CHAPTER IV

SHAW AS A POLITICAL REFORMER
THE APPLE CART

As A.C. Ward points out the title '*Apple Cart*' is taken from an old English proverb according to which a person is said to "upset the apple cart" when he spoils or frustrates someone else's carefully arranged plans." It also refers to an attempt at the overthrowing of the existing and well-established order, customs and traditions. The play suggests both these possibilities which are worked out through a comediac paradox which runs through the play and is resolved at the end.

Shaw has added lengthy Prefaces to his plays and most of them are masterly expositions of his views. They are intimately connected with the central theme of the play. The "Preface" to the *Apple Cart* is no exception in this respect. It gives us his views on democracy, constitutional monarchy and absolute monarchy, on socialism and capitalism and their role in a democracy. As Sen Gupta remarks "In the play '*The Apple Cart*' Shaw discusses a political problem and shows that it has a social solution." He has frankly criticised the present working of democracy, exposed its weaknesses, but he has also shown how a clever and strong man, even though he may be a king, can win the elections, and make a successful, democratically elected Prime Minister.

The "Preface" is a clever piece of self-justification and an effective reply to the critics who had made out that Shaw had ceased to be a democrat and had turned a royalist. In Dresden the performance of the play was actually prohibited as a blasphemy against Democracy. The "Preface" was written as a reply to such scandalous criticism. Shaw has exposed both the weaknesses of democracy, as well as justified it by showing its inherent strength and the way in which it can be effective and successful. Shaw has exposed, "the unreality of both democracy and royalty as our idealists conceive them. Our liberal

democrats believe in a figment called a constitutional monarch, a sort of Punch puppet who cannot move until his Prime Minister's fingers are in his sleeves. They believe in another figment called a responsible minister, who moves only when similarly actuated by the million fingers of the electorate. But the most superficial inspection of any two such figures shows that they are not puppets but living men, and that the supposed control of one by the other and of both by the electorate amounts to no more than a not very deterrent fear of uncertain and under ordinary circumstances quite remote consequences."

The nearest thing to a puppet in our political system is a cabinet minister at the head of a great public office. Unless he possesses a very exceptional share of dominating ability and relevant knowledge he is helpless in the hands of his officials. He must sign whatever documents they present to him, and repeat whatever words they put into his mouth when answering questions in parliament, with a docility which cannot be imposed on a king who works at his job; for the king works continuously whilst his ministers are in office for spells only, the spells being few and brief, and often occurring for the first time to men of advanced age with little or no training for and experience of supreme responsibility. George the Third and Queen Victoria were not, like Queen Elizabeth, the natural superiors of their ministers in political genius and general capacity: but they were for many purposes of state necessarily superior to them in experience, in cunning, in exact knowledge of the limits of their responsibility and consequently of the limits of their irresponsibility: in short, in the authority and practical power that these superiorities produce In conflicts between monarchs and popularly elected ministers the monarchs win every time when personal ability and good sense are at all equally divided.

It is wrong to suppose that Shaw has packed cards against democracy by stressing the abilities of the king, and exposing the folly and laughing at

the democratically elected ministers. Shaw has not done so, he has only analysed the many weaknesses of democracy and placed his views so trenchantly that it all becomes a powerful irritant to thought, and the readers are forced to accept that there is much truth in what Shaw says in the "Preface" and later enacts it in the play itself. He has shown that the king wins in the conflict with his cabinet not by an exercise of his royalty but by threatening to go to the polls and defeating his rivals. Proteus, the Prime Minister, at once realises that the king is bound to come at the top by virtue of his many qualities of head and heart. Both the Prime Minister and the king play with equal skill; and the king wins, not by greater astuteness, but because he has the ace of trumps in his hand and knows when to play it. As the prettier player of the two he has the sympathy of the audience. He depends on his conformity to the popular ideal of dignity and perfect breeding. He has to be trained, and he trains himself to accept good manners as an indispensable condition of his intercourse with his subjects, and to leave to the less highly placed such indulgences as tempers, tantrums, bullyings, sneerings, swearings, kickings: in short, the commoner violences and intemperances of authority.

