

Inaugural Parade

(Continued from preceding page)

Or does it?
How long ago was it
That Lincoln issued his proclamation
Guaranteeing emancipation
To all the slaves, whatever their breed,
Whatever their color, or race, or creed?
How long ago was it? How long—O Lord?

But here comes Garner, riding in a Ford!
John Nance Garner, from the land of cotton,
Now is the Man who is called "Forgotten."
(But cheer up, Jackie, and don't you cry,
Though lonely's the road that you must travel,
One can't live forever in the public eye—
So run on home and play with your gavel.)

The Ides of March are dank and chill
The Unknown Soldier's unknown still,
But stride on, brothers—on and on—
Up the slopes of Capitol hill.

And—look—who's—here!
Here comes Hearst!
Setting up a cheer for America First!
Setting up a sneer at the starving foreigner
(Let him pull his belt in another notch)
Old Uncle Sam is his own best coroner—
So bye, bye, brotherhood!
Hello, suicide!
Buy, Buy American—including Scotch!

And here comes Senator Hiram Johnson
Armed with a ladle to dish the gravy;
And several La Follettes from Wisconsin;
And Senator Hale for the Biggest Navy;
And here is Citizen Al Smith, toting
Purple scars from an ancient fight—
Grinning, we hope, the while he's quoting
Tilden's slogan: "I'd rather be right!"
Here's James A. Farley and James A. Foley;
Clarence True Wilson, and Picketts (Deets);
Privy Councillors Howe and Moley,
Figuring out the gate receipts;
Senators Watson, Smoot and Moses
Each adorned with a welcome "Ex-";
And here come Amazons, strewing roses—
The Sabine women, pride of their sex.

Give them a cheer for what they've done,

Another cheer from the crowded stand
For Oklahoma's Indian Band;
For Senators McAdoo, Walsh, and Norris;
Mayor O'Brien, quoting Horace;
Governors Ritchie, Lehman, Cross;
Sauce for the gander, apple sauce
For all the limping ducks that pass;
Governor Ely, Carter Glass;
Huey Long with galloping tongue;
Owen D. and Tammany Young;
Admiral Grayson, Major Domo;
Walter Lippmann, sapient homo;
Bishop Cannon, the Methodist Pope;
Bernard Baruch and Herbert Swope;
Eddie Dowling, Winfield Sheehan;
Many and many a European
Representing the world's emporia,
Looking about for moratoria,
Wondering what the new deal means . . .
Infantry, cavalry, tanks, marines. . .

But where's the army of the unemployed?
One would think they'd be overjoyed
To join this pageant of renown—
These festive rites. . .

But—hold!
Sit down!
Yes—meaning you!
Sit down in front!
Here come the bearers of the terrible brunt
One incoming—the other out-going.
Which is the luckier?
There's no way of knowing.
But though it's a hollow platitude
To speak of a nation's gratitude,
The mob today should be nothing loath
To offer plenty of same to both.

To you, Lord Hoover—we would mention things more relevant
To peace of mind than all their votes or vetoes;
There's climate that is bracing and benevolent
Twixt Palo Alto's hills and Sausalito's,
Where one may calmly dwell, relieved of onus,
Watching in eastern skies the new Aurora—
Deaf to the shrill demands for Beer or Bonus—
Deaf—best of all!—to belchings out of Borah. . .
So bless the vengeful voters who evicted you,
Discard the hairy shirt that has afflicted you,
And find the solace that detachment brings
To those who once were presidents and kings.
And you, Mr. Roosevelt—our nation-wide selection—

We know that smiles of confidence enwreath
Your cheering face. Each rotogravure section
Reveals that you have Cousin Teddy's teeth;
But are we sure that you have fixed your eyes on
A goal beyond the politician's ken?
Have you the will to reach the far horizon
Where rest the hopes of men?

We know not now, but as you gird your loins,
We'll think about the motto on our coins—
And leave the full solution of your mystery
To that relentless epic poet, History.

* * *

Thus ends the parade.
So gather 'round, pards,
The new deal is made:
The pot's on the table,
There's gold and there's hope in it.
Pick up your cards,
There's a game to be played—
Is anyone able
To open it?

