* with intense interest when I was five years old; but an exposition of the Marxian Dialectic would have been Greek to me.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

SLAVES AND MASTERS

Slaves and schoolboys often love their masters.

The Nature Of Political Hatred
Preface to JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

DRAGGED BACK

Our schools teach the morality of feudalism corrupted by commercialism, and hold up the military conqueror, the robber baron, and the profiteer, as models of the illustrious and the successful. In vain do the prophets who see through this imposture preach and teach a better gospel: the individuals whom they convert are doomed to pass away in a few years; and the new generations are dragged back in the schools to the morality of the fifteenth century.

Is There Any Hope In Education?
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

The right to knowledge must be regarded as a fundamental human right.

The Higher Motive. The Tree Of Knowledge
Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

CONDUCIVE TO BENEFICIAL CONDUCT

No future education authority, unless it is as badly educated as our present ones, will imagine that it has any final and eternal truths to inculcate: it can only select the most useful working hypotheses and inculcate them very much as it inculcates standard behavior throughout that vast of civilized conduct in which it does not matter in the least how people act in particular situations provided they all act in the same way, as in the rule of the road. All the provisional hypotheses may be illusions; but if they conduce to beneficial conduct they must be inculcated and acted on by Governments until better ones arrive.

Importance Of Free Thought
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

PRIZE-GIVING IN A GIRLS' SCHOOL

Still, one must go some whither, after all. That was my feeling, last Tuesday, when, turning over my invitations, I found

a card addressed to me, not in my ancestral title of Di Bassetto, but in the assumed name under which I conceal my identity in the vulgar business of life. It invited me to repair to a High School for Girls in a healthy south-western suburb, there to celebrate the annual prize-giving with girlish song and recitation.

LONDON MUSIC

DRIVING EDUCATION UNDERGROUND

To abolish schools altogether and make teaching a crime, as Butler's Erewhonians abolished machinery and imprisoned the explorer because they found a watch in his pocket, would only drive education underground as it did in Tsarist Russia, where women, for teaching peasants to read, were imprisoned for twenty years.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

SCHOOLS HAVE NOT CHANGED

Some years ago I lectured in Oxford on the subject of education. A friend to whom I mentioned my intention said, "You know nothing of modern education: schools are not now what they were when you were a boy." I immediately procured the time sheets of half a dozen modern schools, and found, as I expected, that they might all have been my old school: there was no real difference.

Alleged Novelties In Modern Schools
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

IF I WERE PERMITTED TO DO AS I LIKED

I admit, however, that if my schoolmasters had treated me as an experiment of the Life Force: that is, if they had set me free to do as I liked subject only to my political rights and theirs, they could not have watched the experiment very long, because the first result would have been a rapid movement on my part in the direction of the door, and my disappearance therethrough.

It may be worth inquiring where I should have gone to. I should have gone into the country, or into the sea, or into the National Gallery, or to hear a band if there was one, or to any library where there were no school books. I should have read very dry and difficult books: for example, though nothing would have induced me to read the budget of stupid party lies that

served as a text-book of history in school, I remember reading Robertson's *Charles V* and his history of Scotland from end to end most laboriously. Once, stung by the airs of a schoolfellow who alleged that he had read Locke on the *Human Understanding*, I attempted to read the Bible straight through, and actually got to the Pauline Epistles before I broke down in disgust at what seemed to me their inveterate crookedness of mind. If there had been a school where children were really free, I should have had to be driven out of it for the sake of my health by the teachers; for the children to whom a literary education can be of any use are insatiable: they will read and study far more than is good for them. In fact the real difficulty is to prevent them from wasting their time by reading for the sake of reading and studying for the sake of studying, instead of taking some trouble to find out what they really like and are capable of doing some good at.

The Experiment Experimenting
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

WHITHER?

Now nobody knows the way a child should go. All the ways discovered so far lead to the horrors of our existing civilizations, described quite justifiably by Ruskin as heaps of agonizing human maggots, struggling with one another for scraps of food.

The Sin Of Nadab And Abihu
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

A CEREMONY OF DISILLUSION

As my own education operated by a succession of eye-openers each involving the repudiation of some previously held belief, and consequently of my conviction of my father's infallibility to say nothing of my own, I do not see why, when child life is organized into age groups as it has always been in our schools with their First Latin Juniors and Sixth Forms and the like, the promotion of a child from one group to an older one should not be marked by a ceremony of disillusion, in which the novices should be informed that they may now scrap the childish part of their religious instruction as poppycock no longer suitable to their advancing years.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

PUTTING THINGS CRUDELY

You see, children, we have to put things very crudely to you to make ourselves intelligible.

THE SHE-ANCIENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

ANY SYSTEM BETTER THAN NONE AT ALL

. . . untutored ignorance does not make for good citizenship: any system of instruction and training is better than none at all. Our system must go on until we provide a better one.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

IMMEDIATELY QUIET BUT FINALLY DISASTROUS

Liberty is the breath of life to nations; and liberty is the one thing that parents, schoolmasters, and rulers spend their lives in extirpating for the sake of an immediately quiet and finally disastrous life.

Government By Bullies
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

A GHASTLY BUSINESS

It is a ghastly business, quite beyond words, this schooling.

School
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

ON BEING TIRED

THE NEWLY BORN: What is being tired?

THE SHE-ANCIENT: The penalty of attending to children. Farewell.

BACK TO METHUSELAH

CITIZENSHIP IN UTOPIA

The time cannot be very far off when the education authorities will have to consider which set of beliefs is the better qualification for citizenship in Utopia.

Standard Religion Indispensable
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

AT HOME EVERYWHERE

A vagabond is at home nowhere because he wanders: a child should wander because it ought to be at home everywhere.

Mobilization
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

NOT CONFINED TO CHILDREN

Education is not confined to children: in fact liberal education is mostly adult education, and goes on all through life in people who have active minds instead of second hand mental habits. But adult education takes care of itself: all that the State can do is to take care that the materials for it, the libraries and Art galleries and orchestras and open spaces are at hand for it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE UNIVERSITY

The university will always exist in some form as a community of persons desirous of pushing their culture to the highest pitch they are capable of, not as solitary students reading in seclusion, but as members of a body of individuals all pursuing culture, talking culture, thinking culture, above all, criticizing culture. If such persons are to read and talk and criticize to any purpose, they must know the world outside the university at least as well as the shopkeeper in the High Street does. And this is just what they do not know at present. You may say of them, paraphrasing Mr. Kipling, "What do they know of Plato that only Plato know?" If our universities would exclude everybody who had not earned a living by his or her own exertions for at least a couple of years, their effect would be vastly improved.

University Schoolboyishness

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

FAMILIES TOO SMALL

We no longer have large families: all the families are too small to give the children the necessary social training. The Roman father is out of fashion; and the whip and the cane are becoming discredited, not so much by the old arguments against corporal punishment (sound as these were) as by the gradual wearing away of the veil from the fact that flogging is a form of debauchery. The advocate of flogging as a punishment is now exposed to very disagreeable suspicions; and ever since Rousseau rose to the effort of making a certain very ridiculous confession on the subject, there has been a growing perception that child whipping, even for the children themselves, is not always the innocent and highminded practice it professes to be.

Large and Small Families

In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

UNEXPURGATED

A child of six can read an unexpurgated edition of the *Arabian Nights* without being touched by the pornographic passages.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

SERVICEABLE TO THE COMMUNITY

Therefore, if for only half an hour a day, a child should do something serviceable to the community.

The Horror Of The Perpetual Holiday
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

ON BEING A MOTHER

It must be a curious thing to be a mother. First the child is part of yourself; then it is your child; then it is its father's child; then it is the child of some remote ancestor; finally it is an independent human being whom you have been the mere instrument of bringing into the world, and whom perhaps you would never have thought of caring for if anyone else had performed that accidental service. It must be an odd sensation looking on at these young people and being out of it, staring at that amazing callousness, and being tolerated and no doubt occasionally ridiculed by them before they have done anything whatsoever to justify them in presuming to the distinction of your friendship. Of the two lots, the woman's lot of perpetual motherhood, and the man's of perpetual babyhood, I prefer the man's I think.

Letter to Ellen Terry

DETESTED BUT NECESSARY

Both the managing people and the mere disciplinarians may be, and often are, heartily detested; but they are so necessary that any body of ordinary persons left without what they call superiors, will immediately elect them. A crew of pirates, subject to no laws except the laws of nature, will elect a boatswain to order them about and a captain to lead them and navigate the ship, though the one may be the most insufferable bully and the other the most tyrannical scoundrel on board.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MANNERS

Laborers who are contemptuously anti-clerical in their opinions will send their daughters to the convent school because the nuns

teach them some sort of gentleness of speech and behavior. And peers who tell you that our public schools are rotten through and through, and that our universities ought to be razed to the foundations, send their sons to Eton and Oxford, Harrow and Cambridge, not only because there is nothing else to be done, but because these places, though they turn out blackguards and ignoramuses and boobies galore, turn them out with habits and manners of the society they belong to. Bad as those manners are in many respects, they are better than no manners at all.

The Pursuit Of Manners
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

AUXILIARY PARENT

Now the Board of Education has to deal with children aged from two to five, to whom the first verses of the gospel of John mean nothing, whereas the first chapter of Genesis is intelligible, entertaining, and entirely credible. They must be educated by fables and legends and allegories and parables or else by the slipper, the cane, the birch, or some sort of painful injury which teaches nothing but dread of detection, and makes the teacher a hostile and hated executioner instead of a guide, philosopher, friend, and auxiliary parent.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

USELESS

It is useless to assure us that there is no other key to knowledge except cruelty.

A False Alternative
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

INCREASE KNOWLEDGE

I cannot change their minds; but I can increase their knowledge.

Preface to GENEVA

ANY FOOL CAN MAKE A DISCOVERY

I have the utmost respect, madam, for the magnificent discoveries which we owe to science. But any fool can make a discovery. Every baby has to discover more in the first years of its life than Roger Bacon ever discovered in his laboratory.

THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

LIMIT TO KNOWLEDGE

No man is allowed to put his mother into the stove because he desires to know how long an adult woman will survive at a temperature of 500 degrees Fahrenheit, no matter how important or interesting that particular addition to the store of human knowledge may be.

Limitations Of The Right To Knowledge
Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A KING'S SECRET

CHARLES: Let me tell you a secret, Jamie: a king's secret. Peter the fisherman did not know everything. Neither did Martin Luther.

JAMES: Neither do you.

CHARLES: No; but I must do the best I can with what I know, and not with what Peter and Martin knew.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

COMMON SENSE

Common sense is not so logical.

Expiation And Moral Accountancy
In IMPRISONMENT

A FINAL WORD OF ADVICE

Let me illustrate. Suppose I am in an Irish village with growing peasant girls to convert. They grow up between gentle nuns and learned priests called holy fathers who offer them for their guidance faith in Our Lady of Good Counsel. She is "the Seat of Wisdom, the Bride of the Holy Ghost, the Mother of Fair Love and of Knowledge and of Holy Hope. Her beautiful soul reflects the image of the Most Holy Trinity as crystal mirror, and no shadow of sin or imperfection has ever darkened her understanding. For thirty years she lived in closest intercourse with the Son of God made Man. She drank in every utterence of His, and kept all His words in her heart. She is therefore the perfect counsel for us in this vale of tears."

What sort of fool should I be if, blind and deaf to the beauty of this vision and its fitness to the childish mind and imagination of the growing maid, I were to crash in with denunciations of it as a romantic fiction, and insist on the substitution of the

preface and postscript to my *Back to Methuselah*, with its postulate of a Life Force which makes terrible blunders like cancer, osteitis, and epilepsy, and lets loose upon us unsatisfactory old experiments like the tiger and the anaconda? Our Lady of Good Counsel could nurse her growing mind and make a good girl of her. Creative Evolution, mentally beyond her reach, could only destroy her faith in anything and make her behavior incalculable and uncivilized. . . .

Postscript SIXTY YEARS OF FABIANISM

Culture

CULTURE

Culture! My dear Mr. Praed: do you know what the mathematical tripos means? It means grind, grind, grind for six to eight hours a day at mathematics, and nothing but mathematics. I'm supposed to know something about science; but I know nothing except the mathematics it involves. I can make calculations for engineers, electricians, insurance companies and so on; but I know next to nothing about engineering or electricity or insurance. I dont even know arithmetic well. Outside mathematics, lawn-tennis, eating, sleeping, cycling and walking, I'm a more ignorant barbarian than any woman could possibly be who hadnt gone in for the tripos.

VIVIE *in* MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

THE RISK

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing; but we must take that risk because a little is as much as our biggest heads can hold; and a citizen who knows that the earth is round and older than six thousand years is less dangerous than one of equal capacity who believes it is a flat ground floor between a first floor heaven and a basement hell.

Preface to GENEVA

THE BEST RULERS

Blessed then are those who do not know and cannot think: to them life seems a joyride with a few disagreeable incidents that must be put up with. They sometimes make the best rulers.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MY STUPENDOUS IGNORANCE

My ignorance in these matters is stupendous; but I refuse to believe that Newton's system did not enable him to locate Mercury theoretically at its nearest point to the sun, and then to find out with his telescope that it was apparently somewhere else.

Preface to IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

ONE OF THE MOB

When using such convenient terms as the quality and the mob it must never be forgotten that they do not indicate two classes of entirely different persons. They are the same persons. In literature and drama, for instance, I belong to the quality. In mathematics, athletics, mechanics, I am one of the mob, and not only accept and obey authority but claim a neighborly right to be told what to do by those who know better than I do. The best of us is nine hundred and ninety-nine per cent quality; and the vulgar ailment called Swelled Head afflicts only those whose minds are so preoccupied with the few things they know that there is no room left for the innumerable things they dont know. I do some things very well; but my self-esteem is crushed by the multitude of things at which I am a hopeless duffer. In championing the rights of the mob I champion my own.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WE'RE IGNORANT

What better were my people than yours, for all their pride? But I've noticed it all my life: we're ignorant. We dont really know whats right and whats wrong. We're all right as long as things go on the way they always did. We bring our children up just as we were brought up; and we go to church or chapel just as our parents did; and we say what everybody says; and it goes on all right until something out of the way happens: theres a family quarrel, or one of the children goes wrong, or a father takes to drink, or an aunt goes mad, or one of us finds ourselves doing something we never thought we'd want to do. And then you know what happens: complaints and quarrels and huff and offence and bad language and bad temper and regular bewilderment as if Satan possessed us all. We find out then that with all our respectability and piety, weve no real religion and no way

of telling right from wrong. Weve nothing but our habits; and when theyre upset, where are we? Just like Peter in the storm trying to walk on the water and finding he couldnt.

MRS. KNOX *in* FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

NEWTON'S IGNORANCE

FOX: I suffer greatly from shame at my ignorance.

NEWTON: Shame will not help you, Pastor. I spend my life contemplating the ocean of my ignorance. I once boasted of having picked up a pebble on the endless beach of that ocean. I should have said a grain of sand.

CHARLES: I can well believe it. No man confronted with the enormity of what he does not know can think much of what he does know. But what is the precession of the equinoxes? If I fire off those words at court the entire peerage will be prostrate before the profundity of my learning.

MRS. BASHAM: Oh, tell the gentleman, Mr. Newton; or they will be here all day.

NEWTON: It is quite simple: a child can understand it. The two days in the year on which the day and night are of equal duration are the equinoxes. In each successive sidereal year they occur earlier. You will see at once that this involves a retrograde motion of the equinoctial points along the ecliptic. We call that the precession of the equinoxes.

FOX: I thank you, Isaac Newton. I am as wise as I was before.

MRS. BASHAM: You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Mr. Newton, injuring the poor gentlemen's brains with such outlandish words. You must remember that everybody is not as learned as you are.

NEWTON: But surely it is plain to everybody——

MRS. BASHAM: No: it isnt plain to anybody, Mr. Newton.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

PRIVILEGED MEN

Greek scholars are privileged men. Few of them know Greek; and none of them know anything else; but their position is unchallengeable. Other languages are the qualifications of waiters and commercial travellers: Greek is to a man of position what the hallmark is to silver.

CUSINS *in* MAJOR BARBARA

WHERE THE FREETHINKER IS AT HOME

It is clear from my letter to Ensor Walters that a freethinking Western can feel as much at home in the temples of the farthest east as in a British or foreign cathedral.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

PICKING BRAINS

As it never occurred to me to conceal my opinions any more than my nationality, and as I had, besides, an unpleasant trick of contradicting everyone from whom I thought I could learn anything in order to draw him out and enable me to pick his brains, I think I must have impressed many amiable persons as an extremely disagreeable and undesirable young man.

IMMATURITY

SUMMER SCHOOLS

During the twentieth century an important social development has transformed that costly and deleterious bore, the British holiday, into a genuinely recreative change. Under the title of Summer Schools, voluntary associations of artistically minded students of sociology, theosophy, science, history and what not—shall we say people who take life, or some department of life, seriously, and cannot be happy unless they are using their brains and learning something in the intervals of dancing and singing for pure fun?—now appear every autumn in the prettiest country districts. These schools are open to everybody; they afford intimate glimpses of more or less celebrated people who come and lecture to them for the sake of propaganda; and they are very very much jollier, as well as substantially cheaper and more genial, than the so-called pleasure resorts in which irritable and overworked professional entertainers hypnotize credulous Britons into believing that they are enjoying themselves when they are only paying through the nose for being worried and pillaged. . . .

I myself, after a larger experience of professionally and commercially organized art than most men can afford, find that it is at such gatherings and from such voluntary enterprises that I can oftenest recapture something of that magic which music and drama had for me in my childhood and which it is so utterly impossible to preserve under commercial conditions. Commerce

in art can save me from many ridiculous blunders and makeshifts that do not matter; but it seldom achieves the things that do matter, never indeed except when they are forced on it in spite of its teeth by some individual artist . . . mostly one heavily persecuted by it as Wagner was.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

A World-Betterer

HELL

To me living in a world of poor and unhappy people is like living in hell.

Letter

SUNDAY EVENINGS

Kindly consider that for years past every Sunday evening of mine has been spent on some more or less squalid platform, lecturing, lecturing, lecturing, and lecturing. . . .

Correspondence

MY DESIRE

"Do I at last see before me that old and tried friend of the working classes, George Bernard Shaw? How are you, George?"

Although I was not then old, and had no other feeling for the working classes than an intense desire to abolish them and replace them by sensible people. . . .

DEATH OF AN OLD REVOLUTIONARY HERO

THE SORDID SIDE

I love the sordid side of business: the play of economic motive fascinates me.

Letter to Ellen Terry

SOCIAL FRICTION

Life is made lonely and difficult for me in a hundred unnecessary ways; and so few people are clever and tactful and sensible and self-controlled enough to pick their way through the world

without giving or taking offence that the first quality of capitalistic mankind is quarrelsomeness. Our streets are fuller of feuds than the Highlands or the Arabian desert. The social friction set up by inequality of income is intense: society is like a machine designed to work smoothly with the oil of equality, into the bearings of which some malignant demon keeps pouring the sand of inequality. If it were not for the big pools of equality that exist at different levels, the machine would not work at all. As it is, the seizings-up, the smashings, the stoppages, the explosions, never cease.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WHAT I LOVE

It is good for me to be worked to the last inch whilst I last, and I love the reality of the Vestry and its dustcarts, and H'less orators after the silly visionary fashion-ridden theatres.

Letter

THE PRIME CONDITION

It is the sensible schemes, unfortunately, that are hopeless in England. Therefore I have great hopes that my own views, though fundamentally sensible, can be made to appear fantastic enough to have a chance.

First, then, I lay it down as a prime condition of sane society, obvious as such to anyone but an idiot, that in any decent community, children should find in every part of their native country, food, clothing, lodging, instruction, and parental kindness for the asking. For the matter of that, so should adults; but the two cases differ in that as these commodities do not grow on the bushes, the adults cannot have them unless they themselves organize and provide the supply, whereas the children must have them as if by magic, with nothing to do but rub the lamp, like Aladdin, and have their needs satisfied.

Children And Game: A Proposal

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

FEAR OF BODILY WANT

Until the community is organized in such a way that the fear of bodily want is forgotten as completely as the fear of wolves already is in civilized capitals, we shall never have a decent social

life. Indeed the whole attraction of our present arrangement lies in the fact that it does relieve a handful of us from this fear; but as the relief is affected stupidly and parasitic on the rest, they are smitten with the degeneracy which seems to be the inevitable biological penalty of complete parasitism. They corrupt culture and statecraft instead of contributing to them, their excessive leisure being as mischievous as the excessive toil of the laborers. Anyhow, the moral is clear. The two main problems of organized society: how to produce subsistence enough for all its members, and how to prevent the theft of that subsistence by idlers, should be carefully dissociated; for the triumphant solution of the first by our inventors and chemists has been offset by the disastrous failure of our rulers to solve the other. Optimism on this point is only wilful blindness.

Vital Distribution

In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

CUSTOM

When will we realize that the fact that we can become accustomed to anything, however disgusting at first, makes it necessary for us to examine carefully everything we have become accustomed to? Before motor cars became common, necessity had accustomed us to a foulness in our streets which would have horrified us had the street been our drawing-room carpet. Before long we shall be as particular about our streets as we now are about our carpets.

UNDER THE WHIP

IDEALIST

The idealist is a more dangerous animal than the Philistine just as a man is a more dangerous animal than a sheep.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

PREJUDICE

We all deprecate prejudice; but if all of us were not animated sacks of prejudices, and at least nine tenths of them were not the same prejudices so deeply rooted that we never think of them as prejudices but call them common sense, we could no more form a community than so many snakes.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

CRIMES

I hate poverty and slavery worse than any other crimes whatsoever.

UNDERSHAFT *in* MAJOR BARBARA

MAN'S HIGHEST FUNCTION

This is the highest function that man can perform, the greatest work he can set his hand to: to pick out the significant incidents from the chaos of daily happenings and arrange them so that their relation to one another becomes significant, thus changing us from bewildered spectators of a monstrous confusion to men intelligently conscious of the world and its destinies.

The Interpreter Of Life

In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

WE SHALL SEE

The time may come when these islands shall live by the quality of their men rather than by the abundance of their minerals; and then we shall see.

KEEGAN *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

WISDOM

We are made wise not by the recollections of our past, but by the responsibilities of our future.

ZOO *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

TALK

The author though himself a professional talk maker, does not believe that the world can be saved by talk alone.

TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

WINDBAGS

. . . public life is the paradise of voluble windbags.

The Miracle Of Condensed Recapitulation

Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

PROGRESS

All progress is initiated by challenging current conceptions, and executed by supplanting existing institutions.

The Author's Apology

In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

WARNING

Never forget that the old law of the natural philosophers, that Nature abhors a vacuum, is true of the human head. There is no such thing as an empty head, though there are heads so impervious to new ideas that they are for all mental purposes solid, like billiard balls. I know that you have not that sort of head, because, if you had, you would not be reading this book. Therefore I warn you that if you leave the smallest corner of your head vacant for a moment, other people's opinions will rush in from all quarters, from advertisements, from newspapers, from books and pamphlets, from gossip, from political speeches, from plays and pictures—and, you will add, from this book!

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE BEGINNING OF HOPE

Dont fuss, dearest: I'm not unhappy. I am enjoying the enormous freedom of having found myself out and got myself off my mind. That looks like despair; but it is really the beginning of hope, and the end of hypocrisy. Do you think I didnt know, in the days of my great speeches and my roaring popularity, that I was only whitewashing the slums? I did it very well—I dont care who hears me say so—and there is always a sort of artistic satisfaction in doing a thing very well, whether it's getting a big Bill through the House, or carrying a big meeting off its feet, or winning a golf championship. It was all very jolly; and I'm still a little proud of it. But even if I had not had you here to remind me that it was all hot air, I couldnt help knowing as well as any of those damned Socialists that though the West End of London was chockful of money and nice people all calling one another by their Christian names, the lives of the millions of people whose labor was keeping the whole show going were not worth living. I knew it quite well; but I was able to put it out of my mind because I thought it couldnt be helped and I was doing the best that could be done. I know better now: I know that it can be helped, and how it can be helped. And rather than go back to the old whitewashing job, I'd seize you tight round the waist and make a hole in the river with you.

SIR ARTHUR *in* ON THE ROCKS

THINGS WONT STAY WHERE THEY ARE

Have you noticed, by the way, that we no longer speak of letting things alone in the old-fashioned way? We speak of letting them slide; and this is a great advance in good sense; for it shews that we at last see that they slide instead of staying put; and it implies that letting them slide is a feckless sort of conduct. So you must rule out once for all the notion of leaving things as they are in the expectation that they will stay where they are. They wont.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

GHOSTS FROM THE FUTURE

Yes: women and men who are ahead of their time. They alone can lead the present into the future. They are ghosts from the future. The ghosts from the past are those who are behind the times, and can only drag the present back.

THE LADY *in* ON THE ROCKS

MISTAKES

All communities must live finally by their ethical values: that is, by their genuine virtues. Living virtuously is an art that can be learnt only by living in full responsibility for our own actions; and as the process is one of trial and error even when seeking the guidance of other's experience society must, whether it likes it or not, put up with a certain burden of individual error. The man who has never made a mistake will never make anything; and the man who has never done any harm will never do any good.

The Root Of The Evil
In IMPRISONMENT

THE TWO PIONEERS

That is, pioneers of the march to the plains of heaven (so to speak).

The second, whose eyes are in the back of his head, is the man who declares that it is wrong to do something that no one has hitherto seen any harm in.

The first, whose eyes are very longsighted and in the usual place, is the man who declares that it is right to do something hitherto regarded as infamous.

The second is treated with great respect by the army. They give him testimonials; name him the Good Man; and hate him like the devil.

The first is stoned and shricked at by the whole army. They call him all manner of opprobrious names; grudge him his bare bread and water; and secretly adore him as their savior from utter despair.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

HUMAN NATURE

There is nothing that can be changed more completely than human nature when the job is taken in hand early enough. Such artificial products as our agricultural laborers and urban mechanics, our country gentlemen and city plutocrats, though they are from the same human stock, are so different that they cannot live together without great discomfort, are practically not intermarriageable.

Standard Religion Indispensable
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

THE POOR ARENT ANGELS

Whenever your sympathies are strongly stirred on behalf of some cruelly ill used person or persons of whom you know nothing except that they are ill used, your generous indignation attributes all sorts of virtues to them, and all sorts of vices to those who oppress them. But the blunt truth is that ill used people are worse than well used people: indeed this is at bottom the only good reason why we should not allow anyone to be ill used. If I thought you would be made a better woman by ill treatment I should do my best to have you ill treated. We should refuse to tolerate poverty as a social institution not because the poor are the salt of the earth, but because "the poor in a lump are bad." And the poor know this better than anyone else. When the Socialist movement in London took its tone from lovers of art and literature who had read George Borrow until they had come to regard tramps as saints, and passionate High Church clergymen (Anglo-Catholics) who adored supertramps like St. Francis, it was apt to assume that all that was needed was to teach Socialism to the masses (vaguely imagined as a huge crowd of tramplike saints) and leave the rest to the natural effect

of sowing the good seed in kindly virgin soil. But the proletarian soil was neither virgin nor exceptionally kindly. The masses are not in the least like tramps; and they have no romantic illusions about one another, whatever illusions each of them may cherish about herself. When John Stuart Mill was a Parliamentary candidate in Westminster, his opponents tried to defeat him by recalling an occasion on which he had said flatly that the British workman was neither entirely truthful, entirely sober, entirely honest, nor imbued with a proper sense of the wickedness of gambling: in short, that he was by no means the paragon he was always assumed to be by parliamentary candidates when they addressed his class as "Gentlemen," and begged for his vote. Mill probably owed his success on that occasion to the fact that instead of denying his opinion he uncompromisingly reaffirmed it. The wage workers are as fond of flattery as other people, and will swallow any quantity of it from candidates provided it be thoroughly understood that it is only flattery, and that the candidates know better; but they have no use for gushingly idealistic ladies and gentlemen who are fools enough to think that the poor are cruelly misunderstood angels.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE DESIRABLE CIVILIZATION

There will still be questions to settle which are at bottom questions as to the sort of civilization that is desirable; and this involves a decision as to the sort of people that are desirable and undesirable. Some of us value machinery because it makes a shorter working day. Some of us, believing that a more primitive life than ours would be happier and better, advocate "a return to nature." Others dream of a much more mechanized, specialized, and complicated life. Some of us value machinery because it makes a shorter working day possible for us: others value it because it enriches us by increasing the product per hour. Some of us would like to take things easy and retire at 60: others would like to work their utmost and retire at 40. Some of us will say let us be content with £200 a year: others No: let us live at the rate of £20,000 a year and strain every faculty to earn it. Some of us want a minimum of necessary work and a maximum of liberty to think and discover and experiment in the extension of science and art, philosophy and religion, sport and exploration:

others, caring for none of these things, and desiring nothing more than to be saved the trouble of thinking and to be told what to do at every turn, would prefer thoughtless and comfortable tutelage and routine, not knowing what to do with themselves when at liberty. A life filled with scientific curiosity would be hell for the people who would not cross the street to find out whether the earth is flat or round; and a person with no ear for music would strenuously object to work for the support of municipal bands, whilst people of Shakespear's tastes would agitate for the extermination of the unmusical.

Temperamental Difficulties
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

LAWS ARE NECESSARY

No two consciences are the same. No two love affairs are the same. No two marriages are the same. No two illnesses are the same. No two children are the same. No two human beings are the same. What is right for one is wrong for the other. Yet they cannot live together without laws; and a law is something that obliges them all to do the same thing.

CHARLES *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

FREE TO RISK HIS SOUL

A man who is not free to risk his neck as an aviator or his soul as a heretic is not free at all; and the right to liberty begins, not at the age of 21 years but of 21 seconds.

English Physical Hardihood and Spiritual Cowardice
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

TRAINED AS WELL AS BORN

Intellect can blunder disastrously; but so can intuition when it is ignorant. Neither of them can reach sound conclusions without authentic facts at all, the inferences and guesses will be alike unsound. Besides, facts do not always lead to reasoned inferences. They may provoke vindictive resentments, sentimental leniencies, hopes and fears, prejudices and cupidities, leading to explosions of emotion that sweep reason from minds that have not had stern judicial training and natural judicial consciences. Competent municipal councillors must be taught and trained as well as born.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ALL THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT AROUND US

The world at large, though it contains London and Paris and New York, also contains primitive villages where gas, electric light, tap water and main drainage are as unknown as they were to King Alfred. Our famous universities and libraries and picture galleries are within travelling distance of tribes of savages and cannibals, and of barbarian empires. Thus you can see around you living examples of all the stages of the Capitalist System I have described. Indeed, if you come, or your parents came (like mine) from one of those families of more than a dozen children in the genteel younger-son class which were more common formerly than they are today, you are certain to have found, without going further than your parents, your brothers and sisters, your uncles and aunts, your first cousins, and perhaps yourself, examples of every phase of the conditions produced by Capitalism in that class during the last two centuries, to say nothing of the earlier half medieval phases in which most women, especially respectable women, are still belated.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NOT CHARITY

It cannot be too thoroughly understood that Socialism is not charity nor loving-kindness, nor sympathy with the poor, nor popular philanthropy with its something-for-nothing alms-giving and mendicity, but the economist's hatred of waste and disorder, the aesthete's hatred of ugliness and dirt, the lawyer's hatred of injustice, the doctor's hatred of disease, the saint's hatred of the seven deadly sins: in short, a combination of the most intense hatreds against institutions which give economists a strong pecuniary interest in wasteful and anarchic capitalism, artists in venality and pornography, lawyers in justice, doctors in disease, and saints in catering for the seven deadly sins or flattering them instead of denouncing them.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

YOUR PRIVATE LIFE

Should you become a convert to Socialism you will not be committed to any change in your private life, nor indeed will you find yourself able to make any change that would be of the

smallest use in that direction. The discussions in the papers as to whether a Socialist Prime Minister should keep a motor car, or a Socialist playwright receive fees for allowing his plays to be performed, or Socialist landlords and capitalists charge rent for their land or interest on their capital, or a Socialist of any sort refrain from selling all that she has and giving it to the poor (quite the most mischievous thing she could possibly do with it), are all disgraceful displays of ignorance not only of Socialism, but of common civilization.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MAKE THE MOST OF US ALL

My nurse was fond of remarking that you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear; and the more I see of the efforts of our churches and universities and literary sages to raise the mass above its own level, the more convinced I am that my nurse was right. Progress can do nothing but make the most of us all as we are. . . .

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

HUMAN MUSHROOMS

It is now absolutely certain that the political and social problems raised by our civilization cannot be solved by mere human mushrooms who decay and die when they are just beginning to have a glimmer of the wisdom and knowledge needed for their own government.

CONRAD *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE BORN RULER

Every bumptious idiot thinks himself a born ruler of men; every snob thinks that the common people must be kept in their present place or shot down if society is to be preserved; every proletarian who resents his position wants to strike at something or somebody more vulnerable than the capitalist system in the abstract; but when they have all done their worst the dead they have slain must be buried, the houses they have burned rebuilt, and the hundred other messes they have left cleared up by women and men with sense enough to take counsel together without coming to blows, and business ability enough to organize the work of the community. These sensible ones may not always

have been sensible: some of them may have done their full share of mischief before the necessary sanity was branded into them by bitter experience or horrified contemplation of the results of anarchy; but between the naturally sensible people and the chastened ones there will finally be some sort of Parliament to conduct the nation's business, unless indeed civilization has been so completely wrecked in the preliminary quarrels that there is no nation worth troubling about left, and consequently no national business to transact. That has often happened.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

SHAM SUPERMEN

Man is never without an array of human idols who are all nothing but sham Supermen.

Man's Objection To His Own Improvement
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

WHAT IT MEANS

Being members one of another means One Man One Vote, and One Woman One Vote, and universal suffrage and equal incomes and all sorts of modern political measures.

The Reduction To Modern Practice Of Christianity
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

UTOPIANS

Utopians do not grow wild on the bushes nor are they to be picked up in the slums: they have to be cultivated very carefully and expensively.

Incompatibility Of Peasantry With Modern Civilization
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

OUR TURN NEXT?

The saying that we are members one of another is not a mere pious formula to be repeated in church without any meaning: it is a literal truth; for though the rich end of the town can avoid living with the poor end, it cannot avoid dying with it when the plague comes. People will be able to keep themselves to themselves as much as they please when they have made an end of poverty; but until then they will not be able to shut out the sights and sounds and smells of poverty from their daily

walks, nor to feel sure from day to day that its most violent and fatal evils will not reach them through their strongest police guards.

Besides, as long as poverty remains possible we shall never be sure that it will not overtake ourselves. If we dig a pit for others we may fall into it: if we leave a precipice unfenced our children may fall over it when they are playing. We see the most innocent and respectable families falling into the unfenced pit of poverty every day; and how do we know that it will not be our turn next?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WE MUST GO AHEAD

Do you suppose that the men of my generation will put up with these pious platitudes that end in our believing that it's no use doing anything? We must put up with what weve got and go ahead with it as best we can.

Letter

ON BEING CERTAIN

We are overrun with Popes. From curates and governesses, who may claim a sort of professional standing, to parents and uncles and nurserymaids and school teachers and wiseacres generally, there are scores of thousands of human insects groping through our darkness by the feeble phosphorescence of their own tails, yet ready at a moments notice to reveal the will of God on every possible subject; to explain how and why the universe was made (in my youth they added the exact date) and the circumstances under which it will cease to exist; to lay down precise rules of right and wrong conduct; to discriminate infallibly between virtuous and vicious character; and this with such certainty that they are prepared to visit all the rigors of the law, and all the ruinous penalties of social ostracism on those, however harmless their actions may be, who venture to laugh at their monstrous conceit or to pay their assumptions the extravagant compliment of criticizing them.

The Sin Of Athanasius

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

WHAT WRECKS CIVILIZATION?

We must finally adapt our institutions to human nature. In the long run our present plan of trying to force human nature into a mould of existing abuses, superstitions, and corrupt interests, produces the explosive forces that wreck civilization.

The Cost Of Divorce

In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

ATOM SPLITTING

When atom splitting makes it easy for us to support ourselves as well by two hours work as now by two years, we shall move mountains, and straighten rivers in a hand's turn. Then the problem of what to do in our spare time will make life enormously more interesting. No more doubt as to whether it is worth living.

Correspondence

OBSTACLE TO SOCIALISM

And I, who said forty years ago that we should have had Socialism already but for the Socialists.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE AMERICAN MILLIONAIRE

Our newspapers and melodramas are blustering about our imperial destiny; but our eyes and hearts turn eagerly to the American millionaire. As his hand goes down to his pocket, our fingers go up to the brims of our hats by instinct.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE UPHOLDERS OF CAPITALISM

Capitalism is not an orgy of human villainy: it is a Utopia that has dazzled and misled very amiable and public spirited men, from Turgot and Adam Smith to Cobden and Bright. The upholders of Capitalism are dreamers and visionaries who, instead of doing good with evil intentions like Mephistopheles, do evil with the best intentions. With such human material we can produce a dozen new worlds when we learn both the facts and the lessons in political science the facts teach. For before a good man can carry out his good intentions he must not only ascertain the facts but reason on them.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A RESPECTABLE MAN

Here am I, for instance, by class a respectable man, by common sense a hater of waste and disorder, by intellectual constitution legally minded to the verge of pedantry, and by temperament apprehensive and economically disposed to the limit of old-maidishness; yet I am, and have always been, and shall now always be, a revolutionary writer, because our laws make law impossible; our liberties destroy all freedom; our property is organized robbery; our morality is an impudent hypocrisy; our wisdom is administered by inexperienced or mal-experienced dupes, our power wielded by cowards and weaklings, and our honor false in all its points. I am an enemy of the existing order for good reasons.

Sane Conclusions
In MAJOR BARBARA

WHY NOT?

You see things; and you say "Why?" But I dream things that never were; and I say "Why not?"

THE SERPENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

INTENSELY SERIOUS

I was drawn into the Socialist revival of the early eighties, among Englishmen intensely serious and burning with indignation at very real and very fundamental evils that affected all the world; so that the reaction against them bound the finer spirits of all the nations together instead of making them cherish hatred of one another as a national Virtue.

IMMATURITY

ESTABLISHED DUTIES

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 of conforming to it, progress must involve the repudiation of an established duty at every step. If the Englishman had not repudiated the duty of absolute obedience to his king, his political progress would have been impossible. If women had not repudiated the duty of absolute submission to their husbands, and defied public opinion as to the limits set by modesty to their education, they

would never have gained the protection of the Married Women's Property Act, the municipal vote, or the power to qualify themselves as medical practitioners.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE WIDE PURPOSE

Nothing can save society except the clear head and the wide purpose: war and competition, potent instruments of selection and evolution in one epoch, become ruinous instruments of degeneration in the next.

Progress an Illusion
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

CATASTROPHIC UTOPIANS

We must not stay as we are, doing always what was done last time, or we shall stick in the mud. Yet neither must we undertake a new world as catastrophic Utopians, and wreck our civilization in our hurry to mend it.

Postscript BACK TO METHUSELAH

AN IMPOSTURE

Civilization is at present an imposture: we are a crowd of savages on whom a code of makeshift regulations is forced by penalties for breaking them. When I was sent to school I was confronted by a new set of rules and made aware that if I broke them I should be punished. As no other reason for obeying them was given to me I concluded naturally that I could break them without the slightest loss of self-respect, and indeed with some pride in my independence and cleverness, as long as I was not found out. My hero in fiction was the rebel, not the goody-goody citizen, whom I despised. This attitude became a habit which I have never been able to shake off completely.

Postscript BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE COMING CHANGES

You will need all your wits about you to find out where you are and keep there during the coming changes.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WHOM WE ATTRACT

I have had occasion often to point out that revolutionary movements attract those who are not good enough for established institutions as well as those who are too good for them.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

THE ONLY THINGS!

I had rather be a dog than the Prime Minister of a country where the only things the inhabitants can be serious about are football and refreshments.

PROTEUS *in* THE APPLE CART

THE MOTOR CAR

And what Englishman will give his mind to politics as long as he can afford to keep a motor car?

BALBUS *in* THE APPLE CART

LAW

Law has been popularly known only as oppression and taxation, and politics as a clamor for less government and more liberty. That citizens get better value for the rates and taxes they pay than for most other items in their expenditure never occurs to them. They will pay a third of their weekly earnings or more to an idle landlord as if that were a law of nature; but a collection from them by the rate collector they resent as sheer robbery: the truth being precisely the reverse.

Preface to GENEVA

PUBLIC WORK

. . . this public work that never ends because we cannot finish one job without creating ten fresh ones. We get no thanks for it because ninety-nine hundredths of it is unknown to the people, and the remaining hundredth is resented by them as an invasion of their liberty or an increase in their taxation. It wears out the strongest man, and even the strongest woman, in five or six years. It slows down to nothing when we are fresh from our holidays and best able to bear it, and rises in an overwhelming wave through some unforeseen catastrophe when we are on the verge of nervous breakdown from overwork and fit for rest and sleep only.

MAGNUS *in* THE APPLE CART

AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN BORN

Dont deceive yourself, Srarthur: you cant teach people anything they dont want to know. Old Dr. Marx—Karl Marx they call him now—my father knew him well—thought that when he'd explained the Capitalist System to the working classes of Europe theyd unite and overthrow it. Fifty years after he founded his Red International the working classes of Europe rose up and shot one another down and blew one another to bits, and turned millions and millions of their infant children out to starve in the snow or steal and beg in the sunshine, as if Dr. Marx had never been born. And theyd do it again tomorrow if they was set on to do it.

HIPNEY *in* ON THE ROCKS

AFTER THE NEXT ELECTION

BROADBENT: Dont despair, Larry, old boy: things may look black; but there will be a great change after the next election.

DOYLE: Oh, get out, you idiot!

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

OUR RULERS

Our Solons, Caesars and Washingtons, Lenins, Stalins and Nightingales, may be better than their best competitors; but they die in their childhood as far as statesmanship is concerned, playing golf and tennis and bridge, smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol as part of their daily diet, hunting, shooting, coursing, reading tales of murder and adultery and police news, wearing fantastic collars and cuffs, with the women on high heels staining their nails, daubing their lips, painting their faces: in short, doing all sorts of things that are child's play and not the exercises or recreations of statesmen and senators. Even when they have read Plato, the Gospels, and Karl Marx, and to that extent know what they have to do, they do not know how to do it, and stick in the old grooves for want of the new political technique which is evolving under pressure of circumstances in Russia. Their attempts at education and schooling end generally in boy farms and concentration camps with flogging blocks, from which the prisoners when they adolesce emerge as trained and pre-

judiced barbarians with a hatred of learning and discipline, and a dense ignorance of what life is to nine-tenths of their compatriots.

Preface to GENEVA

THE PEOPLE OBJECT TO BE GOVERNED

SIR ARTHUR: No country has ever been governed by the consent of the people, because the people object to be governed at all. Even you, who ought to know better, are always complaining of the income tax.

THE DUKE: But five shillings in the pound, Arthur! Five shillings in the pound!!

ON THE ROCKS

MY MOB

I would have my mob all Caesars instead of Toms, Dicks, and Harrys.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

MOSTLY FOOLS

Now I will be as frank as St. Augustine, and admit that the professed Socialists are also a very mixed lot, and that if joining them meant inviting them indiscriminately to tea I should strongly advise you not to do it, as they are just like other people, which means that some of them steal spoons when they get the chance. The nice ones are very nice; the general run are no worse than their neighbors; and the undesirable ones include some of the most thoroughpaced rascals you could meet anywhere. But what better can you expect from any political party you could join? You are, I hope, on the side of the angels; but you cannot join them until you die; and in the meantime you must put up with mere Conservatives, Liberals, Socialists, Protestants, Catholics, Dissenters, and other groups of mortal women and men, very mixed lots all of them, so that when you join them you have to pick your company just as carefully as if they had no labels and were entire strangers to you. Carlyle lumped them all as mostly fools; and who can deny that, on the whole, they deserve it?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE BURGLAR PAYS FOR HIS JEMMY

For my own part I do not call myself a thief. My intentions are not dishonest; and I did not institute, nor have I any power to change, the legalized system under which I became a landlord whether I liked it or not; but I have devoted all my political life to rubbing in the aforesaid fact that I inflict on my tenants exactly the same economic injury as a burglar, pickpocket, shoplifter, highwayman, or any other sort of robber. I am not a robber baron because I am not a baron; but a robber I certainly am in effect; for I make my tenants yield up to me a part of their hardearned incomes without doing them, or having ever done them, any service whatever. That this is not my fault, and has been to some extent my misfortune, does not make their rents any easier to pay. That in paying off the mortgagees I bought my powers of exploitation with hard cash is equally irrelevant: the burglar has to pay for his jemmy.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE CABIN BOY

Nothing, therefore, is really in question, or ever has been, but the differences between class incomes. Already there is economic equality between captains, and economic equality between cabin boys. What is at issue still is whether there shall be economic equality between captains and cabin boys. What would Jesus have said? Presumably he would have said that if your only object is to produce a captain and a cabin boy for the purpose of transferring you from Liverpool to New York, or to manoeuvre a fleet and carry powder from the magazine to the gun, then you need give no more than a shilling to the cabin boy for every pound you give to the more expensively trained captain. But if in addition to this you desire to allow the two human souls which are inseparable from the captain and the cabin boy, and which alone differentiate them from the donkey-engine, to develop all their possibilities, then you may find the cabin boy costing rather more than the captain, because cabin boy's work does not do so much for the soul as captain's work. Consequently you will have to give him at least as much as the captain unless you definitely wish him to be a lower

creature, in which case the sooner you are hanged as an abortionist the better. That is the fundamental argument.

The Captain And The Cabin Boy
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

OUR FIRST DUTY

. . . the worst of our crimes is poverty, and that our first duty, to which every other consideration should be sacrificed, is not to be poor.

The Gospel Of St. Andrew Undershaft
In Preface to MAJOR BARBARA

NOBODY MUST BE POOR

We, after the terrible experience we have had of the effects of poverty on the whole nation, rich or poor, must go further and say that nobody must be poor.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

UNSENTIMENTAL SCIENTIFIC PIONEERS

There are plenty of millenium mongering Societies and Parties and Leagues to join and be happy. The Fabians must be unsentimental scientific pioneers of the next practicable steps, not dreamers of the New Jerusalem and the Second Advent or the Love panacea with justice nowhere.

Postscript in SIXTY YEARS OF FABIANISM

THOUGHT TRAVELS

And what the Isle of Cats thinks today, all England thinks tomorrow.

THE MAYOR *in* ON THE ROCKS

UNIQUE

THE DUKE: You dont appreciate him. He is absolutely unique.
BASHAM: In what way, pray?
THE DUKE: He is the only politician I ever met who had learnt anything from experience.

ON THE ROCKS

MASTER AND SLAVE

You will also learn that when the master has come to do everything through the slave, the slave becomes his master, since he cannot live without him.

THE HE-ANCIENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

REASONABLE MEN

Every reasonable man (and woman) is a potential scoundrel and a potential good citizen. What a man is depends on his character; but what he does, depends on his circumstances. The characteristics that ruin a man in one class make him eminent in another. The characters that behave differently in different circumstances behave alike in similar circumstances.

In Preface to MAJOR BARBARA

ENGLISH GENTLEMEN

The people who don't go to the theatre because they cant afford the stalls and are ashamed to be seen in the gallery. . . .

