# WINSTON CHURCHILL

DR. JONATHAN

**Winston Churchill**

# Dr. Jonathan

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

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# PREFACE

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This play was written during the war. But owing to the fact that several managers politely declined to produce it, it has not appeared on any stage. Now, perhaps, its theme is more timely, more likely to receive the attention it deserves, when the smoke of battle has somewhat cleared. Even when the struggle with Germany and her allies was in progress it was quite apparent to the discerning that the true issue of the conflict was one quite familiar to American thought, of self-determination. On returning from abroad toward the end of 1917 I ventured into print with the statement that the great war had every aspect of a race with revolution. Subliminal desires, subliminal fears, when they break down the censor of law, are apt to inspire fanatical creeds, to wind about their victims the flaming flag of a false martyrdom. Today it is on the knees of the gods whether the insuppressible impulses for human freedom that come roaring up from the subliminal chaos, fanned by hunger and hate, are to thrash themselves out in anarchy and insanity, or to take an ordered, intelligent and conscious course. Of the Twentieth Century, industrial democracy is the watchword, even as political democracy was the watchword of the two centuries that preceded it. Economic power is at last realized to be political power. No man owns himself, no woman owns herself if the individual is not economically free. Perhaps the most encouraging omen of the day is the fact that many of our modern employers, and even our modern financiers and bankers seem to be recognizing this

truth, to be growing aware of the danger to civilization of its continued suppression. Educators and sociologists may supply the theories; but by experiment, by trial and error,—yes, and by prayer,—the solution must be found in the practical domain of industry.

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# ACT I

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SCENE: The library of ASHER PINDAR'S house in Foxon Falls, a New England village of some three thousand souls, over the destinies of which the Pindars for three generations have presided. It is a large, dignified room, built early in the nineteenth century, with white doors and gloss woodwork. At the rear of the stage,—which is the front of the house,—are three high windows with small, square panes of glass, and embrasures into which are fitted white inside shutters. These windows reach to within a foot or so of the floor; a person walking on the lawn or the sidewalk just beyond it may be seen through them. The trees bordering the Common are also seen through these windows, and through a gap in the foliage a glimpse of the terraced steeple of the Pindar Church, the architecture of which is of the same period as the house. Upper right, at the end of the wall, is a glass door looking out on the lawn. There is another door, lower right, and a door, lower left, leading into ASHER PINDAR'S study. A marble mantel, which holds a clock and certain ornaments, is just beyond this door. The wall spaces on the right

and left are occupied by high bookcases filled with respectable volumes in calf and dark cloth bindings. Over the mantel is an oil painting of the Bierstadt school, cherished by ASHER as an inheritance from his father, a huge landscape with a self-conscious sky, mountains, plains, rivers and waterfalls, and two small figures of Indians—who seem to have been talking to a missionary. In the spaces between the windows are two steel engravings, “The Death of Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham” and “Washington Crossing the Delaware!” The furniture, with the exception of a few heirlooms, such as the stiff sofa, is mostly of the Richardson period of the '80s and '90s. On a table, middle rear, are neatly spread out several conservative magazines and periodicals, including a religious publication.

TIME: A bright morning in October, 1917,

GEORGE PINDAR, in the uniform of a first lieutenant of the army, enters by the doorway, upper right. He is a well set up young man of about twenty-seven, bronzed from his life in a training camp, of an adventurous and social nature. He glances about the room, and then lights a cigarette.

ASHER PINDAR, his father, enters, lower right. He is a tall,

strongly built man of about sixty, with iron grey hair and beard.
His eyes are keen, shadowed by bushy brows, and his New England
features bear the stamp of inflexible “character.” He wears a black
“cutaway” coat and dark striped trousers; his voice is strong and
resonant. But he is evidently preoccupied and worried, though he
smiles with affection as he perceives GEORGE. GEORGE'S fondness for
him is equally apparent.

GEORGE. Hello, dad.

ASHER. Oh, you're here, George.

GEORGE (looking, at ASHER). Something troubling you?

ASHER (attempting dissimulation). Well, you're going off to France, they've only given you two days' leave, and I've scarcely seen anything of you. Isn't that enough?

GEORGE. I know how busy you've been with that government contract on your hands. I wish I could help.

ASHER. You're in the army now, my boy. You can help me again when you come back.

GEORGE. I want to get time to go down to the shops and say goodbye to some of the men.

ASHER. No, I shouldn't do that, George.

GEORGE (surprised). Why not? I used to be pretty chummy with them, you know,—smoke a pipe with them occasionally in the noon hour.

ASHER. I know. But it doesn't do for an employer to be too familiar with the hands in these days.

GEORGE. I guess I've got a vulgar streak in me somewhere, I get along with the common people. There'll be lots of them in the trenches, dad.

ASHER. Under military discipline.