Remembering, as you're betting, the exact
Terms of every covenant and pact—
Remembering all the little fears that probe
Into the heart of this bewildered globe—
Remembering all the howitzers and sabres
With which men show their feelings for their neighbors—
Knowing it's not yet over, over there—
Breathing, perhaps, one brief but timely prayer:
God save our planet!

Hard Luck Heroes

STUDIES IN SUBLIME FAILURE. By SHANE LESLIE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1933. \$3.75.

Reviewed by CLARENCE DAY

GREAT failures are even more exciting than most great successes. This book has five such dramas in it. The heroes are Cardinal Newman; Parnell, "the uncrowned King of Ireland"; Coventry Patmore, the poet; Lord Curzon; and that likable and honest but unreliable crank, Moreton Frewen.

over and over in pocket, for he continually led them astray. He was so sincere, fluent, and plausible that they forgot he was wild-eyed. His nickname was Mortal Ruin. Even in projects where he might have made millions, he wasn't thorough—he didn't nail a deal down.

Lord Curzon was a mixture. He was humorous about himself, and he put up a manful fight every day of his life against pain. (Curvature of the spine.) But he was vain and conceited, and though he was in many ways a great man, he wasn't as great as he thought. The account of his attempts to handle Kitchener is as good

here with the portraits. Some of his words smell of mothballs: "minglement," "cephalophorous," "papaverous," "illative." And he likes to say simple things in a glittering way. He is phrasey.

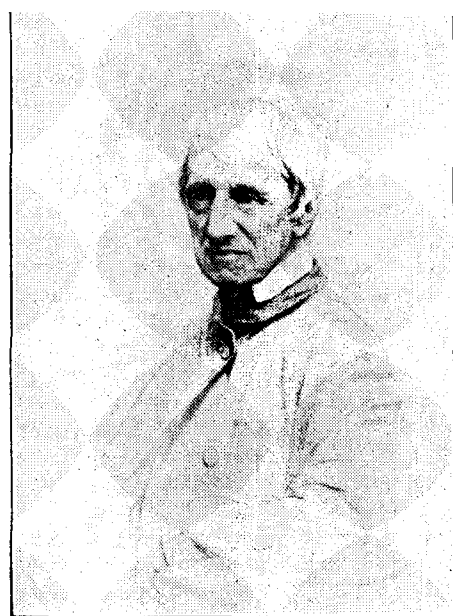
On the other hand he knows how to choose subjects. He is an artist at that. And he tells his five stories dramatically. There is plenty of fun and excitement.

In the portrait of Cardinal Newman, he is not at his best. There is too much theology in it. Leslie has left a lot out, but he might have done more weeding still. He makes Newman's character, however, more interesting than ever. Newman was "wiry and ascetic," he says, and a grim and obstinate fighter. He was sentimental, fussy, and miserable. Also he burst into tears more than most men. In fact he cried quite a lot. But he wasn't hysterical. When he had a good cry, it cleared up his brain. It was like taking snuff.

Moreton Frewen packed his life higgledy-piggledy full of exploits and ventures. The more he traveled the more new ideas he got, and he suffered from each one like a sunstroke. Everywhere he went he lost money. He was a henchman of William Jennings Bryan, and a great advocate of bimetalism. He lived in the Far East, he bought mines; he worked for the freedom of Ireland. He had a ranch in Wyoming in the days when the West was a paradise for sportsmen, it was so full of game, and many of Frewen's English friends visited him for the shooting. Sir Maurice de Bunsen, however, stalked and shot, one day, Frewen's only milch cow, thinking it was a buffalo. It did look a bit thin for a buffalo, he said, but he was excited.

Most of Frewen's life, in spite of all his financial disappointments, seemed happy. He was always looking ahead, always hoping. And he had many friends. But his brain was too jiggetty. He was chock full of schemes to make money. If he had only gone a bit slow he might have had the fun at times of succeeding.

To be sure he had fun enough. But his friends and associates didn't. They suffered



CARDINAL NEWMAN.

