Captains at the Helm: Shaw's Industrialist 'Heroes'

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Abstract

The thesis "Captains at the Helm: Shaw's Industrialist 'Heroes'" attempts to isolate and analyse the concept of the Captain of Industry in Bernard Shaw's essays and drama. The discussion begins with an explication of the social philosophy of Thomas Carlyle (Past and Present and Latter-Day Pamphlets) and John Ruskin (Unto This Last and The Political Economy of Art) as it pertains to leadership and the state of society, or, in particular, to the proper/improper management of capital, industry, and labour. While determining the character and role of Carlyle's and Ruskin's ideal industrial managers—the Captain of Industry and Pilot of State, respectively—the discussion parallels and contrasts these figures with Shaw's own views on the subject, especially concerning his definitive piece of political economy, The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism, Capitalism, Sovietism, and Fascism.

The main scope of the thesis is to then explore the nature of Shaw's industrialists, as found in his drama, and critique their characteristics and activities in part according to the schema of industrial management proposed by Carlyle and Ruskin, but principally according to Shaw's own philosophies about social evolution, life purpose, and economies in general. Though Shaw never directly states his own conception of the Captain of Industry, this paper attempts to posit an approximate type. The process of doing so involves a composite sketch drawn from the various capitalists and business people appearing in Shaw's drama, in which characters are compared and contrasted so that a Captain of Industry might be discerned as it develops from this collection of business people. The characters analysed are, as they appear in the order of the discussion, Epifania Fitzfassenden in The Millionairess, Henry Bossborn in Why She
Would Not, Boss Mangan in *Heartbreak House*, Tom Broadbent in *John Bull's Other Island*, and Andrew Undershaft in *Major Barbara*.

As well, the thesis provides biographical and citational appendices on the German armament manufacturer Alfred Krupp and the American steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie, with special notice put upon Carnegie's business philosophies in his collections of essays, *The Gospel of Wealth* and *The Empire of Business*. 
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If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free; if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed.

For what are riches, empire, pow’r,
But larger means to gratify the will?

A rich person ought to have a strong stomach.
   -Walt Whitman, *Collect,* p. 324.
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Prefatory Chart

Writing in the mid nineteenth-century, Thomas Carlyle called for a new saviour for society who would organise the workers of England and help redirect the powers of state towards the creation of a proper society. With this idea, he coined the term “Captains of Industry.” As Europe rushed towards industrialisation, powerful leaders of business became new representatives of power and wealth, and took on – or were given – the token title of Captains of Industry. However, the designation was often dissociated from the chivalry Carlyle envisioned in his Captains, and through Socialism, came to adopt even negative connotations. In his drama, Bernard Shaw does not directly address the advent of Carlylean Captains of Industry, but he most certainly takes particular interest in rich and powerful capitalists. My discussion seeks to analyse Shaw’s ‘Captains of Industry,’ comparing them to the Carlylean model and Shaw’s own social critique.

For each play selected, three criteria are being applied in the analysis of each Captain of Industry character and the consequences of their work: the professional/industrial, the existential, the social/moral. The first qualification that each character must meet pertains to the very definition of the Captain of Industry: a person who manages—and preferably owns—a large business, commonly a mill, foundry, refinery, factory, or any other workshop of heavy industry. Andrew Carnegie, a veritable Captain of Industry himself, provides some useful parameters of discernment: “A man to be in business must be at least part owner of the enterprise which he manages . . . and be . . . chiefly dependent for his revenues . . . upon its profits” (GOW viii). The Captain of Industry is at times conflated with the financial side of business, but in my choice of
characters, I have weighed their involvement with the production aspect of industrial works and their organisation of labour against their management of capital alone. The reason for doing so has less to do with purism itself, since the directorship of industry actually has a moral or honourable standing in the writing of Carlyle and Ruskin, and holds a different degree of significance with Shaw.

The shades of difference between industry, trade, investment, and speculation, vary from critic to critic. Carlyle, who coined the term “Captain of Industry,” places great importance on the figure as a chivalrous leader of labour, and disdained the ‘moneychangers’ of the cash nexus. Ruskin spoke both to merchants, investors, and manufacturers when he charged his “Pilots of State” with the duty to conduct their business on moral grounds. His ideal captain/pilot can be called the “gentleman capitalist.” Shaw has no specific description for a Captain of Industry in his drama, prefaces, or social criticism. Part of my task will be to patch together a composite sketch that might characterise Shaw’s ideal businessperson had he created such a type. My sources range from the dramatic characters themselves to Shaw’s political economy to the traditional influences of Carlyle and Ruskin.

There is one element in Shaw’s boss characters that set them apart from the conceptions of the two Victorian social philosophers: their vitality. This component of their being relates to Shaw’s metabiological philosophy of Creative Evolution and the will of the Life Force. I do not actively pursue a deep analysis into this Shavian ‘religion,’ but I do draw from the characters’ surface details and their general function in Shaw’s understanding of history and reality. The remarkable energy that drives some of these characters connects them with the superman model envisioned in Man and
Superman, although I have chosen to emphasise the "unreasonable man" described in the play’s fictional appendix, “The Revolutionist’s Handbook.” On top of their physical heartiness, their vigour acts as an inspiring or dominating will that often represents progressive forces of economies, history, or evolution in general. This ability, of sorts, brings with it both deficits and benefits, which I will endeavour to explain in the context of each play. Overall, the vitality of Shaw’s Captains of Industry could also be thought to represent the powerful forces associated with productive enterprise, manufacture, and masses of labourers. Both Carlyle and Shaw emphasise this ‘heroic,’ masculine side of these master builders of society.

Developing from industry’s power in and, at times, over society are the moral and greater economic factors of controlling larger degrees of material and human resources. The Captain of Industry’s role in a nation’s economy and its communal well being cannot be adequately described under this prefatory section. Suffice it to say that Carlyle and Ruskin placed a strong moral imperative upon their leaders of commerce and labour. They must act as conscientious father figures for a misguided people struggling with an irresponsible economic system based upon the amoral principles of laissez-faire. Shaw’s opinion about the social and moral duties of rich capitalists are not so noble, since he views the issue with the eyes of a pragmatist. I do not mean that Shaw does not abhor suffering brought about by the socio-economic disparities in money and power; he strongly critiques the actions of exploitative tyrants in business, politics, or any position of authority. The moral and social responsibilities of Shaw’s Captains of Industry become a complex watershed of counterbalancing values as we try to untangle judgements based upon compassion and tradition from civilisation’s survival instinct,
that which advances us technologically and possibly intellectually. The Shavian
Captain can be slippery when we try to grasp the concept as a purely negative or positive
being, perhaps because such an exercise of judgement flows contrary to Shaw’s system
of thought.

There are many shades of value to these characters, but comparing them against
other dramatis personae often proves the best way to determine what type of opinion
Shaw expects us to have about these industrialists. Except for Epifania of The
Millionairess and Bossborn of Why She Would Not, with each play chosen, I focus on the
dialectical interplay between a trinitarian paradigm of characters; however, this does not
exclude other dialectical (or sometimes only comparative) dualities that emerge from
and between each play. The trinity often involves the competing poles of materialism,
spiritualism, and intellectualism, although I have also imagined a metaphorical trinity
structured as captain, first mate/crew, and compass. The necessity of the dialectical
interplay was key in my decision to exclude the many industrialists or eminent capitalists
that Shaw writes into many of his plays.

The characters and plays I will be analysing in depth are Epifania Fitzfassenden
in The Millionairess (1935), Henry Bossborn in Why She Would Not (1949), Boss
Mangan in Heartbreak House (1919), Tom Broadbent in John Bull’s Other Island
(1904), and Andrew Undershaft in Major Barbara (1905). These characters are not the
only industrialists, capitalists, and/or employers of Shaw’s drama. A number of others
are found in his plays, and though I do not cover them in my discussion, I would like here
to at least acknowledge their existence: Sartorius in Widowers’ Houses (1892), Mrs.
Warren in Mrs. Warren’s Profession (1893), Burgess from Candida (1893), Mr. Malone
in *Man and Superman* (1903), Tarleton in *Misalliance* (1910), and Old Bill Buoyant in *Buoyant Billions* (1947).

My first section, “Plotting a Course: Industry and Society from Carlyle to Shaw,” functions as a general introduction to Victorian and Edwardian attitudes about capitalism and great capitalists. I do not attempt a full cultural study of the periods, but have rather focused my survey around the works of Thomas Carlyle: *Past and Present* (1843), *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850), and John Ruskin: *The Political Economy of Art* (1857), “Essays on Political Economy” (1862), *Unto This Last* (1862). These two social philosophers held a considerable degree of influence over Nineteenth Century beliefs about moral duty, the state of society, and the sublime form of political economy. Though one cannot propose a direct linkage of Carlyle and Ruskin to Shaw’s *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Socialism, Capitalism, Sovietism, and Fascism* (1928), the crossovers are considerable enough to warrant some comparison. Using *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide*, the definitive text on Shaw’s political economy, and “Preface on Bosses” (1935) from *The Millionairess*, I then plot out Shaw’s views on industrial employers and his explanation of powerful leaders found in all forms of organisations.

Section two, “An Interlude upon the ‘Unreasonable [Person]’—Make Way or Make It My Way: Epifania and Bossborn on Full Steam Ahead,” departs from the last section’s mention of Shaw’s “unreasonable man.” The purpose of the brief analysis of these two plays *The Millionairess* (1935) and *Why She Would Not* (1950) is to touch upon the characteristics of the born boss and the effects he/she has upon social structure. I name this section an interlude because it functions more as an illustrative aside that further helps to draw out the procession of my analysis in the following sections. The
brevity of this part also reflects the typification of Epifania Fitzfassenden and Henry Bossborn as agents of the Life Force. They and the plays they are found in lack the depth of character and dialectical play that can be found in my other selections.

Section three, "Heartbreak House—Phantasm Captains, Drifting Skippers, and Mangan’s Wreck," looks at Alfred “Boss” Mangan, the only Captain of Industry in all of Shaw’s drama. I say this somewhat facetiously because Mangan is only a hollow shell of this Carlylean champion. He represents what I would call “the stage capitalist,” an ironic depiction of the stereotypes of powerful capitalists: a cowardly bully disguised as the enterprising businessman. I begin with Heartbreak House because it is the furthest from any true representation of captaincy, even though it is the most preoccupied with the subject.

Section four, "John Bull’s Other Island—Buoyant but Brainless: The Unsinkable Broadbent and His Unnavigated Success," introduces Tom Broadbent, an affable civil engineer. Though this play intends to address the issue of Irish and English national temperaments, elements of the business world are brought out for consideration as we witness a collision of Irish tradition and English efficiency, of dreaming and doing. What connects Broadbent to the Captain of Industry ideal is mostly his force of character. His profession touches upon industry and building, but his vigour most clearly adds to our understanding of the Shavian Captain.

Section five, "Major Barbara—Scrapping Old Capitalism and Refitting a New Ship of State," Major Barbara (1905) focuses on the most perplexing and powerful of Shaw’s industrialists. The munitions maker and armament manufacturer Andrew Undershaft represents almost all the qualities that one might imagine compose Shaw’s
Captain of Industry: vigour, money, management of labour, and social vision.

Problematising his 'idol status' are the many conscious contradictions within his ethic, or gospel (he is not a hypocrite, however). The culmination of the Captain figure occurs as Undershaft merges his business (so to speak) with his daughter Barbara, a salvationist, and her fiancé Aldolphus Cusins, a teacher of Greek. I label each respectively an industrial Captain, a spiritual Captain, and a public Captain; the combination of all three being the nearest creation of the Carlylean Captain of Industry.

Following my conclusion, "Closing the Captain's Log: Some Concluding Thoughts," I have included two appendices to provide examples of once living Captains of Industry: Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) and Alfred Krupp (1812-1887). Both men are most similar to Undershaft and their professional lives exemplify the general representation of business themes in *Major Barbara*. As well, I provide selections from Carnegie’s *The Gospel of Wealth* (1900) and *The Empire of Business* (1902) to further illustrate late Victorian business philosophies (Carnegie did stand apart, though, both as an American and in his opinions). The career and character of Alfred Krupp parallel with many of the issues I will be discussing. As a factory-owner who held strict control over his workers, Krupp makes an interesting – though discouraging – example of how a real-life Captain of Industry might distinguish himself.
Section One

Plotting a Course: Industry and Society from Carlyle to Shaw

Found on pages at the very centre of Thomas Carlyle’s *Past and Present* (1843), in the second chapter of its third book, “The Modern Worker,” we can read a crucial proclamation of this influential text. After sternly declaring that England’s archetypal Hell has been replaced by the fear of failing to succeed,\(^1\) to gain money and fame, he states:

> But indeed this Hell belongs naturally to the Gospel of Mammonism, which also has its corresponding Heaven. For there is one reality among so many Phantasms; about one thing we are so entirely in earnest: The making of money. Working Mammonism does divide the world with the idle game-preserving Dilettantism:—thank Heaven that there is even a Mammonism, anything we are in earnest about! Idleness is worst, Idleness alone is without hope: work earnestly at anything, you will by degrees learn to work at almost all things. There is endless hope in work, were it even work at making money. (140-1)

At base, we have a clear gradation developing between activity and inactivity, work and idleness, even so far as between greed and sloth. However, if we look at *Past and Present* as a socio-economic critique, by modern standards of political economy it holds little theoretical value. As a science of economics, *Past and Present* lacks credibility, but as a text providing a discourse for a social critique that influenced many thinkers of the Victorian period and beyond, its ramifications are significant. Therefore, as we approach Bernard Shaw’s work, Carlyle’s broad categorisations, but serious observations, will serve as a point of departure in analyzing the roots of the Captain of Industry characters in Shaw’s drama.
Turning to *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Socialism, Capitalism, Sovietism and Fascism* (1928), the best example of Shaw’s socio-economic writing, Chapter 24 “The Tyranny of Nature” echoes Carlyle’s condemnation of dilettantism and further defines Shaw’s own Chivalry of Labour:

> The very first lesson that should be taught us when we are old enough to understand it is that complete freedom from the obligation of work is unnatural. . . . The question we have to settle is how much leisure we can afford to allow ourselves. Even if we must work like galley slaves whilst we are at it, how soon may we leave off with a good conscience, knowing that we have done our share and may now go free until tomorrow? That question has never been answered, and cannot be answered under our system because so many of the workers are doing work that is not merely useless but harmful. . . . We now revolt against the slavery of work because we feel ourselves to be the slaves, not of Nature and Necessity, but of our employers and those for whom they have to employ us. We therefore hate work and regard it as a curse. When people have leisure enough to learn how to live, and to know the difference between real and sham enjoyment, they will not only begin to enjoy their work, but to understand why Sir George Cornewall Lewis said that life would be tolerable but for its amusements. . . . [T]here is nothing so disagreeable to a healthy person as wasting time. (*IWG* 110-12)

Again, work is better than casually wasting away our days, but Shaw does point to the fact that work, in general, offers little satisfaction under the present economic system. Shaw redirects the leisure that Carlyle abhors by uniting wise leisure with joyful labour. Carlyle and Shaw’s philosophies share a core belief that the earnest application of our energy to a sensibly directed task should satisfy the human mind and our sense of purpose. Idleness depresses; activity invigorates. But Shaw (more so than Carlyle) does recognize that blind labour (*i.e.* not governed by wisdom or practicality), even if energetic, accomplishes little. A great deal of industry leads to waste and inefficiencies, seeming to prove that more production does not guarantee better living. Where is the
source of the problem? According to Carlyle, John Ruskin (another influential Victorian social critic, among other fields such as art and architecture), and Shaw, mismanagement, or the complete lack of direction, leads to true waste of life. Misuse of time and misguided effort will not only achieve nothing; it also threatens to undermine our previous accomplishments.

The conceptual frame we are working with does not merely apply to an individual’s own work; it is meant to encompass collective (though often uncooperative) human activity, particularly in the capitalist system. In The Intelligent Woman’s Guide, Shaw clearly defines capital as the surplus generated from the productive application of labour, and then defines capitalism, with condemning irony, as:

the system by which the land of the country is in the hands, not of the nation, but of private persons called landlords, who can prevent anyone from living on it or using except on their own terms. (129)

[T]he proper use of cleverness in this world is to take advantage of stupid people to obtain a larger share than they of the nation’s income. Rascally as this notion is, it is too common to be ignored. The proper social use of brains is to increase the amount of wealth to be divided, not to grab an unfair share of it: . . . it is a principle of Capitalism that everyone shall use not only her land and capital, but her cunning, to obtain as much money for herself as possible. (345-6)

Shaw suggests that human effort has been diverted from productivity, to predatory competition. The weak are consumed by the cunning few who do not increase the well-being or even wealth of the nation as they accumulate larger gains: “Naturally these rich men of business used all their power and influence to make their Governments go from bad to worse” (IWG 157).

A thinker with Fabian tendencies, Shaw at one point based his social solution upon the idea of universal equality of income. Raising the lowest classes by eliminating
poverty would cure "the worst sin of mankind" and reduce the power of the unscrupulous rich; ideally, that is. In a simple sense, we might then expect Shaw to harshly criticize any person who acquires more than a "fair" share of wealth. The preface to The Millionaireess (Preface on Bosses, 1935) seems to attest to this condemnatory attitude, vaguely resembling Carlyle’s warnings against Mammonism:

Now it is not desirable that [moneymakers] should rule the world; for the secret of moneymaking is to care for nothing else and to work at nothing else; and as the world’s welfare depends on operations by which no individual can make money, whilst its ruin by war and drink and disease and drugs and debauchery is enormously profitable to moneymakers, the supremacy of the moneymaker is the destruction of the State. A society which depends on the incentive of private profit is doomed. (218)

The excerpt represents only one dimension of Shaw’s multifaceted debate about capitalism and the great capitalists who become both a blessing and a burden. Had Shaw not written plays that look beyond this stereotypical Socialist contempt for laissez-faire capitalism, he would have merely fallen back upon the conventional tone of incriminating nineteenth-century industrialist fiction popularized by Harriet Martineau, G. W. M. Reynolds, and Paul Pimlico: anyone rich being a licentious villain, and anyone poor being a chaste sufferer. Shaw thought beyond the simple propagandist binaries, and always sought to pierce through ready-made assumptions to explore the hidden motivations or mechanisms of economies and psychologies. Shaw replies to the Marxist habit of glorifying workers and vilifying capitalists:

... it is perverse stupidity to declare in one breath that the working-classes are starved, degraded, and left in ignorance by a system which heaps victuals, education, and refinements on the capitalist, and to assume in the next that the capitalist is a narrow, sordid scoundrel, and the working-man a high-minded, enlightened, magnanimous philanthropist. (“The Illusions of Socialism” 156-57)
Most interestingly, the ideology underlying both Shaw’s drama and his political economy avoids predictable divisions; while his writing attacks capitalism, often on the immediate flip side, it carries a seemingly contradictory awe and even seems to acknowledge a necessity for the powerfully rich.

Immediately after describing capitalism allows/promotes the grabbing capital by exploitative cunning (IWG 345-46), Shaw marvels at the wealth accumulated by mega-capitalists like Cecil Rhodes, Andrew Carnegie, and Alfred Nobel, who are forced to resort to philanthropy to unburden their swollen purses (347). Earlier in The Intelligent Woman’s Guide, Shaw has drawn a comparison between the King of England and John D. Rockefeller, noting that the highest head of state owns but a fraction of the riches next to the capital controlled by the largest head of business (70). The King, Shaw observes, supposedly has greater power, since “experience shews that authority is not proportionate to income” (70). As the analysis of authority proceeds, Shaw writes that “[w]hen we speak of the power of the rich, we are speaking of a very real thing, because a rich man can discharge anyone from his employment who displeases 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” (71), and—I would add—quite a different thing from the ability to improve that society. Shaw personally acknowledges (perhaps with feigned humility) the real and readily observed economic/social significance of an industrialist: “[I] have sometimes made more than a hundred times as much money in a year as my father ever did; but he, as an employer, had more power over the lives of others than I” (IWG 346). The admission reveals Shaw’s large respect for employers, considering his own literary ego and that his “father
was an employer whose whole capital added to that of his partner would not have kept a big modern company in postage stamps for a fortnight” (207). Punctuating the section that contrasted traditional authorities (the King, the Pope, and ship captains) with the Rockefellers’ power of capital, Shaw writes the following: “Money is not the secret of command. . . . Real authority has nothing to do with money” (71). This does not imply that rich magnates have no authority. Shaw merely realizes that their money is not the true source or actuality of that power; he neither limits the strength of these managers of money and manpower, nor the power of the Captains of Industry in his drama.

Here we reach a crucial understanding of the relationship between money and power in the frame of this discussion. Wealth, so commonly thought to be power, only denotes it, or make it apparent through one’s conspicuous consumption of materials and services. Just as capital (wealth) can be defined as the surplus product of labour, we can then conceive of power, by logical association, as the ability to manipulate or command human effort.

In the section of Unto This Last (1862) entitled “Veins of Wealth,” Ruskin writes: “mercantile economy, the economy of ‘merces’ or of ‘pay,’ signifies the accumulation, in the hands of individuals, of legal or moral claim upon, or power over, the labour of others” (133); “What is really desired, under the name of riches, is essentially, power over men” (134). If we look into Ruskin’s explanation of wealth (similar to Shaw’s), the investment of money and the purchase of products or services does not equate as real power. Pecuniary power is a secondary (perhaps even tertiary) level of power, since it is removed from the active, physical creation of products. It is the power to buy the product of labour, but it is not necessarily the power to command labour.
As an early political economist, in a time when the terms of the science were still finding their definitions, Ruskin wanted to draw a clear distinction between “true” and “false” wealth. His illustration of the nature of “riches” begins with his noting that property represents the traditional sense of wealth. However, coffers full of gold and property with bountiful resources do not constitute true wealth. Instead, they offer the potential to generate riches, but only if the proprietor can hire workers to utilize these resources (134). Therefore, a nation’s pool of labour has equal importance to other resources, at a theoretical level, when determining the wealth of nations. Conversely, Ruskin names the improper use or understanding of wealth as “Illth.” In “Ad Valorem” in Unto This Last, he writes:

Wealth, therefore, is “The possession of the valuable by the valiant;” and in considering it as a power existing in a nation, the two elements, the value of the thing and the valour of the possessor, must be estimated together... [those creating “illth”] being inherently and eternally incapable of wealth; and operating for the nation, in an economical point of view, either as pools of dead water, and eddies in a stream (which, so long as the stream flows, are useless, or serve only to drown people...); or else, as dams in a river... or else, as mere accidental stays and impediments, acting not as wealth, but (for we ought to have a correspondent term) as “illth,” causing various devastation and trouble around them in all directions; or lastly, act not at all, but merely animated conditions of delay. (UTL 171)

The latent wastefulness in a laissez-faire economy brought about by the misguided application of labour and capital, or by the stagnant accumulation of resources and money, act to help worsen a nation’s ‘illness.’ An uncoordinated and unprincipled system (i.e. unvaliant) perpetuates inefficiency as if by unconscious self-destruction (this is the closest Ruskin ever comes to an appeal for efficiency).
With regards to wealth as the application of labour, we are speaking here in the most basic terms of an economy’s development and maintenance: pure industry, as one may call it. However, I will take this moment only to point out, but certainly not explain, the increasing complexity of political economy. While Carlyle and Ruskin greatly admired pure industry, they had but a limited working knowledge of the functions of capital, systems of trade, and the realm of finance. Nonetheless, they did recognize the possible dangers, injustices, and abuses that could and did arise from the “cash nexus”: capitalism’s great maelstrom of unfixed relationships and hidden manipulations where ethical responsibilities became unsettled and easily obscured.

The moral dangers of wealth have always been well recognized, often with the warning of the sinfulness of its excess. Ruskin attested to this prejudice in front of an audience at Manchester, July 10th, 1857, while giving his lecture “The Political Economy of Art.” From the early Greeks to the Christians of the middle ages, the rich person has always held a special invitation to either Acheron or the Inferno, he observes (1-2). But in contrast to a prosaic sermon, Ruskin then wishes his audience to admit the error of simply judging the rich as sinners. He explains the necessity of looking past our critical presumptions about “ungentlemanly capitalists”:

For wealth is simply one of the greatest powers which can be entrusted to human hands: a power, not indeed to be envied, because it seldom makes us happy; but still less to be abdicated or despised; while, in these days, and in this country, it has become a power all the more notable, in that the possessions of a rich man are not represented, as they used to be, by wedges of gold or coffers of jewels, but by masses of men variously employed, over whose bodies and minds the wealth, according to its direction, exercises harmful or helpful influence, and becomes, in that alternative, Mammon either of Unrighteousness or of Righteousness. (2-3)
Ruskin has gone a step further than Carlyle by not simply excusing the pursuit of capital as activity versus idleness; he has given it a social precedence that has significant consequences: virtuous benefits and ignoble deficits. Progress achieved and society improved seem to be the promises of Ruskin’s properly applied wealth. And therein is the defining point of this inquiry into an educated, well-managed economy. How does a vast collection of people, functioning under the loose organisation of laissez-faire methods, assure that national resources (property, raw materials, labour, capital) are put to use fittingly (as anomalous as the term “fittingly” remains)? Looking through the works of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Shaw, we find that the creation of a “heavenly” versus a “hellish” world sometimes depends upon the decision-making, management, and expected leadership of a particular member of society: the industrial employer. They are often represented as working alongside, and occasionally above, our common political or religious leaders. These are the figures we shall now come to recognize as the “Captains of Industry.”

In *Past and Present*, those who follow the misleading Gospel of Mammonism and Dilettantism bring about the crying need for this new source of leadership. Carlyle asserts that the “sumptuous Merchant-Prince [and] illustrious game-preserving Duke” (141) are the ruin of the worker, and of all common people. They excuse their abuse of fellow citizens by the means of what Carlyle terms the “Cash-payment” or what we might consider as age-old, innocuous wage labour. The denigrated England of *Past and Present*, whose prime ailments develop mostly from its lack of leadership and wise government, appears to be working at laying waste to its own well-being. Worthy human effort, being the advancement toward a “heavenly” earth, does not necessarily stand in
opposition to industrial production; for Carlyle, work can become a means of salvation. Unfortunately, such effort remains greatly misdirected, and is hence wasted under “Working Mammonism” and “Unworking Dilettantism” (176). Carlyle and Shaw both believe that a typical plutocracy and aristocracy lead to the ruin of society. Between greed and sloth, the Merchant-Princes at least only bring about a lesser evil, since they work (though sometimes destructively) to accomplish a product. On the surface, what Carlyle seems to be advocating through most of Past and Present is a return to feudalism under once noble aristocratic lords. In actuality, Carlyle valorizes the relationship established in a feudal system: the reciprocal care and dependency of serf and lord. Both Carlyle and Ruskin describe the institution of managed labour often simultaneously in terms of paternalism and martialism, both requiring the reciprocating relationships of obedience to authority and care/protection of subordinates, or “noble loyalty in return for noble guidance” (Carlyle 265). However, the lament of these two Victorians indicates that this paternal connection has been undone by “cash-payment,” replaced by the temporary contractual agreement and, therefore, lacking in filial responsibility.

Before moving on to explain the role of industrial leaders, a distinction needs to be made between the worthwhile and the worthless aristocracy. The difference is primarily based on the activities that members of this class choose to pursue. Carlyle defines them as “Working Aristocracy” and “Unworking Aristocracy.” The former works at increasing wealth; the latter spends its hours amusing themselves, shooting partridges, and “dilettante-ing” their way through public office (Carlyle 171). Shaw does at least acknowledge a working aristocracy, but adds that they would be better off joining the rest of the “Idle Rich” in purposeless leisure (IWG 91). Compared to almost
every other class, with the exception of the poorest people, the aristocracy remains the
most hopeless spectacle, the parasitical class of society. Of this propertied class Carlyle
says, “you did not make the Land of England; and by the possession of it, you are bound
to furnish guidance and governance to England!” (170). Unfortunately, they do not
govern and, as it turns out, should not. Shaw feels these wastrels should move aside for
the more capable people of greater ability to manage society. In Shaw’s drama,
conservative aristocratic culture is in the process of being superseded by more efficient
forces (i.e. those that are in the process of creating a plutocracy). Having steadily lost
their social function (except as ornaments of culture), aristocrats of long lineage and
inherited positions inhabit a mostly futile existence.

Having lost hope in the fruitless play of aristocrats, grown tired of weak political
rhetoric, and feeling alarmed at the avaricious new capitalists, Carlyle and Ruskin call for
a figure who would give purpose to the Chivalry of Labour by creating a neo-feudal
system of industry, uniting the domestic well-being of the workers (the basic community)
with the profit interests of the employers. Carlyle writes: “We are governed, very
infallibly, by the ‘sham-hero,’—whose name is Quack, whose work and governance is
Plausibility, and is also Falsity and Fatuity” (25); “We must have more Wisdom to
govern us, we must be governed by the Wisest, we must have an Aristocracy of Talent!”
(28). Carlyle supposes that society’s disorganisation from its lack of proper direction and
purpose “will have to be solved by those who stand practically in the middle of [the
working classes]; by those who themselves work and preside over work” (260). These
Captains of Industry will finally offer “noble just Industrialism and Government by the
Wisest” (260); they are to be the recreators of a Carlylean ideal reality: “a Society with
something of a Heroism in it" (260). Ruskin applies a similar though more precise ethic to his Pilots of the State:

> to use your time and strength to war with the waywardness of and thoughtlessness of mankind; to keep the erring workman in your service till you have made him an unerring one; and to direct your fellow-merchant to the opportunity which his dullness would have lost. This is much; but it is yet more, when you have fully achieved the superiority which is due to you, and acquired the wealth which is the fitting reward of your sagacity, if you solemnly accept the responsibility of it, as it is the helm and guide of labour far and near. For you who have it in your hands, are in reality the pilots of the power and effort of the state. ("Pol. Econ. of Art" 78)

Shaw’s *Intelligent Woman’s Guide* contains a parallel opinion about the business class and supplies some plausible features for the Shavian Captain of Industry:

> But the main scope in business is for honourable and useful activity. . . . The planning and management and ordering of [industry] gives employment to able and energetic men who have no property, but have the education and social address of the propertied class. . . . There are always a few cases in which this management is done, not by descendants of propertied folk, but by men and women sprung from the hungriest of the hungry. These are the geniuses who know most of the things that other people have to be taught, and who educate themselves as far as they need any education. (196, emphasis my own)

Since he does not posit the business élite as saviours or as gentlemanly models, Shaw avoids romanticising or glorifying industrialists as Carlyle and Ruskin do. There are even subtle differences between Carlyle’s “Captains of Industry” and Ruskin’s “Pilots of State.” The former has an unchallenged heroism leaning towards revolutionary tendencies. This gallant Captain will gain the following of workers not through wages, but through the true loyalty inspired by paternal and fraternal bonds. He will become a rallying point for all workers, and will lead them against the injustices and wastefulness of sham heroes--lazy aristocrats, corrupt capitalists, and beguiling politicians. Ruskin’s
“Pilots” have a tamer chivalry. They do not seek to remodel the system from below or overthrow current forms of government. They advocate a softer paternalism that seeks to educate and reform employees and even competitors. These Pilots of State attempt to resolve social rifts by promoting more co-operation between the rich élite and the poor labourers.

Shaw’s Boss or Captain remains more enigmatic, since Shaw has never stated an official Captain of Industry type in his expositions, and the Boss characters of the plays exist unto themselves, unique and determined within their dramatic context. Yet, judging from the passage from *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide* quoted on the previous page and the plays we will later be looking at, a Captain of Industry ideal does exist, albeit in a veiled and convoluted form.

Of importance here are the type of people Shaw classifies as “the born bosses” (*Millionairess* 218). As quoted above, these inherent leaders are the self-taught geniuses who rise to power by their own abilities, rather than through inherited titles and capital. They exhibit a degree of vigour and hold an inherent sense of purpose that distinguishes them from, and even existentially sets them above most people. The “Preface on Bosses” heading *The Millionairess* illustrates some of Shaw’s serious thoughts on the subject of these leaders:

[A] born boss is one who rides roughshod over us by some mysterious power that separates him from our species and makes us fear him: that is, hate him. (218)

The same mysterious personal force that makes the household tyrant, the school tyrant, the office tyrant, the brigand chief and the pirate captain, brings the born boss to the top by a gravitation that ordinary people cannot resist. (219)
And what about ambitious people who possess commanding business ability or military genius or both? They are irresistible unless they are restrained by law; for ordinary individuals are helpless in their hands. Are they to be the masters of society or its servants? (218)\textsuperscript{13}

The strength of these bosses derives from charisma produced from the power of “will” which can be found at the centre of Shaw’s Life Force. This charisma does not come from the paternal/fraternal love or the inspirational heroism that characterises the virtues of Carlyle and Ruskin’s ideal leaders. Quite obviously, as is apparent from what is quoted above, the “mysterious personal force” often tyrannically subordinates and pushes the will of one individual upon many. The born boss who organises and commands is then not necessarily a boon to communities or nations. Shaw later asserts that no matter what revolutions or reforms pass, “the tyranny of the talented individuals\textsuperscript{14} will remain” (The Millionairess 236). He suggests that strong willed leaders far too easily lead a weakened society; it is an arrangement that Shaw views as detrimental to good leadership. The best way to counter this stratification of power is to recalibrate the balance of managerial ability between higher and lower orders, and thereby reduce the degree of hierarchy: “Now the remedy lies, not in the extermination of all dominators and deciders, but on the contrary in their multiplication to what may be called their natural minority limit, which will destroy their present scarcity value” (Millionairess 238).

Acting like a reverse Gresham’s law to bring back the nobler coinage, Shaw’s call for a society of masters would outmode the previous society of slaves: “But we must also eliminate the mass of ignorance, weakness, and timidity which force them to treat fools according to their folly” (Millionairess 238). Therefore, just as the power of authority is necessarily determined from obedience below, Shaw states that the actual quality of
leadership depends on the state of the people beneath such authority. However, in the present system, a mass of poor, uneducated, and apathetic people begets cunning and powerful agents of domination.

Though these bosses are superior examples of the abilities of leadership and of irrepressible ambitions, they are not the same types of leaders promoted through Carlyle’s Captains and Ruskin’s Pilots. With Carlyle, his ideal leader represents the perfect balance between despotism and paternalism; he is in tune with the needs of the people. The Pilots of State follow a code of conduct that should naturally apply to all situations; they bring an ethical imperative to level off the unruly field of amoral capitalism. However, with Shaw’s bosses, a dialectical negotiation between higher and lower forces, the governing and governed, must be in play. These extraordinary individuals embody an unbridled energy that requires management itself; these masters must also be made to serve society, and not simply be allowed dominate the common person.