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

ON BEING BUSY

How can the busiest man in England find time to do anything?

SIR ARTHUR *in* ON THE ROCKS

I HAVE FAILED

I, who have preached and pamphleteered like any Encyclopedist have to confess that my methods are no use, and would be no use if I were Voltaire, Rousseau, Bentham, Marx, Mill, Dickens, Carlyle, Ruskin, Butler, and Morris all rolled into one, with Europides, More, Montaigne, Molière, Beaumarchais, Swift, Goethe, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Jesus and the prophets all thrown in (as indeed in some sort I actually am, standing as I do on all their shoulders). The problem being to make heroes out of cowards, we paper apostles and artist-magicians have succeeded only in giving cowards all the sensations of heroes whilst they tolerate every abomination, accept every plunder, and submit to every oppression.

Barbara's Return To The Colors
In Preface to MAJOR BARBARA

IDOLATRY

Our professed devotion to political principles is only a mask for our idolatry of eminent persons.

Preface to THE APPLE CART

WHAT REALLY CONCERNS US

Crime, like disease, is not interesting: it is something to be done away with by general consent, and that is all about it. It is what men do at their best, with good intentions, and what normal men and women find that they must and will do in spite of their intentions, that really concern us.

Tragedy, Not Melodrama
Preface to SAINT JOAN

OUR SOCIAL FAILURES

. . . our social failures are not all drunkards and weaklings. Some of them are men who do not fit the class they were born into. Precisely the same qualities that make the educated gentleman an artist may make an uneducated manual laborer an able-bodied pauper.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

GUILT

I must point out that the guilt is shared by all of us.

Thou Art The Man
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

IF WE DID OUR BIT IN PEACE

The truth is that things change much faster and more dangerously when they are let alone than when they are carefully looked after. Within the last hundred and fifty years the most astounding changes have taken place in this very business that we are dealing with (the production and distribution of the national income) just because what was everybody's business was nobody's business, and it was let run wild. The introduction of machinery driven by steam, and later on of electric power distributed from house to house like water or gas, and the invention of engines that not only draw trains along the ground and ships over and under the sea, but carry us and our goods flying through the air, has increased our power to produce wealth and

get through our work easily and quickly to such an extent that there is no longer any need for any of us to be poor. A labor-saving house with gas stoves, electric light, a telephone, a vacuum cleaner, and a wireless set, gives only a faint notion of a modern factory full of automatic machines. If we each took our turn and did our bit in peace as we had to do during the war, all the necessary feeding and clothing and housing and lighting could be done handsomely by less than half our present day's work, leaving the other half free for art and science and learning and playing and roaming and experimenting and recreation of all sorts.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HOUSE OF LORDS

. . . the House of Lords is more representative than the House of Commons because its members are there as the sons of their fathers, which is the reason for all of us being in the world; but it would be a much more human body if it were half-and-half sons and daughters.

Preface to IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

HOW TO WIN SUPPORT

A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

CHANGE THE DURATION OF HUMAN LIFE

The very vulgar proposition that you cannot change human nature, and therefore cannot make the revolutionary political and economic changes which are now known to be necessary to save our civilization from perishing like all previous recorded ones, is valid only on the assumption that you cannot change the duration of human life. If you can change that, then you can change political conduct through the whole range which lies between the plague-stricken city's policy of "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" and the longsighted and profound policies of the earthly paradises of More, Morris, Wells and all the other Utopians.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

LAST THING TO EXPECT IN POLITICS

What your Majesty proposes is the straightforward, logical, intellectually honest solution of our difficulty. Consequently it is the last solution I could have expected in politics.

PROTEUS *in* THE APPLE CART

A LARGE FIELD FOR TOLERATION

It is not true that it takes all sorts to make a world; for there are some sorts that would destroy any world very soon if they were suffered to live and have their way; but it is true that in the generations of men continuous high cultivation is not expedient: there must be fallows, or at least light croppings, between the intense cultivations; for we cannot expect the very energetic and vital Napoleon to be the son of an equally vital son. Nobody has yet calculated how many lazy ancestors it takes to produce an indefatigable prodigy; but it is certain that dynasties of geniuses do not occur, and that this is the decisive objection to hereditary rulers (though not, let me hasten to add, to hereditary figure heads). There is a large field for toleration here: the clever people must suffer fools gladly, and the easy-going ones find out how to keep the energetic ones busy. There may be as good biological reasons for the existence of the work-shy as of the workmad. Even one and the same person may have spells of intense activity and slackness varying from weeks to years.

Importance Of Laziness For Fallowing
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

FREEDOM

Smokers and non-smokers cannot be equally free in the same railway carriage.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE TOWER OF BABEL

The truth is, we live in a Tower of Babel where a confusion of names prevents us from finishing the social edifice.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WHEN I WAS A CHILD

We are a stupid people; and we are a bad looking people. We are ugly; we have narrow minds; and we have bad manners. A great deal of this is due to the effect of being brought up in

a society of inequality. I know perfectly well what happened to myself. I can remember one of my earliest experiences in life was my father finding me playing with a certain little boy in the street, and telling me I was not to play with that little boy, giving me to understand that he was a very inferior and objectionable kind of little boy. I had not found him so. I asked my father why. He said: "His father keeps a shop." I said to my father: "Well; but you keep a mill." Therefore my father pointed out to me that he sold things wholesale, and that this little boy's father sold things retail; and that consequently, there was between me and that boy a gulf which could never be respectably bridged; and that it was part of my duty and part of my honor to regard that boy as an inferior. . . .

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

MY NURSEMAID TOOK ME INTO THE SLUMS

I am not a friend of the poor and an enemy of the rich as ignorant people expect a Socialist to be. When I was a child the nursemaid who took me out to exercise me just as she might have taken a dog, took me into the slums where she had friends instead of into handsomer and more salubrious places. Naturally I hated the slums and the dwellers therein. I still want to have the slums demolished and the dwellers exterminated, and am writing this book with this end in view in my second childhood. And I have in my time elicited thunders of applause from slum audiences by expressing these sentiments.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NOT OLD ENOUGH

On all hands as I write the cry is that our statesmen are too old, and that Leagues of Youth must be formed everywhere to save civilization from them. But despairing ancient pioneers tell me that the young are worse than the old; and the truth seems to be that our statesmen are not old enough for their jobs.

Postscript BACK TO METHUSELAH

HYGIENE IS AESTHETIC

Slums must be demolished because they are ugly and dirty, and replaced by noble thoroughfares and garden cities on the ground that hygiene, like culture, is essentially aesthetic.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

TO WHOM SHOULD WE LOOK?

Only assemblies of persons who are economically carefree, chosen by constituents equally unintimidated, can be looked to for the imagination and daring which modern public business demands.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT OUR PROBLEMS DEMAND

. . . to grapple with the enormous problems of our modern civilization, problems that demand from you the largest scope of mind, the most unhesitating magnanimity, the most sacred recognition of your spiritual and human equality with every person in the nation. To solve them you need a new sort of human being.

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

The Theatre

HOW BAD A POPULAR PLAY CAN BE

In order to fully realize how bad a popular play can be, it is necessary to see it twice.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

WHEN LEISURE BECOMES GENERAL

When poverty is abolished, and leisure and grace of life become general, the only plays surviving from our epoch which will have any relation to life as it will be lived then will be those in which none of the persons represented are troubled with want of money or wretched drudgery. Our plays of poverty and squalor, now the only ones that are true to the life of the majority of living men, will then be classed with the records of misers and monsters, and read only by historical students of social pathology.

SHAKESPEAR AND DEMOCRACY

IF THE THEATRE TOOK ITSELF SERIOUSLY

This would be a very good thing if the theatre took itself seriously as a factory of thought, a prompter of conscience, an elucidator of social conduct, an armory against despair and dullness and a temple of the Ascent of Man.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE FUNCTION OF DRAMA

Drama is no mere setting up of the camera to nature: it is the presentation in parable of the conflict between Man's will and his environment: in a word, of problem.

In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

IF I EVER TAKE TO PLAYWRITING

If I ever take to playwriting (one never knows how low one may fall) I shall do a London Bourgeois Gentilhomme—quite as curious a creature in his way.

LONDON MUSIC

IF I WERE PREVENTED

If I were prevented from producing immoral and heretical plays, I should cease to write for the theatre, and propagate my views from the platform and through books.

The Witness's Qualifications

Preface to THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

OUTLET FOR TRUTH

Fortunately there is one outlet for the truth. We are permitted to discuss in jest what we may not discuss in earnest. A serious comedy about sex is taboo: a farcical comedy is privileged.

Artificial Retribution

In Preface to OVERRULED

I GIVE PAIN

It is no more possible for me to do my work honestly as a playwright without giving pain than it is for a dentist. The nation's morals are like its teeth: the more decayed they are the more it hurts to touch them. Prevent dentists and dramatists from giving pain, and not only will our morals become as carious as our teeth, but tooth-ache and the plagues that follow neglected morality will presently cause more agony than all the dentists and dramatists at their worst have caused since the world began.

Star Chamber Sentimentality

Preface to THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

I DO NOT PLEASE EVERYBODY

. . . the person who is willing to do anything to please everybody is a universally and deservedly despised and disastrous person. The public cannot do without the theatre; and the actor and the dramatist are therefore in a position to insist on honorable terms.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

IS IT DIFFICULT TO WRITE PLAYS?

When people ask me whether it is difficult to write plays I always reply that it is either easy or impossible. It may be laborious: that is quite another matter; but unless the novice can do it from the first without any serious trouble or uncertainty he had better not do it at all: it is not his job.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

A FAST GRIP

To do without illusions and ideals, and to keep a fast grip on the real stuff of life, is hard enough anywhere. I am not sure on reflection, that it is easier out of the theatre than in it.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

WHAT I SAY TODAY EVERYBODY WILL SAY TOMORROW

In this world you must know *all* the points of view, and take One, and stick to it. In taking your side, dont trouble about it being the right side—North is no righter or wronger than South—but be sure that it is really yours, and then back it for all you are worth. And never stagnate. Life is a constant becoming; all stages lead to the beginning of others. The theatre is my battering ram as much as the platform or the press: that is why I want to drag it to the front.

Well, what I say today, everybody will say tomorrow, though they will not remember who put it into their heads. Indeed, they will be right; for I never remember who puts the things into my head: it is the Zeitgeist.

Letter

LONG SPEECHES

You are wrong, believe me, about the long speeches. The easiest thing to do in public is a monologue. It is sheer want of practice that makes actors self-mistrustful when they are asked to deliver a speech or tell a story on the stage, instead of asking or answering questions, or throwing sentences at one another's heads. Why does nobody ever fail as Hamlet? Because he has long speeches. Remember, the nation is trained to hear

sermons. Bless you, I've made speeches hours long to casual wayfarers who could go away when they pleased; and they all stopped at least half an hour.

Letter

UNSUCCESSFUL

The manager of the C.F.A. Theatre regrets to have to announce that his attempt to procure a new play introducing a married woman in love with her own husband, and without a past, has been wholly unsuccessful. An appeal to our leading dramatic authors to write such a play has elicited a unanimous refusal to compromise their professional reputation by dealing with an abnormal situation and catering for morbid tastes. . . .

THE THEATRE OF THE FUTURE

C.F.A. Cash-for-admission.

OLD-FASHIONED AND PRUDISH

Some of my plays were for many years under the ban of the censorship as disgracefully unfit for public performance by reason of their obscenity and blasphemy; and all of them were classed as seditious and paradoxical. They are now disparaged as old-fashioned and prudish by the young lions of dramatic literature.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE HOME

If on any night at the busiest part of the theatrical season in London, the audiences were cordoned by the police and examined individually as to their views on the subject, there would probably not be a single house-owning native among them who would not conceive a visit to the theatre, or indeed to any public assembly, artistic or political, as an exceptional way of spending an evening, the normal English way being to sit in separate families in separate houses, each person silently occupied with a book, a paper, or a game of halma, cut off equally from the blessings of society and solitude. You may make acquaintance of a thousand streets of middle-class English families without coming on a trace of any consciousness of citizenship, or any artistic cultivation of the senses. The condition of the men is bad enough, in spite of their daily escape into the

city, because they carry the exclusive and unsocial habits of "the home" with them into the wider world of their business. Amiable and companionable enough by nature, they are, by home training, so incredibly ill-mannered, that not even their interest as men of business in welcoming a possible customer in every inquirer can correct their habit of treating everybody who has not been "introduced" as a stranger and intruder. The women, who have not even the city to educate them, are much worse: they are positively unfit for civilized intercourse: graceless, ignorant, narrow-minded to a quite appalling degree. In public places these homebred people cannot be taught to understand that the right they are themselves exercising is a common right. Whether they are in a second-class railway carriage or in a church, they receive every additional fellow passenger or worshipper as a Chinaman receives the "foreign devil" who has forced him to open his ports.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

EASIER

It is much easier to write a good play than to make a good law. And there are not a hundred men in the world who can write a play good enough to stand daily wear and tear as long as a law must.

Preface to THE APPLE CART

SHOP WINDOW

. . . the worst convention of the criticism of the theatre current at that time was that intellectual seriousness is out of place on the stage; that the theatre is a place of shallow amusement; that people go there to be soothed after the enormous intellectual strain of a day in the city: in short, that a playwright is a person whose business it is to make unwholesome confectionery out of cheap emotions. My answer to this was to put all my intellectual goods in the shop window.

My Own Part In The Matter
In Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

A GREAT MATTER

For this writing of plays is a great matter, forming as it does the minds and affections of men in such sort that whatsoever

they see done in show on the stage, they will presently be doing in earnest in the world, which is but a larger stage. Of late, as you know, the Church taught the people by means of plays; but the people flocked only to such as were full of superstitious miracles and bloody martyrdoms; and so the Church, which also was just then brought into straits by the policy of your royal father, did abandon and discountenance the art of playing; and thus it fell into the hands of poor players and greedy merchants that had their pockets to look to and not the greatness of this your kingdom. Therefore now must your Majesty take up that good work that your Church hath abandoned, and restore the art of playing to its former use and dignity.

SHAKESPEAR *in* THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS

THE DULLEST THEME

I was considered a heresiarch of the most extravagant kind when I expressed my opinion, at the outset of my career as a playwright, that adultery is the dullest of themes on the stage, and that from Francesca and Paolo down to the latest guilty couple of the school of Dumas fils, the romantic adulterers have all been intolerable bores.

The Favorite Subject Of Farcical Comedy
In Preface to OVERRULED

THE THOUGHT

. . . for me the play is not the thing, but its thought, its purpose, its feeling, and its execution. And as most modern plays have no thought, and are absolutely vulgar in purpose and feeling, I am mainly interested in their execution.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

A theatre to me is a place "where two or three are gathered together." The apostolic succession from Eschylus to myself is as serious and as continuously inspired as that younger institution the apostolic succession of the Christian Church.

The Author's Apology
OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

HOW THE DRAMA WAS BORN

The drama was born of old from the union of two desires: the desire to have a dance and the desire to hear a story.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE CONTEMPLATIVE

Which is the superior man? The man whose pastime is slaughter, or the man whose pastime is creative or contemplative? I have no doubt about the matter myself, being on the creative and contemplative side by nature.

KILLING FOR SPORT

WITHOUT A RAY OF HOPE

I was too young and inexperienced to guess, that what was the matter was not any lack of literary competence on my part, but the antagonism raised by my hostility to respectable Victorian thought and society. I was left without a ray of hope; yet I did not stop writing novels until, having planned my fifth effort on a colossal scale, I found at the end of what were to me only the first two sections of it, that I had no more to say and had better wait until I had educated myself much farther. And when, after an interval of critical journalism, I resumed the writing of fiction, I did so as a playwright and not as a novelist.

IMMATURITY

SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO SAY

You really must have something very important to say to a man, if you expect him to allow you to buttonhole him and claim his undivided attention for even twenty minutes at a stretch, much more (as in the case of a tragedy) for a whole evening.

LONDON MUSIC

MY FIRST THEATRE

When I was a small boy I was taken to the opera. I did not then know what an opera was, though I could whistle a good deal of opera music. I had seen in my mother's album photographs of all the great opera singers, mostly in evening dress. In the theatre I found myself before a gilded balcony filled with persons in evening dress whom I took to be the opera singers. I picked out one massive dark lady as Alboni, and wondered how soon she would stand up and sing. I was puzzled by the fact

that I was made to sit with my back to the singers instead of facing them. When the curtain went up, my astonishment and delight were unbounded.

How The Theatre Fared
In Preface to HEARTBREAK HOUSE

WHAT THEY WANT

Playgoers wanted to see how the rich live; wanted to see them actually drinking champagne and wearing real fashionable dresses and trousers with a neatly ironed crease down the knee.

The Pedantry Of Paris
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

A MASTER!

Just as a barrister in England gets an immense reputation as a criminal's advocate when a dozen of his clients have been hanged (the hanging being at once a proof and an advertisement of the importance of the cases), so when a dramatist has written five or six plays in which two hours of intrigues and telegrams are wasted in bringing about some situation which the audience would have accepted at once without any contrivance at all, he receives his diploma as a master of play construction!

LONDON MUSIC

ON WHOM I DEPEND

I write in the classical manner for those who pay for admission to a theatre because they like classical comedy or tragedy for its own sake, and like it so much when it is good of its kind and well done that they tear themselves away from it with reluctance to catch the very latest train or omnibus that will take them home. Far from arriving late from an eight or half-past eight o'clock dinner so as to escape at least the first half-hour of the performance, they stand in queues outside the theatre doors for hours beforehand in bitingly cold weather to secure a seat. In countries where a play lasts a week, they bring baskets of provisions and sit it out. These are the patrons on whom I depend for my bread. I do not give them performances twelve hours long, because circumstances do not at present make such entertainments feasible.

To The Critics, Lest They Should Feel Ignored
Preface to SAINT JOAN

THE MAIN OBSTACLE

I half suspect that those managers who have had most to do with me, if asked to name the main obstacle to the performance of my plays, would unhesitatingly and unanimously reply "The Author."

Preface to PLAYS PLEASANT

I INJURE MY PROSPECTS

I could not have done anything more injurious to my prospects at the outset of my career than writing *Mrs. Warren's Profession.*

Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

IF I WERE DICTATOR

I have asked Londoners again and again why they pay half a guinea to go to a theatre when they can go to St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey for nothing. Their only possible reply is that they want to see something new and possibly something wicked; but the theatres mostly disappoint both hopes. If ever a revolution makes me Dictator, I shall establish a heavy charge for admission to our churches. But everyone who pays at the church door shall receive a ticket entitling him or her to free admission to one performance at any theatre he or she prefers. Thus shall the sensuous charms of the church service be made to subsidize the sterner virtue of the drama.

Church And Theatre

In Preface to HEARTBREAK HOUSE

IN LONELY LODGINGS

Our shops and business are full of young men living in lonely lodgings, whose only artistic recreation is the theatre. In theatre we practise upon them every art that can make their loneliness intolerable and heighten the charm of the bait in the snares of the street as they go home.

Why The Unmentionable Must Be Mentioned

In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

LIFE ON £30 A DAY

. . . to be ungenteel is worse than to fail. I use the word ungenteel purposely; for the stage presents life on thirty pounds a day, not as it is, but as it is conceived by the earners of thirty shillings a week. The real thing would shock the audience.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

MY MODELS

I have used living models as freely as a painter does.

IMMATURITY

THE BASIS OF OUR PLAYS

When I was a well-known writer, I said that what we wanted as the basis of our plays and novels was not romance, but a really scientific natural history.

Rise Of The Scientific Spirit
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

AN INHUMAN PERSON

The critical profession, in fact, is cruel in its nature, and demands for its efficient discharge an inhuman person like myself. Therefore nobody need be surprised if I raise an exultant and derisive laugh at the clouds of defeat, disappointment, failure, perhaps ruin, which overhang the theatre at present.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

SUICIDE

The new playhouses could be distinguished from cathedrals and museums only by the iron shelters for the queue on rainy nights, which were usually added by an engineering firm after the completion of the edifice, a practice which had already led two architects to suicide and one, more energetic and practical, to murder.

THE THEATRE OF THE FUTURE

AN INDUSTRY

The manufacture of well made plays is not an art: it is an industry.

The Pedantry Of Paris
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

TWIN BEDS

Wellington said that an army moves on its belly. So does a London theatre. Before a man acts he must eat. Before he performs plays he must pay rent. In London we have no theatres for the welfare of the people: they are all for the sole purpose of producing the utmost obtainable rent for the proprietor. If the twin

flats and twin beds produce a guinea more than Shakespear, out goes Shakespear, and in come the twin flats and the twin beds. If the brainless bevy of pretty girls and the funny man outbid Mozart, out goes Mozart.

Commerce In The Theatre
In Preface to HEARTBREAK HOUSE

MYSELF

It is hard for an actor whose point of honor it is to be a perfect gentleman, to sympathize with an author who regards gentility as a dishonest folly, and gallantry and chivalry as treasonable to women and stultifying to men.

Preface to PLAYS PLEASANT

NOTHING FOR YOUR MONEY

It is never safe to take my plays at their suburban face value: it ends in your finding in them only what you bring to them, and so getting nothing for your money.

Preface to THE APPLE CART

THE THINGS I DO NOT SAY!

I am by no means the willing victim of this instinct. I am keenly susceptible to contrary influences—to flattery, which I swallow greedily if the quality is sufficiently good; to the need of money, to private friendship or even acquaintanceship, to the pleasure of giving pleasure and the pain of giving pain, to consideration for people's circumstances and prospects, to personal likes and dislikes, to sentimentality, pity, chivalry, pugnacity and mischief, laziness and cowardice, and a dozen other human conditions which make the critic vulnerable; but the critical instinct gets the better of them all. I spare no effort to mitigate its inhumanity trying to detect and strike out of my articles anything that would give pain without doing any good. Those who think the things I say severe, or even malicious, should just see the things I do not say. I do my best to be partial, to hit out at remediable abuses rather than at accidental shortcomings, and at strong and responsible people rather than weak and helpless ones. And yet all my efforts do not alter the result very much. So stubborn is the critic within me, that with every disposition to be as goodnatured and popular an authority as

the worst enemy of art could desire, I am to all intents and purposes incorruptible.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

NEW-FANGLED PLAYS

I care not for these new-fangled plays. No man can understand a word of them. They are all talk.

THE BEEFEATER *in* THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS

WHAT SHAKESPEAR DID TO HAMLET

I have by me a book called *The Elizabethan Hamlet*, by Mr. John Corbin, published by Mr. Elkin Mathews, in which the author succeeds in fully driving home the fact, not of course hitherto unknown, but certainly hitherto underestimated, that Hamlet first became popular on the stage as a madman: that is, as a comic person according to the ideas of that time. I say of that time as a matter of politeness to my contemporaries, though anyone who has ever seen a village idiot at large must have seen also a crowd of villagers teasing him, encouraging him to make uncouth sounds and cut deplorable capers, and laughing at him with gross enjoyment as at one of Nature's primest jokes. It has always been so, I am afraid. The old-fashioned king's jester was not a clever, satirical, able person like Dumas's Chicot: he was a zany, a poor idiot, a butt, not a wit. Fortunately we have at last reached a point at which the old Hamlet play is out of the question, whilst the masterpiece which Shakespear built on it is the most popular play we have. But is there any distinction, except in degree of atrocity, between the old brutal laughter at "Hamblet's" madness and murderous cunning, and our laughter today at the Lady Janes of Mr. Gilbert, and at certain comedians and music-hall artists who are commercially fortunate enough to be abnormally small or grotesque in appearance? And if Shakespear, in a much coarser age, could take subjects which were reeking with the vilest stage traditions, and lift them at one stroke to the highest tragic dignity, is it too much to ask that our modern dramatists should habitually assume that "the British public" consists of humane persons with developed sympathies, and not of rowdy undergraduates and street arabs?

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

BY MAIN STRENGTH

The murder scene was not very good, because Macbeth belonged to the school of the Irish fiddler who, when Ole Bull asked him whether he played by ear or from notes, replied that he played "by main strength"; and you cannot get the brooding horror of the dagger scene by that method.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

HOW WE DO SHAKESPEAR

. . . owes all its magic to the turn of the line, which lets you into the secret of its utterer's mood and temperament, not by its commonplace meaning, but by some subtle exaltation, or stultification, or slyness, or delicacy, or hesitancy, or what not in the sound of it. In short, it is the score and not the libretto that keeps the work alive and fresh; and this is why only musical critics should be allowed to meddle with Shakespear especially early Shakespear. Unhappily, though the nation still retains its ears, the players and playgoers of this generation are for the most part deaf as adders. Their appreciation of Shakespear is sheer hypocrisy, the proof being that where an early play of his is revived, they take the utmost pains to suppress as much of it as possible, and disguise the rest past recognition, relying for success on extraordinary scenic attractions; on very popular performers, including, if possible, a famously beautiful actress in the leading part; and, above all, on Shakespear's reputation and the consequent submission of the British public to be mercilessly bored by each of his plays once in their lives, for the sake of being able to say they have seen it. And not a soul has the hardihood to yawn in the face of the imposture. The manager is praised; the bard is praised; the beautiful actress is praised; and the free list comes early and comes often, not without a distinct sense of conferring a handsome compliment on the acting manager. And it certainly is hard to face such a disappointment without being paid for it. For the more enchanting the play is at home by the fireside in winter, or out on the heather of a summer evening—the more the manager, in his efforts to realize this enchantment by reckless expenditure on incidental music, colored lights, dances, dresses, and elaborate rearrangements and dislocations of the play—the more, in fact, he departs from the old platform with its curtains and its placards inscribed "A

Street in Mantua," and so forth, the more hopelessly and vulgarly does he miss his mark. Such crown jewels of dramatic poetry as *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, fade into shabby colored glass in his purse; and sincere people who do not know what the matter is, begin to babble insufferably about plays that are meant for the study and not for the stage.

Yet once in a blue moon or so there wanders on to the stage some happy fair whose eyes are lodestars and whose tongue's sweet air's more tunable than lark to shepherd's ear. And the moment she strikes up the true Shakespearean music, and feels her way to her part altogether by her sense of that music, the play returns to life and all the magic is there.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

BLANK VERSE

Blank verse is so childishly easy and expeditious (hence, by the way, Shakespear's copious output) that by adopting it I was enabled to do within the week what would have cost me a month in prose.

Preface to THE ADMIRABLE BASHVILLE

WITHOUT PRETENDING

I purposely contrived the play in such a way as to make the expenses of representation insignificant; so that, without pretending that I could appeal to a very wide circle of playgoers, I could reasonably sound a few of our more enlightened managers as to an experiment with half a dozen afternoon performances.

PLAYS PLEASANT

THE SACRED WORD

I also endeavored in this little play to prove that I was not the heartless creature some of my critics took me for. I observed the established laws of stage popularity and probability. I simplified the character of the heroine, and summed up her sweetness in the one sacred word: Love.

Preface to THE ADMIRABLE BASHVILLE

EVERYONE IN A FILM STUDIO KNOWS BETTER

. . . it is believed in the Hollywood studios today that everyone in a film studio knows better than any professional playwright how a play should be filmed.

FOREWORD *to* CYMBELINE

IN ALL SOLEMNITY

To our young people studying for the stage I say, with all solemnity, learn how to pronounce the English alphabet clearly and beautifully from some person who is at once an artist and a phonetic expert. And then leave blank verse patiently alone until you have experienced emotion deep enough to crave for poetic expression, at which point verse will seem an absolutely natural and real form of speech to you. Meanwhile, if any pedant, with an uncultivated heart and a theoretic ear, proposes to teach you to recite, send instantly for the police.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

WORD MUSIC

This generation, I sometimes think, has no sense of word music. They will go to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition, and admire tissues of cottons, wools, and silks; but give them a beautiful tissue of words, and they have no more sense of the art of it than if it was the Post Office Directory. For instance, William Morris has been weaving words into an article on the art and industry of the fourteenth century in Time. Now watch the reviews and see whether one of them will draw the slightest distinction between the beauty of this article's verbal fabric and the literary kamptulicon of Mr. Blank of the Sterile Club, situate in the region between Dan and Beersheba. But if William Morris had woven a carpet instead, how everybody would have pretended to admire it!

LONDON MUSIC

MY TASTE

I had no taste for what is called popular art, no respect for popular morality, no belief in popular religion, no admiration for popular heroics.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

THE BEST PLAYWRIGHT

I dare not claim to be the best playwright in the English language; but I believe myself to be one of the best ten, and may therefore perhaps be classed as one of the best hundred.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT IS WORTH DOING?

Nothing is worth doing unless the consequences may be serious.

HYPATIA *in* MISALLIANCE

A WONDER

Indeed, to anyone who can estimate, even vaguely, the complicated trouble, the risk of heavy loss, and the initial expense and thought, involved by the production of a play, the ease with which dramatic authors, known and unknown, get their works performed must needs seem a wonder.

Preface to PLAYS PLEASANT

NOTHING HE LIKES BETTER

Any fool can hang the wisest man in the country. Nothing he likes better.

BLANCO *in* THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

IS CAESAR SERIOUS?

APOLLODORUS: Is Caesar serious?

BRITANNUS: His manner is frivolous because he is an Italian; but he means what he says.

APOLLODORUS: Serious or not, he spake well.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

A QUESTION

SIR PATRICK: And tell me this. Suppose you had this choice put before you: either to go through life and find all the pictures bad but all the men and women good, or to go through life and find all the pictures good and all the men and women rotten. Which would you choose?

RIDGEON: Thats a devilishly difficult question, Paddy. The pictures are so agreeable, and the good people so infernally disagreeable and mischievous, that I really cant undertake to say offhand which I should prefer to do without.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

RESCUED

24th August, 1895.

Great Heavens, I have just rescued *The Man of Destiny* from a frightful fate. I am lying in a field, writing in any old note

book with a fountain pen. A foal came up behind me and was just stretching down for a mouthful of the little book with the play in it when I became aware of him. And now he wont go away. I must move into the next field.

Letter

FAILURE

28th January, 1890.

Cashel Byron was reported a failure in October last. Only 2,500 copies gone—should have been 10,000 at least. Have not heard of it since. I cannot do novels now: I have grown out of it. My next effort in fiction, if ever I have time to make one, will be a play.

Correspondence

A FIRM OPINION OF ME

Xmas, 1900.

You may have observed that the critics have shaken down at last into something like a firm opinion about me, the favorable ones playing up strongly and the unfavorable ones saying boldly out that the thing is a failure. . . . That's a great advance on the help-a-lame-dog-over a stile business.

Letter

CANDIDA VERSUS THE SUPERMAN

26th Dec., 1903.

None of the Candida enthusiasts like the Superman. It nevertheless had to be written.

Letter

Books

GUARANTEE

I can guarantee you against any plot. You will be candidly dealt with. None of the characters will turn out to be somebody else in the last chapter: no violent accidents or strokes of pure luck will divert events from their normal course: forger, long lost heir, detective, nor any commonplace of the police court or of the realm of romance shall insult your understanding, or tempt you to read on when you might be better in bed or attending to your business.

The Author to the Reader
IN LOVE AMONG THE ARTISTS

RESURRECTION

. . . when I flung them aside as failures they almost instantly began to shew signs of life.

CASHEL BYRON'S PROFESSION

ORIGINALITY

What the world calls originality is only an unaccustomed method of tickling it.

PREFACE *to* THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

STYLE

Effectiveness of assertion is the alpha and omega of style. He who has nothing to assert has no style and can have none: he who has something to assert will go as far in power and style as its momentousness and his conviction will carry him. Disprove his assertion after it is made, yet its style remains

Darwin has no more destroyed the style of Job nor of Handel than Martin Luther destroyed the style of Giotto. All the assertions get disproved sooner or later; and so we find the world full of magnificent debris of artistic fossil with the matter-of-fact credibility gone clean out of them, but the form still splendid.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

PENNY-IN-THE-SLOT HEROES

Your penny-in-the-slot heroes, who only work when you drop a motive into them, are so oppressively automatic and uninteresting.

PREFACE *to* THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

I FORGET THE AUTHOR'S NAME

There is a book—I forget the author's name, but it is the Posthumous Papers of some club or other—in which a man says to his son, "Vidth and visdom go together, Sammy." I rather doubt the statement.

LONDON MUSIC

WHAT YOU GET FROM BOOKS

The contrast between the wisdom of our literature and the folly of our rulers and voters is a melancholy proof that people get nothing out of books except what they bring to them, and that even when the books explode their prejudices and rebuke their villainies they will read their own dispositions into the books in spite of the authors, and hang up their instruments of torture and their bullet-riddled banners in the very temples of Mercy and Peace.

TO INTRODUCE THE PREFACES

AS IT IS

You must always let yourself think about everything. And you must think about everything as it is, not as it is talked about.

VILLAGE WOOING

AN INSTRUMENT

An author is an instrument in the grip of Creative Evolution, and may find himself starting a movement to which in his own little person he is intensely opposed. When I am writing a play

I never invent a plot: I let the play write itself and shape itself, which it always does even when up to the last moment I do not see the way out. Sometimes I do not see what the play was driving at until quite a long time after I have finished it; and even then I may be wrong about it just as any critical third party may.

Postscript to BACK TO METHUSELAH

MAGIC SPELLS

KEARNEY: Is there anything further before we release these men?

BLUEJACKET: There are some dawcuments handed over by the Cadi, sir. He reckoned they were sort of magic spells. The chahplain ordered them to be reported to you and burnt, with your leave, sir.

KEARNEY: What are they?

BLUEJACKET: Four books, torn and dirty, made up of separate numbers, value each wawn penny, and entitled *Sweeny Todd, The Demon Barber of London: The Skeleton Horseman*——

DRINKWATER: It's maw lawbrary, gavner. Downt burn em.

KEARNEY: Youll be better without that sort of reading, my man.

DRINKWATER: Downt let em burn em, lidy. They dassent if you horder em not to. Yer dunno wot them books is to me. They took me aht of the sawdid reeyellities of the Worterlcoo Rowd. They formed maw mawnd: they shaowed me sathink awgher than the squalor of a corster's lawf——

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

LOVE ON PAPER

Let those who may complain that it was all on paper remember that only on paper has humanity yet achieved glory, beauty, truth, knowledge, virtue, and abiding love.

Letter to Ellen Terry

WHY I GAVE UP FICTION

17th June, 1889.

It was intended to be a great work. I wrote two huge chapters; discovered that I had nothing more to say; and thereupon gave up fiction and took to Socialism.

Correspondence

THE VALUE OF BOOKS

THEODOTUS: Horror unspeakable! Woe, alas! Help!

RUFIO: What now?

CAESAR: Who is slain?

THEODOTUS: Slain! Oh, worse than the death of ten thousand men! Loss irreparable to mankind.

RUFIO: What has happened, man?

THEODOTUS: The fire has spread from your ships. The first of the seven wonders of the world perishes. The library of Alexandria is in flames.

RUFIO: Psha!

CAESAR: Is that all?

THEODOTUS: All! Caesar: will you go down to posterity as a barbarous soldier too ignorant to know the value of books?

CAESAR: Theodotus: I am an author myself; and I tell you it is better that the Egyptians should live their lives than dream them away with the help of books.

THEODOTUS: Caesar: once in ten generations of men, the world gains an immortal book.

CAESAR: If it did not flatter mankind, the common executioner would burn it.

THEODOTUS: Without history, death will lay you beside your meanest soldier.

CAESAR: Death will do that in any case. I ask no better grave.

THEODOTUS: What is burning there is the memory of mankind.

CAESAR: A shameful memory. Let it burn.

THEODOTUS: Will you destroy the past?

CAESAR: Ay, and build the future with its ruins.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

HOW TO READ VERSE

Whilst I am in the way of faultfinding, I may as well say that I protest altogether against the Reciter's theory that verse should be disguised as prose in its oral delivery. All poets read their verses sing-song, which is the right way: else why the deuce should they be at the trouble of writing in verse at all?

LONDON MUSIC

A DANGEROUS AMUSEMENT

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Reading is a dangerous amusement, Tarleton. I wish I could persuade your free library people of that.

TARLETON: Why, man, it's the beginning of education.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: On the contrary, it's the end of it. How can you dare teach a man to read until youve taught him everything else first?

JOHNNY: Leave it at that. Thats good sense. Anybody on for a game of tennis?

BENTLEY: Oh, lets have some more improving conversation. Wouldnt you rather, Johnny?

JOHNNY: If you ask me, no.

TARLETON: Johnny: you dont cultivate your mind. You dont read.

JOHNNY: Yes I do. I bet you what you like that, page for page, I read more than you, though I dont talk about it so much. Only, I dont read the same books. I like a book with a plot in it. You like a book with nothing in it but some idea that the chap that writes it keeps worrying, like a cat chasing its own tail. I can stand a little of it, just as I can stand watching the cat for two minutes, say, when Ive nothing better to do. But a man soon gets fed up with that sort of thing. The fact is, you look on an author as a sort of god. I look on him as a man that I pay to do a certain thing for me. I pay him to amuse me and to take me out of myself and make me forget.

TARLETON: No. Wrong principle. You want to remember. Read Kipling. "Lest We Forget."

JOHNNY: If Kipling wants to remember, let him remember. If he had to run Tarleton's Underwear, he'd be jolly glad to forget. As he has a much softer job, and wants to keep himself before the public, his cry is, "Dont you forget the sort of things I'm rather clever at writing about." Well, I dont blame him: it's his business: I should do the same in his place. But what he wants and what I want are two different things. I want to forget; and I pay another man to make me forget.

MISALLIANCE

NATURAL MAN

If I buy a book or go to the theatre, I want to forget the shop and forget myself from the moment I go in to the moment I come out. Thats what I pay my money for. And if I find that the author's simply getting at me the whole time, I consider

that he's obtained my money under false pretences. I'm not a morbid crank: I'm a natural man; and, as such, I dont like being got at.

MISALLIANCE

A PERMANENT MARK

Out of the millions of books in the world, there are very few that make any permanent mark on the minds of those who read them.

Letter to Frank Harris

SHAKESPEAR

Ah, sir, how the words of Shakespear seem to fit every crisis in our emotions!

MENDOZA *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

INSULTED

Once, when I was a guest in a Manchester club, I was insulted by one of the members so offensively that I had to lecture him severely on his breach of club manners, and warn him that my host might complain to the Committee. What annoyed him was not my uncompromising refusal to accept Jehovah as a god, but that I had denied the omniscience and infallibility of Shakespear.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DISAGREEABLE IMPRESSION

The playwright who attempts to revive genuine drama produces the disagreeable impression of the pedant who attempts to start a serious discussion at a fashionable at-home.

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

AT EASE WITH AN AUTHOR

Not until an author has become so familiar that we are quite at our ease with him, and are up to his tricks of manner, do we cease to imagine that he is, relatively to older writers, terribly serious.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE PRACTICAL ASPECT

It was hard for a navvy or a blacksmith to believe that making scratches with a pen on a scrap of paper was work on which a man could grow as hungry as at wielding shovels and picks and sledgehammers; and for a long time authors had to live by selling their manuscripts to publishers and players. But publication made the book available to everyone to copy; and when a play was performed a shorthand expert could be sent to report it word by word as it was spoken on the stage and thus obtain a copy for publication or for use in another theatre without paying the author. To this the publishers and managers objected very strongly; for they too wanted an exclusive right to print or perform the book or play they had bought from the author; and this he could not sell to them because he did not possess it. So though the authors were too few, too poor, too feckless in business and politics to obtain anything for themselves from Parliament, the publishers, being men of business, obtained it for them and bought it from them for prices which still left most of them struggling with "toil, envy, want: the patron and the jail," until they formed professional associations (trade unions under a more genteel name) and began to exploit their new sort of property more sensibly.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MY NEXT BOOK

The musical conventions of the minstrel style are curious; but I shall reserve a full description of them for my treatise on modern music, which I hope to get through the Press shortly before 1950.

LONDON MUSIC

FICTION

SWINDON: I cant believe it! What will History say?

BURGOYNE: History, sir, will tell lies, as usual.

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

The Critic

MY LIFE AS A CRITIC

When I broke loose from my cashier's desk and with desperate imprudence jumped overboard into the literary market in London only to find that nobody would publish my attempts at writing books, I made my living for some years as a critic of literature, painting, music, and the theatre. My good word was of some value then; but no painter, picture dealer, music seller, composer, actor, or manager ever offered me cash down for a favorable notice. One innocent youth in the provinces sent me a patent tobacco pipe with a letter asking me to be kind to his brother, to whom he was deeply attached, and who had taken to the stage as a profession. He had failed to ascertain that I do not smoke. I was touched by his brotherly devotion, and would certainly have paid a little special attention to the case if I had ever seen the brother acting or remembered his name. The methods of the theatre managers were less crude. They would consult me as an expert on the advisability of producing some foreign play of which they had purchased the performing rights. If I thought well of it, would I translate it and sell the option of performing my translation within six months, for, say, £50? If I had made a translation of some noted foreign play, preferably a French one, I believe I could have made a hundred a year by selling an option on it twice a year. One eminent actor-manager offered to accept an original play of mine, not committing himself to a date for production, but intimating that if at any time I desired an advance on account of royalties it could be arranged. At his theatre on every first night the stage was cleared after the performance for a banquet at which it was a coveted privilege

to be a guest. The critics were invited discreetly by the box office chief as they entered. I always accepted the invitation as a courteous tribute to my influence; but I never went.

In the picture market nobody ever offered me hard cash, directly or indirectly, for a favorable notice. The picture dealers had personal contacts with the critics on the days they set apart for the Press before the opening of their exhibitions; and the older hands were experts in the art of personally humbugging reporters who, being only newsmen who could not tell a Greco from a Guido or a Frith from a Burne-Jones at sight, got on by praising the eminent painters and ignoring the beginners unless they were talked by the dealer into believing that his latest speculation in a beginner's work was the discovery of a new genius. At my first appearance at these "Press Views" I was addressed very flatteringly by a famous dealer, now long deceased, who expatiated to me rapturously on the marvellous qualities of half a dozen respectable but quite ordinary sketches in water-color by an unknown painter. I listened gravely and then said "Mr. ——: how can you talk such nonsense to me? You know better." Without turning a hair he beckoned me confidentially and said, "Come with me" and led me to a private room in which he kept a few real treasures by old masters: mostly primitives.

His chief contemporary and rival in picture dealing, also long since passed away, had a subtler method. He invited me to see the latest picture by a well-known painter, and received me not very genially, like a man disgusted with the popular taste in art. "Oh!" he said, "Youve come to see this. Here it is. Pish! It is what you people like; and we have to provide it for you. Now here (pointing to a picture quite inconspicuously hung) is a picture to my taste worth ten of it. But it means nothing to you: you wouldnt know the painter's name if I told it to you. Look at his handling! Look at that sky. But you gentlemen of the Press pass it by without a glance." Of course the reporters who did not know chalk from cheese in painting would hasten to shew their connoisseurship by "writing up" the neglected genius for all they were worth. I was taken in; but I had not the heart to spoil the old man's comedy by telling him so. I was soon recognized as a qualified critic and admitted to the inner fellowship that exists between the genuine critics and the dealers

who are real connoisseurs. In that circle the tricks of the trade were dropped, with the result that many of the best critics knew nothing of the humbug and corruption practised on newsmen employed by editors who were ignorant of art and impatient of the convention that obliged their papers to notice it. They sent their worst and wordiest reporters to the galleries, the theatre, and the opera, reserving their best for political meetings and the criminal courts.

However, the relations of critics with dealers do not cover the whole field of possible corruption. I was never bribed by a dealer, and after my first appearances never humbugged. But I once gave up a valuable appointment as picture critic to a prominent weekly journal because I was asked to write flattering notices of the pictures painted by the proprietor's friends regardless of their merits, the argument being that as I was welcome to do the same for my own personal friends, I could not be so churlish as to refuse to do as much for my employer. Later on I obtained an equally desirable appointment, but had to give that up also, because the proprietress of the paper insisted on interpolating over my signature ecstatic little raptures about minor Academy pictures by painters who invited her to tea at their studios.

In the musical world no direct bribes ever came my way, nor did I ever hear of any. All I can say is that at the Opera as in the theatres and all other places of public entertainment it was far easier and pleasanter to praise everything, flatter everybody, and say nothing about shortcomings, than to write the critical truth. At the Opera my easygoing colleagues in the foyer between the acts would expatiate indignantly on the demerits of the new world-famous Italian tenor with the voice of a newspaper crier and the manners of a trooper who was that night proving himself utterly unpresentable in London as an adequate Manrico or Lohengrin. The conductor would have been in his proper place among the second violas; the cuts made in the score were unpardonable Vandalisms; the work was only half rehearsed or perhaps not rehearsed at all; in the love duet the soprano was sharp and the tenor flat all through; the Wagner Leitmotifs were phrased one way by the strings, another by the brass, and yet another by the wood-wind so that no one could recognize them as the same; the leaders of the chorus were in

their seventh or eighth decades, almost voiceless and never in the middle of the note, but indispensable because they were "good starters," and so on through the series of impostures and makeshifts which make the Opera a hell for composers and for critics who know. "You must really shew this up," the easygoers would say to me. But they did not shew it up themselves. By their accounts the performances shone with all the brilliancy of the diamonds with which the ladies in the grand tier boxes were decked to advertise the riches of their financier husbands. Complaisant critics were welcomed in the theatre even when all the stalls were sold out and they had to be content as "rovers" without allotted seats, sitting or standing about wherever they could. From the agents and henchmen of the favored *prima donna* of that day I received hints that not only were unlimited tickets for her concerts at my disposal for the asking, but that invitations to her delightful castle in Wales were not beyond possibility for a critic who could be depended on not to mention that she was no longer sure of her F and preferred to transpose and make it E flat. I was never a guest at that castle, even after I had asked the lady's accompanist in what key she sang "Ah, non giunge." He took it as a threat of exposure if I were not invited.

And so it went. The incorruptible critics were tolerated because their articles, being readable and controversial, kept up public interest in the art which the managers were exploiting. A readable unfavorable notice is a better advertisement than an unreadable or at any rate unmemorable puff. Also no doubt Awe was at work here: an able and independent critic could win authority and prestige. And the complaisant critics were not all corrupt: They imposed on the public because they were themselves imposed on, not knowing that there was anything to complain of, nor, when they had picked up a little knowledge, being sure enough of it to have the courage of it, or skilled enough to know exactly what was wrong.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

I OBJECT TO A UNIFORM

I have returned to Mr. F. R. Benson a couple of stalls which he has been kind enough to send me for his *Hamlet* at the Globe Theatre; and I shall make my reason public. The tickets were inscribed "Evening dress indispensable for stalls, dress circle, and

private boxes." Now, I object to being forced into the uniform of any class—most of all that of the class of gentlemen to which I do not belong, and should be ashamed to belong. I need not here repeat the refutation of the stale pretence that the evening dress regulation ensures decency and cleanliness. A man can be just as offensively unclean in evening dress as in any other costume. It is, as I have said, a class uniform and nothing else. Now I submit to it at the opera (in London) because I cannot effectively challenge Mr. Harris's right to place his theatre on the footing of a West-End drawing room as long as the West-End people pay up the subvention which in France comes from the nation. But I submit reluctantly, and take a distinct pleasure in the fact that my evening suit is by far the seediest article of clothing I possess. When Mr. Benson tries on the same tyranny without the same excuse, I object. I prefer to pay two shillings and go into the pit, where I can wear what I like. That is what I did some weeks ago, when I went to see Mr. Benson as Hamlet on my own initiative, and remarked that he keeps up the pleasant old tradition by which the Danish court enters to the strains of the march from Judas Maccabaeus. The performance is an interesting and enjoyable one; and Mr. Benson is better as Hamlet than in any other of the parts he has played here this season. But he is not going to force his inky cloak and customary suits of solemn black on me, for all that. And his attempt to do so makes me half suspect him of being a relative of the archbishop after all.