Coventry Patmore is treated with admiration and respect but fun too. Shane Leslie never is mean to him, but he doesn't deny he was comic. Patmore was very religious, and as a married man he was also fond of sexual intercourse. He tried to combine these two things. Leslie explains how he did it. But in all his explaining Leslie won't use the term "sexual intercourse." He calls it "the act of marriage-hood," "the act of fruition between men and women," "the way of a man with a maid." Genteel fig-leaves.

The Marie Harriman Gallery announces the "Poésies" of Mallarmé, with thirty original etchings by Henri-Matisse, the whole done in the grand manner. There will be ninety-five copies on Arches paper at \$400, twenty-five copies on Japanese vellum at \$700, and five copies (with extra etchings and an original drawing) at \$1,200. It is a bit difficult to reconcile such *objets d'art* with book publishing.

Shaw the Black Girl

(Continued from first page)

Christian church and civilization is not what most readers would be inclined at this date to dally over in any form. The majority will certainly prefer a dialogue to an essay, and if a minority diverges, it will probably do so on the ground that the dialogue is only the familiar monologue broken up into speeches. For the historic paradox of Shaw may well prove to be that anyone so unwilling to hold his characters to authentic self-expression should ever have selected in the first place the medium of dramatic writing, for which such expression is the crime committed. After just a few words of these "Adventures" you find that the black girl is not a black girl but a bright and prankish white and older boy named Bernard with a gift of talk, and that this boy is all the other characters as well.

Here is a daughter of the wild who by merely learning to read the Bible is able to go about her inquiries on the existing order like any old-time heckler among the Fabians. It is true that she has also observed the conduct of white settlers; but to offset this she has been in the hands of a lady missionary. She certainly did not learn rebellion against the universe from her. The lady missionary, flatteringly described in at least one particular as having run away from her lovers—such of them as have not already run away from her—disappears from the second page of the book and is never heard of after. But it was her work, and no wonder, which started the black girl off through the jungle to find a more likely God. An exhilarating contrast presents itself here between the Shaw reaction to the missionary mind and the Sylvia Townsend Warner handling of it in "Mr. Fortune's Maggot."

Plunging with her knoberry, if you know what that is, through the African forest, the black girl (who is Bernard) meets and confounds Noah's God, Job's God, the young teacher Ecclesiastes, Micah the prophet, a scientist called myop to emphasize what he does not see, a Roman legionary—this incident is pretty bad—a Jew, an Arab, a wood carver, an Irish socialist, and an old man cultivating his garden (all of whom are Bernard). You can see the direction the talk would take, particularly when it comes to economic nationalism and blood sacrifice; the arraignment in the latter case ranges from vivisection, with the egregious token of a dog's saliva, to crucifixion and the categorical cross.

None of the figures consulted is competent to explain a missionary God. Nor, for that matter, any God. In the end what



ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE LITTLE BLACK GIRL."

Shaw calls "dirty water theology"—the failure of the church to throw out its less civilized teachings as more civilized ones trickle in—has proved too much for the black girl. When God, as is customary, is stated to be love, "she has to point out that love is not enough (like Edith Cavell making the same statement about patriotism), and that it is wiser to take Voltaire's advice by cultivating her garden and bring-

ing up her pickaninnies"—nonchalantly consigned by Shaw to miscegenation through emergency use of the socialist Irishman—"than to spend her life imagining that she can find a complete explanation of the universe by laying about her with a knoberry." Here is a conclusion as satirical, as unreasonably soothing, as a radio sign-off. Let us leave the philosopher compromising on and in his garden. Thank God for a garden. I'm very sure God walks in mine. *Il faut cultiver le jardin.* "The rest you had better leave to Him."

As you read these "Adventures" you do not wait for the mention of Voltaire to think of him. They order this matter of satire better in France. They order it better, as a matter of fact, in England.

"Why did you make the monkeys so ugly and the birds so pretty?"
"Why shouldn't I?" said the old gentleman. "Answer me that."

If Edward Dodson had gone along in this manner, whatever would have become of Alice, answer me that? There are other painful passages. That pun, "I am not a pickaninny nor even a grown up ninny." And that pun about going to the dogs.

