

him standin' there with his mouth open. When she came home that night, he flew into an awful rage, but she never said a word, just got him a good hot supper. He never said no more after that when she went out nursin'."

"The first winter we was here, my wife, Mary, had scarlet fever. Mrs. McGrath nursed her day and night. Don't know what we'd have done without her. That spring she got pneumonia and never got rightly over it. All summer she was hardly able to do nothin'. My wife useter come over and visit with her and stay some nights with her too. She'd spend most of her time sittin' at the window and watchin' and waitin' for Dan to come back.

"Comin' on the fall we could see she was gettin' weaker and weaker and Mary stayed with her near all the time."

We were now leaning on the rickety old fence. The sun had all but disappeared beyond the horizon.

"Comin' on the last she'd rave and have spells when she didn't know any of us. She be talkin' to Danny. The evenin' she died—it was just about this time of day she asked Mary to fix her so she could sit up. We was both with her that evenin'. The sun was just settin' and you could see along the road and out into the hills. She said to Mary,

"I'm expecting Danny back this evening".

"Weell, Mary just tried to cover up and said he might be late or something. But she kept sayin' that Danny'd be comin' down the road soon. And then just as the sun went down, she said,

"Look, there's Danny. He's come at last!"

"And she smiled and lifted up her arms. You should have seen the look on her face. Then she just fell back and died. It sure gave us the shivers. We almost thought young Dan was there. But he never came back and that woman just pined away for him. Mary goes to her grave often and keeps flowers on it. There weren't a finer woman alive than that Mrs. McGrath."

We stood looking at the deserted cottage. The sun had now set and in the gathering twilight, it seemed lonely and sad. Drawn by an inner compulsion, I forced the door open and entered. There seemed to hover about the empty rooms the spirit of the loving mother who had vainly waited long years for the return of her son. And as I gazed about me, I was filled with the bitterest remorse for the impetuosity of youth which had caused so much heartbreak to my mother.

—MARGARET HAGEN '59

## MAN AND SUPERMAN

By George Bernard Shaw

### Some Philosophical and Psychological Considerations

Behind every truly great play stands its author who is a great dramatist—a master of his craft. **Man and Superman** is one of the three great comedies that have been written in the last sixty years; the other two are: **The Importance of Being Earnest** by Oscar Wilde and **The Circle** by Somerset Maugham. Its author, George Bernard Shaw, is a great dramatist because he possesses

to a supreme degree the gift of dialogue. He is one of the greatest and one of the most controversial literary figures of our time. Whether we like or dislike, agree with or disagree with him, we are forced to admit that he is an authentic genius and a great dramatist.

Shaw wrote many plays that are masterpieces but if he had never written anything except **Man and Superman** his contribution to the drama would have been immense. When the audience loudly applauded this play it was the first time in the history of the English drama that a play of ideas had been a success. In all plays of this type there is an interplay of ideas and we are made conscious of the intellectual positions which the speakers represent. The play of ideas is concerned primarily with one or several philosophies and secondarily with a story or situation. Audiences required time to become accustomed to this type of play. But when Shaw's style and thought no longer puzzled or shocked them, they liked and enjoyed his new type of play.

This play has been acclaimed as the most remarkable comedy that has ever been written. But as the subtitle states, it is not only a comedy; it is a Comedy and a Philosophy. The comedy is mingled with the philosophy. There is the delightful comedy of the pursuit of the male by the female, which is supplemented by the deeper comedy of man the thinker. In the former comedy Ann pursues Tanner and he reluctantly consents to marry her. In Tanner we have at first a supremely confident and rational man who soon becomes disconcerted and hunted down by the outwardly modest and pure-hearted Ann. In the latter comedy, Tanner is revealed as an independent thinker whose purpose of awakening society and making reason prevail is overruled by Ann's domestic love. This seeming defeat of human reason is the work of the higher reason of the Life Force which ensures propagation of the human race. By himself Tanner could not change the world because this task requires the continuation of the race and the strivings of more than one generation. As we would expect from the man who could "never resist a joke", the comedy is written with a great deal of Shavian wit. The philosophy in this play expounds two main philosophical motives. One is the theory of the Life Force which desires above all else to make suitable marriages and produce a purer and higher race and eventually the Superman. The other is the idea that in marriages the woman is the more conscious agent. This latter theory makes the woman the pursuer and the man the pursued. This is not a new idea for in the Shakesperian drama the woman takes the initiative.

In discussing the play with our attention mainly focused on the philosophical and psychological aspects we must examine Shaw's own belief in the theory of the Life Force with its related theory of the Superman and his belief that woman is the pursuer of man. Many questions immediately arise but some of the most important are: Is man capable of achieving infinite perfection by selective breeding and new training? Can man ever become a Superman and if so, what type of man will this Superman be? Is woman more anxious to marry and procreate than man? Who is the pursuer and who the pursued?