LONDON MUSIC

FROM MEN OF ESTABLISHED REPUTATION

It is from men of established literary reputation that we learn that William Blake was mad, that Shelley was spoiled by living in a low set, that Robert Owen was a man who did not know the world, that Ruskin was incapable of comprehending political economy.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

NO MAN

. . . no man, be he ever so accomplished a critic, can effectively look at or listen to plays that he really does not want to see or hear.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

I DO NOT PROFESS

It does not follow, however, that the right to criticize Shakespear involves the power of writing better plays. And in fact—do not be surprised at my modesty—I do not profess to write better plays.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

PLOT

Plot has always been the curse of serious drama, and indeed of serious literature of any kind.

Foreword to CYMBELINE

LITTLE BETHEL AND LITTLE BAYREUTH

Amateur art is discredited art in so far only as the amateur is known as the ape of commercial art. Persons who go to the theatre and opera house only to be smitten with an infatuate ambition to reproduce in their own untrained persons what they see the great professional artists doing there, are most foredoomed to failure and ridicule. Here and there one of them succeeds, only to be absorbed by the commercial profession. But the countryside is full of stout characters with no such folly and no such ambition, who will do as much for any gifted artistic leader as they have done for Mr. Boughton and for the organizers of our provincial choirs and brass bands. If Little Bethel has raised the miners of England in a few generations from troglodyte savagery to pious respectability, Little Bayreuth may as easily raise them from pious respectability to a happy consciousness of and interest in fine art, without which all their piety and respectability will not save their children from resorting to cruel sports and squalid sensualities in their natural need for enjoyment.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

INTIMACY

. . . if you want her to play to you as to a friend whom she glories in pleasing, then you have got to convince her that you are artistically capable of that intimate relationship.

LONDON MUSIC

Professions

THE JUDGE

A judge with a keen sense of law (a very rare phenomenon on the Bench, by the way).

Doctors' Consciences
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE JUDGE

LADY CICELY: Men are always thinking that they are going to do something grandly wicked to their enemies; but when it comes to the point, really bad men are just as rare as really good ones.

BRASSBOUND: You forget that I am like my uncle, according to you. Have you any doubt as to the reality of his badness?

LADY CICELY: Bless me! your Uncle Howard is one of the most harmless of men—much nicer than most professional people. Of course he does dreadful things as a judge; but then if you take a man and pay him £5,000 a year to be wicked, and praise him for it, and have policemen and courts and laws and juries to drive him into it so that he cant help doing it, what can you expect? Sir Howard's all right when he's left to himself.

CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

THE DOCTOR

There was my father's old friend George Boddington of Sutton Coldfield. He discovered the open-air cure in eighteen-forty. He was ruined and driven out of his practice for only opening the windows; and now we wont let a consumptive

patient have as much as a roof over his head. Oh, it's very very interesting to an old man.

SIR PATRICK *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE MEDICAL STUDENT

Is it possible for a man to go through a medical training and retain a spark of common sense?

The Perils Of Inoculation
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

PRESCRIPTIONS

Doctors write prescriptions that are as absurd as the rub of chalk with which an Irish tailor once charmed away a wart from my father's finger.

The Successful Doctor
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

APOTHECARY

Dr. Newland, our apothecary, was in almost continual attendance to administer cathartics; and when I had a sore throat I used to hold out for sixpence before submitting to a mustard plaster round my neck.

LONDON MUSIC

DOCTOR

If people are persuaded that night air is dangerous to health and that fresh air makes them catch cold, it will not be possible for a doctor to make a living in private practice if he prescribes ventilation.

Patient-Made Therapeutics
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

ONE GUINEA, PLEASE

Yes; but some doctors are dreadful. There was that man at Folkestone: he was impossible. He tore aside the curtain and let the blazing sunlight into the room, though she cannot bear it without green spectacles. He opened the windows and let in all the cold morning air. I told him he was a murderer; and he only said "One guinea, please."

THE ELDERLY LADY *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

VEGETARIAN

11th May, 1898.

They are frightened out of their wits by the doctor who wants to cure me of my vegetarian follies. . . .

Letter

THE DOCTOR

It is useless for the doctor to tell him that what he or his sick child needs is not medicine, but more leisure, better clothes, better food, and a better drained and ventilated house.

Medical Poverty

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

SCHOOLMISTRESS

You know quite well what I mean. When will you learn, Nicobar, that it is no use trying to browbeat me. I began life as a schoolmistress; and I can browbeat any man in this Cabinet or out of it if he is fool enough to try to compete with me in that department.

LYSISTRATA *in* THE APPLE CART

THE GENERAL

NAPOLEON: What shall we do with this officer, Giuseppe? Everything he says is wrong.

GIUSEPPE: Make him a general, excellency; and then everything he says will be right.

THE MAN OF DESTINY

THE BARRISTER

You see he only tells one side of the story. That comes from his training as a barrister. You mustnt think he's naturally deceitful.

LADY CICELY *in* CAPTAIN BRASSBOUND'S CONVERSION

THE POLITICAL PRIVATE SECRETARY

In good society in England, Charles, men drivel at all ages by repeating silly formulas with an air of wisdom. Schoolboys make their own formulas out of slang, like you. When they reach your age, and get political private secretaryships and things of that sort, they drop slang and get their formulas out of *The Spectator* or *The Times*.

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

THE ACTRESS

NELLY: You really think I could teach you something, Mr. Newton? What a compliment! Did you hear that, Rowley darling?

NEWTON: In these very simple matters one may learn from anyone. And you, Madam, must have very remarkable mental powers. You repeat long parts from memory in the theatre. I could not do that.

NELLY: Bless me, so I do, Mr. Newton. You are the first man I ever met who did not think an actress must be an ignorant ninny—except schoolboys, who think she is a goddess. I declare you are the wisest man in England, and the kindest.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

THE PAINTER

He was a great painter. On his deathbed he said to me "It has taken me fifty years to learn my trade, and to paint all the foolish pictures a man must paint and get rid of before he comes through them to the great things he ought to paint. And now that my foot is at last on the threshold of the temple I find that is also the threshold of my tomb." That man would have been the greatest painter of all time if he could have lived as long as I. I saw him die of old age whilst he was still, as he said himself, a gentleman amateur, like all modern painters.

MRS. LUTESTRING *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE PAINTER

KNELLER: The circle is a dead thing like a straight line: no living hand can draw it: you make it by twirling a pair of dividers. Take a sugar loaf and cut it slantwise, and you will get hyperbolas and parabolas, ellipses and ovals, which Leonardo himself could not draw, but which any fool can make with a knife and a lump of sugar. I believe in none of these mechanical forms. The line drawn by the artist's hand, the line that flows, that strikes, that speaks, that reveals! that is the line that shews the divine handiwork.

CHARLES: So you, too, are a philosopher, Mr. Kneller!

KNELLER: Sir: when a man has the gift of a painter, that qualification is so magical that you cannot think of him as anything else. Who thinks of Leonardo as an engineer? of

Michael Angelo as an inventor or a sonneteer? of me as a scholar and a philosopher? These things are all in our day's work: they come to us without thinking. They are trifles beside our great labor of creation and interpretation.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

THE SINGER

Cases are by no means uncommon of practised singers and speakers losing all confidence in their old methods in new and alarming conditions as to space. When that happens, they begin to bleat frantically, with the effect that Gayarré produced on me. Actors and singers who have small voices should remember that the problem for them is to make themselves *heard*, and by no means to make themselves *loud*. Loudness is the worst defect of quality that any voice, large or small, can have.

LONDON MUSIC

THE PROFESSOR

When a man is mentally incapable of abstract thought he takes to metaphysics; and they make him a professor. When he is incapable of conceiving quantity in the abstract he takes to mathematics; and they make him a professor. When he is incapable of distinguishing between a clockwork mouse and a real one he takes to biology; and they make him a professor. And so on. The fact is, these chaps are clockwork mice themselves. By tutoring them and coaching them and stuffing them with text-books you wind them up, and they go. You feel safe with them because you always know how far they will go and how they will go.

CONRAD *in*
A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

THE GREENGROCER

They joke about the greengrocer, just as they joke about the mother-in-law. But they cant get on without both.

COLLINS *in* GETTING MARRIED

THE MONARCH

A king is not allowed the luxury of a good character. Our country has produced millions of blameless greengrocers, but not one blameless monarch.

MAGNUS *in* THE APPLE CART

THE CRITIC

I have twice had to resign very desirable positions on the critical staff of London papers of first-rate pretension—in one case because I was called upon as a recognized part of my duties to write corrupt puffs of the editor's personal friends, with full liberty, in return, to corruptly puff my own; and in the other, because my sense of style revolted against the interpolation in my articles of sentences written by the proprietor's wife to express her high opinion of artists, unknown to fame and me, who had won her heart by their hospitality.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

PLAYWRIGHT

14th April, 1896.

Here am I, after 20 years drudging away, at last venturing to tell myself that if I begin writing for the stage, I will master the business by the time I am fifty or so. I know I will get deeper into it than I now have any idea of, and that I will come to understand the requirements of the art in a way that I do not know.

Letter

TRADE UNION OFFICIAL

No king on earth is as safe in his job as a Trade Union official. There is only one thing that can get him sacked; and that is drink. Not even that, as long as he doesnt actually fall down. I talk democracy to these men and women. I tell them that they have the vote, and that theirs is the kingdom and the power and the glory. I say to them "You are supreme: exercise your power." They say, "That's right: tell us what to do"; and I tell them. I say "Exercise your vote intelligently by voting for me." And they do. That's democracy; and a splendid thing it is too for putting the right men in the right place.

BOANERGES *in* THE APPLE CART

THE CLERK

I can remember the time when the standard wage of a clerk in London was fifteen shillings a week whilst that of a skilled mechanic was two pounds; yet people brought up their sons to be clerks instead of masons, carpenters, or fitters, because the

black coat, the starched collar, and the pen, were more respectable than the fustian jacket, the corduroy trousers, the chisel, the saw, and the hammer. The clerk, pitiably poorer than the mechanic, was at least richer than the ploughman with his thirteen shillings, or the farmer's "boy" in Oxfordshire with eight shillings and two or three children. I recall these now incredible British figures for the instruction of those who dismiss all changes as Utopian on the general ground that human nature (meaning human conduct, which is infinitely changeable) cannot be changed.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE TEACHER!

I want a man with no relations and no schooling: that is, a man who would be out of the running altogether if he were not a strong man. And I cant find him. Every blessed foundling nowadays is snapped up in his infancy by Barnardo homes, or School Board officers, or Boards of Guardians; and if he shews the least ability he is fastened on by schoolmasters; trained to win scholarships like a racehorse; crammed with secondhand ideas; drilled and disciplined in docility and what they call good taste; and lamed for life so that he is fit for nothing but teaching.

UNDERSHAFT *in* MAJOR BARBARA

THE SCHOOLMASTER

With millions of acres of woods and valleys and hills and wind and air and birds and streams and fishes and all sorts of instructive and healthy things easily accessible, or with streets and shop windows and crowds and vehicles and all sorts of city delights at the door, you are forced to sit, not in a room with some human grace and comfort of furniture and decoration but in a stalled pound with a lot of other children, beaten if you talk, beaten if you cannot prove by answering idiotic questions that even when you escaped from the pound and from the eye of your gaoler you were still agonizing over his detestable sham books instead of daring to live.

School

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE POLITICIAN

Our work is no longer even respected. It is looked down on by our men of genius as dirty work. What great actor would

exchange his stage? what great barrister his court? what great preacher his pulpit? for the squalor of the political arena in which we have to struggle with foolish factions in parliament and with ignorant voters in the constituencies? The scientists will have nothing to do with us; for the atmosphere of politics is not the atmosphere of science. Even political science, the science by which civilization must live or die, is busy explaining the past whilst we have to grapple with the present: it leaves the ground before our feet in black darkness whilst it lights up every corner of the landscape behind us.

MAGNUS *in* THE APPLE CART

THE BUTLER

The English are extremely particular in selecting their butlers, whilst they do not select their barons at all, taking them as the accident of birth sends them.

THE IRRATIONAL KNOT

THE COOK

Molière took an opinion on the effectiveness of his comedies; but it was the opinion, not of the French Academy, but of his cook. He knew better than to classify the cook as illiterate and the Academy as infallibly literate.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE PROPAGANDIST

These people forget that I am a man: they think I am a talking machine to be turned on for their pleasure every evening of my life.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

THE TINKER

Well, nowadays it is not the king that rules but the tinker. . . . The Method

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE COSTER'S DREAM

Now imagine our costermonger becoming a Labor member of Parliament, as he may under existing conditions if he is a bit of a speaker, and has picked up all the abstract arguments for Socialism and against Capitalism by attending Socialist meetings and reading Socialist tracts. I have shared the platform with very

eloquent costers who elicited thunders of applause by their speeches, though they dropped all their aitches and the Governor of the Bank of England has never been known to drop one. Imagine your coster a Cabinet Minister, a Prime Minister, or, if you like, a Duce, a Führer, or a Commissar! Such things happen nowadays. In that case he may see himself in the delightful position of being able to create unlimited wealth by simply printing scraps of paper marked ten shillings, a pound, five pounds, a hundred pounds. He can print them by the million, and make them legal tender in all business transactions. Revolutionary governments consisting of inexperienced men who know a good deal about poverty and halfpence and nothing about millions almost always intoxicate themselves by this assumption, which is pure lunacy. No government can create a loaf of bread, an egg, a pair of boots, nor even repair a broken window by printing figures on paper. The bits of paper can be valid as title-deeds to bread and butter and boots and bricks and mortar or any other material objects or personal services only when the material objects and active servants are in existence. If not, the holders of the paper may go whistle for them. They might as well hold shares in an imaginary gold mine.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WORLD BETTERER

I preached whenever and wherever I was asked. It was first come first served with me: when I got an application for a lecture I gave the applicant the first date I had vacant, whether it was for a street corner, a public-house parlour, a market place, the economic section of the British Association, the City Temple, a cellar, or a drawing-room. My audiences varied from tens to thousands. I expected opposition, but got hardly any. Twice, in difficulties raised by attempts of the police to stop Socialist street meetings (they always failed in the end because the religious sects, equally active in the open air, helped the Socialists to resist them), I was within an ace of going to prison. The first time was in Dodd Street in Dockland, where the police capitulated on the morning of the day when I volunteered to defy them. The second time, many years later at the "World's End" in Chelsea, a member of a rival Socialist Society disputed the martyr's palm with me, and, on a division, defeated me by two

votes, to my secret relief. My longest oration lasted four hours in the open air on a Sunday morning to crowds at Trafford Bridge in Manchester. One of my best speeches was delivered in Hyde Park in torrents of rain to six policemen sent to watch me. . . . I entertained them for more than an hour. I can still see their waterproof capes shining in the rain when I shut my eyes. I never took payment for speaking.

How I Became a Public Speaker
in SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

UNEMPLOYABLE

Some sixty years ago or thereabouts I asked a very clever lad (he had just produced a volume of poems) what profession he intended to adopt. He replied quite seriously that professions would soon cease to exist, as a speech from the Socialist leader Henry Mayers Hyndman had convinced him that the revolution would take place in England in 1889, the centenary of the French revolution. I reminded him that in the most perfect Socialist State people would occasionally break their bones and need surgeons to set them, that houses could not be built without craftsmen and master builders nor babies born without midwives: in short, that under Socialism there would be as many crafts, professions, and callings as ever, if not several more.

Though this is as plain as the sun in the heavens it had never occurred to him. He had looked forward to Socialism as a state of things in which nobody will ever be hungry or cold or ill or ignorant or in any sort of trouble. He had been taught to believe in heaven and hell; and instead of examining these beliefs and rejecting them as fabulous he had simply transferred them to Socialism and Capitalism. Instead of a State in which everybody will have to work he had envisaged a moneyless State in which nobody will work.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE VAGABOND

I have no sympathy with vagabonds and talkers who try to reform society by taking men away from their regular productive work and making vagabonds and talkers of them too.

Why Not Give Christianity A Trial?
Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

THE TALKER

Joyce Burge has talked so much that he has lost the power of listening.

CONRAD *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

MUSIC CRITIC

I believed I could make musical criticism readable even by the deaf. Besides, my terms were moderate: two guineas a week.

LONDON MUSIC

THE THINKER

Certainly the practical men know where they are, but not always whither we are going, whereas the thinkers who know whither we are going do not always know where we are.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

CONQUEROR

POTHINUS: Is it possible that Caesar, the conqueror of the world, has time to occupy himself with such a trifle as our taxes?

CAESAR: My friend: taxes are the chief business of a conqueror of the world.

CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

THE DANCER

If you want a rule of thumb to guide you in determining the merits of two dancers comparatively, then simply see how much of each dances, and award the palm to the larger quantity. Let me explain. Dancing begins at the feet and progresses upwards. In some people it stops at the ankles: they shine only in clog dancing hornpipes, and the like. In others it reaches as far as to the hips: these can aspire to kicking through a Gaiety pas de quatre, or spurious can-can. Then the magic fluid reaches the shoulders and invades the arms as far as the elbows, then the dancer pretends to leading business. Many a premiere danseuse holds her position in spite of a neck and wrists which are, dancingly considered, dead as door nails. But the dancer who dances to the tips of her fingers and the top of her head: that is the perfect dancer.

LONDON MUSIC

SHOPKEEPER

Provided their incomes are either equal or large enough to be superfluous as far as personal habits and expenses are concerned, people of the most widely different occupations can associate without embarrassment. Foxhunters and flyfishers meet astronomers and philosophers at dinner parties in country houses on equal terms. When I was young a peer could not possibly visit a shopkeeper; but the daughters of superpedigreed peers now dance at the balls of mammoth shopkeepers and seek husbands there. For in the long run money will take us anywhere, and lack of it will tame the haughtiest peer.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE WAITER

The waiter is a remarkable person in his way. A silky old man, white haired and delicate looking, but so cheerful and contented that in his presence ambition stands rebuked as vulgarity, and imagination as treason to the abounding sufficiency and interest of the actual. He has a certain expression peculiar to men who are pre-eminent in their callings, and who, whilst aware of the vanity of success, are untouched by envy.

Of the WAITER *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

THE POLICE

GUNNER: And you call that justice!

LORD SUMMERHAYS: No. Justice was not my business. I had to govern a province; and I took the necessary steps to maintain order in it. Men are not governed by justice, but by law or persuasion. When they refuse to be governed by law or persuasion, they have to be governed by force or fraud, or both. I used both when law and persuasion failed me. Every ruler of men since the world began has done so, even when he has hated both fraud and force as heartily as I do. It is as well that you should know this, my young friend; so that you may recognize in time that anarchism is a game at which the police can beat you.

MISALLIANCE

THE PICKPOCKET

When detected pickpockets were publicly hanged, the undetected ones drove a flourishing trade under the gallows. But nobody ever picks a pocket when a policeman is watching.

SIXTY YEARS OF FABIANISM

THE SOLDIER

Soldiering, my dear madam, is the coward's art of attacking mercilessly when you are strong, and keeping out of harm's way when you are weak. That is the whole secret of successful fighting. Get your enemy at a disadvantage; and never, on any account, fight him on equal terms.

SERGIUS *in* ARMS AND THE MAN

THE CRAZE FOR WORK

Every woman whose husband is engaged in interesting work knows the difficulty of getting him away from it even to his meals: in fact, jealousy of a man's work sometimes causes serious domestic unhappiness; and the same thing occurs when a woman takes up some absorbing pursuit, and finds it and its associations more interesting than her husband's company and conversation and friends. In the professions where the work is solitary and independent of office and factory hours and steam engines, the number of people who injure their health and even kill themselves prematurely by overwork is so considerable that the philosopher Herbert Spencer never missed an opportunity of warning people against the craze for work. It can get hold of us exactly as the craze for drink can. Its victims go on working long after they are so worn out that their operations are doing more harm than good.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

REASONABLE!

I am sick of reasonable people: they see all the reasons for being lazy and doing nothing.

THE SECRETARY *in* GENEVA

THE ROUTINEER

Men inevitably become indifferent to anything they do often enough. It is this dangerous power of custom that makes it so

difficult to convince the common sense of mankind that any established commercial or professional practice has its root in passion. Let a routine once spring from passion, and you will presently find thousands of routineers following it passionlessly for a livelihood.

Routine
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A SLAVE OF CUSTOM

I object to be called unintelligent merely because I do not know enough about mechanical construction to be able to judge whether a motor car of new design is an improvement or not; and therefore prefer to buy one of the old type to which I am accustomed.

The Dread Of The Original Thinker
In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

THE ORATOR

Public oratory is a fine art. Like other fine arts, it cannot be practised effectively without a laboriously acquired technique.

BBDE *in* GENEVA

THE CONDITION OF HUMAN SURVIVAL

When Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden and had to fend for themselves they had to feed and clothe and house not only themselves but their children; otherwise the race would have perished with them. It is thus a condition of human survival that every human couple should be able to support by its labor at least three unproductive, greedy, mischievous brats as well as themselves.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

UNEMPLOYED

Now a starving man is a dangerous man, no matter how respectable his political opinions may be. A man who has had his dinner is never a revolutionist: his politics are all talk. But hungry men, rather than die of starvation, will, when there are enough of them to overpower the police, begin by rioting, and end by plundering and burning rich men's houses, upsetting the

government, and destroying civilization. And the women, sooner than see their children starve, will make the men do it, small blame to them.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

CYNICISM

Walk through the poorer quarters of our cities on Sunday when the men are not working, but resting and chewing the cud of their reflections. You will find one expression common to every mature face: the expression of cynicism.

Weaknesses Of The Salvation Army
In Preface to MAJOR BARBARA

THE PEASANT

LARRY: I tell you, an Irish peasant's industry is not human: its worse than the industry of a coral insect. An Englishman has some sense about working: he never does more than he can help—and hard enough to get him to do that without scamping it; but an Irishman will work as if he'd die the momen the stopped. That man Matthew Haffigan and his brother Andy made a farm out of a patch of stones on the hillside: cleared it and dug it with their own naked hands and bought their first spade out of their first crop of potatoes. Talk of making two blades of wheat grow where one grew before! those two men made a whole field of wheat grow where not even a furze bush had ever got its head up between the stones.

BROADBENT: That was magnificent, you know. Only a great race is capable of producing such men.

LARRY: Such fools, you mean! What good was it to them? The moment theyd done it, the landlord put a rent of £5 a year on them, and turned them out because they couldn't pay it.

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE PRIMA DONNA

I doubt whether anyone would grudge us our extra spending money. An attempt by the Government to tax it so as to reduce us to the level of ordinary mortals would probably be highly unpopular, because the pleasure we give is delightful and wide-

spread, whilst the harm we do by our conceit and tantrums and jealousies and spoiltness is narrowly limited to the unfortunate few who are in personal contact with us. A *prima donna* with a rope of pearls ten feet long and a coronet of Kohinoors does not make life any worse for the girl with a string of beads who, by buying a five shilling ticket, helps to pay for the pearls: She makes it better by enchanting it.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE PROFESSIONAL HUMBUG

One day when I was expatiating to a friend on the importance of teaching people to speak well, he asked me dubiously whether I did not find that most men became humbugs when they learnt elocution. I could not deny it. The elocutionary man is the most insufferable of human beings. But I do not want anybody to become elocutionary. If your face is not clean, wash it: dont cut your head off. If your diction is slipshod and impure, correct and purify it: dont throw it away and make shift for the rest of your life with a hideous affectation of platformy accent, false emphases, unmeaning pauses, aggravating slowness, ill-conditioned gravity, and perverse resolution to "get it from the chest" and make it sound as if you got it from the cellar. Of course, if you are a professional humbug—a bishop or a judge, for instance—then the case is different; for the salary makes it seem worth your while to dehumanize yourself and pretend to belong to a different species. But under ordinary circumstances you had better simply educate your ear until you are fairly skilful at phonetics, and leave the rest to your good sense.

LONDON MUSIC

GOVERNORS AND ORGANIZERS

Nature, which is always incorrigibly prodigal, produces more than enough of natural born governors and organizers to fill all the panels of the necessary hierarchy with an overflow quite sufficient to give the governed choice enough to keep the elected under democratic control. But this generous supply comes from the entire population, and amounts to a percentage of it only. Moreover it is available only when the fullest culture and education are within the reach of everyone capable of profiting by them. Cut off nine-tenths of the population from such culture

and education by proletarian poverty and you cut off nine-tenths of the natural supply of governing and organizing ability, and are forced back on dressing up "the tenth transmitter of a foolish face" to look like a natural aristocrat, and get through his public work by doing what was done last time, whilst his private affairs are managed by his butler, his bailiff, and his solicitor.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

COULD NOT AFFORD

My poor father should never have been in business. His parents were poets; and they gave him the noblest ideas; but they could not afford to give him a profession.

ELLIE *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE POET

I well know that it is in the poet that the holy spirit of man—the god within him—is most godlike. It should make you tremble to think of that—to think that the heavy burthen and great gift of a poet may be laid upon you.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

THE PHILOSOPHER

My good friend, there is nothing so wonderful that a philosopher cannot believe it. The philosopher sees a hundred miracles a day where the ignorant and thoughtless see nothing but the daily round, the common task.

NEWTON *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

THE SECRET OF A SUCCESSFUL MAN

HYPATIA: Theres money in underwear: theres none in wild-cat ideas.

TARLETON: Theres money in me, madam, no matter what I go into.

MRS. TARLETON: Dont boast, John. Dont tempt Providence.

TARLETON: Rats! You dont understand Providence. Providence likes to be tempted. Thats the secret of the successful man.

MISALLIANCE

THE CLERGYMAN

Of course what you say is all very true; but it does no good: they dont mind what you say to them one little bit. They think

they agree with you; but whats the use of their agreeing with you if they go and do just the opposite of what you tell them the moment your back is turned? Look at our congregation at St. Dominic's! Why do they come to hear you talking about Christianity every Sunday? Why, just because theyve been so full of business and moneymaking for six days that they want to forget all about it and have a rest on the seventh; so they can go back fresh and make money harder than ever! You positively help them at it instead of hindering them.

CANDIDA *in* CANDIDA

THE RECTOR

I was present once at the induction of a rector into a Church of England living. Although I knew beforehand that the bishop would have to ask the postulant a question to which the answer would be a deliberate lie, known to be such to both of them, and was prepared to admit that they were both doing this under duress, having to do it or have their vocations closed to them, it was none the less shocking to see and hear it actually done.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

JUDGES AND BISHOPS

Never forget that if you leave your law to judges and your religion to bishops you will presently find yourself without either law or religion.

The Cost Of Divorce
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

THE CHOICE

UNDERSHAFT: You cant become prime minister all at once. Havnt you a turn for something? What about literature, art, and so forth?

STEPHEN: I have nothing of the artist about me, either in faculty or character, thank Heaven!

UNDERSHAFT: A philosopher, perhaps? Eh?

STEPHEN: I make no such ridiculous pretension.

UNDERSHAFT: Just so. Well, there is the army, the navy, the Church, the Bar. The Bar requires some ability. What about the Bar?

STEPHEN: I have not studied law. And I am afraid I have not

the necessary push—I believe that is the name barristers give to their vulgarity—for success in pleading.

UNDERSHAFT: Rather a difficult case, Stephen. Hardly anything left but the stage, is there? Well, come! is there anything you know or care for?

STEPHEN: I know the difference between right and wrong.

UNDERSHAFT: You dont say so! What! no capacity for business, no knowledge of law, no sympathy with art, no pretension to philosophy; only a simple knowledge of the secret that has puzzled all the philosophers, baffled all the lawyers, muddled all the men of business, and ruined most of the artists, the secret of right and wrong. Why, man, youre a genius, a master of masters, a god! at twenty-four, too!

MAJOR BARBARA

Religion

DANGEROUS TO BE A SAINT

. . . it is far more dangerous to be a saint than to be a conqueror.

Contrast With Napoleon
Preface to SAINT JOAN

WHAT IS WRONG WITH PRIESTS

What is wrong with priests and popes is that instead of being apostles and saints, they are nothing but empirics who say "I know" instead of "I am learning," and pray for credulity and inertia as wise men pray for scepticism and activity.

The Latest Theories
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

I SHOULD STARVE

If I had either to prosper as a stockbroker or starve as a metabiologist I should starve, as Mozart and Beethoven very nearly did when they composed symphonies instead of sentimental drawingroom ballads.

Postscript to BACK TO METHUSELAH

TRUE JOY

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

It is a house built to last for ever. The walls and beams are big enough to carry the Tower of Babel, as if the builders, anticipating our modern ideas and instinctively defying them, had resolved to shew how much material they could lavish on a house built for the glory of God, instead of keeping a competitive eye on the advantage of sending in the lowest tender, and scientifically calculating how little material would be enough to prevent the whole affair from tumbling down by its own weight.

Description of the BISHOP'S PALACE *in* GETTING MARRIED

REASON

Reason can discover for you the best way—bus or tram, underground or taxi—to get from Piccadilly to Putney, but cannot explain why you should want to go to Putney instead of staying in Piccadilly.

SIXTEEN SELF SKETCHES

THE RAREST OF ALL FAITHS

. . . the immense pressure of thought and labor which earns for the greatest artists that rarest of all faiths, faith in their real selves.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE CHURCH

IMMENSO: Why do I uphold the Church: I, who know as much of the crimes of the Churches as you do? Not for what the Church did for men, but for what men did for the Church. It brought us no gifts; but it drew forth gifts from us. And that is just as it should be. I love the Church because Michelangelo painted its churches. You complain of it because the churches did not paint Michelangelo. Well, suppose they had painted him! Suppose they had tarred and feathered him! Would you not place the painting of Michelangelo, with the burning of John Huss or Giordano Bruno or Joan of Arc, among the crimes of the Churches?

MRS. ETTEN: That is a very pretty juggle with words, and very funny. But when you are talking of Michelangelo you are talking of a man so great that he was literally a demigod.

When you talk of the Church, you are talking of a pack of common men calling themselves clergymen and priests, and trying to persuade us that they are demigods by wearing ugly black clothes. Michelangelo did not paint for them: he painted for me, and for people like you and me. We are the spectators for whom he painted; we are the Church which drew out his gifts. It was for us that Bach and Beethoven composed, that Phidias and Rodin made statues, that the poets sang and the philosophers became seers. It is you who are faithless and disloyal in giving the allegiance we owe to them to corrupt gangs of little lawyers and politicians and priests and adventurers organized as States and Churches and dressed up like actors to seem the thing they are not. They pretend to see events with glass eyes, and to hear the music of the spheres with ass's ears.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

PRAYER

Prayer consoles, heals, builds the soul in us; and to enact a Prohibition of Prayer, as some Secularists would if they had the power, would be as futile as it would be cruel.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MORALITY

Immorality does not necessarily imply mischievous conduct: it implies conduct, mischievous or not, which does not conform to current ideals. All religions begin with a revolt against morality, and perish when morality conquers them and stamps out such words as grace and sin, substituting for them morality and immorality. Bunyan places the town of Morality, with its respectable leading citizens Mr. Legality and Mr. Civility, close to the City of Destruction. In the United States today he would be imprisoned for this. Born as I was in the seventeenth century atmosphere of mid-nineteenth century Ireland, I can remember when men who talked about morality were suspected of reading Tom Paine, if not of being downright atheists.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE CASE OF SOCRATES

Now it is always hard for superior wits to understand the fury roused by their exposures of the stupidities of comparative

dullards. Even Socrates, for all his age and experience, did not defend himself at his trial like a man who understood the long accumulated fury that had burst on him, and was clamoring for his death. His accuser, if born 2,300 years later, might have been picked out of any first class carriage on a suburban railway during the evening or morning rush from or to the City; for he had really nothing to say except that he and his like could not endure being shewn up as idiots every time Socrates opened his mouth. Socrates, unconscious of this, was paralyzed by his sense that somehow he was missing the point of the attack. He petered out after he had established the fact that he was an old soldier and a man of honorable life, and that his accuser was a silly snob. He had no suspicion of the extent to which his mental superiority had roused fear and hatred against him in the hearts of men towards whom he was conscious of nothing but good will and good service.

Joan And Socrates
Preface to SAINT JOAN

A SUPERIOR BEING

Fear will drive men to any extreme; and the fear inspired by a superior being is a mystery which cannot be reasoned away.

Contrast With Napoleon
Preface to SAINT JOAN

DANGER OF UTTERING THE TRUTH

The righteous man takes his life in his hand whenever he utters the truth.

Letter

HONEST REALITY

. . . in the long run civilization must get back to honest reality or perish.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK GIRL
IN HER SEARCH FOR GOD

A RELIGIOUS PERSON

We must have a religion if we are to do anything worth doing. If anything is to be done to get our civilization out of the horrible mess in which it now is, it must be done by men

who have got a religion. One of the reasons which have induced me to take up this subject very seriously is the simple observation that people who have no religion are cowards and cads. You may say, How do you reconcile that with the statement by a Bishop that when he wants to get anything done, he finds it is no use going to Church people, he has to go to atheists and Noncomformists, and people of that kind? Well, an atheist is not a man who has no religion, any more than a professing Christian is necessarily a person who has a religion. Obviously, the majority of Christians today have not any religion, and they have less of Christianity than of any religion on earth. What I mean by a religious person is one who conceives himself or herself to be the instrument of some purpose in the universe which is a high purpose, and is the motive power of evolution, that is of a continual ascent in organization and power of life, and extension of life. Any person who realizes that there is such a power, and that his business and joy in life is to do its work, and his pride and point of honor to identify himself with it, is religious; and the people who have not got that feeling are clearly irreligious, no matter what denomination they may belong to.

MODERN RELIGION

THE CATHEDRAL WITHIN ME

In my consciousness there is a market, a garden, a dwelling, a workshop, a lover's walk . . . above all a cathedral. My appeal to the master builder is: Mirror this Cathedral for me in enduring stone; make it with hands; let it direct its sure and clear appeal to my senses so that when my spirit is vaguely groping after an elusive mood my eye shall be caught by the skyward tower, showing me where, within the Cathedral, I may find my way to the Cathedral within me.

ON GOING TO CHURCH

SEERS

. . . the seers of visions and the bearers of revelations are not always criminals.

Joan's Voices And Visions
Preface to SAINT JOAN

WHAT WE WANT

We do not want good men and bad men any more than we want giants and dwarfs. What we do want is a high quality for our normal: that is, people who can be much better than what we now call respectable without self-sacrifice. Conscious goodness, like conscious muscular effort, may be of use in emergencies; but for everyday national use it is negligible; and its effect on the character of the individual may easily be disastrous.

The Gospel of Laodicea
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

RELIGION, POLITICS AND SEX

The ablest and most highly cultivated people continually discuss religion, politics, and sex: it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they discuss nothing else with fully awakened interest. Commoner and less cultivated people, even when they form societies for discussion, make a rule that politics and religion are not to be mentioned, and take it for granted that no decent person would attempt to discuss sex. The three subjects are feared because they rouse the crude passions which call for furious gratification in murder and rapine at worst, and, at best, lead to quarrels and undesirable states of consciousness.

Taboo In Schools.
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE COMMONWEALTH OF FELLOW-FEELING

Though a busy man can always find something to do, there comes a point at which his health, his sanity, his existence may depend on his doing nothing of the smallest importance; and yet he cannot sit still and twiddle his thumbs: besides he requires bodily exercise. He needs an idle pastime. Now "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" if the idler lets his conscience go to sleep. But he need not let it go to sleep. There are plenty of innocent idle pastimes for him. He can read detective stories. He can play tennis. . . . But to kill, being all the time quite a good sort of fellow, merely to pass away the time when there are a dozen harmless ways of doing it equally available, is to behave like an idiot or a silly imitative sheep.

Surely the broad outlook and deepened consciousness which

admits all living to the commonwealth of fellow-feeling, and the appetite for fruitful activity and generous life which come with it, are better than this foolish doing of unamiable deeds by people who are not in the least unamiable.

KILLING FOR SPORT

A DIVINE RIGHT

The minister believed that when a thing needs saying, a man is in due course inspired to say it, and such inspiration gives him a divine right to be heard.

Brieux And Voltaire
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

THE WILL TO DO

They have observed the simple fact that the will to do anything can and does, at a certain pitch of intensity set up by conviction of its necessity, create and organize new tissue to do it with.

Creative Evolution
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

CONSCIENCE NEVER FAILS

Conscience is part of the equipment of the normal man, and it never fails in its work.

Familiar Frauds Of The Trade In Sin
In IMPRISONMENT

FORGOTTEN

The famine years of the soul, when the great vital dogmas of honor, liberty, courage, the kinship of all life, faith that the unknown is greater than the known and is only the As Yet Unknown, and resolution to find a manly highway to it, have been forgotten in a paroxysm of littleness and terror. . . .

The Latest Theories
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

GAINING FREEDOM

Malice and fear are narrow things, and carry with them a thousand inhibitions and terrors and scruples. A heart and brain purified of them gain an enormous freedom. . . .

The Ruthlessness Of The Pure Heart
In IMPRISONMENT

THE MOST STUPENDOUS FACT

Creeds must become intellectually honest. At present there is not a single credible established religion in the world. That is perhaps the most stupendous fact in the whole world situation.

Sane Conclusions
In MAJOR BARBARA

THERE IS NOTHING ELSE

It all comes back to fellow-feeling and appetite for fruitful activity and a high quality of life: there is nothing else to appeal to.

KILLING FOR SPORT

THE CHURCH TO WHICH I BELONG

. . . that older and greater Church to which I belong: the Church where the oftener you laugh the better, because by laughter only can you destroy evil without malice, and affirm good fellowship without mawkishness.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

BETTER THAN THE GUTTER

At worst the Bible gives a child a better start in life than the gutter.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK GIRL

ASHAMED OF ITS PAST

. . . life, including human life, is continually evolving, and must therefore be continually ashamed of itself and its present and past.

In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

IN THE BOOKS OF THE RECORDING ANGEL

Not one of us has a blank page in the books of the Recording Angel.

Most Prisoners No Worse Than Ourselves
In IMPRISONMENT

THE CHURCHMAN WHO NEVER READS *THE FREETHINKER*

Yet the ordinary man so dislikes having his mind unsettled, as he calls it, that he angrily refuses to allow a paper which dissents from his views to be brought into his house. Even at his club he resents seeing it, and excludes it if it happens to run

counter to the opinions of all the members. The result is that his opinions are not worth considering. A churchman who never reads *The Freethinker* very soon has no more real religion than the atheist who never reads the *Church Times*. The attitude is the same in both cases: they want to hear nothing good of their enemies; consequently they remain enemies and suffer from bad blood all their lives; whereas men who know their opponents and understand their case, quite commonly respect and like them, and always learn something from them.

What We Do Not Teach, And Why
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

THE ENGLISHMAN'S MIND

It seems impossible to root out of an Englishman's mind the notion that vice is delightful, and that abstention from it is privation.

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

A MATTER OF TASTE

I am convinced that if a dozen sceptics were to draw up in parallel columns a list of the events narrated in the gospels which they consider credible and incredible respectively, their lists would be different in several particulars. Belief is literally a matter of taste.

Credibility Of The Gospels
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

ON BEING USED

I must be used, built into the solid fabric of your life as far as there is any usable brick in me, and thrown aside when I am used up. It is only when I am being used that I can feel my own existence, enjoy my own life.

Letter

A MAN OF EXCEPTIONAL SANITY

We always hesitate to treat a dangerously good man as a lunatic because he may turn out to be a prophet in the true sense: that is, a man of exceptional sanity who is in the right when we are in the wrong.

The Gospel of Laodicea
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

IT SAYS WHAT HE MEANS

. . . no public man in these islands ever believes that the Bible means what it says: he is always convinced that it says what he means.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE MATTER WITH US

All English men and women are eager to be ladies and gentlemen; yet the things we do to become ladies and gentlemen are just those that steep us in the basest caddishness and the deepest irreligion. That does not alter the fact that if you could get into people an intelligent conception of gentility or gentleness, you might do something with them. If you allow people who are caddish and irreligious to become the governing force, the nation will be destroyed. We are today largely governed by persons without political courage, and that is what is the matter with us.

MODERN RELIGION

IMAGINATION

The thing he believes may be true, but that is not why he believes it: he believes it because in some mysterious way it appeals to his imagination.

Credibility And Truth
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

REVELATION CONTINUOUS

The notion that inspiration is something that happened thousands of years ago, and was then finished and done with, never to occur again: in other words, the theory that God retired from business at that period and has not since been heard from, is as silly as it is blasphemous. He who does not believe that revelation is continuous does not believe in revelation at all, however familiar his parrot's tongue and pewsleepy ear may be with the word.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

A NATION OF CHRISTS

Steam locomotion is possible without a nation of Stephensons, although national Christianity is impossible without a nation of Christs.

The Verdict Of History
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

CONVERSION

The great danger of conversion in all ages has been that when the religion of the high mind is offered to the lower mind, the lower mind, feeling its fascination without understanding it, and being incapable of rising to it, drags it down to its level by degrading it. Years ago I said that the conversion of a savage to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery.

In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD

After all, the salvation of the world depends on the men who will not take evil good-humoredly, and whose laughter destroys the fool instead of encouraging him. "Rightly to be great," said Shakespear when he had come to the end of mere buffoonery, "is greatly to find quarrel in a straw." The English cry of "Amuse us: take things easily: dress up the world prettily for us" seems mere cowardice to the strong souls that dare look facts in the face; and just so far as people cast off levity and idolatry they find themselves able to bear the company of Bunyan and Shelley, of Ibsen and Strindberg and great Russian realists, and unable to tolerate the sort of laughter that African tribes cannot restrain when a man is flogged or an animal trapped and wounded. They are gaining strength and wisdom: gaining, in short, that sort of life which we call the life everlasting, a sense of which is worth, for pure well-being alone, all the brutish jollities of Tom Cringle and Humphrey Clinker, and even Falstaff, Pecksniff, and Micawber.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE GREATEST DRAW

Sometime ago I had occasion to deliver a public address on the Problems of Poverty in Bristol. Following the custom of those who understand such problems, I put up at the most expensive hotel in the town, where I arrived the night before that appointed for my own performance. After dinner I went into the hall of the hotel to study the theatrical announcements exhibited for the convenience of playgoing visitors. There, among bills of pantomimes and melodramas, I found, in carved wooden frames of "ecclesiastical" gothic design, and with capital letters suggestive of the ten commandments, the announcements of the churches, with the hours of service, and details of

the musical arrangements, as to which "special attention" was guaranteed. Leaving all theological and sectarian considerations out of account, I have no doubt whatever that the Bristol churchgoer has a better time of it in point of comfort, decency, cheapness, music, interest, edification, rest and recreation than the Bristol playgoer. I sometimes believe that our playgoers in London are simply stupid people who have not found out those great "draws," the services in St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. Certainly, when I recall some of the evening services I have attended in cathedrals, and compare them with the dull drudgery of sitting out The Manxman, even in a complimentary stall (what must it be in the shilling gallery?) I begin to understand why it is that only the weaklings, the sentimentalists, the unbusinesslike people go to the theatre, whilst the solid, acquisitive, industrious, safely selfish Englishman who will have the best value for his money, sticks to the church.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THIS EARTH OF OURS

This world, sir, is very clearly a place of torment and penance, a place where the fool flourishes and the good and wise are hated and persecuted, a place where men and women torture one another in the name of love; where children are scourged and enslaved in the name of parental duty and education; where the weak in body are poisoned and mutilated in the name of healing, and the weak in character are put to the horrible torture of imprisonment, not for hours but for years, in the name of justice. It is a place where the hardest toil is a welcome refuge from the horror and tedium of pleasure, and where charity and good works are done only for hire to ransom the souls of the spoiler and the sybarite. Now, sir, there is only one place of horror and torment known to my religion; and that place is hell. Therefore it is plain to me that this earth of ours must be hell, and that we are all here, as the Indian revealed to me—perhaps he was sent to reveal it to me—to expiate crimes committed by us in a former existence.

KEEGAN *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

ONLY ONE RELIGION

There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it.

Preface to PLAYS PLEASANT

THE JAINS

In India the Jains have built temples of extraordinary magnificence for a creed from which God is expressly excluded as a force beyond human comprehension which we must not presume to name. There are British sects in which the belief in God is so thorough and logical that parents must not discuss religion with their children: They must leave them wholly in the hands of God. A well known friend of mine who was a convinced atheist and militant freethinker was the son of devout Glasite (in England Sandemanian) parents, and the grandson of a leader of that little sect. But his attempt to bring up his own son as an anti-clerical and atheist was completely defeated when the boy went to a public school, where he distinguished himself by a brilliant success on the most conventional lines. For the boy had an "inner Light" of his own different both from the inner light of his atheist father and that of his Glasite grandparents. His father was disappointed just as his grandfather had been. This inner light has to be reckoned with; for we beget many ugly ducklings, all of whom do not turn out to be swans.

Now what is this inner light?

Scientifically it is still a mystery; but for the purposes of a Ministry of Education it is the personal view the citizen takes of the facts known to him or her. It is therefore of cardinal importance that the citizen should know the facts as far as they are known or knowable. It seems to follow that parents, parsons, teachers, and propagandists of every sort must be prevented at all costs from telling children lies instead of teaching them science.