Shaw's own words in this regard are worth quoting at some length: "The conflict is not really between royalty and democracy. It is between both and plutocracy, which, having destroyed the royal power by frank force under democratic pretexts, has bought and swallowed democracy. Money talks: money prints: money broadcasts: money reigns; and kings and labour leaders alike have to register its decrees, and even, by a staggering paradox, to finance its enterprises and guarantee its profits. Demociacy is no longer bought; it is bilked. Ministers who are Socialists to the backbone are as helpless in the grip of Breakages, Limited as its acknowledged henchmen They no longer dare even to talk of nationalising any industry, however socially vital, that has a farthing of profit for plutocracy still left in it, or that can be made to yield a farthing for it by subsidies."

Shaw's interest was primarily in morals, politics, philosophy and social reform. The impression that he was not primarily interested in his dramas as dramas is further strengthened by his numerous pronouncements from time to time. Thus once he wrote "I write plays with the deliberate object of converting the nation to my opinions I have no other incentive to write plays." In other words, his business is social reform; he has certain ideas to propagate and uses the drama as an instrument for the spread of his convictions. Once he remarked that for art's sake he will not pen a single line. He was in search of a suitable medium for the expression of his ideas.

Shaw sells his wares. Shaw's fundamental aim in his plays is the bettering of the lot of humanity by subjecting accepted conventions and institutions to the cold, searching light of his penetrating intellect. All his plays are about some important aspect of contemporary social life or some important social evil or social institution which he considers as evil and which is scrutinized with courage and determination. Thus the most important element in a Shavian drama is its discussion of some important social problem. His dramas are "dramas of ideas; the material of his plays is the mental substance in which, modern life is lived". Instead of the conflict of wills as in the romantic drama we have the conflict of ideas and the conflict of speech. This makes Shaw a great writer of serious comedies which are didactic in intention, through which Shaw propagates his views, punctures numerous popular notions not based on facts, makes his readers sit up and provokes them to think for themselves and form their own views. The Apple Cart is no exception in this respect. A number of ideas have been discussed thread-bare, and readers are provoked to think for themselves. The play thus is a great irritant to thought. The point would become clear if one examines it in some detail, with relevant examples from the play.

It is generally supposed that democracy is the best form of government, that it is the government of the people, for the people and by the

people. Shaw examines in detail this popular notion of democracy and shows that democracy is nothing of the kind, and that it has limitations and shortcomings of its own. This has been done by depicting the conduct of the ministers during the two cabinet meetings, one in Act I and the other in Act II. The ministers constantly squabble and quarrel and care for their own good rather than for the good of the country. They are corrupt and petty-minded. A strong man is needed to govern the people. The concept, "government by the people" is a pure myth, for the people cannot govern themselves. Thus the many shortcomings of democracy have been exposed, so much so that it has been said that the play is a satire on democracy, that by the time he came to the writing of the play, he had turned against democracy and become critical of it, that in the play he has upset the apple cart of democracy.

Another popular notion which Shaw has punctured is that the monarch in a democracy should be a mere figure-head, a mere indiarubber stamp who does what his ministers advise him to do. A "Constitutional monarch" must efface his personality completely, for any self-assertion on his part would be a total negation of democracy. The fallacy of this argument is exposed though the conflict of wills between Proteus, the Prime Minister, and King Magnus, who frequently asserts himself and uses back-door influence to uphold his own point of view. Both are strong and clever men and both forcefully and clearly put forward their respective points of view. The king stresses the difficulties of a monarch, the various ways in which he can be helpful to the elected representatives of the people, and the services he can perform for the good of the people. His arguments carry conviction and make the readers sit up and think. They realise that all is not well with democracy and a system of checks and balaices is essential for its successful working, and the monarch can play an effective role in this respect. Ultimately the king wins, but he does not do so by refusing to sign the ultimatum but by agreeing to sign it and then abdicating and contesting the elections as a commoner. This is the comediac paradox of the play. The King wins because he is a better and stronger man

who can easily turn the tables upon his opponents and get the better of them by playing his trump card at the last moment.

It is supposed that in a democracy the Ministers—the elected representatives of the people—are able men and they enjoy complete freedom of action. But Shaw has clearly established that it is not so. The ministers are mere puppets in the hands of bureaucrats. They prepare notes for their use, and also write out the speeches which they read in public and which they are supposed to have penned for themselves. This is so because the ministers change every five years, and sometimes even earlier but the bureaucrats continue at their jobs till the end of their career, and hence they have more experience and better knowledge and so the ministers tend to be mere puppets in their hands, as they can do nothing without their advice and guidance. As the king, too, continues for long at his job, he is better equipped with knowledge and experience than his ministers. A Constitutional King may or may not be an indiarubber stamp, but the ministers certainly are in the hands of the powerful bureaucracy. Thus Shaw has shown that democracy in the modern complex and intricate age has degenerated into bureaucracy. None can deny the truth what Shaw has to say in this connection.