When writing about business managers, both Shaw and Ruskin refer to sagacious leadership directed towards honourable activity. From this, we begin notice that the Captain of Industry figure begins to signify more than a successful person at business, especially in light of Shaw’s onerous bosses. In the traditional philosophy of the Captain of Industry, these people are valued as employers before being respected for their economic worth, and such values are both utilitarian and moral. Shaw seeks to push this concept further by stressing the overall social significance, both harmful and beneficial, of these Captains. Whether it is their “mysterious personal force,” “a will of which [they are] a part” (MB 139), or “[t]he way of the world” (WSWN 202) that gives them a force of
character beyond normal capabilities, the consequences of these traits split both ways. This same species of “super-managers” creates the Great Catherines, the Men of Destiny (Napoleon), and the Saint Joans, as well as the General Flancos, Bombardones, and Battlers (who, in Geneva, respectively represent Franco, Mussolini, and Hitler). Even Shaw’s “domestic” managers become domineering types, as it is with Candida, Ann Whitefield (Man and Superman), and Lady Cicely (Captain Brassbound’s Conversion). Therefore, the Shavian Captains of Industry, though ideally engaged in honourable and useful activity, become unstable as their energetic impulse, intelligence (cunning properly applied), and their instinctive routes to success and assiduous industry, gain uncontainable inertia. These details and the consequences of these characters will become most apparent when we examine Epifania (The Millionaireess), Bossborn (Why She Would Not), and Undershaft (Major Barbara), and explore them in contrast with Boss Mangan (Heartbreak House) and with Broadbent (John Bull’s Other Island).

What is the exact nature of this figure, drawn in part from Carlyle and Ruskin, modified through a mix of Darwinism and the Marxist/Hegelian dialectic, and then tempered with Shaw’s own vital infusion of the Life Force? I would like to avoid defining Shaw’s ideal Captain of Industry alongside the concept of his “superman.” The two are only alike in that they are examples of vitality and will functioning together, striving for a higher end. While the superman springs from the unconscious, natural evolution towards a higher state of existence, a theoretical being rather than an actual one, the Shavian Pilots of the State exist as dramatic characters whose effects are more limited and immediate, and whose benefits for humankind remain ambiguous. Shaw’s industrialists may not be supermen, but they are remarkable, perhaps even extraordinary,
specimens of human effort. Undershaft, Epifania, Bossborn, and even Broadbent are more akin to the "Unreasonable Man" first described in The Revolutionist's Handbook, a fictionalized appendix to Man and Superman (1903): "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man" (260). The aphorism accords almost perfectly with how each one of these hyper-capitalists alters the situations around him to suit his needs. In her essay "Bernard Shaw's 'Unreasonable Man,'" Barbara B. Brown notes that these characters represent superior individuals with "an intense desire to act, to participate" (77) and "are distinguished by energy, courage, and leadership," (77) often being marked by terms such as "vitality," "lively," "power of work," and "active" (77). Most importantly, these types of Shavian characters exhibit a remarkable strength of will which furnishes them with an extraordinary sense of direction, a driving purpose that guides their actions. I describe them in a purely stereotypical or theoretical sense. No character of Shaw's is ever purely a "superman." However, as we later examine the qualities of the characters in the plays selected, these traits will serve as important markers distinguishing between the "Captain of Industry" and the characters whom they interact with and stand in contrast to.
Section Two

An Interlude upon the "Unreasonable [Person]"

Make Way or Make It My Way:
Epifania and Bossborn on Full Steam Ahead

The characters who most exhibit the superman-like properties described above,\textsuperscript{15} combined with the basic constitution (or profession) of a Captain of Industry (what Carlyle might call "Working Mammonism") are Epifania in *The Millionairess* (1935) and Bossborn in *Why She Would Not* (1950). I begin my analysis of Shaw's powerful capitalists/vitalists with these two characters because they embody the most basic essence of the Shavian Captain of Industry: an instinctual ability, or will, to organise labour, resources, and capital. I also begin with these plays because they are of Shaw's later drama, *Why She Would Not* being the last written. The growing interest in "born bosses" and dominators that Shaw displays in the last of his plays are of special interest for this section. This preoccupation of Shaw's indicates the importance, in his thinking, of the characteristics of leadership, the directors of capital, and their powerful influence upon society in general.

Epifania Ognisanti di Parerga Fitzfassenden is perhaps the most fiery of Shaw's characters. Her "athletic" (*Millionairess* 245) presence on stage is certainly more impressive than her name as she proceeds to unsettle, reorganise, and break both business establishments and people.\textsuperscript{16} I would not name her a Captain of Industry so much in her business practices, since she never commands any large amount of industry or labour (though it is imaginable that she could/would do so if given the chance). What qualifies
her, in part, for a connection with this Carlylean figure is her indomitable will. She has
an uncanny ability to know how to manage both capital and people. Her barrister attests
to the latter ability:

I'm afraid I can't control her, Miss Smith. What's worse, I'm afraid
she can control me. It's not only that I can't afford to offend so rich
a client. It's that her will paralyzes mine. It's a sort of genius
some people have. (274)

Her acquisitive nature compels her to chase after whatever she desires, often
above the interests of those around her. "I am a woman who must always want
something and always gets it" (254): essential to the existence of all Shavian bosses is
the element of enterprise; their vitality must be directed into challenging endeavours.
The plot Shaw develops in the course of the play seeks to prove that it is not only large
amounts of money that give certain plutocrats their powers of command. Epifania's
'paralytic** will' becomes the key factor that allows her succeed in the challenge she
faces. The situation she comes to master involves a wager or test in which she must
"go out into the world with nothing but [thirty-five shillings] and the clothes she
stands in, and earn her living alone and unaided for six months" (286). Accomplishing
this, she would earn the right to marry an impecunious, but intellectually evolved,
Egyptian doctor.

Shaw does not trivialise the power of money in The Millionairess, either.
Epifania's privileged upbringing contributes to her force, though not to the same degree
as her inborn nature: "a millionairess who can rise to her destiny and wield the power her
money gives her" (Millionairess 312) is Epifania's autobiographical account. Her claim,
"Nobody is nobody without money" (270), proves to be partially true as she proceeds to
confront the task set before her. Her two major accomplishments are the take-over17 and
streamlining of a sweatshop followed by the appropriation and renovation of a hotel. Her method of entering into these business depends upon her “mysterious personal force” \textit{(Millionairess} 281\textit{)} and the acute knowledge about business strategies she received from her plutocratic heritage. As she systematically displaces the inefficient managers of these small establishments (they step aside, feeling they have no choice), Epifania also disrupts the daily lives (routines) of citizens, particularly those who are idle “duffers.” The revitalisation of the hotel most specifically highlights Shaw’s view that society is not only susceptible to self-propelled leaders, but also depends upon their managerial genius to organise its resources into efficient application:

You see all she had to do with the old crockery was to break it and throw the bits into the dustbin. But what was the matter with the old Pig and Whistle was not the old thick plates that took away your appetite. It was the old people it had gathered about itself that were past their work and had never been up to much according to modern ideas. They had to be thrown into the street to wander about for a few days and then go into the workhouse... Now the house is a credit to the neighborhood and gives more employment than the poor old Pig did in its best days.” (299-300)

Her successful improvement of the means at hand closely resembles Tom Broadbent’s eviction of the inefficient Irish landholders—“duffers”—in \textit{John Bull’s Other Island}.

And exactly like Shaw’s message in that earlier play, \textit{The Millionairess} critiques the value of the born bosses’ utilitarianism, too. The last line of its “Preface on Bosses” states: “For when ambition and greed and mere brainless energy have been disabled, the way will be clear for inspiration and aspiration to save us from the fatheaded stagnation of the accursed Victorian snobbery which is bringing us on the verge of ruin” (244).

The progressive influence of the bosses may be necessary to go beyond the ruinous, “fatheaded stagnation” of conservative aristocracies, but more is at stake than European
politics and socio-economics. Shaw includes the Egyptian Doctor in the play with the purpose of distinguishing between worldly values and spiritual principles. The Doctor says: “The wrath of Allah shall overtake those who leave the world no better than they found it” (315). “Better,” in this case, means more than economic efficacy; one must also strive for a higher reality. “Ambition and greed and mere brainless energy” come very close to describing Epifania. She is intelligent but not as mystically aware as a Captain of Industry should be. Carlyle did envision a Master Worker who would trump the reign of the idle gentry and put to work the unemployed many, yet his Captain had a higher purpose than reforming industry alone: “a mystic nexus to replace the cash nexus” (MB 20) as Shaw observes. The final act closes with the promise of Epifania’s marriage with the Doctor and we are left to speculate about the possibility that, in their union, spiritual inspiration will find harmony with the energetic aspiration of worldly enterprise.

Beneath the theme of spiritual dialectics, The Millionairess offers hints of the power/cultural struggle occurring between the business class and the gentry:

Epifania: We are the only real aristocracy in the world: the aristocracy of money.
The Doctor: The plutocracy, in fact.
Epifania: If you like. I am a plutocrat of the plutocrats. (281)

However, the issue remains a liminal theme as the contrast between the ascetic Egyptian Doctor and mammonish Epifania comes to the forefront in the end. Why She Would Not picks up this concern more explicitly as it portrays the concept of class supersession and the evolution towards ultimate efficiency. Henry Bossborn enters the scene as a veritable hero. After saving a lady from a thug twice his size, he brushes off any romantic pretensions of bravery and asserts himself as a practical realist, “Bluff, dear lady, pure bluff. A bully is not always a coward; but a big coward is almost always a bully. I took
his measure that is all” (194). As reward, Bossborn asks Serafina (the former lady-in-
distress) to introduce him to her family (“the greatest timber merchants and woodmen in
the country” [WSWN 195]) for a job in the timber yard at subsistence-level wages. Later
facing the executives of White Sons and Bros Ltd. in the boardroom, Bossborn quickly
moves to turn the tables by revealing his initial request as a demand “to have the run of
the works” (WSWN 196). He rejects a labouring job in the yard not because he wants
more money—he still only wants three pounds as a manager—but more out of a dislike
of working a routine and having to answer to a superior:

I’m not that sort of man. I can’t clock in, and work at regulars at
the bench. I can’t do what you call work at all. It is not in my
nature. I must come when I like and go when I like and stay when
I like. (196)

Shaw does not go into great detail about the boardroom and the lumber yard, but one
can read from the surface details that it runs somewhat efficiently (“We don’t allow
unpunctuality here” [196]), but the company succeeds rather by its own momentum,
not by decisive business leadership. The emerging master plans to change this.

Bossborn moves into the firm without much confrontation, restructuring and
doing away with “[t]he waste of labour” (198) as he pleases. The greater confrontation
of the play occurs between Serafina and the new “master of the situation.” Though
Serafina is not an aristocrat, she approximates the role through her (in)activities as an idle
plutocrat spending days on cruise ships where “everything is done for you” (WSWN 197).
She accuses Bossborn of “having made terrible changes in the company” (198), which
for a sentimental mind is true. He has pensioned off executives long involved with the
family firm, replaced the clerks by “a girl with a calculating and invoicing typewriter”
(198), and "trained" Serafina's father. On top of streamlining the firm, he has broken the back of the old family tradition of business management:

Serafina: We Whites like to be masters in our own house. I like to be mistress in mine.
Bossborn: Oh, that is all over. I've trained Jasper in my methods, and am now in business on my own. (198)

Bossborn is every bit the dominator, "who rides roughshod over us by some mysterious power" (218), that Shaw warns of and also calls for in the preface to The Millionairess: "A great deal of the directing and organizing work of the world will still have to be done by energetic and capable careerists who are by no means void of vulgar ambition, and very little troubled by the responsibilities that attend on power" (239). The larger arena of Serafina and Bossborn's collision of ideals involves the tension between tradition and progress, gentrified society and technical pragmatists. "I dislike the society of ladies and gentlemen" (200), comments Bossborn. Not satisfied merely with organising industry, he takes it upon himself to engineer the reconstruction of Four Towers, "a pretentious country house surrounded by a high stone wall... broken by four sham towers with battlement tops" (194) belonging to the Whites. Bossborn severs family lineage in the company (being an unnecessary anachronism in Shaw's view of commerce) and then moves to clear away the gentrified plutocracy's heritage—"the real aristocracy"—by blowing up Four Towers, replacing it with ultramodern prefabricated villas (198), and signalling the eventual end of stagnant "Victorian snobbery."

For the purpose of my argument, the strongest point of Why She Would Not appears in the closing moments as Bossborn explains himself:

Bossborn: I coerce nobody: I only point out the way.
Serafina: Yes: your way, not our way.
Bossborn: Neither my way nor yours. The way of the world. Some people call it God’s way. (202)

The same question of “whose way” appeared in Major Barbara (as “whose character”) nearly half a century earlier as Undershaft, the industrialist, spoke with his son, an “honourable English gentleman” (MB 123), about what governs England (124-25, or see page 110 of this discussion). The debate in Major Barbara concerned politics and economics; the topic here opens itself up to an interpretation according to Creative Evolution or the general spirit of progress. By his own account, Bossborn acts as a Captain who leads industry and social reform (on a limited scale) less from a personal imperative, since he follows “the way of the world.” Here is the Shavian Captain of Industry in its most essential state, functioning as a figure whose great force of will follows an instinct beyond his being.

The reading does not pass without complications, however. As we will further explore in the plays following this section, Shaw does not wholly endorse efficiency and modernity as the highest standard of human endeavours. Granted, he acknowledges a need for or the simple fact of the evolutionary processes in history, society, and industry (see “Decline of the Employer” in The Intelligent Woman’s Guide). Yet, the connection that Bossborn makes between “the way of the world” and “God’s way” potentially raises many questions about Shaw’s final opinion about the validity of a purely materialist dialectic. Are we to suppose that Bossborn’s mechanical manipulation of the factory and townhouse satisfies the higher needs of human spirit? At no other point does Bossborn make any claims to a purpose beyond his own interests. We could assume that he unconsciously follows “a will of which [he] is a part” (MB 139). In “The Evolutionary Dialectic of Shaw and Teilhard: A Perennial Philosophy,” Daniel J. Leary presents the
idea that Shaw's Creative Evolution is receptive to a "pantheistic interpretation" (18) in which God and the world are to be understood as one. Therefore, as Bos born brings socio-economic progress to the world, he advances the will of the Life Force.

Lacking in this play is the spiritual counterpart for the industrialist present in the other dramas considered in my analysis. Standing alone, Bos born's efforts seem quite cold to human compassion or any other moral sentiment. Like Epifania, he can be paralleled with the "unreasonable man" (or, person) who in adapting the world to himself/herself brings about all progress. Of course, we cannot read the fictional "Maxims for Revolutionists" or either of these two plays as true in every sense of Shaw's philosophies. We need only look to Buoyant Billions (1947), the second last of Shaw's plays, to see that progress is not completely devoid of compassion. In the course of this play, there appear a number of references to humanity's technological/industrial progress ("atom-splitting" as one example), but by the end, the capitalist Bill Buoyant welcomes in the "World Betterer": a representative of "Ruskin's profession, Plato's profession. Confucius, Gautama, Jesus, Mahomet, Luther, William Morris" (BB 82). The "World Betterer" brings to light the main weakness in the supposition that the born bosses are the saviours of society. Each example given for this profession above, is not so much a leader as he is a teacher. "The future is with the learners" (BB 112), remarks one character – a Chinese Priest – of Buoyant Billions: "For it is obvious that a business [or any social institution] organized for control by an exceptionally omnipotent and omniscient head will go to pieces when that head is replaced by a commonplace numskull" (Millionairess 237). The learner brings about a synthesis between the dominator and the numskull with the aid of the teacher Captain. The great organisers of
the world are a tool, but they cannot become our sole support and leader lest society fall apart without their guidance. Ideally, the Captain of Industry is a “World Betterer” in both a practical and a benevolent sense: compassionately instructing those under his paternalistic authority. As we proceed through the plays ahead—Heartbreak House, John Bull’s Other Island, and Major Barbara—it will be necessary to look at the balance being established (often undermined) between efficiency and compassion, energy and control, the dominator and dominated. The synthesis of these poles, or lack thereof, will become a prime indicator of the sort of captaincy at hand.
Section Three

Heartbreak House
Phantasm Captains, Drifting Skippers, and Mangan’s Wreck

Before engaging in a discussion of Heartbreak House (1919) and later John Bull’s Other Island (1907), I would like to return to the warnings made by Carlyle and Ruskin about the dangerous irresponsibility of laissez-faire briefly considered in section one. While I did say that Ruskin and Carlyle had a limited grasp of the complex web of market economies, they do sense the untamed, often abused, power it commands. Carlyle writes: “Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle” (199). In “The Political Economy of Art,” Ruskin announces: “I believe one of the worst symptoms of modern society to be, its notion of great inferiority, and ungentlemanliness, as necessarily belonging to the character of the tradesman.” I believe tradesman may be, ought to be—often are, more gentleman than idle and useless people” (75). Certainly they ought to be, but Ruskin does not deny that many ungentlemanly capitalists do exist, and most successfully so:

Why is one man richer than another? Because he is more industrious, more persevering, and more sagacious... That power of endurance, that quickness of apprehension, that calmness of judgment, which enable him to seize the opportunities that others lose, and persist in the lines of conduct where others fail—are these not talents?—are they not, in the present state of the world, among the most distinguished of mental gifts?... [But] you think it perfectly just that he should use his intellect to take the bread out of the mouths of all other men in the town who are of the same trade with him; or use his breadth and sweep of sight to gather some branch of commerce of the country into one great cobweb, of which he is himself to be the central spider, making every thread vibrate with the points of his claws, and commanding every avenue with the facets of his eyes. You see no injustice in this. (“Political Economy of Art” 76-7)
The intelligence and perseverance of the gifted capitalist seems easily corrupted into monstrous power-mongering as Ruskin reveals the Janus-faced nature of this Carlylean idol. No doubt Shaw knew about the enterprising businessman’s dangerous temptation towards more capital and more control. Going one step further, he also perceived the gradual disappearance of self-established employers as part of the ‘natural’ evolution of an economy into more complex systems of interrelation. The replacement of dominant heads of companies with salaried, impermanent managers leads to a lack of conscience or consciousness of market leaders. In accordance with a Marxist view of historical/social progression, Shaw views capitalism as a means toward an end, a necessary step on the way to another form of society. Shaw alludes to such social evolution in *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide*. Under the chapter “Decline of the Employer,” he states:

The *dominant man* [in the past] was not the capitalist nor the landlord nor the laborer, but the employer who could set capital and land and labor to work. . . . But as spare money began to accumulate in larger and larger quantity, and enterprise expanded accordingly, business came to be done on a larger and larger scale until these old-fashioned little firms found their customers being taken away from them by big concerns and joint stock companies who could, with their huge capitals and costly machinery, not only undersell them, but make a greater profit out of their lower prices. . . . Just as the little businesses conducted by a couple of gentleman partners, starting with a capital which they counted in the hundreds, had to give way to companies counting their capital in the thousands, so these companies are being forced to combine into Trusts which count their capital in the millions. . . . [T]he employers were weakened, and finally lost their supremacy and became employees. . . . Thus the financiers and their go-betweens are now the *masters of the situation*, and the men who actually conduct and order the industry of the country, who would have been great commercial magnates in Queen Victoria’s reign, are now under the thumbs of men who never employed an industrial workman nor entered a factory or mine in their lives, and never intend to. (*IWG* 200-3, emphasis added)
The preface to *The Millionaireess* elaborates on the apparent degeneration of industrial management:

> [W]hen dominators die, and are succeeded by persons who can only work a routine, a relapse is inevitable; and the destruction by the dominators of the organizations by which citizens defend themselves against the oppression (trade unions for example) may be found to leave society less organized than it was before the hand of the master had risen from the dust to which it has returned. For it is obvious that a business organized for control by an exceptionally omnipotent and omniscient head will go to pieces when that head is replaced by a commonplace numskull. (237, emphasis added)

The able mastership of autocratic early-capitalists gives way to bureaucratic incompetents who have both a limited understanding of the process and end goal of a production facility. What happens when the symptoms of the division of labour infect even those who manage labour? Carlyle prophesied the emergence of a veritable anti-Captain. Just like England’s propertied and titled class which “has become Phantasm-Aristocracy, no longer able to do its work, not in the least conscious that it has any work longer to do” (135), from the land of mechanical industry usurped by methods of finance, is created a Phantasm Captain. Carlyle identified this anti-type in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (1850) under “The Present Time”:

Who would govern that could get along without governing? He that is fittest for it, is of all men the unwillingest unless constrained. By multifarious devices we have been endeavouring to dispense with governing; and by very superficial speculations, of laissez-faire, supply-and-demand, etc. etc. to persuade ourselves that it is best so. The Real Captain, unless it be some Captain of mechanical Industry hired by Mammon, where is he in these plays? Most likely, in silence, in sad isolation somewhere, in remote obscurity; trying if, in an evil ungoverned time, he cannot at least govern himself. The Real Captain undiscoverable; the Phantasm Captain everywhere very conspicuous… (20)
This new, false manager has no links to pure, mechanical industry, leaving him with little understanding of or responsibilities to the people he employs. There is nothing of the self-made man about him, and thereby lacks the sense of purpose to guide a nation’s people. Profit and loss are his only value judgements. In *Heartbreak House* and *John Bull's Other Island*, the Phantasm Captain is the spawn and servant of unconscionable syndicates and trusts. Mangan and Broadbent rule, but do not responsibly govern, while the Real Captains, who could be identified as Shotover and Keegan, remain the isolated and misunderstood mad prophets, kept powerless by the systems they rebuke and refuse to join. This may be an embellishment of Carlylean rhetoric; Boss Mangan and Tom Broadbent may or may not be so terribly multifarious as they seem, and Shotover and Keegan may only be mad prattlers – occasionally insightful – but not the sole sources of truth. Nonetheless, whatever qualities of the Captain Mangan and Broadbent lack – and possibly imitate – leave them highly suspect in Shaw’s universe.

I begin my analysis of *Heartbreak House* and *John Bull's Other Island* by encouraging reflection upon the debased England of *Past and Present* as a means to illustrate the primary struggles and thematic points recurring throughout these two plays: idle wasting, absence of leadership, aristocratic irresponsibility, and, of course, mammonistic greed. This section’s preamble spoke on the subject of the Phantasm Captain, who represents the degeneration of the boss characters this discussion seeks to understand. Understanding the makings of a false Captain of Industry may seem a distraction from the line of argument, yet the contrast holds great relevance in light of counter-example. Though the plays analyzed in section one are understood to be examples – but not exemplary – of the Shavian Captain of Industry, *Heartbreak House*
and *John Bull's Other Island* take us one step closer to the actualization of the Real Captain by thematic connection with *Major Barbara*. The antithetical relationship existing between Andrew Undershaft and Alfred "Boss" Mangan, and, to a lesser extent, Tom Broadbent, significantly unites these three plays by providing a comparison of situations that have failed or potentially succeeded in creating the groundwork for a Real Captain. I will admit that *Heartbreak House* does not normally configure with "the big three," yet I would argue that it serves as an excellent complement to *John Bull's Other Island* and an even better counter-point to *Major Barbara*. Without explaining the entire nature of the relationship, I will assert that *Heartbreak House* and *John Bull's Other Island* anticipate the culmination of the tripartite union of Andrew Undershaft, Adolphus Cusins, and Barbara Undershaft in *Major Barbara*. *Man and Superman* also connects to this argument, since the theoretical structure created in the optional third act describing the world's history and the middle ground it occupies between the tensions of Heaven and Hell plays itself out in *John Bull's Other Island* and finds potential resolution in *Major Barbara*. Therefore, in the tradition of "the big three," the pursuits of culture and spirit that are in contention with (and fail to achieve synthesis with) the worldly desires of progress, profit, and power find a potential resolution in *Heartbreak House* and *John Bull's Other Island* that is largely left unrealised. *Major Barbara* achieves the required synthesis of polar forces as the worldly unites with the spiritual, and power combines with intelligence.

Before I continue, I would like to dispel the illusion that in Shaw's drama the perfect Captain of Industry hero is the end-all solution to every social malady. Shaw's industrial organisers are an immediate, practical answer to the problem of leadership,
worker malcontent, and wasteful industry. However, as a solution for Carlyle’s “The Condition of England Question,” the industrialist functions only as a component in a larger equation. While I also propose that all of Shaw’s bosses are tyrants tearing society apart and reorganizing it to suit their needs, their moral value remains ambivalent (even absent) unless contextualized within a larger frame, whether it be material progress, social improvement, or spiritual evolution. They inherently act as destructive agents of capitalism and as reconstructive agents of progress, whether or not they are conscious of the role: the results of their activities often have double-edged outcomes. As with any of Shaw’s compositions, a balance needs to be sought; the answer lies in a dialectical struggle. Industrialists cannot – on their own – alter society’s progress, since capitalism binds its supporters solely to the pursuit of worldly, hence limited, ends. Philistinism has little scope beyond the material.

Many of Shaw’s characters (Ellie, Undershaft, and Mrs. Warren) may proclaim that money solves all of life’s major problems. These harsh, but clear-minded Philistines are not living under Shaw’s dreaded illusion of “slave-morality” which venerates the impoverished and excuses weak-willed servitude. Ellie Dunn of *Heartbreak House* states an ethic that hits upon the money versus poverty debate found in much of Shaw’s drama. Ellie’s lines closely resemble Andrew’s Undershaft oath to become “a full-fed free man at all costs” (143) and reflects Mrs. Warren’s decision to save herself from the grinding poverty of labouring in a whitelead factory. She says, “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”
The argument is convincing in a limited scope; perhaps reason, morality, and all idealism are worthwhile sacrificing if, in poverty, they are to be lost anyhow.

Even Shaw appears to personally promote money (physical comfort) before all else when he writes: "the irresistible natural truth which we all abhor and repudiate: to wit, that the greatest of our evils, and the worst of our crimes is poverty, and that our first duty, to which all every other consideration should be sacrificed, is not to be poor" (MB 15). This seemingly sound materialism is countermanded through the voice of his character Shotover. Replying to Ellie's assertion that a soul is best fed on riches, he says "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" (126-27). The message is clear: money feeds but it does not save; it sustains the body, prepares the mind, but does not fulfill the soul. As we move into the world of Heartbreak House, we will witness how these "books and pictures and concerts and scenery," i.e. English culture, the same aristocratic frivolities Carlyle denounces, harm the soul and mislead the spirit almost as soundly as the disparities of poverty.

Sadly enough, there are no Epifanias or Bossborns who enter to shore up the decaying society. Ironically enough, the great Boss Mangan, the only character who is ever named as a 'real' Captain of Industry, has sold his soul more efficiently than all the others, and not even for culture, or comfort, for that matter.

Heartbreak House can be read as the bleakest of Shaw's plays, as the jocund rise and fall of emotions is pierced by a foreboding look into the future of England. The first scene opens on the porch of a house "built so as to resemble the after part of an old-fashioned high-pooped ship" (HH 49) where the young Ellie Dunn has drifted off to sleep.
in the “weary resignation” of having been left completely ignored upon a bench since her arrival some hours ago. The lethargy and domestic disorganisation of this opening scene (symbolic of an ailing society gone adrift) persists throughout the play only to be interrupted by a series of emotional climaxes that only develops Ellie’s awareness – but no one else’s – and does not proffer a coherent sense of the plot’s direction. As Michael W. Kaufman notes in his essay “The Dissonance of Dialectic,” “Heartbreak House presents a sequence of dramatic confrontations that never achieve thematic resolution” (6). Audience expectations are left quite unsettled due to a “plot crammed with implausible things, proceeding by fits and starts – new entrances, abrupt reversals, and the most peculiar recognition scenes – almost as if in a dream” (Brustein 222, as qtd. in Kaufman 3). The disorienting movement of events might possibly leave the audience agreeing with Hector Hushabye’s impatient interjections: “Is this England or a madhouse?” (145), and “How is all this going to end?” (154). Then, as the final scene appears to end, fading into the spent and lazy night air of Heartbreak House’s garden, the play goes into its final spasm as the suspense peaks and rolls like the angry breakers of Captain Shotover’s reveries. The audience may expect the final judgement for which Shotover shouts, as an answer to Hector’s earlier premonition: “Heaven’s threatening growl of disgust at us useless futile creatures. [Fiercely] 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” (140). The bombs fall; Heartbreak House and its inhabitants remain; and, as Hector says disgustedly, “Yes, safe. And how damnably dull the world has become again suddenly!” (160). The play ends with Ellie’s hope that the zeppelins and the bombs will return the
next night to re-stimulate the Heartbreakers' dull playfulness with the semi-erotic excitement of near destruction. Whether heavenly signs or merely the convulsions of a world at war, even these warnings are reduced to amusement. The lazy, distracted tone of the first scene has not been overturned, only briefly interrupted (as with every past explosion of emotion), and the characters are left with nothing else to do but to go to sleep, dream, and play at life the next afternoon.

But where is the Captain of Industry in all this disorder? By the end of the play Boss Mangan, the proclaimed Captain, has been blown to pieces in the dynamite laden gravel pit (having been bombed), along with the pirate Billie Dunn, another perversion of captainship. Those still living, the idle wasters and business incompetents, remark:

Mazzini: I was quite wrong, after all.\textsuperscript{23} It is we who have survived; and Mangan and the burglar –
Hector: - the two burglars –
Lady Utterword: - the two practical men of business –
Mazzini: - both gone. (160)

Perhaps the audience is meant to believe that final judgement has been given, since the play has been purged of capitalists and pirates, a thieving villainy both one and the same. I would disagree with the tendency to immediately recognize the thieves as the core source of corruption in England; they are only a symptom. No solution has been found, since these scoundrels are easily replaced. What remains of Heartbreak House and England offers limited hope of a rebirth that will surpass age-old problems. Before we can consider Mangan as a Phantasm Captain, it is important to draw attention to the real dilemma England has run aground upon in Shaw’s drama. Though the likes of Mangan and Billie Dunn are a blight upon the nation, the problems begin with the Carlylean diagnosis of a governing class which fails to govern.
Of all the other plays, *Heartbreak House* most resembles the misguided, hero-deprived England Carlyle describes in *Past and Present*. Shaw begins his preface by noting that *Heartbreak House* signifies “cultured, leisured Europe before the war” (7) whose “overheated drawing room atmosphere was delivering the world over to the control of ignorant and soulless cunning and energy” (7). In a Carlylean manner of speaking, the irresponsibility of “illustrious game-preserving Dukes” has opened the way for the “sumptuous Merchant-Princes.” The political situation in pre-war England is comparable to the compartmentalized head of Broadbent in *John Bull's Other Island*. Larry Doyle, his business partner, remarks that Broadbent’s head is full of “political nonsense” (*JBOI* 83) and has “all its ideas in watertight compartments, and all the compartments warranted impervious to anything that doesn’t suit [him] to understand” (83); the resulting division allows Broadbent to profess his utmost devotion to the needs of the Irish one day and act contradictorily the next, by mortgaging all the Irish farmers of Rosscullen out of their land. Similarly, England’s heads of state in *Heartbreak House* are afflicted with a division in understanding between the act of governing “efficiently” and the ability to govern soundly. Shaw writes in the preface:

In short, power and culture were in separate compartments. The barbarians were not only literally in the saddle, but on the front bench in the House of Commons, with nobody to correct their incredible ignorance of modern thought and political science but upstarts from the counting-house, who had spent their lives furnishing their pockets instead of their minds. Both, however, were practised in dealing with money and with men, as far as acquiring the one and exploiting the other went; and although this is as undesirable an expertness as that of the medieval robber baron, it qualifies men to keep an estate or a business going in its old routine without necessarily understanding it. (10, emphasis added)
Notice that the same issue arises concerning the abuse of people for the sake of acquiring money, brought on by the same ignorance of proper management. National leadership has been relegated to the same function of disingenuous ownership: a routinisation that perpetuates and steadily accentuates problems in the current system. The lack of correspondence between culture and power (brains and action) has created a void of leadership, and let fall the opportunity for properly guided action. To speak in terms of the dialectic, a synthesis is needed. The proper navigation of the ship of state requires a fusion between the "upstarts from the counting-house" (who know business) and the aristocratic, semi-learned, estate-holders (who know culture). However, even the cooperation of these weak-willed routineers would not be enough. They would require guidance under the dominating, capable hand of a Real Captain: "it was not enough to seek the company of the ordinary man of action: one had to get into contact with the master spirits" (HH 31). But, as Michael Kaufman notes, there is a dissonance of such a dialectic throughout the play: a "failure to harmonize the dialectical polarities reflects the continuing failure of the English leaders to exert their wills to replace the destructive self-indulgence with creative self-realization that alone may lead to a better society" (9). And, I would add, no hero, industrial or otherwise, appears to unite, amend, or overthrow the common governors. As we will come to realize in the proceeding pages, Heartbreak House begins with a great deficit of leadership, promises some hope of salvation in the illusory reputations of Mangan and Hastings Utterword and the revelatory speeches of Shotover, but ultimately fails to offer a new helmsman. Consequently, the bombs fall and are called upon to return the next night.
Who is this master spirit (better than ordinary men of action) that Shaw prophesies and why does this figure not find maturation in the setting of this play? Shaw offers three possible sources of leadership: Captain Shotover, the aged seaman possessing a prophetic awareness now inextricable from his growing senility; Sir Hastings Utterword, the efficient colonial governor; and Boss Mangan, the practical man of business and man of action, a Napoleon of Industry. The Heartbreakers are not included in the list because, as Shaw writes in the preface, the Heartbreak people are “helpless wasters of their inheritance” ineffective even to the public affairs they take on as their sole duty (“dilettante-ing their way through public office,” as Carlyle wrote). Hector Hushabye may be the most charismatic of characters, but for all his style, bravado, and acute intelligence, he makes a hopeless master. His games of romance, acts of chivalry, and evenings of dressing-up as heroes (Lawrence of Arabia, for example), has created the “the overheated drawing room delivering the world into the control of ignorant and soulless cunning and energy.” In the words of Julian Kaye in Bernard Shaw and the Nineteenth Century, “[t]he vitalism of Shaw’s heroines and the courage of Carlyle’s “hero” have been debased to romantic illusions by Hesione and Hector Hushabye” (17). Don Juan, from the Hell scene of Man and Superman, summarizes Shaw’s desperation at these helpless wasters and sets up a theoretical frame for viewing the Shavian universe:

... Hell is the home of the unreal and of the seekers of happiness. It is the only refuge from Heaven, which is, as I tell you, the home of the masters of reality, and from earth, which is the home of the slaves of reality. The earth is a nursery in which men and women play at being heroes and heroines, saints and sinners. ... [In Hell] you call your appearance beauty, your emotions love, your sentiments heroism, your aspirations virtue, just as you did on earth; but here there are no hard facts to contradict you, no ironic
contrast of your needs with your pretensions, no human comedy, nothing but a perpetual romance, a universal melodrama. . . . In Heaven, as I picture it, dear lady, you live and work instead of playing and pretending. (139-40)²⁷

The Heartbreakers' amusements resemble the "universal melodrama" that is Hell; but, unlike the afterlife, their actions do have consequences in the real world. Rather, it is their complete lack of affirmative action that has sent the ship of England "on the rocks." Hesione calls the bombing of their town "a glorious experience" (160), "like an orchestra: it's like Beethoven" (158); only romantic illusion could lead a Heartbreaker to aesthetically glorify a World War that threatens to end the aristocratic legacy of England which permits Hesione's life of playful pretending while in ignorance of its consequence. Therefore, while Hector, Hesione, and Ariadne may appeal to the audience's sense of Byronic wonder, their comfort is damnation, an irresponsible wasting Shaw heartily condemns.