EVERYBODY'S BIG PAPA

Finally, if you are not selfish and cruel, you will find that you must give the children some reason for behaving well when no one is looking, and there is no danger of being found out, or when they would rather do the forbidden thing at the cost of a whacking than leave it undone with impunity. You may tell them that God is always looking, and will punish them inevitably when they die. But you will find that posthumous penalties are not immediate enough nor real enough to deter a bold child. In the end you must threaten it with some damage to a part of it called its soul, of the existence of which you can give it no

physical demonstration whatever. You need not use the word soul: you can put the child "on its honor." But its honor also is an organ which no anatomist has yet succeeded in dissecting out and preserving in a bottle of spirits of wine for the instruction of infants. When it transgresses you can resort to scolding, calling it a naughty, dirty, greedy little thing. Or you may lecture it, telling it solemnly that "it is a sin to steal a pin" and so forth. But if you could find such a monster as an entirely matter-of-fact child, it might receive both scoldings and lectures unmoved, and ask you "What then? What is a sin? What do you mean by naughty, greedy? I understand dirty; but why should I wash my hands if I am quite comfortable with them dirty. I understand greedy; but if I like chocolates why should I give half of them to Jane?" You may retort with "Have you no conscience, child?" but the matter-of-fact reply is "What is conscience?" Faced with this matter-of-fact scepticism you are driven into pure metaphysics, and must teach your child that conduct is a matter, not of fact, but of religious duty. Good conduct is a respect which you owe to yourself in some mystical way; and people are manageable in proportion to their possession of this self-respect. When you remonstrate with a grown-up person you say "Have you no self-respect?" But somehow one does not say that to an infant. If it tells a lie, you do not say "You owe it to yourself to speak the truth," because the little animal does not feel any such obligation, though it will later on. If you say "You must not tell lies because if you do nobody will believe what you say," you are conscious of telling a thundering lie yourself, as you know only too well that most lies are quite successful, and that human society would be impossible without a great deal of goodnatured lying. If you say "You must not tell lies because if you do you will find yourself unable to believe anything that is told to you," you will be much nearer the truth; but it is a truth that a child cannot understand; you might as well tell it the final truth of the matter which is, that there is a mysterious something in us called a soul, which deliberate wickedness kills and without which no material gain can make life bearable. How can you expect a naughty child to take that in? If you say "You must not tell a lie because it will grieve your dear parents," the effect will depend on how much the child cares whether its parents are grieved or not. In any

case to most young children their parents are as gods, too great to be subject to grief, as long as the parents play up to that conception of them. Also, as it is not easy to be both loved and feared, parents who put on the majesty of gods with their children must not allow the familiarity of affection, and are lucky if their children do not positively hate them. It is safer and more comfortable to invent a parent who is everybody's Big Papa, even Papa's papa, and introduce it to the child as God. And it must be a god that children can imagine. It must not be an abstraction, a principle, a vital impulse, a life force, or the Church of England god who has neither body, parts, nor passions. It must be, like the real papa, a grown-up person in Sunday clothes, very very good, terribly powerful, and all-seeing: that is, able to see what you are doing when nobody is looking. In this way the child who is too young to have a sufficiently developed self-respect and intelligent sense of honor: in short, a conscience, is provided with an artificial, provisional, and to a great extent fictitious conscience which tides it over its nonage until it is old enough to attach a serious meaning to the idea of God.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

PLAIN ARMY REGULATIONS

Do justice; love mercy; and walk humbly before your God. That appeals to a man if only it could be set out in plain army regulations.

THE SERGEANT *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

THE IDEALISTS

I see plenty of good in the world working itself out as fast as the idealists will allow it.

Preface to PLAYS PLEASANT

THE CONDITION

I believe that any society which desires to found itself on a high standard of integrity of character in its units should organize itself in such a fashion as to make it possible for all men and all women to maintain themselves in reasonable comfort by their industry without selling their affections and their convictions.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

THE INSIDER

When I had to come out of the realm of imagination into that of actuality I was still uncomfortable. I was outside society, outside politics, outside sport, outside the Church. If the term had been invented then I should have been called The Complete Outsider. But the epithet would have been appropriate only within the limits of British barbarism. The moment music, painting, literature, or science came into question the positions were reversed: it was I who was the Insider. I had the intellectual habit; and my natural combination of critical faculty with literary resource needed only a clear comprehension of life in the light of an intelligible theory: in short, a religion, to set it in triumphant operation.

IMMATURITY

GOVERNMENT IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A RELIGION

I repeat, government is impossible without a religion: that is, without a body of common assumptions. The open mind never acts: when we have done our utmost to arrive at a reasonable conclusion, we still, when we can reason and investigate no more, must close our minds for the moment with a snap, and act dogmatically on our conclusions. The man who waits to make an entirely reasonable will dies intestate.

Christianity And The Empire

Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

UP HIS SLEEVE

BLANCO: Take care, Boozy. He hasnt finished with you yet. He always has a trick up His sleeve——

ELDER DANIELS: Oh, is that the way to speak of the ruler of the universe—the great and almighty God?

BLANCO: He's a sly one. He's a mean one. He lies low for you. He plays cat and mouse with you. He lets you run loose until you think youre shut of Him; and then, when you least expect it, He's got you.

ELDER DANIELS: Speak more respectful, Blanco—more reverent.

BLANCO: Reverent! Who taught you your reverent cant? Not your Bible. It says He cometh like a thief in the night—aye, like a thief—a horse-thief——

ELDER DANIELS: Oh!

BLANCO: And it's true. Thats how He caught me and put my neck into the halter. To spite me because I had no use for Him—because I lived my own life in my own way, and would have no truck with His "Dont do this," and "You mustnt do that," and "Youll go to Hell if you do the other." I gave Him the go-bye and did without Him all these years. But He caught me out at last. The laugh is with Him as far as hanging me goes.

ELDER DANIELS: Dont dare to put your theft on Him, man. It was the Devil tempted you to steal the horse.

BLANCO: Not a bit of it. Neither God nor Devil tempted me to take the horse: I took it on my own. He had a cleverer trick than that ready for me. When I think that I might have been safe and fifty miles away by now with that horse; and here I am waiting to be hung up and filled with lead! What came to me? What made me such a fool? Thats what I want to know. Thats the great secret.

THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Now what made the old-fashioned religion so powerful was that at its best (meaning in the hands of its best believers) there was much positive good in it, and much comfort for those who could not bear the cruelty of nature without some explanation of life that carried with it an assurance that righteousness and mercy will have the last word. This is the power of Science also: it, too, at its best has done enormous positive good; and it also at its highest flight gives a meaning to life which is full of encouragement, exultation, and intense interest. You may yourself be greatly concerned as to whether the old or the new explanation is the true one; but looking at it objectively you must put aside the question of absolute truth, and simply observe and accept the fact that the nation is made up of a relatively small number of religious or scientific zealots, a huge mass of people who do not bother about the business at all, their sole notion of religion and morality being to do as other people in their class do, and a good many Betwixt-and-Betweens. The neutrals are in one sense the important people, because any creed may be imposed on them by inculcation during infancy, whereas the believers and unbelievers who think for themselves

will let themselves be burnt alive rather than conform to a creed imposed on them by any power except their own consciences.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

REVISING THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION

A nation which revises its parish councils once in three years, but will not revise its articles of religion once in three hundred, even when those articles avowedly began as a political compromise dictated by Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, is a nation that needs remaking.

The Verdict Of History

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

SEALED

The Bible is a sealed literature to most of us because we cannot read it naturally and unsophisticatedly.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

MY FATHER

The more sacred an idea or a situation was by convention, the more irresistible was it to him as the jumping off place for a plunge into laughter. Thus, when I scoffed at the Bible he would instantly and quite sincerely rebuke me, telling me, with what little sternness was in his nature, that I should not speak so; that no educated man would make such a display of ignorance; that the Bible was universally recognized as a literary and historical masterpiece; and as much more to the same effect as he could muster. But when he had reached the point of feeling really impressive, a convulsion of internal chuckling would wrinkle up his eyes; and (I knowing all the time quite well what was coming) would cap his eulogy by assuring me, with an air of perfect fairness, that even the worst enemy of religion could say no worse of the Bible than that it was the damndest parcel of lies ever written. He would then rub his eyes and chuckle for quite a long time. It became an unacknowledged game between us that I should provoke him to exhibitions of this kind.

IMMATURITY

DEFRAUDED OF MARTYRDOM

Instead of exclaiming "Send this inconceivable Satanist to the stake," the respectable newspapers pith me by announcing

"another book by this brilliant and thoughtful writer." And the ordinary citizen, knowing that who is well spoken of by a respectable newspaper must be all right, reads me as he reads Micah, with undisturbed edification from his own point of view. It is narrated that in the eighteen-seventies an old lady, very devout Methodist, moved from Colchester to a house in the neighbourhood of the City Road, in London where mistaking the Hall of Science for a chapel, she sat at the feet of Charles Bradlaugh for many years, entranced by his eloquence, without questioning his orthodoxy or moulting a feather of her faith. I fear I shall be defrauded of my just martyrdom in the same way.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

INFALLIBILITY

Perhaps I had better inform my Protestant readers that the famous Dogma of Papal Infallibility is by far the most modest pretension of the kind in existence. Compared with our infallible democracies, our infallible medical councils, our infallible astronomers, our infallible judges, and our infallible parliaments the Pope is on his knees in the dust confessing his ignorance before the throne of God, asking only that as to certain historical matters on which he has clearly more sources of information open to him than anyone else his decision shall be taken as final.

The Church Uncompromised By Its Amends

Preface to SAINT JOAN

THE OLD RULE

Most people, to save themselves from unbearable mistrust and misery, or from being driven by their conscience into actual conflict with the law, fall back on the old rule that if you cannot have what you believe in you must believe in what you have.

Doctors' Consciences

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

DEFINING A SAINT

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. A saint is one who having practised heroic virtues, and enjoyed revelations or powers of the order which the Church classes technically as supernatural, is eligible for canonization.

Was Joan Innocent Or Guilty?
Preface to SAINT JOAN

VOLTAIRE

Voltaire, whose religious opinions were almost exactly those of most English Noncomformists today.

Brieux And Voltaire
In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

THE STATESMAN

As I see the world, the statesman must be religious; but he must discard every element in his religion that is not universal. He may have a vision of the whole human race bound together in a world-wide Catholic church; but he must not be either an anglican Catholic or a Roman Catholic. If he personifies the creative factor in biology as God he must not nationalize it as Jehovah or Allah, Buddha or Brahma. Above all he must not look to God to do his work for him. He must regard himself as the fallible servant of a fallible God, acting for God and thinking for God because God, being unable to effect His purposes without hands or brains, has made us evolve our hands and brains to act and think for Him: in short, we are not in the hands of God; but God is in our hands. A ruler must not say helplessly "Thy Will be done": he must devise it, find out how to do it, and have it done. His God must not be an existing Omnipotent Omniscient Perfection, but as yet only an ideal towards which creative evolution is striving, with mankind merely its best attempt so far, and a very unsatisfactory one at that, liable to be replaced at any moment if creative evolution gives it up as hopeless. He must face the evil in the world, which apparently reduces the goodness of God to absurdity, as but the survival of errors originally well intended. He must treat life as everlasting, but treat his contemporaries as ephemeral mortals having no life beyond the grave to compensate them for any injustices they may suffer here and now.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A QUESTION

Does any man seriously believe that the chauffeur who drives a motor car from Paris to Berlin is a more highly evolved man than the charioteer of Achilles, or that a modern Prime Minister is a more enlightened ruler than Caesar because he rides a tricycle, writes his dispatches by the electric light, and instructs his stockbroker through the telephone?

The Verdict Of History
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

A SUPERPERSONAL NEED

. . . that there are forces at work which use individuals for purposes far transcending the purpose of keeping these individuals alive and prosperous and respectable and safe and happy in the middle station in life, which is all any good bourgeois can reasonably require, is established by the fact that men will, in the pursuit of knowledge and of social readjustments for which they will not be a penny the better, and are indeed often many pence the worse, face poverty, infamy, exile, imprisonment, dreadful hardship, and death. Even the selfish pursuit of personal power does not nerve men to the efforts and sacrifices which are eagerly made in pursuit of extensions of our power over nature though these extensions may not touch the personal life of the seeker at any point. There is no more mystery about this appetite for knowledge and power than about the appetite for food: both are known as facts and as facts only, the difference between them being that the appetite for food is necessary to the life of the hungry man and is therefore a personal appetite, whereas the other is an appetite for evolution, and therefore a superpersonal need.

The Evolutionary Appetite.
Preface to SAINT JOAN

THE RELIGION OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Creative Evolution is already a religion, and is indeed now unmistakably the religion of the twentieth century, newly arisen from the ashes of pseudo-Christianity, of mere scepticism, and of the soulless affirmations and blind negations of the Mechanists and Neo-Darwinians. But it cannot become a popular religion until it has its legends, its parables, its miracles. And

when I say popular I do not mean apprehensible by villagers only. I mean apprehensible by Cabinet Ministers as well.

The Religious Art Of The Twentieth Century
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

PUTTING THE ATHEIST IN HIS PLACE

The first common mistake to get rid of is that mankind consists of a great mass of religious people and a few eccentric atheists. It consists of a huge mass of worldly people, and a small percentage of persons deeply interested in religion and concerned about their own souls and other people's; and this section consists mostly of those who are passionately affirming the established religion and those who are passionately attacking it, the genuine philosophers being very few.

Worldliness Of The Majority
Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

I WAS TOO INFANTILE!

That I can write as I do without having to think about my style is due to my having been as a child steeped in the Bible, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and Cassell's *Illustrated Shakespear*. I was taught to hold the Bible in such reverence that when one day, as I was buying a pennyworth of sweets in a little shop in Dublin, the shopkeeper tore a leaf out of a dismembered Bible to wrap them in, I was horrified, and half expected to see him struck by lightning. All the same I took the sweets and ate them; for to my Protestant mind the shopkeeper, as a Roman Catholic, would go to hell as such Bible or no Bible, and was no gentleman anyhow. Besides, I liked eating sweets. I was too infantile then to reach my more mature conclusion that the reason I could read and remember the Bible stories and not read school books was that the Bible stories were translated when English literary art was at the summit of its majesty, the translators having believed that they were Englishing the very words of God himself.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE TRUTH

THE ARCHBISHOP: Would it not be quite easy to tell them the truth?

LA TREMOUILLE: Man alive, they wouldn't believe it.

SAINT JOAN

THE WAY OUT

I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will if he had undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman.

Why Not Give Christianity A Trial?
Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

ROBOTS OR CRANKS

There are religious orders in which the rule is so completely monastic that every penny the members would own as laymen belongs to the order. They may not even choose the fashion of the clothes they wear. But their daily bread is secure; and wherever they go they are entitled to at least three days hospitality from the order. I asked a friend of mine who belonged to such an order what bad effects, if any, it had on its votaries. He thought a moment, and said "Well, it develops one's individuality so frightfully that at forty years of age every member is a confirmed crank." It will be interesting to see whether Communism will change the Russians into a nation of robots or a nation of cranks.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

STORY-TELLERS

All the sweetness of religion is conveyed to the world by the hands of story-tellers and image-makers. Without their fictions the truths of religion would for the multitude be neither intelligible nor even apprehensible; and the prophets would prophesy and the teachers teach in vain.

What To Do With The Legends
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

A NEW CREATION

Heaven's threatening growl of disgust at us useless futile creatures. I tell you, one of two things must happen. Either out of that darkness some new creation will come to supplant us as we have supplanted the animals, or the heavens will fall in thunder and destroy us.

HECTOR *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE PATH TO GODHEAD

The pursuit of omnipotence and omniscience. Greater power and greater knowledge: these are what we are all pursuing even at the risk of our lives and the sacrifice of our pleasures. Evolution is that pursuit and nothing else. It is the path to godhead. A man differs from a microbe only in being further on the path.

FRANKLYN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

I HAVE TO RUN AWAY

ELLIE: I shall pretend to sell myself to Boss Mangan to save my soul from the poverty that is damning me by inches.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: Riches will damn you ten times deeper. Riches wont save even your body.

ELLIE: Old-fashioned again. We know now that the soul is the body and the body the soul. They tell us they are different because they want to persuade us that we can keep our souls if we let them make slaves of our bodies. I am afraid you are no use to me, Captain.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: What did you expect? A Savior, eh? Are you old-fashioned enough to believe in that?

ELLIE: No. But I thought you were very wise, and might help me. Now I have found you out. You pretend to be busy, and think of fine things to say, and run in and out to surprise people by saying them, and get away before they can answer you.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: It confuses me to be answered. It discourages me. I cannot bear men and women. I have to run away. I must run away now.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE SAME MANNER FOR ALL HUMAN SOULS

The great secret, Eliza, is not having bad manners or good manners or any other particular sort of manners, but having the same manner for all human souls: in short, behaving as if you were in Heaven, where there are no third-class carriages, and one soul is as good as another.

HIGGINS *in* PYGMALION

THEY ONLY BEG

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Will you forgive my curiosity? What is the Bible for?

LINA: To quiet my soul.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Ah, yes, yes. It no longer quiets mine, I am sorry to say.

LINA: That is because you do not know how to read it. Put it up before you on a stand; and open it at the Psalms. When you can read them and understand them, quite quietly and happily, and keep six balls in the air all the time, you are in perfect condition; and youll never make a mistake that evening. If you find you cant do that, then go and pray until you can. And be very careful that evening.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Is that the usual form of test in your profession?

LINA: Nothing that we Szczepanowskis do is usual, my lord.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Are you all so wonderful?

LINA: It is our profession to be wonderful.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Do you never condescend to do as common people do? For instance, do you not pray as common people pray?

LINA: Common people do not pray, my lord: they only beg.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: You never ask for anything?

LINA: No.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Then why do you pray?

LINA: To remind myself that I have a soul.

MISALLIANCE

BELIEVE

I'm not afraid, and not ashamed. I know that in an accidental sort of way, struggling through the unreal part of life, I havnt always been able to live up to my ideal. But in my own real world I have never done anything wrong, never denied my faith, never been untrue to myself. Ive been threatened and blackmailed and insulted and starved. But Ive played the game. Ive fought the good fight. And now it's all over, theres an indescribable peace. I believe in Michael Angelo, Velasquez, and Rembrandt; in the might of design, the mystery of color, the redemption of all things by Beauty everlasting, and the message of Art that has made these hands blessed. Amen. Amen.

LOUIS *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE GREAT GAME

HANNAH: Well, if there was nothing wrong in the world there wouldnt be anything left for us to do, would there?

ELDER DANIELS: Be of good cheer, brothers. Seek the path.

BLANCO: No. No more paths. No more broad and narrow. No more good and bad. Theres no good and bad; but by Jiminy, gents, theres a rotten game, and theres a great game. I played the rotten game; but the great game was played on me; and now I'm for the great game every time. Amen. Gentlemen: let us adjourn to the saloon. I stand the drinks.

THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET

THE SOUL

It's prudent to gain the whole world and lose your own soul. But dont forget that your soul sticks to you if you stick to it; but the world has a way of slipping through your fingers.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

GOOD AND BAD PEOPLE

Good people are the very devil sometimes, because, when their good-will hits on a wrong way, they go much further along it and are much more ruthless than bad people; but there is always hope in the fact that they mean well, and that their bad deeds are their mistakes and not their successes; whereas the evils done by bad people are not mistakes but triumphs of wickedness. And since all moral triumphs, like mechanical triumphs, are reached by trial and error, we can despair of Democracy and despair of Capitalism without despairing of human nature: indeed if we did not despair of them as we know them we should prove ourselves so worthless that there would be nothing left for the world but to wait for the creation of a new race of beings capable of succeeding where we have failed.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

WHEN WE KNOW

THE CAPTAIN: What is God?

LAVINIA: When we know that, Captain, we shall be gods ourselves.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

HERE THERE IS NO HOPE

THE STATUE: My dear: I am so much more admired in marble than I ever was in my own person that I have retained the shape the sculptor gave me. He was one of the first men of his day: you must acknowledge that.

ANA: Father! Vanity! from you!

THE STATUE: Ah, you outlived that weakness, my daughter: you must be nearly 80 by this time. I was cut off (by an accident) in my 64th year, and am considerably your junior in consequence. Besides, my child, in this place, what our libertine friend here would call the farce of parental wisdom is dropped. Regard me, I beg, as a fellow creature, not as a father.

ANA: You speak as this villain speaks.

THE STATUE: Juan is a sound thinker, Ana. A bad fencer, but a sound thinker.

ANA: I begin to understand. These are devils, mocking me. I had better pray.

THE STATUE: No, no, no, my child: do not pray. If you do, you will throw away the main advantage of this place. Written over the gate here are the words "leave every hope behind, ye who enter." Only think what a relief that is! For what is hope? A form of moral responsibility. Here there is no hope, and consequently no duty, no work, nothing to be gained by praying, nothing to be lost by doing what you like. Hell, in short, is a place where you have nothing to do but amuse yourself.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

CHANGE

Progress is impossible without change; and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. Creeds, articles, and institutes of religious faith ossify our brains and make change impossible. As such they are nuisances, and in practice have to be mostly ignored.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DREAMS AND DRAINAGE

UNDERSHAFT: That is what is wrong with the world at present. It scraps its obsolete steam engines and dynamos; but it wont

scrap its old prejudices and its old moralities and its old religious and its old political constitutions. Whats the result? In machinery it does very well; but in morals and religion and politics it is working at a loss that brings it nearer bankruptcy every year. Dont persist in that folly. If your old religion broke down yesterday, get a newer and a better one for tomorrow.

BARBARA: Oh how gladly I would take a better one to my soul! But you offer me a worse one. Justify yourself: shew me some light through the darkness of this dreadful place, with its beautifully clean workshops, and respectable workmen, and model homes.

UNDERSHAFT: Cleanliness and respectability do not need justification, Barbara: they justify themselves. I see no darkness here, no dreadfulness. In your Salvation shelter I saw poverty, misery, cold, and hunger. You gave them bread and treacle and dreams of heaven. I give from thirty shillings a week to twelve thousand a year. They find their own dreams; but I look after the drainage.

MAJOR BARBARA

DANCING IN CHURCH

. . . our insular conception of a church as a place where we must on no account enjoy ourselves, and where ladies are trained in the English art of sitting in rows for hours, dumb, expressionless, and with the elbows uncomfortably turned in. But since people must enjoy themselves sometimes, why not in their own churches as well as in places where drinking bars, gambling tables, and other temptations to enjoy themselves unhealthily and indecently are deliberately put in their way? "Dancing is an art," says Mr. Headlam. "All art is praise," says Mr. Ruskin. Praise is surely not out of place in a church. We sing there: why should we not dance?

LONDON MUSIC

WHEN I DIE

Yet from my reading aloud of all this writing on the wall, Mr. Everyman, who never reads the Bible, and never listens critically to the ritual of having the lessons read to him every Sunday in Church (when he goes to Church: a habit which he is dropping), gathers nothing but that I am a damnably irreligious

man who will certainly go to hell when I die if there be any such place as hell, which Mr. Everyman is beginning to doubt, because it has uncomforting possibilities for himself as well as certainty for me.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A GOOD MAN OR NOT?

Take a vote as to whether I am a good man or not. Some people will tell you that my goodness is almost beyond that of any other living person. They will even tell you that I am the only hope of religion in this country. You will not have to go very far to find persons who are of exactly the contrary opinion.

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

INTOLERABLE BONDAGE

When I was a little boy, I was compelled to go to Church on Sunday; and though I escaped from that intolerable bondage before I was ten it prejudiced me so violently against church-going that twenty years elapsed before, in foreign lands and in pursuit of works of art I became once more a churchgoer. To this day, my flesh creeps when I recall that genteel suburban Irish Protestant church, built by Roman Catholic workmen who would have considered themselves damned had they crossed its threshold afterwards. Every separate stone, every pane of glass must have sowed a separate evil passion in my young heart. Yes, all the vulgarity, savagery and bad blood which has marred my literary work was certainly laid upon me in that house of Satan.

ON GOING TO CHURCH

HEAVEN AND HELL TO A CHILD

As a child I thought of the earth as being an immense ground floor with a star studded ceiling which was the floor of heaven, and a basement which was hell.

The Case of Galileo
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

WASHING AWAY OUR SINS

Human self-respect wants so desperately to have its sins washed away, however purgatorially, that we are willing to go through the most fantastic ceremonies, conjurations, and ordeals

to have our scarlet souls made whiter than snow. We naturally prefer to lay our sins on scapegoats or on the Cross, if our neighbours will let us off so easily; but when they will not, then we will cleanse ourselves by suffering a penalty sooner than be worried by our consciences.

Expiation And Moral Accountancy
In IMPRISONMENT

IN UNLIMITED QUANTITY

There is no harder scientific fact in the world than the fact that belief can be produced in practically unlimited quantity and intensity, without observation or reasoning, and even in defiance of both, by the simple desire to believe founded on a strong interest in believing. Everybody recognizes this in the case of the amatory infatuations of the adolescents who see angels and heroes in obviously (to others) commonplace and even objectionable maidens and youths. But it holds good over the entire field of human activity.

Credulity And Chloroform
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A GUARANTEE

. . . when I myself wrote a play for the Salvation Army to shew them that the dramatic method might be used for their gospel as effectively as the Lyric or orchestral method, I was told that unless I could guarantee that the persons in my play actually existed, and the incidents had actually occurred, I, like Bunyan, would be regarded by the elderly soldiers in the army as no better than Ananias. As it was useless for me to try to make these simple souls understand that in real life truth is revealed by parables and falsehood supported by facts, I had to leave the army to its oratorical metaphors and to its popular songs about heartbroken women waiting for the footsteps of their drunken husbands, and hearing instead the joyous step of the converted man whose newly found salvation will dry all their tears.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

DAMNATION

Any gospel or anti-gospel will succeed as long as the author and the audience are making for the same end, whether by affirmation and praise, or by satire and negation. But when an

author is openly insulting his patrons in the gallery by flattering their conscious hypocrisy, and complimenting them on what he conceives to be their weaknesses and superstitions, and what they themselves equally conceive to be their weaknesses and superstitions, he is predestined to damnation. To be publicly and obviously played down to is more than human nature can bear.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE INSCRIPTION

The first prison I ever saw had inscribed on it "Cease to do evil: learn to do well"; but as the inscription was on the outside, the prisoners could not read it.

Most Prisoners No Worse Than Ourselves
In IMPRISONMENT

EMPTYING THE BABY

State Intolerance is founded, not now on crude fanaticism, but on the fear that if the people discover that the miracles they believe in are either fables or frauds, and that the scriptures they accept as Divine revelations are questionable in any sentence, they will empty the baby out with the bath water, and defy all religion and all morality.

Postscript to BACK TO METHUSELAH

MY PURPOSE

What I want to do is to make people more and more conscious of their souls and of the purpose which has evolved the soul as its special organ.

MODERN RELIGION

OUR FOLLY

God has given us a world that nothing but our own folly keeps from being a paradise.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

WEEDING THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The fashionable theatre prescribed one serious subject: clandestine adultery: the dullest of all subjects for a serious author, whatever it may be for audiences who read the police intelligence and skip the reviews and leading articles. I tried slum-landlordism, doctrinaire Free Love (pseudo-Ibsenism), prostitution,

militarism, marriage, history, current politics, natural Christianity, national and individual character, paradoxes of conventional society, husband-hunting, questions of conscience, professional delusions and impostures, all worked into a series of comedies of manners in the classic fashion, which was then very much out of fashion, the mechanical tricks of Parisian "construction" being de rigueur in the theatre. But this, though it occupied me and established me professionally, did not constitute me an iconographer of the religion of my time, and thus fulfil my natural function as an artist. I was quite conscious of this; for I had always known that civilization needs a religion as a matter of life or death; and as the conception of Creative Evolution developed I saw that we were at last within reach of a faith which complied with the first condition of all the religions that have ever taken hold of humanity: namely, that it must be, first and fundamentally, a science of metabiology. This was a crucial point with me; for I had seen Bible fetichism, after standing up to all the rationalistic batteries of Hume, Voltaire, and the rest, collapse before the onslaught of much less gifted Evolutionists, solely because they discredited it as a biological document; so that from that moment it lost its hold, and left literate Christendom faithless. My own Irish eighteenth-centuryism made it impossible for me to believe anything until I could conceive it as a scientific hypothesis, even though the abominations, quackeries, impostures, venalities, credulities, and delusions of the camp followers of science, and the brazen lies and priestly pretensions of the pseudo-scientific curemongers, all sedulously inculcated by modern "secondary education," were so monstrous that I was sometimes forced to make a verbal distinction between science and knowledge lest I should mislead my readers. But I never forgot that without knowledge even wisdom is more dangerous than mere opportunist ignorance, and that somebody must take the Garden of Eden in hand and weed it properly.

My Own Part In The Matter
In Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE HOLY GHOST

Man's political capacity and magnanimity are clearly beaten by the vastness and complexity of the problems forced on him.

And it is at this anxious moment that he finds, when he looks upward for a mightier mind to help him, that the heavens are empty. He will presently see that his discarded formula that Man is the Temple of the Holy Ghost happens to be precisely true, and that it is only through his own brain and hand that this Holy Ghost, formally the most nebulous person in the Trinity, and now become its sole survivor as it has always been its real Unity, can help in any way.

Property And Marriage
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

SAINT BERNARD

Granted that St. Bernard and St. Thomas were as resolute egoists as I, having equally disregarded the interests and wishes of our families in our determination to go our own ways, and choosing always the course of life most congenial to us at all costs to ourselves and others, why did they go so far as to kill themselves at half my age by overwork and privation? It was not because they believed themselves to be the servants and instruments of God; for I believe myself to be the servant and instrument of creative evolution, which comes to the same thing, and entitles me to rank equally with them as a religious person: That is to say, a person to whom eating, drinking and reproduction are irksome necessities in comparison with the urge to wider and deeper knowledge, better understanding, and greater power over ourselves and our circumstances. So far, there is no reason why I, too, should not be canonized some day. Perhaps I shall.

But there is a difference. St. Bernard believed in an eternal personal life after death for everybody. He believed that happiness in that after life, though it could not be deserved by us as sinful creatures, was possible on the assumption that all our sins were expiated in advance by the torture and death of Jesus, on whom God had laid the iniquity of us all. I not only do not believe this, but should regard it as in the last degree ungentlemanly on my part to allow anyone else to suffer for my sins. And the notion that the very unsatisfactory product of creative evolution known as G.B.S. will persist for ever instead of being depersonalized and replaced by something better, is not only incredible but as unbearable in my imagination as it must be in everyone

else's. There I am sharply at issue with the Abbot of Clairvaux both as to the facts and the morals to be drawn from them.

Again, St. Bernard got his courage and his humility from his belief that he was the servant of God; and I get mine (such as they are) from my kindred belief that I am the servant of creative evolution and that my supreme appetite is an evolutionary appetite. But here again there is between us the tremendous difference that he conceived God as omnipotent, all-righteous and infallible, whereas it is plain to me that creative evolution proceeds by trial and error, which should perhaps be called trial and failure. The world is so full of its failures that much of our time is occupied in killing them lest they should kill us.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THREE IN ONE

In my dreams it is a country where the State is the Church and the Church the people: three in one and one in three. It is a commonwealth in which work is play and play is life: three in one and one in three. It is a temple in which the priest is the worshipper and the worshipper the worshipped: three in one and one in three. It is a godhead in which all life is human and all humanity divine: three in one and one in three.

KEEGAN *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY

Let me tell you, Mr. Valentine, that a life devoted to the Cause of Humanity has enthusiasms and passions to offer which far transcend the selfish personal infatuations and sentimentalities of romance.

MRS. CLANDON *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

THE VERY DEVIL

The pleasures of the senses I can sympathize with and share; but the substitution of sensuous ecstasy for intellectual activity and honesty is the very devil.

THREE PLAYS FOR PURITANS

WE ARE FRIENDS AT ONCE

LAVINIA: Religion is such a great thing that when I meet really religious people we are friends at once, no matter what

name we give to the divine will that made us and moves us. Oh, do you think that I, a woman, would quarrel with you for sacrificing to a woman god like Diana, if Diana meant to you what Christ means to me? No: we should kneel side by side before her altar like two children. But when men who believe neither in my god nor in their own—men who do not know the meaning of the word religion—when these men drag me to the foot of an iron statue that has become the symbol of the terror and darkness through which they walk, of their cruelty and greed, of their hatred of God and their oppression of man—when they ask me to pledge my soul before the people that this hideous idol is God, and that all this wickedness and falsehood is divine truth, I cannot do it, not if they could put a thousand cruel deaths on me. I tell you, it is physically impossible. Listen, Captain: did you ever try to catch a mouse in your hand? Once there was a dear little mouse that used to come out and play on my table as I was reading. I wanted to take him in my hand and caress him; and sometimes he got among my books so that he could not escape me when I stretched out my hand. And I did stretch out my hand; but it always came back in spite of me. I was not afraid of him in my heart; but my hand refused: it is not in the nature of my hand to touch a mouse. Well, Captain, if I took a pinch of incense in my hand and stretched it out over the altar fire, my hand would come back. My body would be true to my faith even if you could corrupt my mind. And all the time I should believe more in Diana than my persecutors have ever believed in anything. Can you understand that?

LAVINIA *in* ANDROCLES AND THE LION

SOLITARY

. . . almost everybody needing some part of the day in a solitary room or place to themselves.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

LOWER AND HIGHER CENTRES

AUBREY: Thats the worst of Sweetie. We all have—to put it as nicely as I can—our lower centres and our higher centres. Our lower centres act: they act with a terrible power that

sometimes destroys us; but they dont talk. Speech belongs to the higher centres. In all the great poetry and literature of the world the higher centres speak. In all respectable conversation the higher centres speak, even when they are saying nothing or telling lies. But the lower centres are there all the time: a sort of guilty secret with every one of us, though they are dumb. I remember asking my tutor at college whether, if anyone's lower centres began to talk, the shock would not be worse than the one Balaam got when his donkey began talking to him. He only told me half a dozen improper stories to shew how openminded he was. I never mentioned the subject again until I met Sweetie. Sweetie is Balaam's ass.

THE COUNTESS: Keep a civil tongue in your head, Popsy. I——

AUBREY: Woman: I am paying you a compliment: Balaam's ass was wiser than Balaam. You should read your Bible. That is what makes Sweetie almost superhuman. Her lower centres speak. Since the war the lower centres have become vocal. And the effect is that of an earthquake. For they speak truths that have never been spoken before—truths that the makers of our domestic institutions have tried to ignore. And now that Sweetie goes shouting them all over the place, the institutions are rocking and splitting and sundering. They leave us no place to live, no certainties, no workable morality, no heaven, no hell, no commandments, and no God.

TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

HOLY LIVING

It is not pleasure that makes life worth living. It is life that makes pleasure worth having. And what pleasure is better than the pleasure of holy living?

FOX *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

A HUMAN SOUL

There are times when a man needs to meditate in solitude on his destiny. A chord is touched; and he sees the drama of his life as a spectator sees a play. Laugh if you feel inclined: no man sees the comic side of it more than I. In the theatre of life everyone may be amused except the actor. Theres an idea in this: an idea for a picture. What a pity young Bentley is not a

painter! Tarleton meditating on his destiny. Not in a toga. Not in the trappings of the tragedian or the philosopher. In plain coat and trousers: a man like any other man. And beneath that coat and trousers a human soul. Tarleton's Underwear!

TARLETON *in* MISALLIANCE

FRIENDS

FOX: When the bell rings to announce some pitiful rascal twaddling in his pulpit, or some fellow in a cassock pretending to bind and loose, I hear an Almighty Voice call "George Fox, George Fox: rise up: testify: unmask these impostors: drag them down from their pulpits and their altars; and let it be known that what the world needs to bring it back to God is not Churchmen but Friends, Friends of God, Friends of man, friendliness and sincerity everywhere, superstition and pulpit playacting nowhere."

CHARLES: Pastor: it is not given to every man as it has been to you to make a religion for himself. A readymade Church is an indispensable convenience for most of us. The inner light must express itself in music, in noble architecture, in eloquence: in a word, in beauty, before it can pass into the minds of common men. I grant you the clergy are mostly dull dogs; but with a little disguise and ritual they will pass as holy men with the ignorant. And there are great mysteries that must be symbolized, because though we feel them we do not know them, Mr. Newton having not yet discovered their nature, in spite of all his mathematics. And this reminds me that we are making a most unwarrantable intrusion on our host's valuable time. Mr. Newton: on my honor I had no part in bringing upon you this invasion of womanhood. I hasten to take them away, and will wait upon you at some happier moment. Come, ladies: we must leave Mr. Newton to his mathematics.

NEWTON: I must correct that misunderstanding, sir. I would not have you believe that I could be so inhospitable as to drive away my guests merely to indulge in the trifling pursuit of mathematical calculation, which leads finally nowhere. But I have more serious business in hand this morning. I am engaged in a study of the prophecies in the book of Daniel. It may prove of the greatest importance to the world. I beg

you to allow me to proceed with it in the necessary solitude. The ladies have not wasted my time: I have to thank her Grace of Cleveland for some lights on the Book of Revelations suggested to me by her proceedings. But solitude—solitude absolutely free from the pleasant disturbance of ladies' society —is now necessary to me; and I must beg you to withdraw.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

POETRY!

THE ARCHBISHOP: Well, the Church has to rule men for the good of their souls as you have to rule them for the good of their bodies. To do that, the Church must do as you do: nourish their faith by poetry.

LA TREMOUILLE: Poetry! I should call it humbug.

THE ARCHBISHOP: You would be wrong, my friend. Parables are not lies because they describe events that have never happened. Miracles are not frauds because they are often— I do not say always—very simple and innocent contrivances by which the priest fortifies the faith of his flock. When this girl picks out the Dauphin among his courtiers, it will not be a miracle for me, because I shall know how it has been done, and my faith will not be increased. But as for the others, if they feel the thrill of the supernatural, and forget their sinful clay in a sudden sense of the glory of God, it will be a miracle and a blessed one. And you will find that the girl herself will be more affected than anyone else. She will forget how she really picked him out. So, perhaps, you will.

ST. JOAN

THE FUN

LA TREMOUILLE: Well, I wish I were clever enough to know how much of you is God's archbishop and how much the most artful fox in Touraine. Come on, or we shall be late for the fun; and I want to see it, miracle or no miracle.

THE ARCHBISHOP: Do not think that I am a lover of crooked ways. There is a new spirit rising in men: we are at the dawning of a wider epoch. If I were a simple monk, and had not to rule men, I should seek peace for my spirit with Aristotle and Pythagoras rather than with the saints and their miracles.

SAINT JOAN

THE CATHEDRAL

Every Church should be a Church of All Saints, and every cathedral a place for pure contemplation by the greatest minds of all races, creeds, and colors.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

COURAGE

All courage is religious: without religion we are cowards.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

TRIAL AND ERROR

The advantage of my version of the situation from the political point of view is that there is no danger of my imagining that because I regard myself as an instrument of creative evolution I must therefore be right in my way of doing its work. As it works by trial and error so must I. The advice I am giving in this book is the best I can offer at my age; but it may be a mischievous mistake.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

POINTING AHEAD

I'm not a teacher: only a fellow-traveller of whom you asked the way. I pointed ahead—ahead of myself as well as of you.

THE BISHOP *in* GETTING MARRIED

DUTY

First there was man's duty to god, with the priest as assessor. That was repudiated; and then came Man's duty to his neighbor, with Society as the assessor. Will this too be repudiated, and be succeeded by Man's duty to himself, assessed by himself? And if so, what will be the effect on the conception of Duty in the abstract? Let us see.

I have just called Lassalle a self-worshipper. In doing so I cast no reproach on him; for this is the last step in the evolution of the conception of duty. Duty arises at first a gloomy tyranny, out of man's helplessness, his self-mistrust, in a word, his abstract fear. He personifies all that he abstractly fears as God, and straightway becomes the slave of his duty to God. He imposes that slavery fiercely on his children, threatening them with hell, and punishing them for their attempts to be happy. When,

becoming bolder, he ceases to fear everything and dares to love something, this duty of his to what he fears evolves into a sense of duty to what he loves. Sometimes he again personifies what he loves as God: and the God of Wrath becomes the God of Love: sometimes he at once becomes a humanitarian, an altruist, acknowledging only his duty to his neighbor. This stage is correlative to the rationalist stage in the evolution of philosophy and the capitalist phase in the evolution of industry. But in it the emancipated slave of God falls under the dominion of Society, which, having just reached a phase in which all the love is ground out of it by the competitive struggle for money, remorselessly crushes him until, in due course of the further growth of his courage, a sense at last arises in him of his duty to himself. And when this sense is fully grown the tyranny of duty perishes; for now the man's God is his own humanity; and he, self-satisfied at last, ceases to be selfish. The evangelist of this last step must therefore preach the repudiation of duty.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

MIRACLE

All life is more or less miraculous to every intelligent person. . . .

MODERN RELIGION

THE ATHEIST

And now look at me and behold the supreme tragedy of the atheist who has lost his faith—his faith in atheism, for which more martyrs have perished than for all the creeds put together.

THE FATHER *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

THE VOICE

To me there is only one voice. It is very low; but it is so near that it is like a whisper from within myself. There is no mistaking it for any voice of the birds or beasts, or for your voice.

ADAM *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE NEED FOR MAD PEOPLE

We want a few mad people now. See where the sane ones have landed us!

POULENGEY *in* SAINT JOAN

THE RIGHTEOUS

"I came not to call sinners, but the righteous, to repentance."

THE ARCHBISHOP *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

DELUSIONS

I have often said that there is in nature a law of the conservation of Human Credulity (like Joule's law of the Conservation of Energy) so inexorable that it is impossible to dispel one delusion without creating another equivalent one.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Unless this withered thing religion, and this dry thing science, have come alive in our hands, alive and intensely interesting, we may just as well go out and dig the garden until it is time to dig our graves.

FRANKLYN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

BY WILLING

If you have no eyes, and want to see, and keep trying to see, you will finally get eyes. If, like a mole or a subterranean fish, you have eyes and dont want to see, you will lose your eyes. If you like eating the tender tops of trees enough to make you concentrate all your energies on the stretching of your neck, you will finally get a long neck, like the giraffe. This seems absurd to inconsiderate people at the first blush; but it is within the personal experience of all of us that it is just by this process that a child tumbling about the floor becomes a boy walking erect; and that a man sprawling on the road with a bruised chin, or supine on the ice with a bashed occiput, becomes a bicyclist and a skater. The process is not continuous, as it would be if mere practice had anything to do with it; for though you may improve at each bicycling lesson *during* the lesson, when you begin your next lesson you do not begin at the point at which you left off: you relapse apparently to the beginning. Finally, you succeed quite suddenly, and do not relapse again. More miraculous still, you at once exercise the new power unconsciously. Although you are adapting your front wheel to your balance so elaborately and actively that the accidental locking of your handle bars for a second will throw you off; though five

minutes before you could not do it at all, yet now you do it as unconsciously as you grow your finger nails. You have a new faculty, and must have created some new bodily tissue as its organ. And you have done it solely by willing. For here there can be no question of Circumstantial Selection, or the survival of the fittest. The man who is learning how to ride a bicycle has no advantage over the non-cyclist in the struggle for existence: quite the contrary. He has acquired a new habit, an automatic unconscious habit, solely because he wanted to, and kept trying until it was added unto him.

The Advent Of The Neo-Lamarckians
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

ABUSE

Everything has its abuse as well as its use.

The Author's Apology For Great Catherine

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Clearly the statesman of the future must find some credible substitute for Jehovah lest civilization should perish in lazy negation. He may call Jehovah's supplanter by a dozen different names; but he must get rid of certain Jehovian attributions, especially the attribution of infallibility; for the Creator, the Holy Ghost, the Word (properly the Thought), the Cosmic Energy, the Elan Vital, the Divine Spark, the Life Force, the Power that makes for Righteousness (call it what you will) is not infallible: it proceeds by trial and error; and its errors are called the Problem of Evil. It is not omnipotent: indeed it has no direct power at all, and can act only through its creations. Its creations are not omniscient: they proceed by guesses; and evil arises when they guess wrong with the best intentions. It has neither body nor parts; but it has, or rather is, what we call a soul or passion, for ever urging us to obtain greater power over our circumstances and greater knowledge and understanding of what we are doing. It is also an appetite for truth (correspondence of beliefs to facts), for beauty, for justice, for mercy, lumped by the Churches as saving virtues, against which, however, we must set such appetites as pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth, lumped as the seven deadly sins, but evidently only the excesses and abuses of the self-preservative

instincts. Besides, the list is incomplete: for instance, it omits sadistic cruelty, which ranges from physical torture and mayhem (maiming) to sarcasm and teasing, and is specially abhorrent as the most effective weapon of the sinful many against the virtuous few.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

ONE OF MY DISCIPLES

I myself have had to introduce into one of my plays a scene in which a young man defends his vices on the ground that he is one of my disciples. I did so because the incident had actually occurred in a criminal court, where a young prisoner gave the same reason and was sentenced to six months imprisonment, less, I fear, for the offence than for the attempt to justify it.

Brieux Shews The Other Side

Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

Foreigners

CONTRADICTION

How can what an Englishman believes be heresy? It is a contradiction in terms.

THE CHAPLAIN *in* SAINT JOAN

PARIS

Paris is, as usual, imposing on American greenhorns and British Philistines as a city artistic before everything, with specialties in cookery and well-dressed women. I am not an artistic novice, English or American; and I am not to be taken in. Paris is what it has always been: a pedant-ridden failure in everything that it pretends to lead. Mozart found it so more than a hundred years ago.

LONDON MUSIC

IRISHMEN AND ENGLISHMEN

From the day I first set foot on this foreign soil I knew the value of the prosaic qualities of which Irishmen teach Englishmen to be ashamed as well as I knew the vanity of the poetic qualities of which Englishmen teach Irishmen to be proud. For the Irishman instinctively disparages the quality which makes the Englishman dangerous to him; and the Englishman instinctively flatters the fault that makes the Irishman harmless and amusing to him. What is wrong with the prosaic Englishman is what is wrong with the prosaic men of all countries: stupidity.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

ON SUSPENDING THE LAWS OF GOD

Do you think the laws of God will be suspended in favor of England because you were born in it?

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

TRAITOR

In your language traitor means betrayer: one who is perfidious, treacherous, unfaithful, disloyal. In our country it means simply one who is not wholly devoted to our English interests.

WARWICK *in* SAINT JOAN

JEWS

THE JEW: I must begin by explaining that I am a Jew.

SHE: I dont believe you. You dont look like one.

THE JEW: I am not a primitive Hittite. You cannot draw my nose in profile by simply writing down the number six. My hair is not black, nor do I wear it in excessively oiled ringlets. I have all the marks of a German blond. German is my native language: in fact I am in every sense a German. But I worship in the synagogue; and when I worship I put my hat on, whereas a German takes it off. On this ground they class me as a non-Aryan, which is nonsense, as there is no such thing as an Aryan.

SHE: I'm so glad to hear you say that. The Germans here say that I am an Aryan; but I tell them I am nothing of the kind: I'm an Englishwoman. Not a common Englishwoman, of course: I'm a Camberwell woman; and though the West End may turn up its nose at Camberwell, Camberwell is better than Peckham any day in the week.

THE JEW: No doubt. I have not been there.

SHE: I never could abide Peckham people. They are disliked everywhere. Its instinctive, somehow. Havnt you noticed it?

THE JEW: All peoples are disliked in the lump. The English are disliked: the Germans are disliked: the French are disliked. The Protestants are disliked; and all their hundreds of sects dislike one another. So are the Catholics, the Jesuits, the Freemasons. You tell me that the inhabitants of Peckham are disliked: no doubt they deserve it.

SHE: They do.

THE JEW: Some of the greatest men have disliked the human race. But for Noah, its Creator would have drowned it. Can we deny that He had good reasons for disliking it? Can I deny that there are good reasons for disliking Jews? On the contrary, I dislike most of them myself.

SHE: Oh, dont say that. Ive known lots of quite nice Jews. What I say is why pick on the Jews, as if they were any worse than other people?

GENEVA

"AIRISH"

What a ridiculous thing to call people Irish because they live in Ireland! you might as well call them Airish because they live in air. They must be just the same as other people.

ZOO *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

I dislike feeling at home when I am abroad.

THE GENTLEMAN *in* WIDOWERS' HOUSES

WHEN AN ENGLISHMAN BORROWS

SCHUTZMACHER: Not at all. Personally, I like Englishmen better than Jews, and always associate with them. Thats only natural, because, as I am a Jew, theres nothing interesting in a Jew to me, whereas there is always something interesting and foreign in an Englishman. But in money matters its quite different. You see, when an Englishman borrows, all he knows or cares is that he wants money; and he'll sign anything to get it, without in the least understanding it, or intending to carry out the agreement if it turns out badly for him. In fact, he thinks you a cad if you ask him to carry it out under such circumstances. Just like the *Merchant of Venice*, you know. But if a Jew makes an agreement, he means to keep it and expects you to keep it. If he wants money for a time, he borrows it and knows he must pay it at the end of the time. If he knows he cant pay, he begs it as a gift.

