

who said she liked 'Hamlet' very much; but it was so full of quotations. Had she but known it, she praised not only the play in that remark, but herself as well. For if she knew some of those matchless lines by heart she held within herself a feast for lean intellectual days—like the soul who, because of early training, can remember the Scriptures in some disastrous hour.

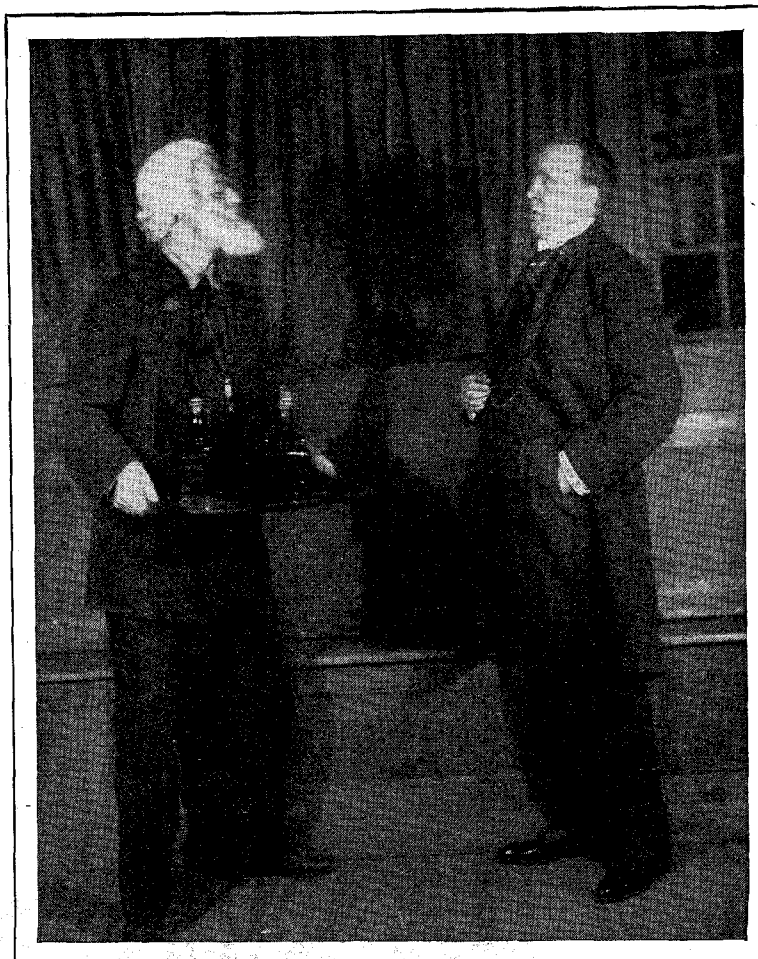
"The fact is that beauty endures, despite our frailties; and it is as inevitable that a work of art returns again and again as that April repeats her green magic year by year. The sordid, the vulgar, the stupid, and the commonplace have their little moment; but somewhere the eternal things go on and the stars are in the heavens, whether we notice them or not. They wait, like all wonderful things, for the extreme experience which forces us to lift our eyes to them. Nothing great ever perishes. Of that I am deeply convinced."

FIREWORKS

"WHAT we want is action. Pep! Zip! Punch!" This, according to a widespread belief, is the monotonous demand of theatrical producers, editors, and publishers engaged in a gigantic conspiracy to keep intelligent plays, articles, and books from a hungry and expectant public. We have more than a smattering of suspicion that this belief has been born of the complaint of writers whose work has failed of recognition beyond the circle of their immediate friends. The plaint that is heard oftenest is the cry that plays with an intellectual interest stand no show of production when pitted against dramas of blood and thunder, and that even when intellectual plays are put upon the stage they fail of popular appreciation. All of which may be just another question of varying estimates of worth. Is the author who condemns the public as a congregation of bores or the public which condemns the author as an unmitigated bore the sounder critic? On the whole, we are inclined to think that the public has the better of the argument. For plays and books do frequently succeed which appeal chiefly to the intellect. The audience which awaits such plays and books is not as extensive as that which pays homage to the sportive Charlie Chaplin, but nevertheless it is not to be sneezed at.