Shaw has also examined critically the role of plutocracy or big powerful industrial concerns. The role that industrial concerns like Breakages, Ltd., play is the very negation of democracy. They purchase new inventions and suppress them, thus causing great harm to the nation. They have their own vested interests and they always care for their own good, and never for the nation. They use the power of money to smuggle their own men into the government and thus strike at the very root of democracy. Instead of democracy, one can get plutocracy. They control not only the means of large scale production but also the machinery of distribution. Thus real power lies in their hands, and both democracy and monarchy are meaningless and helpless, till their powers are curbed, and they are made more responsible.

The helplessness of the government in the face of such powerful organ isat ions is symbol ised by the cry of despair of Lysistrata, the Powermjstress General in the cabinet. Such are a few of the more important ideas on which Shaw has focused in the play. He has written a comedy, but it is a serious comedy, a comedy with a purpose, the purpose being to provoke thought and thus bring about social change. Shaw is eminently successful in his didacticism.

The Apple Cart is a great problem play and it highlights a number of social, political and economic problems, and provokes the readers to work out their own solution to these problems. The central problem of the play is the conflict between Monarchy and Democracy, with Proteus standing for democracy and King Magnus for the right of the monarchs. The conflict between the two throws up the problem of the comparative merits and demerits of untrammelled power, and of the corrupting influence of such power.

As A.C. Wards puts it "Although. it may be felt that the conflict in The Apple Cart is between the virtue and clear-sightedness of Magnus and the muddle-headedness or worse of most of the Cabinet, the solution at the end of the play, which leaves things as they were before the play began. is the solution which the British constitutional system provided centuries ago for its political problems and has maintained since; namely, a balance of power between an elected parliament and a monarch who always has in reserve the right to withhold consent to any act or proposal which threatens the ultimate sovereignty of the people. It is this system of check and counter-check that the play maintains through Magnus's refusal to. be robbed of his reserve powers and through Proteus's refusal to give Magnus the opportunity to assume what might prove to be far more extensive powers."[5]

Soon after the play was written, the whole world had become involved in the great economic and financial crisis which brought ruin to countless

people. Within a year or two Britain had millions of unemployed and some of her most important industries were at a standstill Since the rest of the world had also grown poorer and all countries were buying fewer goods from one another, Britain's vital export trade was seriously damaged and her ships had therefore much less to carry. Yet private spending continued almost unabated among certain classes of people, and shipping companies recovered through 'luxury Cruises' for holiday-makers some part at least of the revenue they were losing through the want of goods for their cargo boats to carry.

Despite the financial crisis, much inessential expenditure continued: for example, many millions of pounds were spent yearly on 'football pools', i.e. gambling on the results of football matches, often by those who had never seen a football match and knew nothing whatsoever of the game. "Football pools" grew into one of Britain's large 'industries', and that the millions poured into it each year can only be regarded as luxury spending which adds nothing to human wealth or welfare. Its relevance in connection with The Apple Cart is that the author foresaw the general trend, of which this example is only one symptom. When the Cabinet Ministers in the play are boasting that they have made the nation prosperous, Magnus asks them a troubling question: "You think this prosperity is safe ?" They find the question absurd. One says: 'Safe Look at my constituency with its four square miles of confectionery works ! Do you know that in the Christmas cracker trade Birmingham is the workshop of the world." Others speak of the enormous output of chocolate creams, and of the superiority of British golf clubs, china and porcelain, tapestries and polo ponies. But Magnus's doubts and dread remain. He replies, ironically, 'it is certainly a consoling thought that if we were peacefully blockaded by the League of Nations we could live for at least three weeks on our chocolate creams.' His country's vital industries, he is convinced, are being allowed to sink into a minor place, because luxury goods are finding a well-paying market, and the employees are satisfied with this state of affairs because they enjoy the high wages. Magnus is so uneasy about

what the future may hold, when the foreign markets may no longer be open to luxury products, that he says, 'I feel as if I were sitting on a volcano'.