Conversely to this aristocratic world of romanticised and exaggerated adventures, Shaw has provided Shotover, 'a real man of action.' Or at least, he was once, during the prime of his life: "I was ten times happier on the bridge in the typhoon, or frozen into Arctic ice for months in darkness" (HH 128). Now Shotover battles the dementia of old age:

I am in my second childhood. I do not see you as you really are. I can't remember what I really am. 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. (130, emphasis added)

While Shotover's other-worldliness causes his wisdom to manifest in ways most extraordinary, these spontaneous daydreams remain a major impediment to his desire to fight against the corrupt world and "[t]o kill fellows like Mangan" (HH 86). His inability
to cope with the swift movement of reality keeps him on the periphery as a Carlylean "Real Captain" retreats from a world that fails to recognise his wisdom: "[the Real Captain is] in silence, in sad isolation somewhere, in remote obscurity; trying if, in an evil ungoverned time, he cannot at least govern himself" (Latter-Day Pamphlets 20). Unfortunately, Shotover cannot even govern himself at all times, but in spite of this fact, he delivers an important message about self-determination and realism fundamental to the basic formation of any Shavian boss.

Shotover's explanation for the poor state of the nation greatly resembles Don Juan's consternation of the pleasurable dreaming of Hell and his entreaty for more steering and less drifting in Man and Superman. The absence of will and progress associated with the "happiness of yielding and dreaming instead of resisting and doing" had originally been articulated through the character of Don Juan as he described "the universal melodrama" of Hell. The theme/metaphor is further explored later in his conversation with the Devil:

The Devil: What is the use of knowing?
Don Juan: Why, to be able to choose the line of greatest advantage instead of yielding in the direction of the least resistance. Does a ship sail to its destination no better than a log drifts nowhither? . . . to be in Hell is to drift: to be in Heaven is to steer.
The Devil: On the rocks, most likely.
Don Juan: Pooh! which ship goes oftenest on the rocks or to the bottom? the drifting ship or the ship with a pilot on board? (169)

Heartbreak House serves to illustrate why Man and Superman is heedful of drifting and yielding in the direction of least resistance. With the herald of war about to thunder through the indolent night of the Heartbreak home, the conversation turns to premonition as Shotover warns against the purposeless acquiescence of one's life and of nation's government:
Shotover: Let a man drink ten barrels of rum a day, he is not a drunken skipper until he is a drifting skipper. Whilst he can lay his course and stand on his bridge and steer it, he is no drunkard. It is the man who lies drinking in his bunk and trusts to Providence that I call the drunken skipper, though he drank nothing but the waters of the River Jordan. (156)

Hector: And this ship we are all in? This soul’s prison we call England?
Shotover: The captain is in his bunk, drinking bottled ditch-water; and the crew is gambling in the forecastle. She will strike and sink and split. Do you think the laws of God will be suspended in favor of England because you were born in it?
Hector: Well I dont mean to be drowned like a rat in a trap. I still have the will to live. What am I to do?
Hector: And what may my business as an Englishman be, pray?
Shotover: Navigation. Learn it and live; or leave it and be damned. (156)

And so we have returned to the fundamental quality of the veritable Captain of Industry, the headstrong, enlightened hero of Carlyle’s calling. Like Ruskin’s Pilot of State, “the helm and guide of labour far and near,” Shaw (through the voice of Shotover) posits the key principles to life and government as “simple navigation.” Naturally, the metaphor here applies to more than business practice, or government; yet, the significance of navigation in the context of Life (as in the process of evolution) logically connects from the macrocosm to the microcosm: the government of the ship of state depends upon the management of trusts and companies, just as being capable of properly expressing one’s own will and directing one’s energies improves effectiveness in larger arenas.

Epifania, Bossborn, and Undershaft, along with the many other Shavian characters of superior wills (the born bosses) can all be said to know the business of navigation on top of the business of life, whether it be industrial, commercial, governmental, or military pursuits. And, as we shall see, the leaders of business like Mangan and Broadbent fail as
Shavian heroes, since they only understand the business of the Englishman to be the pursuit of profit, and do not connect those ventures with any higher will or determination towards world-bettering.

If not Hector nor Shotover, and not yet Ellie, who else will take England’s helm and steer her from the rocks? Sir Hastings Utterword never appears on the stage but his reputation places him as a player in this drama. A “numskull” (53, 145), Shotover names him, describing him later as resembling the figure-head of his ship: “[Hastings] had the same expression: wooden yet enterprising” (53). Hastings, the imperialist who tames foreign lands into serving the needs of England, represents a potential symbol of leadership, if it were not for Shotover’s disparagement and the supposedly admirable talents his brother and wife say he possesses. Randall Utterword marvels at his brother’s “gift of being able to work sixteen hours a day at the dullest detail, and actually likes it. That gets him to the top wherever he goes” (132). Ariadne, expressing similar appreciation of her husband’s practical (though dull and brainless) activity, proposes that Hastings is indeed the answer to the question of who will save the country: “Get rid of your ridiculous sham democracy; and give Hastings the necessary powers, and a good supply of bamboo to bring the British native to his senses: he will save the country with the greatest ease” (145). Shotover quickly deflates Ariadne’s praise of Hastings methods of control, indicating it is nothing like true leadership at all: “Any fool can govern with a stick in his hand. I could govern that way. It is not God’s way: The man is a numskull.” (145). Shotover maintained the obedience of a crew “so degraded that they wouldn’t obey me unless I swore at them and kicked them and beat them with my fists” (127) by convincing them he had sold himself to the devil in Zanzibar: “It saved my soul from the
kicking and swearing that was damning me by inches” (127). Hastings, despite his basic manner of management, is not a model for leadership. In the essay “Shaw’s Blakean Vision: A Dialectical Approach to Heartbreak House,” D. J. Leary hits upon the deficits of Hastings’ leadership:

Hastings Utterword has but to utter the word and it shall be done in the world of practical men, but like Warren Hastings, the first governor-general of British India, he might very well be impeached for using despotic methods to obtain such control. He is power with no desire – Randall can have Ariadne; power with no imagination – he can work sixteen hours a day on dull details; power with no will – he is without purpose or mission. (98)

Hastings is without the vitality, the power of mind, to become more than just a tyrant. His ability to ride “roughshod over people” has nothing to do with a “mysterious personal force.” If anything, his “wooden yet enterprising” procedure renders him little more than a tool of Empire, a “commonplace numskull” capable only of following a routine. His lack of innovation or charismatic inspiration will only eventually decay into imperial disorganisation, chaos, as it so does with the outbreak of World War I.

I have dwelt upon Hastings, as way of illustrating some of the prime deficiencies in the character of Mangan, since the two are set as thematic doubles: “[Hastings] represents stupidity in imperial government, as Mangan represents stupidity in domestic government” (Wisenthal 155). Mangan’s other double (as mentioned previously) is the thief Billie Dunn, and his antithetical doubles (at various intervals) are Shotover, Ellie, and Mazzini. While the contrast between Mangan and Ellie establishes an inversion of strength in the poles of masculinity and femininity, the rich and the poor, the conventional bosses at the political, economic, and domestic levels and the ones who must typically obey, the relationship between Mangan, Mazzini, and Shotover connects
to the larger scope of my argument. The relationships established in *John Bull's Other Island* between Tom Broadbent, Larry Doyle, and Peter Keegan reflect the triangle of *Heartbreak House*, although, I would argue, it is far more complementary, at least between Broadbent and Larry. These two triangles then later culminate in the tripartite union of Andrew Undershaft, Adolphus Cusins, and "Major" Barbara. The order I set the names in is deliberate. Mangan, Broadbent, and Undershaft are all the capitalist Captains of Industry. Mazzini, Larry, and Cusins all figure on a continuum of intellect, who range from being unaware of power dynamics to quite cognisant. Also, all three work under the boss character, again on a continuum from an abused underling to a well-matched partner. Shotover, Keegan, and Barbara all introduce a spiritual, heavenly insight that functions to draw our attention to issues that exist above the basic matters of money and management, infusing into each drama the values of salvation and damnation that are otherwise not addressed by any of the other characters. Of anyone, it is the latter set that are most like Carlyle and Ruskin (and perhaps Shaw, too); they bring a judicious tone to a situation where there would only otherwise exist value judgements based upon profit and loss, power and control, politics and economics. These salvationists are offered as a means of completing the Captain of Industry, of informing the mysterious personal force of a higher will, of giving it purpose and direction. To once again draw upon the nautical analogy: Mangan/Broadbent/Undershaft represent the commanders of the physical, the organizers who deal with the practical business of running any vessel or organization; Shotover/Keegan/Barbara represent the compasses that provide a direction, a heavenly magnetism, making them, in some sense, the true helmsmen; Mazzini/Larry/Cusins alternately represent the first mates who act as a complementary intelligence for the
captain, a sort of second sight, but also represent the subordinate crew who serve under the cooperative navigation of compass and pilot. Exploring the interconnected relevance of each character in these triangles will be necessary to fully understand the Shavian Captain of Industry.

However, equally important, we need to examine how each boss stands on his own before these relationships can be fully examined. Let us then consider Shaw’s presentation of Mangan’s character. Before Mangan enters upon the scene, his reputation precedes him. Hesione makes first mention of Mangan, labeling him as “a perfect hog of a millionaire” (59), “a Napoleon of industry and disgustedly rich” (63). Ellie comes to his defence by telling Hesione the story of how “Mr. Mangan did an extraordinarily noble thing out of pure friendship for [her] father” (63). Mazzini Dunn received from Mangan an amount of capital – not a loan or an investment, a genuine gift – that allowed him to begin his own business. Unfortunately, as Ellie explains, when her father launched the enterprise on a large scale, he incurred liabilities, faced bankruptcy, and the business went into liquidation. Ellie and Hesione’s conversation ensues with the following remarks:

Hesione: I suppose your father had no head for business, and made a mess of it.
Ellie: Oh, that just shews how entirely you are mistaken about him. The business turned out to be a great success. It now pays forty-four per cent after deducting the excess profits tax.
Hesione: Then why arnt you rolling in money?
Ellie: I dont know. It seems very unfair to me. (64)

Lucky for Ellie and her father, “the Boss [came] to the rescue again” (65) and “bought what was left of the business – the buildings and the machinery and things” (65), and made Mazzini a minor manager, enough to save them from starvation. Ellie finishes
relating the history of Mangan’s involvement with her family with how a “chance” (the irony lies with both the providential and unintentional) encounter with him began their relationship: “Of course it was considered a great chance for me, as he is so rich. And—and—we drifted\textsuperscript{36} into a sort of understanding—I should call it an engagement” (65, emphasis added).

So far Mangan comes across as a benevolent hero, almost a gentleman were it not for the lecherous overtones in his “understanding” with Ellie. His reputation will quickly decline once he appears on stage. Shaw’s stage directions describing Mangan contain some of the least flattering details compared to most other character introductions; in fact, “Mangan is perhaps the least agreeable character in Shaw’s plays, with scarcely a single redeeming quality” (Wisenthal 152):

\begin{quote}
\textit{Boss Mangan . . . is about fiftyfive, with a careworn, mistrustful expression, standing a little on an entirely imaginary dignity, with a dull complexion, straight, lustreless hair, and features so entirely commonplace that it is impossible to describe them.} (73)
\end{quote}

The adjectives, “dull,” “lustreless,” and “entirely commonplace,” hardly correspond to the exceptionally noticeable presence of other bosses like Epifania or Bossborn. The emphasis on his mundanity already points towards the possibility he is a “commonplace numskull” in business. Nothing about Mangan is attractive; he is without any of Shotover’s magnetism. The “entirely imaginary dignity” becomes more apparent later on; first in an exchange with Shotover:

\begin{quote}
Mangan: \textit{[playing the strong man]} . . . I never made up my mind to do a thing yet that I didn’t bring it off. That’s the sort of man I am; and there will be a better understanding between us when you make up your mind to that, Captain.
Shotover: You frequent picture palaces.
Mangan: Perhaps I do. Who told you?
Shotover: Talk like a man, not like a movy. (75)
\end{quote}
Shotover, with his typical penetrating insight, lights upon the key feature of Mangan’s character, in that he is just that: a character, one that is both fictional and lifted from fiction. Mangan is a poseur, an even worse one than Hector, since his boastings are an illusion: his powers and riches are phantasmal; they do not really exist.

The façade Mangan cultivates can be traced to the popular fiction of the earlier Victorian era. Hesione, perhaps again with her irony, describes Mangan in a way that is remarkably similar to the mass literature of the mid-nineteenth century, which was “intended to please the tired and bored mind of the working man” (Melada 62). These penny press publications appealed to the sensational, attacked “all kinds of lawful authority” (63) and made full use of the stereotypical image of the lecherous and greedy factory owner. For example, G. W. M. Reynolds’ story “The Manufacturer” (1849) and Paul Pimlico’s “The Factory Girl” (1849) both employ a narrative in which employers seduce or attempt to seduce an honest working girl (Melada 63-73). Hesione creates a sensational image associated with those penny dreadfuls, while also imbuing Mangan with the tough overlord-of-the-factory-floor iconography alluded to in the chivalry of hard labour of Past and Present:

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... (101)

However, Hesione’s imaginings are mistaken. Mangan has never dealt with the hard facts of industry. As well, there is nothing brutish or hard about is manner, not to say that
he has any of Hector's gentle strength or charm. Like Randall, he is a "rotter," in other words, a cowardly bully who cries when his posturing meets confrontation.

Only partially caught in the misinformed muddle of his sympathies, Mazzini dispels Hesione's notion that Mangan is anything similar to a Captain of Industry:

Bless you, dear Mrs Hushabye, what romantic ideas of business you have! Poor dear Mangan isn't a bit like that... he doesn't know anything about machinery. He never goes near the men: he couldn't manage them: he is afraid of them. I can never 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. (101)

Mangan, as a *faux* industrialist, does not in anyway relate to the mill owners Carlyle valorized for his Captain of Industry image. These early industrialists (before the extreme routinisation of labour on manufacturing lines) often built their companies from the floor up and, on that floor, worked beside their employees, developing a bond with both man and machine. How can Mangan thump his boss title with pride when he is too afraid to face his own workers?

A quick answer to that would be to say Mangan is confusing his false success in industry with his cunning in finance (which is partially illusory, as well). Mangan's Napoleonic reputation plummets. Once a threatening symbol of power above most people, we witness the steady undoing of his "movy talking" character. In a manner of speaking, as Mangan's "bloated capitalist" (*HH* 85) ego is stripped away, he becomes reduced to the bare human state of raw emotion, and then, as if it were not enough, rendered into mere bits by the finale's explosion. Mangan's first confrontation of the play already hints at the weakness he hides. At three separate intervals during Mangan's dialogue with Shotover, the stage directions describe him as "*staggered*" (74),
“weakening” (75), and retorting “feebly” (76). Even when facing Ellie, after proudly explaining how he ruined her father on purpose,³⁸ his puffed up front is easily deflated:

Mangan: Of course you don’t understand: what do you know about business? ... [He explains how his business functions as a series of investments, bankruptcies, and buyouts] ... If it’s really a big thing the third lot will have to sell out too, and leave their work and their money behind them. And that’s where the real businessman comes in: where I come in. But I’m cleverer³⁹ than some: I don’t mind dropping a little money to start the process. I took your father’s measure... I am a man that knows how to take care of himself. [He throws himself back into the big chair with large self-approval]. Now what do you think of me, Miss Ellie? Ellie: How strange! That my mother, who knew nothing at all about business, should have been quite right about you! She always said ... that you were just that sort of man.
Mangan: [sitting up, much hurt] Oh! did she? (94-95)

It is ironic that Mangan, who plays the strongman (while Hastings is the strongman and Shotover is above coercion) and supposedly thrives on confrontation, cannot deal with the turmoil of Heartbreak House. By the middle of Act two, he has become an emotional wreck. Understandably, he was made a plaything after being half hypnotized and left to hear everybody’s true opinion about him: “I’m nothing but a disgusting old skinflint to be made a convenience of by designing women and fool managers of my works, am I?” (111). And, like Ellie, his heart has been broken by the Hushabyes. After seeing “depths of emotion suddenly welling up in [Mangan]” (111), Hesione orders him not to cry and denies it is even possible he could have a broken heart:

Mangan: I’m a man aint I?
Mrs Hushabye: [half coaxing, half rallying, altogether tenderly] Oh no: not what I call a man. Only a Boss: just that and nothing else.
What business has a Boss with a heart? (112)

She relinquishes her de-humanisation of Mangan after learning that he has a “Christian” name, “Alfred”: “And you have a heart, Alfy, a whimpering little heart, but a real one”
The stage is set for Mangan’s salvation: his pomp has been removed; his hardness has been smashed; and he has been reintroduced as a real human. But, no epiphany occurs. Mangan fails to use a dialectical form of confrontation to find synthesis among the inhabitants and guests of Heartbreak House. In the next act, he has again lost all composure, and as he attempts to undress himself (unsuccessfully), he proves how little he has learned: “We’ve stripped ourselves morally naked: well, let us strip ourselves physically naked... I tell you I cant bear this. I was brought up to be respectable. . . . How are we to have any self-respect if we dont keep it up that we’re better than we really are” (146-47). Kaufman would say that the failure is part of Shaw’s “stress [on] the absence of the characters’ will to achieve the synthesis of which such resources are indeed capable” (6). Mangan’s failure at “creative synthesis” (Kaufman 6) may also be part of the play’s “symmetrical balance” (6), as a diametrical opposite of Ellie: “Mangan’s development in the play is directly antithetical to Ellie’s: while Ellie progresses to womanhood, Mangan is stripped of all his pretenses to manhood” (Wisenthal 153). When comforted by Hesione, Ellie rebukes her sympathy: “Oh dont slop and gush and be sentimental” (107); later, Hesione the gushy sentimentalist, says of Mangan: “I never met a man so greedy for sympathy” (139).41

We have just witnessed what makes Mangan a failure as a basic human being, and now we must consider what not only makes “the creature a fraud even as a captain of industry” (103), but also the near opposite of that Carlylean hero. Now we begin our transition to John Bull’s Other Island as we examine how, in many similar ways, Mangan and Broadbent not only fail, but also counteract the very code of the Captain of Industry.
Section Four

John Bull's Other Island
Buoyant but Brainless: The Unsinkable Broadbent and His Unnavigated Success

Though I have devoted this section to the analysis of Tom Broadbent and John Bull's Other Island, I would like to make an overlap with the previous section so that both the similarities and dissimilarities between Mangan and Broadbent may stand out more clearly. I stated above that we have finished analyzing the human details of Mangan's character, presumably shifting to the larger social perspective of Mangan's business activities. Evaluating Shaw's Captains of Industry, however, incorporates both their socio-political and economic relevance as well as the most basic of human attributes: physical constitution and primary/primal mental faculties, i.e. the instinctive. The primal nature in each of Shaw's boss characters represents, in various ways, the Life Force. They have been instilled with 'a will not their own' or with 'some mysterious personal force' by the processes of Life. Shaw's Creative Evolution is both mental (spiritual in the sense of intellect) and physical: they are both interdependent, but as Don Juan says, "Life was driving at brains" (150), to the plane of pure intellect. Therefore, we should be skeptical of Mangan when we read his uncomplimentary description (dull, lusterless, commonplace) and hear him say, while "shuddering liverishly" (92): "Too rich: I can't eat such things [macaroni]. I suppose it's because I have to work so much with my brain. That's the worst of if being a man of business: you are always thinking, thinking, thinking" (92). His unhealthy disposition complements his unattractive appearance and rude manners. As for the use of his brain and the business of thinking, thinking, thinking, we should read it as a ruse or at least a contradiction. If Mangan really is as intelligent as he claims, he should not be foiled at every confrontation with the
people of Heartbreak House. He should be able to assert himself as “master of the situation” (*IWG* 202), yet he later fails to even be the master of his own emotions.

Adolphus Cusins, the professor of Greek from *Major Barbara*, has a similar weakness of health that distinguishes him as a thinker. Conversely, his “wrecked constitution” (*MB* 62) develops from more noble and enlightened activities than Mangan’s “brainwork.” Cusins’ desire to improve the world, to think beyond his own situation, may weaken his body, but his pursuits overshadow Mangan’s paper pushing and money mongering.

While Cusins needs only a proper outlet for his energies (Baskin 145), he is at least closer to the “proper social use of brains” (*IWG* 345). The problem with Mangan is that he applies his energy to “soulless cunning” (*HH* 7); he wastes his intelligence and his body upon unfulfilling, petty tasks: “[Mangan] will sit up all night thinking of how to save sixpence” (*HH* 10). All the other Captains of Industry considered in this argument (even the elderly Undershaft) have a vigour that remains absent in Mangan. They have a desire for productivity and far-reaching objectives that Mangan does not fully grasp.

As if to prove that vigour, productivity, and big goals are not enough to guarantee a perfect leader (industrial or otherwise), Shaw has created Tom Broadbent. This bumptious civil engineer illustrates how vitality does not necessarily translate into impressive cognisance. We might at first assume Broadbent possesses some capacity for great thought when the stage directions describe him as “*a robust full-blooded, energetic man in the prime of life, sometimes eager and credulous, sometimes shrewd and roguish, sometimes portentously solemn, sometimes jolly and impetuous, always buoyant and irresistible, mostly likeable, and enormously absurd in his most earnest moments*” (69-70). The “buoyant and irresistible” presence of Broadbent should, as a spectacle, make
him an impressive character. Shaw intends to at least gain some of our appreciation for Broadbent by investing the fellow with an energy to be admired. In contrast to Mangan’s dyspeptic problems with macaroni, Broadbent’s heartiness, a “eupletic jollity” (75), enables him to imbibe a good quantity of “illicitly distilled whisky, called potcheen” (102), which even revives his appetite. Hodson, his valet, attests to the strength of the liquor: “I just took a mouthful, sir. It tasted of peat: oh! something horrid, sir... I’m sure I don’t know how they can stand it” (108); then again, Hodson is described as being of “indifferent health” (69).

As the play progresses, we soon notice that other facets of Broadbent’s temperament counterbalance the virtues of his vitality, stopping him short of earning the reputation of an undaunted hero. In the preface to *John Bull’s Other Island*, Shaw includes some more words to help us better comprehend the merit of Broadbent’s character: “[The English audiences] were perfectly willing to allow me to present Tom Broadbent as infatuated in politics, hypnotized by his newspaper leader-writers and parliamentary orators into an utter paralysis of his common sense, without moral delicacy or social tact, provided I made him cheerful, robust, goodnatured, free from envy, and above all, a successful muddler-through in business and love” (8). *Past and Present* concerns itself with the English national character as well, at one point saying in the chapter entitled “The English,” “Of all Nations in the world at present the English are the stupidest in speech, the wisest in action” (154), a near perfect description of Broadbent (with an ironic twist on “wisest”). A similar line is echoed in *Man and Superman*’s “Epistle Dedicatory,” which could serve to illustrate Broadbent less as an Englishman, but more as a man of practical and efficient business: “The secret of the prosaic man’s
success, such as it is, is the simplicity with which he pursues these ends” (16, as qtd. in Wisenthal 95). Indeed, Broadbent’s commonness does not relate to his outward appearance and exuberance, but deals more with the simplicity with which he understands any given situation. His success lies in the fact that he cannot discern any complicated matters before him, so he barges through delicate situations ‘brilliantly.’ Broadbent succeeds in his exploits as “a result not of his efficiency, but of his self-confidence and—primarily—his simple acquisitiveness” (Wisenthal 95). Even though Larry Doyle, Broadbent’s partner at the land office, brings (or attempts to bring) intelligent awareness into the partnership, Broadbent still ignores all sensible realities and forges ahead. When Larry realizes the foolishness of Broadbent’s electioneering tactics, he says, “You say the Irish sense of humour is in abeyance. Well, if you drive through Rosscullen in a motor car with Haffigan’s pig, it wont stay in abeyance. Now I warn you.” (131). Even after the ensuing crash that kills the pig and destroys part of “the main sthreet o Rosscullen on market day” (133), Broadbent fails to see the laughter about him, and so is not cowed enough to keep from making speeches. The same ignorant simplicity gains him the hand of Nora, who has longingly waited eighteen years for Larry’s return. Again, he ignores Larry’s words and remains lulled in the wonder of Nora’s Irish beauty. He treads right over Nora and Larry’s angst-ridden, futile romance to procure the wife that will help him win his Rosscullen seat.

Mangan fails at love; Broadbent succeeds. Mangan seems more the prosaic man in his appearance; Broadbent, despite his charm, is far more “stupid in speech.” His electioneering for the Parliament seat of Rosscullen reveals the Broadbent who is “infatuated in politics, hypnotized by his newspaper leader-writers and parliamentary
orators into an utter paralysis of his common sense.” The speech he gives towards
the end of Act** three (122-24) pieces together the political buzzwords of the day
(for example: peace, retrenchment, reform, decadent Imperialism, and freedom of
conscience), being no more than the clichés of the Liberal Party he thinks he supports.
Corresponding perfectly with his compartmentalised brain, Broadbent paradoxically both
exemplifies and undoes Carlyle’s grand portrait of John Bull, a well-known stereotype
of the English:

Unconsciously, for thou speakest of nothing, this great Universe is
great to thee. Not by levity of floating, but by stubborn force of
swimming, shalt thou make thy way. . . . Thy very stupidity is
wiser than their wisdom. A grand vis inertiae is in thee; how many
great qualities unknown to small men! Nature alone knows thee,
acknowledges the bulk and strength of thee: thy, Epic, unsung in
words, is written in huge characters on the face of this Planet,
—sea-moles, cotton-trades, railways, fleets and cities . . . Ask Bull
his spoken opinion of any matter,—oftentimes the force of dulness
can no farther go. You stand silent, incredulous, 44 as over a
platitude that borders on the Infinite. . . . you call the man an ox
and an ass. 45 But set him once to work,—respectable man! His
spoken sense is next to nothing, nine-tenths of it palpable
nonsense: but his unspoken sense, his inner silent feeling of what is
true, what does agree with fact, what is doable and what is not
doable. . . A terrible worker; irresistible against marshes,
mountains, impediments, disorder, incivilisation; everywhere
vanquishing disorder, leaving it behind him as method and order. .
. . Nay withal, stupid as he is, our dear John,—ever, after infinite
tumblings, and spoken platitudes innumerable from barrel-heads
and parliament-benches, he does settle down somewhere about the
just conclusion; you are certain that his jumblings and tumblings
will end, after years or centuries, in the stable equilibrium. 46
Stable equilibrium, I say; centre-of-gravity lowest;—not the
unstable, with centre-of-gravity highest, as I have known it done
by quicker people! (154-56)

Carlyle’s character sketch of John Bull parallels much of the events occurring in John
Bull’s Other Island, and yet, Broadbent easily represents the antithesis of the hopefulness
in Carlyle’s conception. The successes of Shaw’s “prosaic man” foil basic evaluation.
Shaw, like Carlyle, may admire the “grand $vis\ inertiae$ [power of inertia]” of these characters and commend their ability to get things done, but unlike Carlyle, he does not overly appreciate their simple wisdom. Shaw still values intelligence over brawny exploit. More insight into the English character-type and the value of active thought can be taken from the section “Our Temperaments Contrasted” of the preface for *John Bull’s Other Island*: “The Englishman . . . jumps to the conclusion that wilfulness is the main thing. In this he is right. But he overdoes his jump so far as to conclude also that stupidity and wrong-headedness are better guarantees of efficiency and trustworthiness than intellectual vivacity” (14). Broadbent, similar to Mangan, lacks the kind of intelligence required to sustain a vision that sees beyond the immediate concerns of this world into the world of the spirit (what Keegan and Shotover look upon).

Carlyle’s John Bull succeeds not by “levity of floating, but by stubborn force of swimming” (154). My section heading stated that Broadbent succeeds through his unnavigated buoyancy: part luck, part tactlessness, and part the result of what Mazzini calls running into nothing but jellyfish (*HH* 155) (the inhabitants of Rosscullen provide no resistance). Broadbent does exert effort, yet the success of his “swimming” has more to do with the “stubborn force” of his English temperament: earnestness qualified by “simple acquisitiveness” (Wisenthal 95). Now, of course (for both Shaw and Carlyle), a John Bull is not a Captain of Industry; nonetheless, the two types are alike in that they know what is “doable” and have the force of character to get it done. With Carlyle, the distinctions between John Bull and the Captain of Industry are quite apparent in that the Captain has more heroism in leadership and a singleness of purpose in tasks *without* the excessive talking. In the argument of *Past and Present*, Carlyle seems to be using John
Bull to caricature the English politicians and plutocrats who feel that English industry and guidance will civilise the world with headstrong, unenlightened force. Shaw is doing much the same in *John Bull's Other Island*. Broadbent closely resembles the stereotypical John Bull, and he, too, rather seems to be a caricature of a Captain of Industry. However, he is not mocking the Carlylean Captain of Industry. Through Broadbent's conquests, Shaw is demonstrating how, in the present state of England and empire, what succeeds is not the greatest genius, but the bluntest of minds. Interestingly, the only character to be named a Captain of Industry in a play is an ironic caricature of the Captain of Industry. By having Hesione stereotypically label Boss Mangan a slave-driving factory owner, Shaw presents Mangan as a “stage capitalist,” which suits Mangan, since he survives on surface appearance. He is not an industrialist who gets work done, but is rather a “Promoter” or financier building a false reality around his “abilities” and the syndicate. As it is revealed, Mangan even fails to “live up to” the stereotypes of the factory tyrant or shrewd financier; or, in the words of Lady Utterword: “There is no pleasing you, Mr. Mangan. You are determined to be neither rich nor poor, honest nor dishonest” (151).

The tumbling, but driven, John Bull and the powerful, but just, Captain of Industry are part of an ethic or theory of life that Carlyle and Shaw share. Ibsen, whose drama notably influenced Shaw, also belongs to or at least refers to this worship of industry and industrialists. *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896) connects at some level with both the grand spirit and productive energy admired by Carlyle and Shaw. Twenty years after having been convicted of embezzlement, five spent in prison and the rest in self-imposed confinement to the upper floor of his house, John Gabriel Borkman ventures
outside into the night’s snowstorm where he will eventually die. In his last moments, accompanied by Ella, his wife’s sister whom he once loved, Borkman slips into the dreams he could not fulfil:

Borkman: Can you see the smoke of the great steamships out there on the fjord?
Ella: No, John.
Borkman: I can see it! All over the world they go—spreading friendship and understanding—Bringing light and warmth to thousands of homes. That’s what I dreamed of doing!
Ella: [softly] And it remained a dream.
Borkman: Yes, it remained a dream. [Listening] And down there by the river—the factories are humming! Can you hear them? My factories! All those I would have created! . . . Can’t you hear them, Ella?
Ella: No, John.
Borkman: I can hear them!
Ella: [Anxiously] I think you’re mistaken, John.
Borkman: [More and more inspired] But these are only the outworks of the kingdom!
Ella: The kingdom? What kingdom?
Borkman: My kingdom of course! . . . Do you see the great peaks soaring—towering behind the other? That is my vast, my infinite, my inexhaustible kingdom!
Ella: An icy wind blows from that kingdom, John!
Borkman: It is the breath of life to me! . . . I can feel the veins of metal stretching out their arms to me; their wide-spread, branching, luring arms! In the vault of the banks that night, as I stood there with a lantern in my hand, they came to me as in a vision. You begged to be liberated and I tried to free you. But my strength failed me, and the treasure sank back into the earth again. (437-8)

Mammon worshipper or Captain hero? Borkman seems a tragic mix of the two. His dream of creating industry begins with a social conscience, but seems to degenerate into a fetish for minerals, an intimate materialism. I say it “seems to degenerate” because there is the ambiguous possibility that Borkman is moving beyond his present existence and into a higher state. A metallic transcendentalism? How are we to read “the metal hand” that clutches Borkman’s heart, taking his life?
Mangan certainly has no such vision; his pride grows from cunning swindles; his death has no transcendental connotations. Broadbent sounds similar to Borkman (certainly with the pretence of social conscience) when he says:

You shall never regret it, Mr Keegan: I give you my word for that. I shall bring money here: I shall raise wages: I shall found public institutions: a library, a Polytechnic (nondenominational, of course), a gymnasium, a cricket club, perhaps an art school. I shall make a Garden City of Rosscullen: the Round Tower shall be thoroughly repaired and restored. (158)

As the passage suggests, Keegan has reservations about Broadbent's project; and as Ella's statement ("an icy wind blows from that kingdom") suggests, the kingdom of money and industry does not satisfy all human needs. The shadowy starkness surrounding Borkman's death discourages the sole pursuit of that cold domain. In *John Bull's Other Island*, Keegan provides the weight to counterbalance the otherwise jolly accomplishments of Broadbent. Keegan’s dreams are powerful like Borkman’s, but his kingdom, the Heavenly one, differs greatly. Keegan speaks in response to Broadbent’s story that he once dreamt of Heaven as like a tea-room, full of “pale blue satin” and “pious old ladies” (163):

Keegan: 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 godhead in which all life is human and all humanity divine: three in one and one in three. It is, in short, the dream of a madman. [He goes away across the hill]

Broadbent: [Looking after him affectionately] What a regular old Church and State Tory he is! He’s a character: he’ll be an attraction here. Really almost equal to Ruskin and Carlyle. Larry: Yes; and much good they did with all their talk! (163)
Keegan’s spirituality (and all his talk) fails to properly act as a barrier against Broadbent’s nearly uncontainable “gospel of efficiency” (159). In *John Bull’s Other Island* and most of Shaw’s other problem plays, this utilitarian gospel is the law that currently governs society, reducing social relations to a mechanism balancing upon profit and loss, the useful and unusable, generally treating human relationships as disposable resources. As I have stated previously, Keegan acts as a Real Captain attempting to provide guidance to the oblivious many. Like Carlyle and Ruskin, he wants to re-establish real, ‘human’ value (fraternity and stability) in an all-too-efficient world of *laissez-faire*: “But the day 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” (159). Unlike Carlyle and Ruskin, Keegan does not call for heroes and gentlemen, yet he does share their desire for a far-extending Christian concern for fellow people. Unfortunately, like Shotover, Keegan’s retreat into dreaming by the Round Tower indicates his inability to circumvent Broadbent’s conquest of Rosscullen, but his vision promises a future reality beyond the Broadbentian gospel: “For four wicked centuries the world has dreamed this foolish dream of efficiency; and the end is not yet. But the end will come” (160). In response to Keegan’s incisive tirades, Broadbent immediately resorts to the political rhetoric of the day to categorise Keegan, and then turn him into a tourist side-show ready for exploitation (163). The bitter Larry, who probably understands Keegan, Carlyle, and Ruskin, better than Broadbent, dismisses Keegan out of the shameful spite produced by his heart that breaks for a hopeless Ireland.