RIDGEON: Come, Loony! do you mean to say that Jews are never rogues and thieves?

SCHUTZMACHER: Oh, not at all. But I was not talking of criminals. I was comparing honest Englishmen with honest Jews.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE JEWS

The Jews generally give value. They make you pay; but they deliver the goods. In my experience the men who want something for nothing are invariably Christians.

THE NOBLEMAN *in* SAINT JOAN

A CLEVER IRISHMAN

Still, a clever Irishman is better than the usual alternative: a mediocre Englishman.

LONDON MUSIC

THE FUNNIEST JOKE

NORA: I wanted to know whether you found Ireland—I mean the country part of Ireland, of course—very small and backwardlike when you came back to it from Rome and Oxford and all the great cities.

KEEGAN: When I went to those great cities I saw wonders I had never seen in Ireland. But when I came back to Ireland I found all the wonders there waiting for me. You see they had been there all the time; but my eyes had never been opened to them. I did not know what my own house was like, because I had never been outside it.

NORA: D'ye think thats the same with everybody?

KEEGAN: With everybody who has eyes in his soul as well as in his head.

NORA: But really and truly now, werent the people rather disappointing? I should think the girls must have seemed rather coarse and dowdy after the foreign princesses and people? But I suppose a priest wouldnt notice that.

KEEGAN: It's a priest's business to notice everything. I wont tell you all I noticed about women; but I'll tell you this. The more a man knows, and the farther he travels, the more likely he is to marry a country girl afterwards.

NORA: Youre joking, Mr. Keegan: I'm sure yar.

KEEGAN: My way of joking is to tell the truth. It's the funniest joke in the world.

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF OTHERS

. . . the comparatively common gift of "an eye for character" has to be supplemented by the higher dramatic gift of sympathy with character—of the power of seeing the world from the point of view of others instead of merely describing or judging them from one's own point of view in terms of the conventional systems of morals.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE "NIGGER"

I am despised. I am called nigger by this dirty faced barbarian whose forefathers were naked savages worshipping acorns and mistletoe in the woods whilst my people were spreading the highest enlightenment yet reached by the human race from the temples of Brahma the thousandfold who is all the gods in one. This primitive savage dares to accuse me of imitating him: me, with the blood in my veins of conquerors who have swept through continents vaster than a million dogholes like this island of yours. They founded a civilization compared to which your little kingdom is no better than a concentration camp. What you have of religion came from the east; yet no Hindu, no Parsee, no Jain, would stoop to its crudities. Is there a mirror here? Look at your faces and look at the faces of my people in Ceylon, the cradle of the human race. There you see Man as he came from the hand of God, who has left on every feature the unmistakable stamp of the great original creative artist. There you see Woman with eyes in her head that mirror the universe instead of little peepholes filled with faded pebbles. Set those features, those eyes, those burning colors beside the miserable smudged lumps of half baked dough, the cheap commercial copies of a far away gallery of masterpieces that you call western humanity, and tell me, if you dare, that you are the original and I the imitation. Do you not fear the lightning? the earthquake? the vengeance of Vishnu? You call me nigger, sneering at my color because you have none. The jackdaw has lost his

tail and would persuade the world that his defect is a quality. You have all cringed to me, not for my greater nearness to God, but for my money and my power of making money and ever more money. But today your hatred, your envy, your insolence has betrayed itself. I am nigger. I am bad imitation of that eater of unclean foods, never sufficiently washed in his person or his garments, a British islander. I will no longer bear it, the veil of your hypocrisy is rent by your own mouths: I should dishonor my country and my race by remaining here where both have been insulted. Until now I have supported the connection between India and England because I knew that in the course of nature and by the justice of Brahma it must end in India ruling England just as I, by my wealth and my brains, govern this roomful of needy imbeciles. But I now cast you off. I return to India to detach it wholly from England, and leave you to perish in your ignorance, your vain conceit, and your abominable manners. Good morning, gentlemen. To hell with the lot of you.

SIR JAFNA *in* ON THE ROCKS

LEARNING LANGUAGES

I am very sorry; but I cannot learn languages. I have tried hard, only to find that men of ordinary capacity can learn Sanscrit in less time than it takes me to buy a German dictionary. The worst of it is that this disability of mine seems to be most humiliatingly exceptional. My colleagues sit at French plays, German plays, and Italian plays, laughing at all the jokes, thrilling with all the fine sentiments and obviously seizing the finest shades of the language; whilst I, unless I have read the play beforehand, or asked someone during the interval what it is about, must either struggle with a sixpenny "synopsis" which invariably misses the real point of the drama, or else sit with a guilty conscience and a blank countenance, drawing the most extravagantly wrong inferences from the dumb show of the piece. The torture of this can only be adequately apprehended when it is considered that in ordinary novels, or plays, or conversations, the majority of sentences have no definite meaning at all; and that an energetic intellectual effort to grapple with them, such as one makes in trying to understand a foreign language, would at once discover their inconclusiveness, inaccuracy, and emptiness. When I listen to an English play I

am not troubled by not understanding when there is nothing to understand. But at a foreign play I do not understand this; and every sentence that means nothing in particular—say five out of six in the slacker moments of the action—seems to me to be a sentence of which I have missed the meaning through my unhappy and disgraceful ignorance of the language. Hence torments of shame and inefficiency, the betrayal of which would destroy my reputation as a critic at one blow. Of course I have a phrase or two ready at the end of my tongue to conceal my ignorance. My command of operatic Italian is almost copious, as might be expected from my experience as a musical critic. I can make love in Italian; I could challenge a foe to a duel in Italian if I were not afraid of him; and if I swallowed some agonizing mineral poison, I could describe my sensations very eloquently. And I could manage a prayer pretty well. But these accomplishments are too special for modern comedy and ordinary conversation. As to French, I can neither speak it nor understand it when spoken without an impracticably long interval for reflection; and I am, besides, subject to a curious propensity, when addressed by Italian or French people, to reply in fluent German, though on all other occasions that language utterly baffles me.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

WHOM NOT TO CONSULT

Sixty years ago, walking one Sunday in Hyde Park, where any social reformer or religious apostle may collect a crowd by simply stopping and addressing the empty air, I came upon a certain Captain Wilson, now, I fear, forgotten, who was preaching a gospel which he called Comprehensionism, and urging his listeners to become Comprehensionists. But a world of Comprehenders might and probably would be a world of duffers. Comprehension is quite distinct from executive faculty. The men of action, skilled and ready in practice, are seldom comprehensive thinkers. The world is full of active solicitors who have no sense of law, doctors for whom biology might as well not exist, priests without a ray of religion, journalists thoughtlessly repeating stock phrases in customary collocations, boards of directors who do nothing but what was done last time, skilled workmen who know little more about their jobs than the machines they are handling, as well as Chancellors of the Exchequer

who, convinced that the more a country exports the richer it is, hold that the ideal height of prosperity for a nation is to produce nothing for its own consumption and everything for foreign trade. I think it was Palmerston, our greatest Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who said "If you wish to be thoroughly misinformed about a country, consult a man who has lived there for thirty years and speaks the language like a native."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE DISCOVERY

We cannot help it, because we are so constituted that we always believe finally what we wish to believe. The moment we want to believe something, we suddenly see all the arguments for it, and become blind to the arguments against it. The moment we want to disbelieve anything we have previously believed, we suddenly discover not only that there is a mass of evidence against it, but that this evidence was staring us in the face all the time.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE ONLY REAL CHANGE

Until there is an England in which every man is a Cromwell, a France in which every man is a Napoleon, a Rome in which every man is a Caesar, a Germany in which every man is a Luther plus a Goethe, the world will be no more improved by its heroes than a Brixton villa is improved of Cheops. The production of such nations is the only real change possible to us.

The Perfectionist Experiment At Oneida Creek

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

WHAT THE WORLD LIKES

The world, however, likes miracles and heroes.

THE MAN OF DESTINY

MOSCOW BUILT ON ENGLISH HISTORY

Moscow thinks a lot of itself. But what has Moscow to teach us that we cannot teach ourselves? Moscow is built on English history, written in London by Karl Marx.

BOANERGES *in* THE APPLE CART

ALL THE SAME GOD

The apparent multiplication of Gods is bewildering at the first glance; but you soon discover that they are all the same God in different aspects and functions and even sexes. There is always one uttermost God who defies personification.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

War

THE LEAGUE!

Oh, there is no use talking to you. You all come here to push your own countries without the faintest notion of what the League is for; and I have to sit here listening to foreign ministers explaining to me that their countries are the greatest countries in the world and their people God's chosen race. You are supposed to be international statesmen; but none of you could keep a coffee stall at Limehouse because you would have to be equally civil to sailors of all nations.

THE SECRETARY *in* GENEVA

DUTIES

Mind: I dont say that an Englishman has not other duties. He has a duty to Finland and a duty to Macedonia.

BROADBENT *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

HINDRANCES AND NUISANCES

I'm a metallurgical chemist turned civil engineer. Now whatever else metallurgical chemistry may be, it's not national. It's international. And my business and yours as civil engineers is to join countries, not to separate them. The one real political conviction that our business has rubbed into us is that frontiers are hindrances and flags confounded nuisances.

DOYLE *in* JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

MERE DOERS

Oh, this military life! this tedious, brutal life of action! That is the worst of us Romans: we are mere doers and drudgers:

a swarm of bees turned into men. Give me a good talker—one with wit and imagination enough to live continually doing something!

CAESAR *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

THE CRY FOR JUSTICE

None of you seem to have any idea of the sort of world you are living in. Into the void created by this ignorance has been heaped a groundwork of savage superstitions: human sacrifices, vengeance, wars of conquest and religion, falsehoods called history, and a glorification of vulgar erotics and pugnacity called romance which transforms people who are naturally as amiable, as teachable, as companionable as dogs, into the most ferocious and cruel of all the beasts. And this, they say, is human nature! But it is not natural at all: real human nature is in continual conflict with it; for amid all the clamor for more slaughter and the erection of monuments to the great slaughterers the cry for justice, for mercy, for fellowship, for peace, has never been completely silenced even the worst villainies must pretend to be committed for its sake.

THE JUDGE *in* GENEVA

THE THIN VENEER

There are still places in the world where after tribal battles the victors eat the vanquished and the women share the feast with the warriors. In others foreign explorers, visitors, and passengers are killed as strangers. The veneer of civilization which distinguishes Europeans from these tribesmen and their wives is dangerously thin.

Preface to GENEVA

SPOILED!

The Chinaman who burnt down his house to roast his pig was no doubt honestly unable to conceive any less disastrous way of cooking his dinner; and the roast must have been spoiled after all.

A False Alternative

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

HIS DUTY

. . . when a stupid man is doing something he is ashamed of, he always declares that it is his duty.

APOLLODORUS *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

THE QUESTION

LADY: I! Oh! are you a coward?

NAPOLEON: That is one question you must never ask a soldier. The sergeant asks after the recruit's height, his age, his wind, his limb, but never after his courage.

THE MAN OF DESTINY

HEROIC DUELS

Only the dogfights of the planes bring back modern war to the heroic duels of Ajax and Diomedes, Hector and Achilles, but with the quaint difference that the victor must fly away without "consolidating his position" or obtaining a surrender or military decision of any kind. Battles used to last one day, and end in victory or defeat. They now last for months without decisive result, the offensives beginning with alarming successes and then petering out, and the whole sanguinary business being presently overridden by blockade, exhaustion, starvation, revolution, or some other event remote from the field of battle, where the armies "fertilize the field that each pretends to gain."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NOT FRIENDLY RELATIONS

PETKOFF: But of course we saw to it that the treaty was an honorable one. It declares peace——

CATHERINE: Peace!

PETKOFF: —but not friendly relations: remember that. They wanted to put that in; but I insisted on its being struck out. What more could I do?

ARMS AND THE MAN

TROUBLESOME PEOPLE

Would the world ever have been made if its maker had been afraid of making trouble? Making life means making trouble. Theres only one way of escaping trouble; and thats killing

things. Cowards, you notice, are always shrieking to have troublesome people killed.

HIGGINS *in* PYGMALION

ECCENTRIC PEOPLE

People who are shewn by their inner light the possibility of a better world based on the demand of the spirit for a nobler and more abundant life, not for themselves at the expense of others, but for everybody, are naturally dreaded and therefore hated by the Have-and-Holders, who keep always in reserve two sure weapons against them. The first is a persecution effected by the provocation, organization, and arming of that herd instinct which makes men abhor all departures from custom, and, by the most cruel punishments and the wildest calumnies, force eccentric people to behave and profess exactly as other people do. The second is by leading the herd to war, which immediately and infallibly makes them forget everything, even their most cherished and hardwon public liberties and private interests, in the irresistible surge of their pugnacity and the tense preoccupation of their terror.

Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

SCOUNDRELISM

Your objective is domination: your weapons fire and poison, starvation and ruin, extermination by every means known to science. You have reduced one another to such a condition of terror that no atrocity makes you recoil and say that you will die rather than commit it. You call this patriotism, courage, glory. There are a thousand good things to be done in your countries. They remain undone for hundreds of years; but the fire and the poison are always up to date. If this be not scoundrelism what is scoundrelism? I give you up as hopeless. Man is a failure as a political animal. The creative forces which produce him must produce something better.

JUDGE *in* GENEVA

THE VALUE OF BLUFF

Do you at all realize, sir, that we have nothing standing between us and destruction but our own bluff.

BURGOYNE *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

THE FASCINATION OF WAR

LOMAX: Well, the more destructive war becomes, the sooner it will be abolished, eh?

UNDERSHAFT: Not at all. The more destructive war becomes the more fascinating we find it.

MAJOR BARBARA

FEAR

There is only one universal passion: fear. Of all the thousand qualities a man may have, the only one you will find as certainly in the youngest drummer boy in my army as in me, is fear. It is fear that makes men fight: it is indifference that makes them run away: fear is the main-spring of war. Fear! I know fear well, better than you, better than any woman. I once saw a regiment of good Swiss soldiers massacred by a mob in Paris because I was afraid to interfere: I felt myself a coward to the tips of my toes as I looked on at it. Seven months ago I revenged my shame by pounding that mob to death with cannon balls. Well, what of that? Has fear ever held a man back from anything he really wanted—or a woman either? Never. Come with me; and I will shew you twenty thousand cowards who will risk death every day for the price of a glass of brandy. And do you think there are no women in the army, braver than the men, though their lives are worth more? Psha! I think nothing of your fear or your bravery. If you had had to come across to me at Lodi, you would not have been afraid: once on the bridge, every other feeling would have gone down before the necessity—the necessity —for making your way to my side and getting what you wanted.

And now, suppose you had done all this! suppose you had come safely out with that letter in your hand, knowing that when the hour came, your fear had tightened, not your heart, but your grip of your own purpose! that it had ceased to be fear, and had become strength, penetration, vigilance, iron resolution! how would you answer then if you were asked whether you were a coward?

NAPOLEON *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

MOTIVE

They fight all day and march all night, covering impossible distances and appearing in incredible places, not because every

soldier carries a field marshal's baton in his knapsack, but because he hopes to carry at least half a dozen silver forks there next day.

Descriptive Advice in THE MAN OF DESTINY

GRUB

You can always tell an old soldier by the inside of his holsters and cartridge boxes. The young ones carry pistols and cartridges: the old ones, grub.

THE MAN *in* ARMS AND THE MAN

MODERN WAR

I have stood on a modern battlefield watching a group of soldiers waging war. I pitied their extreme boredom. They had a camouflaged cannon, and were feeding it with shells. Each shell had to have a fuse screwed into it before it was passed to the men who pushed it into the breech of the cannon. Then a man pulled a string; and the shell went off into the air with a tremendous Bang-Whizzzz. Where it went to, what it did when it got there, whether it exploded or not, was unknown to these weary men picking up shells, screwing in fuses, closing the breech and pulling the string over and over again without the horror of seeing any result from their monotonous toil. I could not work up the smallest interest in the business after the first shot even when I tried to remind myself that another group of men, similarly employed on the German side, might at any moment send a shell into my midriff equally joylessly. I recalled the battles described by Homer which had delighted my boyhood, and wondered sardonically what Homer would have said to this battle in which I was under fire, and which our war correspondents would have to make as thrilling on paper as the fights on the plains of Troy in which the gods and goddesses themselves took part. A duller entertainment I cannot conceive. But it rubbed into me the utter divorce of the warrior from the effects of his soulless labor. He has no sight or knowledge of what he is doing: he only hands on a shell or pulls a string. And a Beethoven or a baby dies six miles off. All he feels is a longing for his spell of duty to be over and his ration of bully beef ready for him. I did not even see yellow as Goethe did at Valmy, Wagner in Dresden, and a chauffeur of mine at King's Cross during a raid. The notion that these heavily bored men were

being heroic, or cruel, or anything in the least romantic or sensational, was laughable.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE PRACTICAL VIEW

SIR O.: My lord: I abhor war as much as you do. But, damn it, if a fellow is coming at me to cut my throat, I must cut his if I can. Am I to allow him to kill me and ravish my wife and daughters?

JUDGE: I think that under such circumstances a plea of legitimate defence might be allowed. But what has a tussle with a murderer and a ravisher to do with laying a mine in the high seas to slaughter innocent travellers whose intentions towards yourself, your wife, and your daughters, if they have any intentions, are entirely friendly? What has it to do with dropping a bomb into the bed of a sleeping baby or a woman in childbirth?

SIR O.: One feels that. It is terrible. But we cannot help its happening. We must take a practical view. It is like the London traffic. We know that so many children will be run over and killed every week. But we cannot stop the traffic because of that. Motor traffic is a part of civilized life. So is coalmining. So is railway transport. So is flying. The explosions in the mines, the collisions of the trains, the accidents in the shunting yards, the aeroplane crashes, are most dreadful; but we cannot give up flying and coalmining and railway travelling on that account. They are a part of civilized life. War is a part of civilized life. We cannot give it up because of its shocking casualties.

JUDGE: But the mine explosions and railway collisions and aeroplane crashes are not the objects of the industry. They are its accidents. They occur in spite of every possible precaution to prevent them. But war has no other object than to produce these casualties. The business and purpose of a coalminer is to hew the coal out of the earth to keep the home fires burning. But the soldier's business is to burn the homes and kill their inhabitants. That is not a part of civilization: it is a danger to it.

COMMISSAR: Come, Comrade Judge: have you never sentenced a criminal to death? Has the executioner never carried out

your sentence? Is not that a very necessary part of civilization?

JUDGE: I sentence persons to death when they have committed some crime which has raised the question whether they are fit to live in human society, but not until that question has been decided against them by a careful trial at which they have every possible legal assistance and protection. This does not justify young men in slaughtering innocent persons at random. It would justify me in sentencing the young men to death if they were brought to trial. What we are here to investigate is why they are not brought to trial.

SIR O.: But really, they only obey orders.

THE JUDGE: Why do you say "only"? The slaughter of human beings and the destruction of cities are not acts to be qualified by the word only. Why are the persons who give such atrocious orders not brought to trial?

GENEVA

THE RIGHT TO MISGOVERN OURSELVES

Slaves are very often much more comfortable both in body and mind than fully responsible free men. That does not excuse anybody for embracing slavery. It is no doubt a great pity, from many points of view, that we were not conquered by Napoleon, or even by Bismarck and Moltke. None the less we should have been rightly despised if we had not been prepared to fight them for the right to misgovern ourselves.

Does It Matter?
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

YOU CANNOT CONQUER A NATION

It takes all sorts to make a world—saints as well as soldiers. And now, General, time presses; and America is in a hurry. Have you realized that though you may occupy towns and win battles, you cannot conquer a nation?

ANDERSON *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

THE TEST

There is an old story, told sometimes about Mazarin, sometimes about Richelieu, of a Minister's antechamber hung with pictures; those on one side being all idyllic landscapes and scenes of domestic sentiment; those on the other, scenes of battle and

blood and torture. The Minister, when he wanted to size up a new man, watched how he took the pictures. If he clung to the battle pictures, the Minister knew he was a timid man of peace, for whom action and daring were full of romantic fascination. If he wallowed in cottage sentiment and the "Maiden's Prayer," he was immediately marked down for military preferment and dangerous jobs. Have you ever known a sportsman who was ferocious? Have you ever known a humanitarian who was not ferocious?

Letter to Frank Harris

THEY BOTH SICKEN ME

I have never written a line to start a war. Far from caring for nothing but money, I should be a much richer man if I had given to my business a hundredth fraction of the time, attention, and interest I have given to my profession and to public questions. War is more distressing for me than for the Jingos because I feel the losses on both sides, whereas they seem to feel they have made a good bargain when the slaughter of one Englishman is followed by the slaughter of two Germans or Italians. I can never forget that the loss to Europe, and consequently to us all as Europeans, is the same whether the slaughtered man's name is John or Fritz or Beppo. I have not the consolations and exultations of English patriotism; for I am an Irishman who on native patriotic principles should rejoice in England's defeats. I loathe war, and feel no difference in point of atrocity between the blitzings of London and those of Naples and Cologne. They both sicken me.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A BRAVE MAN

The name of Jonas Hanway lives as that of a brave man because he was the first who dared to appear in the streets of this rainy island with an umbrella.

Routine

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

BUT FOR THE BLOODSHED

. . . the Government had employment in the shape of national service, even in work of destruction, instantly ready for an

unlimited number of proletarians, male and female. Those had been halcyon days but for the bloodshed.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE

EVE: If you were not a fool you would find something better for both of us to live by than this spinning and digging.

ADAM: Go on with your work, I tell you; or you shall go without bread.

EVE: Man need not always live by bread alone. There is something else. We do not yet know what it is; but some day we shall find out; and then we will live on that alone; and there shall be no more digging nor spinning, nor fighting nor killing.

BACK TO METHUSELAH

DIVIDING A CONSCIENCE

You cannot divide my conscience into a war department and a peace department.

AUBREY *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

HOPELESSLY OUTSHONE

Everybody understands war only too well; for it is a primitive blood sport that gratifies human pugnacity. Successful players at it earn fame enough to satisfy the maddest human ambition. I enjoy civil celebrity; but as I have never killed anybody in violent manner I am hopelessly outshone by warriors who have hundreds of thousands of violent deaths to their credit. Napoleon was a contemporary of Kant, Goethe, Mozart, and Beethoven. Compare their tombs, and you will get an aesthetic measure of how much more we admire a great soldier than a great philosopher, poet, or composer.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

UNTIL THE GODS ARE TIRED

And so, to the end of history, murder shall breed murder, always in the name of right and honor and peace, until the gods are tired of blood and create a race that can understand.

CAESAR *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

SECOND NATURE

The social creed must be imposed on us when we are children; for it is like riding, or reading music at sight: it can never become a second nature to those who try to learn it as adults; and the social creed, to be really effective, must be a second nature to us. It is quite easy to give people a second nature, however unnatural, if you catch them early enough. There is no belief, however grotesque and even villainous, that cannot be made a part of human nature if it is inculcated in childhood and not contradicted in the child's hearing. Now that you are grown up, nothing could persuade you that it is right to lame every woman for life by binding her feet painfully in childhood on the ground that it is not ladylike to move about freely like an animal. If you are the wife of a general or admiral nothing could persuade you that when the King dies you and your husband are bound in honor to commit suicide so as to accompany your sovereign into the next world. Nothing could persuade you that it is every widow's duty to be cremated alive with the dead body of her husband. But if you had been caught early enough you could have been made to believe and do all these things exactly as Chinese, Japanese, and Indian women have believed and done them. You may say that these were heathen Eastern women, and that you are a Christian Western. But I can remember when your grandmother, also a Christian Western, believed that she would be disgraced for ever if she let anyone see her ankles in the street, or (if she was "a real lady") walk there alone. The spectacle she made of herself when, as a married woman she put on a cap to announce to the world that she must no longer be attractive to men, and the amazing figure she cut as a widow in crape robes symbolic of her utter desolation and woe, would, if you could see or even conceive them, convince you that it was purely her luck and not any superiority of western to eastern womanhood that saved her from the bound feet, the suttee, and the hara-kiri. If you still doubt it, look at the way in which men go to war and commit frightful atrocities because they believe it is their duty, and also because the women would spit in their faces if they refused, all because this has been inculcated upon them from their childhood, thus creating the public opinion which enables the Government not only to raise enthusiastic volunteer armies, but to enforce military service by heavy

penalties on the few people who, thinking for themselves, cannot accept wholesale murder and ruin as patriotic virtues.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

GENEROSITY

In future, sir, I must ask you to be a little less generous with the blood of your men, and a little more generous with your own brains.

BURGOYNE *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

IN A RED COAT

Oh, you are mad. Is it nothing to you what wicked thing you do if only you do it like a gentleman? Is it nothing to you whether you are a murderer or not, if only you murder in a red coat?

JUDITH *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

DRAGONS AND DEVILS

Men with empty phrases in their mouths and foolish fables in their heads have seen each other, not as fellow-creatures, but as dragons and devils, and have slaughtered each other accordingly.

Preface To The Third Edition

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE ENEMIES

BURGOYNE: And will you wipe out our enemies in London, too?

SWINDON: In London! What enemies?

BURGOYNE: Jobbery and snobbery, incompetence and Red Tape.

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

THE WORLD WARS

I have now lived through two "world wars" without missing a meal or a night's sleep in my bed, though they have come near enough to shatter my windows, break in my door, and wreck my grandfather clock, keeping me for nine years of my life subject to a continual apprehension of a direct hit next time blowing me and my household to bits.

Preface to GENEVA

TECHNICAL QUALIFICATION

Every technical qualification for doing good is a technical qualification for doing evil as well.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

AFTER THE WAR

They undertake to make a new world after every war with hardly brains enough to manage a fried fish stall.

Letter

HOW TO SECURE AN INCOME

When I was young I could buy a secure income of £1,000 a year for £20,000. I could not get £20,000 by working; for five or six pounds a week was all I could earn; but I presently became the proprietor of copyrights which proved lucrative and enabled me to reap the fruits of other people's labor to the extent of £20,000 more than I was accustomed to live on. Few people were in that position; and my spare money, my capital, had a scarcity value of five per cent per annum. But the invention and multiplication of machines, and the elimination of the waste of competition by the amalgamation of competing business firms and companies without any equivalent increase in the cost of labor, kept increasing the unearned spare money on sale until its price fell to three and even to two-and-a-half per cent. When I laid hands on another £20,000, I could get only £500 a year for it instead of £1,000 without running risks. The Government was able to pay off all the people to whom it was paying five per cent by borrowing the money at two-and-a-half. In fact it was hardly necessary to go to that trouble, as its possibility compelled most of the holders of the five per cent stock to accept the new rate instead of the old.

This did not suit the financiers at all. It did not suit me. The usual measures were taken to limit the accumulation of spare money by destroying the goods that the money represented. Wheat was burnt, coffee was burnt, and netted fish were thrown back into the sea whilst the proletariat were badly short of the food they could not afford to buy. But these childish peckings at the downward movement of the value of spare money could not arrest it. Burning bags of coffee was silly: What was needed

was destruction on a scale that only governments with thousands of millions of money and millions of soldiers at their command could hope to achieve. It seemed the work of Providence when the South African War broke out, and I was able once more to obtain £1,000 a year for £20,000.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AN IMPOTENT WINDBAG

Military discipline is instructive. More than fifty years ago I was marching in a procession which numbered at least a thousand men. It was broken up and scattered in hopeless confusion and terror by twenty pale nervous policemen armed with nothing more deadly than their clubs. Not one of the thousand knew what to do or what any of the others would do; so they all ran away, except those who were overtaken and knocked on the head. I did not run away: I walked away; and as I was respectably dressed and seemed unconcerned nothing happened to me except that one elderly man who recognized me as one of the orators who had exhorted the thousand to march to victory before the procession started, rushed up to me and cried, "Tell us what to do. Give us a lead," making me acutely conscious of my disgraceful exposure as an impotent windbag. I could only tell him that there was nothing to be done but to make our several ways to the place of meeting as best we could.

Now this man was visibly less frightened than some of the twenty policemen. He wanted to fight them more than they wanted to fight him. But each of the twenty policemen knew what the other nineteen were going to do, and had the law on his side. He had a uniform, a helmet, and a weapon, and could depend on the co-operation of nineteen uniformed, helmeted, weaponed comrades. It was a triumph of expected behavior over mistrust and anarchy. Since then I have had nothing but a sardonic smile for Shelley's "Ye Are Many: They Are Few." It made an end for me of the democratic delusion that the world is or ever can be ruled by majorities of unorganized individuals. Even the organized are at the command of the minority who can make decisions, who know what to do, and can do it. And these are as likely to be ambitious scoundrels as men of good will.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AN EXPERIMENT

A curious devil might destroy the whole race in torment, acquiring knowledge all the time from his highly interesting experiment.

An Argument Which Would Defend Any Crime
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

FAMOUS WITHOUT ABILITY

Martyrdom, sir, is what these people like: it is the only way in which a man can become famous without ability.

BURGOYNE *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

HINDHEAD NEXT

Well, it wont last for ever. The writing is on the wall. Rome fell. Babylon fell. Hindhead's turn will come.

GUNNER *in* MISALLIANCE

Imprisonment

DEVIL'S WORK

It is easy—terribly easy—to shake a man's faith in himself. To take advantage of that to break a man's spirit is devil's work. Take care of what you are doing. Take care.

MORELL *in* CANDIDA

CONFLICT WITH THE POLICE

I have never been imprisoned myself; but in my first years as a public speaker I had to volunteer for prison martyrdom in two Free Speech conflicts with the police.

IMPRISONMENT

ONLY WHAT A CONVICT LEARNS

What I did learn at school I should have been better without, as it was only what a convict learns from his fellow prisoners and from fear and suffering, though I must not pretend that, apart from the imprisonment, these were severe enough to make a song about.

SCHOOL

THE REAL MAN?

Which of the six is the real man? thats the question that torments me. One of them is a hero, another a buffoon, another a humbug, another perhaps a bit of a blackguard. And one at least, is a coward: jealous, like all cowards.

SERGIUS *in* ARMS AND THE MAN

A DEN OF DANGEROUS ANIMALS

If you know the facts and are strong enough to look them in the face, you must admit that unless we are replaced by a more highly evolved animal, in short, by the Superman, the world must remain a den of dangerous animals among whom our few accidental supermen, our Shakespears, Goethes, Shelleys, and their like, must live as precariously as lion tamers do, taking the humor of their situation, and the dignity of their superiority, as a set-off to the horror of the one and the loneliness of the other.

The Conceit Of Civilization
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

ONE INFLEXIBLE POINT OF HONOUR

The truth is, hardly any of us have ethical energy enough for more than one really inflexible point of honour.

The Psychology Of Self-Respect In Surgeons
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

WICKED PEOPLE

It is only in the middle classes, Stephen, that people get into a state of dumb helpless horror when they find that there are wicked people in the world. In our class, we have to decide what is to be done with wicked people; and nothing should disturb our self-possession.

LADY BRITOMART *in* MAJOR BARBARA

PRODUCING WHITE

Our criminal system is an organized attempt to produce white by two blacks.

Expiation And Moral Accountancy
In IMPRISONMENT

BASE MORALS

. . . cruelty, retributive or sadist or both, sets in rapid operation the Gresham law that a base coinage drives out an honest one. It holds as good in morals as in money.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT YOU CANNOT DO

You can give a prisoner a pardon; but you cannot give him back a moment of his imprisonment.

The Lethal Chamber
In IMPRISONMENT

MAKING IT BETTER

Our prison system is a horrible accidental growth and not a deliberate human invention, and that its worst features have been produced with the intention, not of making it worse, but of making it better.

Howard's Good Intentions
In IMPRISONMENT

HELL

Our prisons are artificial hells for which there is no excuse: all the physical brutalities of concentration camps and torture chambers are trivial and temporary compared to the routine of imprisonment described by Mr. Fenner Brockway after twenty-eight months of it, and of penal servitude as described by Mr. Jim Whelan after thirteen years of it. Both of them would have been extremely lucky if they had been let off with a flogging, however savage, as a public entertainment.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE CHAINED DOG

The more a dog suffers from being chained the more dangerous it is to release him: he bites savagely at the hand that dares touch his collar.

Zolaism As A Superstition
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

GOOD SOLDIERS

Incurable criminals make well-behaved soldiers and prisoners.

Good Soldiers Often Bad Citizens,
And Bad Citizens Good Prisoners
In IMPRISONMENT

MY APOLOGY

The good of mentioning them is that you make people so extremely uncomfortable about them that they finally stop

blaming "human nature" for them, and begin to support measures for their reform.

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

DETERRENCE

There are people to be dealt with who will not obey the law unless they are afraid to disobey it, and whose disobedience would mean disaster.

Plausibility Of The Deterrence Delusion
In IMPRISONMENT

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Everybody's business is nobody's business.

JOHNNY *in* MISALLIANCE

SOOT AND WHITEWASH

We must get out of the habit of painting human character in soot and whitewash. It is not true that men can be divided into absolutely honest persons.

Most Prisoners No Worse Than Ourselves
In IMPRISONMENT

THE TREE

I have always despised Adam because he had to be tempted by the Woman, as she was by the serpent, before he could be induced to pluck the apple from the tree of knowledge. I should have swallowed every apple on the tree the moment the owner's back was turned.

The Higher Motive. The Tree of Knowledge
Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

EXEMPLARY PRISONERS

. . . in British convict prisons the worst-behaved citizens are often the best-behaved prisoners. These exemplary prisoners should never be released; but they should be so humanely treated as never to desire release, and even to dread it. As we order things now, the "free" poor would all break windows to get into a humane prison; but there will be no danger of this when honest folk can be equally comfortable at large.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE FLOOD

God lost patience with the world and drowned everybody except a single family. But the result was that the progeny of that family reproduced all the vices of their predecessors so exactly that the misery caused by the flood might just as well have been spared.

A False Alternative
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

FACING FACTS

He has a hard and penetrating intellect and a remarkable power of looking facts in the face; but unfortunately, being very young, he has no idea of how very little of that sort of thing most of us can stand.

SUMMERHAYS *in* MISALLIANCE

Extermination

SOUND PRACTICAL ADVICE

When I tell them that they have no right to punish anybody (except perhaps themselves); that when Jesus told them so he was giving them sound practical advice; and that our treatment of criminals is diabolical, they dismiss me as a dreamy sentimentalist; but when I add that far from sympathizing with those who demand the abolition of capital punishment and the substitution of a penal servitude worse than death, I demand the liquidation, as kindly as possible, of all incorrigible living nuisances, I muddle and amaze them as much as when I profess myself a democrat and yet demand the disfranchisement and disqualification of political nincompoops from every political activity except that of ventilating their grievances and choosing between rulers of proved competence.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

IF NOT FIT TO LIVE

If people are fit to live, let them live under decent human conditions. If they are not fit to live, kill them in a decent way.

The Price Of Life In Communities
In IMPRISONMENT

THE YAHOO

We must eliminate the Yahoo, or his vote will wreck the commonwealth.

The Verdict Of History
In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE RIGHT TO LIVE

The moment we face it frankly we are driven to the conclusion that the community has a right to put a price on the right to live in it.

The Price Of Life in Communities
In IMPRISONMENT

CIVILIZATION

Civilization is not a gift of Nature but a task that has to be performed continuously day-by-day by organized labour of many grades, from which everybody benefits and to which all of us must either contribute our shares or shirk them by enslaving others to do double service. To prevent such shirking Socialism must eliminate shirkers. We must "weed the garden."

SIXTY YEARS OF FABIANISM

MOST INSTRUCTIVE!

There can be no question that the burning of St. Joan of Arc must have been a most instructive and interesting experiment to a good observer, and could have been made more so if it had been carried out by skilled physiologists under laboratory conditions.

An Argument Which Would Defend Any Crime
In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

THE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT FIT

If we desire a certain type of civilization and culture we must exterminate the sort of people who do not fit into it.

Previous Attempts Miss The Point
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

VISIONARIES

The historian must understand that visionaries are neither imposters nor lunatics.

The Evolutionary Appetite
Preface to SAINT JOAN

THE PRACTICAL MAN

Jesus remains unshaken as the practical man; and we stand exposed as the fools, the blunderers, the unpractical visionaries.

Labor Time
In Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

HEROISM AND VILLAINY

Nature does not keep heroism exclusively for one set of men and villainy exclusively for another, merely to enable us all to become dramatists and "paint character" with a bucket of whitewash and a jar of lampblack.

WIDOWERS' HOUSES

JUSTICE

I have never claimed for myself the divine attribute of justice.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

A NEW SCIENCE

Extermination will become a human science. . . .

Limited Liability In Morals
In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

THE INQUISITION

Long ago I suggested that we should all be obliged to appear before a Board (virtually an inquisition) every five years, and justify our existence to its satisfaction on pain of liquidation.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

Bear in Mind

LIBERTY

. . . bear in mind that unless there is a large liberty to shock conventional people, and a well informed sense of the value of originality, individuality, and eccentricity, the result will be apparent stagnation covering a repression of evolutionary forces which will eventually explode with extravagant and probably destructive violence.

Toleration, Modern And Medieval
Preface to SAINT JOAN

WHAT CHRIST STANDS FOR

Christ stands in the world for that intuition of the highest humanity that we, being members one of another, must not complain, must not scold, must not strike, nor revile nor persecute nor revenge nor punish.

CHRISTIANITY

INSANE LIFE

A life spent in prayer and almsgiving is really as insane as a life spent in cursing and picking pockets: the effect of everybody doing it would be equally disastrous.

The Gospel of Laodicea
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

MAKING FRIENDS

. . . as a prudent man, I always make friends with able desperadoes, knowing that they will seize the citadel when the present garrison retires.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THINGS YOU MUST NOT KNOW

"There are some things you must not know: for instance, if you turn boiling water into your wife's bath to ascertain what temperature her body can bear before it disintegrates you will presently add to that knowledge the knowledge of what it feels like to be hanged."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A MULTITUDE

There is no such thing as Man in the world: what we have to deal with is a multitude of men, some of them great rascals, some of them great statesmen, others both, with a vast majority capable of managing their personal affairs, but not of comprehending social organization, or grappling with the problems created by their association in enormous numbers. If "Man" means this majority, then "Man" has made no progress; he has, on the contrary, resisted it. He will not even pay the cost of existing institutions: the requisite money has to be filched from him by "indirect taxation." Such people, like Wagner's giants, must be governed by laws; and their assent to such government must be secured by deliberately filling them with prejudices and practising on their imaginations by pageantry and artificial eminences and dignities. The government is of course established by the few who are capable of government, though its mechanism once complete, it may be, and generally is, carried on unintelligently by people who are incapable of it, the capable repairing it from time to time when it gets too far behind the continuous advance or decay of civilization. All these capable people are thus in the position of Wotan, forced to maintain as sacred,and themselves submit to, laws which they privately know to be obsolescent makeshifts, and to affect the deepest veneration for creeds and ideals which they ridicule among themselves with cynical scepticism. No individual Siegfried can rescue them from this bondage and hypocrisy; in fact, the individual Siegfried, has come often enough, only to find himself confronted with the alternative of governing those who are not Siegfrieds or risking destruction at their hands. And this dilemma will persist until Wotan's inspiration comes to our governors, and they see that their business is not the devising of laws and institutions to prop up the weaknesses of mobs and secure the survival of the unfittest,

but the breeding of men whose wills and intelligences may be depended on to produce spontaneously the social wellbeing our clumsy laws now aim at and miss. The majority of men at present in Europe have no business to be alive; and no serious progress will be made until we address ourselves earnestly and scientifically to the task of producing trustworthy human material for society. In short, it is necessary to breed a race of men in whom the life-giving impulses predominate, before the New Protestantism becomes politically practicable. The most inevitable dramatic conception, then, of the nineteenth century is that of a perfectly naive hero upsetting religion, law and order in all directions, and establishing in their place the unfettered action of Humanity doing exactly what it likes, and producing order instead of confusion thereby because it likes to do what is necessary for the good of the race. This conception, already incipient in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, was certain at last to reach some great artist and be embodied by him in a masterpiece. . . .

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

THE PEDIGREE

Englishmen hate Liberty and Equality too much to understand them. But every Englishman loves a pedigree.

The Method

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

IN SECURITY

The drawback to England's capacity for doing impossible things when in danger is her incapacity for doing impossible things (except repeating what was done last time) in security.

Preface to GENEVA

GOVERNMENT ACTION

So you see I cannot even be a Christian except through Government action. . . .

Preface to THE APPLE CART

ADVANCED PEOPLE

I greatly mistrust advanced people. In my experience they are very difficult to work with, and often most disreputable in their private lives. They seldom attend divine service.

SIR O. *in* GENEVA

ORDERS OF MEN

. . . the three main orders of men: to wit, the instinctive, predatory, lustful, greedy people; the patient, toiling, stupid, respectful, money-worshipping people; and the intellectual, moral, talented people who devise and administer States and Churches. History shews us only one order higher than the highest of these: namely, the order of Heroes.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

PRETENDERS

I myself was converted to Socialism by Das Kapital; and though I have since had to spend a good deal of time pointing out Marx's mistakes in abstract economics, his total lack of experience in the responsible management of public affairs, and the unlikeness at close quarters of his typical descriptions of the proletariat to any earthly working women or of the bourgeoisie to any real lady of property, you may confidently set down those who speak contemptuously of Karl Marx either as pretenders who have never read him or persons incapable of his great mental range.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

REFRESHMENTS

The same members who sat silent in stunned assent when they had to vote for an item of £20,000 for electrical machinery, would hold all-night sittings to rage furiously over an item of three and sixpence for refreshments.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE TRADE UNION

The object of a trade union under existing conditions must finally be, not to improve the technical quality of the work done by its members, but to secure a living wage for them.

Trade Unionism And Science

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A DELIGHTFUL SPORT

Lord Acton's dictum that power corrupts gives no idea of the extent to which flattery, deference, power, and apparently unlimited money, can upset and demoralize simpletons who in

their proper places are good fellows enough. To them the exercise of authority is not a heavy and responsible job which strains their mental capacity and industry to the utmost, but a delightful sport to be indulged for its own sake, and asserted and reasserted by cruelty and monstrosity.

Preface to GENEVA

THE TOO CELEBRATED AMATEUR

He always reminds me of the too celebrated amateur who being asked could he play the violin, replied that he had no doubt he could if he tried.

LONDON MUSIC

FINE WORDS

When it is comprehension we have to test, not executive facility, fifteen minutes conversation should be amply sufficient; but the conversation must not be in abstract terms, popularly called fine words; for in abstract terms the views of our rulers are all correct. Fine words are like letters of the alphabet used as algebraic signs, useless to the practical politician until they are attached to definite things in definite forms, definite quantities, for definite durations. Statesmen may be agreed that a pint equals twenty fluid ounces; but if they infer that a pint of milk is equal to twenty fluid ounces of gin they will be dangerous when the feeding of children is in question.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

SAINTS AND SCOUNDRELS

A month spent in a Tolstoyan community will convince anybody of the soundness of the nearest police inspector's belief that every normal human group contains not only a percentage of saints but also a percentage of irreclaimable scoundrels and good-for-noughts who will wreck any community unless they are expensively restrained or cheaply exterminated.

Christianity And The Seventh Commandment

In Preface to ON THE ROCKS

A USEFUL GUIDE

When I was a child I heard my grandfather say that no man, however highly placed, could refuse a five-pound note if you

crackled it under his nose; and though this old-fashioned Irish figure needs considerable correction for richer countries and modern money values, I still regard my grandfather's generalization as sound enough to be a useful guide in business.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT THEY WERE

Men are what they were.

Preface to GENEVA

NO SUSPICION

They would never have elected me had they had the faintest suspicion of my ultimate political views.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

EMPTYING THE BATH

At each blind rush from one extreme to the other we empty the baby out with the bath, learning nothing from our experience, and furnishing examples of the abuses of power and the horrors of liberty without ascertaining the limits of either.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

MOSTLY CROOK

To the Old School Ties the dictators seem ignorant uneducated rebels. To the dictators the Ties seem sordid exploiters who live by robbing the poor, and intend to go on doing it by hook or crook, mostly crook.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHO IS MORE DANGEROUS?

There is no more dangerous mistake than the mistake of supposing that we cannot have too much of a good thing. The truth is, an immoderately good man is very much more dangerous than an immoderately bad man: that is why Savonarola was burnt and John of Leyden torn to pieces with red-hot pincers whilst multitudes of unredeemed rascals were being let off with clipped ears, burnt palms, a flogging, or a few years in the galleys. That is why Christianity never got any grip of the world until it virtually reduced its claims on the ordinary citizen's

attention to a couple of hours every seventh day, and let him alone on week-days.

The Gospel of Laodicea
In Preface to GETTING MARRIED

A distinguished critic has summed up the impression made on him by *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, by declaring that "the difference between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Euclid."

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

THE SENSE OF SECURITY

The original thinker, in repudiating convention is repudiating that on which his neighbors are relying for their sense of security.

The Dread Of The Original Thinker
In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

A MAN'S LIFE

. . . it is not necessary to wear trousers and smoke big cigars to live a man's life.

Joan's Manliness And Militarism
Preface to SAINT JOAN

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

It is hard to believe that you may wake up one morning, and learn from your newspaper that the Houses of Parliament and the King have moved to Constantinople or Baghdad or Zanzibar, and that this insignificant island is to be retained only as a meteorological station, a bird sanctuary, and a place of pilgrimage for American tourists. But if that did happen, what could you do?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMANS' GUIDE

A PROFESSOR LOSES HIS TEMPER

When I began my political career the cry of the Capitalists to the State was "Hands off industry; hands off agriculture; hands off banking, shipping, mining; hands off everything but foreign policy and police protection of private property." When I assumed the necessity of land nationalization at a meeting of the British Association in Bath in 1888, Henry Sidgwick, a professor of political economy and ethics who had never before

been known to lose his temper or raise his voice, sprang up and cried out that advocacy of land nationalization was advocacy of crime, and he would not countenance it by his presence. Thereupon he not only left the platform but actually slammed the door behind him violently. I have never been able to persuade those of his friends who were not present that he was capable of such an explosion; but the word nationalization acted as a detonator on this mildest of men.

Nowadays the Capitalist cry is "Nationalize what you like; municipalize all you can; turn the courts of justice into courts martial and your parliaments and corporations into boards of directors with your most popular mob orators in the chair, provided the rent, the interest, and the profits come to us as before, and the proletariat still gets nothing but its keep."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE RABBLE

A rabble gathered and followed to see the fun, as rabbles always will in cities. In London I have seen thousands of citizens rushing to see why the others were rushing, and to find out why. It looked like a revolutionary *émeute*. On one occasion it was a runaway cow. On another it was Mary Pickford, "World's Sweetheart" of the old silent films, driving to her hotel in a taxi.

Preface to GENEVA

MARX NOT INFALLIBLE

It is a pity they did not begin their political education, as I began mine, by reading Karl Marx. It is true that I had occasion to point out that Marx was not infallible; but he left me with a very strong disposition to back the economic situation to control all the other situations, religious, nationalist, or romantic, in the long run.