For two months a play of this type has been drawing full houses at the Garrick Theater, in New York City. It is true that the play, "Heartbreak House,"¹

¹ Heartbreak House, By George Bernard Shaw. Brentano's, New York.



CAPTAIN SHOTOVER (ALBERT PERRY) AND HIS GUEST, BOSS MANGAN (DUDLEY DIGGES), IN THE THEATRE GUILD'S PRODUCTION OF "HEARTBREAK HOUSE"

bears the magic stamp of George Bernard Shaw; nevertheless its authorship is not its sole claim to popularity. Of course there are many who go to see Shaw because they are convinced that he represents the latest style in intellectual adornment. There are probably new ones of this type born every minute, but we are convinced that the bulk of the audience of "Heartbreak House" is made up of people who prefer good talk, if it really is good talk, to all the pep, zip, and punch of the latest melodrama.

"Heartbreak House" is emphatically a talky play. Save in the last act when a bomb from an airplane drops off stage and eliminates two members of the cast, the play is all talk from beginning to end. Gathered together in an English country home the presiding deity of which is a retired sea captain (who has trafficked with the devil in his youth) is a conglomerate group which at Shaw's dictation proceeds to rend the world limb from limb. After the pieces have been strewn over the stage for three acts, the play, according to the familiar Shaw precedent, just stops. No one even attempts to sweep up the remains.

As those who read the preface to

"Heartbreak House" in its published version know, Mr. Shaw withheld this play from the footlights during the war for the reason that "comedy, though sorely tempted, had to be loyally silent." But we suspect that the war would have still gone on to its conclusion even if "Heartbreak House" had been presented. We feel that Mr. Shaw in his consideration for the niceties of war-time etiquette may have overestimated the effect which his utterances would have upon the popular mind. Of course such an error in judgment would be an unusual one for Mr. Shaw to make. For he has so consistently erred upon the side of modesty, when it came to the judgment of his own writings, that perhaps we do him an injustice when we impute to him the fear that any work of his could influence popular opinion.

Whatever the truth of the matter may be, we are sure that those who have witnessed "Heartbreak House" at the Garrick have not left the theater with any feeling that the pillars of society were tumbling about their heads. We suspect that most of them went away with this thought uppermost in their minds: "What wonderful fireworks!"

Will this conclusion satisfy or disappoint G. B. S.?

CURRENT EVENTS ILLUSTRATED



RINGING DOWN THE CURTAIN ON A GREAT INTERNATIONAL DRAMA

The work for American soldiers in France during the European war which was carried on through the Paris headquarters of the Y. M. C. A. cost nearly fifty million dollars. Here were housed bureaus for purchase, manufacture, building, and transportation; for the distribution of magazines and newspapers; for the administration of religious work; and for the direction of entertainment of various kinds. In the Paris headquarters was carried on that vast business by which France was dotted from Bordeaux to Coblenz, from Havre to Cannes, with huts for the American soldiers. What this work accomplished is dramatically described in a remarkable book called "That Damn Y," by Miss Katherine Mayo, already reviewed in The Outlook and four chapters of which first appeared in its columns. The above illustration shows the final closing of these Paris headquarters of the Y. The man locking the door is Mr. F. A. Jackson, the Controller of the European Department of the New York Life Insurance Company, who has been a resident of Paris for many years. In connection with his own absorbing business he volunteered as a Y worker in Paris in November, 1917, and served as chairman of the Finance Committee until the close of the work. His companion in this final and simple but dramatic ceremony is Mr. W. C. Hill, an American business man who volunteered as a Y worker and served with Mr. Jackson in the finance department of the Y until the war ended.