And yet, perhaps to be expected with the dialectically inclined Shaw, there exists an element of redemptive worth in Broadbent’s enterprise. Shaw states in the play’s
preface that “[t]he virtues of Broadbent are not less real because they are the virtues of money that coal and iron have produced” (8-9). The line echoes Shaw’s treatment of Borkman [1912] in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, in which Shaw announces him as “a Napoleon of finance” (131). He goes on to say, “Ibsen does not make him [Borkman] superficially: he goes to the poetic basis of the type: the love of gold—actual metallic gold—and the idealization of gold through that love” (*Quintessence* 133). In the introduction to a collection of Ibsen drama, translator Eva La Gallienne adds her own qualification of Shaw’s Borkman sketch: “But I think it is power, rather than actual gold, that Borkman loves” (xxxii). I agree for the most part; Borkman’s desire for wealth extends beyond the “love of precious metals” (*Quintessence* 131). Let us reflect back on what Ruskin wrote in “Veins of Wealth” of *Unto This Last* (1862): “What is really desired, under the name of riches, is essentially, power over men” (134). The same could be said of Broadbent. He does not merely want to rebuild Rosscullen and represent it in Parliament to further his liberalist social policies. Broadbent’s move to politics and his business control over the people’s land are meant to give him power. Broadbent never admits to this in the play, but with a brain of watertight subdivisions, he may not fully understand his desires.

Indeed, Broadbent does not fully comprehend the consequences for most of what he is doing. He believes that he will help Rosscullen with his muddled ideas of Gladstonized liberalism (“I’m going to develop this place” [152]) and perhaps Ireland as a whole: “The syndicate [that Broadbent and Larry work under] is a perfectly respectable body of responsible men of good position. We’ll take Ireland in hand, and by straightforward business habits teach it efficiency and self-help on sound Liberal
principles” (*JBOI* 158). Larry and Keegan inform the audience of what Broadbent and his syndicate will really do: abuse and exploit the Irish. I am tempted here to call Broadbent a hypocrite. At least Mangan is a half-honest hypocrite: he gloats over his mean business practices and later admits to having no real capital or power. Yet, somehow, Broadbent believes in himself and places complete trust in his syndicate; he will not let his hopes sink. He nearly reveals a glimmer of consciousness about the shrewdness of the syndicate’s plans, but never lets his optimism falter:

Broadbent: *[W]e, with our capital, our knowledge, and organization, and may I say our English business habits, can make or lose ten pounds out of the land that Haffigan, with all his industry, could not make or lose ten shillings out of. . . . [T]his place may have an industrial future, or it may have a residential future: I cant tell yet; but it’s not going to be a future in the hands of your Dorans and Haffigans, poor devils!* (156)

Keegan: Have you considered what is to become of Haffigan?
Larry: Oh, we’ll employ him in some capacity or other, and probably pay him more than he makes for himself now.
Broadbent: *[dubiously] Do you think so? No no: Haffigan’s too old. . . .* Haffigan had better go to America, or into the Union, poor old chap! (157)

One can feel a cold wind blowing from Broadbent’s future Rosscullen, as Ella might say. For the Irish, little warmth accompanies Broadbent’s jollity, a hollow friendliness with no long-term promise.

To provide better insight into the true nature of the syndicates Broadbent and Mangan represent, let us look out from the perspectives of other characters in *J.B.O.I.* Immediately before Broadbent tells about the “respectable and straightforward” syndicate, Larry offered an entirely different perspective on its land speculations:

Well, our syndicate has no conscience: it has no more regard for your Haffigans and Doolans and Dorans than it has for a gang of Chinese coolies. It will use your patriotic blatherskite and
Larry says this with almost a half-pride. He is a character who has turned in on himself and against his fellow Irish-people out of shame. The last line hints at an ethic within him that resembles the beliefs of Carlyle and Shaw. Indeed, Larry often spouts an economic sense that corroborates with Shaw’s political economy. The only other character in this play to do the same is Keegan. Just as Broadbent took Nora from Larry, he also took the Parliamentary seat Cornelius Doyle was trying to arrange for his son Larry. During his preliminary speech – before Broadbent takes over the crowd – Larry makes his opinions known, much to the dislike of the Rosscullen members (118-121). His explanation of the ailing Irish economy ends with the final solution of the equality or at least equity of income for the most basic of labourers. Curiously, his speech ends with: “in Ireland the people is the Church and the Church the people” (121), a statement that sounds uncannily like Keegan’s “three in one and one in three.” Shaw, Keegan, and Doyle form their own trinity. Unfortunately, Doyle despises Keegan’s dream for Ireland, even though it is much the same as his. Why? Keegan and Broadbent hold completely opposing values, and Doyle has chosen to align himself with Broadbent. By the play’s end, Doyle has lost hope in his Keegan-esque entreaty for equitable wages and “men of honour” (JBOI 120). Instead, he chooses to find solace in the effective action and economic sense (‘real’ power) that Broadbent represents.

I have already revealed how Broadbent bustles Larry out of the way for both Nora and the Parliamentary seat. Yet, Shaw views Broadbent and Larry’s relationship as a
rather complementary one, or at least efficient at the level of business. The preface clearly illustrates the strength of the Larry-Broadbent binary:

No doubt, when the play is performed in Ireland, the Dublin critics will regard it as self-evident that without Doyle Broadbent would have become bankrupt in six months. I should say, myself, that the combination was probably much more effective than either of the partners would have been alone. I am persuaded further – without pretending to know more about it than anyone else – that Broadbent’s special contribution was simply the strength, self-satisfaction, social confidence and cheerful bumptiousness that money, comfort, and good feeling bring to all healthy people; and that Doyle’s special contribution was the freedom from illusion, the power of facing facts, the nervous industry, the sharpened wits, the sensitive pride of the imaginary man who has fought his way up through social persecution and poverty.  

Broadbent and Larry’s partnership severely contrasts with Mangan and Mazzini’s. The latter couple is in no way complementary. Mangan basically fattened Mazzini with capital to prepare him for a butchering liquidation. As well, Mazzini, “a little elderly man with bulging credulous eyes and earnest manners,” (61) contrasts with Larry’s perceptiveness. Yet, both remain under the service of their ‘captains.’ Larry follows in the wide wake of Broadbent’s inertia; Mazzini plays a part of Mangan’s ‘skeleton crew’ of middle managers who keep up the semblance of Mangan’s capable leadership. Mangan’s lack of interest in “the works” leaves the “footling people” (102) like Mazzini in charge of routinely managing (not leading) the workers. Instead, Mangan the “skinflint” worries night and day about the financial side of the industry: “Mangan keeps us in order. He is down on us about every extra halfpenny. We could never do without him.” You see, he will sit up all night thinking of how to save sixpence” (102). At least, Mazzini seems more aware of how Mangan uses him, compared to Larry’s retreat into cynical acceptance of Broadbent’s domination in all matters.
Reflect back upon Shaw’s “Decline of the Employer,” found on page 35 of this paper, and upon the title of “Promoter” I gave Mangan. A quick way to dissociate Mangan and Broadbent from the true Captain of Industry would be to point out that they both deal with finance rather than industry. Broadbent may not be the same kind of promoter as Mangan, but he definitely functions to drum up support and secure the syndicate’s interests. However, as a civil engineer, he focuses less on actual money than on building up Rosscullen. Borkman, too, is mostly a financial businessman, and in The Quintessence of Ibsenism Shaw writes a response about the mammonish character:

Men grow rich according to the strength of their obsession by this passion [the true love of money]: its great libertines become Napoleons of finance. . . the lucky ones are invited to display their supposed Napoleonic powers in spending their windfalls, when they reveal themselves as quite ordinary mortals, if not indeed sometimes as exceptionally resourceless ones. Besides, finance is one business, and industrial organization another: the man with a passion for altering the map by digging isthmuses never thinks of money save as a means to his end [as it is with Broadbent]. (132)

Mangan’s shoddy consumption (nutritive and conspicuous) betrays his resourcelessness:

Mazzini: And the worst of it is, poor Mangan doesn’t know what to do with his money when he gets it. He is such a baby that he doesn’t know even what to eat and drink: he has ruined his liver eating and drinking the wrong things. . . (102)

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. (126)

It is a wonderful Shavian irony that the man who works with vast quantities of money has the least ability to use it properly. No doubt, Mangan’s personal problem serves as a complement upon the greater social function of his application of capital.

Issues also lie in Broadbent and Larry’s use of capital. Larry says at one point during his speechmaking, “If we can’t have men of honor own the land, let’s have men of
ability. If we can't have men with ability, let us at least have men with capital" (120). The bit of reason appears to be a sound argument in favour of the syndicate's involvement at (or domination of) Rosscullen. But this only depends upon the angle from which we view Larry's proclamation. The practical realist in Shaw would certainly have us believe that without money, i.e. the basic means of supporting healthy living, there is no honour; only full-fed people are capable of remaining virtuous. Yet, by the logic of reverse inference, we could also determine that capital overthrows all honour, of the 'heroic' sense, and even replaces the able person with the moneyed person. The perceptive philosopher in Shaw would also have us be aware that capital is not enough, and while ability is a requirement in any organisation (communal or commercial), it is blind without the guidance of higher ideals: honour. Larry, unintentionally, once again justifies Ruskin and Carlyle, who stress the need for an honourable, capable élite: "an Aristocracy of Talent" (P&P 26). Larry makes the important distinction that men with capital do not necessarily bring with them ability or honour, but a noble person might be more likely to bring forth the other necessities. The ideal leader will incorporate vision with the knowledge to direct the resources (money and labour) into creating the means to achieve the desired end. However, in the context of John Bull's Other Island, honour is shunned, ability is confused with efficiency, and capital is in the wrong hands of the syndicate. One could say that the three-legged stool has been dismantled, is in separate compartments, leaving the Captain of Industry without a place to stand.55

The syndicate does more than just push out honour as it ushers in profit. A good deal of Keegan's criticism focuses on how Broadbent's plans will remove the current land-tenants (Doran, Haffigan, and others) and replace them with English and American
tourists: “the making of golf links and hotels to bring idlers to a country in which workers have left in millions” (*JBOI* 161). Keegan also reiterates the values of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Shaw, when he says, “[W]hen we cease to do, we cease to live” (161). The Chivalry of Labour lives strong in Keegan, and so does the distaste for mammonism—“gluttony and gambling” (160)—and idleness—“shooting and hunting” (160). Just as Broadbent had the pluck to picture Keegan as a tourist sideshow, he will also repair the Round Tower, putting in place (in the words of Keegan) an “admission sixpence, and refreshments and penny-in-the-slot mutoscopes to make it interesting” (160). Broadbent will ruin beauty by renovation and debase the religious and historical symbolism\(^56\) of the Tower. Although, the proposed resort will displace the Irish labourers or employ them for its purposes, the Irish farm industry has little value in itself. Larry reveals the fact in his typical bitter retort to Ireland’s “industrious decent man” (111 *JBOI*): “Industrious! . . . I tell you, an Irish peasant’s industry is not human: it’s worse than the industry of a coral insect” (111). Larry chides them less for their laziness and more for their inefficient and antiquated methods of farm-management. Broadbent is correct in saying that he could make or lose ten pounds to their ten shillings (156). Progress, bringing with it a world that “belongs to the efficient” (159), simply has no use for “duffers” (157). Shaw may not agree with all of the ‘efficient world’s’ qualities, but he does not deny its inevitability. As demonstrated in “Decline of the Employer” with his explanation of industry’s move from small holders to large trusts (*IWG* 200-204), Shaw accepts the evolution-like development of social institutions. Therefore, while *John Bull’s Other Island* struggles to establish Carlylean and Ruskinian politics, economics, and religion, it eventually submits to the powers of new commerce to await the advent of a new order.
“Decline of the Employer” also outlines how the growth of businesses altered the heads of companies from highly involved entrepreneurs to detached, task-driven managers. Both Broadbent and Mangan are part of this decline of leadership, the takeover of industry by “go-betweens,” and the establishment of the precarious world of speculative finance: a “centre-of-gravity highest” method of operation. They are by no means the source of this economic (d)evolution: they are the tools, the “asses” of the syndicates. Keegan explains the one fault of the ass: “he wastes all his virtues – his efficiency, as you call it – doing the will of his greedy masters instead of doing the will of Heaven that is in himself. He is efficient in the service of Mammon, mighty in mischief, skilful in ruin, heroic in destruction” (159). Mangan and Broadbent’s professions lead them to be more “skilful in ruin” than to pursue “honourable and useful activity” (IWG 196). They neglect the duties belonging to figures of authority who are responsible for employees and other dependants; they only wish to extract some use out of people, and reciprocate no wise influence or beneficial supervision. Their financial methods prosper by quick turnovers of profit and cornering markets by strangling competition: they “use [their] breadth and sweep of sight to gather some branch of commerce of the country into one great cobweb” (Pol. Econ. of Art 77). Notice the similarities between Mangan’s and Broadbent’s business ventures; how they have no real industrial power themselves; and how their habits are destructive:

Mangan: [The factories] exist all right enough. But theyre not mine. They belong to the syndicates and shareholders and all sorts of lazy good-for-nothing capitalists. I get money from such people to start the factories. (143)

Mangan: Well, I dont know what you call achievements; but Ive jolly well put a stop to the games of the other fellows in the other
departments. . . . I may not know anything about my machinery; but I know how to stick a ramrod into the other fellow's. (144-45)

Mangan: I don't start new businesses. I let other fellows start them. They put all their money and their friend's money into starting them. They wear out their souls and bodies trying to make a success of them. They're what you call enthusiasts. But the first dead lift of the thing is too much for them; and they haven't enough financial experience. In a year or so they sell out to a new lot of fellows for a few deferred ordinary shares: that is, if they're lucky enough to get anything at all. As likely as not the very same thing happens to the new lot. They put in more money and a couple of years more work; and then perhaps they have to sell out too, and leave their work and their money behind them. And that's where the real business man comes in: where I come. (94)

Keegan gives a prophetic account of what Broadbent's syndicate will do in Rosscullen:

I do every justice to the efficiency of you and your syndicate. You are, both, I am told, thoroughly efficient civil engineers. . . . You may even build the hotel efficiently if you can find enough efficient masons, carpenters, and plumbers, which I rather doubt. [Dropping his irony, and beginning to fall into the attitude of the priest rebuking sin] When the hotel becomes insolvent [Broadbent takes the cigar out of his mouth, a little taken aback] your English business habits will secure the thorough efficiency of the liquidation. You will reorganize the scheme efficiently; you will liquidate its second bankruptcy efficiently [Broadbent and Larry look quickly at one another; for this, unless the priest is an old financial hand, must be inspiration]; you will get rid of its original shareholders efficiently after efficiently ruining them; and you will finally profit very efficiently by getting that hotel for a few shillings in the pound. [More and more sternly] Besides these efficient operations, you will foreclose your mortgages most efficiently [his rebuking forefinger goes up in spite of himself]; you will drive Haffigan to America; you will find a use for Barney Doran's foul mouth and bullying temper by employing him to slave-drive your laborers very efficiently; and [low and bitter] when at last this poor desolate countryside becomes a busy mint in which we shall all slave to make money for you, . . . then no doubt your English and American shareholders will spend all the money we make for them very efficiently in shooting and hunting, in operations for cancer and appendicitis, in gluttony and gambling; and you will devote what they save to fresh land development schemes. (159-60)
The syndicates, the mighty corporations whose actions are partly determined by collections of shareholders and partly by financial board-members, would thoroughly appal Thomas Carlyle. "Where is the Captain hero? Where is the chivalry?" he might ask.

This "ramrod" commerce creates situations which in no way promote long-term responsibility between worker and employer, between fellow 'merchants,' or even between business partners. Broadbent’s syndicate not only hastens the gathering of national commerce into “one great cobweb,” but international commerce, as well. Larry explains their interest in Free Trade:

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 separate them. The one real political conviction that our business has rubbed into us is that frontiers are hindrances and flags confounded nuisances. (84)

Larry presents a pretty image of unification, like Borkman’s steamships “spreading friendship and understanding” (JGB 437). In his self-contradictory manner of thinking, Broadbent asserts that “[Irish] Home Rule will work wonders under English guidance” (82), and we might fully expect him to say, “The Irish economy will work wonders under the syndicate’s guidance.” Yet, he has reservations about Free Trade (JBOI 85), indicating that he is a John Bull type serving the interests of England more than the Captain of Industry archetype serving the interests of international commerce. Although, with no critical reflexivity, Broadbent may be quite capable of opening up England to exploitation as he is doing with Ireland’s Rosscullen. Broadbent despises “decadent Imperialism” (124) and still does not see the ‘commercial Imperialism’ of multinationals. It would appear that Keegan perceives the consequences of Free Trade: “An island of . . .
cowards whom you buy and tame for your own service, of bold rogues who help you to plunder us that they may plunder you afterwards" (157). And so, Keegan brings to light this new commerce's penchant for backstabbing thievery. Both Mangan and Broadbent's syndicate are chimerical, deceptive as they fly under the false colours of generous investment (Mangan only gives money to people who he knows will founder) and of opening borders or creating commercial opportunities (Larry and Broadbent surpass "frontiers and flags" to "plunder" Ireland). This is not industrial captaincy; this is cutthroat piracy. Financier and buccaneer: capitalist and corsair: "the two practical men of business" (HH 160).

And yet, I have not finished with Broadbent and Mangan, as their careers did not end in business. Both had political aims: a Parliament seat and "the dictatorship of a great public department" (HH 144). This move to politics may be read in two ways: for personal purposes and/or the purposes of commercial organisations. The first accords to the personal ambitions of each businessman. They desire wealth, but wealth is power over men. Hence, they sensibly desire a position of government. Shaw addresses the phenomenon in The Intelligent Woman's Guide: "If [the capitalist] were a capable man, what remained for him was profit was enough to make him rich enough to go into Parliament if he cared to. Sometimes it was enough to enable him to buy his way into peerage. Capital being useless and Labor helpless without him, he was, as an American economist put it, master of the situation" (202). As explained in such works as Gentlemanly Capitalists by H.L. Malchow and English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit by Martin J. Weiner, there existed a bias against finance and industry in the Victorian period which led public opinion to perceive these as 'ungentlemanly'
trades. Consequently, merchants, factory owners, and financiers often attempted to personally compensate for this poor public image by rounding-out their careers in an office of municipal/national service. I would argue that Magan and Broadbent do not enter into office because of any genuine need to improve their character and make their careers socially beneficial. Broadbent plays at this illusion, but he is much like Mangan who wants more power, which he will no doubt abuse or botch. We might assume that their work at commercial management seems compatible with social management.

However, Shaw does not agree. He writes in the preface to *Heartbreak House*, “From the beginning the useless people set up a shriek for ‘practical business men.’... They [the businessmen] proved not only that they were useless for public work, but that in a well-ordered nation they would never have been allowed to control private enterprise” (30). He based Mangan’s move to a “great public department” on a real life figure: Lord Devonport, a successful grocer who became Food Controller during WWI and failed miserably at the job (Wisenthal 152). If Broadbent and Mangan were to bring their business capabilities and methods into such administrative positions, one could easily suppose that a mismanagement disaster would be brewing. How could these two self-serving capitalists, nay, syndicate-obeying lackeys fulfil the duties of representative government. No doubt, Shaw would urge that Broadbent and Mangan be kept from public office.

Yet, in both plays, the two ‘practical businessmen’ find their way into the Government, with ease, at worst. Part of the reason they are capable of doing so is the public’s incomprehension and lack of interest in politics and another part is political corruption at the top. The will of the syndicates is yet another. In *John Bull’s Other
Island, the syndicate “will use your [the Irish’s] patriotic blatherskite and balderdash to get parliamentary powers over you” (158). An even worse situation can be found in Heartbreak House:

Mangan: [T]he Prime Minister of this country asked me to join the Government without even going through the nonsense of an election. . . .
Lady Utterword: As a Conservative or a Liberal?
Mangan: No such nonsense. As a practical business man. . .
Lady Utterword: You must have given an immense sum to the party funds, Mr Mangan.
Mangan: Not a penny out of my own pocket. The syndicate found the money: they knew how useful I should be to them in Government. (144)

The Commonwealth’s future looks grim if cowardly ‘Boss’ Mangan’s and stupid Broadbents can be pitched into the Government by corporations needing political leverage. First, the ‘practical business men’ are incapable of true leadership; second, the syndicates’ influence cannot be trusted with society’s welfare. It is no wonder that England finds itself ‘on the rocks’ by the end of Heartbreak House.
Section Five

*Major Barbara*

Scrapping Old Capitalism and Refitting the Ship of State

Is there no hope? Is there no Real Captain hidden in the fog of manipulations, power struggles, and plundering? Carlyle hoped for a noble, just, and wise Captain of Industry, but (so far) Shaw's plays present only its incomplete semblance. For once, Mazzini appears to be correct when he says, "I am afraid all the captains of industry are what we call frauds" (103). However, I am intent on proving Mazzini wrong, at least to some degree. Mazzini may be correct (even Shotover does not succeed as a Real Captain), but only so in the context of *Heartbreak House*. The phantasms and frauds that persist through *Heartbreak House* are revealed as illusions or shams, but when these false bubbles are pierced, like Mangan's reputation, nothing rushes in to fill the void, and we are left with an unresolved vacuum, a negation. Only Ellie seems to experience spiritual development with her heartbroken maturation, even though she finds delight in the bombing's destruction. However, while the thematic structure of *Major Barbara* works, like *Heartbreak House*, to break through the surface appearances, the beliefs of characters, and social institutions, it also strives to construct a firmer reality out of the shattered false realities: a dialectical solution instead of a dissonant negation. Unlike *Heartbreak House*, in which but one character achieves maturity or greater awareness, a variety of characters become better aware of various hidden realities in *Major Barbara*. On a different level than character construction, *Major Barbara* also undoes the false fronts of social institutions and reveals their true workings: such as, pointing out the actual source of funding for and function of the English aristocracy and the Salvation
Army; re-assigning the true source of power of the English government; and ultimately providing a potential path to personal and social salvation.

To contradict Mazzini’s partially true observation about Captains of Industry, the character who, in a large part, effects such drastic change of awareness is Shaw’s nearest representation of a Carlylean Captain of Industry. Yet, as I have indicated earlier, Shaw does not merely adopt existing character types, and so he goes even further in Major Barbara to modify the magnetic will of his Captain by tempering it with the intellectual awareness and spiritual vision of two other characters. Of course, the industrial boss presented in Major Barbara is Andrew Undershaft, an armament manufacturer powerful both in person and in business. The intellect comes from Adolphus (Dolly) Cusins, a classical Greek scholar; the spirit from Undershaft’s daughter ‘Major’ Barbara, a Salvation Army worker/soldier. The eventual combination of efforts between these three characters potentially brings about a most remarkable solution for the “Condition of England Question” at the heart of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Shaw’s work. Essentially, a new leadership for the lower classes and working masses is forged in Undershaft’s armament factory; one that will give power to the lower orders to offset and possibly revolutionise the current oligarchy of irresponsibly idle aristocrats and ungentlemanly selfish plutocrats.

Though Major Barbara has the tone and purpose of an earnest problem play, we must take care not to suppose that the conclusions or solutions reached in Major Barbara, or any of Shaw’s other plays, are created to offer realistic answers to social issues. Therefore, while my argument may be comparing Major Barbara to the writings of Carlyle and Ruskin, I am working with the drama as a theoretical framework constructed
upon playful logic, abstract morality, and fictional situations. Shaw’s letters provide a useful disclaimer upon this subject:

If, in dealing with Undershelf, you demonstrate that the social problems will never be solved by the Henry Fords or Leverhulmes, well and good: I shall heartily endorse your conclusion. But if you keep accusing me of trying to impose Undershelf on you as the Saviour of the world, I can only drop my inherited kindness for a moment and tell you to go to hell. In fact I think you will go there soon if you do not pull your faculties together. My plays are no more economic treatises than Shakespeare’s plays are. (Coll. Letters 1911-1925 629)

Therefore, I do not propose that Shaw intends to present Undershelf as a real solution for poverty, and though the Captain of Industry ideal seems to be captured in his union with Cusins and Barbara, it does not transcend the dramatic medium to become a feasible proposal in the real world. Undershelf is a vehicle for questioning economic conditions and social beliefs in England, but the in the end remains a symbolic hypothesis, not a practical application. Much like the many other strong boss characters Shaw creates, (Epifania, Napoleon, Battler, and Bombardone) Undershelf should be considered an imaginative portrait worth contemplating. Yet, Shaw does not endorse these dramatic figures as societal models. Undershelf’s power and attraction cannot be enough to make him a Saviour.

Nevertheless, Major Barbara still addresses weighty social dilemmas comparable to Carlyle’s “Condition of England Question” and does attempt to make us reconsider accepted realities. By examining “The Gospel of St Andrew Undershelf,” we begin to understand the complicated ways in which the play grapples with the issues of class conflict, poverty, and disabled leadership. Shaw writes: “In the millionaire Undershelf I have represented a man who has become intellectually aware and spiritually as well as
practically conscious of the irresistible natural truth which we all abhor and repudiate: to
wit, that the greatest of our evils, and 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” (15).
Shaw concludes his thoughts upon the worst of all social ailments by prescribing for “the
crying need of the nation” (22) a strong dose of money. Supposedly, this revelation is the
central innovative thought in Major Barbara, since Shaw feels that we should readily
understand the “familiar” idea of Undershaft’s “religious consciousness,” “that he is only
the instrument of a Will or Life Force which uses him for purposes wider than his own”
(22). Rather, as Shaw proposes: “What is new [on stage], as far as I know, is that article
in Undershaft’s religion which recognizes in Money the first need and in poverty the
vilest sin of man and society” (22). To argue that the people’s poverty can be solved with
money should seem, at first, either a pointless tautology or a naïve induction. One might
as well say that a person dying of thirst in a desert should drink more water. The only
real solution to the problem is to remove the barriers that impede one’s ability to secure
the resources needed to satisfy one’s needs. Shaw only appears naïve when we read the
surface of his new gospel of wealth, since Major Barbara (the play even more so than the
preface) does confront the complexities of the issue and does strive to posit a new means
by which material resources (i.e. money) will be managed by a system (or leader)
guaranteeing fair access to all, at least within its dramatic context.

Perhaps because of modern politico-economic practices, Shaw’s once innovative
idea that social economy comes before social morality is, in my opinion, the rather more
apparent supposition, while Undershaft’s consciousness serves as the less obvious, more
complex concept. If we were to view Major Barbara through the theoretical lens of the
“Don Juan in Hell” scene in Man and Superman (a possibly logical concurrence considering the interconnectedness of “The Big Three”), then we would read Undershaft’s “becom[ing] intellectually aware and spiritually as well as practically conscious” (MB 15) as necessarily part of shedding false realities. Cusins may repeatedly call Undershaft “Prince of Darkness” but the self-aware and socially conscious Andrew Undershaft often seems a “master of reality,” despite (or perhaps because of) his intellectual revelry in casuistic logic. Certainly, on one level, Undershaft exhibits his extraordinary awareness by challenging standard “mercanto-Christian morality” (MB 13) with equivocating refutations. As we will come to see, Undershaft may be a character of many contradictions, but, unlike the oblivious Broadbent, he can honestly say, “I am not one of those men who keep their morals and their business in watertight compartments” (MB 70). If anything, he purposefully launches morals and business into explosive collisions. In the words of Lady Britomart, “Thats Andrew all over. He never does a proper thing without giving an improper reason for it” (116). Undershaft illustrates Shaw’s assertions that “[i]f a man cannot look evil in the face without illusion, he will never know what it really is, or combat it effectually (MB 48);” “Creeds must become intellectually honest” (49).

Undershaft’s practical consciousness allows him to perceive the complexities of any given situation and assess the qualities (including weaknesses) of any character he encounters. The two main plot lines of Major Barbara come to life in Undershaft’s attempts to disprove Cusins’ application of humanitarian ideas, and to shatter Barbara’s faith in the Salvation Army. Undershaft’s ultimate goal is to convert the young couple to his “gospel” so that he may first procure a suitable inheritor for his foundry, win back the
lost father-daughter relationship, and finally secure a union that will realise his social vision (perhaps also an unconscious Life Force purpose). Unlike Broadbent’s half-blundering success, Undershaft’s plans unfold according to careful thought and deliberate manipulations. Undershaft lures Cusins with his Dionysian powers, tactically challenges the Greek professor’s intellect by reinterpreting a quotation of Plato (147), and corrals Cusins by cleverly placing a final appeal on terms Cusins’ eager humanitarianism could not reject: “Dare you make war on war? Here are the means” (147). After meeting his daughter for basically the first time, he quickly sees how to impress Barabara (69); he continues to bait her attention throughout the play (139), and manages to efficiently shake the foundations of Barbara’s faith by tying her allegiance to the Salvation Army with his millions made on murder. After what equates to purchasing the Salvation Army (107-110), Undershaft successfully tempts Barbara with the challenge to fulfil the spiritual needs of his own workers: “Try your hand on my men: their souls are hungry because their bodies are full” (143).

Undershaft, one could say, is keenly aware of divisions and the resulting interplay of forces, whether in interpersonal relationships, business activities, or social structures. He is, as Cusins names him, a Machiavelli. I have already briefly demonstrated how he manipulates the people about him, and I will later analyse how he controls his workers, but for the moment I would like to focus upon his class-consciousness. Social hierarchy remains the only system of relations that truly challenges Undershaft’s influential abilities. Though he boasts, “I am the government of your country... my want is a national need” (154), his struggle for power against national, traditional government is still in the balance. Having been influenced by Marxism, Shaw’s perception of society
and resulting dialectic rests upon class tensions. It is perhaps to be expected, then, that much of the dramatic tensions and philosophical/social inquiries of *Major Barbara* derive from class-based issues. In fact, as I will later argue, Undershaft’s revolutionary awareness developed from his intentional struggle to surpass class limitations. In a curious reversal, after having escaped the position of a foundling dependant upon society, Undershaft now has society depend upon him. While the two main plot threads of the play concern Undershaft’s psychological negotiations with Cusins and Barbara, the next most significant subplot is Lady Britomart’s and Stephen’s interactions/negotiations with Undershaft, the absent household provider.

Other subplots of class struggle also exist in *Major Barbara*, but rather it is the lack of constructive interaction between the lower and the upper classes that characterises the relationship. If we look at the three acts of *Major Barbara*, we can see how the play is divided so as to reflect a social cosmos, presenting each act in the order of thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Act I takes place at Wilton Crescent in the drawing room of Lady Britomart’s home (also once Undershaft’s), thereby signifying the upper-class, aristocratic element. Next follows West Ham: the lowest level of English society, as represented by the impoverished situation of the unemployed. After a brief return to Wilton Crescent, the final act ushers in Perivale St Andrews, what is to become the standard middle class of the twentieth century: the prosperous working class (as opposed to the upper-middle class tradesman, lawyers, politicians, and other white-collar occupations). Perivale of Act III also marks a partial unification of the forces that are in disharmony in the first and second Act**.
While the two main plot threads of the play concern Undershaft’s psychological negotiations with Cusins and Barbara, the next most significant subplot is Lady Britomart and Stephen’s interactions/negotiations with Undershaft, the absent household provider. From a Marxist perspective, this family encounter involves a negotiation between classes, or, between the two powers that compose England’s élite: the aristocracy and plutocracy. Sidney P. Albert’s essay “The Price of Salvation: Moral Economics in Major Barbara” notes that “[t]he first act initiates and encompasses two levels of action and meaning, as the economic concerns of a particular family become the vehicle for viewing the moral, political, and religious structure of the whole social order” (308). The play opens with a discussion between Lady Britomart and her son Stephen. The first major item concerns Lady Britomart’s desire to arrange for Stephen’s inheritance of his father’s business, which Stephen resists from his abhorrence of the immorality of arms manufacture and as part of an aristocratic bias against ungentlemanly industry. The second item they discuss is the “domestic economy” (Albert 309) of the Britomart-Undershaft household, much to the dismay of the upright Stephen:

Stephen: We cannot take money from him [Undershaft]...
Lady Britomart: But after all, Stephen, our present income comes from Andrew.
Stephen: [shocked] I never knew that.
Lady Britomart: Well, you surely didn’t suppose your grandfather [The Earl of Stevenage] had anything to give me. The Stevenages could not do everything for you. We gave you social position. Andrew had to contribute something. He had a very good bargain, I think.63

So far, we have explored the significance of money in Major Barbara: first, for Undershaft’s liberation, and second, for the maintenance of an unproductive aristocracy. However, while both the play and our discussion open on issues of money management
and domestic economy, these themes are all tied together under the issue of power. As Jonathan Wisenthal’s *Marriage of Contraries* points out, “*Major Barbara* is not so much about money as about power. It can best be seen as an exploration of the nature of power: the possession of control or command over others” (Wisenthal 61).

Therefore, when Undershaft “appears as industrial provider for a parasitic aristocracy lacking independent means of support” (Albert 309), he can be understood to hold an important degree of power over his family and, allegorically, the aristocracy.⁶⁴

Stephen: [bitterly] We are utterly dependent on him and his cannons, then?
Lady Britomart: Certainly not: the money is settled. But he provided it. So you see it is not a question of taking money from him or not: it is simply a question of how much. I dont want any more for myself. (59-60)

As Ruskin says, “What is really desired, under the name of riches, is essentially, power over men” (*UTL* 134). In Lady Britomart’s case, she has no real concern over money itself (“I dont want any more for myself” [60]). In a practical manner, she requires money to manage several different households as her children begin to marry: a matronly power. Of course, her powers of domestic provision exist in an illusory sense, since the true source of those funds come from Undershaft. Therefore, Lady Britomart must find other methods to establish her authority beyond distributing money as a mere go-between.

Before moving into an analysis of her powers to command, I would like to point out the broader consequences of Lady Britomart’s use of riches. Part of the social problem in *Major Barbara* rests in the fact that Lady Britomart (i.e. the aristocracy) misunderstands the concept of “true” wealth. According to the political economy of Ruskin, true wealth is the means of production,⁶⁵ and Shaw clearly notes
that “[b]efore there can be wealth to divide-up, there must be labor at work” (IWG 45).