The Denshawai Horror

Preface to JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

WHEN MEN WERE JUST WHAT THEY ARE NOW

But beware of assuming that the result will be a unanimous House of Commons with an unopposed Labor Government carrying everything before it. Do not even assume that the Labor Party will split into two parties, one Conservative and the

other Progressive. That would be the happiest of the possibilities. The danger is that it may split into half a dozen or more irreconcilable groups, making parliamentary government impossible. That is what happened in the Long Parliament in the seventeenth century, when men were just what they are now, except that they had no telephones nor airplanes.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

IF THE WORLD IS TO BE SAVED

Do not mistake mere idle fancies for the tremendous miracle-working force of Will nerved to creation by a conviction of Necessity. I tell you men capable of such willing, and realizing its necessity, will do it reluctantly, under inner compulsion, as all great efforts are made. They will hide what they are doing from themselves: they will take care not to know what they are doing. They will live three hundred years, not because they would like to, but because the soul deep down in them will know that they must, if the world is to be saved.

FRANKLYN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

A PERPETUAL WAR CLOUD

Internationalism is nonsense. Pushing all the nations into Geneva is like throwing all the fishes into the same pond: they just begin eating one another. We need something higher than nationalism: a genuine political and social catholicism. How are you to get that from these patriots, with their national anthems and flags and dreams of war and conquest rubbed into them from their childhood? The organization of nations is the organization of world war. If two men want to fight how do you prevent them? By keeping them apart, not by bringing them together. When the nations kept apart war was an occasional and exceptional thing: now the League hangs over Europe like a perpetual war cloud.

THE SECRETARY *in* GENEVA

GREATNESS

Shall we leave Rome behind us—Rome, that has achieved greatness only to learn how greatness destroys nations of men who are not great!

CAESAR *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

WHAT THE STATESMAN MUST SAY

In my childhood I heard a pious Irish mother say to her adult son, when he warned her that she was in danger of losing her train, that she would catch it "with the help of God." His reply was "Yes; but you will have to look pretty sharp yourself." That is what the statesman must always say to the theocrat.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

SELF-HELPERS

No one ever feels helpless by the side of the self-helper; whilst the self-sacrificer is always a drag, a responsibility, a reproach, an everlasting and unnatural trouble with whom no really strong soul can live. Only those who have helped themselves know how to help others, and to respect their right to help themselves.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE CREATION OF GENTLEMEN

If any man wants a better life, he should not seek for that life for himself alone, but should attain it by raising of the general level of life. . . . The real constructive scheme you want is the practical inculcation into everybody that what the country needs, and should seek through its social education, its social sense and religious feeling, is to create gentlemen: and when you create them all other things will be added unto you.

The Case for Equality

NEWSPAPER

ACIS: What do you think of what you see around you? Of us, for instance, and our ways and doings?

THE MALE FIGURE: I have not seen the newspapers today.

BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE MISCHIEF MAKER

The sectarian minister for whom foreign gods are idols, and their worshippers heathen idolaters to be converted to his sect, is a dangerous mischief maker on whom the warning of Jesus against destroying the wheat in the effort to uproot the tares is

lost. The statesman must, when he meddles with religion, do so as a complete freethinker. All the aesthetic dramatizations of divinity must be impartially dealt with by him.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

YOUNG SALVATION LASS

We must not forget that though the old fables are dead for some of us they are not yet dead for everybody. I recall something that happened to me one night when I attended a great meeting of the Salvation Army in the Albert Hall to commemorate Mrs. Booth, the wife of the Army's founder. I had been invited because I had written a play with a Salvation lass as the heroine, and, in a letter to the Press, corrected an ignorant ribald who had libelled the excellent Salvation bands. I was placed in the very centre and focus of the great amphitheatre. I could sing not altogether discordantly and unskilfully; and as there is no better fun than community singing, and the Army hymn tunes were delightfully exciting and quite free from the dullness that has given "sacred music" a bad name, I led the singing in my crowded box with tremendous gusto. A tribute to my performance came from a young Salvation lass, who, her eyes streaming with tears, grasped both my hands and cried "Ah! we know, dont we?"

What could I say? Those who believe that the truth is never out of season will no doubt insist that I could and should have said, "My good girl, you are quite mistaken. All this about climbing up the golden stairs to heaven that I have been singing about with such clan is superstitious rubbish. There is no such heaven and no golden stairs. May I recommend you to study the works of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh and Colonel Ingersoll. I share their scepticism. Good evening."

But I could not say this, and did not want to say it. Instead, though I could not fill my eyes with tears, I did my best to make them beam like hers as I returned the grasp of her hands, and, with my heart apparently too full for speech, left her convinced that "we knew" and that I believed everything she believed and hoped for everything she hoped for.

Anyone who blames me for this sympathetic hypocrisy is unfit to be a Minister of Education.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

FOLLY

. . . folly is not nonsensical: in fact the more foolish it is, the more logical, the more subtle, the more eloquent, the more brilliant.

THE JUDGE *in* GENEVA

A LIAR

The soldier who, when I was pointed out to him as a teetotaller, said I was a damned liar because no man with a shilling in his pocket could pass a public-house without going in and having a drink, was a product of poverty and unremitting toil as inevitably as John Ruskin was a product of leisure and money. A Poor Law which puts food, lodging, and clothing first, and leisure and pocket-money nowhere, is socially half blind. The Frenchman who said he could do without the necessities of life if only he had its luxuries was wiser than the framers of the statute of Elizabeth or the Gradgrinds of 1832.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

HEAVEN?

BROADBENT: Have you ever heard of Garden City?

TIM: D'ye mane Heaven?

BROADBENT: Heaven! No: it's near Hitchin.

JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND

COMMAND

Reluctance to command is a more serious difficulty. When a couple of soldiers are sent on any duty one of them must be made a corporal for the occasion, as there must be someone to make the decisions and be responsible for them. Usually both men object: each trying to shove the burden on to the other. When they differ in this respect the Platonic rule is to choose the reluctant man, as the probability is that the ambitious one is a conceited fool who does not feel the responsibility because he does not understand it. This kind of reluctance cannot be overcome by extra pay. It may be overcome by simple coercion, as in the case of common jurors.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

A BAD COUNSELLOR

. . . so let us keep calm. Anger is a bad counsellor.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

ALIKE

. . . most nations express themselves alike when they are red-hot.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

RESPECTABLE HORROR

Nothing that is admittedly and unmistakably horrible matters very much because it frightens people into seeking a remedy: the serious horrors are those which seem entirely respectable and normal to respectable and normal men.

Zolaism As A Superstition

In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

THE CASTE SYSTEM

. . . you need a country in which society is organized in a series of exclusive circles, in which the privacy of private life is very jealously guarded, and in which no one presumes to speak to anyone else without an introduction following a strict examination of social credentials. It is only in such a country that persons of special tastes and attainments can form a little world of their own, and protect themselves absolutely from intrusion by common persons. I think I may claim that our British society has developed this exclusiveness to perfection.

THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE ANONYMOUS DONOR

CUSINS: They prayed with the most touching sincerity and gratitude for Bodger, and for the anonymous donor of the £5,000. Your father would not let his name be given.

LOMAX: That was rather fine of the old man, you know. Most chaps would have wanted the advertisement.

CUSINS: He said all the charitable institutions would be down on him like kites on a battlefield if he gave his name.

LADY BRITOMART: Thats Andrew all over. He never does a proper thing without giving an improper reason for it.

CUSINS: He convinced me that I have all my life been doing improper things for proper reasons.

MAJOR BARBARA

MISTAKES

I think men make more mistakes by being too clever than by being too good.

ANN *in* MAN AND SUPERMAN

NEVER LOSE A CHANCE

What is life but a series of inspired follies? The difficulty is to find them to do. Never lose a chance: it doesnt come every day.

HIGGINS *in* PYGMALION

GREATNESS

NAPOLEON: Superiority will make itself felt, madam. But when I say I possess this talent I do not express myself accurately. The truth is that my talent possesses me. It is genius. It drives me to exercise it. I must exercise it. I am great when I exercise it. At other moments I am nobody.

THE ORACLE: Well, exercise it. Do you need an oracle to tell you that?

NAPOLEON: Wait. This talent involves the shedding of human blood.

THE ORACLE: Are you a surgeon, or a dentist?

NAPOLEON: Psha! You do not appreciate me, madam. I mean the shedding of oceans of blood, the death of millions of men.

THE ORACLE: They object, I suppose.

NAPOLEON: Not at all. They adore me.

BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE UNIVERSAL POSTULATE

One of the first and most famous utterances of rationalism would have condemned it without further hearing had its full significance been seen at the time. Voltaire, taking exception to the trash of some poetaster, was met with the plea "one must live." "I dont see the necessity," replied Voltaire. The evasion was worthy of the Father of Lies himself; for Voltaire was face to face with the very necessity he was denying; must have known, consciously or not, that it is the universal postulate; would have understood, if he had lived today, that since all valid human institutions are constructed to fulfil man's will, and his will is

to live even when his reason teaches him to die, logical necessity, which was the sort Voltaire meant (the other sort being visible enough) can never be a motor in human action, and is, in short, not necessity at all. But that was not brought to light in Voltaire's time; and he died impenitent, bequeathing to his disciples that most logical of agents, the guillotine, which also "did not see the necessity."

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

NOTHING HAPPENS

Life was so thoroughly accepted as a divine institution that in order to make it seem tragic, something dreadful had to happen and somebody had to die. But the tragedy of modern life is that nothing happens, and that the resultant dullness does not kill.

Zolaism As A Superstition
In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

COLD-BLOODED WISDOM

You take all the courage out of me with your cold-blooded wisdom.

LOUKA *in* ARMS AND THE MAN

MY CHILDHOOD

Oh, a devil of a childhood, rich only in dreams, frightful and loveless in realities.

Letter

THE HORROR

EVE: You say we must not cease to exist. But you used to complain of having to exist always and for ever. You sometimes sit for hours brooding and silent, hating me in your heart. When I ask you what I have done to you, you say you are not thinking of me, but of the horror of having to be here for ever. But I know very well that what you mean is the horror of having to be here with me for ever.

ADAM: Oh! That is what you think, is it? Well, you are wrong. It is the horror of having to be with myself for ever. I like you; but I do not like myself. I want to be different; to be better; to begin again and again; to shed myself as a snake

sheds its skin. I am tired of myself. And yet I must endure myself, not for a day or for many days, but for ever. That is a dreadful thought. That is what makes me sit brooding and silent and hateful. Do you never think of that?

BACK TO METHUSELAH

SENSELESS!

Life as it occurs is senseless: a policeman may watch it and work in it for thirty years in the streets and courts of Paris without learning as much of it or from it as a child or a nun may learn from a single play by Brieux.

The Interpreter Of Life

In THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

AMUSEMENT

I am no sportsman; and if I had the power I should say to the stag hunter "Your cruelty is neither necessary nor unavoidable; and you must find some other way of amusing yourself." For there are obviously other ways.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE GRINDSTONE

ELLIE: I suppose you think youre being sympathetic. You are just foolish and stupid and selfish. You see me getting a smasher right in the face that kills a whole part of my life: the best part that can never come again; and you think you can help me over it by a little coaxing and kissing. When I want all the strength I can get to lean on: something iron, something stony, I dont care how cruel it is, you go all mushy and want to slobber over me. I'm not angry; I'm not unfriendly; but for God's sake do pull yourself together; and dont think that because youre on velvet and always have been, women who are in hell can take it as easily as you.

MRS. HUSHABYE: Very well. But I warn you that when I am neither coaxing and kissing nor laughing, I am just wondering how much longer I can stand living in this cruel, damnable world. You object to the siren: well, I drop the siren. You want to rest your wounded bosom against a grindstone. Well here is the grindstone.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

FACING THE FACTS

I wanted to get at the facts. I was prepared for the facts being unflattering: had I not already faced the fact that instead of being a fallen angel I was first cousin to a monkey?

Rise Of The Scientific Spirit
Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

THE GREATNESS OF THE POWER

. . . accepting it, as she has been trained to accept all monstrous calamities, as proofs of the greatness of the power that inflicts them, and of her own wormlike insignificance.

Of MRS. DUDGEON *in* THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

THE PORTRAIT

It is a strange fact, your Majesty, that no living man or woman can endure his or her portrait if it tells all the truth about them.

KNELLER *in* IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

GENIUS

ELLIE: I feel now as if there was nothing I could not do, because I want nothing.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER: Thats the only real strength. Thats genius.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE

THE UTMOST THAT CAN BE SUFFERED

. . . it may drive us mad if we begin to think of public evils as millionfold evils. They are nothing of the kind. What you yourself can suffer is the utmost that can be suffered on earth. If you starve to death you experience all the starvation that ever has been or ever can be. If ten thousand other women starve to death with you, their suffering is not increased by a single pang: their share in your fate does not make you ten thousand times as hungry, nor prolong your suffering ten thousand times. Therefore do not be oppressed by "the frightful sum of human suffering": there is no sum: two lean women are not twice as lean as one nor two fat women twice as fat as one. Poverty and pain are not cumulative: you must not let your spirit be crushed by the fancy that it is. If you can stand the suffering of one

person you can fortify yourself with the reflection that the suffering of a million is no worse: nobody has more than one stomach to fill nor one frame to be stretched on the rack. Do not let your mind be disabled by excessive sympathy. What the true Socialist revolts against is not the suffering that is not cumulative, but the waste that is. A thousand healthy, happy, honorable women are not each a thousand times as healthy, or honorable as one; but they can co-operate to increase the health, happiness, and honor possible for each of them. At present nobody can be healthy, happy, or honorable: our standards are so low that when we call ourselves so we mean only that we are not sick nor crying nor lying nor stealing (legally or illegally) oftener than we must agree to put up with under our Capitalist Constitution.

We have to confess it: Capitalist mankind in the lump is detestable. Class hatred is not a mere matter of envy on the part of the poor and contempt and dread on the part of the rich. Both rich and poor are really hateful in themselves. For my part I hate the poor and look forward eagerly to their extermination. I pity the rich a little, but am equally bent on their extermination. The working classes, the business classes, the professional classes, the propertied classes, the ruling classes, are each more odious than the other: They have no right to live: I should despair if I did not know that they will all die presently, and that there is no need on earth why they should be replaced by people like themselves. I do not want any human child to be brought up as I was brought up, nor as any child I have known was brought up. Do you?

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE NATURAL SENSE OF HONOUR

In my infancy I was told that if I was a bad child I should spend eternity after my death burning in a brimstone hell in an agony of thirst, tortured by a magical combustion that would never consume me. This fable served its turn while I was young enough to believe it; but when I was old enough to laugh at it I was left without any credible reason for behaving honorably, and with a habit of deriding all religious teaching as fraudulent, ridiculous, and characteristic of superstitious fools and humbugs. Fortunately by that time I had also evolved a sense of honor which inhibited my worst impulses and dictated my best ones;

and I took to pointing out, in my new capacity as a boy atheist, that this natural sense of honor, nowhere mentioned in the Bible, was the real source of honorable behavior and was quite independent of religious instruction. I ranked it, and still do, as a passion.

But before this sense of honor became imperative there was an interval of incredulity during which I was in school a shamelessly unscrupulous liar in my excuses for neglecting my school lessons and leaving my exercises unwritten, the true reason being that I was too busy reading readable books (the school books were utterly unreadable), listening to music, looking at pictures, and roaming over Dalkey Hill: that is, doing the things that really educated me and made me loathe my school prison, where art and beauty had no place, and the teachers, though apparently full of Latin and Greek, and mostly candidates for the pulpit, were, culturally, comparatively ignorant.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THOSE INTERMINABLE HOURS

I had been told to keep my restless little limbs still all through those interminable hours; not to talk; and above all to be happy and holy there and glad that I was not a wicked little boy playing in the fields instead of worshipping God.

ON GOING TO CHURCH

AND END BY SAYING

You never can tell. People begin by saying "Is not this the carpenter's son?" and end by saying "Behold the Lamb of God!"

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

A MODERN PROPHET

I do not know anything more annoying at a concert than a man who beats time. He is a sort of modern prophet with a Kentish fire shut up in his bones, so that, like Jeremiah, he is weary with forbearing and cannot stay. He generally does stay, notwithstanding, right through to the very end. It seems unreasonable to hate him so venomously for attempting what the big drum and cymbals may be achieving at the same time with your entire approval; but, reasonably or not, the thumping of his boots distracts and annoys you beyond expression, and

you gloat vindictively over his defeat when a syncopated passage throws him out.

Among these death-watches of the concert room there are some terribly destructive varieties. I remember a tenor who used to mark time by shooting his ears up and down. If you have ever seen a circus clown twitch his ear you know how it makes your flesh creep. Imagine the sensation of looking at a man with his ears pulsating 116 times per minute in a quick movement from one of Verdi's operas. That man permanently injured my nervous system by rehearsing in my presence (unsuccessfully) the arduous part of Ruiz in Il Trovatore. But he was eclipsed by a rival who marked time with his eyes. You know the fancy clock in which an old man with a pistol looks out of a rustic window, glancing from side to side for burglars as the clock ticks. That was how he did it; and never shall I forget the shrinking of my whole nature from his horrible ocular oscillations. Feeling that I should go mad if I ever saw such a thing again, I left the country (he was not an Englishman), and have never revisited it.

LONDON MUSIC

EXPERIENCE

We learn from experience that men never learn anything from experience.

Letter

Growing Old

EVEN THE YOUNGEST

Even the youngest of us may be wrong sometimes.

LOVE AMONG THE ARTISTS

DISCOURAGEMENT

Our will to live depends on hope; for we die of despair, or, as I have called it in the Methuselah cycle, discouragement. What damns Darwinian Natural Selection as a creed is that it takes hope out of evolution, and substitutes a paralysing fatalism which is utterly discouraging.

Postscript to BACK TO METHUSELAH

PART OF THE PUBLIC OPINION

For ten years with an unprecedented pertinacity and obstination I have been dinning into the public head that I am an extraordinarily witty, brilliant and clever man, that is now part of the public opinion of England, and no power in heaven or earth will ever change it. I may dodder and dote, I may become the chipping block of all the bright original spirits of the rising generation; but my reputation shall not suffer, it is built up fast and solid like Shakespear's on an impregnable basis of dogmatic reiteration.

Letter

ON THE SHELF

A famous playwright wrote a long play to shew that people of my age were on the shelf; and I laughed at him with the wrong side of my mouth.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

WHEN YOU GROW UP

A man's interest in the world is only the overflow from his interest in himself. When you are a child your vessel is not yet full; so you care for nothing but your own affairs. When you grow up, your vessel overflows; and you are a politician, a philosopher, or an explorer and adventurer. In old age the vessel dries up: there is no overflow: you are a child again. I can give you the memories of my ancient wisdom: mere scraps and leavings; but I no longer really care for anything but my own little wants and hobbies. I sit here working out my old ideas.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

TOO OLD AT FORTY

14th March, 1890.

I used to think myself rather an advanced musician; but Time is overtaking me at last. In five years I shall be an old fogey.

LONDON MUSIC

DOING MIRACLES

Yes: it was by meditating on Life that I gained the power to do miracles.

THE SERPENT *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE FATHER-IN-LAW

Woe to the old if they have no impersonal interests, no convictions, no public causes to advance, no tastes or hobbies! It is well to be mother but not to be a mother-in-law; and if men were cut off artificially from intellectual and public interests as women are, the father-in-law would be as deplorable a figure in popular tradition as the mother-in-law.

Family Affection
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

ONLY ONE SPEECH

You know very well that after a certain age a man has only one speech.

SIR O. *in* GENEVA

A LESSON

TARLETON: Curious that we should both have gone the same way.

THE MAN: You and she the same way! What do you mean?

TARLETON: Both got stout, I mean.

THE MAN: Would you have had her deny herself food?

TARLETON: No: it wouldnt have been any use. Its constitutional. No matter how little you eat you put on flesh if youre made that way.

THE MAN: Is that all the feeling that rises in you at the sight of the face you once knew so well?

TARLETON: Funny that I cant remember! Let this be a lesson to you, young man. I could go into court tomorrow and swear I never saw that face before in my life if it wasnt for that brooch.

MISALLIANCE

A MERIT

You're getting old, Craven, and you want to make a merit of it, as usual.

CHARTERIS *in* THE PHILANDERER

VULGAR OLD BUFFER

27th June, 1901.

I have ceased to believe that we can do anything against the younger generation. When Barker observed to me at one of the rehearsals that I was just his father's age, I realized how completely we have taken the place of the generation we helped to kick out of the way. We are old, Father William: they can do without us. Barker regards me as a vulgar old buffer, devilish clever and with a sympathetic wife.

NEARER THE SEA

Now that my own stream is nearer the sea, I am more inclined to encourage myself in haste and recklessness by reminding myself that le mieux est l'ennemi du bien. . . .

Preface: 1913

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

RUNNING OUT

My sands are running out; the exuberance of 1901 has aged into the garrulity of 1920.

My Own Part In The Matter
In Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

AT 60

At 60 I find myself a shameless old professional, writing trivial things when I am not raging over this cursed war. There is not much of me left, only a few crumbs to be swept up and tidied before I go to the Buttonmoulder.

Letter

AT 89

Though I am far from being as clever and well informed as people think, I am not below the average in political capacity; yet in my 89th year I am no more fit to rule millions of men than a boy of 12. Physically I am failing: my senses, my locomotive powers, my memory, are decaying at a rate which threatens to make a Struldbrug of me if I persist in living; yet my mind still feels capable of growth; for my curiosity is keener than ever. My soul goes marching on; and if the Life Force would give me a body as durable as my mind, and I knew better how to feed and lodge and dress and behave, I might begin a political career as a junior civil servant and evolve into a capable Cabinet Minister in another hundred years or so.

Postscript to BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE ACCURSED HAPPINESS

I feel nothing but the accursed happiness I have dreaded all my life long: the happiness that comes as life goes, the happiness of yielding and dreaming instead of resisting and doing, the sweetness of the fruit that is going rotten.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

I SHOULD HAVE BEGUN AS A SAGE

I am ending as a sage with a very scrappy and partial knowledge of the world. I do not see why I should not have begun with it if I had been told it all to begin with: I was more capable of it then than I am now in my dotage.

Preface to GENEVA

THE IDEAL CHILD

The ideal old person is a child, the ideal child is forty, the ideal woman is a man, though women lie low and let that secret keep itself.

21st Sept., 1896
Letter

PARADISE!

A man who had made a huge fortune as a shopkeeper bought an estate in Surrey and endowed it as a retreat for working ladies (governesses and the like) who had managed to save some money for their old age, but not enough. A minimum of savings was obligatory, guaranteeing a minimum of character. The estate was a paradise for them. But instead of being perfectly happy there they went mad. The mental hospital was full before the governors guessed the cause. The only company the old ladies had was their own company: old lady company. The governors had to set up lawn-tennis courts, croquet grounds and the like, and invite all the young people in the county to come there for play and practice. They came and chatted and had tea with the old ladies, who immediately recovered their wits and returned to normal sanity. And no doubt this much association with them was as necessary for the education of the young as for the mental health of the old; for even more important than contacts with young people for old people are contacts with adults for children. Children are not childish all through any more than dotards are dotards all through. I have been a child and am a dotard; and I know. The wisdom and knowledge with which a child is born is not confined to digesting its food, changing its teeth, and substituting for mother's milk a diet richer in minerals. These are marvellous accomplishments; but there are mental inheritances no less remarkable. In some respects the wisdom of babes and sucklings, like their digestions, is more trustworthy than it will be when they are grown-up, and even when they have been Cabinet Ministers in half a dozen parliaments. And the very old, if the evolutionary process still persists, may be young in the first dawnings of a new faculty. Consequently neither the infant school nor the estate in Surrey is a solution of the social problem for the very young and very old. Some children are older mentally

than their parents, and some septuagenarians younger than their grandchildren.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NO SUCH THING AS NATURAL DEATH

Considering now that I have lived fourteen years longer than twice as long as Mozart or Mendelssohn, and that within my experience men and women, especially women, are younger at fifty than they were at thirty in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is impossible to resist at least a strong suspicion that the term of human life cannot be fixed at seventy years or indeed fixed at all. If we master the art of living instead of digging our graves with our teeth as we do at present we may conceivably reach a point at which the sole cause of death will be the fatal accident which is statistically inevitable if we live long enough. In short, it is not proved that there is such a thing as natural death: it is life that is natural and infinite.

Preface to GENEVA

THE MOTTO

(I know all about elderly gentlemen, being one myself) whose motto is the highly popular one, "Anything for a quiet life."

Anything For A Quiet Life

Preface to THE SHEWING-UP OF BLANCO-POSNET

YOU WILL SLEEP IN THE MORNING

When you are very old: very very old, like me, the dreams come by themselves. You dont know how terrible that is: you are young: you sleep at night only, and sleep soundly. But later on you will sleep in the afternoon. Later still you will sleep even in the morning; and you will awake tired, tired of life. You will never be free from dozing and dreams: the dreams will steal upon your work every ten minutes.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER *in* HEARTBREAK HOUSE

CULTIVATING A GREY HEAD

SIR PATRICK: Thank you. Thats a good lad. They all put up with me, these young chaps, because I'm an old man, a real old man, not like you. Youre only beginning to give yourself

the airs of age. Did you ever see a boy cultivating a moustache? Well, a middle-aged doctor cultivating a grey head is much the same sort of spectacle.

RIDGEON: Good Lord! yes: I suppose so. And I thought that the days of my vanity were past. Tell me: at what age does a man leave off being a fool?

SIR PATRICK: Remember the Frenchman who asked his grandmother at what age we get free from the temptations of love. The old woman said she didnt know. Well, I make you the same answer. But the world's growing very interesting to me now, Colly.

RIDGEON: You keep up your interest in science, do you?

SIR PATRICK: Lord! yes. Modern science is a wonderful thing. Look at your great discoveries! Where are they leading to? Why, right back to my poor dear old father's ideas and discoveries. He's been dead now over forty years. Oh, it's very interesting.

RIDGEON: Well, theres nothing like progress, is there?

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

ON BECOMING A NEW PERSON

TANNER: I had become a new person; and those who knew the old person laughed at me. The only man who behaved sensibly was my tailor: he took my measure anew every time he saw me, whilst all the rest went on with their old measurements and expected them to fit me.

ANN: You became frightfully self-conscious.

TANNER: When you go to heaven, Ann, you will be frightfully conscious of your wings for the first year or so. When you meet your relatives there, and they persist in treating you as if you were still a mortal, you will not be able to bear them. You will try to get into a circle which has never known you except as an angel.

MAN AND SUPERMAN

SPELLING MY NAME WITH TWO LETTERS

It has taken two world wars to force us to set our clocks and arrange our working and sleeping hours by the changes of winter, spring and summer, obvious and simple as that step has proved. How many Armageddons a reform of our spelling

and arithmetic will cost, I cannot guess. Yet the economic case for a British alphabet capable of spelling my name with two letters instead of four is enormously more pressing than the meteorological case for adjusting our watches to the two hours difference between midsummer and midwinter daylight.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WISDOM

I should prefer to grow wiser without growing older.

POTHINUS *in* CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

AN OLD GENTLEMAN WITH A WHITE BEARD

I assure you that a great many people, seeing how many childish fables and ridiculous ceremonies have been attached to the conception of divinity, have rushed to the conclusion that no such thing as divinity exists. When they grow out of believing that God is an old gentleman with a white beard, they think they have got rid of everything that the old gentleman represented to their infant minds. On the contrary, they have come a little nearer to the truth about it.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HIS BROTHER

I have known eminent men who had brothers. I asked one of them about his brother. He said, "Oh, we are very good friends. Of course I couldnt stand his company for two days; but as we never see one another we get on all right." Everyone must have observed how often near relatives, even when inveterately clannish, keep clear of one another. A son or daughter may fall naturally into a group in which their father or mother would be an unhappy intruder. Conversely the parents' circle may be one in which their children, or some of them, are so hopelessly misclassed that their success in life depends on their extricating themselves from it completely.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE REPULSIVE MASK

TARLETON: You get it out of your head, my lad, that I'm going to die because I'm wearing out or decaying. Theres no such thing as decay to a vital man. I shall clear out; but I shant decay.

BENTLEY: And what about the wrinkles and the almond tree and the grasshopper that becomes a burden and the desire that fails?

TARLETON: Does it? by George! No, sir: it spiritualizes. As to your grasshopper, I can carry an elephant.

MRS. TARLETON: You do say such things, Bunny! What does he mean by the almond tree?

TARLETON: He means my white hairs: the repulsive mask. That, my boy, is another invention of Natural Selection to disgust young women with me, and give the lads a turn.

MRS. TARLETON: John: I wont have it. Thats a forbidden subject.

TARLETON: They talk of the wickedness and vanity of women painting their faces and wearing auburn wigs at fifty. But why shouldnt they? Why should a woman allow Nature to put a false mask of age on her when she knows that she's as young as ever? Why should she look in the glass and see a wrinkled lie when a touch of fine art will shew her a glorious truth? The wrinkles are a dodge to repel young men. Suppose she doesnt want to repel young men! Suppose she likes them!

MISALLIANCE

LIVING IN SIN

French authors of saintly temperament are forced to include in their retinue countesses of ardent complexion with whom they are supposed to live in sin.

The Missing Data Of A Scientific Natural History Of Marriage
In Preface to OVERRULED

AN ACTIVE VERB

LORD SUMMERHAYS: How callous youth is! How coarse! How cynical! How ruthlessly cruel!

HYPATIA: Stuff! It's only that youre tired of a great many things Ive never tried.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: It's not alone that. Ive not forgotten the brutality of my own boyhood. But do try to learn, glorious young beast that you are, that age is squeamish, sentimental, fastidious. If you cant understand my holier feelings, at least you know the bodily infirmities of the old. You know that I darent eat all the rich things you gobble up at every meal;

that I cant bear the noise and racket and clatter that affect you no more than they affect a stone. Well, my soul is like that too. Spare it: be gentle with it. If you could possibly think of me as half an angel and half an invalid, we should get on much better together.

HYPATIA: We get on very well, I think. Nobody else ever called me a glorious young beast. I like that. Glorious young beast expresses exactly what I like to be.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Where on earth did you get these morbid tastes? You seem to have been well brought up in a normal, healthy respectable, middle-class family. Yet you go on like the most unwholesome product of the rankest Bohemianism.

HYPATIA: Thats just it. I'm fed up with——

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Horrible expression. Dont.

HYPATIA: Oh, I daresay it's vulgar; but theres no other word for it. I'm fed up with nice things: with respectability, with propriety! When a woman has nothing to do, money and respectability mean that nothing is ever allowed to happen to her. I dont want to be good; and I dont want to be bad: I just dont want to be bothered about either good or bad: I want to be an active verb.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: An active verb? Oh, I see. An active verb signifies to be, to do, or to suffer.

HYPATIA: Just so: how clever of you! I want to be; I want to do; and I'm game to suffer if it costs that. But stick here doing nothing but being good and nice and ladylike I simply wont. Stay down here with us for a week; and I'll shew you what it means: shew it to you going on day after day, year after year, lifetime after lifetime.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Shew me what?

HYPATIA: Girls withering into ladies. Ladies withering into old maids. Nursing old women. Running errands for old men. Good for nothing else at last. Oh, you cant imagine the fiendish selfishness of the old people and the maudlin sacrifice of the young. It's more unbearable than any poverty: more horrible than any regular-right-down wickedness. Oh, home! home! parents! family! duty! how I loathe them! How I'd like to see them all blown to bits! The poor escape. The wicked escape. Well, I cant be poor: we're rolling in money.

It's no use pretending we're not. But I can be wicked; and I'm quite prepared to be.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: You think that easy?

HYPATIA: Well, isnt it? being a man, you ought to know.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: It requires some natural talent, which can no doubt be cultivated. It's not really easy to be anything out of the common.

HYPATIA: Anyhow, I mean to make a fight for living.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Living your own life, I believe the Suffragist phrase is.

HYPATIA: Living any life. Living, instead of withering without even a gardener to snip you off when youre rotten.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: Ive lived an active life; but Ive withered all the same.

HYPATIA: No: youve worn out: thats quite different. And youve some life in you yet or you wouldnt have fallen in love with me. You can never imagine how delighted I was to find that instead of being the correct sort of big panjandrum you were really an old rip like papa.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: No, no: not about your father: I really cant bear it. And if you must say these terrible things: these heart-wounding shameful things, at least find something prettier to call me than an old rip.

HYPATIA: Well, what would you call a man proposing to a girl who might be——

LORD SUMMERHAYS: His daughter: yes, I know.

HYPATIA: I was going to say his grand-daughter.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: You always have one more blow to get in.

HYPATIA: Youre too sensitive. Did you ever make mud pies when you were a kid—beg pardon: a child.

LORD SUMMERHAYS: I hope not.

HYPATIA: It's a dirty job; but Johnny and I were vulgar enough to like it. I like young people because theyre not too afraid of dirt to live. Ive grown out of the mud pies; but I like slang; and I like bustling you up by saying things that shock you; and I'd rather put up with swearing and smoking than with dull respectability; and there are lots of things that would just shrivel you up that I think rather jolly. Now!

LEARNING THE POSITIONS

I learnt to dance for the first time last August. Or stop. Was it really the first time? I recollect that when I was a very minute kid indeed, a lady named Magrae, who lived a few doors off, taught me the five positions; and I can still remember three of them. That is what they did in those days: they taught you positions but did not teach you to dance. Thus I learnt the positions at, say, seven and how to dance (rather like a tank) at 61.

7th Jan., 1918
Letter

THE ROYAL ACADEMICIAN

The old masters play the deuce with our mere susceptibles. Your Royal Academician thinks he can get the style of Giotto without Giotto's beliefs, and correct his perspective into the bargain. Your man of letters thinks he can get Bunyan's or Shakespear's style without Bunyan's conviction or Shakespear's apprehension, especially if he takes care not to split his infinitive.

Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

THE AMUSEMENT OF CHILDREN

. . . one day, wandering along the seashore in Scotland, I found myself the target of a barrage of stones, heavy or sharp enough to injure me seriously, if they had found their mark on my head. I had come within range of a fishing village, or possibly a mining village, where the children were at play. Their notion of play was to throw stones at a strange elderly gentleman with a beard, defying him meanwhile with war cries describing him opprobriously as a Beaver.

Being considerably frightened, and too old to run away fast enough, not to mention that flight would have encouraged my assailants and greatly increased their enjoyment, I concluded that there was nothing for it but to frighten them more than they were frightening me. They had three things to fear: the police, the straps with which their parents corrected their behavior, and the possibility of my seizing and clouting one of them who might be any of them. Accordingly I strode towards them under fire with a resolutely vengeful air. They dispersed and fled, leaving me fortunately scathless, but quite convinced that some other alternative to imprisonment in school than letting children

loose to amuse themselves in their own way must be found if civilization was to survive.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE ELECTRIC LIFT

I have to be housekept-for, nursed, doctored, and generally treated like a child in all sorts of situations in which I do not know what to do; and far from resenting such tutelage I am only too glad to avail myself of it. The first time I was ever in one of those electric lifts which the passengers work for themselves instead of being taken up and down by a conductor pulling at a rope, I almost cried, and was immensely relieved when I stepped out alive.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THREE SCORE AND TEN

I accept my three score and ten years. If they are filled with usefulness, with justice, with mercy, with good-will; if they are the lifetime of a soul that never loses its honor and a brain that never loses its eagerness, they are enough for me, because these things are infinite and eternal, and can make ten of my years as long as thirty of yours. I shall not conclude by saying live as you like and be damned to you, because I have risen for the moment far above any ill-will to you or to any fellow creature. . . .

THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

FAITH IN REASON

Only the other day our highest boast was that we were reasonable human beings. Today we laugh at that conceit, and see ourselves as wilful creatures. Ability to reason accurately is as desirable as ever; for by accurate reasoning only can we calculate our actions so as to do what we intend to do: that is, to fulfil our will; but faith in reason as a prime motor is no longer the criterion of the sound mind, any more than faith in the Bible is the criterion of righteous intention.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

SATISFACTION IS DEATH

As long as I have a want, I have a reason for living. Satisfaction is death.

GREGORY *in* OVERRULED

BEING MADE PERFECT

After all, what man is capable of the insane self-conceit of believing that an eternity of himself would be tolerable even to himself? Those who try to believe it postulate that they shall be made perfect first. But if you make me perfect I shall no longer be myself, nor will it be possible for me to conceive my present imperfections (and what I cannot conceive I cannot remember); so that you may just as well give me a new name and face the fact that I am a new person and that the old Bernard Shaw is as dead as mutton.

Trailing Clouds Of Glory
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

FACT FOR BIOGRAPHY

I remember once buying a book entitled *How to Live on Sixpence a Day*, a point on which at that time circumstances compelled me to be pressingly curious. I carried out its instructions faithfully for a whole afternoon; and if ever I have an official biography issued, I shall certainly have it stated therein, in illustration of my fortitude and self-denial, that I lived for some time on sixpence a day.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

PEACE IS ARDUOUS

In truth, it is, as Byron said, "not difficult to die," and enormously difficult to live: that explains why, at bottom, peace is not only better than war, but infinitely more arduous.

The Yahoo And The Angry Ape
In Preface to HEARTBREAK HOUSE

WHERE TO DIE

I should prefer to die in a reasonably dry ditch under the stars. . . .

Letter

A HORROR

He also knows that if some devil were to convince us that our dream of personal immortality is no dream but a hard fact, such a shriek of despair would go up from the human race as no other conceivable horror could provoke.

Trailing Clouds Of Glory
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

AN END

Only, there must be some end, some end: I am not strong enough to bear eternity.

ADAM *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

WHAT PEOPLE DIE OF

CONRAD: Do you know what people really die of?

IMMENSO: Of reasonableness. They do not want to live for ever.

CONRAD: Of laziness, and want of conviction, and failure to make their lives worth living. That is why. That is sound scientific biology for you. I believe that we are on the brink of a generation that will live longer. Or else we are on the brink of destruction.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DOMESTICITY OF FRANKLYN BARNABAS

NOT A GOD

Nobody has ever called me a god: I am at best a sage.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

REJOICE IN DEATH

Therefore let us give up telling one another idle stories, and rejoice in death as we rejoice in birth; for without death we cannot be born again; and the man who does not wish to be born again and born better is fit only to represent the City of London in Parliament, or perhaps the University of Oxford.

Trailing Clouds Of Glory
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

ADAM

I have to think about you. You are lazy: you are dirty: you neglect yourself: you are always dreaming: you would eat bad food and become disgusting if I did not watch you and occupy myself with you. And now some day, in spite of all my care, you will fall on your head and become dead.

EVE *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

ON BEING YOUNG

When I arrived at my door after these dissipations I found Fitzroy Square, in which I live, deserted. It was a clear, dry cold night; and the carriage way round the circular railing

presented such a magnificent hippodrome that I could not resist trying to go just once round in Vincenti's fashion. It proved frightfully difficult. After my fourteenth fall I was picked up by a policeman. "What are you doing here?" he said, keeping fast hold of me. "I'bin watching you for the last five minutes." I explained, eloquently and enthusiastically. He hesitated a moment, and then said, "Would you mind holding my helmet while I have a try. It dont look so hard." Next moment his nose was buried in the macadam and his right knee was out through its torn garment. He got up bruised and bleeding, but resolute. "I never was beaten yet," he said; "and I wont be beaten now. It was my coat that tripped me." We both hung our coats on the railings, and went at it again. If each round of the square had been a round in a prize fight, we should have been less damaged and disfigured; but we persevered, and by four o'clock the policeman had just succeeded in getting round twice without a rest or a fall, when an inspector arrived and asked him bitterly whether that was his notion of fixed point duty. "I allow it aint fixed point," said the constable emboldened by his new accomplishment; "but I'll lay a half sovereign *you* cant do it." The inspector could not resist the temptation to try (I was whirling round before his eyes in the most fascinating manner); and he made rapid progress after half an hour or so. We were subsequently joined by an early postman and by a milkman, who unfortunately broke his leg and had to be carried to hospital by the other three. By that time I was quite exhausted and could barely crawl into bed.

LONDON MUSIC

GOODBYE

Death ends everything, doesnt it? Goodbye.

RIDGEON *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

HOW TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE YOUNG

Do away with death and you do away with the need for birth: in fact if you went on breeding, you would finally have to kill old people to make room for young ones.

Trailing Clouds Of Glory
In Preface to MISALLIANCE

DEAD PEOPLE WALKING ABOUT

Is it any wonder that I am driven to offer to young people in our suburbs the desperate advice: Do something that will get you into trouble? But please do not suppose that I defend a state of things which makes such advice the best that can be given under the circumstances, or that I do not know how difficult it is to find out a way of getting into trouble that will combine loss of respectability with integrity of self-respect and reasonable consideration for other people's feelings and interests on every point except their dread of losing their own respectability. But when there's a will there's a way. I hate to see dead people walking about: it is unnatural.

Preface to FANNY'S FIRST PLAY

THE TEST

LAVINIA: Captain: your jokes are too grim. Do not think it is easy for us to die. Our faith makes life far stronger and more wonderful in us than when we walked in darkness and had nothing to live for. Death is harder for us than for you: the martyr's agony is as bitter as his triumph is glorious.

THE CAPTAIN: A martyr, Lavinia, is a fool. Your death will prove nothing.

LAVINIA: Then why kill me?

THE CAPTAIN: I mean that truth, if there be any truth, needs no martyrs.

LAVINIA: No; but my faith, like your sword, needs testing. Can you test your sword except by staking your life on it?

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

BEFORE THEY HAVE SENSE

Already most of our grand-children die before they have sense enough to know how to live.

EVE *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

WHAT I HAVE DONE I HAVE DONE

Anyhow, what I have done I have done; and at that I must leave it.

Foreword to CYMBELINE

INCAPABLE OF PRODUCING A SINGLE LINE

. . . if I turned out to be "not for an age but for all time" my descendants five hundred years hence would be doing the

same without ever putting pen to paper, as pure parasites on the labor of printers, publishers, actors, managers, and booksellers. Most of them could not even claim to be descendants of the Prophet (Shavin Shereefs), as my copyrights would have been sold by my posterity (we are a somewhat improvident clan) and have passed into the hands of persons incapable of producing a single line of literature.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AGAIN AND AGAIN

We must all be born again, and yet again and again.

Trailing Clouds Of Glory

In Preface to MISALLIANCE

WHERE'S MR. IRVING?

I sometimes wonder where Mr. Irving will go to when he dies—whether he will dare to claim, as a master artist, to walk where he may any day meet Shakespear whom he has mutilated, Goethe whom he has travestied.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

LIKE A STONE

Then Tyler died, sinking unnoted like a stone in the sea.

THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS

NOT THE LAST WORD

. . . we have no reason to suppose that we are the Creator's last word.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THERE IS A BEYOND

And for what may be beyond, the eyesight of Lilith is too short. It is enough that there is a beyond.

LILITH *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

THE SUPERMAN

The superiority in the unconscious self will be the true characteristic of the Superman.

Property And Marriage

In Preface to MAN AND SUPERMAN

YOUNG IDEAS

There is only one way to defy Time; and that is to have young ideas, which may always be trusted to find youthful and vivid expression.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

FRIENDS AND MOUNTAINS

THE HE-ANCIENT: Look at me. This is my body, my blood, my brain; but it is not me. I am the eternal life, the perpetual resurrection; but this structure, this organism, this makeshift, can be made by a boy in a laboratory, and is held back from dissolution only by my use of it. Worse still, it can be broken by a slip of the foot, drowned by a cramp in the stomach, destroyed by a flash from the clouds. Sooner or later, its destruction is certain.

THE SHE-ANCIENT: Yes: this body is the last doll to be discarded. When I was a child, Ecrasia, I, too, was an artist, like your sculptor friends there, striving to create perfection in things outside myself. I made statues: I painted pictures: I tried to worship them.

THE HE-ANCIENT: I had no such skill; but I, like Acis, sought perfection in friends, in lovers, in nature, in things outside myself. Alas! I could not create it: I could only imagine it.

THE SHE-ANCIENT: I, like Arjillax, found out that my statues of bodily beauty were no longer even beautiful to me; and I pressed on and made statues and pictures of men and women of genius, like those in the old fable of Michael Angelo. Like Martellus, I smashed them when I saw that there was no life in them: that they were so dead that they would not even dissolve as a dead body does.

THE HE-ANCIENT: And I, like Acis, ceased to walk over the mountains with my friends, and walked alone; for I found that I had creative power over myself but none over my friends. And then I ceased to walk on the mountains: for I saw that the mountains were dead.

ACIS: No. I grant you about the friends perhaps; but the mountains are still the mountains, each with its name, its individuality, its upstanding strength and majesty, its beauty——

BACK TO METHUSELAH

A MAN WITHOUT A GRIEVANCE

I enjoyed the immunities of impecuniosity with the opportunities of a millionaire. If ever there was a man without a grievance, I was that man.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

Mainly About People

WHO WAS SHAKESPEAR?

And who in the name of all the sluts and jades and light-o'-loves and fly-by-nights that infest this palace of mine, may William Shakespear be?

QUEEN ELIZABETH *in* THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS

NOT GUILTY

Nobody knows better than I do that a musical critic who is always talking about music is quite as odious as an ordinary man who is always talking about himself. I venture to hope that I have never been guilty of the latter vice; and I shall try to steer clear of the former.

LONDON MUSIC

NEVER HEARD OF HIM!

The most pitiful sort of ignorance is ignorance of the few great men of our own time. Most of us die without having heard of those contemporaries of ours for our opportunities of seeing and applauding whom posterity will envy us. Imagine meeting the ghost of an Elizabethan cockney in heaven, and, on asking him eagerly what Shakespear was like, being told either that the cockney had never heard of Shakespear, or knew of him vaguely as an objectionable writer of plays full of regrettable errors of taste.

As Good Fish In The Sea

In Preface to THREE PLAYS BY BRIEUX

ARCHIMEDES

I once ventured to criticize it in the presence of a Winchester master. He proudly adduced as a proof of the modernity and intellectual leadership of his school that it had just actually introduced a mathematical master, thus reaching in the twentieth century the point reached by Archimedes two thousand years ago.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

JESUS

I grant you I know a great deal more about economics and politics than Jesus did, and can do things he could not do.

Why Not Give Christianity A Trial?
Preface to ANDROCLES AND THE LION

GOD CAN STILL CREATE

Man is not God's last word: God can still create. If you cannot do His work He will produce some being who can.

FRANKLYN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

NO

I envy you the power to say No.

B.B. *in* THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A CONFESSION

I must make a personal confession in this matter. Though I was saturated with the Bible and with Shakespear before I was ten years old, and the only grammar I ever learned was Latin grammar, so that Elizabethan English, became a mother tongue to me, yet when I first read such vivid and unaffected modern versions as Dr. James Moffatt's *New Translations of the New Testament*, I at once got from them so many lights on the Bible narratives which I had missed in the authorized version that I said to myself "Someday I will translate *Hamlet* into modern vernacular English." But indeed if the alienation of our young from Elizabethan English continues it will be necessary to produce revised versions not only of Shakespear but of Sir Walter Scott and even of my own early novels.

THE ADMIRABLE BASHVILLE

IF EVER I AM RICH

I dwell on the cornet a little, because in my youth I was presented by a relative with absolutely the very worst and oldest cornet then in existence. It was of an obsolete rectangular model, and sounded in B flat with the A crook on. Its tone was unique; my master—an excellent player, of London extraction—once described it as "somethink 'ellish"; and he did it no more than justice. I never come across Scott's line, "Oh, for a blast of that dread horn," without thinking of it. After devastating the welkin with this remarkable instrument for some months, I was told that it would spoil my voice (perhaps in revenge for having had its own spoiled); and though I had not then, nor ever have had, any voice worth taking care of, I there and then presented the cornet as a curiosity to my instructor, and abandoned it for aye. It turned his brain eventually; for he afterwards spread a report that *I* was mad.