But commonly the substance is finer, and there is always a prancing drive in the prose, a ringing clip to it. It is straightforward, and wilful, as in the letters to Ellen Terry. "Why not our mother?" demands the black girl, whose parental memories make the Father image most unwinning. "Well, let us drop the family. It is only a metaphor," said the conjurer. "It is a way of saying love one another: that is all. Love them that hate you. Bless them that curse you. Never forget that two blacks do not make a white."

The whole fantasia will confirm those who still find Shaw brightly destructive, and those who find him provocative only of the past. The detractors will point to the fanciful fifties, when the provincial preacher was wont to put his sermons in the form of Conversations with the Devil by way of keeping the congregation in its seat. If the congregation prefers a sermon straight, the essay is the stuff. Its case is brilliantly put. It gives the neatest successive portraits of the Biblical deity. It says that Micah "raised the conception of God to the highest point it has ever attained." It says that Paul is to blame not alone for founding the church, after Jesus "had allowed Peter to persuade him that he was the Messiah," but for founding it with reversion to the God of Noah. In fact, Jesus chose all his disciples "unwisely"; we are only just now beginning to rescue Christ's advanced thought "from the mess the apostles and their successors made of it." And it touches the Shaw hat to some of the rescue men, the modern translators of the Bible concerning whose reward Henry Mencken, acting on behalf of the poetry of the King James version, once asked if a hundred million centuries in hell would be enough. All told, the sermon is quite a superb one in the modern manner, but did Shaw really think its material was new? Many an orthodox mother would be glad to tell him that it is exactly what has been corrupting young Jack and Jill for years now over the radio on Sunday afternoons.

Rationalists who have early been Christians have as a rule some difficulty in dismissing the faith they have outgrown. It never quite lets them off the search for God. Rationalists who have never been Christians have a difficulty not unlike it. As the search for God becomes God, so does the same search dropped or unbegun. "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" Shaw has the black girl say in a speech kept free from sentiment, kept hard. More than once in reading the first part of her *Adventures* I found myself reflecting, How little trouble Handel had with all this. Later, in the essay, and this may be a point of test for the two-part method, there was Shaw explicitly talking of the Messiah. No, it will probably not be done better than Handel did it—"If with all your hearts ye truly seek me, ye shall ever surely find me,"—leading to the more than mortal imagining of these words the incontrovertible affirmation of music. Against it can be brought no more than the force of a line, Shaw's own and in this book—English prose that has its root in the soil of Malory: "God be with you if

you can find Him. He is not with me." We have called this a conservative book. It has, however, a revolutionary phase, and we are determined to say what that is. As to current modes of punctuation in English, about all anyone can do is what the matchless Fowler calls "welter in the existing chaos." Yesterday I recoiled from a volume of American short stories because they were flea-bitten with commas. Today in this British text of Shaw's no comma can be found fore or aft the quotation mark, and again comes the recoil.

"Before you go" said the black girl "tell me. . ."

"Stuff, girl!" said the lady. . .

"Hi! you there" cried one of the ladies.

Yet compare these:

"And your wives?" . . .

"Pooh!" said the sculptor. . .

We protest the granting of punctuation to Pooh and wives and denying it to go just because go rates a comma. What



ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE LITTLE BLACK GIRL."

have commas committed against the direct discourse of Shaw that he should order what must have been a frantic compositor to yank them all out? No, really, this will not do. To the eye in pain from these ragged spaces the horrid image comes of an old man who has his tongue in his cheek merely to avoid catching it in his gums.

There is also the resurrection of the colon, monumentally reintroduced about two years ago by Pearl Buck, who leaves out commas everywhere except where Mr. Shaw does. Mrs. Buck thrust the colon away from its only indispensable place—the place where a sentence is about to conclude with direct discourse, and the author wishes the quoted part to carry down into a separate paragraph—and with utmost strangeness used a comma instead. It was one of the ten thousand times ten thousand commas which people say she never puts in where they belong. The Buck comma in or out was disturbing, but it was also the right stop to pull, in the same sense that it was said of Henry James that "his prose, chanted to his punctuation, would serve as well as a mass in D major." There is no such rhythmic urge in the adoration of the colon, and even of the semicolon, by Mr. Shaw, who interrupts the swiftest of journalistic prose to punctuate a man who is merely being spoken to as if he were being corresponded with. "Doctor: will you see to poor Miss Fitzjones' cerebellum?" And this in a context of such advanced orthography as couldnt, havnt, cant, dont.