The division between Lady Britomart and Undershaft is symbolic of the aristocracy’s alienation from the sources of national wealth. The general decay of industry and labour in England is symptomatic of aristocratic ignorance about the industrial economy and of the division of leadership among the governing class. As we will come to see in Act II, and have seen in Heartbreak House and John Bull’s Other Island, the neglect of the labourer for the interest of pure finance brings about the greatest social deficit. The wealth of England, in this case, appears to be more like Ruskin’s “Illth”: “causing various devastation and trouble around them in all directions” (UTL 171). Only in Act III is the barrier of misunderstood wealth corrected and surpassed as Undershaft provides for the material needs of his employees by creating what appears to be a socialist community: Perivale St. Andrews.

To treat Lady Britomart as little more than a parasite living off the talent of business managers and the sweat of labour is not to do her complete justice. If there is anything admirable about her, it is the trait she shares with the Shavian dominator. Shaw’s description of Lady Britomart reveals this quality:

*Lady Britomart is a woman of fifty or thereabouts, well dressed and yet careless of her dress, well bred and quite reckless of her breeding, well mannered and yet appallingly outspoken . . . and withal a very typical managing matron of the upper class . . . limited in the oddest way with domestic and class limitations, conceiving the universe exactly as if it were a large house in Wilton Crescent, though handling her corner of it very effectively on that assumption.* (51)

She behaves as a being well-adapted to her environment, “very effectively” fulfilling the only role society has offered her, becoming the domestic version of the Shavian boss: “the household tyrant” (Millionairess 219). Her “personal force” may not seem so
“mysterious,” but she efficiently accomplishes the management of her piece of the universe by cowing all those about her. She compensates for her lack of “power through property” with her hard-line on propriety, constantly keeping her children and their future spouses in line with snapshot criticism. Even the strong-minded Undershaft allows himself to be chastised and reduced to a boyish stature (like Stephen with his tie and watch twiddling [MB 52]):

Lady Britomart: Andrew: you can talk my head off; but you cant change wrong into right. And your tie is all on one side. Put it straight.
Undershaft: [disconcerted] It wont stay unless its pinned [he fumbles at it with childish grimaces]. (120)

As well, Lady Britomart does her best to exert her sense of right and wrong when confronting Undershaft's equivocations by labelling his talk as “a sort of religion of wrongness” (59). Often failing on that account, she tries to override any “unreasonable” conversation by bullying the speakers into a cowed silence, by ordering the transgressors to depart, or by threatening to walk out herself. The bubble of civility she tries to maintain in her home requires constant reinforcement as she checks and corrects all conversations so that they follow the line of propriety. Lady Britomart puts to work (altered, of course, to suit the domestic sphere) the methods of the Boss described in the preface to The Millionairess: “In short, a ruler must not only make laws, and rule from day to day: he must . . . create and maintain an artificial mentality which will endorse his proceedings and obey his authority” (221). She establishes and maintains her role as matronly manager in a way similar to Undershaft’s role as boss (to be explored later), but is far more a tyrant than he. Like most despots whose heavy-handed rule can compensate for a weakened base of power for only so long, Lady Britomart’s authority weakens
considerably as the play progresses and the domestic conditions evolve beyond her role as matronly manager, principally noted when Stephen (unclimactically) breaks his mother’s bonds and achieves independence (122). Like her son Stephen, who also resisted Undershaft with the most polemical and unsupported arguments, she enters into Undershaft’s power upon seeing Perivale, declaring, “[A]ll that plate and linen, all that furniture and those houses and orchards and gardens belong to us. They belong to me: they are not a man’s business. I wont give them up” (133). Therefore, though she has lost the nurturing duty for her children, Lady Britomart finds, as does everyone else, a new purpose in the resolution of Major Barbara to replace the loss of a previous role.

What allows Lady Britomart and Stephen to be so easily wooed are the inherent divisions within their perceptions of reality. In the process of “maintaining an artificial mentality,” Lady Britomart cannot help but fall into hypocrisy. The many contradictions found in the stage directions allude to her contradictory nature: “well dressed and yet careless of her dress, well bred and quite reckless of her breeding, well mannered and yet appallingly outspoken” (51). As well, the counter-intuitive comments Lady Britomart periodically provides attest to her unrealistic perceptions. With the issue of the funds she receives from Undershaft, though they are the profits from war, death, and destruction, she ignores the moral dilemma: “So you see it is not a question of taking money from him or not: it is simply a question of how much” (60). In the manner of the Broadbentian brain blockage, “Lady Britomart may compartmentalize conflicting beliefs, simply separating what one says – does – knows to be true” (Nutter 90).

To escape the hardships and ambiguities in life, one may steer against reality and impose a false vision, or worse, drift and “yield in the direction of least resistance” (M&S
Sarah Undershaft ("slender, bored, and mundane" [MB 61]) and her fiancé Charles Lomax (somewhat of a "numskull") both resort to this last form of false consciousness, whereby they remain in "total cheerful obliviousness to the facts" (Nutter 90). One can interpret this mindset into the socio-political stage as the governing élite’s stance on the issue of the poor condition of labour and the unemployed in England. Like the dilemma presented in Heartbreak House, “power and culture [are] in separate compartments” (HH 10). Undershaft, the representative of the industrial base supporting aristocrats, employees, and governments, is a stranger in what should be his own home. Barbara’s love of the poor is also distinctly out of place in Lady Britomart’s household. Lady Britomart, Stephen, Sarah, and Charles would prefer to remain in oblivious disregard of whatever problems are occurring below and take for granted their luxury without bothering to know the source of their income. They feel isolated and secure; they are, in Shotoverian terms, lying in their bunks trusting to Providence, letting any drunken skipper take the helm.

The disjunctive transition from the privileged setting of the first act into the dismal opening scene of West Ham further highlights the ailments of class division. Playing upon this placement of contradictions, Shaw emphasises the chiasmus by inserting mock elements of élite society into the scene of poverty. After describing Rummy Mitchens and Snobby Price, the stage directions take on a literary flair with the following portrait: "If they were rich people, gloved and muffed and well wrapped up in furs and overcoats, they would be numbed and miserable; for it is a grindingly cold raw January day; and a glance at the background of grimy warehouses and leaden sky visible over the whitewashed walls of the yard would drive any idle rich person straight to the
Mediterranean” (75). The farcical interweaving of rich and poor continues as Snobby and Rummy discuss their highborn names and Snobby puts on airs:

Rummy: What’s your name?
Price, for short.
Rummy: Snobby’s a carpenter, ain’t it? You said you was a painter.
Price: Not that kind of snob, but the genteel sort. I’m too uppish
owing to my intelligence. Wots your name?
Rummy: Rummy Mitchens, sir.
...
Price: Wot does Rummy stand for? Pet name praps?
Rummy: Short for Romola.
Price: For wot?!
Rummy: Romola. It was out of a new book. Somebody me
mother wanted me to grow up like.
Price: We’re companions in misfortune, Rummy. Both on us got
names that nobody cawnt pronounce. Consequently I’m Snobby
and youre Rummy because Bill and Sally wasnt good enough for
our parents. Such is life! (76-77)

Through this opening, Shaw creates an ironic contrast between rich and poor, which symbolically (not co-operatively) unites them together in Major Barbara’s social microcosm of Wilton Crescent–West Ham–Perivale. Despite entrenched class antagonisms, the two poles in the socio-economic spectrum are alternatively self-supporting. They both provide the other class with the necessity for salvation (degrading poverty/shameful wealth) and the immediate means of salvation (confession for charity/forgiveness through charity).

As representations of the abused unemployed, Snobby Price and Peter Shirley (a newcomer to West Ham) provide the strongest voices of Britain’s disenchanted workers in all of Shaw’s drama. Their awareness of the economic mechanisms that keep them in their unfortunate situation far exceeds the shortsightedness of the soon-to-be unemployed Irish labourers in John Bull’s Other Island. However, Shirley and Price’s fraudulent
appropriation of the Salvation Army’s charity by pretending to be great sinners and earnest converts\textsuperscript{68} demonstrates their weakness of character\textsuperscript{69} in a Shavian frame of judgement. They lack the will or vitality\textsuperscript{70} to rise above their present condition. Are they in such a poor lot (spiritually, I mean) because of their inherent weakness of character or because of socio-economic circumstances? Snobby, as one who probably excels at avoiding responsibility, would have you believe the latter:

Fust, I’m intelligent . . . beyond the station o’ life into which it has pleased the capitalists to call me. Second, an intelligent bein needs a doo share of appiness; so I drink something cruel when I get the chawnce. Third, I stand by my class and do as little as I can so’s to leave arf the job for me fellow workers. Fourth, I’m fly enough to know wots inside the law and wots outside it; and inside it I do as the capitalists do: pinch wot I can lay me ands on. In a proper state of society I am sober, industrious and honest: in Rome, so to speak, I do as the Romans do. Wots the consequence? When trade is bad – and it’s rotten bad right now – and the employers az to sack arf their men, they generally start with me. (76)

Several pertinent details can be drawn from Snobby’s rationalisations, another gospel.

From the logic of his claim, the élite (as role models) are partially responsible for his drunkenness, laziness, and dishonesty, and the overall lack of “a proper state of society.”

Peter Shirley and Snobby Price are examples of the plight put upon hard-working citizens when they are respected as little more than tools to be used and discarded at need.\textsuperscript{71}

These capitalists and employers have failed the mandate of Ruskin’s Pilots of State:

\ldots to use your time and strength to war with the waywardness of and thoughtlessness of mankind; to keep the erring workman in your service till you have made him an unerring one. . . if you solemnly accept the responsibility of it, as it is the helm and guide of labour far and near. (“Pol. Econ. of Art” 78)

If we are to read \textit{Major Barbara} in light of Carlyle and Ruskin, the prime source of social ailment derives from the governing society’s abnegation of the responsibility to properly
care for the labouring classes. Sardonically, Shaw addresses the demands of these social philosophers ("rich men or aristocrats with a developed sense of life" [MB 20]): “They even demand abstract conditions: justice, honor, a noble moral atmosphere, a mystic nexus to replace the cash nexus” (20). Despite the patronising tone, Shaw still demonstrates how the cash nexus undermines civil duty, and even proposes through *Major Barbara* that another less materialistic and more permanent system of relations needs to be established. Shaw clearly recognises that the transient bond of wage labour weakens the stability of society: “We allow our industry to be organized in open dependence on the maintenance of ‘a reserve army of unemployed’ for the sake of ‘elasticity’” (MB 18). Much like Carlyle, Shaw values “[t]he principle of Permanent Contract instead of Temporary” (P&P 266), and we will later explore how Undershaft, like a Captain of Industry, enlists this unregimented army of unemployed and prepares the way for a new relationship between employer and employee, and the élite and the governed.

Unstable wage labour is only one abuse of the cash nexus in *Major Barbara*. The other is philanthropy. As a play equating religion with business, *Major Barbara* manipulates the processes of charity (a union of spirit and cash) to further illustrate Carlyle’s deploration of the cash nexus in *Past and Present*: “We have profoundly forgotten everywhere that *Cash-payment* is not the sole relation of human beings; we think, nothing doubting, that it absolves and liquidates all engagements of man” (141). Whatever attention the rich and powerful voluntarily give to the poor comes in the form of conscience-cleansing, esteem-garnering philanthropy,72 which is far from any active approach that would help solve the unemployment dilemma. Like impermanent
employment contracts, charity is only a temporary method of relating to the poor. It does
ward off starvation by providing bread and treacle, but the hunger will return while more
charity may not follow. The institutions of charity only mask class disharmony and set
up illusions of co-operation, as the rich buy their way out of the social responsibility,
absolving and liquidating the debts they owe to those who have helped create those
fortunes. Ironically, the benevolence of England’s upper class stems less from actual
humanitarianism and more from the threat of violence, an echo of outright revolution:

Mrs Baines: I remember 1886, when you rich gentleman hardened
your hearts against the cry of the poor. They broke the windows
of your clubs in Pall Mall.
Undershaft: [gleaming in approval of their method] And the
Mansion House Fund went up next day from thirty thousand
pounds to seventy-nine thousand! (104)

Still, the donations certainly do little to soothe hostility from below, as voiced by three
West Ham inhabitants; they feel the rich are indebted to the poor anyhow:

Rummy: You know what ladies and gentleman are.
Price: Thievin swine! (77)

Price: Make the thievin swine give you a meal: they’ve stole many a
one from you. Get a bit o your own back. (78-79)

Shirley: [angrily] Who made your millions for you?” Me and my like. What
kep us poor? Keepin you rich. I woulndt have your conscience, not for all
your income. (88)

Between Wilton Crescent and West Ham there is a distinct lack of the hero worship
or paternal care advocated in Carlyle and Ruskin’s social contracts. The poor feel
both exploited and neglected by employers, and those in the seats of profit and power
want little to do with the problems below. The English nation of Major Barbara is in
a sorry state.
Snobby’s gospel also brings to light other unjust consequences of a *laissez-faire* economy controlled by a rigid, yet hypocritical, morality. Class division not only occurs at the level of income, but also in the very habits of conduct: “in Rome, so to speak, I do as the Romans do. Wots the consequence? When trade is bad – and it’s rotten bad right now – and the employers az to sack arf their men, they generally start with me” (76). The very reason for Snobby’s dismissal directly relates to imitating his employers. He is the victim of a double-edged “Roman law” that only serves privileged folk. The play’s preface does corroborate Snobby’s claim that he suffers under a system in which there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, but it still retains some responsibility at the level of the individual:

> 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, and what we think of what he does, depends on his circumstances. The characteristics that ruin a man in one class make him eminent in another... The faults of the burglar are the qualities of the financier... In short, though character is independent of circumstances, conduct is not; and our moral judgments of character are not: both are circumstantial. (35-36)

Poverty may be the crime that victimises Snobby and Shirley, but Undershaft’s gospel teaches us “that to live ... happy, you must first acquire money enough for a decent life, and power enough to be your own master” (*MB* 94). According to his gospel, poverty condemns us beneath the unrelenting weight of the seven deadly sins of “[f]ood, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children” (*MB* 141), because only money “can lift [the] seven millstone’s from Man’s neck” and turn us into “full-fed free” people. But, since under capitalism, inequality of income stretches to such a degree that some have plenty while others have nearly none, making even equality of opportunity an impossibility (*IWG* 123), then some citizens have no hope of ever lifting the millstones.
Short of tolerating the circumstance, they have no choice but to create their own opportunities independent of society's laws. To reach this level of sufficiency, one must be wilful; remaining a victim is not the way of the Shavian boss, or any commendable character. For Shaw, that is:

Undershaft: [his energetic tone dropping into one of bitter brooding remembrance] I was an east ender. I moralized and starved until one day I swore that I would be a full-fed free man at all costs; that nothing should stop me except a bullet, neither reason nor morals nor the lives of other men. I said ‘Thou shalt starve ere I starve’; and with that word I became free and great. I was a dangerous man until I had my will: now I am a useful, beneficent, kindly person. That is the history of most self-made millionaires, I fancy. (143)

Undershaft accomplishes his goal because his wilful character leads him to supersede the slave-morality mindset and conduct befitting a despondent East Ender. We could also assume that he challenges, with his ethic of self-interest, the softer side of mercantocratic Christian morality in order to align himself with cut-throat capitalist methods. That is, he has taken "the faults of the burglar," the desperateness of any poor person driven to crime, and turned them into the qualities necessary to succeed at business. Some critics have puzzled over how Shaw could seemingly permit Undershaft's amoral and dangerous ethic to remain unchallenged in Major Barbara. How could Undershaft (or Shaw) suppose that his method of escaping poverty by any means could be a general prescription? The result would be anarchy. Yet, we should reserve any strong criticisms, first because, as Shaw wrote in one letter concerning Major Barbara: "As I write my plays as they come to me, by inspiration and not by conscious logic, I am as likely as anyone else to be mistaken about their morals" (Coll. Letters 1926-1950 613). Just as we cannot treat Shaw's drama as realistic economic treatises, we should not perceive them as
moral edicts. Undershaft’s mystique comes from the seemingly ambiguous, conflicting mixture of right and wrong in his ‘morality.’ He advocates violence and self-preservation, but then aspires towards a humanitarian ethic. He does not excuse amoral self-preservation outright; he acts according to this ‘law’ only as a means toward an end.

A different way to argue or, rather, deflate Undershaft’s contentious secret of self-mastery would be to consider that his situation does not actually correspond to the devil-may-care, hard won story of success. His fortune came to him by chance inheritance, though undoubtedly it was one he had to earn or at least be suited for. By this one fact, we could deny any didactic value in Undershaft’s life-story, and also deny him the title ‘Captain of Industry.’ I would respond, twisting a phrase that Undershaft has already contorted, “What does it matter if what he says is false if it is true.” By “true,” I do not mean morally correct. Just as Undershaft’s qualifications as a Captain of Industry depend upon the terms we use to define the designation, “true” here refers to his survival-type business attitude. He still manages a factory, though he did not create it; and though he is not a “self-made man” in the truest sense, it is the vital spirit of his character which marks him with the essence of the Shavian Captain, the born boss. With Undershaft, “self-made” does not really refer to the wealth of business; it has more in common with his forcible inner-imperative that allows him to counter normal laws, morality, and methods of business. Undershaft exists as more than the typical concept of the self-made man, and transcends the popular sense of the Captain of Industry (think of Mangan) to become aligned with Carlyle’s practical and prophetic sense of the term.

Carlyle never calls his Captain of Industry a self-made man, but makes an approximate description. The essence of “the self-made” is to create something from
nothing, to give direction and utility where there was disorganisation and waste. The idea involves a struggle and accomplishment through an individual's own means. The Captain of Industry does much the same. Carlyle writes that "[t]he main substance of this immense Problem of Organising Labour, and first of all of Managing the Working Classes, will, it is very clear, have to be solved by those who stand practically in the middle of it; by those who work and preside over work" (P&P 260). Similar to the common conception of the self-made man, the Captain of Industry comes from the bottom of the ranks and moves to the top. He activates reform less so on a personal scale, but his work at the industrial, communal, and then national level still connects to the idea of improvement by self-willed methods. Carlyle's Captain is a boss in the Shavian sense that he stands alone (as a leader) and that his "mysterious personal power" comes from within (but guided by a higher ideal, not a dominator's personal desire for power).

Undershaft very much resembles this kind of spirit, although his pursuits are, at one level, more individualistic. Setting aside for later analysis how he organises the ranks of his own labourers, I would say that Undershaft contains the core personality of the self-determined Captain. Undershaft's choice to find "power enough to be his own master" (MB 94) reflects Carlyle's emphasis on active work and scorn for wasteful idleness. Also, like the Captain of Industry who stands apart from the masses of working men and typical social authorities, Undershaft introduces and puts into action an alternative code of conduct though, at the moment, for his own personal use. I am speaking of Undershaft's choice to escape from poverty, regardless of law or morality. First, consider what Shaw says of Undershaft's choice of action: "when society offered him the alternative of poverty or a lucrative trade in death and destruction, it offered him,
not a choice between opulent villainy and humble virtue, but between energetic enterprise and cowardly infamy” (18-19). What motivates Undershaft to escape his disenfranchised position is partly the desire to be a free person and also the chance to be involved in “energetic enterprise.” Undershaft recognises “that his life depends on his usefulness” (48), and behaves according to the highest Carlylean principle: “Idleness is worst, Idleness is alone without hope: work earnestly at anything, you will by degrees learn to work at almost all things” (P&P 141). Countering Lady Britomart’s accusation that he “got on because [he was] selfish and unscrupulous,” (143), Undershaft retorts, “I had rather be a thief than a pauper. I had rather be a murderer than a slave. I dont want to be either, but if you force the alternative on me, then, by Heaven, I’ll choose the braver and more moral one” (143). Notice that each alternative he selects is an active role. The “braver and more moral” path is the one that steers hard against the course of life that would hold him under an impoverished servitude and purposelessness. What he reacts against is tolerance, passivity, and resignation--what you could call the idleness of the submissive poor. Shaw further supports this view in the preface; he does, in fact, promote it: “the misery of the world is due to the fact that the great mass of men act and believe as Peter Shirley acts and believes [i.e. accept injustices and do not resist]. If they acted and believed as Undershaft acts and believes, the immediate result would be a revolution of incalculable beneficence” (19). We could make the counterpoint that Undershaft’s ideology may just as easily bring about disastrous anarchy. Instead, I would posit that Shaw approaches the issue from a dialectical understanding. I earlier explained on pages 20 to 22 that Shaw argues for a society of masters to replace the current mass of slaves. Undershaft’s method of action represents one step in that process. By refusing to
be submissive, the lower orders can offset the oligarchy’s domination of the ignorant and powerless masses. Just as the best way to restrain the despotic “Born Boss” is to educate and, thereby, empower society enough so that it is capable of harnessing his abilities of leadership, the lower classes must pressure the upper-minority to serve everyone’s needs. The Captain of Industry and Undershaft act as a catalyst in this process. They inspire activity and ability for the purpose of establishing a better balance of power. To create the soundest dialectic, both poles must be of equal capacity and strength. Shaw reveals, in the case of *Major Barbara*, that perhaps the only way the poor can change their conditions is to behave as Undershaft, to contravene restrictive moralities and laws that maintain the status quo by creating an oppositional force. Unfortunately, given the character of Shirley and Snobby, it seems an impossibility since the capitalist system functions as a vicious circle. Another force or set of leaders needs to intervene.

It should make sense that, in a play so focused on industrial ownership and the state of labour, the legacy of the foundry inhabits a central role with plot and theme. For the plot, it is the obvious question about who will inherit the company. Thematically, inheritance stands in opposition to the idea of being self-made. I would like to introduce the ideas of Andrew Carnegie at this time. As an “anarchic individualist” (*GOW* ix) who prided himself for holding on to the anachronisms of business partnership (viii-ix), Carnegie near perfectly highlights the business method (more an attitude, consult App. I.xx) espoused by Undershaft (consult Appendix I for more information about Carnegie). Much like Shaw, Carnegie often criticised the custom of passing fortune and property (especially enterprise) on to undeserving family members (App. I.viii). With Shaw and Carnegie, only the meek shall inherit; the genius sprung from the periphery to the centre
of power gains his position through his own effort and merit. In *Major Barbara*, the initial act of inheriting the firm is not what is in contention; it is what one does with the opportunity afterwards: recline in assurance or engage in the endeavour? The Undershaft tradition\textsuperscript{81} of inheritance by foundling challenges and parodies aristocratic lineage. Also, if we apply the opinions of Andrew Carnegie to *Major Barbara*, the Undershaftian inheritance can be read as a contrasting commentary on the succession practices in many turn-of-the-century companies. The foundry’s legacy of inheritance distinguishes the company’s nature from typical methods of partnership and ownership transfer. The introduction of an orphan without any known claims to parentage symbolically represents the antithesis of traditional aristocratic lineage in which breeding holds high priority. Lady Britomart’s complaints demonstrate how the unusual legacy makes an affront of England’s titled and propertied class:

> When my father remonstrated [that a foundling should inherit the foundry], Andrew actually told him to his face that history tells us of only two successful institutions: one the Undershaft firm, and the other the Roman Empire under the Antonines. That was because the Antonine emperors all adopted their successors. Such rubbish! The Stevenages are as good as the Antonines, I hope. (58)

The birthright of the English gentleman, to which Stephen proudly says he belongs (an important issue later), has little merit and no future in *Major Barbara*.

Shaw, the Creative Evolutionist, saw very little to gain from long bloodlines, favouring miscegenation in its place: a mixture of race, culture, and mental/physical faculties.\textsuperscript{82} The same applies to his sense of historical progress of nations, classes, and belief systems. The approach is essentially dialectical as one character merges with another to create a modified, improved offspring. The self-made man of *Major Barbara* connects with this evolutionary mode. The Undershaft foundry succeeds partly because
the adoptive tradition prevents stagnation: the previous rich and powerful Undershaft introduces the poor and powerless (yet adamant) adopted Undershaft who has neither class nor blood ties. Miscegenation is crucial in the formulation and direction of the foundry’s new future as Undershaft, Cusins, and Barbara unite classes, temperaments, and ideologies into a hybridised force. Even the breeding and education going into this new partnership is a modification of upper class norms. Carnegie held strong beliefs about the role and actual necessity of the lower orders in society. He writes in *The Gospel of Wealth* and then in *The Empire of Business*:

> . . . from the ranks of the poor so many strong, eminent, self-reliant men have always sprung and always must spring . . . (GOW 6, consult App. I.i-I.iii for an extended citation)

Carnegie’s emphatic approval of the poor lacks empirical credibility, yet the object of his claim reflects the notion that the Undershaft foundlings act as vital infusions into the nepotistic, stagnant upper class. From another angle, Shaw would in no way suppose that the poverty itself improves mankind. Yet, if we consider Undershaft’s forthright condemnation of poverty and the impoverished (nearly identical to Shaw’s own views in the preface), despite its contrariness to Carnegie’s opinion, a curious crossover occurs. Carnegie’s need for the poor and Shaw’s abolition of poverty both arrive at the conclusion that genius, innovation, and energy springs from the lower ranks of society. Shaw posits an existential difference with the “born bosses” from disadvantaged origins: “There are always a few cases in which this management [of business] is done, not by descendants of propertied folk, but by men and women sprung from the hungriest of the hungry. These are the geniuses who know most of the things that other people have to be taught, and who educate themselves as far as they need any education” (*IWG* 196).
Carnegie echoes the same precept: “the greatest and best of our race have necessarily been nurtured in the bracing school of poverty – the only school capable of producing the supremely great, the genius” (GOW 64). The self-made man, the new master of the situation, seems to transcend typical codes of conduct and circumstance. Though Shaw argues that conduct equates to environment, he allows for character to be the existential wild card. Carnegie and Undershaft have either been dealt a lucky hand in life, they prosper by chance (perhaps even Providence), or their very characters have determined their success independent of or in combination with the actualities into which they were born.

We might then ask why there remains with both Carnegie and Major Barbara a sharp bias against the liberally educated gentleman. Why does the old-line oligarchy of educated, cultured, propertied or moneyed people not hold great weight with The Gospel of Wealth and Major Barbara? It would make sense to believe the advantaged class should naturally be more fit to lead than the extremely disadvantaged, as Shaw himself indicates:

... it is perverse stupidity to declare in one breath that the working-classes are starved, degraded, and left in ignorance by a system which heaps victuals, education, and refinements on the capitalist, and to assume in the next that the capitalist is a narrow, sordid scoundrel... (“The Illusions of Socialism” 156-57)

However, Shaw also balances this statement by explaining why the capitalist and other élite should have better faculties of mind:

Nature does not care a rap for rich and poor. For instance, she does not pick out the children of the rich to receive her capricious gifts. If in every two hundred people there are only twenty rich, her gift of management will fall to nine poor children and one rich one. But if the rich can cultivate the gift and the poor cannot, then nine-tenths of the nation’s natural supply of managing ability will
be lost to it: and to make up the deficiency many of the managing posts will be filled up by pig-headed rich people only because they happen to have the habit of ordering poor people about. (IWG 99)

I would not here suppose that Peter Shirley or Snobby Price should make a better set of rulers than Bodger or the Stevenages. Both poles have their flaws, but the managers of money and men, and the educated and cultured should, by default of upbringing or profession, make the better decision-makers. But, in the case of my discussion, we are dealing with anomalies of ability, the special creations of the Life Force that have imbibed a larger than usual quantity of vitality and vision. Shaw’s real boss and leader does not gravitate to the highest position by simple default of social inheritance. The routines of the status quo that perpetuate civilisation do not govern the dominators.

The answer to my question above, concerning the prejudice of the educated gentleman, can be found in the reason why Stephen does not inherit the Undershaft foundry. At first, it would seem that custom lies behind Undershaft’s decision. Undershaft simply states, as though by default, that his son cannot be the one to manage the works and ‘govern’ Perivale because “the Undershaft tradition disinherits him” (MB 118) in the place of another foundling. Looking deeper into the text, we can easily tell that Stephen’s administrative capacities have nearly as much to do with his exemption as the Antonine inheritance. “If the tradition be ever broken it will be for an abler man than Stephen” (119), says Undershaft. What disables Stephen’s business ability, perhaps more so than his inbred character, is his birthright of the “honorable English gentleman” (MB 123). His public school education and his good breeding have lifted him above the coarseness of commerce: “I go into trade! Certainly not . . . I have no intention of becoming a man of business in any sense. I have no capacity for business and no taste
for it. I intend to devote myself to politics” (121). The true English gentleman takes the highroad to leadership, through secretaryships and other work in public office; he does not take the challenging, roundabout way of managing real people in the real affairs of “do-or-die” commerce. Stephen is the upright, high-class, English individual who “will not hear the Government of [his] country insulted” (MB 124) and disdains touching the vulgar profits and practices of trade.

In the context of the play’s resolution, where separate powers and ideologies find unification, Stephen may be understood as a weak antithetical type. He has not the potential to add anything to the new form of industrial management emerging from the partnership of Undershaft, Cusins, and Barbara. Stephen cannot add to the synthesis since he clings to his identification with the English upper class, unlike Barbara, for example, who forgoes dressing like a lady to don the androgynous Salvation Army uniform. Stephen emphasises his aristocratic birthright, and suppresses his unprivileged heritage from Undershaft. On the other hand, Barbara, acting as her father’s daughter, removes herself from social position: “I have no class, Dolly: I come straight out of the heart of the whole people” (151). Stephen’s weakness is partly a product of the public school system, as well. Undershaft plainly abnegates any connection with that facet of English society: “I am not a gentleman; and I was never educated” (68). Apparently, this absence of cultivation (or, indoctrination) proves to be a necessity for the continuation of the foundry. Undershaft describes the difficulty he has experienced in finding a suitable foundling:

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 . . . 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 into docility and what they call good taste; and lamed for life so that he is fit for nothing but teaching.

Undershaft’s words sound much like Carnegie’s many tirades against higher education, which he argued was useless on this planet; whereas “the future captain of industry is *hotly engaged* in the school of experience, obtaining the very knowledge required for his future triumphs” (*EOB* 110, emphasis added, consult Append. I.xx1-I.xxiii). In light of Undershaft’s and Carnegie’s opinions about scholarship, Cusins presents a special case, since his Classical education serves as a passport into the aristocratic world. Yet, his learning is only a token symbol of gentlemanliness; Cusins claims to have gleaned only the fruit from the chaff of liberal education: “Greek has not destroyed my mind: it has nourished it. Besides, I did not learn it at an English public school” (136). Undershaft stands firmly outside and against the trappings of aristocratic culture, but Barbara and Cusins move themselves into the margins between upper and lower, creating ambiguities around their class identity. They serve as the bridge that connects the poor with the powerful, productive industry with parasitic aristocracy, and uncultured plutocracy with learned gentility.

The qualities of class character become a high point of concern as we move into an analysis of *Major Barbara*’s resolution. Given Stephen’s narrow-minded prejudices, one may be surprised to realise that Stephen matter-of-factly arrives at the same conclusion my argument has striven so far to explain. While paying special attention to his idea of character, one should also note, in the process of his declamation, the
pervading attitude the aristocracy held towards the industrious rich throughout the
nineteenth century. Stephen says:

You [Undershaft] are very properly proud of having been
industrious to make money; and it is greatly to your credit that you
have so much of it. But it has kept you in circles where you are
valued for your money and deferred to for it, instead of in the
doubtless very old-fashioned and behind-the-times public school
and university where I formed my habits of mind. It is natural for
you to think that money governs England; but you must allow me
to think I know better.
Undershaft: And what does govern England, pray?
Stephen: Character, father, character.
Undershaft: Whose character? Yours or mine?
Stephen: Neither yours nor mine, father, but the best elements in the
English national character. (124-25)

Stephen hits upon the exact issue that stretches through Carlyle, Ruskin, and Shaw, and is
echoed in the actual business world by those like Carnegie, being that the key to
leadership (political, religious, military, and commercial) is character. Stephen even
iterates a belief to be later formalised in The Intelligent Woman’s Guide: “Money is not
the secret of command . . . Real authority has nothing to do with money” (IWG 71). In
light of social philosophy, Undershaft’s second question, “Whose character?” holds even
greater significance. The response, “Neither yours nor mine,” is the correct answer, since
neither gentry nor money, submissive obedience nor despotic authority, effete culture nor
bull-headed power, will justify a new England on their own. However, Stephen’s
wisdom is only brilliant as a theoretical frame for viewing the issue. The definitive
departure of agreement occurs with the last line. “The best elements of the English
national character” is but a catch phrase devoid of any concrete meaning. Stephen’s
theory dissolves into a debate over the definition of terms. Stephen later demonstrates
the arbitrariness of “character” upon experiencing Perivale, Undershaft’s company town:
"I have satisfied myself that the business is one of the highest character and a credit to our country" (149). The complete reversal of his opinion does not look beyond the current poles of the cultural divide. Character is the solution, but what mixture of whose best elements will determine political, economic, and spiritual salvation has not been determined. A composite needs to be provided.

Had Stephen become manager of the foundry, we would have witnessed yet another addition to the progressive decline of the employer. Desiring to follow with the tradition of primogeniture, in the first act, Lady Britomart puts pressure on her son to adopt the "family" business, to which he replies:

Stephen: [dubiously] I am afraid I should make a very poor hand of managing a cannon foundry.
Lady Britomart: Nonsense! you could easily get a manager and pay him a salary. (58)

Lady Britomart’s solution for Stephen’s incapacity perfectly reflects the evolution of business organisation described in “Decline of the Employer” and The Gospel of Wealth. Undershaft, the charismatic and direct boss, would be replaced by the uninvolved (with the machinery and employees, but not the ledger) administrative manager. If this were to happen, the “absentee landlordism” practised by the English aristocracy of the past would infect the spirit of the foundry. The establishment of an unaware system of administration would solidify Perivale St Andrews as another constituent of corporatism. Navigating genius would fall away to the routinised numskull and the “industrious dunderhead” (Millionairess 222); “Thus, a very clever man may build up a great business, and leave it to his quite ordinary son to carry on when he is dead; and the son may get on very well without ever really understanding the business as his father did” (IWG 204). Between 1928 and 1935, Shaw revised this initially half-optimistic account
of hereditary transmission of business in a way that applies quite specifically to the situation in Major Barbara: “For it is obvious that a business organized for control by an exceptionally omnipotent and omniscient head [a loose description of Undershaft] will go to pieces when that head is replaced by a commonplace numskull [Stephen, exactly]. . . It is occurring every day in commercial business” (Millionairess 237). Shaw and Carnegie’s opinion that a strong business will fail without the innovative direction of a powerful head of affairs is perfectly highlighted during an exchange between Lady Britomart and Undershaft:

Lady Britomart: Do you pretend that Stephen could not carry on the foundry just as well as all the other sons of the big business houses?
Undershaft: Yes: he could learn the office routine without understanding the business, like all the other sons; and the firm would go on by its own momentum until the real Undershaft — probably an Italian or a German — would invent a new method and cut him out. (118-19)

Without a doubt, the foundry’s potential for revolutionary waves would turn to doldrums under the influence of salaried supervisors, and the impressively socialist town of Perivale would peter out under the constraints of funding cuts and wage caps (i.e. Mangan’s saving of sixpence). Carnegie addressed the dilemma of commercial evolution, and though he felt there was no need to fear syndicates (their organisation imitated natural evolution, consult App. I.vi), he firmly believed that the strong, personal influence of a single millionaire belonged at the helm of any well-to-do company (Append. I.ix-I.x) and not dependent upon salaried officials. He strongly advised against standard inheritance and placed a central commandment about new heirs at the head of any firm: “The duty of a great enterprise is to interest capable assistants who are without capital, but who have shown aptitude for affairs, and raise these to membership
and management" (*GOW* 57). By ignoring Stephen and adopting Cusins, Undershaft has saved the business from the perpetual cycle of routineers being replaced by routineers, and has opened the foundry up to new purposes that extend beyond mechanistically evolutionary capitalism.