GEORGE (laughing). We're supposed to be fighting a war for democracy. I was talking to old Bains yesterday,—he's still able to run a lathe, and he was in the Civil War, you know. He was telling me how the boys in his regiment stopped to pick blackberries on the way to the battle of Bull Run.

ASHER. That's democracy! It's what we're doing right now—stopping to pick blackberries. This country's been in the war six months, since April, and no guns, no munitions, a handful of men in France—while the world's burning!

GEORGE. Well, we won't sell Uncle Sam short yet. Something is bothering you, dad.

ASHER. No—no, but the people in Washington change my specifications every week, and Jonathan's arriving today, of all days.

GEORGE. Has Dr. Jonathan turned up?

ASHER. I haven't seen him yet. It seems he got here this morning. No telegram, nothing. And he had his house fixed up without consulting me. He must be queer, like his father, your great uncle, Henry Pindar.

GEORGE. Tell me about Dr. Jonathan. A scientist,—isn't he? Suddenly decided to come back to live in the old homestead.

ASHER. On account of his health. He was delicate as a boy. He must have been about eight or nine years old when Uncle Henry left Foxon Falls for the west,—that was before

you were born. Uncle Henry died somewhere in Iowa. He and my father never got along. Uncle Henry had as much as your grandfather to begin with, and let it slip through his fingers. He managed to send Jonathan to a medical school, and it seems that he's had some sort of a position at Johns Hopkins's—research work. I don't know what he's got to live on.

GEORGE. Uncle Henry must have been a philanthropist.

ASHER. It's all very well to be a philanthropist when you make more than you give away. Otherwise you're a sentimentalist.

GEORGE. Or a Christian.

ASHER. We can't take Christianity too literally.

GEORGE (smiling). That's its great advantage, as a religion.

ASHER. George, I don't like to say anything just as you're going to fight for your country, my boy, but your attitude of religious skepticism has troubled me, as well as your habit of intimacy with the shop hands. I confess to you that I've been a little afraid at times that you'd take after Jonathan's father. He never went to church, he forgot that he owed something to his position as a Pindar. He used to have that house of his overrun with all sorts of people, and the yard full of dirty children eating his fruit and picking his flowers. There's such a thing as being too democratic. I hope I'm as good an American as anybody, I believe that any man with brains, who has thrift, ought to rise—but wait until they do rise. You're going to command men, and when you come back here into the business again you'll be in a position of

authority. Remember what I say, if you give these working people an inch, they'll take all you have.

GEORGE (laying his hand on ASHER's shoulder). Something is worrying you, dad. We've always been pretty good pals, haven't we?

ASHER. Yes, ever since you were a little shaver. Well, George, I didn't want to bother you with it—today. It seems there's trouble in the shops,—in our shops, of all places,—it's been going on for some time, grumbling, dissatisfaction, and they're getting higher wages than ever before—ruinous wages. They want me to recognize the union.

GEORGE. Well, that beats me. I thought we were above the labour-trouble line, away up here in New England.

ASHER (grimly). Oh, I can handle them.

GEORGE. I'll bet you can. You're a regular old war horse when you get started. It's your capital, it's your business, you've put it all at the disposal of the government. What right have they to kick up a row now, with this war on? I must say I haven't any sympathy with that.

ASHER (proudly). I guess you're a real Pindar after all, George.

(Enter an elderly maid, lower right.)

MAID. Timothy Farrell, the foreman's here.

(Enter, lower right, TIMOTHY, a big Irishman of about sixty, in working clothes.)

TIMOTHY. Here I am, sir. They're after sending word you wanted me.

GEORGE (going up to TIMOTHY and shaking his hand warmly). Old Timothy! I'm glad to get sight of you before I go.

TIMOTHY. And it's glad I am to see you, Mr. George, before you leave. And he an officer now! Sure, I mind him as a baby being wheeled up and down under the trees out there. My boy Bert was saying only this morning how we'd missed the sight of him in the shops this summer. You have a way with the men, Mr. George, of getting into their hearts, like. I was thinking just now, if Mr. George had only been home, in the shops, maybe we wouldn't be having all this complaint and trouble.

GEORGE. Who's at the bottom of this, Timothy? Rench? Hillman? I thought so. Well, they're not bad chaps when you get under their skins.

(He glances at his wrist watch)

Let me go down and talk with them, dad,—I've got time, my train doesn't leave until one thirty.

ASHER (impatiently, almost savagely). No, I'll settle this, George, this is my job. I won't have any humoring. Come into my study, Timothy.

TIMOTHY, shaking his head, follows ASHER out of the door, left.

After a moment GEORGE goes over to the extreme left hand corner of
the room, where several articles are piled. He drags out a kit bag,
then some necessary wearing apparel, underclothes, socks, a sweater,
etc., then a large and rather luxurious lunch kit, a pin cushion.
with his monogram, a small travelling pillow with his monogram, a
linen toilet case embroidered in blue, to hang on the wall—these