I believe that a taste for brass instruments is hereditary. My father destroyed his domestic peace by immoderate indulgence in the trombone; my uncle played the ophicleide—very nicely, I must admit—for years, and then perished by his own hand. Some day I shall buy a trombone myself. At the Inventions Exhibition Messrs. Rudall and Carte displayed a double-slide trombone, which I felt insanely tempted to purchase. Of the merits of this instrument I was, and am, wholly ignorant, except that I inferred that its "shifts" were only half as long as on the ordinary trombone; and I ascertained that its price was 13 guineas. If ever I have so vast a sum at my command I shall probably buy that trombone, and ask Herr Richter to engage me for the next concert at which the Walkürenritt or Les Francs Juges is in the program.

LONDON MUSIC

CONDITIONED REFLEX

What, exactly is a conditioned reflex? I became intellectually conscious of one some fifty years ago, when there was opened at Chelsea a Naval Exhibition. It contained facsimiles of Nelson's last flagship and of the first class passengers' quarters in a modern Peninsular and Oriental Liner. I gazed without discomposure on the cockpit in which Nelson kissed Hardy and died. But in the passage between the P. and O. cabins I suddenly felt seasick, and had to beat a hasty retreat into the gardens.

This was a perfect example of a conditioned reflex. I had often been made seasick by the rolling and pitching of a ship. The rolling and pitching had been accompanied by the sight of the passengers' quarters and the smell of paint and oakum. The connection between them had been so firmly established in me that even when I stood on the firm earth these sights and smells made me squeamish.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

BEFORE I WAS BORN

. . . as nothing that is true is ever new I daresay it had been said again and again before I was born.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

ST. BERNARD

It happens that I resemble my sainted namesake in refusing to eat flesh, fish, or fowl, to smoke tobacco (or anything else), or to stimulate myself with drugs or spirits. I do not go about in a monk's frock and rope-girdle; but I spend no more on clothes than men with a twentyfifth of my income, if so much. For nearly fifty years past I have had at my disposal an unearned income sufficient to enable me to live comfortably without doing a stroke of work; but I work daily like any proletarian. If saintliness consists in these abstinences and exertions I may claim a place in the Communion of Saints beside St. Bernard or any other hero of the hagiographers.

On this a ridiculous legend has grown to the effect that a stern Puritan bringing-up imposed Law's Serious Call on me from my childhood. No fable could be farther from the truth. The only belief impressed on me in my Irish Protestant childhood was that all Roman Catholics go to hell as such when they die, and all Protestants to heaven if they are good children. I grew out of this when I was promoted from petticoats to knickerbockers; and the rest of my development was in a family atmosphere so sceptical, Bohemian, anarchic, and on its educational side aesthetic, that in my teens I was a professed atheist, with no reverence whatever for the Trinity, but a profound and lasting respect for Michael Angelo and Raphael, for Handel, Mozart and Beethoven. To literature I took without enthusiasm or ambition because it was in my lifeblood. At all events, I am the

last man in the world to be cited as ascetic either in theory or practice. In refusing to drink maraschino and drinking apple juice instead, I may seem to thoughtless topers as heroically selfsacrificing as St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas when they refused archbishoprics; but the truth is that I like apple juice and would as soon drink petrol as maraschino. May not the truth about the two saints be that as their tastes were different from those of Becket and Wolsey and Richelieu they rated mitres, red hats, and riches infinitely below the solitude and simple life and ecstasies of the monk and scholar?

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA AND STALIN

The late Lawrence of Arabia, whom I knew pretty well, deliberately chose the lowest rank in the army, refusing to give orders and classing himself as illiterate, not in the least because he was humble, modest, and self-sacrificing, but because he felt that he would be in a stronger position and much freer as an aircraftman than in the officers' mess, which was equally open to his choice. Stalin outdid Lawrence by rising from social nothingness to the summit of political power in Russia without a handle to his name or even a Cabinet portfolio. Not until years later, when he had to sign treaties and concert military operations with his western allies, had he to let himself be dubbed Premier and Marshal.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

HUMAN NATURE IS MANIFOLD

Mr. Wells found Pavlov charming, humane, and intelligent, with a striking resemblance to me who denounced him as a monster of cruelty. He was a man with two natures and perhaps several more of which we know nothing; for human nature is manifold not only in the sense that men differ from each other and "it takes all sorts to make a world," but in that every one of us is not a simple single character but a bundle of characters under one hat. Yet for public purposes we blacklist one man as a coward, and inscribe the name of another on the roll of honour as a hero. The Victoria Cross has been won by men abjectly afraid of ghosts, dogs, and dentists. Lawrence of Arabia, in the one full dress pitched battle at which he was present, had an attack of pure funk which troubled him for twenty minutes

and then passed off completely. In 1815 no one would have been so shameless as to confess to such a lapse. In 1915 nobody was so shameless as to pretend that he felt no misgivings when the enemy's barrage was finding the range.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

PASSION

Like all poets I have a passion for pugilism.

HE *in* HOW HE LIED TO HER HUSBAND

"I KNOW HER CLASS"

It's about this girl you are interested in. Now, I have seen her. I have talked to her. First, she's mad. That doesnt matter. Second, she's not a farm wench. She's a bourgeoise. That matters a good deal. I know her class exactly. Her father came here last year to represent his village in a lawsuit: he is one of their notables. A farmer. Not a gentleman farmer: he makes money by it, and lives by it. Still, not a laborer. Not a mechanic. He might have a cousin a lawyer, or in the Church People of this sort may be of no account socially; but they can give a lot of bother to the authorities.

ROBERT *in* SAINT JOAN

MY CLASS SNOBBERY

In my sixteenth year an emergency made me very precociously cashier-in-chief (there was no other) to a leading estate agent in Dublin. It was part of my duty to pay the metropolitan shopping bills of our country clients. I began by calling at the shops on my way from the bank, and paying them across the counter. To my surprise I was handed a percentage on the amount of the bill. Being then the greenest of innocents, I astonished the shopkeepers by refusing the tip. I did this not in the least because I had any scruple against being paid twice over for the same service. I did not think of it in that way. It was my class snobbery that could not brook the indignity of tips from shopkeepers. I stopped calling on them, and left them to call on me for their money.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

AN AGREEABLE SENSATION

I had not achieved a success; but I had provoked an uproar; and the sensation was so agreeable that I resolved to try again.

MAINLY ABOUT MYSELF

DICKENS'S DAUGHTER TOLD ME

Abraham Mendelssohn found himself unfortunate in being the father of a famous composer and the son of a famous theologian. Dickens's father could hardly have been at home with Maclise, Stanfield, Macready, and the bevy of celebrities of which his son was the centre. Dickens's daughter told me that she could imagine nothing more dreadful than the lot of a man of genius in an entirely commonplace household. Children who, inheriting their father's name and adopting his profession, are expected to inherit his genius (think of Mozart's son and Wagner's!) would do well to change their names and keep the relationship a dead secret, lest they should be dismissed as failures instead of being respected as quite competent mediocrities.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MADDENING

Oh, you cant think how maddening it is to be related to a celebrated person, and never be valued anywhere for our sakes.

DOLLY *in* YOU NEVER CAN TELL

THREE TIMES SEVEN?

MRS. BASHAM: How much is three times seven?

NEWTON: Three times seven? Oh, that is quite easy.

MRS. BASHAM: I suppose it is to you, sir; but it beats me. At school I got as far as addition and subtraction; but I never could do multiplication or division.

NEWTON: Why, neither could I: I was too lazy. But they are quite unnecessary: addition and subtraction are quite sufficient. You add the logarithms of the numbers; and the antilogarithm of the sum of the two is the answer. Let me see: three times seven? The logarithm of three must be decimal four seven seven or thereabouts. The logarithm of seven is, say, decimal eight four five. That makes one decimal three two two, doesnt it? What's the antilogarithm of one decimal three

two two? Well, it must be less than twenty-two and more than twenty. You will be safe if you put it down as——

SALLY: Please, maam, Jack says it's twenty-one.

NEWTON: Extraordinary! Here was I blundering over this simple problem for a whole minute; and this uneducated fish hawker solves it in a flash! He is a better mathematician than I.

IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

UP HIS SLEEVE

You never knew how much Morris had up his sleeve until he thought you knew enough to understand him.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

HATED THE MODERN GRAND PIANO

William Morris, one of the greatest and wisest word musicians of the nineteenth century, hated the modern grand piano and would not have one in his house.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MOVED TO TEARS

Morris, when he was dying, was moved to tears by old music that was not banged at him from Steel-framed concert grands, but played as it was intended to be played.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

I HANDED MORRIS THE APPROPRIATE ADJECTIVE

Morris was a very great literary artist: his stories and essays and letters no less than his poems are tissues of words as fine as the carpet on the ceiling; but he was quite often at a loss for a critical word in dealing with some uncongenial modern thing. On such occasions I would hand him the appropriate adjective, and he would grab at it with a gasp of relief. It was like giving a penny to a millionaire who had bought a newspaper and found his pockets empty.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

DAMFOOL!

At last the comrades, when there was a debating job to be done, put it on me, knowing that I could play cat and mouse

with any ordinary opponent whilst Morris, in the background, could only devastate his moustache and supply a growled basso continuo of "Damfool! Damfool!"

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

THE SHY AND SENSITIVE MAN

He has the off-handed manner and the little audacities of address which a shy and sensitive man acquires in breaking himself in to intercourse with all sorts and conditions of men.

About Sir Colenso Ridgeon

In THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

IF THEY HAD KNOWN

If the British Government had known and understood what Marx was doing, and what its effect was going to be on the mind of the world, it would have sent him to prison and destroyed every scrap of his handwriting and every copy of his books. But they did not know where to strike. They persecuted poor men for making profane jokes; they suppressed newspapers in England as well as in Ireland; they dismissed editors who were too independent and outspoken; they burnt the books of novelists who had gone a little too far in dealing with sex; they imprisoned street corner speakers on charges of obstructing traffic; and all the time they were providing Karl Marx with the finest reading room in the world whilst he was writing their death warrants.

THE COMMISSAR *in* GENEVA

AS SHAKESPEAR DID

Had Marx and Engels been contemporaries of Shakespear they could not have written the Communist Manifesto, and would probably have taken a hand, as Shakespear did, in the enclosure of common lands as a step forward in civilization.

Preface to GENEVA

HE RUINED HIMSELF

Karl Marx changed the mind of the world by simply telling the purseproud nineteenth century its own villainous history. He ruined himself; his infant son died of poverty and two of his children committed suicide.

BUOYANT BILLIONS

TERRIBLE POWERS

Marx had, too, what Darwin had not: implacability and a fine Jewish literary gift, with terrible powers of hatred, invective, irony, and all the bitter qualities bred, first in the oppression of a rather pampered young genius (Marx was the spoilt child of a well-to-do family) by a social system utterly uncongenial to him, and later on by exile and poverty.

Darwin And Karl Marx
Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

AMAZING, SHOCKING, UNHEARD OF THING

I had to become a clerk at fifteen. I was a proletarian undisguised. Therefore, when I began to take interest in politics, I did not join the Conservative Party. It was the party of the landlords; and I was not a landlord. I did not join the Liberal Party. It was the Party of the employers; and I was an employee. My father voted Conservative or Liberal just as the humor took him, and never imagined that any other party could exist. But I wanted a proletarian party; and when the Karl Marx slogan began to take effect in all the countries in Europe by producing proletarian political societies, which came to be called Socialist societies because they aimed at the welfare of society as a whole as against class prejudices and property interests, I naturally joined one of these societies, and so came to be called, and was proud to call myself, a Socialist.

Now the significant thing about the particular Socialist society which I joined was that the members all belonged to the middle class. Indeed its leaders and directors belonged to what is sometimes called the upper middle class: that is, they were either professional men like myself (I had escaped from clerkdom into literature) or members of the upper division of the civil service. Several of them have since had distinguished careers without changing their opinions or leaving the Society. To their Conservative and Liberal parents and aunts and uncles fifty years ago it seemed an amazing, shocking, unheard-of thing that they should become Socialists, and also a step bound to make an end of all their chances of success in life. Really it was quite natural and inevitable. Karl Marx was not a poor laborer: he was the highly educated son of a rich Jewish lawyer. His almost equally famous colleage, Friedrich Engels, was a well-to-do employer.

It was precisely because they were liberally educated, and brought up to think about how things are done instead of merely drudging at the manual labor of doing them, that these two men, like my colleagues in The Fabian Society (note, please, that we gave our society a name that could have occurred only to classically educated men), were the first to see that Capitalism was reducing their own class to the condition of a proletariat, and that the only chance of securing anything more than a slave's share in the national income for anyone but the biggest capitalists or the cleverest professional or business men lay in a combination of all the proletarians without distinction of class or country to put an end to Capitalism by developing the communistic side of our civilization until Communism became the dominant principle in society, and mere owning, profiteering, and genteel idling were disabled and discredited. Or, as our numerous clergymen members put it, to worship God instead of Mammon. Communism, being the lay form of Catholicism, and indeed meaning the same thing, has never had any lack of chaplains. I may mention, as illustrating the same point, that the Fabian Society, when I joined it immediately after its foundation in 1884, had only two rival Socialist Societies in London, both professing, unlike the Fabian, to be working-class societies. But one of them was dominated by the son of a very rich man who bequeathed large sums to religious institutions in addition to providing for his sons, to whom he had given a first-rate education. The other was entirely dependent on one of the most famous men of the nineteenth century, who was not only a successful employer and manufacturer in the business of furnishing and decorating palaces and churches, but an eminent artistic designer, a rediscoverer of lost arts, and one of the greatest of English poets and writers. These two men, Henry Mayers Hyndman and William Morris, left their mark on the working-class proletariat as preachers of Socialism, but failed in their attempts to organize a new working-class Socialist Party in their own upper middle class way under their own leadership and in their own dialect (for the language of ladies and gentlemen is only a dialect), because the working classes had already organized themselves in their own way, under their own leaders, and in their own dialect. The Fabian Society succeeded because it addressed itself to its own class in order that it might set about doing the necessary

brain work of planning Socialist organization for all classes, meanwhile accepting, instead of trying to supersede, the existing political organizations which it intended to permeate with the Socialist conception of human society.

The existing form of working-class organization was Trade Unionism. Trade Unionism is not Socialism: it is the Capitalism of the Proletariat.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

HYNDMAN AND MORRIS

Hyndman could talk about anything with a fluency that left Morris nowhere. He was a most imposing man, and seemed to have been born in a frock coat and top hat. In old age he looked like God in Blake's illustrations to Job. In the prime of life, as he was then, he was more like the deity in Raphael's Vision of Ezekiel. He was a leading figure in any assembly, and took that view of himself with perfect self-confidence. Altogether an assuming man, quite naturally and unconsciously.

Morris was quite unassuming: he impressed by his obvious weight and quality. On this occasion he disclaimed all capacity for leadership, and said he was ready to do anything he was told, presumably by Hyndman as chairman of the Federation, plus the leader who had called him a disciple. I smiled grimly to myself at this modest offer of allegiance, measuring at sight how much heavier Morris's armament was; but Hyndman accepted it at once as his due. Had Morris been accompanied by Plato, Aristotle, Gregory the great, Dante, Thomas Aquinas, Milton and Newton, Hyndman would have taken the chair as their natural leader without the slightest misgiving, and before the end of the month have quarrelled with them all and left himself with no followers but the devoted handful who could not compete with him, and to whom he was a sort of god. But he was always excellent company as a perfect Victorian freethinking gentleman, like Meredith and Dilke, who had known everyone and was never at a loss for anecdotes about them. His talk was a most entertaining performance; and both Morris and I could listen to it without being bored for a moment. There was, however, an important difference between his talk and Morris's. What Morris said he meant, sometimes very vehemently; and it was always worth saying. Of Hyndman's

most brilliant conversational performance it was quite impossible to believe a single word. The people he described so entertainingly were not authentic human beings. The things he told as having happened to them could not possibly have happened to anybody.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

ROBERT OWEN

Robert Owen had both foresight and faith; but he could not handle the world outside his own factories.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

NAPOLEON

When you hear of a man achieving eminence by working sixteen hours a day for thirty years, you may admire that apparently unnatural feat; but you must not conclude that he has any other sort of ability: in fact you may quite safely put him down as quite incapable of doing anything that has not been done before, and doing it in the old way. He never has to think or invent. To him today's work is a repetition of yesterday's work. Compare him, for example, with Napoleon. If you are interested in the lives of such people you are probably tired of hearing how Napoleon could keep on working with fierce energy long after all the members of his council were so exhausted that they could not even pretend to keep awake. But if you study the less often quoted memoirs of his secretary Bourrienne you will learn that Napoleon often moodled about for a week at a time doing nothing but play with children or read trash or waste his time helplessly. During his enforced leisure in St. Helena, which he enjoyed so little that he probably often exclaimed, after Cowper's Selkirk, "Better live in the midst of alarms than dwell in this horrible place," he was asked how long a general lasted. He replied, "Six years."

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NO SPOILED CHILD

He is imaginative without illusions, and creative without religion, loyalty, patriotism or any of the common ideals. Not that he is incapable of these ideals, he has swallowed them all in his boyhood, and now, having a keen dramatic faculty, is extremely clever at playing upon them by the arts of the actor

and stage manager. Withal, he is no spoiled child. Poverty, ill-luck, the shifts of impecunious shabby-gentility, repeated failure as a would-be author. . . .

About NAPOLEON *in* THE MAN OF DESTINY

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

I prefer the ranks, sir, I have a freer hand. And the conversation in the officers' mess doesnt suit me. I always resign a commission and enlist again.

MEEK *in* TOO TRUE TO BE GOOD

RIFF-RAFF

I remember once coming to loggerheads with the late Dr. Francis Hueffer, about fifteen seconds after the opening of our first conversation, on the subject of musical culture in English society. Whenever the subject arose between us, I declared that English society did not care about music—did not know good music from bad. He replied, with great force, that I knew nothing about it; that nobody had ever seen me in really decent society; that I moved amidst cranks, Bohemians, unbelievers, agitators, and—generally speaking—riff-raff of all sorts; and that I was merely theorising emptily about the people whom I called bloated aristocrats. He described, by way of example, an evening at Lord Derby's house, where he had greatly enjoyed some excellent music; and he asked me whether I knew that such music was, in a quiet way, a constant grace of the best sort of English social life. I suggested that he should give me an opportunity to judge for myself by introducing me to these circles; but this he entirely declined to do; having no confidence whatever in my power of behaving myself in a seemly manner for five consecutive minutes.

LONDON MUSIC

THE SILENTEST WOMAN

I always felt apologetic with Mrs. Morris. I knew that the sudden eruption into her temple of beauty, with its pre-Raphaelite priests, of the proletarian comrades who began to infest the premises as Morris's fellow Socialists, must be horribly disagreeable to her (I knew how my mother felt about the more discordant of them); and as one of this ugly rag-tag-and-bobtail

of Socialism I could not expect her to do more than bear my presence as best she might. Fortunately she did not take much notice of me. She was not a talker: in fact she was the silentest woman I have ever met.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

NO SENSE OF HUMOR

A. B. Walkley has had the unspeakable audacity to advise "the frolic Bassetto" to go to Richard III at the Globe Theatre. This is a gibe at my earnestness, which perhaps makes my column appear heavy to those who are accustomed to the trivialities of dramatic criticism. But I believe I have the support of those who are weary of levity, of egotism, of senseless facetiousness, of self-advertisement, and, I will add, of ignorance and presumption. If, as Walkley implies, I have no sense of humor—and I do not deny it nor regret it—at least my readers are protected against misplaced jests and fleers at men who feel their responsibility and do not trifle with their mission.

LONDON MUSIC

NO NAME WORTH SIGNING

As I then had no name worth signing, and G.B.S. meant nothing to the public, I had to invent a fantastic personality with something like a foreign title. I thought of Count di Luna (a character in Verdi's Trovatore), but finally changed it for Corno di Bassetto, as it sounded like a foreign title, and nobody knew what a corno di bassetto was.

LONDON MUSIC

RUDYARD KIPLING

Have you seen the Kipling story in Scribner's, which I send you by this post? Wouldn't you like to play the blind woman? That is what I call genius: one forgives all the creature's schoolboy's ruffianisms and vulgarities for his good things, of which this is one of the goodest. What a pity the thrilling turning point of it—when he feels the child's kiss in his palm, and then, seeing that there is no child there realizes—is impossible on the stage! I wonder could I get him to try his hand at the theatre in his fine style—not his Lights that Failed and Limmacons and the like.

Letter to Ellen Terry

BARRIE

I like Barrie and his work; but someday a demon in the shape of Alice will sit by the fire in hell and poke up the flames in which he is consuming.

Letter to Ellen Terry

NEVER A REAL CONFESSION OF THE SOUL

There is a curious contrast between Dickens's sentimental indiscretions concerning his marriage and his sorrows and quarrels, and his impenetrable reserve about himself as displayed in his published correspondence. He writes to his family about waiters, about hotels, about screeching tumblers of hot brandy and water, and about the seasick man in the next berth, but never one really intimate word, never a real confession of the soul. David Copperfield is a failure as an autobiography because when he comes to deal with the grown-up David, you find that he has not the slightest intention of telling you the truth—or indeed anything—about himself. Even the child David is more remarkable for the reserves than for the revelations: he falls back on fiction at every turn. Clennam and Pip are the real autobiographies.

I find Dickens is at his greatest after the social awakening which produced *Hard Times*. *Little Dorrit* is an enormous work. The change is partly the disillusion produced by the unveiling of capitalist civilization, but partly also Dickens's discovery of the gulf between himself as a man of genius and the public. That he did not realize this early is shown by the fact that he found out his wife before he married her as much too small for the job, and yet plumbed the difference so inadequately that he married her thinking he could go through with it. When the situation became intolerable, he must have faced the fact that there was something more than "incompatibilities" between him and the average man and woman. *Little Dorrit* is written, like all the later books, frankly and somewhat sadly, de haut en bas. . . . *Edwin Drood* is no good, in spite of the stone-throwing boy, Buzzard and Honeythunder. Dickens was a dead man before he began it. Collins corrupted him with plots. And oh! the Philistinism; the utter detachment from the great human heritage of art and philosophy!

A Letter to G.K.C.

SIR HENRY IRVING

The truth is, Irving was interested in nothing but himself; and the self in which he was interested was an imaginary self in an imaginary world. He lived in a dream.

THE FAMOUS VIENNA ARTICLE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR GENT

Take the case of Shakespear. He left school early to spend his teens helping his father, who was a Stratford tradesman of some standing. Shakespear's subsequent career proves that with this much business training he could easily have prospered as a tradesman in Stratford. But having an irresistible literary and histrionic vocation he broke loose and migrated to London (I did the same myself) where he obtained a footing and authority in the theatre by organizing the business of attending to the horses of the equestrian playgoers. Marlowe of the mighty line was king among playwrights then; but when he presently died, Shakespear had proved that he could write not only mighty lines by the bushel, but sensible and amusing ones too. He was set to rewrite old plays and dramatize old stories; and he transfigured them so amazingly that only once in his short life (52) did he take the trouble to invent an original story for himself. But though this became his main occupation he kept up his business habits as a side line with so much success that in his forties he was able to return to Stratford, not as Shaxper the runaway poacher, but as William Shakespeare Gent., landed proprietor with a coat of arms, living in the finest new house in the main street. His fellow playwrights were mostly university scholars who, never having been forced to acquire business habits, and having acquired instead the very unbusinesslike habit of writing their stage directions in Latin, suffered greatly from poverty, even, as in the case of his chief rival Chapman, living and dying in comparative indigence. Could John Shakespear have afforded his son a university education William would have had a hard time of it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

WHAT THEY COULD RISE TO

The strength of a chain is no greater than its weakest link; but the greatness of a poet is the greatness of his greatest moment.

Shakespear used to get drunk. Frederick the Great ran away from a battle. But it was what they could rise to, not what they could sink to, that made them great. They werent good always; but they were good on their day.

GUNNER *in* MISALLIANCE

AN OBVIOUS EXPERIMENT

One evening in 1878 or thereabouts, I, being then in my earliest twenties, was at a bachelor party of young men of the professional class in the house of a doctor in the Kensingtonian quarter of London. They fell to talking about religion revivals; and an anecdote was related of a man who, having incautiously scoffed at the mission of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, a then famous firm of American evangelists, was subsequently carried home on a shutter, slain by divine vengeance as a blasphemer. A timid minority, without quite venturing to question the truth of the incident—for they naturally did not care to run the risk of going home on shutters themselves—nevertheless shewed a certain disposition to cavil at those who exulted in it; and something approaching to an argument began. At last it was alleged by the most evangelical of the disputants that Charles Bradlaugh, the most formidable atheist on the Secularist platform, had taken out his watch publicly and challenged the Almighty to strike him dead in five minutes if he really existed and disapproved of atheism. The leader of the cavillers, with great heat, repudiated this as a gross calumny, declaring that Bradlaugh had repeatedly and indignantly contradicted it, and implying that the atheist champion was far too pious a man to commit such a blasphemy. This exquisite confusion of ideas roused my sense of comedy. It was clear to me that the challenge attributed to Charles Bradlaugh was a scientific experiment of quite simple, straightforward, and proper kind to ascertain whether the expression of atheistic opinions really did involve any personal risk. It was certainly the method taught in the Bible, Elijah having confuted the prophets of Baal in precisely that way, with every circumstance of bitter mockery of their god when he failed to send down fire from heaven. Accordingly I said that if the question at issue were whether the penalty of questioning the theology of Messrs. Moody and Sankey was to be struck dead on the spot by an incensed deity, nothing could effect a more convinc-

ing settlement of it than the very obvious experiment attributed to Mr. Bradlaugh, and that consequently if he had not tried it, he ought to have tried it. The omission, I added, was one which could easily be remedied there and then, as I happened to share Mr. Bradlaugh's views as to the absurdity of the belief in these violent interferences with the order of nature by a short-tempered and thin-skinned supernatural deity. Therefore—and at that point I took out my watch.

The effect was electrical. Neither sceptics nor devotees were prepared to abide the result of the experiment. In vain did I urge the pious to trust in the accuracy of their deity's aim with a thunderbolt, and the justice of his discrimination between the innocent and the guilty. In vain did I appeal to the sceptics to accept the logical outcome of their scepticism: it soon appeared that when thunderbolts were in question there were no sceptics. Our host, seeing that his guests would vanish precipitately if the impious challenge were uttered, leaving him alone with a solitary infidel under sentence of extermination in five minutes, interposed and forbade the experiment, pleading at the same time for a change of subject. I of course complied, but could not refrain from remarking that though the dreadful words had not been uttered, yet, as the thought had been formulated in my mind, it was very doubtful whether the consequences could be averted by sealing my lips. However, the rest appeared to feel that the game would be played according to the rules, and that it mattered very little what I thought so long as I said nothing. Only the leader of the evangelical party, I thought, was a little preoccupied until five minutes had elapsed and the weather was still calm.

Defying The Lightning: A Frustrated Experiment

Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

MRS. BESANT

Mrs. Besant the Secularist eats and drinks largely, and becomes stouter and coarser every year. Mrs. Besant the Theosophist becomes a teetotaller and vegetarian.

A Letter

ALBERT EINSTEIN

I once said in public (I was proposing the health of Albert Einstein) that religion is always right and science always wrong.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

QUEEN VICTORIA

It is clear that if all female children are to have their minds formed as the mind of Queen Victoria was formed in her infancy, a Socialist State will be impossible.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THAT BENIGHTED PERIOD

I doubt whether nineteenth-century writers can be as entertaining to you as they are to me, who spent the first forty-four years of my life in that benighted period. If you would appreciate the enormous change from nineteenth-century self-satisfaction to twentieth-century self-criticism you can read the *Pickwick Papers* (jolly early Dickens) and then read *Our Mutual Friend* (disillusioned mature Dickens), after which you can try Dickens's successor, H. G. Wells, who, never having had any illusions about the nineteenth century, is utterly impatient of its blunderings, and full of the possibilities of social reconstruction. When you have studied nineteenth-century county gentility in the novels of Anthony Trollope and Thackeray for the sake of understanding your more behindhand friends, you must study it up-to-date in the novels of John Galsworthy. To realise how ignorant even so great an observer as Dickens could be of English life outside London and the main coaching routes you can compare his attempt to describe the Potteries in *Hard Times* with Arnold Bennett's native pictures of the *Five Towns*; but to appreciate his much more serious and complete ignorance of working-class history and organization in his own day you would have to turn from fiction to the *Webb's History of Trade Unionism.*

The earlier nineteenth-century literature, for all its invective, satire, derision and caricature, made amiable by its generous indignation, was not a literature of revolt. It was pre-Marxian. Post-Marxian literature, even in its most good-humored pages by men who never read Marx, is revolutionary: it does not contemplate the survival of the present order, which Thackeray, for instance, in his bitterest moods seems never to have doubted.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

THE RACE STRUGGLING OUT OF ITS DUMBNESS

. . . you are in the same difficulty that beset me formerly: namely the absolute blank in the history of the immediate past that confronts every man when he first takes to public life.

Written history stops several decades back; and the bridge of personal recollection on which older men stand does not exist for the recruit. Nothing is more natural that you should reconstruct me as the last of the Rationalists (his real name is Blatchford); and nothing could be more erroneous. It would be much nearer the truth to call me, in that world, the first of the mystics.

If you can imagine the result of trying to write your spiritual history in complete ignorance of painting, you will get a notion of trying to write mine in ignorance of music. Bradlaugh was a tremendous platform heavyweight; but he had never in his life, as far as I could make out, seen anything, heard anything or read anything in the artistic sense. He was almost beyond belief incapable of intercourse in private conversation. He could tell you his adventures provided you didn't interrupt him (which you were mostly afraid to do, as the man was a mesmeric terror); but as to exchanging ideas, or expressing the universal part of his soul, you might as well have been reading the letters of Charles Dickens to his family—those tragic monuments of dumbness of soul and noisiness of pen. Dont forget that the race is only struggling out of its dumbness, and that it is only in moments of inspiration that we get out a sentence. All the rest is padding. . . .

Letter to G.K.C.

MARTIN LUTHER

Martin Luther, the priest, horrified the greater half of Christendom by marrying a nun, yet was a submissive conformist in countless ways, living orderly as a husband and father, wearing what his bootmaker and tailor made for him, and dwelling in what the builder built for him, although he would have died rather than take the Church made by himself to his liking; generations of men calling themselves Lutherans took that Church from him just as unquestioningly as he took the fashion of his clothes from his tailor. As the race evolves, many a convention which recommends itself by its obvious utility to everyone passes into an automatic habit, like breathing.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

JOHN RUSKIN

Take the case of John Ruskin. He was a graduate of Oxford University and a professor of aesthetics there until he shook the

dust of the place off his feet when it tolerated vivisection as a method of research. Why was he so different from the typical Oxford graduates and professors of his time? Why was his literary power so prodigiously better than theirs? Why did he see at a glance through the pseudo-scientific imposture that took them in so easily, and the economic imposture which made Gladstone declare that the social system of landlord, farmer, and agricultural laborer was the natural, sound, and eternal basis of society whilst Ruskin was denouncing it with invectives which make the Jeremiads of Karl Marx read like the pale reproaches of a Sunday school teacher? The explanation is that his parents, instead of packing him off to preparatory school and afterwards to Eton or Harrow, Rugby or Winchester, to get rid of him, kept him at home; made him learn the authorized version of the Bible verse by verse; and steeped him in the glories of European art and scenery instead of in the traditions of the public schools.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

RUSKIN PUBLISHED HIS PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

. . . the pure milk of the true economic gospel is to be found in the scriptures of Ruskin, who, being himself a proprietor with a social conscience, published his private accounts to shew that every penny he had spent on himself had been earned by his work, and the rest given to his country. Cecil Rhodes barred idlers from benefit under his will.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

OSCAR WILDE

Even so sophisticated a man as Oscar Wilde claimed that by his two years' imprisonment he had settled accounts with the world and was entitled to begin again with a clean slate. But the world persisted in ostracizing him as if it had not punished him at all.

Expiation And Moral Accountancy
In IMPRISONMENT

A PLEASURE MERCHANT

When I was first in company with Anatole France he asked who I was. Answering for myself I said, "I am, like you, a man of genius." This was, according to his French code, so immodest

that it startled him into riposting with "Ah well: a whore (courtisane) has the right to call herself a pleasure merchant." I was not offended; for it is true that all artists make their livings as pleasure merchants and not as seers and philosophers; and the similarity of the case of the courtisane was not new to the author of *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. But why did he not say "a confectioner has the right to call himself a pleasure merchant," which would have been equally true? Or a jeweller? Or a trader in any of the hundreds of articles in our shops that are not necessities of life and have an aesthetic value only? They are even more to the point; for as a matter of fact the courtisane with brains enough to argue the point never makes Anatole France's excuse: her plea before Mrs. Grundy is, "It is I and my like to whom you owe the purity of your unmarried daughters." She contends that sexual satisfaction is not a luxury but a necessity which defies the restrictive conditions which Mrs. Grundy attaches to it.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DISOWNED!

Mr. William Archer disowns me because I "Cannot touch pitch without wallowing in it."

The Author's Apology
In Preface to MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

WHAT I OWE TO MOLIERE AND DICKENS

I was finding that the surest way to produce an effect of daring innovation and originality was to revive the ancient attraction of long rhetorical speeches; to stick closely to the methods of Moliere; and to lift characters bodily out of the pages of Charles Dickens.

The Dawn of Darwinism
In Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

SHAKESPEAR UNALTERED

Every revival helps to exhaust the number of possible ways of altering Shakespear's plays unsuccessfully, and so hastens the day when the mere desire for novelty will lead to the experiment of leaving them unaltered.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

THE FATE OF THE GENIUS

Nature, which our religious sects rightly call Providence, somehow sees to it that as many geniuses as are socially necessary are born; but under Capitalism most of it is extinguished by lack of leisure from breadwinning. I, myself, after five years' commercial servitude, had to burn my boats and spunge upon my parents for my livelihood for nine years of literary apprenticeship before I could earn my keep by my pen. From commercial habit I worked daily at fiction, like Trollope, day by day, without waiting for inspiration; but the publishers were unanimous in their refusal to select me as an author; and the better I wrote the more resolved they were to have nothing to do with me. . . .

Their advisers, who included George Meredith and John Morley, knew their business as well as any State department could.

What, then, was needed to tide me over this period had my parents been unable to feed, lodge and clothe me?

Clearly and simply a bread-and-butter job in the four-hour-five-day-a-week division, leaving the novice daily leisure enough to write fiction as a would-be-novelist, to paint pictures, to compose music, to invent machines, to excogitate philosophies or scientific theories, taking the chance of imposing on the world as a professionally self-supporting story-teller, painter, composer, philosopher, inventor or what not. Rousseau lived by copying music, Spinoza by grinding lenses, Wagner by conducting (and borrowing), Dickens as a clerk, Wells as a schoolmaster, others as journalists or what not. But nowadays few such employments leave sufficient leisure to maintain the natural supply of geniuses. Sterndale Bennett was extinguished by having to teach five-finger exercises to young ladies when he should have been composing. Newton might have got as far as Einstein if he had not been employed as Master of the Mint. There is as far as I can see, no other solution of the problem of original work under Socialism than routine jobs and shorter hours for aspirants. Some business training does no harm to artists and thinkers: on the contrary, it saves them from being the feckless nuisances they now often are, living in an imaginary world and ignorant of the real one. The Harold Skimpole side of Leigh Hunt was an extremely undesirable one.

DISCOURAGEMENT

In this land of discouragement the sublime has become the ridiculous.

THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN *in* BACK TO METHUSELAH

IBSEN

Henrik Ibsen, when pressed to join this or that political party, always said "I belong to no party: I have within me both the Right and the Left. I am pleased to find my new views influencing Liberals, Conservatives, Socialists, and especially workmen and women; but I will not label myself Liberal or Conservative or Labor or Suffragist. Party rules are not golden rules: there are no golden rules."

I find myself in the position of Ibsen. His objection to adopt a party label is shared by those who have room in their heads for more than one political subject, and who take the trouble to find out how their views would work out in practice. My method of examining any proposition is to take its two extremes, both of them impracticable; make a scale between them; and try to determine at what point on the scale it can best be put in practice. A mother who has to determine the temperature of her baby's bath has two fixed limits to work between. The baby must not be boiled and must not be frozen. Within those limits she must proceed by trial and error. She dips her elbow in the water, and soon finds out that below 70 degrees Fahrenheit the water is too cold and above 100 it is too hot. Within these contracted limits bathing the baby is possible and effective. A statesman who has to provide baths for millions of children or soldiers has to face the same problem.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

GRANVILLE-BARKER

Harley Granville-Barker was not far out when, at a rehearsal of one of my plays, he cried out, "Ladies and gentlemen: will you please remember that this is Italian opera."

LONDON MUSIC

HERE IS YOURSELF AND MYSELF

Ibsen never presents his play to you as a romance for your entertainment: he says, in effect, "Here is yourself and myself,

our society, our civilization. The evil and good, the horror and the hope of it, are woven out of your life and mine."

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

INSANELY METAPHYSICAL

Keir Hardie, the founder of the Independent Labor Party, once addressed a string of very wretched men who were waiting to scramble for a casual job at the London docks at dawn on a cold winter morning. They were the worst-paid male manual workers in London; and their poverty was being rubbed into them mercilessly by heavy rain. Accordingly, Keir Hardie talked Socialist economics to them as their most urgent political interest. He then, as a candidate for the local parliamentary seat, invited questions. Thereupon a man, blotted against the dock wall for some half shelter from the downpour, stepped out and said he had listened to the speaker's able address, but had been surprised to find that it contained no politics. What they wanted to know, he said, were the speaker's views as to the disestablishment of the Church in Wales.

On the off-chance of being picked by the foreman for the job of unloading a ship for sixpence an hour at the risk of accidents which occurred every twenty minutes according to the records of the London Hospital, this economic man had become a metaphysical man. He was not a Welshman; and the establishment or disestablishment of the Welsh Church would not have made a farthing difference to him. And he was a typical voter. For all practical purposes the citizen who is not made desperate by starvation is almost insanely metaphysical.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MAKING POSSIBLE THE DEVIL KNOWS WHO

Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau made Robespierre and Napoleon possible. Lassalle and Marx, Engels and Richard Wagner, made Hitler and Mussolini possible as well as Lenin, Stalin, and Atakurk. Carlyle and Ruskin, Wells and Shaw, Aldous Huxley and Joad, are making possible the devil knows who in England: probably someone of whom these sages would

vehemently disapprove. Democracy must find better auditors than its literary malcontents or else face their disruptive restlessness at best it can.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE MAN OF GENIUS

I do not wish to hurt your feelings, O respectable reader; but do you really think a man of genius would feel much more at home in your company than you would in the galleys? Your objection to a galley-slave, after all, is only that he is a coarser fellow than yourself, insensible to the extremes of your points of honor in decency and morality; tolerant of sights, sounds, and deeds that are horrible to you; and callously reckless, even to bodily violence, of the delicacies and amenities which are to you the indispensable conditions of bearable human intercourse. Among such creatures, shrinking and constant apprehension would be your lot; and yet it would not be safe to shew your fear any more than if you were in a den of hyenas and jackals. I submit to you, then, as politely as such a thing may be submitted, that since Plato, Dante, Shakespear, Goethe, and men of that kind are esteemed great only because they exceed us average persons exactly as we exceed the galley-slave, it follows that they must walk through our world much as through a strange country full of dangerous beasts. It must, therefore, take something like a lion-tamer's nerve to be a man of genius; and when the man of genius is timid—and fear is the beginning of wisdom—he must suffer much more than the ordinary coward, who can, at any rate, choose a safer pursuit than lion-taming, whereas your hapless man of genius is born into the den and must stay there until he is carried out in his coffin.

Obviously, I have never seen Goethe or Shakespear or Plato: they were before my time. But I have seen Richard Wagner, who was so vehemently specialized by Nature as a man of genius that he was totally incapable of anything ordinary. He fought with the wild beasts all his life; and when you saw him coming through a crowded cage, even when they all felt about him as the lions felt about Daniel, he had an air of having his life in his hand, as it were, and of wandering in search of his right place and his own people, if any such there might be. When he had nothing else to do he would wander away to the walls and

corners, apparently in search of some door or stairway or other exit from the world, not finding which he would return disconcerted, and either sit down in desperation for a moment before starting off on a fresh exploration, or else—being a most humane man—pet one of the animals with a little conversation.

LONDON MUSIC

BYRON

The result is precisely what the advent of nineteenth-century thought first produced in England: to wit Byronism. By his brooding on the perpetual failure, not only of others, but of himself, to live up to his ideals; by his consequent cynical scorn for humanity; by his jejune credulity as to the absolute validity of his concepts and the unworthiness of the world in disregarding them; by his wincings and mockeries under the sting of the petty disillusions which every hour spent among men brings to his sensitive observation, he has acquired the half tragic, half ironic air, the mysterious moodiness, the suggestion of a strange and terrible history that has left nothing but undying remorse, by which Childe Harold fascinated the grandmothers of his English contemporaries.

ARMS AND THE MAN

WAGNER

The world is ruled by deeds, not by good intentions, and one efficient sinner is worth ten futile saints and martyrs. Like all men of genius, Wagner had exceptional sincerity, exceptional respect for facts, exceptional freedom from the hypnotic influence of sentimental popular movements, exceptional sense of the realities of political power as distinguished from the pretences and idolatries behind which the real masters of modern States pull their wires and train their guns.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

HERBERT SPENCER AND TOLSTOY

The philosopher Herbert Spencer, though a very clever man, had the amiable trait in his character of an intense dislike to coercion. He could not bring himself even to coerce his horse; and the result was that he had to sell it and go on foot, because the horse, uncoerced, could do nothing but stop and graze.

Tolstoy, equally a professed humanitarian, tamed and managed the wildest horses; but he did it by the usual method of making things unpleasant for the horse until it obeyed him.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

SAMUEL BUTLER

Samuel Butler had the supreme sort of style that never smells of the lamp, and therefore seems to the kerosene stylist to be no stylist at all.

SAMUEL BUTLER: A CRITICAL STUDY REVIEW

HENRY GEORGE

. . . I then had my attention diverted to economic science by Henry George, and was presently swept into militant Marxism for the next ten years. When I gave up novel-writing, and after an interval occupied by Marxist propaganda and critical journalism, undertook the resurrection of the drama, the old biological problems still called for new solutions. In an elaborate lecture on Darwin I disposed of the problem of evil which bothered St. Augustine and pleased the Darwinists because it was a thick stick to beat God with. I got rid of the Darwinist muddle of inherited and acquired habits by pointing out that as to an evolutionist all habits are acquired the controversy was about nothing, all that was necessary to clear it up being a deeper study of inheritance in the light of embryology. This was thirty-seven years ago; and the professional scientists have not yet got as far as I, the professional artist, got in 1906. Yet the scientific material I was using was all discovered by them, not by me.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE WEBBS

The most devoted and indefatigable, the most able and disinterested students of this science in England, as far as I know, are my friends Sidney and Beatrice Webb. It has taken them forty years of preliminary work, in the course of which they have published several treatises comparable to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, to formulate a political constitution adequate to existing needs. If this is the measure of what can be done in a lifetime by extraordinary ability, keen natural aptitude, exceptional opportunities, and freedom from the preoccupations of

breadwinning, what are we to expect from the parliament man to whom political science is as remote and distasteful as the differential calculus, and to whom such an elementary but vital point as the law of economic rent is a pons asinorum never to be approached, much less crossed? Or from the common voter who is mostly so hard at work all day earning a living that he cannot keep awake for five minutes over a book?

Cowardice Of The Irreligious

In Preface to BACK TO METHUSELAH

LIFE WITH THE WEBBS

I wonder what you think of our life—our eternal political shop, our mornings of dogged writing, all in separate rooms; our ravenous plain meals; our bicycling; the Webb's incorrigible spooning over their industrial and political science; Miss P.T. Irish, shrewd and green eyed, finding everything very interesting; myself always tired and care worn. . . .

28th May, 1897

Letter

I COULD NOT BE CLASSIFIED

It was this determination to sample movements and their leaders instead of reading about them that brought her into contact with the Fabian Society, which was making stir enough at the time to call for investigation. They were as usual, a mixed lot, but with unerring judgment she fixed on Sidney Webb as a unique lump of solid ability without any complications. She had no difficulty in appropriating him with a completeness which was part of the fundamental simplicity of his nature; for she was nv attractive lady; and when Sidney fell in love he did not do it by halves. Her family was amazed and scandalized as she had seemed of all the young women in London the most certain to choose and marry a Cabinet Minister, if not a Prime Minister. And in those days Cabinet Ministers were not six a penny. Her choice needs no justification now. Cabinets have flamed and crackled and died down like thorns under a pot; but Sidney Webb remains, piling up an authority and an eminence that have never been shaken. Asquith the contemptuous lived to canonise him.

In fact, the sole drawback to her choice was myself, a useful

member of the Webb's retinue, but highly obnoxious to Beatrice for the technical reason that I could not be classified. All her interest was in social organization. Her job was the discovery of the common rules by which men bind themselves to co-operate for social ends. She had no use for exceptional people; degrees of ability and efficiency she could deal with; but the complications introduced by artists, Irishmen and the eccentric and anarchic individuals who infest revolutionary movements and have to be shot when the revolution succeeds, were, in her business of social definition and classification, simply nuisances. She would probably have got rid of me as most women get rid of their husbands' undesirable bachelor friends, but for one qualification which I possessed. I knew Webb's value. And so I was not only tolerated but heroically made much of until the joyous day when she discovered a classification for me. I was a Sprite; and in that category I became happily domesticated at holiday times with the newly-weds until my own marriage six years later.

Foreword to MY APPRENTICESHIP

DARBY AND JOAN

I know all about the private life of the Webbs and can assure you that it is utterly void of these scandalous adventures which make private lives readable. Mr. Webb and Miss Potter are now Darby and Joan: that is all.

TWO OCTOGENARIANS

A GATHERING

. . . there is a body called the Fabian Research Department, of which I have the honour to be Perpetual Grand, the real moving spirit being Mrs. Sidney Webb. A large number of innocent young men and women are attracted to this body by promises of employment by the said Mrs. S. Webb in works of unlimited and inspiring uplift. . . .

Well, Mrs. Sidney Webb summoned all these young things to an uplifting AT HOME at the Fabian Office lately. They came in crowds and sat at her feet whilst she prophesied unto them, with occasional comic relief from the unfortunate Perpetual Grand. At the decent hour of ten o'clock she bade them good night and withdrew to her own residence and to bed. For some accidental reason or other I lingered, until as I thought,

all the young things had gone home. I should explain that I was in the two pair back. At last I started to go home myself. As I descended the stairs I was stunned by the most infernal din I have ever heard, even at the front coming from the Fabian Hall, which would otherwise be the back yard. On rushing to this temple I found the young enthusiasts sprawling over tables, over radiators, over everything except chairs, in a state of scandalous abandonment, roaring at the tops of their voices and in a quite unintelligible manner a string of presumably obscene songs. . . . These if you please are the solemn and sour neophytes whose puritanical influence has kept you in dread for many years.