The doctrine of the Life Force is very difficult to define. We know from **Man and Superman** that it is a force which is the very essence of life. It is a half personified power which at the same time is reminiscent of a deity and a machine. This force working through man by an evolutionary process will achieve higher and higher degrees



of perfection and in time will produce a new kind of man and eventually the Superman. The most obvious result of this force is the power of sex, the impulse to beget children. In the play we are discussing this impulse is clearly brought out. This impulse is much stronger in the woman than in the man. Tanner, the "philosophic man", says of this impulse in woman: "... 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." The Life Force implanted this impulse in woman and gives her no choice but to pursue man for the purpose of begetting children. There is no doubt but that the chief aim of the Life Force is the begetting of children through the arrangement of suitable marriages. In this play Ann is the embodiment of the Life Force and Tanner is the victim.

Tanner is the philosophic man who recognizes yet resists the Life Force. According to Shaw the philosophic man is the one who "... seeks in contemplation to discover the inner will of the world." He can not only discover but manage this force in somewhat the same way as man manages the natural forces. Tanner is aware of the universal purpose of the Force but he does not seem to be able to manage it; he is in its "grip" and has no choice but to obey it. Both Ann and Tanner are, in a sense, in the "grip" of the Force and are being used for its purpose. Ann says of her marriage to Tanner: "It will not be all happiness for me. Perhaps death." Tanner states: "The Life Force. I am in the grip of the Life Force". All the way through the play, from Straker's whistle at the mention of Ann's name in Tanner's presence to Tanner's own comment that: "The trap was laid from the beginning," we know that Tanner is destined to marry Ann. Man is only an instrument of the Force. If he consents to fulfill its purpose, he is later scrapped. And if he refuses to promote its purpose, he is scrapped. Whether he promotes or hinders its purpose, man is scrapped in the end.

The explanation of Tanner's resistance to the Life Force can be found in Shaw's concept of the artist-man. According to the Shavian theory, man is a creative artist in one way or another and is more interested in expressing himself than in the begetting of children; and he can be diverted to this latter purpose only by some exceptional

excitement. Thus, the female is the hunter and the male is the game; women animated by the impulse to perpetuate the species pursues the man and tracks him down by a variety of seductive arts. This theory is implicit in nearly all of Shaw's works and is one of the main themes in *Man and Superman*. Tanner gives us a ruthless picture of the artist man. "The true artist will let his wife starve, his children go barefoot his mother drudge for his living at seventy sooner than work at anything but his art. To women he is half vivisection, half vampire." We wonder if this is true? Are artists ever as ruthless as Tanner asserts they are? It is true that some of them, like Shaw himself, let their mothers earn their living while they worked at their art but this is the exception and not the rule. Tanner insists it is common to the artist man; this we cannot admit because there are many artists who are very careful of those dependent on them. The higher and more civilized a man becomes the more careful he is of those around him. The artist man does desire to express himself as Tanner states but he greatly exaggerates this desire of self-expression. Shaw further maintains that this desire of the artist man's for self-expression results

in a war between the sexes on based dissimilar purposes. The artist-man and the mother woman, the first creating and destroying and the second preserving and perpetuating are shown to be in a state of war. Tanner says: "Of all human struggles there is none so treacherous and remorseless as the struggle between the artist-man and the mother woman". This duel of sex implies a difference between the purpose of the man and the woman so deep that we wonder if there can be any useful cooperation between them. We cannot admit that such rivalry exists. Tanner seems to lose faith in it also when he comments: "Is there a father's heart as well as a mother's". Just for a moment Tanner wonders if man too wishes to create something more important than a picture of a piece of poetry. Because the supreme form of art is the creation of life which is accomplished by the essential union of man and woman, there is no war between the sexes but they are in a state of alliance.

The notion of the Superman is inseparable from the theory of the Life Force because it is the eventual aim of this force. Shaw derived his notion of the Superman from the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche. This doctrine, once discovered by Shaw, captured and held his attention. We may wonder why Shaw believed in Nietzsche's superstition, for superstition is the best word for Nietzsche's theory since it cannot be found to have any sound basis in fact. The breakdown in Shaw's belief in the gradual progress of the human race to higher and better forms of society was followed by his belief in this superstition. He was, up until this time, above all else a progressive. But as he became more aware of the achievements of the ancient world, he ceased to believe in progress. Since Shaw believed the masses were incapable of rising to a higher form of society; he snatched the idea of the Superman. He suddenly and completely became convinced of this theory. Here was the only way society could be perfected, by the eventual evolution of the Superman. According to Nietzsche, the Superman would be a born leader and an aristocrat who would scorn the masses. The process by which the Superman would be produced would be one of Creative Evolution. When Shaw became convinced of this doctrine, he wrote a play to proclaim it. The result is—*Man and Superman*—and in no other play is Shaw more intent on proclaiming his beliefs.