The bureaucratisation of industrial management may not have been a concern for Carlyle, since he held the “sumptuous Merchant-Prince [and] illustrious game-preserving Duke” (*P&P* 141) responsible for the decayed state of leadership. However, as my introduction explained, critics as early as Ruskin began to notice the “unjust” results of firms amalgamating into “webs of commerce.” Writing over sixty years later in *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide*, Shaw documented the “end of the days of arrogant cotton lords and merchant princes” (202) and set about explaining the process by which the proprietorship (not leadership) of joint stock companies, shareholders, and “financiers and go-betweens” (203) superseded “the monopoly of business technique which made the capitalist-employer supreme in the nineteenth-century. Employers today are neither capitalists nor monopolists of managerial ability” (205). Shaw essentially described the process by which the employer became an employee (203), as Carnegie would have become had he not retired when he sold out his steel works. Undershaft does indeed sell-out at the end of *Major Barbara*, giving up part of his authority and allowing the management of his company to undergo an amalgamation. The merger of Undershaft, Cusins, and Barbara symbolically represents an alternative to the mergers of corporatism, which involve the combination of resources mainly in the attempt to absorb competition, achieve new markets, and control the means of production. The concluding triune of *Major Barbara* introduces the amalgamation of ideologies:
capitalism with culture and spirit; energy with intellect and compassion; power with analysis and purpose.

Before I can adequately comment on how Cusins and Barbara complement Undershaft's abilities and deficiencies, and improve upon the present condition of the foundry and Perivale, I should like to conduct a more thorough examination of Undershaft's character, the nature of his power, and his relation to the works. The stage directions introduce a man who could at first pass for Mazzini Dunn: "Andrew is, on the surface, a stoutish, easygoing elderly man, with kindly patient manners and an engaging simplicity of character" (65-66). But unlike Mangan, whose dull, lustreless, and commonplace surface appearance (HH 73) reveals his nature, the initial impression given of Undershaft contradicts his inner-being. Though Undershaft is described as "elderly" in the stage directions, a reader of the play might easily forget his apparent age because of his vivacious characterisation, perhaps best revealed in the events at West Ham, occurring off-stage: "It was an amazing meeting. Mrs. Baines almost died of emotion. Jenny Hill simply gibbered with hysteria. The Prince of Darkness played his trombone like a madman: its brazen roarings were like the laughter of the damned. 117 conversions took place then and there" (116). The scene contains overtones of the orgiastic frenzy associated with the worship of Dionysus/Bacchus. Perhaps in line with Undershaft's protean nature, Cusins applies another agnomen-like name to the armament manufacturer, "Dionysos Undershaft" (109-10). The title is used to signify the god-like descent of Undershaft's intoxicating vitality that possesses Cusins. Much of Undershaft's Dionysian influential potency emanates from his mastery of conversational,
argumentative logic. The force of his Machiavellian reasoning leaves Cusins “reeling before the storm” (MB 97), exclaiming “Father Colossus – Mammoth Millionaire” (97).

Given Undershaft’s vigour, one could almost expect Shaw to describe Undershaft as he did Tom Broadbent; “a robust, full-blooded, energetic man in the prime of his life” (JBOI 69). Undershaft’s gale-force (ir)rationalism equals and possibly out-rivals Broadbent’s bumptious charisma and proclivity for talking. Definitely, Cusins’ colossal re-imagining of Undershaft extends beyond Broadbent’s “Olympian Manner” (McDowell 546). Whether purposefully paralleled or not, Shaw noticed the similarities in temperament between Undershaft and Broadbent. In one letter, he sketches Undershaft as “Broadbent and Keegan rolled into one, with Mephistopheles thrown in” (Coll. Letters 1898-1910 542). Had Shaw already written Heartbreak House he may have made an even more suitable reference to Shotover instead of Keegan. As similar as the two are, Keegan appears more sensible in his spurned deliberations from the sidelines; Shotover possesses more of the unpredictable explosiveness characteristic of Mephistophelean Undershaft. A brief examination of the second half of the stage directions describing Undershaft, may allow us to discern the contrast of his experienced, wiser side with his fiercely energetic self:

... he has a watchful, deliberate, waiting, listening face, and formidable reserves of power, both bodily and mental, in his capacious chest and long head. His gentleness is partly that of the strong man who has learnt by experience that his natural grip hurts people unless he handles them very carefully, and partly the mellowness of age and success. (66)

Like Broadbent and Shotover, Shaw designs Undershaft to be an impressive spectacle. His reserves of bodily and mental power, and harmful, though restrained, strength indicate his larger-than-life capacity. Indeed, Undershaft accentuates Shotover’s
magnetic character (HH 100) into a propulsive force, and also turns the Captain’s alienated position into a charismatic sweep of influence. While Undershaft’s words confound and mystify one’s sensibilities, as sophistries they are not designed to undergo long-term scrutiny. The shock-effect of his words opens people up to the persuasive current of his will. He does not succeed as a clever manipulator; he must present himself as a man of rallying leadership.

With respect to his strength of command, Undershaft’s comportment possibly resembles Carlyle’s Captain of Industry who “stands powerfulest and nearest” (P&P 261) to “Heavenly Powers” (261). While Undershaft seems to have been invested with an ability to intoxicate or bewilder people’s spirits, he hardly represents Carlyle’s Heavenly Powers. Some necessary distinctions between Carlyle’s Captain of Industry and Undershaft need to be defined, most certainly relating to their methods of leadership, and character as leader (I will compare their relation to national leadership shortly).

Carlyle speaks of noble Masters inspiring workers to unite under a Chivalry of Labour, creating a just realm. Undershaft has little to do with genteel forms of conduct. I must admit that before Cusins and Barbara become associates in the matter, Undershaft governs through shams and distractions. At first, he does not act as a “Fighter against Chaos” (P&P), rather being a creator of illusion and chaos on at least two fronts: 1) he controls his workers by creating a “false mentality”; 2) he profits (and rejoices) in destruction, not social beneficence.

On the surface, Perivale St Andrews appears to be a workers’ paradise, an Owenite town or the realisation of the Garden City earlier promised by Broadbent (“I shall make a Garden City of Rosscullen”[JBOI 158]): “It is an almost smokeless town of
white walls, roofs of narrow green slates or red tiles, tall trees, domes, campaniles, and slender chimney shafts, beautifully situated and beautiful in itself" (*MB* 128-29). We learn through the second scene of the third act about the generous wages, fine and affordable restaurants, and clean working environment:

Sarah: Heavens! what a place! Did you see the nursing home!?
Stephen: Did you see the libraries and schools!?
Sarah: Did you see the ball room and the banqueting chamber in the Town Hall!?  
Stephen: Have you gone into the insurance fund, the pension fund, the building society, the various applications of cooperation!? (130)

The actual foundry reflects nothing of the “Works Department of Hell” (126) envisioned by Cusins. Undershaft’s relations with his workers even seems to accord with Carlyle and Ruskin’s call for paternalism; “They call him Dandy Andy and are proud of his being a cunning old rascal; but it’s all horribly, frightfully, immorally, unanswerably perfect” (*MB* 130). Barbara is proven quite incorrect about her imaginative picture of Perivale “as a sort of pit where lost creatures with blackened faces stirred up smoky fires and were driven and tormented by [her] father” (126). The West Ham Salvation shelter has more in common with Perivale’s imagined hellish reality. With the Salvation Army, Peter Shirley could only temporarily be ‘saved’ by tainted charity and placebo-like faith. At the foundry he has been given a job (129-30), turning him into a productive worker; he is now a real citizen and not a social burden. In “Permanence,” the chapter following “Captains of Industry,” Carlyle demands that people be governed by “[t]he Principle of Permanent Contract instead of Temporary” (266). Previous to visiting Perivale, Barbara’s saving of the misguided poor was an attempt to reinstate the eternal relationship with God, but the rediscovered faith had as much permanence as a full-fed stomach:
Bill: Tell us, aol menn, wot o’clock this mawnin was it wen im as they call Snobby Prawce was sived?
Barbara: About half past twelve, Bill. And he pinched your pound at a quarter to two. (112)

In contrast to Snobby’s temporary conversion, a stable work contract has instead saved Peter Shirley by giving him the responsibility of a job and money to be free from the weakness of hunger. Though Perivale depends upon cash-payment, we see no sign of the instability of which Carlyle warns; having been in production since James the First, the foundry offers long-term employment “because there is always a war going on somewhere” (MB 55). Ironically, the permanence or, rather, honesty of religious faith in Major Barbara depends upon the fulfilment of temporary, yet recurring, physical needs. Before a permanent contract can be accomplished between people or between a person and God, the “slaves of reality” (M&S 139) must be emancipated from the seven deadly sins listed by Undershaft: “Food, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children” (141).

The Undershaft legacy appears to have succeeded as the socialist town dreamed of by many nineteenth-century idealists; it offers reliable employment, fair wages, a healthy environment, and education. There is even a William Morris Labour Church depicting Morris’ words in a ten foot mosaic: “No Man is Good Enough to be Another Man’s Master” (133). However, Undershaft points out that “they take no more notice of [the slogan] than of the ten commandments in church” (133). In actuality, Perivale functions as an efficient, self-regulating capitalist system:

Cusins: But Jones needs to be kept in order. How do you maintain discipline among your men?
Undershaft: I dont. They do. You see, the one thing Jones wont stand is any rebellion from the man under him, or any assertion of social equality between the wife of the man with 4 shillings a week
less than himself, and Mrs Jones! Of course they all rebel against me, theoretically. Practically, every man of them keeps the man just below him in his place. I never meddle with them. I never bully them. . . . [Undershaft then describes the self-maintained chain of command from bottom to top] . . . The result is a colossal profit, which comes to me. (127)

Though not afraid of his men like Mangan (they pose no threat anyhow), Undershaft’s hands-off approach complicates our expected ‘boss image’ of him. He is neither a tyrant nor a paternalist; perhaps he has found the key to practical governance. The socialist paradise also has its illusions. Its solidarity is really a chain of minor power struggles; its fraternal well-being remains untested, since no disparities exist to inspire the tensions present in the first two acts of the play. The pretence of improved society (economic prosperity and civil harmony) works more as a tool for control by Undershaft. Like Alfred Krupp (1812-87), a German armament manufacturer who built his own company town, Undershaft establishes just and noble industry (or its semblance) because it runs efficiently and to his advantage (Matheson 300). As Lady Britomart says, “[Undershaft] never does a proper thing without giving an improper reason for it.” He runs a socialist town for utilitarian, capitalist ends — for “the colossal profit”— not because of any moral imperative for social harmony.

In the original Derry Manuscript for Major Barbara, Shaw stresses an antagonistic relationship between Undershaft and his employees. Shaw dropped a section of the Derry MS that would have made the Perivale workers more aware of Undershaft’s role:

Undershaft: Every week or so they have a Socialist in a red tie in that Labor Church to keep their attention concentrated on my rascality, my robbery of their labour, and the ease with which they could run the factory themselves if they were properly organized.
Lady Britomart: You let them.
Undershaft: Of course. It is most useful to me. It makes them intelligent and self-respecting and what they call class-conscious. (189)

Undershaft: Naturally. They can see that I get more out of them than they get out of me; and they know that all these institutions for their benefit – especially the insurance and pension fund – enslave them far more effectually than if they could change their employment without losing anything but a few days wages. Men idolize freely chosen leaders; but they hate masters, especially masters with moral pretensions. (187)

By dropping these sections, Shaw alters the consciousness of the workers, making them less aware of Undershaft’s manipulations. The workers of the previous draft understood the dynamics by which they accept Undershaft’s authority, not taking his boss position for granted as an existential given. In the final version of *Major Barbara*, the people of Perivale are quite satisfied with the situation, and instead displace their “theoretical rebellion” against Undershaft for disciplining or jockeying with the workers above and below.

In this way, Undershaft is a ‘better master of the situation’ without being a bully or a “master with moral pretensions.” By complicating his own authority, simply by telling the truth about the power structure, he avoids becoming the tyrant described in “Preface on Bosses”: “the most honest ruler becomes a tyrant and a fabricator of legends and falsehoods, not out of any devilment in himself, but because those whom he rules do not understand his business . . . [A ruler must] create and maintain an artificial mentality which will endorse his proceedings and obey his authority” (*Millionaire*ss 221). By giving his employees the William Morris mosaic he is not endorsing his authority or creating a false mentality; his employees sustain the system despite his interference. It would seem, then, that the workers follow the mentality assigned to them by class-
consciousness: a type of routine existence. With their material needs satisfied, they feel no need to rock the boat, so to speak. Their worries are focussed inwards toward the petty power struggles on the job and the social hierarchy in Perivale. Therefore, at the level of labour management, the foundry can be said to have a momentum or will of its own, the “will which [Undershaft is] a part” (MB 139). It is not chivalry that keeps Undershaft’s men in order; it is the simple lack of discontent. Provided there is war, strife, and rebellion in the world, Perivale itself remains without serious conflict: self-regulating so long as it can remain profitably competitive in the arms market. The company’s biggest concern (its consciousness, in some sense) is how to make more money by finding more efficient, more destructive ways of using gunpowder.

Wrapping himself in contradiction once again, Undershaft presents the argument in the final act (corroborated by Cusins, too) that he has, in reality, no power. Is he then like Mangan? Actually no; Undershaft has far greater business capacity. Shaw makes it quite obvious that Undershaft maintains a hands-on supervisory duty in the factory and determines some degree of its activities; he is not an absent stockholder or manager, and is not sitting about all day thinking of ways to save sixpence (as Mangan does). The power that Undershaft does not have refers to the foundry as an institution, as an element of the Ship of State’s superstructure. In the last scene, Shaw shifts the discussion from the realm of individual ownership and profit into the conceptual frame of socio-political power paradigms. Certainly, as the company’s owner Undershaft may have the power of money and gunpowder, but the foundry is involved in powers beyond his control. Like the Salvation Army, it must survive by selling itself to the rich:
Undershaft: From the moment when you become Andrew Undershaft, you will never do as you please again. Don't come here lusting for power, young man.

Cusins: If power were my aim I should not have come here for it. You have no power.

Undershaft: None of my own, certainly.

Cusins: I have more power than you, more will. You do not drive this place: it drives you. And what drives the place?

Undershaft: [enigmatically] A will of which I am a part.

Cusins: Don't listen to his metaphysics, Barbara. The place is driven by the most rascally part of society, the money hunters, the pleasure hunters, the military promotion hunters; and he is their slave. (139)

Undershaft confronts Cusins and Barbara less as an individual factory owner or private capitalist. He challenges them as an embodiment of institutional powers. The issue at hand, then, is not how Undershaft manages his men or how he profits through business; "[t]he climactic debate at the end of the play is more concerned with gunpowder itself as an instrument of change than it is with its manufacture as a source of money" (Wisenthal 60). Undershaft may direct the manufacture and sale of his weapons, but in the standard process of business politics, he has no control over them as an instrument of change.

Judging from his pride about Perivale, Undershaft seems to believe that town and foundry are functioning at peak potential. However, he invites Cusins and Barbara into partnership with him as if to improve upon his enterprise. It is possible that he is motivated by mere personal challenge. He feels satisfied with the works and needs a challenge to fulfil his energetic character by confronting the couple whose beliefs oppose his. It is possible that he wants no more than to turn them over to his side, to have them serve the foundry as he does. However, in my view, Undershaft has realised a higher purpose for the foundry, one that he is incapable of completing, and perhaps understanding, on his own. A question concerning his own purpose stares Undershaft in
the face when he confronts the intellectual and salvationist from the middle of the second Act** onwards. The “Captains of Industry” chapter contains the basic substance of that question: “But let the Captains of Industry consider: once again, are they born of other clay than the old Captains of Slaughter; doomed forever to be no Chivalry” (261).

Undershaft must at some point question the ultimate end of the Undershaft legacy: continuance of its task or supersession to a higher goal. Undershaft as the Captain of Slaughter can be seen in the admiration of his weaponry and the brutality behind his personated gentleness:

Undershaft: ... the good news is that the aerial battleship is a tremendous success. At the first trial it has wiped out a fort with three hundred soldiers in it.
Cusins: Dummy soldiers?
Undershaft: [striding across to Stephen and kicking the prostrate dummy brutally out of the way] No: the real thing. (130)

His happiness with the positive results of his work cannot easily be separated from his delight in destruction. His business practices are particularly mercenary: he posts no allegiances and, according to the Armorer’s Faith, sells his weapons to whoever will pay. Yet, those that are most capable of buying his wares are those who have access to wealth, those already in power, not those challenging tsars, aristocracies, plutocracies, dictators, and other rulers. If we understand Undershaft’s role in politics, he supports (or controls, in his belief) the current leaders for whom he has little respect. In attitude (but less so in practice) he rebels against current oligarchies in the process of making weapons available to all. As Lady Britomart says, “He is above the Law” (55), and holds an uncontrollable, somewhat anarchic place among nations:

Undershaft: The government of your country! I am the government of your country: I, and Lazarus. Do you suppose that you and half a dozen amateurs like you, sitting in a row in that foolish gabble
shop, can govern Undershaft and Lazarus? No, my friends: you will do what pays us. You will make war when it suits us, and keep peace when it doesn't. You will find out that trade requires certain measures when we have decided on those measures. When I want anything to keep my dividends up, you will discover that my want is a national need. . . . Government of your country! Be off with you, my boy, and play with your caucuses and leading articles and historic parties and great leaders and burning questions and the rest of your toys. I am going back to my counting-house to pay the piper and call the tune. (MB 124)

Unlike Mangan, Broadbent, and Bodger, who all enter into politics or align themselves with the ruling élite so that they may better their careers, Undershaft dissociates himself from such a role. Not that he is a rebel desiring better government; Undershaft asserts his autonomy in the belief that he controls society. He still participates with the élite, but unlike Mangan and Broadbent, he does not fully collaborate with governments; his only allegiance is to the foundry and its Armorer's Faith. How far Undershaft really is outside the law is debatable. Even if he were in command, it remains a symbiotic master-slave relationship: Undershaft has no power without their money, and the politicians and aristocrats have no power without his weapons. Unless Undershaft can manipulate nations into maintaining wars (which is suggested by the mention of Lazarus' war loans), he is not the complete "master of the situation." I would argue that Undershaft may have the upper-hand but he cannot claim absolute control. He must somehow break the bonds with capitalism and the oligarchy, and form another allegiance (i.e. with the ideologies of Cusins and Barbara) to become master of the current government.

I would like to take a moment to better explain the Captain of Industry's purpose as an agent of social reform and indicate how Undershaft compares with this sort of captaincy. Heartbreak House and John Bull's Other Island were shown to be related to the naval captain, but Major Barbara stands more clearly in relation to the military
captain presented in *Past and Present* and *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. The chivalry of Carlyle’s Captain of Industry descends from a feudal re-imagining, and from it he constructs a leader who modifies the Chivalry of Fighting into a Chivalry of Work (*P&P* 263). The Carlylean Captain of Industry has a distinctly militaristic demeanour. He will form the ranks of workers into regimented organisations giving order to a chaotic, misguided, and wasteful society (*P&P* 261-66).97 One might expect that Carlyle envisions units of industrial soldiers ready to revolutionise the old order, but he advocates a conservative reform, a purification rather than a destructive recreation. Carlyle’s idea of social evolution differs from the Marxist dialectic of class struggle. He does not posit that the workers will remove capitalism by violent overthrow; instead, they will become better aligned with the State:

Wise obedience and wise governance, I foresee that the regimenting of Pauper Banditti into Soldiers of Industry is but the beginning of this blessed process, which will extend to the topmost heights of our Society; and, in the course of generations, make us all once more a Governed Commonwealth, and Civitas Dei, if it please God! Waste-land Industrials succeeding, other kinds of Industry, as cloth-making, shoe-making, plough-making, spade-making, house-building,—in the end, all kinds of Industry whatsoever, will be found capable of regimenting. Mill-operatives, all manner of free operatives, as yet unregimented, nomadic under private masters, they, seeing such example and its blessedness, will say: “Masters, you must regiment us a little; make our interests with you permanent a little, instead of temporary and nomadic; we will enlist with the State otherwise!” This will go on, on the one hand, while the State-operation goes on, on the other: thus with all Masters of Workmen, private Captains of Industry, be forced to incessantly coöperate with the State and its public Captains; they regimenting in their way, the State in its way, with ever-widening field; till their fields meet (so to speak) and coalesce, and there be no unregimented worker, any more. (*Latter-Day Pamphlets* 141)
The State spoken about above refers to an ideal form of government; one that has rediscovered its true work: an oligarchy not composed of "illustrious game-preserving Dukes" and "sumptuous Merchant-Princes." Carlyle has in mind a society most in line with God's will: a Civitas Dei. However, the current operations of state proceed regardless of the work set in motion by private masters. A union is required to achieve the governance of a greater commonwealth. The private Captains of Industry must join with the public Captains. We cannot neatly overlay its Carlyle's schema of social salvation structure upon the dynamics of Major Barbara. Shaw has complicated the entire notion of the Captain of Industry by involving it in "waste-land Industrials" instead of "cloth-making, shoe-making, plough-making, spade-making, house-building": the manufacture that supports the basic needs of society. Undershaft may regiment his workers and provide social order in Perivale, but he does not constructively co-operate with the state. The source of the money that supports Perivale and the uses of his product pit him against a wisely "Governed Commonwealth." As long as the Undershafts remain slaves to "the most rascally part of society," they will never be more than Captains of Slaughter. A second complication occurs when we consider that there are no public Captains working for the state, who might participate or find synthesis with Undershaft's powers. The élite of Major Barbara have no sense of its real work, of seeing beyond itself. Therefore, the Captain of Industry in Major Barbara must fight against the state, and must find and unite with the Real Captains who remain in obscurity outside of the powers that currently govern society. These Real Captains are, as you may expect, Cusins and Barbara: public Captain and spiritual Captain.
The combination of Undershaft and Barbara complements the militaristic element of the Captain of Industry. Both Undershaft and Barbara have a streak of rebellion within them that emphasises their exteriority to typical society; both “are quite original in [their] religion” (MB 96). Shaw’s conception of Undershaft is mirrored in the makeup of Barbara who is, in comparison to Undershaft’s other daughter Sarah, “robust, jollier, much more energetic” (161). Barbara’s robustness and energy demonstrate that she is not only her “father’s daughter,” but also a vitalist like Undershaft. Barbara and Undershaft overlap in profession, as well: Barbara’s involvement with the Salvation Army implicates her in the interest of labour, and associates her with motifs of war. She adopts the title ‘Major,’ wears a uniform, engages in drum-lead marches, and drills the unrepentant until they are weakened and regimented under the will of the Salvation Army (as she does with Bill Walker, for example). The Salvation Army and Undershaft’s armament factory mesh well in several ways. Both work according to rank, whether it is in terms of foremen and engineers, or majors and commissioners. They represent the idealism of a routine (work or prayer) that seeks to bring order and progress to the world. However, the respective gospel and leader of each institution are in opposition. The Salvation Army, which tries to bring heavenly powers to earth, fails to effectively save the souls of men. Its universal dream succumbs to the mechanisms of capitalism, debasing its message (i.e. it must sell itself to the rich). Meanwhile, Undershaft’s company, which flourishes upon earth with the most devilish of powers (money and gunpowder), succeeds in saving the minds and bodies of people by selling itself to anyone and everyone.

But Undershaft’s gospel can only bring prosperity and harmony within the confines of Perivale and, even then, only at the cost of war elsewhere. Perivale cannot be
used as a universal model; its purposes are limited to worldly materialism (the Labour
Church is a fraud) and it does not improve humanity as a whole. If it were possible to
measure morality in an accountant’s ledger, like one might do to calculate GNP, I would
expect to find that in spite of Perivale’s excellence, its product draws a deficit on the
world market of well-being. Applying hundreds or thousands of Perivales on a
worldwide scale, Undershaft’s gospel and industry would eventually annihilate
civilisation. Profit by war can only be sustained on a limited scale; ironically, a steadily
increasing demand would cancel out the market. Consequently, Perivale, as it originally
stands, cannot become an ideal beyond itself. Unless it can step beyond the forces of
supply and demand (Capitalism), the current Undershaftian ideology can have no larger
purpose other than static self-perpetuation.

Another connection between Undershaft and Barbara is the Army’s motto: “Blood
and Fire.” Undershaft makes the link, “Its motto might be [his] own. . . . My sort of
blood cleanses: my sort of blood purifies” (69). Playing into his game, Barbara unites
their two causes: “So do ours” (69). Undershaft has his own sort of salvation, as well, to
be had through “Money and gunpowder” (93). These represent the most potent of earthly
powers: the ability to buy and to destroy. In a pivotal moment of cognisance, Undershaft
sees to the core of Barbara’s motivations and declares:

Undershaft: [triumphantly] Aha! Barbara Undershaft would be
[original in her religion]. Her inspiration comes from within
herself.
Cusins: How do you suppose it got there?
Undershaft: [in towering excitement] It is the Undershaft inheritance.
I shall hand on my torch to my daughter. She shall make my
converts and preach my gospel –
Cusins: What! Money and gunpowder!
Undershaft: Yes, money and gunpowder. Freedom and power.
Command of life and command of death. (96)
Yet, Barbara does not completely take Undershaft’s gospel to heart, even after her faith in “the colors” has been broken. What she learns from Undershaft is a new way of thinking; she heeds only the instructive message, not the substance, of his gospel which calls for efficiency, progress, and practical awareness:

[Society] scraps its obsolete steam engines and dynamos; but it wont scrap its old prejudices and its old moralities and its old religions 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 better one for tomorrow. (141)

Barbara scraps the flawed Salvation Army, and builds her new faith upon the powers of industry. She accepts the control that capitalist, non-religious forces have upon most socio-economic means. As a result, Undershaft succeeds in bringing Barbara back to earth from the Army’s “paradise of enthusiasm” (MB 151), making her a realist as she accepts the contradictions inherent in her duties: “Turning our backs on Bodger and Undershaft is turning our backs on life” (151). Cusins voices the same realisation: “You cannot have power for good without having power for evil too” (150); and Barbara adds: “There is no wicked side: life is all one” (151). Though both had grasped the complexity of life earlier, they now see clearly beyond the prejudicial divisions of traditional social beliefs that hinder the minds of Lady Britomart and Stephen. Understanding this fluidity of power and morality prepares them for the dialectical union of their beliefs with Undershaft’s industrial means.

As a spiritual Captain, Barbara should intrinsically command spiritual power: “I want to make power for the world too; but it must be spiritual power” (MB 149). She has changed her method and found new means, but her end goal has remained the same: to
bring spiritual salvation to humanity. Practically speaking, she will pick up her work in Perivale where Undershaft left off:

Barbara’s view—and Shaw’s view—is that Undershaft has provided not salvation, but the necessary precondition of salvation. Barbara will build on the foundations which her father has provided, and try to convert the men to something beyond Philistine, bourgeois, snobbish individualism. (Wisenthal 69)

She says of Perivale: “fullfed, quarrelsome, snobbish, uppish creatures, all standing on their little rights and dignities. . . . That is where salvation is really wanted” (152).

Barbara’s endeavour will give real significance to the socialist town. She will make it more than a community that coexists peacefully merely because all the necessary superstructures are in place. To the Captain of Industry model, she will bring the “[l]ove of men [that] cannot be bought by cash-payment” (P&P 262).99 She will regiment the workers according to the moral duty between people, and will make God their leader, instead of maintaining rank by workplace hierarchy. Like a true Captain, Barbara will re-establish fraternity, and ultimately reach even further towards the Civitas Dei.

Accompanying the Carlylean Captain of Industry’s inspired fraternity is the paternity of his guidance: he answers the people’s need for a leader. Cusins seeks to undo the necessity for powerful leadership, or at least prevent the abuse of authority. The professor of Greek battles against the dominators of society with the hope of creating a political equality/liberation** to complement Barbara’s spiritual equality/liberation**. At one level, this battle manifests as an inward struggle:

[Cusins ’] sense of humor is intellectual and subtle, and is complicated by an appalling temper. The lifelong struggle of a benevolent temperament and a high conscience against the impulses of inhuman ridicule and fierce impatience has set up a chronic strain which has visibly wrecked his constitution. He is a most implacable, determined, tenacious,
intolerant person who by mere force of character presents himself as — and indeed actually is — considerate, gentle, explanatory, even mild and apologetic, capable possibly of murder, but not of cruelty or coarseness. (MB 62)

Cusins holds some relation to the species of the Shavian born boss, but the characteristic strong will is tempered and controlled by the strength of his intellect that has taught him compassion for fellow creatures. Ideologically, he stands completely opposed to Undershaft (only when the Machiavelli plays devil’s advocate for capitalism, elitism, and war):

Cusins: But you are driving me against my nature. I hate war.
Undershaft: Hatred is the coward’s revenge for being intimidated.
Dare you make war on war? Here are the means? (147)

What allows Cusins to accept Undershaft’s challenge is the chance to change society, to put his beliefs into action. His job, as public Captain, is to remake the failed State in the shape or will of the people. At one point, Cusins claims to “have more power than [Undershaft], more will” (MB 139), but given the gusto of “Dionysos Undershaft,” we should remain sceptical. The problem facing Cusins, should he accept the offer, is whether he will end up with no power, like Undershaft, and be made to serve the will of the foundry and the rascals of society.

However, Cusins’ will is not at issue. The foundry does not only appeal to him at a personal level; if it did, then the part of him interested in the deal would be that which lusts for power: the dominator within him. Instead of serving the will of the foundry, he puts into effect the will of social philosophers, such as Plato. As a public Captain, his power comes from the masses and serves the masses; it is not his own power:

Cusins: What I am now selling [my soul] for is neither money nor position nor comfort, but for reality and for power.
Barbara: You know that you will have no power, and that [Undershaft] has none.
Cusins: I know. It is not for myself alone. I want to make power for the world. (149)

To accomplish this goal, he will utilise two main assets: his education and the foundry's weapons. Possibly, since Undershaft "was never educated," he never developed an awareness beyond the power of money and gunpowder. His consciousness and activities are firmly rooted in a competitive capitalist world that calls for the survival ethic of the self-made man. The uneducated Undershaft is caught under the limitations which even Andrew Carnegie has noted for himself: "Liberal education gives a man who really absorbs it higher tastes and aims than the acquisition of wealth, and a world to enjoy, into which the mere millionaire cannot enter" (EOB 113).

Cusins has fully absorbed the higher tastes of learning, and as a teacher, he wants to instruct those who do not yet know its virtues. His role as teacher complements, but also denies, a position of leadership. His purpose is to make people think for themselves, so that they may become more independent of, and compete with, decision-making leaders. If we consider Shaw's belief that the weak-willed are equally responsible for producing tyrants as the tyrants themselves,101 what is required to hamper tyranny is a populace that has the ability to keep its rulers in check and see past their hierarchy-sustaining artificial mentalities. Cusins puts this belief into words when he explains how he will arm the populace against the oppressive élite. The weapons he speaks of can be read literally as the products from the foundry, and figuratively as the knowledge of "world-bettering" that he commands:

This power which only tears men's bodies to pieces has never been so horribly abused as the intellectual power . . . As a teacher of Greek I gave the intellectual man weapons against the common
man. I now want to give the common man weapons against the intellectual man. . . . I want a power simple enough for common men to use, yet strong enough to force the intellectual oligarchy to use its genius for the general good. (150)

While Undershaft only superficially tries to create class-consciousness, Cusins will stimulate this awareness into action. These ideas sound dangerous. How can Cusins guarantee that he can keep his own will restrained and prevent himself from becoming a tyrant? Ideally, Barbara’s influence will be necessary, since her love of humanity will soften his latent “appalling temper” and prevent any abuse of authority. They will not only be involved in revolutionising Perivale; they will reach beyond to help the world “scrap its old prejudices and its old moralities and its old religions and its old political constitutions” (MB 141) and, most importantly, its old capitalism and its old reliance on all-too-powerful leaders.

But what about the old Undershaftian legacy, and what of Undershaft’s future in this union of Captains? I would begin by saying that Perivale itself has no future in its new course. Barbara and Cusins are bringing the power of Perivale to the world so that its weapons will someday not be needed (or, at least, not in such high demand). They are not expanding on the enterprise, but rather bringing it to a close. The same will happen with the symbolic Undershaft, whose identity develops from the foundry’s history, its commercial industry, and the Armorer’s Faith. His facilities are required for the immediate synthesis, but he has no definite role in the outcome. He supplies the means to supersede his own purpose: physical well-being (power of money) will support spiritual salvation, and the power of weapons lends its force to the powers of social/political redemption; but in a civilised society, a Captain of Slaughter and the producers of “waste-land Industrials” have no place.
Neither Carlyle nor Shaw provide the ultimate answer to the fate of the Captain of Industry and other Captains once “their fields meet (so to speak) and coalesce, and there be no unregimented worker, any more” (Latter-Day Pamphlets 141). Presumably, their job is complete. Are they still required for future governance or will the regimented masses be guided by their own momentum? Will each person become his or her own Captain? I will not go on to speculate about the futures imagined by either author, and I will not delve into an analysis about whether or not the coalescence of Captains presents a realistic socio-economic solution. But I will conclude the discussion of *Major Barbara* by drawing upon Shaw’s own words about endings that supersede into unknown beginnings:

My plays are interludes, as it were, between two greater realities.
And the meaning of them lies in what follows them. The beginning of one of my plays takes place exactly where an unwritten play ended. And the ending of my written play concludes where another play begins. (Green 125-26, credit to Leary 33)

The unwritten play that proceeds *Major Barbara* leaves many questions about the fate of leaders and the rule of the ideal democratic state. Has the dominator been tamed and the routinised numskull enlightened? The ending offers such hope, but no guarantee.
Closing the Captain’s Log: Some Concluding Thoughts

Though *Major Barbara* ends with the fate of Perivale – and possibly of other communities – in the hands of a capable and impassioned set of leaders, these new Captains are not what concern Shaw at the base of his drama and other writing. The individuals who possess strength of conviction beyond control, and who gain power and wealth to a degree reaching far beyond themselves, remain the more important issue. In one sense, Captains of Industry develop from a capitalist system that permits an individual, a group of individuals, or autonomous corporate anomalies to gain control over numbers of people. This inequality of power has always existed, but never so fluid and detached as with the emergence of *laissez-faire* capitalism, large reserves of wage labour, and the flow of capital under the ‘auspices’ of big private stakeholders in economies.