But I have not told you the worst. Before I fled from the building I did at last discover what words it was they were singing. When it first flashed on me, I really could not believe it. But at the end of the next verse no doubt of error was possible. The young maenad nearest me was concluding every strophe by shrieking that she didn't care where the water went if it didn't go into the wine. . . .

Letter to G.K.C.

HENRY SALT

The late Henry Salt, a famous Shelleyan humanitarian who began his adult life as an Eton master, entitled his autobiography *Seventy Years Among Savages.*

Of course this was an overstatement, as all statements must be if they are to receive any attention.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

H. G. WELLS

H. G. Wells is pioneering the path of wisdom when he urges that heroic enterprises must be provided for our young men, as without such opportunities they will either make political mischief or waste themselves in fruitless sports. The axiom that Satan will find mischief still for idle hands to do applies to idle virtues and capacities as well.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

LEAVE ME TO DROWN

. . . my friend and fellow sage H. G. Wells was so impressed that he announced that if he saw Pavlov and myself drowning,

and only one lifebuoy were within his reach, he would have to throw it to Pavlov and leave me to drown. He had met Pavlov in Russia and been charmed by him to the extent of maintaining that he was a tender humanitarian in his methods, loving his dogs and being loved by them, whereas I, never having met him, had gone so far on the evidence of his experiments as to call him a scoundrel, meaning a person who repudiates common morality in the pursuit of his personal or professional interests.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

DR. INGE

Dr. Inge, greatest of all the Deans of St. Paul's, is so "unmusical" that his only recorded comment on cathedral music expresses a doubt whether the Almighty enjoys "this perpetual serenading."

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

JOHN GALSWORTHY

In Mr. Galsworthy's play *Justice* the useless and detestable torture of solitary imprisonment is shown at its worst without the introduction of a single cruel person into the drama.

Routine

In Preface to THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM, OLIVIER AND BLAND

Cunninghame Graham, the most picturesque of all the contemporaries of the Webbs, and a story writer of genius (he figures in my play *Arms and the Man* with Webb in strong contrast), is not mentioned at all. Among the Fabians nothing is made of the conspicuously able pro-consul Olivier, who went his own way so unscrupulously that if his impulses had not been those of a good man he would have been a first rate scoundrel. Hubert Bland, with his phenomenal muscular strength and prowess as a pugilist, his ferocious monocled scrutiny (his eyesight was defective), was dismissed by Beatrice after a brief investigation as a "mask."

THE HISTORY OF A HAPPY MARRIAGE

CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

He is, I regret to add, an impenitent and unashamed dandy: such boots, such a hat, would have dazzled D'Orsay himself. With

that hat he once saluted me in Regent St. when I was walking with my mother. Her interest was instantly kindled; and the following conversation ensued. "Who is that?" "Cunninghame Graham." "Nonsense! Cunninghame Graham is one of your Socialists: that man is a gentleman."

G. K. CHESTERTON

Chesterton is our "Quinbus Flestrin," the young Man Mountain, a large abounding gigantically cherubic person who is not only large in body and mind beyond all decency, but seems to be growing larger as you look at him, "swellin' wisibly," as Tony Weller puts it.

COBURN'S PHOTOGRAPH OF G.K.C.

OF CHARLOTTE

She is, normally, a ladylike person at whom nobody would ever look twice, so perfectly does she fit into her place. Perfectly placid and proper and pleasant. Does not condescend to be anything more. And takes it all off like a mask when she selects you for intimacy.

5th Dec., 1896

OF CHARLOTTE

MY EARS

I am really sorry about the ears. They are a Shaw speciality. They stick straight out like the doors of a triptych; and I was born with them full size, so that on windy days my nurse had to hold me by my waistband to prevent my being blown away when the wind caught them.

Letter

SARAH BERNHARDT AND DUSE

This week began with the relapse of Sarah Bernhardt into her old profession of serious actress. She played Magda in Sudermann's *Heimat*, and was promptly challenged by Duse in the same part at Drury Lane on Wednesday. The contrast between the two Magdas is as extreme as any contrast could possibly be between artists who have finished their twenty years apprenticeship to the same profession under closely similar conditions. Madame Bernhardt has the charm of a jolly maturity, rather spoilt and petulant, perhaps, but always ready with a sunshine-through-the-clouds smile if only she is made much of. Her

dresses and diamonds, if not exactly splendid, are at least splendacious; her figure, far too scantily upholstered in the old days, is at its best; and her complexion shews that she has not studied modern art in vain. Those charming roseate effects which French painters produce by giving flesh the pretty color of strawberries and cream, and painting the shadows pink and crimson, are cunningly reproduced by Madame Bernhardt in the living picture. She paints her ears crimson and allows them to peep enchantingly through a few loose braids of her auburn hair. Every dimple has its dab of pink; and her finger-tips are so delicately incarnadined that you fancy they are transparent like her ears, and that the light is shining through their delicate blood-vessels. Her lips are like a newly painted pillar box; her cheeks, right up to the languid lashes, have the bloom and surface of a peach; she is beautiful with the beauty of her school, and entirely inhuman and incredible. But the incredibility is pardonable, because, though it is all the greatest nonsense, nobody believing in it, the actress herself least of all, it is so artful, so clever, so well recognized a part of the business, and carried off with such a genial air, that it is impossible not to accept it with good-humor. One feels, when the heroine bursts on the scene, a dazzling vision of beauty, that instead of imposing on you, she adds to her own piquancy by looking you straight in the face, and saying, in effect: "Now who would ever suppose that I am a grandmother?" That, of course, is irresistible; and one is not sorry to have been coaxed to relax one's notions of the dignity of art when she gets to serious business and shews how ably she does her work. The coaxing suits well with the childishly egotistical character of her acting, which is not the art of making you think more highly or feel more deeply, but the art of making you admire her, pity her, champion her, weep with her, laugh at her jokes, follow her fortunes breathlessly, and applaud her wildly when the curtain falls. It is the art of finding out all your weaknesses and practising on them—cajoling you, harrowing you, exciting you—on the whole, fooling you. And it is always Sarah Bernhardt in her own capacity who does this to you. The dress, the title of the play, the order of the words may vary; but the woman is always the same. She does not enter into the leading character: she substitutes herself for it.

All this is precisely what does not happen in the case of

Duse, whose every part is a separate creation. When she comes on the stage, you are quite welcome to take your opera-glass and count whatever lines time and care have so far traced on her. They are the credentials of her humanity; and she knows better than to obliterate that significant handwriting beneath a layer of peach-crimson; her lips are sometimes nearly grey also; there are neither dabs nor dimples; her charm could never be imitated by a barmaid with unlimited pin money and a row of footlights before her instead of the handles of a beer-engine. The result is not so discouraging as the patrons of the bar might suppose. Wilkes, who squinted atrociously, boasted that he was only quarter of an hour behind the handsomest man in Europe: Duse is not in action five minutes before she is quarter of a century ahead of the handsomest woman in the world. I grant that Sarah's elaborate Monna Lisa smile, with the conscious droop of the eyelashes and the long carmined lips coyly disclosing the brilliant row of teeth, is effective of its kind—that it not only appeals to your susceptibilities, but positively jogs them. And it lasts quite a minute, sometimes longer. But Duse, with a tremor of the lip which you feel rather than see, and which lasts half an instant, touches you straight on the very heart; and there is not a line in the face, or a cold tone in the grey shadow that does not give poignancy to that tremor. As to youth and age, who can associate purity and delicacy of emotion, and simplicity of expression, with the sordid craft that repels us in age; or voluptuous appeal and egotistical self-insistence with the candor and generosity that attract us in youth? Who ever thinks of Potiphar's wife as a young woman, or St. Elizabeth of Hungary as an old one? These associations are horribly unjust to age, and undeserved by youth: they belong of right to differences of character, not of years; but they rule our imaginations; and the great artist profits by them to appear eternally young. However, it would be a critical blunder as well as a personal folly on my part to suggest that Duse, any more than Sarah Bernhardt, neglects any art that could heighten the effect of her acting when she is impersonating young and pretty women. The truth is that in the art of being beautiful, Madame Bernhardt is a child beside her. The French artist's stock of attitudes and facial effects could be catalogued as easily as her stock of dramatic ideas: the counting would hardly go beyond the fingers of both hands.

Duse produces the illusion of being infinite in variety of beautiful pose and motion. Every idea, every shade of thought and mood expresses itself delicately but vividly to the eye; and yet, in an apparent million of changes and inflexions, it is impossible to catch any line at an awkward angle, or any strain interfering with the perfect abandonment of all the limbs to what appears to be their natural gravitation towards the finest grace. She is ambidextrous and supple like a gymnast or a panther; only the multitude of ideas which find physical expression in her movements are all of that high quality which marks off humanity from the animals, and, I fear I must add, from a good many gymnasts. When it is remembered that the majority of tragic actors excel only in explosions of those passions which are common to man and brute, there will be no difficulty in understanding the indescribable distinction which Duse's acting acquires from the fact that behind every stroke of it is a distinctively human idea. In nothing is this more apparent than in the vigilance in her of that high human instinct which seeks to awaken the deepest responsive feeling without giving pain. In La Dame aux Camelias, for instance, it is easy for an intense actress to harrow us with her sorrows and paroxysms of phthisis, leaving us with a liberal pennyworth of sensation, not fundamentally distinguishable from that offered by a public execution, or any other evil in which we still take a hideous delight. As different from this as light from darkness is the method of the actress who shews us how human sorrow can express itself only in its appeal for the sympathy it needs, whilst striving by strong endurance to shield others from the infection of its torment. That is the charm of Duse's interpretation of the stage poem of Marguerite Gauthier. It is unspeakably touching because it is exquisitely considerate: that is, exquisitely sympathetic. No physical charm is noble as well as beautiful unless it is the expression of a moral charm; and it is because Duse's range includes these moral high notes, if I may so express myself, that her compass, extending from the depths of a mere predatory creature like Claude's wife up to Marguerite Gauthier at her kindest or Magda at her bravest, so immeasurably dwarfs the poor little octave and a half on which Sarah Bernhardt plays such pretty canzonets and stirring marches.

Obvious as the disparity of the two famous artists has been to many of us since we first saw Duse, I doubt whether any of

us realized, after Madame Bernhardt's very clever performance as Magda on Monday night, that there was room in the nature of things for its annihilation within forty-eight hours by so comparatively quiet a talent as Duse's. And yet annihilation is the only word for it. Sarah was very charming, very jolly when the sun shone, very petulant when the clouds covered it, and positively angry when they wanted to take her child away from her. And she did not trouble us with any fuss about the main theme of Sudermann's play, the revolt of the modern woman against that ideal of home which exacts the sacrifice of her whole life to its care, not by her grace, and as its own sole help and refuge, but as a right which it has to the services of all females as abject slaves. In fact, there is not the slightest reason to suspect Madame Bernhardt of having discovered any such theme in the play; though Duse, with one look at Schwartze, the father, nailed it to the stage as the subject of the impending dramatic struggle before she had been five minutes on the scene. Before long, there came a stroke of acting which will probably never be forgotten by those who saw it, and which explained at once why those artifices of the dressing-table which help Madame Bernhardt would hinder Duse almost as much as a screen placed in front of her.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

SARAH AS JOAN

He fell on Joan of Arc years ago and fixed her up (no other expression conveys the process) for the Gaieté. Now she is dragged to light again with considerable excisions—all heartily welcome—for Madame Bernhardt. In the music, Gounod imitates himself almost as mechanically as Saint-Saëns, and more exclusively. The best number is the vision of St. Margaret and St. Catherine. Even now, when his fount runs yet drier than in the last decade, Gounod can always write heavenly music. But Sarah is really too bad. We all know her way of pretending to act when there is no part for her—how sweetly she intones her lines and poses like a saint. This is what she does in Joan. There is no acting, because there is no play; but she sends the lines out in a plaintive stream of melody throughout which only a fine ear can catch the false ring. You would almost swear that they meant something and that she was in earnest. Not until the final scene at the stake

does the affair become thin enough for even the American and British tripper to see through it. Sarah did not wink once: perhaps because she did not catch my eye, perhaps because she was in no humor for making fun of herself. It must be wearisome to keep up that make-believe night after night, knowing all the time that her serious work is going on without her at the Francais.

LONDON MUSIC

ELLEN TERRY

Ellen Terry is the most beautiful name in the world: it rings like a chime through the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It has a lovely rhythm in it. Not like "Jorj," which is so horribly ugly and difficult that all attempts to call me by it are foredoomed to failure.

Letter
16th Sept., 1896

RISTORI

In my youth I saw the great Italian actress Ristori play Mary Stuart; and nothing in her performance remains more vividly with me than her representation of the relief of Mary at finding herself in the open air after months of imprisonment.

Giving Them Hell
In IMPRISONMENT

A QUIET LADY

When our resources were at last exhausted and the entertainment was on the point of petering out, our hosts had to play their last card. Could anybody play the Helmer piano and oblige us with a tune. There was general shaking of heads until it appeared that the quiet lady, neglected and unknown, could play some pieces. As she went to the little piano we prepared ourselves for the worst and stopped talking, more or less. To encourage the poor lady I went to the piano and sat beside her to turn over for her, expecting "The Maiden's Prayer" or an old-fashioned set of variations on "The Carnival of Venice." I felt I was being very good to her.

After the first two bars I sat up. At the end of the piece (one of her own composition) I said, "Has anyone ever told you that you are one of the greatest pianists in Europe?" Evidently a good many people had; for without turning a hair she said,

"It is my profession. But this is a bad instrument. Perhaps you will hear me at the Philharmonic. I am to play 'Beethoven's E Flat Concerto' there."

Her name is Agatha Ursula Backer-Gröndahl. She played upon Helmer's pianoforte as it was never played upon before, and perhaps never will be again. A great artist—a serious artist—a beautiful, incomparable, unique artist! She morally regenerated us all; and we remained at our highest level until we were dragged down by the shrieks and groans of two Italian waiters who started quarrelling among the knives in the saloon. Fraternity having been re-established by Mr. Charrington, Mr. Archer was requested to improvise a World article for the entertainment of the company. He blushingly declined. Later on it was felt that the evening would be incomplete without a song from me; and after some pressing I reluctantly consented. The guests then left precipitately; and the scene, a historic one in the annals of the theatre, closed.

LONDON MUSIC

TOO BUSY IN HER OWN HOUSE

What I wanted to find out from Madame Gröndahl was how London had continued to remain for seventeen years unacquainted with a public player whose position is as exceptional, and whose talent is as rare and exquisite, as that of Madame Schumann. For Madame Gröndahl is, in round numbers, forty; that is, she is in the full maturity of her genius. And here you become curious about her personal appearance: you would like a little description. Well, she is what you would call—observe, what *you* would call—a perfectly plain woman. Her hair is not golden like yours: it is, I think, almost ashen: you would call it grey. Her figure and style are—well, quiet, slender, nothing in particular, nothing superb or Junonian: what can I say? Complexion? Quite Norwegian: no cream or coral, nothing to be afraid of there. Eyes? Well, eyes are a matter of opinion: I should rather like you to see them for yourself: they are memorable. A noble brow; but then, as you say, how unbecoming to a woman to have a noble brow! Would anybody look at you if you were in the same room with her? Ah, there you have me. Frankly, they would forget your very existence, even if there were no such thing in the world as a piano. For there is a grace beside

which your beauty is vulgar and your youth inadequate; and that grace is the secret of Madame Gröndahl's charm.

At Blandford Square I find the invaluable, the ubiquitous H. L. Broekstad, who explains my errand to our hostess, and at intervals corrects my propensity to neglect my business and talk eloquently about myself. In excellent English Madame Gröndahl tells me how, when she was three or four years old, she used to make music for the stories her father told her; how, later on, Halfdan Kjerulf gave her lessons and taught her what expression in playing meant; how she was struck by hearing the late Edmund Neupert play Beethoven; how she was sent to Berlin and studied under Kullak for three years, working six and sometimes nine hours a day; and how she made her first appearance there seventeen years ago. She composes, she says, in the quiet of the evening, when the day's work is done: chiefly, indeed, in the evenings of December, when the year's work is done. "What work?" I ask, astounded.

"Oh, all the things one has to do," she replies; "the housekeeping, the children, the playing, the three lessons I give every day to pupils." I rise up in wrath to protest against this house, these children, these pupils swallowing up the ministrations that were meant for mankind; but she adds, with a certain diffidence as to her power of expressing so delicate a point in English, that it is as wife and mother that she gets the experience that makes her an artist. I collapse. Bassetto is silenced. He can only bow to the eternal truth, and think how different his column would be if all artists were like this one. Here, then, is the reason why she never came to England before. She was too busy in her own house!

LONDON MUSIC

THE BROWNINGS

I am not at all certain that the attraction between Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning was in the first instance a genuine physiological attraction. Mind you, those two people could write and talk the birds off the bushes when they wished to do so. If any woman wrote to me sonnets such as Elizabeth wrote to Robert, I am very much afraid she would have got round me whether she attracted me physically or not.

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

CHARLES II

As a husband he took his marriage very seriously, and his sex adventures as calls of nature on an entirely different footing. In this he was in the line of evolution, which leads to an increasing separation of the unique and intensely personal and permanent marriage relation from the carnal intercourse described in Shakespear's sonnet. This, being a response to the biological decree that the world must be peopled, may arise irresistibly between persons who could not live together endurably for a week but can produce excellent children. Historians who confuse Charles's feelings for his wife with his appetite for Barbara Villiers do not know chalk from cheese biologically.

Preface to IN GOOD KING CHARLES'S GOLDEN DAYS

FOR ELLEN TERRY

Listen to me, woman with no religion. Send to your library for two books of travel in Africa: one Miss Kingsley's (have you met her?) and the other H. M. Stanley's. Compare the brave woman, with her commonsense and goodwill, with the wild-beast man, with his elephant rifle, and his atmosphere of dread and murder, breaking his way by mad selfish assassination out of the difficulties created by his own cowardice. Think of all that has been rising up under your eyes in Europe for years past, Bismarck worship, Stanley worship, Dr. Jim worship, and now at last Kitchener worship with dead enemies dug up and mutilated. Think also on the law: the gallows, penal servitude, hysterical clamoring for the lash, more cowardice masquerading as "resolute government," "law and order" and the like. Well, how have you felt about these things? Have you had any real belief in the heroism of the filibuster? Have you had any sympathy with the punishments of the judge? Have you found in your own life and your own small affairs no better way, no more instructive heart wisdom, no warrant for trusting to the good side of people instead of terrorizing the bad side of them. I—poor idiot—thought the distinction of Ellen Terry was that she had this heart wisdom, and managed her own little world as Tolstoy would have our Chamberlains and Balfours and German Emperors and Kitcheners and Lord Chief Justices and other slaves of false ideas and imaginary fears manage Europe. I accordingly give you a play in which you stand in the very place where

Imperialism is most believed to be necessary, on the border line where the European meets the fanatical African, with Judge on the one hand, and indomitable adventurer-filibuster on the other, said I.A-F. pushing forward "civilization" in the shape of rifles and pistols in the hands of Hooligans, aristocratic mauvais sujets and stupid drifters. I try to shew these men gaining a sense of courage and resolution from continual contact with and defiance of their own fears. I try to show you fearing nobody and managing them all as Daniel managed the lions, not by cunning: above all, not even a momentary appeal to Cleopatra's stand-by, their passions, but by simple moral superiority. It is world-wide situation and one totally incomprehensible to Cleopatras of all sorts and periods. (Cleopatra would have waited to guess which of the two men was going to beat the other, and then tried to seduce him, after which, as in the case of Antony and Caesar, she would have found that she had guessed wrong.) Here then is your portrait painted on a map of the world—and you prefer Sargent's Lady Macbeth! Here you get far beyond Candida, with her boy and her parson, and her suspicion of trading a little on the softness of her contours—and you want to get back to Cleopatra! Here is a part which dominates a play because the character it represents dominates the world—and you think it might do for Mrs. P.C. The wretched Hooligan who gives the final touch by turning from the navy, the bench, and all the powers and principalities to Ellen in his extremity—"they dassent do it if you tell 'em not"—is dull to you. In every other play I have ever written—even in *Candida*—I have prostituted the actress more or less by making the interest in her partly a sexual interest: only the man in the *Devil's Disciple* draws clear of it. In *Lady Cicely* I have done without this, and gained a greater fascination by it. And you are disappointed.

Letter to Ellen Terry

MOZART AND WAGNER

Mozart had his trade as a musician at his finger ends when he was twenty, because he had served an arduous apprenticeship to that trade and no other. Wagner was very far from having attained equal mastery at thirty-five: indeed he himself has told us that not until he had passed the age at which Mozart died did he compose with that complete spontaneity of musical

expression which can only be obtained by winning entire freedom from all preoccupation with the difficulties of technical processes. But when that time came, he was not only a consummate musician, like Mozart, but a dramatic poet and a critical and philosophical essayist, exercising a considerable influence on his century. The sign of this consummation was his ability at last to play with his art, and thus to add to his already famous achievements in sentimental drama that lighthearted art of comedy of which the greatest masters, like Moliere and Mozart, are so much rarer than the tragedians and sentimentalists.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

THE MOST MIRACULOUS ART

. . . in 1813, music had newly become the most astonishing, the most fascinating, the most miraculous art in the world. Mozart's "Don Giovanni" had made all musical Europe conscious of the enchantments of the modern orchestra and of the perfect adaptability of music to the subtlest needs of the dramatist. Beethoven had shown how these inarticulate mood-poems which surge through men who have, like himself, no exceptional command of words, can be written down in music as symphonies. Not that Mozart and Beethoven invented these applications of their art; but they were the first whose works made it clear that the dramatic and subjective powers of sound were enthralling enough to stand by themselves quite apart from the decorative musical structures of which they had hitherto been a mere feature. After the finales in "Figaro" and "Don Giovanni," the possibility of the modern music drama lay bare. After the symphonies of Beethoven it was certain that the poetry that lies too deep for words does not lie too deep for music, and that the vicissitudes of the soul, from the roughest fun to the loftiest aspiration, can make symphonies without the aid of dance tunes. As, much, perhaps, will be claimed for the preludes and fugues of Bach; but Bach's method was unattainable: his compositions were wonderful webs of exquisitely beautiful Gothic traceries in sound, quite beyond all ordinary human talent, Beethoven's far blunter craft was thoroughly popular and practicable: not to save his soul could he have drawn one long Gothic line in sound as Bach did, much less have woven several of them together with so apt a harmony that even when the composer is unmoved its pro-

gressions saturate themselves with the emotion which springs as warmly from our delicately touched admiration as from our sympathies, and sometimes makes us give a composer credit for pathetic intentions which he does not entertain, just as a boy imagines a treasure of tenderness and noble wisdom in the beauty of a woman. Besides, Bach set comic dialogue to music exactly as he set the recitatives of the Passion, there being for him, apparently, only one recitatives possible, and that the musically best. He reserved the expression of his merry mood for the regular set numbers in which he could make one of his contrapuntal traceries of pure ornament with the requisite gaiety of line and movement. Beethoven bowed to no ideal of beauty: he only sought the expression for his feeling. To him a joke was a joke; and if it sounded funny in music he was satisfied. Until the old habit of judging all music by its decorative symmetry had worn out, musicians were shocked by his symphonies, and, misunderstanding his integrity, openly questioned his sanity. But to those who were not looking for pretty new sound patterns, but were longing for the expression of their moods in music, he achieved a revelation, because, being in his aim to express his own moods, he anticipated with revolutionary courage and frankness all the moods of the rising generations of the nineteenth century.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

MOZART'S FUNERAL

There is no shadow of death anywhere on Mozart's music. Even his own funeral was a failure. It was dispersed by a shower of rain; and to this day nobody knows where he was buried or whether he was buried at all or not. My own belief is that he was not. Depend on it, they had no sooner put up their umbrellas and bolted for the nearest shelter than he got up, shook off his bones into the common grave of the people, and soared off into universality. It is characteristic of the British middle class that whenever they write a book about Mozart, the crowning tragedy is always the dreadful thought that instead of having a respectable vault all to himself to moulder in for the edification of the British tourist, he should have been interred cheaply among the bodies of the lower classes.

LONDON MUSIC

THE LITERARY MUSICIAN

Wagner was the literary musician par excellence. He could not, like Mozart and Beethoven, produce decorative tone structures independently of any dramatic or poetic subject matter, because, that craft being no longer necessary for his purpose, he did not cultivate it. As Shakespear, compared with Tennyson, appears to have an exclusively dramatic talent, so does Wagner compared with Mendelssohn. On the other hand, he had not to go to literary hacks for "librettos" to set to music: he produced his own dramatic poems, thus giving dramatic integrity to opera, and making symphony articulate. A Beethoven symphony (except the articulate part of the ninth) expresses noble feeling, but not thought: it has moods, but no ideas. Wagner added thought and produced the music drama. Mozart's loftiest opera, his *Ring*, so to speak, *The Magic Flute*, has a libretto which, though none the worse for seeming, like *The Rhine Gold*, the merest Christmas tomfoolery to shallow spectators, is the product of a talent immeasurably inferior to Mozart's own. The libretto of *Don Giovanni* is coarse and trivial: its transfigurations by Mozart's music may be a marvel; but nobody will venture to contend that such transfigurations, however seductive, can be as satisfactory as tone poetry or drama in which the musician and the poet are at the same level. . . .

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

LISZT

Liszt's "Mazeppa" is sufficiently novel, though it has been played here more than once. When I first heard it at the Crystal Palace I tried vainly to recollect what the rushing, swishing triplets which represent the galloping of the horse were like. At last a rustic-looking young lady behind me said very audibly, "Oh, *isn't* it like frying rashers?" And so it was exactly.

LONDON MUSIC

OSCAR WILDE'S PLAY

Mr. Oscar Wilde's new play at the Haymarket is a dangerous subject, because he has the property of making his critics dull. They laugh angrily at his epigrams, like a child who is coaxed into being amused in the very act of setting up a yell of rage and agony. They protest that the trick is obvious, and that such epigrams can be turned out by the score by any one lightminded

enough to condescend to such frivolity. As far as I can ascertain, I am the only person in London who cannot sit down and write an Oscar Wilde play at will. The fact that his plays, though apparently lucrative remain unique under these circumstances, says much for the self-denial of our scribes. In a certain sense Mr. Wilde is to me our only thorough playwright. He plays with everything: with wit, with philosophy, with drama, with actors and audience, with the whole theatre. Such a feat scandalizes the Englishman, who can no more play with wit and philosophy than he can with a football or a cricket bat. He works at both, and has the consolation, if he cannot make people laugh, of being the best cricketer and footballer in the world. Now it is the mark of the artist that he will not work. Just as people with social ambitions will practise the meanest economies in order to live expensively; so the artist will starve his way through incredible toil and discouragement sooner than go and earn a week's honest wages. Mr. Wilde, an arch-artist, is so colossally lazy that he trifles even with the work by which an artist escapes work. He distils the very quintessence, and gets as product plays which are so unapproachably playful that they are the delight of every playgoer with two penn'orth of brains. The English critic, always protesting that the drama should not be didactic, and yet always complaining if the dramatist does not find sermons in stones and good in everything, will be conscious of a subtle and pervading levity in *An Ideal Husband*. All the literary dignity of the play, all the imperturbable good sense and good manners with which Mr. Wilde makes his wit pleasant to his comparatively stupid audience, cannot quite overcome the fact that Ireland is of all countries the most foreign to England, and that to the Irishman (and Mr. Wilde is almost as acutely Irish an Irishman as the Iron Duke of Wellington) there is nothing in the world quite so exquisitely comic as an Englishman's seriousness. It becomes tragic, perhaps, when the Englishman acts on it; but that occurs too seldom to be taken into account, a fact which intensifies the humor of the situation, the total result being the Englishman utterly unconscious of his real self, Mr. Wilde keenly observant of it and playing on the self-unconsciousness with irresistible humor, and finally, of course, the Englishman annoyed with himself for being amused at his own expense, and for being unable to convict Mr. Wilde of what seems an obvious

misunderstanding of human nature. He is shocked, too, at the danger to the foundations of society when seriousness is publicly laughed at. And to complete the oddity of the situation, Mr. Wilde, touching what he himself reverences, is absolutely the most sentimental dramatist of the day.

OUR THEATRES IN THE NINETIES

IF YOU VALUE A MAN'S REGARD

Oscar Wilde said of me "An excellent man! he has no enemies; and none of his friends like him." And that's quite true; they dont like me; but they are my friends, and some of them love me. If you value a man's regard, *strive* with him.

25th Sept., 1896
Letter

ROSSETTI, RUSKIN, SWINBURNE, WHITMAN

Morris had a certain respect for Rossetti; but he never spoke of his poetry or his painting. Apparently what awed him about Rossetti was that the poet-painter positively liked writing letters (Morris loathed it, and would never write one if he could possibly help it nor correct his slips and omissions by reading over what he had written) and was so clever in business and diplomacy that he sold his pictures for good prices long before he had any public reputation. Of Ruskin Morris said that he would write the most profound truths and forget them five minutes later, which is true of other writers than Ruskin. Of Swinburne, who, having ceased to be a drunken republican poet, had become a sober reactionary Jingo rhymester in Putney under the tutelage of Theodore Watts Dunton, he said that he got everything from books and nothing from nature. "Read his poems about the sea," he said, "and they will convince you that he never was near the sea in his life and had only read a lot about it; and yet the truth is that the fellow was never out of the sea: he was always swimming about." His favourite quotation from Swinburne was a little poem beginning "If Love were what the rose is," which sounds well but has absolutely no syntax. I gathered that Morris had always known that Swinburne's early revolutionary enthusiasms were epidemics caught from Victor Hugo, and that the Putney reactionary was the real man all the time. He demurred to the classification of Whitman as a poet on technical grounds, his stuff might have all sorts of merits, but it was not verse: anybody

could write like that if they had anything to say. He delighted in Dickens, whom I fortunately had at my tongue's end, and was much too fond of Jorrocks, whom I knew only through Leech's pictures. Shakespear was not in the Morris movement which was strongly anti-rhetorical. He hated Wordsworth as far as any poet could hate the author of "Intimations of Immortality"; but this must be heavily discounted to allow for the overwhelming reaction against Fundamentalist Evangelicalism which made it impossible for the vanguard to be just to any poet who was under the smallest suspicion of piety.

MORRIS AS I KNEW HIM

WRITING PLAYS IN VERSE

Shakespear and Shelley, far from being hampered by the conventional obligations to write their dramas in verse, found it much the easiest and cheapest way of producing them. But if Shakespear had been compelled by custom to write entirely in prose, all his ordinary dialogue might have been as good as the first scene of *As You Like It*; and all his lofty passages as fine as "What a piece of work is Man!" thus sparing us a great deal of blank verse in which the thought is commonplace, and the expression, though catchingly turned, absurdly pompous. The Cenci might either have been a serious drama or might never have been written at all if Shelley had not been allowed to carry off its unreality by Elizabethan versification. Still, both poets have achieved many passages in which the decorative and dramatic qualities are not only reconciled, but seem to enhance one another to a pitch otherwise unattainable.

Just so in music. When we find, as in the case of Mozart, a prodigiously gifted and arduously trained musician who is also, by a happy accident, a dramatist comparable to Moliere, the obligation to compose operas in versified numbers not only does not embarrass him, but actually saves him trouble and thought. . . .

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

THE ILLNESS OF A GENIUS

Every man of genius has a critical illness at 40, Nature's object being to make him go to bed for several months. Sometimes Nature overdoes it: Schiller and Mozart died. Goethe survived, though he very nearly followed Schiller into the shades. I did the thing quite handsomely by spending eighteen

months on crutches, having two surgical operations, and breaking my arm. I distinctly noticed that instead of my recuperation beginning when my breakdown ended, it began before that. The ascending curve cut through the tail of the descending one; and I was consummating my collapse and rising for my next flight simultaneously.

Letter to G.K.C.

HOW DO I KNOW?

The truth is we are apt to deify men of genius, exactly as we deify the creative force of the universe, by attributing to logical design what is the result of blind instinct. What Wagner meant by "true Art" is the operation of the artist's instinct, which is just as blind as any other instinct. Mozart, asked for an explanation of his works, said frankly, "How do I know?"

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

SIR EDWARD ELGAR

I once addressed a public meeting at which another of the speakers ranked as the greatest living British composer. He surprised the audience by saying, "Shaw knows a great deal more about music than I do." To a young musician who asked him for lessons in harmony and counterpoint he replied that he knew nothing about these things.

WAGNER AND SHELLEY

We shall now find that at the point where *The Ring* changes from music drama into opera, it also ceases to be philosophic, and becomes didactic. The philosophic part is a dramatic symbol of the world as Wagner observed it. In the didactic part the philosophy degenerates into the prescription of a romantic nostrum for all human ills. Wagner, only mortal after all, succumbed to the panacea mania when his philosophy was exhausted, like any of the rest of us.

The panacea is by no means an original one. Wagner was anticipated in the year 1819 by a young country gentleman from Sussex named Shelley, in a work of extraordinary artistic power and splendour. *Prometheus Unbound* is an English attempt at a *Ring*; and when it is taken into account that the author was only 27, whereas Wagner was 40 when he completed the poem of *The Ring*, our vulgar patriotism may find an envious satisfaction

in insisting upon the comparison. Both works set forth the same conflict between humanity and its gods and governments issuing in the redemption of man from their tyranny by the growth of his will into perfect strength and self-confidence; and both finish by a lapse into panacea-mongering didacticism by the holding up of Love as the remedy for all evils and the solvent of all social difficulties.

The differences between *Prometheus Unbound* and *The Ring* are as interesting as the likenesses. Shelley, caught in the pugnacity of his youth and the first impetuosity of his prodigious artistic power by the first fierce attack of the New Reformation, gave no quarter to the antagonist of his hero. His Wotan, whom he calls Jupiter, is the almighty fiend into whom the Englishman's God had degenerated during two centuries of ignorant Bible worship and shameless commercialism. He is Alberic, Fafnir, Loki and the ambitious side of Wotan all rolled into one melodramatic demon who is finally torn from the throne and hurled shrieking into the abyss by a spirit representing that conception of Eternal Law which has been replaced since by the conception of Evolution. Wagner, an older, more experienced man than the Shelley of 1819, understood Wotan and pardoned him, separating him tenderly from all the compromising alliances to which Shelley fiercely held him; making the truth and heroism which overthrow him the children of his inmost heart; and representing him as finally acquiescing in and working his own supersession and annihilation. Shelley, in his later works, is seen progressing towards the same tolerance, justice, and humility of spirit, as he advanced towards the middle age he never reached. But there is no progress from Shelley to Wagner as regards the panacea, except that in Wagner there is a certain shadow of night and death come on it: nay, even a clear opinion that the supreme good of love is that it so completely satisfies the desire for life that after it the will to live ceases to trouble us, and we are at last content to achieve the highest happiness of death.

The reduction of the panacea to absurdity was not forced upon Shelley, because the love which acts as a universal solvent in his *Prometheus Unbound* is a sentiment of affectionate benevolence which has nothing to do with sexual passion. It might, and in fact does, exist in the absence of any sexual interest whatever. The words mercy and kindness connote it less ambiguously

than the word love. But Wagner sought always for some point of contact between his ideas and the physical senses, so that people might not only think or imagine them in the eighteenth-century fashion, but see them on the stage, hear them from the orchestra, and feel them from the infection of passionate emotion. Dr. Johnson kicking the stone to confute Berkeley is not more bent on common sense concreteness than Wagner: on all occasions he insists on the need for sensuous apprehension to give reality to abstract comprehension, maintaining in fact, that reality has no other meaning. Now he could apply this process to poetic love only by following it back to its alleged origin in sexual passion, the emotional phenomena of which he has expressed in music with a frankness and forcible naturalism which would possibly have scandalized Shelley.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

HOW TO ACHIEVE EMINENCE

Alexander got drunk and murdered his best friend; but this is not why we admire him. But by ordering the deaths of a prodigious number of people he achieved the utmost eminence attainable in human history.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF A GENIUS

His mind changed as often as his mood. On Monday nothing will ever induce him to return to quill driving: on Tuesday he begins a new pamphlet. On Wednesday he is impatient of the misapprehensions of people who cannot see how impossible it is for him to preside as a conductor over platform performances of fragments of his works which can only be understood when presented strictly according to his intention on the stage: on Thursday he gets up a concert of Wagnerian selections, and when it is over writes to his friends describing how profoundly both bandsmen and audience were impressed. On Friday he exults in the self-assertion of Siegfried's will against all moral ordinances, and is full of a revolutionary sense of "the universal change and renewal": on Saturday he has an attack of holiness, and asks "Can you conceive a moral action of which the root idea is not renunciation?" In short Wagner can be quoted against himself without limit, much as Beethoven's adagios could be

quoted against his scherzos if a dispute arose between two fools as to whether he was a melancholy man or a merry one.

THE PERFECT WAGNERITE

WHAT I MEAN

People imagine that when I say a thing, I not only mean what I say (they seldom give me credit for that) but they imagine I must mean a great deal more.

THE CASE FOR EQUALITY

AWE

. . . these iconoclasts are powerless against the genuine natural awe inspirer. I am as irreverent and even derisive as any sane thinker can be; but I can remember an occasion (I was over twenty at the time) on which I was so overawed by a Jewish Rabbi that I could hardly speak to him. There was no reason for this: we had never met before, and had less than five minutes conversation on an ordinary matter of business which gave no occasion for embarrassment on either side of any sort; but he terrified me by some power in him, magnetic or mesmeric or hypnotic or whatever you like to call it, which reduced me to a subjection which I had never experienced before, and have never experienced since. I was simply discouraged by him. Since then my observation, and the stories I read about the dying-out of primitive tribes at the impact of civilized invaders, have convinced me that every living person has a magnetic field of greater or less intensity which enables those in whom it is strong to dominate those in whom it is relatively weak, or whose susceptibility to its influence, called shyness, is excessive. I have ranked this as a scientific fact in the fourth part of *Back To Methuselah*; but it will not be accepted as such by the professional biologists until one of them has succeeded in making a guinea pig overawe a dog in a laboratory. Someday an intelligent bio-physicist will perhaps find out how to measure this force as we now measure electricity. Meanwhile there is no denying that it exists and must be recognized and even exploited by every practical ruler.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

Almroth Wright, the founder of the aesthetic theory of sanitation, in full Sir Almroth Wright, K.B.E., and of great distinction

as a bacteriologist, physician, and philologist, remarked quite casually at a discussion following a lecture of mine, "I believe the effect of sanitation is aesthetic," and, having thus opened an epoch in hygiene, sat down and thought no more about it. But I thought a great deal about it. I could no more persuade him that he had made a notable discovery than Halley could persuade Newton that his device of fluxions (the calculus) did him credit and would be of enormous value to mathematicians. There was nothing for it but to steal his thunder, not for the first time. It is useful to know a man who has discovered the philosopher's stone but does not know the value of gold.

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT?

MUSICIANS ARE AMAZINGLY ILL-CONDITIONED CONTROVERSIALISTS

Somehow, musicians are amazingly ill-conditioned controversialists. They are almost as bad as scientific men: not quite so dogmatic or so insolent perhaps, but still equally void of good humor and sense of social solidarity with their opponents. Just as, in my boyish days, I hardly ever met a schoolmaster who seemed to know that he was as much bound to be polite to me as long as I behaved myself as to my father as long as he paid the bill, I seldom read a musical paper now without wondering whether the writers are as unmannerly in private life as they are in print. It is my schoolmaster over again. He had a notion that his whole duty was to know, or pretend to know, more about Euclid or Virgil than I; and the result was that his obvious limitation, incompleteness, and lack of social charm made me resolve to shun the mathematical and classical influences which had apparently made him what he was. And the musical papers seem to think that *their* whole duty is to know more about music than anybody else. If some unfortunate amateur calls a tuba a bassoon, or a sonata a symphony, they write of and to him as Colonel Newcombe (a pestilential humbug) spoke of and to the Hindoos.

LONDON MUSIC

DR. BRYANT

A friend of mine who was a highly educated woman, the head of a famous college in the north of London, fiercely disputed the right of the local authority to have the drainage of the college

examined by a public sanitary inspector. Her creed was that of a jealously private lady brought up in a private house; and it seemed an outrage to her that a man with whom she was not on visiting terms should be legally privileged to walk into the most private apartments of her college otherwise than at her invitation. Yet the health of the community depends on a general belief that this privilege is salutary and reasonable. The enlargement of the social creed to that extent is the only way to get rid of cholera epidemics. But this very able and highly instructed lady, though still in the prime of life, was too old to learn.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

NOTHING HIGHER THAN HIMSELF

. . . a dramatist cannot conceive anything higher than himself. No doubt he can invest an imaginary figure with all sorts of imaginary gifts. A drunken author may make his hero sober; an ugly, weak, puny, timid one may make him a Hyperion or a Hercules; a deaf mute may write novels in which the lover is an orator and his mistress a prima donna; but whatever ornaments and accomplishments he may pile up on his personages he cannot give them greater souls than his own. Defoe could invent wilder adventures for Robinson Crusoe than Shakespear for Hamlet; but he could not make that mean adventurer, with his dull eulogies of the virtues of "the middle station of life," anything even remotely like Shakespear's prince.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM

THE END OF IT ALL

We have to face the fact that we are a very poor lot. Yet we must be the best that God can as yet do, else he would have done something better. I think there is a great deal in the old pious remarks about our being worms. Modern science shows that life began in a small, feeble, curious, blind sort of way as a speck of protoplasm; that, owing to some sort of will in this, some curious driving power, always making for higher organisms, gradually that little thing, constantly trying, and wanting, having the purpose in itself, being itself a product of that purpose, has by mere force of wanting and striving to be something higher gradually, curiously, miraculously, continually evolved a series of beings each of which evolved something higher than itself.

What you call evil is nothing but imperfection. What Shelley called the malignity of the Almighty Fiend is only the continued activity of the early attempts which, though superseded by later achievements, have not yet been destroyed by them. Cancer is not a diabolical invention to torment mankind: it was once the achievement of the organizing force, just as the tiger is not purposely the enemy of man: it is an attempt to improve on the oyster. And this miracle of natural creation is constantly going on. This tremendous power is continually struggling with what we call external nature, and is getting hold of external nature and organizing it. Needing eyes and hands and brain for the fulfilment of its purpose, it evolves them. We are its brains and eyes and hands. It is not an omnipotent power that can do things without us; it has created us in order that we might do its work: in fact, that is the way it does its work—through us. When you get this conception of the universe you become religious: you perceive that this thing people have always called God is something in yourself, as Jesus is reported to have said. Read the Gospel of St. John, and you find Jesus always coming back to that point—ye are members one of another—the kingdom of heaven is within you—God is the Son of Man—and at that point they always stoned him: the Pharisees could not stand that. Your purpose in life is simply to help on the purpose of the universe. By higher and higher organization man must become superman, and superman super-superman, and so on. . . .

And what is to be the end of it all? There need be no end. There is no reason why the process should ever stop, since it has proceeded so far. But it must achieve on its infinite way the production of some Being, some Person if you like, who will be strong and wise, with a mind capable of comprehending the whole universe and with powers capable of executing its entire will: in other words, an omnipotent and benevolent God.

MODERN RELIGION

AS FAR AS THOUGHT CAN REACH

When I was a child my governess made me read a book called *The Child's Guide to Knowledge*. When I was at the height of my adult powers I wrote a play called *As Far As Thought Can Reach*. . . .

ENVOY

Bibliography

Chief Published Works by BERNARD SHAW

Work	1st Published	Notes
NOVELS		
Immaturity	1930	Autobiographical Preface
The Irrational Knot	1905	Published in Serial Form, 1885-7
Love Among the Artists	1900 (H. J. Stone & Co., Chicago)	Published in Serial Form, 1887-8
Cashel Byron's Profession	1886 (Modern Press)	Published in Serial Form, 1885-6
An Unsocial Socialist	1887 (Sonnenschein)	Published in Serial Form, 1884
PLAYS		
Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant	1898 (Grant Richards)	
Widowers' Houses		Perf. in London, 1892
The Philanderer		1st Performance, 1905
Mrs. Warren's Profession		1st Performance, 1925
Arms and the Man		1st Performance, 1894
Candida		1st London Perf., 1900
The Man of Destiny		1st Performance, 1897
You Never Can Tell		1st Performance, 1899
Three Plays For Puritans	1901 (Grant Richards)	
The Devil's Disciple		Richard Mansfield in New York
Cæsar and Cleopatra		
Captain Brassbound's Conversion		1st Performance, 1900
Man and Superman	1903	1st Performance, 1905
John Bull's Other Island	1907	1st Performance, 1904
How He Lied to Her Husband		Preface for Politicians
Major Barbara		1st Performance, 1905
Press Cuttings	1909	1st Performance, 1909

Work	1st Published	Notes
The Doctor's Dilemma	1911	1st Performance, 1906
Getting Married		1st Performance, 1908
The Showing-Up of Blanco Posnet		1st Performance, 1909
Misalliance	1914	1st Performance, 1910
The Dark Lady of the Sonnets		1st Performance, 1910
Fanny's First Play		1st Performance, 1911
Androcles and the Lion	1916	1st Performance, 1913
Overruled		1st Performance, 1912
Pygmalion		First Produced in Vienna, 1913
Heartbreak House	1919	Produced in America, 1920
Great Catherine		1st Performance, 1913
O'Flaherty, V.C.		Read by G.B.S. (wireless)
The Inca of Perusalem		
Augustus Does His Bit		
Annajanska		
Back to Methuselah	1924	Produced in America, 1922 New Edition with Post-script, World's Classics, 1946
Saint Joan	1924	1st Performance in New York, 1924
The Apple Cart	1931	Shaw Festival at Malvern
Too True To Be Good	1934	1st Perf. Boston, Mass., 1932
A Village Wooing		1st Performance, 1934
On the Rocks		1st Performance, 1933
The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles	1936	Malvern Festival, 1935
The Six of Calais		
The Millionairess		1st Perf. on Continent, 1936
Geneva	1939	Malvern Festival, 1938 Illus. by Feliks Topolsk
In Good King Charles's Golden Days	1939	Malvern Festival, 1939 Illus. by Feliks Topolski
Cymbeline Refinished	1938	Written for Stratford Festival
Buoyant Billions	1949	De Luxe Edition. Illus. by Clare Winston
SAYS		
The Quintessence of Ibsenism	1891 (Walter Scott)	Revised Edition Constable 1913
The Perfect Wagnerite	1898 (Grant Richards)	
The Sanity of Art	1908 (New Age Press)	Contributed to *Liberty* (U.S.A.) in 1895
Preface to Three Plays by Brieux	1910 (Brentano)	

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The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God	1932	Illustrated by John Farleigh
Fabian Essays	1889 (Walter Scott)	New Edition with Postscript, Allen and Unwin, 1948
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The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism	1928	
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CORRESPONDENCE		
The Ellen Terry-Shaw Correspondence	1931	Preface by G.B.S.
CRITICISM		
Drama	1895-8 (*The Saturday Review. The Star*)	Editor Frank Harris. Pen name of Corno di Bassetto
Music	1888-90	

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Sixteen Self Sketches 1949

Except where otherwise indicated, publisher in each case is Constable & Co.

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