So what is the question?

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make punctuation (sic) mean different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

Maybe what literature needs is more books that nothing but punctuation is the matter with. Then we could all concentrate and watch it improve.

From the press of Helen Gentry, San Francisco, comes a small nicely printed reprint of H. L. Koopman's "Exceptions to the Rule of Legibility," which first appeared in the *Printing Art*.

A Many-sided Genius

BERNARD SHAW: Playboy and Prophet.
By ARCHIBALD HENDERSON. New York:
D. Appleton & Co. 1932. \$7.50.

Reviewed by TEMPLE SCOTT

PROFESSOR HENDERSON is to be congratulated on his accomplishment of this, his second and up-to-date, panoramic presentation of the life and literary adventures of Bernard Shaw. With a truly Boswellian devotion to his hero he dedicated himself to this task for twenty-five years, and now that the task is done, he may well say that it is well done. He has been ably assisted in his work by Bernard Shaw himself, so that this "authorized" biography may, in some parts, be read as autobiography. But Professor Henderson has so deftly embodied the material Shaw contributed that the flow of the diverting tale, so far from being interrupted, is made more sportive and lively. Shaw can be safely trusted to see to that. We have but one small fault to find with the narrative—it overlaps and backwaters in several chapters; for in dealing with Shaw as socialist and dramatist Dr. Henderson, at times, tells the same story twice, and these sections read as if they had been taken from essays written unrelated to the biography itself and then inserted in it without the joints being carefully soldered.

We now have an amply documented and authorized biography of Bernard Shaw in all the activities of his many-sided genius—as novelist, musical and dramatic critic, as economist, socialist, dramatist, humanitarian, and philosopher. We can now accompany him in his career from his boyhood and nonage to his manhood and fully ripened old age, and we are permitted to draw our own conclusions, for Dr. Henderson wisely refrains from drawing any of his own. It is true he frankly acknowledges his devout reverence for Shaw, but such devotion is a purely personal expression, and he does not impose it on his readers in set terms. He refrains from any critical estimate, since his evident purpose, in writing this biography was to present a colorful picture of a living man in whom the world is curiously interested and whom it has taken no little delight to acclaim and honor.

Dr. Henderson, in his portrayal of Shaw, has attempted to paint a composite portrait of a "playboy and prophet"—a conjunction of personalities certain to arouse the curiosity of the general reader. The playboy, or the jester, stands out in this portrait in all the attractive colors natural to the subject, and we see Shaw in every play of his consummate wit, humor, satire, and irony. But the prophet is veiled and indistinct. It would seem as if Dr. Henderson had used up all the attractive colors on his palette on the playboy. Yet there has been a prophet, for his voice was once quite distinctly heard, even if it reached us as one crying in the wilderness. The disciple of Ibsen, Henry George, and Karl Marx and the Fabian Socialist made no little stir at one time. What has become of him? The question is not an impertinent one, and it is quite probable that a future historian of Shaw and his age will also ask it, and perhaps answer it in terms of a denial of the prophet's assumption. For a prophet is one who is consumed by one idea, and Shaw is a man of many ideas.

A prophet is an idealist and so is Shaw, but Shaw's idealism is affected by the creative artist in him which compels him to dramatize his ideas rather than to realize them. A prophet is so impassioned by his one idea that he is ready to lose the whole world for it. Shaw is also impassioned, but his passion is for the play of his many ideas, and in this he has been so successful that instead of losing the whole world he has gained it. In gaining the world the prophet has disappeared, possibly he has been translated into the heaven of English respectability as were his Fabian friends of the late English Labor Government. But the incomparable man of letters is still with us, and we shall perhaps more properly appreciate this highly gifted being if we refrain from a worship of him "this side idolatry" and enjoy the diversely enchanting art with which he has reflected the life of his period.