His only genuine supporter in the Cabinet, Lysistrata, the Power-mistress General, is also troubled, because she is hindered by profit-seeking industrialists from making her department as efficient a public service as she desires it to be. She needs to bring into use every new invention that would increase her department's ability to produce more and more electric power more and more cheaply, so that everyone, even in the remotest corners of the land, may have it available for all purposes. But, she alleges, every new invention that might have the indirect effect of lessening the profits made by manufacturers of things already in use is bought up by the big industrialists and kept out of use. She calls these people Breakages, Limited, and says, "But for them we should have unbreakable glass, unbreakable steel, imperishable material of all sorts Our national repair bill runs up to hundreds of millions". In the preface Shaw cites the case of a man he knew who invented a method of loading and unloading goods rapidly and without damage, but no use was made of it although it would have brought about an enormous saving in time and money.

Another problem posed in the play is the problem whether a constitutional monarch should resort to his power of Veto. King Magnus advises his ministers to think deeply before they deprive him of his constitutional right to veto any measure which he judges to be against the interests of the nation. He reminds them that he stands above the arena of party politics and has no need to bend to 'the tyranny of popular ignorance and popular poverty, which may bring down an elected government.

He says "I stand for the great abstractions: for conscience and virtue; for the eternal against the expedient; for the evolutionary appetite against the day's gluttony; for intellectual integrity, for humanity, for the rescue of industry from commercialism and of science from professionalism, for

everything that you desire as sincerely as I, but which in you is held in leash by the Press, which can organize against you the ignorance and superstition, the timidity and credulity, the gullibility and prudery, the hating and hunting instinct of the voting mob, and cast you down from power if you utter a word to alarm or displease the adventurers who have the Press in their pockets."

In contrast with the king, the members of the cabinet (Lysistrata alone excepted) are of low intelligence and poor in skill. But standards of intelligence and skill have always to be reckoned in accordance with such other standards and it is probable that the cabinet would appear sensible and alert if they were opposed by a king having no more than average human qualities.

In the play Shaw has favoured neither democracy nor royalty. He has focused on the problem resulting from a conflict between the two, and of both with plutocracy, but he has favoured neither and has impartially presented the problem created through the triangular conflict. The victory of the king is not the victory of a monarch but of a better man. Shaw believes that in conflicts between monarchs and popularly elected ministers, the monarchs in every time when personal ability and good sense are at all equally divided. In *The Apple Cart* this equality is assumed. It is masked by a strong contrast of character and methods which had led Shaw's less considerate critics to complain that he had packed the cards by making the king a wise man and the Prime Minister a fool. Shaw defends himself against this view. He explains, that is not at all the relation between the two. Both play with equal skill; and the king wins, not by greater astuteness, but because he has the ace of trumps in his hand and knows when to play it. As the prettier player of the two he has the sympathy of the audience".

Magnus is really an able and strong man. Shaw rightly says: "His ministers have much laxer standards. It is open to them, if it will save their time, to get their own way by making scenes, flying into calculated rages, and

substituting vulgar abuse for argument". Shaw warns that a clever minister, not having had a royal training, must be careful not to choose the weapons at which the king can beat him. In this light the style of fighting adopted by the antagonists in the dispute between King Magnus and Mr. Joseph Proteus is seen to be a plain deduction from their relative positions and antecedents, and not a manufactured contrast between democracy and royalty to the disadvantage of the former. In fact, as Shaw develops the play, one can see that the king is not an absolute monarch nor does he wish to be one. In his long speech before the ministers, he says: "I do not want the old governing class back. It governed so selfishly that the people would have perished if democracy had not swept it out of politics. But evil as it was in many ways, at least it stood above the tyranny of popular ignorance and popular poverty. Today only the King stands above that tyranny. You are dangerously subject to it."

Shaw's plea is that untrammelled democracy is as bad as absolute monarchy. Democracy as a form of government is likely to be considerate towards petty transient gains, It can sacrifice higher principles for the sake of votes, It can also corrupt itself in various ways, if there is no watchdog to detect its misdoings. A constitutional monarch is the vigilant of democracy. He stands for checks and balances in a system of popularly elected government.