One might readily assume that the free manipulation of capital and power leads to injustices in the social system, and such an assumption would largely be correct. But to assume that it is the sole cause of tyranny would be too great a generalisation. Shaw looks beyond this when he writes:

> Private property can be communized. Capitalists and landlords can be pressed into the service of the community. . . . Under such circumstances the speculator would find his occupation gone. With him would disappear the routine exploiter. But the decider, the dominator, the organizer, the tactician, the mesmerizer would remain. (*Millionairess* 237)

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> Are they to be the masters of society or its servants? (*Millionairess* 218)
Why do these dominators always rise to authority? In all of society's heterogeneity, with its uncertainty and conflicting desires, the 'Born Bosses' offer a decisive direction. Acting as a source of progressive energy, these organisers of society are, then, in some ways a curative for the anxieties of the social consciousness. However, they may also become an opiate dulling the responsibility and awareness of the public as it becomes dependent upon its leaders. In this way, the tyrant can be understood as an indicator, not the sole cause of an ailing society.

Nevertheless, Shaw still respects wilful leaders and possibly foresees their necessity. Yes, they run the danger of trampling freedoms and unsettling the equilibrium of society (if there ever was a balance), but Shaw feels that we should be capable of controlling our dominators, of making them our servants while allowing them to be our masters. These wilful bosses are not the ones who will yield and simply cease to be. We must harness their energies to make use of their abilities.

The best way to control tyrants is to introduce a near equal force that will counterbalance their control. We break down monopolies in the marketplace and re-establish competition, and, likewise, we require these checks and balances at many points in the political and social realms. However, throwing another Undershaft into the works would only complicate matters. This power needs to come from elsewhere, from a source competing for a separate set of needs: in other words, the public body.

Essentially, Shaw adds dialectical method to the formula. While Carlyle places England's future in the hands of individual authorities and Ruskin presents a model for capitalists to imitate, Shaw looks at ways to go about constructing not an ideal leader, but a ideal situation. People who are unaware follow a routine; the dominators comprehend
the system, challenge it and manipulate it to their needs. By empowering people so that they may become more aware about the reality of society, Shaw hopes to create a public which can check the abuses of ignorant leaders (born into position or having arrived there by circumstance) and tame the natural born geniuses of management who surpass the restraints put upon the majority. The proper direction of any venture (commercial or national) can only be found in the competing poles – but not completely antagonistic forces – of master and servant, employer and employee, leader and public. The Ship of State, or any other vessel, cannot be justly guided under the independent command of a single pilot.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that there is no ‘perfect’ Captain of Industry in Shaw’s drama. In the plays considered above, we can only ever find its elements, but not the complete entity. It is the same with most everything Shaw writes. He avoids static, all-encompassing categories, and presents us with only the parts of a larger ideal. Not only does this allow for compelling drama, but also for our critical, and perhaps imaginative, interpretations of its outcome. In such a way, the Shavian Captain of Industry remains a beacon on a far off point, perhaps a state not meant to be attained, but certainly contemplated upon as a dynamic and hypothetical model.
Notes

1 “[W]hat is it that the modern English soul does, in very truth, dread infinitely, and contemplate with entire despair? What is his Hell . . .? With hesitation, with astonishment, I pronounce it to be: The terror of ‘Not succeeding;’ of not making money, fame or some other figure in the world, — chiefly of not making money! . . . [For], if we do not ‘succeed,’ where is the use of us? We had better not been born” (140).

2 “All work, even cotton-spinning, is noble; work is alone noble” (P&P 147). “For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in Idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, is in communication with Nature; the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature’s appointment’s and regulations, which are truth. The latest Gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it . . . The blessed glow of Labour in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!” (189). Enthusiastic, indeed; Carlyle’s prescription for vigourous and noble work lacks some definition of conduct and control. Ruskin and Shaw both address the failings of an undisciplined zeal for work and compensate undisciplined with wise or intelligent management.

3 Andrew Undershaft, an example of the “rags to riches” story, vociferates Shaw’s loathing for poverty: “All other crimes are virtues beside [poverty]; all the other dishonors are chivalry itself by comparison. Poverty blights whole cities; spreads horrible pestilences; strikes dead the very souls of all within sight, sound, or smell of it . . . [The poor] poison us morally and physically: they kill the happiness of society . . . Only fools fear crime: we all fear poverty” (MB 142).

4 See chapter four, “Radical Fiction,” of Ivan Melada’s The Captain of Industry in English Fiction 1821-1871. Melada includes Friedrich Engels in the chapter, as well. Engels may not have written fiction, but his unconceding attack on industrialists in works like The Condition of the Working Class in England (1845) hyperbolises the villainy of these employers and ignores their ‘virtues’ to such a degree that it approaches imaginative conception. The polemics of his ‘analysis’ undoubtedly fuelled the prejudice found in the fiction of Pimlico and Reynolds.

5 John Davidson Rockefeller (1839-1937) established the Standard Oil (1870) Company in the United States, which monopolised the market until “[a] new antitrust law broke [the] company into separate corporations in 1911” (“Rockefeller.” World Book. Toronto: Field Enterprises, 1964, 355-356). He became the world’s richest man during his lifetime and, before his death, gave away over $500,000,000 to foundations and organisations (355). Though not terribly poor to start, his career has been named a rags-to-riches story as he rose from a clerk in a small firm to America’s most recognised head of big business (356). His coercive business tactics would largely be restricted or illegal at present, and would have labelled him as less than a ‘gentleman’ capitalist in his own time, though he was greatly respected for his aggressiveness.
Shaw purposefully sparred with Shakespeare for the right to be recognised as England’s greatest playwright. See his ironic play “Shakes Versus Shav” (1949).

Shaw introduces the most destructive of all agents of capitalism, his own brokers of illth, in *The Apple Cart* (1928), with his creation Breakages, Limited. It is not an actual company in itself, but rather an imagined mischievous spirit that inhabits or develops out of the capitalist system. Breakages, Limited does not act as a conscious entity, since it represents all the unconnected inefficiencies and immoralities of a market economy: “The armament firms thrive on war; the glaziers gain by broken windows; the operating surgeons depend on cancer for their children’s bread; the distillers and brewers build cathedrals to sanctify the profits of drunkeness” (*AC* 28). Bernard Mandeville’s satirical political economy *Fable of the Bees* (1714) presents a much more elaborate analysis upon how economies (and society itself) is driven by the worst side of humankind: greed and destruction, foremost.

“We have profoundly forgotten everywhere that *Cash-payment* is not the sole relation of human beings; we think, nothing doubting, that *it* absolves and liquidates all engagements of man” (Carlyle 141).

The situation demonstrates the need for serious consideration of Carlyle’s “Conditon of England Question” first posed in *Chartism* (1839) The term comes from the heading of the first chapter: “Condition-of-England Question.” It functions as a headline for the general social malady that Carlyle believes is plaguing England and also functions to point out our need to address these problems. *Chartism* begins with the sentence: “A feeling very generally exists that the condition and the disposition of the Working Classes is a rather ominous matter at present; that something ought to be said, something ought to be done, in regard to it” (118). “The Condition of England Question” has been used to categorise problem plays and other fiction and non-fiction that seek to bring the issues of the state and public’s well-being. The “Question” applies to more than England: “We shall here take ‘England’ as an unfortunate yet common misnomer for the United Kingdom of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland” (2), explains Michael Levin his text *The Condition of England Question: Carlyle, Mill, Engels*. I would like to stretch the term even further an have it encompass the examination of national economies and politics in general.

According to the preface to *The Millionairess*, Shaw felt that even a modern liberal democracy tends to promote the establishment of an “unashamed plutocracy” (220). “And as the meanest creature can become rich if he devotes his life to it,” continues the preface, “and the people with wider and more generous interests become or remain poor with equal certainty, plutocracy is the very devil socially because it creates a sort of Gresham law by which the baser human currency drives out the nobler coinage” (220). We should note that this statement does not hold that all means of gaining wealth are devilish, but the majority of capitalists who have become part of society’s elite have done so by the most selfish methods. Since this corruption begets more corruption, the best way to improve the capitalist system is to revolutionise it on a grand scale.
In his office as governor of the men employed by him, the merchant or manufacturer is invested with a distinctly paternal authority and responsibility" (UTL 130).

Sometimes these analogies use the language of naval or military captains [UTL: 130-1, 121-2. P&P: 261-63. Latter-Day Pamphlets: 30-31, 124-25, 141]. However, I have decided to primarily play upon the naval metaphor, as Shaw does.

Carlyle addressed the problem of reconciling the need for leadership with the danger of the abuse of authority, "To reconcile Despotism with Freedom" (Carlyle 271). His answer, to support Shaw’s concept of the overpowering bosses, is to “make your Despotism just” (271): a paradox not easily achieved, but the idea of which will later be important to this argument.

The notion of “the tyranny of talented individuals” certainly alludes the negative (ie. despotic) possibilities of governance by Carlyle’s “Aristocracy of Talent” (Carlyle 26-32).

I should note that these were only the selected elements of the superman and do not comprise the entirety of the figure. I stress again that these characters are not actual supermen, only elements of that hypothetical being.

She assaults and tosses one character, Adrian Blenderbland, down a stairs, leaving him grievously injured. At another point she is compared to a tornado, earthquake, and avalanche (Millionaire3 312).

Epifania does not actually gain ownership of the businesses. She enters into them as an employee and quickly pushes aside the managers who are left bewildered by her fierce decisiveness and certitude.

Martin Weiner’s English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit connect with my observations of Shaw’s drama in a number of ways. The seventh chapter of Weiner’s text, “The Gentrification of the Industrialist,” explains the many cultural tensions that helped shape business attitudes and attitudes about business in England from the late nineteenth century to mid twentieth. Weiner presents the phrase “industry as a leper” to describe the industrial bias of the period, a “cultural watershed”: “The industrialist was left somewhat isolated, the legatee of an aborted rebellion against the standards of “upper Englishry,” standards that refused to take the processes of material production quite seriously” (Weiner 128). A reaction against (or, accession with) this prejudice developed in the ranks of industry as “the ideal of the educated amateur” (139) spawned “the cult of the practical man” (139). The outlook of this “practical man” parallels Shaw’s own conception of the born boss. Another note on Weiner’s chapter: Weiner also mentions the fact that William Morris’ (the socialist) reputation supplants that of William Morris (1877-1963) the automobile manufacturer, the British equivalent of Henry Ford (131): “For despite leaving one of the most popular cars in the world to bear his name, William Morris is completely overshadowed by his Victorian namesake in the mental reference map of most educated men and women” (131).
Beginning with *Man and Superman* in 1903, Shaw wrote the quasi-trilogy in three years, with *John Bull's Other Island* in 1904, followed by *Major Barbara* in 1905. In a letter, Shaw had even referred to the set, though not published as such, as “the big three” (Dukore 33). However, the relationship between the three plays runs much deeper than mere chronology, as exhaustively argued by Bernard F. Dukore in his essay “Shaw’s Big Three.”

I would hesitate to suppose that Shaw envisions an ultimate solution to anything. Not even the impressive Shavian Superman satisfies the role: “it is assumed, on the strength of the single word Superman (Übermensch) borrowed by me from Nietzsche, that I look for the salvation of society to the despotism of a single Napoleonic Superman, in spite of my careful demonstration of the folly of that outworn infatuation” (“Preface” MB 13).

Shaw most explicitly refers to slave-morality in the preface to *Major Barbara*: “Nietzsche, as I gather, regarded the slave-morality as having been invented and imposed on the world by slaves making a virtue of necessity and a religion of their servitude” (14). In his book *Men and Supermen*, Arthur H. Nethercot describes the idealists who ascribe to this ethic as “the Slaves of Duty” who “with their erection of romantic masks and their idolization of duty, self-sacrifice, and altruism, . . . often [did so] at the expense of ruining the individual’s own life and happiness” (25).

I should note that Ellie undergoes a type of conversion as the result of her heartbreak: “I was quite a nice girl this morning, and now I am neither a girl nor particularly nice” (HH 108). After throwing away her romantic notions of love and making the transition from girlhood into womanhood, or from romantic dreaming into practical realism, she passes beyond the slave-morality of her misguided innocence. Her father’s poverty, for which she was once proud (60), becomes a plight to escape from: “I shall pretend to sell myself to Boss Mangan to save my soul from the poverty that is damning me by inches” (127).

Mazzini Dunn, the father of Ellie, is the most kind, but least successful person in the play. Though he does everything the “right” way, he is always wrong in every observation he makes. Shaw could be making the point that a kindhearted person does not make a boss of industry or leader of people. Perceptive shrewdness gives one a better ability to command.

At the end of *John Bull’s Other Island* Broadbent makes the incredible remark that he had been educated by the ideas of Ruskin and Carlyle: “They improved my mind; they raised my tone enormously” (163). He then immediately says the same of Peter Keegan, the Shavian Realist who rails against and is tormented by the baseness of Broadbent’s project and mind: “[Keegan] has made me feel a better man: distinctly better” (163). Unable to fathom the true nature of Keegan’s scathing attack on his plan to turn the town of Rossocullen into an English golf resort, a haven for dilettantes, Broadbent ends the play with the line to prove he has learned nothing: “Come along and help me to choose the site for the hotel” (163). Shaw makes the point that the greatest danger to society is not simply the conscious abuse of power. Broadbent’s wilful ignorance (if it is even self-
willed) demonstrates how the stupidity of leaders in business and politics afflicts society more severely than the conscious manipulations and confrontations created by those like Epifania or Bossborn. No amount of protest or sound reason will reach the core thoughts of the brain-blocked, as Keegan has so exasperatedly discovered.

25 Ivan Melada’s *The Captain of Industry in English Fiction 1821-1871* explains the significance of the term Napoleon of Industry in relation to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “discussion of Napoleon as symbol of the spirit of commerce and industrial enterprise” (12). Melada quotes from *English Traits, Representative Men, and Other Essays* (London, 1919): “I call Napoleon the agent or attorney of the middle class of modern society; of the throng who fill the markets, shops, countinghouses, manufactories, ships, of the modern world, aiming to be rich. He was the agitator, the destroyer of prescription, the internal improver, the liberal, the radical, the inventor of means, the opener of doors and markets, the subverter of monopoly and abuse. Of course, the rich and the aristocratic did not like him” (12). The description smacks of Shaw’s unreasonable man and world betterer. Mangan does not improve anything or subvert abuse, and Broadbent only thinks he does, talks as though he does. Undershaft is the one who butts his head up against the aristocratic and rich, and earnestly tries to be an agitator, destroyer of prescription, and the inventor of the means to improve society.

26 Mazzini is a slave to the injustices of reality; Ellie seeks to utilise or transcend them; and Shotover plots to destroys them.


28 Ellie divines the actuality of the Captain’s momentary, opportune appearances and profound declamations: “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” (127). Her harsh observation is true for the most part. The Captain does fail to engage with Mangan or the Heartbreakers in any way that can be considered constructive. He curses the dreaming romantics while he involuntarily does the same and despises the destructive habits of Mangan while conspiring to find a way to blow up all the capitalists and other people who usurp power. While Shotover seeks to destroy, Ellie at least wills herself to transcend the soullessness of Mangan and the melancholic dreaming of the Heartbreakers.

29 Shotover’s technique of gaining his subordinates’ obedience relates to the methods described in the “Preface on Bosses”: “In this way the most honest ruler becomes a tyrant and a fabricator of legends and falsehoods, not out of any devilment in himself, but because those whom he rules do not understand his business” (*Millionairess* 221).
Shotover has succeeded in avoiding the brutal imposition of his authority, but must still rely on manipulations to maintain control. I would like to draw attention to the fact that it is not the power of command that threatens to corrupt Shotover. The “kicking and swearing that was damning [him] by inches” comes about as the result of commanding a degraded crew. Therefore, the nature of a ruler’s control is determined by the quality of character for both the subordinates and subordinator.

30 An ascending list relating to their values of captaincy. The list responds to the power they command and not necessarily how they wield that potential. Undershaft, who holds the more power in his business than do either Mangan or Broadbent, is the greater threat to society, not only because of the weapons he manufactures, but because his Dionysiac will makes him most similar to the uncontrollable tyrants described in the preface of *The Millionairess*.

31 A descending list relating to the fierceness of their evangelizations and to the frustrating impotence faced by each character: *i.e.* the isolated Real Captain whom people eventually come to heed. For example, Shotover and Keegan are far more bitter and hostile than Barbara ever is. Shotover’s violence of mind outweighs even Keegan’s biting invective. These old men, both acting half-mad, shout from the periphery while Barbara, as a literal Salvationist, involves herself with the common people and later allies herself with the powers of business, instead of remaining an ineffective talker. Her loss of faith and subsequent rediscovery of purpose also parallels Ellie’s heartbreak and maturation.

32 Indeed, Mazzini even says, “[Shotover] is so fearfully magnetic: I feel vibrations whenever he comes close to me” (100).

33 An ascending list relating to not only how intelligent each agent is, but also how complementary they are to the boss figure. Mazzini, innocent and always mistaken in his observations, functions as little more than a victimized mark in Mangan’s schemes. Larry and Broadbent are an excellent match, although Larry can sometimes be subsumed under the weight of Broadbent’s buoyancy and English character. Cusins connects most wonderfully with Undershaft, becoming not only his son-in-law, but also the inheritor of Undershaft’s foundry and the intelligent aide to the able magnate.

34 In some sense, Mazzini/Larry/Cusins stand in for the labourer, the real employee, who makes no significant appearance on the stage, except in *Major Barbara*. To be more accurate, the complete absence of real labouring types in *Heartbreak House* (with apologies to Nurse Guinness) signifies Mangan’s complete detachment from any ties to real industry. The toiling, inefficient, squabbling, dreaming and possibly drunken farmers in *John Bull’s Other Island* allude to Broadbent’s real business plan to replace Irish industry with English leisure. Only in *Major Barbara* do we get the most accurate and extensive representation of workers in all Shaw’s drama, ranging from the debased unemployed to the well-kept inhabitants of Perivale St Andrews, denoting Undershaft’s true powers of industry.
35 Hesione says this with a degree of irony.

36 As a product of drifting, the engagement, by Shavian standards, was doomed from the start. This unwilled, dutifully accepted relationship may not be flawed by romantic dreaming, but its faults have everything to do with relinquishing self-determination and yielding to conventional ideals.

37 Hector is a notorious liar. He fabricates fantastical stories of his bravery to impress an audience, such as Ellie. However, “he really is brave, and really has adventures, and yet tells lies about things that he never did and that never happened” (HH 72).

38 “But business is business; and I ruined him as a matter of business” (93). Mangan continually backtracks in his statements of accomplishment. Strangely, he refuses to admit full responsibility for his actions while proclaiming himself a man of action. For example, Mangan excuses his bad behaviour for being the way of business, and he later asserts that he “never set up to be clever” (154). Hesione catches on to this habit when she says, “There is no pleasing you, Mr Mangan. You are determined to be neither rich nor poor, honest nor dishonest” (151). This hypocrisy is another reason why Mangan is beneath Broadbent, whose compartmentalized head leaves him incapable of genuine hypocrisy, only the semblance of it.

39 Special attention should be given to Mangan’s “cleverness.” An earlier quote from The Intelligent Woman’s Guide (345-46, page 10 of this discussion) spoke of the modern misconception about “the proper social use of brains.” Mangan exemplifies the belief that cunning and cleverness are best used to exploit other people.

40 As is typical of Shaw’s drama, the audience receives both sides of a story or character; rarely, if ever, does Shaw only offer a glorious hero or a devilish villain. In the preface to Plays Pleasant, Shaw writes: “The obvious conflicts of unmistakeable good with unmistakeable evil can only supply the crude drama of villain and hero, in which some absolute point of view is taken, and the dissentients are treated by the dramatist as enemies to be piously glorified or indignantly vilified. In such cheap wares I do not deal” (8)

41 Then again, I feel it only fair to mention that Mangan is having “a presentiment that he is going to die” (139). Though any allusions to providence in this play are circumspect, for once somebody is correct. Shotover does say that “[i]t is the hand of God” that drew Mangan to the dynamite stocked gravel pit. The thematic paradox is not easy to resolve, unless it is regarded as Shavian playfulness. We can at least assume Mangan was destroyed for a reason; maybe it is the diabolically moral Shaw who drew him there.

42 The term “temperament” has special relevance here. As a play that “satirizes the national characters of Ireland and England” (rear cover, JBOI), many of the characters are meant to represent types: Broadbent as Englishman, Doyle as an expatriate Irishman, Nora as the delicate and charming Irishwoman, and Haffigan as the earnest, but coarse,
labouring Irishman. These temperaments are mostly determined by “geographic climate” (11).

43 Larry explains: “The difference [between an English woman and an Irish woman] is not a difference of type: it’s the difference between the woman who eats not wisely but too well, and the woman who eats not wisely but too little” (114). As harsh as this sounds, Larry is really trying to wake Broadbent from the wonderment of Nora’s ‘ethereal’ beauty.

44 The speech scene ends in a way that closely parallels what Carlyle has written. Broadbent’s combination of gobbledygook and enthusiasm leaves the crowd seemingly dazed:

Broadbent: Good morning, gentlemen. He turns impressively to the gate, and trots away, congratulating himself, with a little twist of his head and cock of his eye, on having done a good stroke of political business.

Matthew: [awestruck] Good morning, sir.
The Rest: Good morning. [They watch him vacantly until he is out of earshot].

Cornelius: Hwat d’ye think, Father Dempsey?
Father Dempsey: [indulgently] Well, he hasnt much sense, God help him; but for the matter o that, neither has our present member.

...Matthew: [deeply impressed by Broadbent, and unable to understand their levity concerning him] Did you mind what he said about retrenchment? That was very good, I thought. (124-25)

45 Keegan does in fact call Broadbent an ass:

Keegan: Well, perhaps I had better vote for an efficient devil that knows his own mind and his own business than for a foolish patriot who has no mind and no business.

Broadbent: [stiffly] Devil is a rather strong expression in that connection, Mr. Keegan.

Keegan: Not from a man who knows this world is hell. But since the word offends you, let me soften it, and compare you simply to an ass.

Broadbent: [reddening] An ass!

Keegan: [gently] ... The ass, sir, is the most efficient of beasts, matter-of-fact, hardy, friendly when you treat him as a fellow creature, stubborn when you abuse him, ridiculous only in love, which sets him braying, and in politics, which move him to roll about in the public road and raise a dust about nothing. Can you deny these qualities and habits in yourself, sir?

Broadbent: [goodhumouredly] Well, yes, I’m afraid I do, you know. (158-59)

There is also an “ass’s fault” which severely outweighs these ambivalent virtues. “Mr Broadbent spends his life inefficiently admiring the thoughts of great men, and efficiently serving the cupidity of base money hunters” (J.B.O.I 160-61). I will make more of the “ass” figure later.
Keegan prophecies the eventual end of the ventures taken and values held by people like Broadbent. After describing how Broadbent's schemes will ruin Rosscullen and its people, Keegan makes known how he feels history will judge the efficient asses: "For four wicked centuries the world has dreamed this foolish dream of efficiency, and the end is not yet. But the end will come" (160). And this end may be destructive, as it is in Heartbreak House, or it may be serene, as it is in Keegan's vision of Heaven. One thing is for certain, Broadbent's "methods and order" (or, rather "jumblings and tumblings") do not guarantee long lasting stability.

The unpretentious Mazzini explains why Mangan's phantasmal reputation is necessary, "[P]eople believe in him and are always willing to give him money, whereas they dont believe in me and never give me any" (150). The Intelligent Woman's Guide would classify Mangan as a "Promoter": "You, I hope, would not buy shares in a new company unless you saw what are called good names on the prospectus, shewing that half a dozen persons whom you believe to be wealthy, trustworthy, good judges of business, and in responsible social stations were setting you the example. . . . These persons are called Promoters, though they usually call themselves financiers" (203).

Broadbent: "The fact is, there are only two qualities in the world: efficiency and inefficiency, and only two sorts of people: the efficient and inefficient" (157); "The world belongs to the efficient" (159). Broadbent speaks with great clarity and truth. But as it is with all of Broadbent’s insights, his truth is only an empirical observation about the current, flawed way of the world. It does not reach into the heart of Shaw's philosophies and, therefore, remains only half-aware of larger possibilities.

Compare Broadbent's gospel in the above footnote to Keegan's: "For me there are but two countries: heaven and hell; but two conditions of men: salvation and damnation" (162).

One may view Doyle as a fatal realist. He thinks he is getting past dreaming and illusory beliefs, but by aligning himself with Broadbent, he is really misleading himself by substituting practical results for hard-to-reach, but noble, hopes.

The description of Doyle could, in part, be representative of Shaw. More significantly, I would say the qualities connect Doyle with the self-made Captains of Industry. But, as the play is structured, Broadbent receives most of our attention as the captain figure, leaving Larry usurped once again.

Again Mazzini is wrong. I will explain shortly.

Broadbent could almost be named a drummer — "a commercial traveller or travelling sales representative" (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary. New York, Gramercy Books, pg. 601) — were it not for that he buys rather than sells. Whatever buying he does has already been secured by the syndicate, and the only "selling" he does during electioneering has little actual value. Most of the Rosscullen people do not buy
into his liberal ideas, but rather the capital he supposedly commands: “Divil a matter if he has plenty o money. He’ll do right for us enough” (125).

54 A similar statement appears in The Intelligent Woman’s Guide: “It is useless to pretend that religion and tradition and honour always win the day. It is now a century and a half since the poet Oliver Goldsmith warned us that ‘Honor sinks where commerce long prevails’” (223).

55 I have pulled this metaphor from Andrew Carnegie’s The Empire of Business. Consult Appendix I.xv for Carnegie’s actual words.

56 Under the instruction of Ireland’s Christian monasteries, the first round towers of Ireland were built circa 790 for the protection of people, documents, and holy relics. In a sense, the Tower is a bunker, because it guarded against Viking attacks. The Round Tower of the play is, therefore, connected to the founding and preservation of the medieval Catholic Church in Ireland. These roots run deep in Keegan.

57 Larry also says, “I want to bring Galway within 3 hours of Colchester and 24 of New York. I want Ireland to be the brains and imagination of a big Commonwealth, not a Robinson Crusoe island” (84). Larry’s vision of “creative synthesis” is genuine. He may believe that he is using the syndicate to further this dream, but by the end of the play, he seems to have given up this hope.

58 The pirate/capitalist correlation also appears in Fabian Essays, under Shaw’s essay “Transition,” and carries a vein of thought quite similar to “Decline of the Employer”: “English adventurers took to sea in a frame of mind peculiarly favourable to commercial success. They were unaffectedly pious, and had the force of character which is only possible to men who are founded on convictions. At the same time, they regarded piracy as a brave and patriotic pursuit, and the slave trade as a perfectly honest branch of commerce, adventurous enough to be consistent with the honour of a gentleman, and lucrative enough to make it well worth the risk. When they stole the cargo of a foreign ship, or made a heavy profit on a batch of slaves, they regarded their success as a direct proof of divine protection. The owners of accumulated wealth hastened to ‘venture’ their capital with these men. . . . And it is curious to see still, in the commercial adventurers of our own time, the same incongruous combination of piety and rectitude with the most unscrupulous and revolting villainy” (208-209).

59 Also consider: “They [employers] not only owned a good deal of land and capital themselves, but fully intended to become propertied country gentlemen when they retired. It was not until they began to slip down into a salaried or proletarian class, that they also began to listen to Karl Marx” (IWG 207).

60 I would not argue that any of Shaw’s characters mature completely or grow to full awareness. Ellie and the characters of Major Barbara find enlightenment in varying degrees. Barbara and Cusins undergo significant change while others, such as Lady
Britomart, her son Stephen, Bill Walker, and even Andrew Undershaft (at least in the immediate events of the play), discover a new understanding in smaller increments.

61 Refer back to pages 45-46 for a glimpse at the qualities of Heaven and Hell.

62 “Improper” only refers to the rules composing an already hypocritical moral duty. Undershaft is breaking through the expected hypocrisy of morality, therefore appearing to be false when he speaks the opposite.

63 I would like to draw our attention to the businesslike equations Lady Britomart applies to her union with Undershaft, and his liabilities to their offspring. While it may seem a dialectic between practical businessman and cultured aristocrat has been achieved, we should note that it fails under the market mentality of Lady Britomart (‘Brit-o-mart” “being newspeak for “British Market” (Baskin 141)) and becomes non-synthetic substitution instead of dialectical assimilation (i.e. exchange instead of combination). Undershaft’s long-term absence in the household can also be considered a sign of this failure.

64 Undershaft even alludes to the allegorical power struggle of plutocracy and aristocracy while speaking to his wife: “Come, Biddy! these tricks of the governing class are of no use with me. I am one of the governing class myself... I have the power in this matter; and I am not to be humbugged into using it for your purposes” (120).

65 Consider Ruskin’s “The Political Economy of Art,” Unto This Last, and “Essays on Political Economy,” where he argues that we incorrectly see wealth as products of labour, or worse, as abstract money. True wealth is the means of production, that being land, tools, and, most importantly, workers: “the possessions of a rich man are not represented as they used to be, by wedges of gold or coffers of jewels, but by masses of men variously employed” (“Pol. Econ. of Art” 2). [Refer back to pages 15-16 for more of my analysis on power and money.]

66 Shaw makes his opinions about the aristocracy’s social dysfunction very clear in “Oligarchy” of The Intelligent Woman’s Guide: “With the best intentions, the gentry govern the country very badly because they are so far removed from the common people that they do not understand their needs. They use their power to make themselves still richer by forcing the common people to work still harder and accept still less ... They produce poverty on a vast scale by withdrawing labor from production to waste it in superfluous menial service ... They corrupt the teaching in the universities and schools to glorify themselves and hide their misdeeds” (65).

67 “The same mysterious personal force that makes the household tyrant, the school tyrant, the office tyrant, the brigand chief and the pirate captain, brings the born boss to the top by a gravitation that ordinary people cannot resist” (Millionairess 219).

68 Their insincerity about their deliverance into the arms of the Salvation Army may be understood as correlated to the sources of charitable funding that support the organisation. Just as “[a]ll religious organizations exist by selling themselves to the rich”
(MB 98) (according to Undershaft), the poor in West Ham must survive by selling themselves to religious organisations.

69 The stage directions describe Snobby Price in a manner befitting his name, indicative of the fact that he is not a creditable character: “young, agile, a talker, a poser, sharp enough to be capable of anything in reason except honesty or altruistic considerations of any kind” (75).

70 The stage directions are kinder to Peter Shirley than with Snobby Price, but he remains a pitiable character nonetheless: “a half hardened, half worn-out elderly man, weak with hunger” (78).

71 Shirley is an example of the exploitative and irresponsible employment system: “Ive worked ten to twelve hours a day since I was thirteen, and paid my way all through; and now am I to be thrown in the gutter...?” (78). Undershaft also helps to bring out the sad reality of British workers: “Undershaft: [indicating Peter Shirley...] And this is an honest man! [Shirley] Yes; and what av I got by it? Undershaft: Oh, your employers must have got a good deal by it from first to last” (99).

72 Shaw uses Bodger the distiller of whiskey to demonstrate how some businessmen may commit a veiled crime against society and then use those profits to be both absolved of any liabilities and rewarded with public recognition. In Bodger’s case, he sells “[r]otten dranken whiskey” (MB 107) to the very same people he supposedly saves through charity. Worst of all, it is not only himself that he “saves”:

Undershaft: [Bodger] is one of the greatest of our public benefactors. He restored the cathedral at Hakington. They made him a baronet for that. He gave half a million to the funds of his party: they made him a baron for that.

Shirley: What will they give him for the five thousand [going to the Salvation Army]?

Undershaft: There is nothing left to give him. So the five thousand, I should think, is to save his soul. (106)

73 Snobby Price later proves to be the only genuine thief in the play when he cunningly pilfers Bill Walker’s donation in front of everyone. Not only does the hypocrisy mark him as a dishonest man, but also further highlights the interconnected similarity of extreme rich and extreme poor.

74 Shaw later articulates the same precept in the preface for The Millionairess: “The law is equal before all of us; but we are not all equal before the law. Virtually there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, one law for the cunning and another for the simple, one law for the forceful and another for the feeble...” (217).

75 Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), steel tycoon and philanthropist who began life in poverty himself, placed particular importance upon the equality of opportunity. He once
sang democracy was not “equality of conditions, physical or mental, or equality as to property. It does mean political equality and the equality of opportunity” (GOW xii). Freedom, then, is not just the ability to vote and live under abstract democratic rights. It must also manifest as the opportunity to put those rights into effect, i.e. by having fair access to the basic needs in life. I will be returning to Carnegie later in this section.

Undershaft’s recruitment by the previous Undershaft (the sixth of the line) may have been the same careful selection Andrew Undershaft VII makes of Cusins. The verbal and ideological sparring between Undershaft and Cusins from the middle of the second act onwards was part of the former man’s method of assessing the latter, as indicative of Undershaft’s deciding statement: “Well said. Come! you will suit me (147).

Here is the piece of dialogue to which I refer: “[Lady Britomart]: And you, Adolphus, ought to know better than to go about saying that wrong things are true. What does it matter whether they are true if they are wrong? [Undershaft]: What does it matter whether they are wrong if they are true” (144).

The practical side of the Captain of Industry, the aspect that would be applicable in the everyday, is the work ethic he represents and the re-establishment of brotherly ties he advocates (to replace the cash nexus). The prophetic side concerns the grand result of his efforts, uniting the disparate forces of labour, establishing a new standard of interrelations, and ultimately reforming the ailments in society, which may also mean a revolution of the ruling house. As a saviour, the Captain of Industry combines both the direction of immediate activities in life and the guidance of a long-term vision. In the following paragraph, I will be looking at the practical functions of Undershaft as Captain of Industry and then later in my argument considering how he fulfils the prophetic half by uniting with Cusins and Barbara.

Since a strong motif in Major Barbara is the reordering of beliefs, institutions, and phrases from out of a created disorder (usually caused by Undershaft), one may not be surprised to have Shaw play with the order of Carlyle’s ideas and phrases. As an example, consider Dolly Cusins, Andrew Undershaft, Perivale St Andrews; and then consider a character out of Past and Present: “the indomitable Plugson, of the respected firm of Plugson, Hunks and Company, in St. Dolly Undershoot” (182, italics added). Plugson of Undershoot also lives by “the Cash-Gospel” (183).

Of course, I do not mean absolute nothing, but rather a chaotic mass. The self-made person pulls together loose threads of opportunity and resources to build a solid, productive engine, whether it is oneself, a business, etc.

