

**Dr. H. N. SINHA ARTS AND
COMMERCE COLLEGE, PATUR.**

**Faculty of Commerce and Management
B.COM. I SEMESTER II**

**Subject : Compulsory English
How I Became a Public Speaker**

-- G. B. SHAW

George Bernard Shaw



- ▶ George Bernard Shaw is one of the most thought-provoking writers of the twentieth century. Shaw was not only a great dramatist but also a great speaker and debater.
- ▶ In 1925 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.
- ▶ In this autobiographical essay “How I became a public speaker”, Shaw gives us a humorous account of how he trained himself to become a good speaker.

Shaw's Experience in the Zetetical society

- ▶ Shaw went to the Zetetical meeting with his friend Lecky. He had never spoken in public and he did not know anything about public meetings or their order.
- ▶ But he thought that he knew everything and he was proud of himself. Actually he was coward and nervous.
- ▶ He spoke something foolish in the debate and he was ashamed of himself.
- ▶ So he decided to join the society and become a good speaker.

Shaw's nervousness disappeared

- ▶ In the third meeting, Shaw was asked to take the chair and he consented.
- ▶ He read many books of great writers such as Stuart Mill, Darwin and George Eliot. He prepared notes.
- ▶ He attended every meeting.
- ▶ He spoke in the streets, in the parks, anywhere and everywhere possible. He also attended all the meetings and debating societies in University College.
- ▶ At all these meetings, Shaw took part in debates and his excessive nervousness disappeared.

A socialist orator

- ▶ He became a socialist orator.
- ▶ His first lecture was called “Thieves”. He spoke for an hour without any notes. He spoke extempore.
- ▶ He spoke whenever and wherever he was asked. It was first come first served with him. When he got an application for a lecture, he gave the applicant the first date he had vacant.
- ▶ One of his best speeches was delivered in Hyde Park, London in heavy rain. Only six policemen attended his lecture. They were on duty to listen to his speech, plus the secretary of the Society who held umbrella over Shaw. He spoke for more than an hour.

Shaw's freedom of speech

- ▶ Shaw never took payment for speaking.
- ▶ The Sunday Societies paid him ten guineas fee on a condition that he should not speak on controversial politics and religion.
- ▶ But Shaw said that he would talk only on controversial politics and religion and he didn't want any fee except his third class railway ticket.
- ▶ On this condition Shaw was allowed to speak on controversial politics and religion.
- ▶ Thus Shaw obtained freedom of speech.

- ▶ His public speaking brought him a very necessary qualification for political work.
- ▶ They are the committee habit and platform technique.
- ▶ Once in St.James' Hall, London at a meeting, Shaw's opponent tried to defeat him.
- ▶ Shaw used his platform technique to defeat his opponent. Shaw made a speech. In the speech Shaw laughed at his opponent. Suddenly the opponent rushed to the platform to answer Shaw. But his followers had thought that their leader was going to attack Shaw. So they all rushed to the platform and they broke up the meeting. Again the meeting was reorganized and the opponent was made the chairman and Shaw became the speaker again. Thus Shaw succeeded in defeating his opponents.

- ▶ On another occasion Shaw defeated H.G.Wells in a famous debate.
- ▶ Here also Shaw very skillfully used the committee training and platform technique to defeat the great writer H. G. Wells.

Lack of committee training and platform technique
disables Even most gifted thinkers .

Practice alone : With practice one can acquire all
Required skills.

Good Pronunciation: Training by phonetically
competent teacher

G. B. Shaw took final retirement from personal
Performances in 1941, at the of 85th year.

THANK YOU