But there is another aspect to Shaw's faith in democracy, not as a form of government but as a form of society. And that is the economic aspect. Shaw insists not only on political equality but on economic equality. He writes, "I insist on equality of income. Equal consideration for a person with a hundred a year and one with a hundred thousand is impossible". In *The Apple Cart*, "the conflict is not really between royalty and democracy. it is between both and plutocracy, which, having destroyed the royal power by frank force under democratic pretexts, has bought and swallowed democracy Money

talks: money prints: money broadcasts: money reigns: and kings and labour leaders alike have to register its decrees, and even by a staggering paradox to finance its enterprises and guarantee its profits". Shaw indignantly declares; "Democracy is no longer bought; it is bilked. Ministers who are Socialists to the backbone are as helpless in the grip of Breakages, Limited as its acknowledged henchmen: from the moment when they attain to what is with unintentional irony called power (meaning the drudgery of carrying on for the plutocrats) they no longer dare even to talk of nationalizing any industry, however social vital, that has a farthing of profit for plutocracy still left in it, or that can be made to yield a farthing for it by subsidies."

According to Shaw, the real problems that he has tackled in the play are the economic problem of how to produce and distribute our subsistence and the political problem of how to select our rulers and prevent them from abusing their authority in their own interests or those of their class or religion. Capitalism which achieves miracles in production but fails so ludicrously and disastrously to distribute its products rationally, is no solution. Likewise votes for everybody and every authority selected by vote is no solution of the political problem. The only sane course is "to take the step by which dictatorship can be anticipated and averted; and construct a political system for quick positive work, instead of slow nugatory work, fit for the twentieth century instead of the sixteenth". The play is thus a strong plea for a new type of education that will produce ideal governors like King Magnus.

The Apple Cart turns upon the conflict between Proteus, the Prime Minister, and Magnus, the King of England. Both are shrewd and determined and know how to hold their own against their opponents. They act upto their ideals with single minded devotion, never deviate from their chosen aim and the conflict between the two occupies the major part of the play. Indeed, this conflict is central to the play and source of its chief interest. Proteus stands for democracy, for rights of the elected representative of the people, while King

Magnus stands for the rights of the monarch and makes a forceful justification of kingship. Thus both are symbolic figures, and the conflict between then is generalised and raised to the higher level of the conflict between democracy and monarchy'. However, in the end victory goes neither to democracy nor to monarchy but to the greater and better man of the two.

It appears that Joseph Proteus, the Prime Minister, is facing difficulty with the king who is a monarch whom it is difficult to confine within the frame-work of constitutional monarchy. Hence there is a constitutional crisis of far-reaching implications. A meeting of the cabinet is, therefore, held in the conference room of the palace and King Magnus is presented with an ultimatum. The terms of the ultimatum are (1) the king must not use his power to Veto. (2) He must not make political speeches even when they are penned by the Prime Minister or his colleagues, for he has a cunning way of suggesting to the people by his gestures that the speech has not been written by him and it does not express his views. He thus makes his ministers ridiculous, and (3) he must not use back-stair influence on the press to get articles published which have been written by his secretaries and which go against the policies of the government. In short, they want to make him an indiarubber stamp, a mere figurehead and a perfect constitutional monarch. If he does not sign the ultimatum, they would put the facts before the people, and there would be a constitutional crisis of the first magnitude.

In order to drive his point home, Proteus is able to confront the king with a united cabinet. Throughout the two meetings with the king, there is much squabbling and quarrelling among the ministers; there is much show of temper, and there is a lot of triviality and tomfoolery. Charges of corruption, jobbery and drunkenness are freely traded and the main issue that confronts them is forgotten. Amanda splutters into laughter, in season and out of season, and Lysistrata is highly emotional and bursts into tears, for she is unable to face the difficulties created for her by Breakages, Ltd. Boanerges and others

even start singing a song as soon as they feel that their victory is at hand. This is highly unbecoming. There is so much of frivolity and triviality, so much of self-exposure that the play has been called "a satire on democracy". It has even been said that the play shows that Shaw has lost faith in democracy and turned a royalist. However it may be, Proteus is able to discipline his cabinet, bring his colleagues to the point, and show to the king that on the issue of the ultimatum they are all united. Even the two lady ministers, who are generally sympathetic to the king, are against him on this issue. Therefore, if he refuses to sign the ultimatum, he shall have to face the consequences.

King Magnus, on his part, makes a forceful justification of the rights of the King and tells his cabinet of the great good that he can do for them. He stresses his own difficulties and problems. Kings are much maligned persons, all sorts of scandalous charges are leveled at them and if they protest and show that the charges of moral looseness are false, they are likely to lose their popularity with the people. Moreover, he himself can serve as a convenient scapegoat for them. They can easily blame him for their own faults and shortcomings, and he does not mind it for his future does not depend on the vote of the people. But if he signs the ultimatum, he would sink below the level of the meanest of his subjects, for then he would have no rights and no freedom of speech at all, which even the poorest of his subjects enjoys.