Lady Britomart describes the tradition: “The Undershafts are descended from a foundling in the parish of St Andrew Undershaff in the city. That was long ago, in the reign of James the First. Well, this foundling was adopted by an armorer and gun-maker. In the course of time the foundling succeeded to the business; and from some notion of gratitude, or some vow or something, he adopted another foundling, and left the business
to him. And that foundling did the same. Ever since that, the cannon business has always been left to an adopted foundling named Andrew Undershaft” (57).

82 In 1935, Shaw wrote of this biological ‘fact’ in the preface to the Millionairess while tamely reproving Hitler’s anti-Semitic call for a pure bred German race: “Surely the average German can be improved. I am told that children bred from Irish colleens and Chinese laundrymen are far superior to inbred Irish or Chinese. Herr Hitler is not a typical German. I should not be at all surprised if it were discovered that his very mixed blood (all our bloods today are hopelessly mixed) got fortified somewhere in the past by that of Kind David” (232-33).

83 “The worst of crimes. All the other crimes are virtues beside it: all the other dishonors are chivalry itself by comparison. Poverty blights whole cities; spreads horrible pestilence; strikes dead the very souls of all who come within sight, sound, or smell of it. . . . [The poor] poison us morally and physically: they kill the happiness of society: they force us to do away with our own liberties and to organize unnatural cruelties for fear they should rise against us and drag us down into their abyss. Only fools fear crime: we all fear poverty. (MB 142) Carlyle presents a comparable, but somewhat different view in Latter-Day Pamphlets: “where there is a Pauper, there is a sin; to make one Pauper there go many sins. Pauperism is spiritual ignobleness, a practical impropriety and base oblivion of duty, to an affair of the ledger” (134).

84 Lady Britomart: “Oh, Adolphus Cusins will make a very good husband. After all, nobody can say a word against Greek: it stamps a man at once as an educated gentleman” (54).

85 Edward C. Kirkland’s “Editor’s Introduction” to The Gospel of Wealth reveals this quirk or quality of Carnegie’s business beliefs: “This attitude set Carnegie a little apart from the business currents of his period. At a time when business was increasingly professionalized and bureaucratized, he excluded from the ranks of businessmen all salary receivers; when businessmen were consolidating their organizations into trusts, holding companies, and corporations, Carnegie remained the anarchic individualist, a reluctant participator in pools and agreements and a man who held his big business within the confines of the partnership form of organization until the nineties” (viii-ix).

86 “Against th[e] possibility [of being reduced to an employee], the [the employer-stockholder] usually protects himself [and] . . . his position as the established head who has made a success of the business, or at least persuaded the shareholders that he has, is a strong one. But he does not live forever. When he dies or retires, a new manager must be found; and this successor is not his heir, but a stranger entering as a removable employee, managing the concern for a salary and perhaps a percentage of the profits” (IWG 204).

87 Mazzini: “a little elderly man with bulging credulous eyes and earnest manners” (HH 61). His connection with Undershaft is primarily the compassionate and unthreatening
exterior. Undershaft’s confrontational mannerisms would quickly dispel any meekness about him.

One can equate Undershaft with the Jötuns (a Scandinavian mythic race of giants at war with the gods) briefly spoken of in the “Captains of Industry” chapter of Past and Present, at least for his gigantic proportions. Carlyle refers to the Jötuns as the conquerors of difficulty, in other words, the giants of industry that change wild landscapes into usable means. There also exists a double-edge to thesepowerhouses. Along with their brute force comes the possibility of chaotic disruption and even destruction. Undershaft the Dionysiac and arms-maker presents the same problem.

“Shaw sees Undershaft as less a debater than as a man of magnetic intensity and overwhelming energy which captivates Cusins” (Wisenthal 68).

Robert Owen (1771-1858) is know as “the father of English socialism.” His innovations of social reform lead to the establishment of many small co-operative communities: New Harmony (1825) Orbiston (1825-27), Ralahine (1831-33), and Queenwood (1839-45) (Garnett 39-64). These communities sought to reduce class and family divisions, provide nearly equal rights for both sexes, and build commerce upon fair trade. Sir Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928) approached social reform and co-operative communities from the angle of urban planning. Circular in design, these towns incorporated green space into urban centres and were divided in sections devoted to commercial and industrial parks, housing areas, and agricultural fields. Howard’s socialism was tamer compared to Owenism, since the Garden Cities promoted healthy living and efficient town planning rather than radical reform.

Undershaft: “I see no darkness here, no dreadfulness. In your Salvation shelter I say 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” (141).

Matheson writes in one his footnotes: “It is interesting to note that Alfred Krupp, the German armament manufacturer and a man Undershaft may well have been modelled on, in part, had established a company town that bears a distinct resemblance to Perivale St. Andrews. Krupp ‘had established established a bread factory, a wine store, a butcher plant, a hotel, and a charity fund for families left destitute by the periodic flooding of the Ruhr.’ Though, ‘Nothing remotely resembling this may be found in the archives of the other titans who were emerging from the industrial revolution,’ Krupp should not be given too much credit for magnanimity, since, in his own words, these policies were ‘Originally determined for the protection and flowering of the works [as, Shaw implies, were Undershaft’s]. Besides that, it is useful for the prevention of socialistic errors’” (Matheson 300).

Though Undershaft holds the legal rights to ownership and profit, the Undershaftian legacy disinherits him in a limited sense. He has sacrificed his identity (though as a foundling he had none) to adopt that of Andrew Undershaft, the man that created the
foundry in the early seventeenth century. The firm holds an historical precedent that extends beyond the lifespan and power of each individual owner. The legacy invests the foundry with a force of its own,

94 The Amorer’s Faith: “To give arms to all men who offer an honest price for them, without respect of persons or principles: to aristocrat and republican, to Nihilist and Tsar, to Capitalist and Socialist, to Protestant and Catholic, . . . to all sorts and conditions, all nationalities, all faiths, all follies, all causes and all crimes” (MB 138).

95 Carlyle would name Mangan and Broadbent as the Phantasms and Devils that mislead England: “Defenders of the Hypocrisies, the spiritual Vampires and obscene Nightmares, under which England lies in syncope” (Latter-Day Pamphlets 138).

96 Lady Britomart: “It is not only the cannons, but the war loans that Lazarus arranges under the cover of giving credit for the cannons. You know, Stephen, it’s perfectly scandalous. Those two men, Andrew Undershaft and Lazarus, positively have Europe under their thumbs” (55).

97 Carlyle gives the reason why regimentation is required: “You cannot lead a Fighting World without having it regimented, chivalried: the thing, in a day, becomes impossible . . . And can you any more continue to lead a Working World unregimented, anarchic? . . . Your gallant battle-hosts and work-hosts, as the others did, will need to be made loyally yours; they must and will be regulated, methodically secured in their just share of conquest under you; - joined with you in veritable brotherhood, sonhood, by quite other and deeper ties than those of temporary day’s wages!” (P&P 262-63).

98 I would like to look beyond the socio-economic factors that connect the two institutions under the vicious circle of capitalism, but it must be acknowledged that the Salvation Army serves instead of fights the baseness of capitalism. Joining with Bodger’s venture to donate five thousand pounds to the Salvation Army, Undershaft effectively buys out Barbara’s faith, leaving it worthless. The Army not only depends upon the funds of businessmen like Undershaft; it also supplies their factories and warehouses with dutiful and productive workers:

Cusins: [The Army] makes them sober –
Undershaft: I prefer sober workmen. The profits are larger.
Cusins: - honest –
Undershaft: Honest workers are the most economical.
Cusins: - attached to their homes –
Undershaft: An invaluable safeguard against revolution.
Cusins: - unselfish –
Undershaft: Indifferent to their own interests, which suits me exactly.
Cusins: - with their thoughts on heavenly things –
Undershaft: And not on Trade Unionism nor Socialism. Excellent. (98)

However, these matters only demonstrate how the shelter serves the needs of the established powers. The spirit of the Army that Barbara embodies has a higher purpose
than the constraints put upon it by economic realities. Barbara has lost one battle, but not the entire struggle.

Carlyle's full statement goes: "Love of men cannot be bought by cash-payment; and without love men cannot endure to be together" (262). Perivale seems to disprove this idea, since its citizens endure each other quite well. Of course, it is an illusory harmony. It has been bought, and without money and without the self-regulating chain of command, the townspeople would be as co-operative as West Ham and Wilton Crescent.

The nature of Barbara's religion at the end cannot be equate to any denomination; it is original. Therefore, the God she serves may be a mix of the Christian God and a Shavian kind of spiritual socialism.

This belief can be gleaned from these two examples: "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" (IWG 349). "The worst of it is that Capitalism produces a class of persons so degraded by their miserable circumstances that they are incapable of responding to an order civilly given, and have to be fiercely scolded or cursed and kicked before any work can be got out of them; and these poor wretches in turn produce a class of slavedrivers who know no other methods of maintaining discipline. The only remedy is not to produce such people. They are abortions produced by poverty, and will disappear with it" (IWG 352).
Works Consulted

Primary Material


**Secondary Material: Shaw Criticism**


—— “Revising “Major Barbara.” *The Shaw Review.* 1973, 16, 3-10


McDowell, Frederick P. “Politics, Comedy, Character, and Dialectic: The Shavian World of *John Bull's Other Island.*” *PMLA.* 1967, 82, 542-553.


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**Secondary Material: Social Criticism**


Appendix I

Andrew Carnegie: Brief Biography and Quotations

To add “eye-witness” legitimacy to my argument, and to glimpse a “hands-on” view of industrial business and its role in society, I would like to introduce *The Gospel of Wealth* (1900) and *The Empire of Business* (1902), two collections of essays by Andrew Carnegie. Before I list parts of his essays that illustrate some key points of my topic, I feel it necessary to look at Carnegie’s career and life.

Having been raised in a poor household, his father a master weaver left unemployed by the factory system (*GOW* 3), Carnegie epitomises the model of the self-made man as he later prevailed as America’s richest steel tycoon. After his family’s emigration from Scotland to America in 1848, Carnegie began work as a bobbin-boy in a cotton factory, and continued his apprenticeship in various companies as a messenger and telegrapher until he began his rise in the Pennsylvania Railroad from 1853 to 1865 (*GOW* vii). After resigning from the railroad, he set up his own firm, Keystone Bridge Company (1865), and travelled Europe on business where he began an association with British steel makers (xxii). Investing wisely, he bought into and began to manage The Edgar Thompson Steel Works near Pittsburgh (vii), and pioneered the use of a new steel process, the Bessemer converter, on a large scale:

> By the [eighteen]nineties Carnegie’s [mills were] the most advanced and the most powerful unit in the American steel and iron industry. At the end of the century he sold out to financiers and industrialists¹ . . . In 1901 after the sale he had a fortune of about $300,000,000. (viii)

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¹ Proof of the (de)evolution of business and industry described in the “Decline of the Employer” chapter of *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide*. 
Not only was Carnegie a veritable Captain of Industry who "worked and presided over work," he also connects with Major Barbara an account of his major philanthropic efforts. Putting into action the ideals he set presents in The Gospel of Wealth and The Empire of Business, he donated over $311,000,000 before his death in 1919 (GOW xix), mostly for the construction and improvement of libraries and technical schools, scholarships for scientific research, and "hero funds." During the initial sell-out in 1901, he demonstrated his fond respect for labour by setting up a $5,000,000 pension and benefit fund for his employees (xxii).

The Gospel of Wealth and The Empire of Business gather together essays Carnegie wrote for periodicals and for speeches he gave in front of college assemblies, chamber of commerce functions, and crowds at dedication ceremonies. The editor of The Gospel of Wealth, Edward C. Kirkland, notes that the Carnegie had a "family background of Chartist reform" (xi) which may have instilled him with the idealism and social observation found in his writing. Carnegie's intellectualism set him apart from most other capitalists in the opinion of Kirkland: "At a time when such businessmen as John D. Rockefeller [oil tycoon] and Elbert H. Gary (1867-1927) [financier and lawyer] were supposed to be without an intellectual attainment larger than the ability to lead a Sunday-school class, [Carnegie] was the friend of literary men, those characteristically successful like Mark Twain and Richard Watson Gilder (1844-1909)" (x). But he did not escape all criticism:

Although Carnegie lived before the days when ghost-writing was standard operating procedure for businessmen and politicians (and occasionally candidates for the Ph.D.), he has not escaped the stigma. In the folklore of professional authorship the most common name given to the "faceless one" is that of James Howard Bridge.
Carnegie referred to him as “my clever secretary.” Undoubtedly Bridge was of great assistance in the compilation of *Triumphant Democracy* [1886-Carnegie’s second book], and he wrote a book on his own to prove that Carnegie had little to do with the accumulation of his fortune – this was the work of others. (xix)

One might wonder how Shaw would have reacted to *The Gospel of Wealth*. Interestingly, the preface to *Major Barbara* provides us with what could easily be Shaw’s harsh but realistic review of Andrew Carnegie:

> In proof I might point to the sensational object lesson provided by our commercial millionaires today. They begin as brigands: merciless, unscrupulous, . . . But the successful scoundrel is dealt with . . . very Christianly. He is not only forgiven: he is idolized, respected, made much of, all but worshipped. . . . He begins to idolize himself, to respect himself, to live up to the treatment he receives. He preaches sermons, writes books of the most edifying advice to young men, and actually persuades himself that he got on by taking his own advice; he endows educational institutions; he supports charities; he dies finally in the odor of sanctity, leaving a will which is a monument of public spirit and bounty. And all this without any change in his character. . . . You only have to reverse your attitude towards him – to lay hands on his property, revile him, assault him, and he will be a brigand again in a moment, as ready to crush you as you are to crush him, and quite as full of pretentious moral reasons for doing it. (34-35)

His large amounts of charitable money aside, much more characterises Carnegie as a latter-day Captain of Industry. Edward C. Kirkland, the editor of the 1962 Harvard University Press *The Gospel of Wealth*, begins his introduction of the text by citing “a famous introspective note . . . of self analysis” (vii) written by Carnegie at the age of thirty-three as he made his first significant steps into the steel industry: “Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately” (vii). Many of his later writings also catch the driven spirit of self-command that Carnegie proudly thumped as the secret to his success: “The businessman, pure and simple, plunges into and tosses upon the waves of human affairs without a life-preserver in the shape of salary; he risks all . . . The businessman pursues
fortune” (EOB 190). Carnegie’s attitude towards business and life has obvious similarities to Undershaft’s “money as power of self-mastery” and unwillingness to stop for anything except a bullet as he pulled himself out of the east end. “That is the history of most self-made millionaires, I fancy” (MB 143), as Undershaft says. Kirkland even makes a note about Carnegie that serves to further connect him with Undershaft, who habitually snubs gentrified codes of conduct in favour of the practical direct line: “This attitude [similar to John Bull’s “stubborn force of swimming” (P&P 154)], set Carnegie a little apart from the business currents of his period. At a time when business was increasingly professionalized and bureaucratized, . . . when businessmen were consolidating their organizations into trusts, holding companies, and corporations, Carnegie remained the anarchic individualist, . . . a man who held his big business within the confines of the partnership form of organization” (viii-ix).

I have provided here some quotations that are particularly apt when in line with this paper’s look at Carlyle, Ruskin, and Shaw.

“The Advantages of Poverty:”

i. “. . . from the ranks of the poor so many strong, eminent, self-reliant men have always sprung and always must spring . . . it seems, nowadays, a matter of universal desire that poverty should be abolished. We should be quite willing to abolish luxury, but to abolish honest, industrious, self-denying poverty would be to destroy the soil upon which mankind produces the virtues which enable our race to reach a still higher civilization than it now possesses” (GOW 6-7).
ii. "...the greatest and best of our race have necessarily been nurtured in the bracing school of poverty – the only school capable of producing the supremely great, the genius" *(GOW 64).*

iii. "It is not the educated, or so-called, classically educated man, it is not the aristocracy, it is not the monarchs, that have ruled the destinies of the world, either in camp, council, laboratory or workshop. The great inventions, the improvements, the discoveries in science, the great works of literature have sprung from the ranks of the poor" *(EOB 89).*

The Administration of Wealth as Solution:
iv. "The problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth, that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship" *(GOW 14).*

Carnegie as evolutionist:
v. "The truth is that the rich are growing poorer, and the poor growing richer, and that the land is passing from the hands of the few into the hands of the many" *(GOW 51).*

vi. "There is nothing detrimental to human society in it [the movement from private ownership>joint-stock>syndicate>trust], but much is, or is bound soon to become, beneficial. It is an evolution from the heterogeneous to the homogeneous, and is clearly another step in the upward path of development" *(GOW 81).*
Carnegie speaks of our failed “over-sanguine expectations” (GOW 79) of industrial syndication as a new democracy:

vii. “The day is not far past when the industrial world saw its millenium in the joint-stock idea. Every department of industry was to be captured by it. Shares in every conceivable enterprise were to be distributed among the people en masse, thus insuring the much-needed redistribution of wealth, where every man was no longer a consumer only, but his own manufacturer, his own transporter, clothier, butcher, baker, and candlestick-maker. . . Every employee in mill or factory, in railway or steamship service, was soon to become an owner, with a possible future seat on the board” (GOW 79).

Hereditary transmission of wealth and position:

viii. “The fond parent who invests his son with imaginary business business qualifications, and places him in charge of affairs – upon the successful management of which the incomes of thousands depend – incurs a grave responsibility. Most of the disastrous failures of the day arise from this very cause. . . The duty of the of a great enterprise is to interest capable assistants who are without capital, but who have shown aptitude for affairs, and raise these to membership and management” (GOW 57).

Partnership, joint-stock, and Millionaires:

ix. “Joint-stock companies cannot be credited with invention or enterprise. If it were not for the millionaire still in business, leading the way, a serious check would fall
upon future improvement, and I believe business men generally will concur in the opinion, which I firmly hold, that partnership – a very few, not more than two or three men – in any line of business will make full interest upon capital invested” (GOW 74).

x. “It would not be well for Britain’s future if her commercial and manufacturing supremacy depended upon joint-stock companies. It is her individual millionaires who have created this supremacy, and upon them its maintenance still depends. Those who insure steady employment to thousands, at wages not lower than others pay, need not be ashamed of their record; for steady employment is, after all, the one indispensable requisite for the welfare and the progress of the people” (GOW 75).

Gospel of Wealth:
xi. “The only point required by the gospel of wealth is that the surplus which accrues from time to time in the hands of a man should be administered by him in his own lifetime for that purpose which is seen by him, as trustee, to be best for the good of the people. To leave at death what we cannot take away, and place upon others the burden of the work which it was his own duty to perform, is to do nothing worthy” (GOW 48).

On Perivale and humanitarianism:
xii. “There are, of course, a few successful establishments, notably two in France and one in England, which are organized upon the coöperative plan, in which the workmen participate in the profits. . . . I can, of course, picture in my mind a state of
civilization in which the most talented business men shall find their most cherished
work in carrying on immense concerns, not primarily for their own aggrandizement,
but for the good of the masses of workers engaged therein, and their families; but
this is only a foreshadowing of a dim and distant future” (GOW 96-97).

Labor and Capital:

xiii. “It is true, and not false, therefore, that capital and labor are allies and not
antagonistic forces, and that one cannot prosper when the other does not” (GOW 55).

xiv. “Believe me, the interests of Labour and Capital are one. He is an enemy of Labour
who seeks to array Labour against Capital. He is an enemy of Capital who seeks to
array Capital against Labour” (EOB 74).

xv. “In our day, Capital, Business Ability, Manual Labour are the legs of a three-legged
stool [the state, perhaps?]. While the three legs stand sound and firm, the stool
stands; but let any one of these three weaken and break, let it be pulled out or struck
out, down goes the stool to the ground. And the stool is of no use until the third leg
is restored” (EOB 286).

Ruskin’s gentleman capitalist, perhaps?:

xvi. “No man is a true gentleman who does not inspire the affection and devotion of his
servants” (GOW 101).

The tremendous virtues of the business career:
xvii. I can confidently recommend to you the business career as one in which there is abundant room for the exercise of man's highest power, and of every good quality in human nature. I believe the career of the great merchant, or banker, or captain of industry, to be favourable to the development of the powers of the mind, and to the ripening of the judgement upon a wide range of general subjects" (GOW viii).

On initiative (to be more than “a full-fed, free man” (MB 143)):

xviii. “Say each to yourself. “My place is at the top.” Be king in your dreams. Make your vow that you will reach that position, with untarnished reputation, and make no other vow to distract your attention” (EOB 4).

Exuberant charismatic commerce:

xix. “The rising man must do something exceptional, and beyond the range of his special department. HE MUST ATTRACT ATTENTION” (EOB 10-11).

“No by levity of floating, but by stubborn force of swimming, shalt thou make thy way” (P&P 154):

xx. “The business man pure and simple plunges into and tosses upon the waves of human affairs without a life-preserver in the shape of salary; he risks all” (EOB 190).

The Problem with Education:
xxi. "They [college students] have been crammed with the details of petty and insignificant skirmishes between savages, and taught to exalt a band of ruffians into heroes; and we have called them "educated." They have been "educated" as if they were destined for life upon some other planet than this. They have in no sense received instruction. On the contrary, what they have obtained has served to imbue them with false ideas and to give them a distaste for practical life. . . . Had they gone into active work during the years spent at college they would have been better educated men in every true sense of that term. The fire and energy have been stamped out of them, and how to so manage as to live a life of idleness and not a life of usefulness has become the chief question with them. . . . What is the young man who knows Greek with the young man that knows stenography or telegraphy, for instance, or bookkeeping . . . ?" (EOB 80-81).

xxii. "...while the college student has been learning a little about the barbarous and petty squabbles of a far-distant past, or trying to master languages which are dead, such knowledge as seems adapted for life upon another planet than this, as far as business affairs are concerned – the future captain of industry is hotly engaged in the school of experience, obtaining the very knowledge required for his future triumphs" (EOB 110).

xxiii. "College graduates will usually be found under salaries, trusted subordinates. Neither capital, nor influence, nor college learning, nor all combined have proved able to contend in business successfully against the energy and indomitable will which spring from all-conquering poverty" (EOB 113)
An erroneous prognostication or a future dream?:

xxiv. "The day of the absent capitalist stockholder, who takes no interest in the operation of the works beyond the receipt of his dividend, is certainly passing away. The day of the valuable active worker in the industrial world is coming" (EOB 117).

Industry's nation and army:

xxv. "In our day, business in all branches is conducted upon so gigantic a scale that partners of a huge concern are rulers over a domain. The larger employer of labour sometimes has more men under his industrial army than the petty German kings had under their banners" (EOB 223).

King Krupp:

xxvi. "You remember that the late Emperor of Germany wished to make his friend, the steel manufacturer, Krupp, a Prince of empire, but that business man was too proud of his works, and the son of his father, and begged the Emperor to excuse him from degrading the rank he at present held as King of Steel" (EOB 222).
Appendix II

Alfred Krupp: Brief Biography and Notes

The Krupp that Carnegie wrote of in the last quotation of Appendix I, the “King of Steel,” was Alfred Krupp (1812-1887) the son of Friedrich Krupp (1787-1826) who in 1811 formed the company Firm of Fried. Krupp (a.k.a. die Firma), which would pass through the hands of four more generations of Krupps. The Krupp I would like to focus on is Alfred, the second to take charge of the foundry and its first successful manager. His father Friedrich (“the foundering founder” [Muhlen 12]) left him with more of a debt than an inheritance. Nevertheless, with some perseverance, Alfred rose in business and status, less so as a “King of Steel,” but as a King of Cannons. Carnegie may have downplayed this side of Krupp because he felt war went against the purpose of brotherly business and, in consequence, arms manufacture was distasteful and wasteful (GOW xvi). Alfred was the first of the Krupps to establish an armory (the real power of the Kruppian dynasty), first for cannon making and later for all brands of weapons, vehicles, and munitions.

Alfred Krupp began life in a hard lot and never seemed to recover from his childhood stresses. Norbert Muhlen in his book The Incredible Krupps writes:

Born with the silver spoon of Essen’s richest family in his mouth, [Alfred] spent his childhood in poverty brought about by his father. As his relatives and friends kept deploring, Alfred was déclassé, robbed of his rightful claims to wealth and rank, destined to a life far below his origins. (25)

His father experienced so many difficulties that during some periods he could not afford to hire labourers for his small foundry. As a result, Alfred frequently abandoned his
school studies to occupy a position in the works (Muhlen 26). “The anvil was my desk” (Manchester 43), Alfred would say of his education. William Manchester in *The Arms of Krupp 1587-1968*, the definitive book about ‘Kruppdom,’ describes Alfred as an interesting specimen of human energy and nervousness:

> ... he was an unusual boy. Tall and rail-thin, with a long bony skull and spidery legs, he had that *peculiar strength of will* often found in extreme ectomorphs. (42, emphasis added)

> ... he was *sui generis*, a true maverick – restless, brilliant, imaginative, tormented, farsighted, and, despite some rather extraordinary eccentricities, *supremely practical*. (42, emphasis added)

Alfred was even thought to have a fetish for punctuality and efficiency, and when his firm grew to such a size that there were constant worries, he often suffered from insomnia. To occupy his time he would write letters, memorandums, and brief expositions; he even produced some primers to pass on his knowledge of practicalities. During sleepless nights, Alfred would write copious notes about his workers’ performance and upon waking his employees in the morning (the factory ground supported communal living), he would leave these messages on their pillows: “To [his workers] his energy was a marvel” (Manchester 42). Despite his zeal for writing (nothing so impractical as poetry or social criticism), Alfred was a highly uncultured man. In fact, he disdained the arts and, commenting on one of relative’s interest in music, said he would not bother with such a waste of time; his music being the steam hammer of his foundry. Even his Anglophilia¹ held a business-like edge; his admiration for the English in part came from their mastery of steel production and trade. On one “spy trip” to London, he met Sir Henry Bessemer who was introducing a new smelting

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¹ *Né Alfried, he changed his name to Alfred.*
process. This is Alfred’s first connection with Carnegie, since Andrew also dealt with Bessemer. As well, Krupp and Carnegie co-operated in various pools controlling the price and production of certain metals. Unlike Carnegie, Krupp displayed his complete practicality shortly before his death: “He did not part with a single pfenning to help the arts, science, the poor, his church, his community, or anybody or anything” (Muhlen 73).

A good deal of Alfred’s personality quirks carried over into his business practice. One might even attribute his great paranoia (he always felt as though workers would betray him or spies were after his secrets) to the expansion of his enterprise. He did not want to have to rely on other untrustworthy businesses to supply him with coal and ore, so he bought all the resources he could afford. One interesting point: as a man who made his living by fire (to create his weapons that in turn created fire themselves, “Blood and Fire,” so to speak), he was ironically plagued by an extreme fear of fire, arsonphobia, always worrying his works or communal housing would someday burn to the ground (no disaster did happen until the bombings during World War II).

Alfred’s obsessiveness manifested most clearly in the treatment of his workers. He created homes, a butcher shop, wine store, and other welfare services, not out of any humanitarian sentiment, but because the city of Essen could not supply those needs. The shortage of housing was limiting his labour force that required constant expansion. Also, having his workers within the immediate vicinity allowed him to maintain a strict code of conduct, and was known to impose irrational fines for the pettiest offence. Here are some notes that reveal Alfred’s regimentation of his Kruppanier, which disturbingly resembles the neo-feudalism that Carlyle advocated:

   Krupp’s welfare firm combined modern ideas with archaic paternalism. (Muhlen 66)
According to the Cannon King’s conviction, workers were to be treated as children, following the pattern set by military leaders and colonizers of the time with soldiers and natives. Kindly but sternly, the boss had to look after their health, housing, and working conditions, and their discipline; they were denied a voice in public affairs, or even in their own private affairs. “Father knows best,” and Krupp was the father of the firm, just as in German eyes a sovereign was the father of the country and its people. (Muhlen 62-63)

In many other trail-blazing ways, Krupp cared for the welfare of those workers who repaid him with performance and devotion. Early in his career he thought of low-cost, low-rent housing facilities for Kruppian families. (Muhlen 64)

An American reporter toured the city and cabled his editor a sympathetic account of the “stalwart sons of Vulcan.” He compared the “luxury” of Krupp cottages with the “filthy homes in the Chicago Stockyards’ Packingtown.” There was, he observed at the end, just “one fly in the amber . . . Those who work for Krupp must sacrifice political liberty. . . . For all practical purposes the people of Essen are body and soul the property of the Krupps.” If the new Krupp read the dispatch he probably approved of it . . . he regarded himself as “the trustee of an obligatory heritage.” (Manchester 261)

Speaking of Alfred’s paternal role, I thought it might be interesting to consider the relationship between him and his son Friedrich “Fritz” Alfred Krupp (1854-1902). The father and son did not mix well, and were almost as opposite as could be possible:

Despite Alfred’s imaginary illnesses he had the constitution of Kruppstahl [Krupp steel]. Despite his son’s robust appearance he was genuinely frail, a chronic sufferer of from high blood pressure and asthma which may have been attributable, as his resentful mother believed, to his birth in the soot-laden air of the factory yard. The older Krupp was rawboned and cranky. The boy was fat, myopic, and placid, and his only real childhood interest was natural science. As a youth he appeared to spend most of his time weighing himself and then rolling his eyes at the result, or in labeling samples of flora and fauna. (Manchester 190)

The only time they forged a strong relationship was during Friedrich’s restorative trip to Cairo (his health was deteriorating severely). Many of the letters between the two read
more like business communiqués, which indeed they were since Alfred was using his son to barter for deals with the Khedive Said of Egypt (Manchester 195). A series of miscommunications ensued, but I would like to draw attention to one letter (Jan. 26th 1875) that brings to light the issues of heritage and Alfred’s strident ethic:

I am delighted to see from the photographs you sent that you already look stronger than ever. My hopes are rising again, my anxieties about you are now to come to an end—the great anxiety about your life and health—now I can begin to confine them to matters of your future. And the first of all, next to you, are the Works and the many thousand families. The welfare of the former is dependent on the welfare and conduct of the latter. Hard work is being put in on organization . . . Laziness and indifference are giving place to new energies and method, and anyone, without exception, who cannot or will not co-operate in the same spirit has to go. Now we are close to the 17th of February, the day of your coming of age, and of your passing into a position of rare importance in regard to rights and duties. (Krupp 314, emphasis added)

When Friedrich did take control of die Firma, he became “the most successful, baffling, charming, repulsive and . . . most enigmatic of all the Krupps . . . He was unfailingly charitable, generous, and kind” (Manchester 189).

Bearing in mind my discussion in Section Five, Krupp and Co. have obvious crossovers with Major Barbara, the first being the inversion of character between, Alfred and Friedrich, father and son: Undershaft’s vigour versus Cusins’ infirmity, Undershaft’s lack of education versus Cusins’ learning, practical benevolence versus genuine kindness. Like Undershaft, Alfred sold weapons across borders, and when he did hold back deliveries, it had little to do with nationalistic ties. I do not suppose that Shaw intended to establish these similarities, since he never mentions Krupp at all in the preface or play, and the only reference to the Krupps I can find is in The Intelligent Woman’s Guide
(205), written more than twenty years after *Major Barbara*. Still, William Manchester seems quite suspicious of the play, calling it:

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\ldots \text{a thinly veiled satire largely based on the Krupps}\ldots \text{In the play Barbara is substituted for Bertha Krupp}^2 \ldots \text{Stephen complains, } "\text{I have never opened a newspaper in my life without seeing our name in it. The Undershaft torpedo! The Undershaft quick-firers! The Undershaft ten-inch! The Undershaft disappearing rampart gun! The Undershaft submarine! And now the Undershaft aerial battleship!}" \text{Shaw is uncanny. Although he could not possibly have had access to Alfred’s correspondence, the } "\text{disappearing rampart gun}" \text{is straight out of the Kanonenkönig’s last mad scribbles about } \text{Panzerkanone, and while he couldn’t have penetrated Germaniawerft’s secret plans in Kiel, his submarine reference came less than a year before the launching of the U-1 there.} \text{ (Manchester 245)}
\]

The connection between Bertha and Barbara seems rather spurious on further inspection and submarines were known in Europe since the 1890s, and Britain had five submarines by 1900.\(^3\) The rampart gun may have been foresight, but Shaw no doubt paid close attention to world politics and the arms race, which might have informed him about new weaponry. I would not call *Major Barbara* a satire of the Krupps, but I do feel Shaw captures the spirit and failings of late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century big business (especially the arms trade) in an extraordinarily adept manner.

Carnegie’s description of Alfred Krupp and the Emperor of Germany (see Appendix I.xxx) may not be perfectly accurate, but it certainly holds some validity. Whilhelm and Alfred were close partners in power. Manchester writes of the beginning of their partnership when Whilhelm expressed interest in the works and virtually distinguished Krupp as a Captain of Industry:

\(^2\)Bertha Krupp was Friedrich’s daughter. She would have been fourteen to fifteen when the play was written. When Bertha succeeded to the Krupp “throne,” she was named, by the Kaiser, his Cannon Queen.
“Of course” (selbstverständlich), [Alfred] replied; a Hohenzollern could drop in on him any time; the Gusstahlfabrik latchstring was always up. . . . the Cartridge Prince dismounted outside. Chin in and chest out, Wilhelm marched through the factory, links, rechts; left, right. On emerging he congratulated Alfred. The shop, he observed, was as tidy as a parade ground (it really was), and die Kruppianer were true soldiers of industry. . . . [Wilhelm] wanted to show his appreciation, so he pinned Alfred’s narrow breast with Roter-Adler-Orden, Order of the Red Eagle, fourth Klasse, a distinction normally reserved for gallant generals. It wasn’t better than a commercial order – in Alfred’s view nothing was – but he saw it, correctly, as a royal promise, an invisible net. (Manchester 77, emphasis added)

The link uniting Krupp and Hohenzollern was unbreakable. Alfred wanted to make guns, Wilhelm wanted to buy them. It was a marriage of convenience, perhaps of necessity, and not even death could end it; each of Wilhelm’s successors was bound to be allied with the senior Krupp of his generation. (Manchester 87)

Krupp did more than sell weapons he revolutionised warfare with his new innovations in weaponry. He has been named him one of the fathers of modern warfare, and is closely tied to the development of the German nation in history books. However we choose to perceive Alfred Krupp, we must acknowledge his great power of technological and historical advancement. It may be easy to glorify him to the level of King Krupp (he even built his own castle-like mansion, Blühnbach, in the Austrian Alps) and see him, in the words of Epifania, a “plutocrat of the plutocrats” (Millionaireess 281), “the only real aristocracy in the world” (281). Yet, if he did not supply the cannons, then another enterprising steel producer would have likely taken his place. Yet, if he did not organise labour in the barracks of his industrial compound, creating a greatly productive community and establishing a business that would arm soldiers and hasten the world to war, one might wonder who would have filled this monumental role.