What characteristics will the Superman possess and how will he differ from the ordinary man? From the words of Nietzsche we vaguely learn what he expects of the Superman. "The Superman's first virtues must be uprightness and truthfulness; he must be courageous to the point of hardness and his giving, if he give at all, his charity, if he be charitable, must not be the outcome of pity but the consequences of an impulse generated by a superabundance of power." He adds that this Superman will have a sublime intellect and be free in the sense that he will have the will to be responsible for himself. This demi-god will be a natural leader of man. Nietzsche regards man as very remote from this ideal. He says: "Man is a rope slung between animal and Superman, a rope over an abyss." But he is optimistic and believes that just as the ape ultimately produced the man so the man will ultimately produce the Superman; who is to be an evolution from the higher men of the present day. Nietzsche was a firm believer in evolution in its extreme form and he believed that man would become Superman and he could achieve this goal because he willed it. In his teachings we find repeated and repeated:



"A new will I teach men. Behold, I teach you Superman."

We get glimpses like the one quoted above of what the Superman was to Nietzsche's imagination. But nowhere do we get a clear picture because Nietzsche did not have a clear notion of him. He could give only a vague outline of this being which he hoped but could not prove would someday exist. Unlike most philosophers, Nietzsche is not concerned with the happiness of the greatest number but with the evolution of the Superman. This creation of his imagination would, by his own methods, erase all the ills from society. How many other philosophers wished that such a "miracle" would happen. But they, unlike Nietzsche, did not allow a figment of their imagination to dominate their philosophy.

**Man and Superman**, written by Shaw to proclaim his belief in the theory of the Life Force and the Superman and his conviction that woman is the pursuer of men, is only one of his masterpieces but it is the one which changed the attitude of intellectual people toward him. Previously he had been regarded as a clever and amusing Irishman who poked fun at everything and seemed opposed to all existing laws of morality, religion and politics. Now they obtained a glimpse of the real George Bernard Shaw; the jesting, exaggerative dramatist who opposed many accepted values but firmly believed in the necessity of laws, religions and systems of ethics. Perhaps no better adjectives can be applied to the man who believed that: "Life happy or unhappy, successful or unsuccessful, is extraordinarily interesting."; than **Jesting Apostle**. And perhaps no finer tribute has been paid to Shaw than that of one of his fellow Irishmen Sean O'Casey: "Shaw will shine forth in the cathedral of man's mind a sage standing in God's holy fire as in the gold mosaic of a wall."

—MARY ELAINE TRAINOR '59

### TEEN-TALK

Yeh! the glad laddie  
Toots for his date  
In his dad's caddie  
Which she digs the most.

According to fashion,  
If they're hep at all  
They're rockin' an' rollin'  
An' havin' a ball—  
He in his tan shoes  
And pink shoe laces,  
Polka-dot shirt  
An' goin' places;  
She in skirt and sweater  
Stamped with his letter,  
Bobby socks and saddle shoes,  
An' not a thought of havin' the blues.  
To the shriek of the sax  
and the beat of the drum  
They twirl and jive

'Till they're close to numb.  
They phone each other frequently  
And meet each other after school;  
They teen-talk and sip their coke—  
I mean, these cats are really cool!

But we mustn't ban Cadillacs,  
Tan shoes and bobby socks,  
Teen-talk and the shrieking sax—  
For that's a-what they like!

—BEVERLEY HOWARD '59

### JUSTICE

Justice is a virtue, so they say.  
Each man must have it  
To live life right.

Justice is fairness,  
Justice knows no prejudice,  
Justice knows no selfishness.  
Each man shall have it—must.  
Does he possess it yet?  
But cast thine eye about thee, O Jerusalem,  
and see.  
Oh Lord, 'tis ruin—rebuild.

—M. J. M. '61

### PREMIERE PLUIE DU PRINTEMPS

Une autre fois hier c'était le printemps  
La joie douce d'une nouvelle saison  
Egayait les vieux comme les jeunes enfants  
Car les chauds rayons allaient murir les moissons

C'était une nouvelle métamorphose  
Qui après les longs jours hivernaux  
Venait fondre la neige pour les roses  
Et amenaient des beaux jours chauds

Aujourd'hui il pleut à boire debout  
La pluie tombe avec beaucoup de clapotis  
Sur les sillons gèles ça fait comme des clous  
Mais nous sommes heureux d'entendre ces bruits

En effet partout le ciel est gris  
Le soleil cache par les gros nuages  
C'est plutôt triste pour les petits  
De demeurer tranquilles comme des pages

C'est à ce temps-ci que jeunes et vieux  
Pensent au futur et au passé  
Car ils savent bien qu'il y a un Dieu  
Qui a creé un printemps pour les récompenser

Chantez et sifflez comme les oiseaux du ciel  
Qui après un long voyage aux pays chauds  
Reviennent avec la saison nouvelle  
Pour jouir des jours les plus beaux.

—ANDRE DROLET '62