Continuing with his magnificent speech the king says, "I stand for the future and the past, for the posterity that has no vote and the tradition that never had any. I stand for the great abstractions: for conscience and virtue; for the eternal against the expedient; for evolutionary appetite against the day's gluttony; for intellectual integrity, for humanity, for the rescue of industry from commercialism and of science from professionalism, for everything that you desire as sincerely as I, but which in you is held in leash by the Press, which can organise against you the ignorance arid superstition, the timidity and credulity, the gullibility and prudery, the hating and hunting instinct of

the voting mob, and cast you down from power if you utter a word to alarm or displease the adventurers who have the Press in their pockets. Between you and that tyranny stands the throne. I have no elections to fear; and if any newspaper magnate dares offend me, that magnate's fashionable wife and marriageable daughters will soon make him understand that the king's displeasure is still a sentence of social death."

The King ends his speech with the fervent appeal, "But whilst you continue to support me as a separate and independent estate of the realm, I am your scapegoat; you get the credit of all our popular legislation whilst you put the odium of all our resistance to ignorant popular clamor on me. I ask you, before you play your last card and destroy me, to consider where you will be without me. Think once: think twice: for your danger is, not that I may defeat you, but that your success is certain if you insist."

This is the speech of a shrewd, clever and determined man, and the cabinet is much impressed. But Proteus, who is also determined and shrewd, presses the king to sign the ultimatum or face the ensuing crisis and its consequences. The upshot is that the King seeks time till five in the evening when he promises to tell them of his considered decision. It is agreed that the second meeting of the cabinet would be held at five that very evening, and all leave for their lunch full of suspense and anxiety.

The second meeting of the cabinet is a brief one. The King agrees to sign the ultimatum and they are all happy that the crisis has been resolved. But the king hastens to tell them of his future plans. He would abdicate, give up his titles, form a party, and contest the elections as a commoner. He may then be the Prime Minister and rule the country with his son, Robert, as the constitutional monarch. Proteus at once understands the implications of this decision. The King would certainly come at the top, and would be the next Prime Minister of the country. He, therefore, tears off the ultimatum and goes away saying that the things will continue as usual. The clever King has upset

the apple-cart of Proteus and Proteus has not been able to upset the apple cart, i.e. existing arrangements.

The King is victorious, but it is the victory neither of democracy nor of monarchy, but of a clever man over another who is not so clever. The King keeps his trumps card in reserve upto the very end and then plays it well to score a decisive victory. It all depends on the personal qualities of the persons concerned and theories of government are not of much relevance in such conflicts. This is the message that Shaw puts through the play and he does so with eminent success.

The Apple Cart is a political play and it turns on the conflict between Proteus, the Prime Minister, representative of the people, and King Magnus standing for the right and privileges of the monarchy. in their single-minded defence of their respective interests, they become larger than life figures and acquire symbolic dimensions. Proteus symbolises democratic rights of the people and he stands for those rights with unflinching firmness and dedication. King Magnus defends the rights and privileges of the monarchs with equal devotion and determination, and in this conflict King Magnus wins not because he is a monarch but because he is an abler and much better man.

Both Proteus and King Magnus play with equal skill and the king wins, not by greater astuteness, but because he has the ace of trumps in his hand and knows when to play it. As the prettier player of the two he has the sympathy of the audience. He depends on his conformity to the popular ideal of dignity and perfect breeding. He accepts good manners as an indispensable condition of his intercourse with his subjects, and to leave to the less highly placed such indulgences as tempers, tantrums, bullyings, sneerings, kickings: in short, the commoner violences and intemperances of authority.

His ministers have much laxer standards. They try to get their own way by making scenes, flying into calculated rages, and substituting vulgar abuse for argument. A clever minister not having had a royal training, will, if he

finds himself involved in a duel with his King, be careful not to choose the weapons at which the king can beat him. Rather, will he in cold blood oppose to the King's perfect behaviour an intentional misbehaviour and apparently childish petulance which he can always drop at the right moment for a demeanor as urbane as that of the king himself.

