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S. No 3 B.A.Part-3 English (Hons) Topic Life of G B Shaw Dr Umesh Prasad Singh, Assistant Prof of English, D. B. College Contact No 7250460920, Email-ID [drumeshsingh131@gmail.com](mailto:drumeshsingh131@gmail.com)

Life of Bernard Shaw.

George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1856. His father, George Carr was a minor official in the Dublin Law Court, who retired on a small pension and went into business as a corn merchant but proved unsuccessful. He was incapable of earning sufficient money .He had three children George Bernard Shaw and his two sisters. Shaw's mother was a singer of high order, so Shaw learned music from her. When Shaw was sixteen years old, his mother and sisters came to London to settle permanently there. She earned her living by giving lessons and public performances of music.

After his school education, Shaw worked as a clerk-cum-cashier, in a Land Agent's Office. Finding his father incapable of controlling his family, and his mother more devoted to music than to her children, he was disappointed with his parents. This crisis in family affairs had a profound impact on the playwright's mind. He developed an extraordinary way of thinking which enabled him to look upon mankind its custom and convention.

Shaw inherited his love for music from his mother. This made him a music critic of the journal called *The Star*. Then he made his mark as a critic of music and a reviewer of plays. As a critic of the dramas he is still remembered for his contribution to *The Saturday Review*. We find the effect of music in his dramatic works; even his long speeches are rhythmical and musical. About ten years in London, Shaw had to rely mainly, upon his mother for food and lodging. During these years he was making his career. His personality was taking a shape. Finally, he became interested in public causes and political affairs. He joined a political party and addressed public meetings. One day in September 1884 he heard a lecture of an American

economist, Henry George. That lecture changed the mind of Bernard Shaw. He at once turned towards socialism. He joined the Fabian Society. The Fabian Society wanted to bring about a gradual revolutionary change from Capitalism to Socialism. They had a powerful influence on British Political life during the next forty or fifty years.

As a socialist Bernard Shaw first believed that the condition of the civilized society can be changed by legislation aiming at equality. But as he grew older, his trust for equality grew lesser. He came to believe that legislation was not enough for making a good society. The making of good society requires making of good men and women. He was an iconoclast. He also left the Christian religion as it was misused by churches. He believed in reason, and not in any religious faith. He was influenced by Shelley. He loved animals as his fellow creatures, so he became vegetarian. He lived sacred personal life. He ate no flesh, drank no alcohol, and smoked no tobacco. He insisted on the view that man should leave the place better than he had got it.

Politics and journalism occupied Bernard Shaw until 1898. When he reached forty-two he turned to creative writings. In his creative writings he beautifully discussed the social, religious and political problems of the time. He discussed about the public affairs which were concerned with the lives of a large number of people. In his writings he attacked the prevailing aristocracy, snobbery, hypocrisy. In all his writings he has propagated his new ideas.

Shaw was not only a playwright, but also a thinker and a philosopher. He opposed the Darwin's view of the survival of the fittest, which means the killing of the weak by stronger and argued that the fittest are those who survive by superior intelligence and by the exercise of the will power. If such people came to rule there would be a kingdom of wisdom and virtue and war would vanish from the face of the earth.

Shaw married Miss Charlotte in 1898. In 1925 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. He died in 1950. At the end of his life, he was fabulously rich. He was childless. He left all his money in a society for the standardization of English pronunciation.