

**GEORGE BERNARD
SHAW HARLEQUIN
OR PATRIOT?**

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George Bernard Shaw Harlequin Or Patriot? by John Palmer

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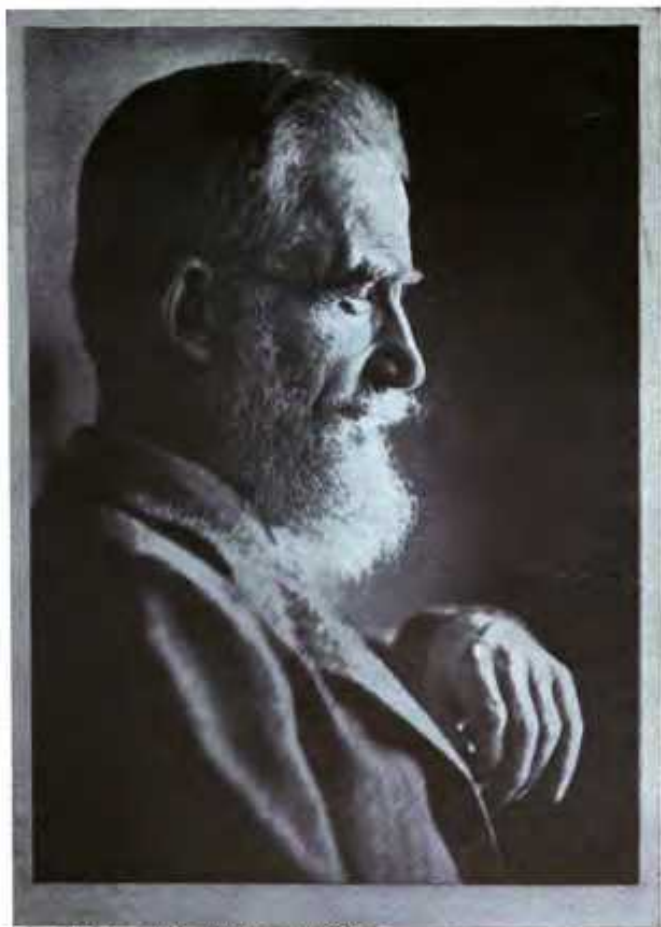
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JOHN PALMER

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From a photograph by Alvin Langdon Coburn

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



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BY
JOHN PALMER



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GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

HARLEQUIN OR PATRIOT?

I

SHAW THE ENIGMA

THE first fallacy is that Bernard Shaw is an immensely public person; that he is a sort of twentieth century Grand Monarch who, if manners allowed, would dine like Louis XIV in the presence of the people and receive the press in his dressing-gown. Now, it is true that Bernard Shaw has been photographed by Alvin Langdon Curn without a stitch; that at one period of his career he almost lived upon a public platform; that he invariably tells us

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

the private history of each of his books and plays; that, partly from a sense of fun, and partly from a determination that what he has seriously to say shall be heard, he talks and writes a good deal about himself; and that he has allowed Mr. Archibald Henderson to compile a sort of concordance to his personality.

Nevertheless, it is not true that Bernard Shaw is an immensely public person. Or perhaps I should put it this way: Bernard Shaw whom the public knows is not an authentic revelation of the extremely private gentleman who lives in Adelphi Terrace. The Bernard Shaw whom the public knows might more accurately be described as a screen. What the public knows about Bernard Shaw is either trivial or misleading. Thus the public knows that