The conflict between King Magnus and Proteus is seen to be a plain deduction from their relative positions and antecedents, and not a manufactured contrast between democracy and royalty to the disadvantage of the former. Shaw has stressed the difficulties which are faced by a king and the good he can do in various ways to the elected representatives of the people. King Magnus has not only good breeding and intelligence, but is also clever and determined. He keeps his trumps card in reserve upto the very end and plays it skillfully to confuse and baffle his ministers. His ultimate victory is the victory of a better and more shrewd man over those who are not so good, shrewd and enlightened.

A further dimension, the economic, is added to the political aspect of the play when it is shown that both Proteus and King Magnus are not only in conflict with each other but also with plutocracy. Plutocracy means the power of money, the power of big industrial concerns represented in the play by Breakages, Limited. This is only one such concern having vested interests in causing breakages of all kinds and then earning huge profits by repairing such breakages. Shaw himself writes in this connection, "the conflict is not really between royalty and democracy. It is between both and plutocracy, which, having destroyed the royal power by frank force under democratic pretexts, has bought and swallowed democracy. "Money talks: money prints: money broadcasts: money reigns; and kings and labour leaders alike have to register its decrees, and even, by a staggering paradox to finance its enterprises and guarantee its profits. Democracy is no longer bought: it is bilked. Ministers who are Socialists to the backbone are as helpless in the grip of Breakages,

Limited as its acknowledged henchmen They no longer dare even to talk of nationalising any industry, however socially vital, that has a farthing of profit for plutocracy still left in it, or that can be made to yield a farthing for it by subsidies."

Industrial concerns like Breakages, Limited have interests in destruction, waste, and disease. 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 drunkenness. Such concerns suppress inventions which adversely effect their interest, as Breakages, Ltd., do in the case of an invention which would have resulted in smooth transportation of goods without any breakages and so it would have been good for the nation, but would have caused considerable loss to Breakages, Ltd. As Lysistrata, the Powermistress General, pathetically puts it, "One of their directors told me to my face that by lifting up his finger he could get my windows broken by the mob; and that Breakages, Limited, would get the job of putting in new glass. And it is true. It is infamous; it is outrageous; but ifi attempt to fight them I shall be hounded out of public life, and they will shove Mouldy Mike into the Cabinet to run my department in their interests that is, to make such a failure of it that Joe will have to sell it to Breakages, Limited, at scrap iron prices", and she breaks down weeping. It is only Amanda, the Postmistress General, who can hold her own against such concerns. She is a good mimic, and when the candidate of Breakages, Limited came to her constituency, she mimicked him so effectively, that he ran away from the contest, and never returned again.

In the play Shaw has established that untrammelled democracy is as bad as absolute monarchy. Shaw is neither anti-democracy nor anti-monarchy but he stands for a system of checks and balances to rectify the faults both of democracy and monarchy. Men like King Magnus are the

urgent need of the hour, because they are more able, more shrewd and more cultured than the representatives of the people. A further dimension has been added to the play, by showing that both the elected representatives and the monarch are in conflict with huge industrial concerns like Breakages, Limited whose power and influence must be curbed for the economic good of the nation. Exploitation on the part of such concerns must end at the earliest.

Critics have by and large failed to appreciate the significance of the Interlude in the Apple Cart. A.C. Ward writes in this connection, "Few things among Shaw's writings have been less understood and more stupidly attacked than he Interlude which comes between the two acts of *The Apple Cart*. Critics have followed each other in declaring that the Interlude has nothing to do with the play, and that it is only a piece of foolery. The truth is, however, that it has much to do with the play and that it contains some of the wisest sayings in modern drama."[6]

"The Interlude" is important dramatically, first, because it shows the other side of Magnus' character. It shows the politically astute king in a personal domestic relationship, relaxed and off duty. A politician or a king who is just that and nothing else all day and every day, is a lopsided creature, a human monster. Wisdom comes through a balancing of one's activities: nothing too much. In the Interlude, Magnus speaks of his association with Orinthia as a strangely innocent relationship. It is for him an essential means of relief and a restorative to be at intervals in the company of a beautiful woman who transports him into a region of fantasy. It keeps him balanced and sane, and able to deal with anxious affairs of state which would otherwise overwhelm him and make him incapable of clear judgment. And since he is faithful to his wife, a less exciting woman but his loyal companion in the work a day world, he is able to withstand Orinthia's desire to bind him to herself in an exclusive and stifling relationship.

Secondly, there are many witty and wise saying in it. Of the wise sayings in the Interlude, only one can be quoted at length. When Orinthia is attempting to persuade Magnus to make her his queen, he says: "Do not let us fall into the common mistake of expecting to become one flesh and one spirit. Every star has its own orbit; and between it and its nearest neighbour there is not only a powerful attraction but an infinite distance. When the attraction becomes stronger than the distance the two do not embrace; they crash together in ruin. We two also have our orbits, and must keep an infinite distance between us to avoid a disastrous collision. Keeping our distance is the whole secret of good manners; and without good manners human society is intolerable and impossible. Though good manners may in these days be regarded by some as an old-fashioned weakness, and crude self-assertion be considered a sign of strength and superiority, experience and the passing of time will undoubtedly show once again to nations and all public bodies as well as to private persons that without good manners human society is intolerable and impossible.

Shaw defies Life Force, as Vitality with a direction, expressing itself in the will to create matter or to mould matter which it finds but which it has not created. Will to do anything can do that thing, and the will to create, if Woman is able to subdue man in most cases by first turning him into an adorer of herself—hence the romance of love and marriage—and when he has been ensnared by the bait of sexual attraction, by turning him into a breadwinner for herself and her children. In order to keep man away from his artistic or idealistic activities, she shares man's interests and ideals. But this is only a bait to convert man into a suitable bread winner—an ideal father and husband. Woman is able to win over ninety-nine men out of hundred but the hundredth case is an exception. He is the genius, the man selected by Life Force to carry life to higher levels. To quote Joad: "In the genius Life's purpose is to carry life itself to higher consciousness not previously achieved;

in the woman to safeguard and maintain the Level which has already been attained. Thus in the genius, too, the Life Force is extra-ordinarily intense; he is ready to sacrifice woman to his higher purposes, just as woman sacrifices the ordinary man to her own. He does not make a good bread-winner and hence the clash between woman and man of genius. Woman may sometimes win him over by making him devote his energies to her own glorification. This way is born romantic art, i.e., art devoted to the glorification of woman. But in most cases, the genius sees visions of Beauty and devotes his time and energy to make others see it. In a genius 'Woman meets a purpose as impersonal and irresistible as her own and the clash is sometimes tragic'.

This conflict between woman impelled by the Life Force and the man of genius has been depicted by Shaw in the Interlude through the love-story of Orinthia and King Magnus. Orinthia is a woman, an instrument of the Life Force for the multiplication of life on earth. She has already married twice and has had children from both her previous husbands. She gave them up for none of them was likely to make a suitable bread-winner for herself and her children.

Then she came across King Magnus. Magnus was charmed by her youth and beauty and she began to live in a suit in the palace of King Magnus as his beloved. However, their relationship is totally Platonic; there are no physical contacts and the king remains faithful to his Queen Jemima who is a simple, middle-aged woman. King Magnus is no ordinary man but a genius, and so despite the best efforts of Orinthia, he is not taken in by the sexual bait offered by her. Orinthia is young and beautiful. She is a rose while Queen Jemima is a mere cabbage as compared to her. But Magnus prefers the cabbages as they are useful in earthly life, while roses merely give aesthetic satisfaction and have no other utility so far as this earthly existence is concerned.

Next, Orinthia seeks to tempt him with promises of a life of love and romance in a fairyland in which she herself lives and moves. But this man of genius rejects this sexual bait and expresses his preference for real earthly life with his plain and aged Queen Jemima, who is an affectionate and faithful life partner, and for whose dignity he cares a lot. Therefore, he rejects all the romantic notions of Orinthia one by one and frankly tells her that it is a stupid romantic notion that they can be one both physically and spiritually. Each of them has a distinct personality of his or her own and good manners require that proper distances should be maintained.

Magnus then prepares to leave as it is tea-time, and his Queen must be waiting for him. Orinthia becomes desperate, and does not allow him to go. She takes hold of him with the result that the two fall on the floor and roll over each other again and. again. It is a comic spectacle which sets the audience roaring with laughter whenever the play is staged. All Orinthia's efforts to hold this man of genius are of no avail, and King Magnus leaves in time for tea with his Queen—earthly Queen as compared to Orinthia, the Queen of fairyland.

Magnus rejects the sexual bait held out by Orinthia, for he is genius, a man of extra-ordinary caliber, who would like to devote his time and energy to the task of nation-building, rather than dwindle into a mere bread-winner for the children of the woman who tries to entrap him by the charm of her youth and beauty.

The Apple Cart has a great character—King Magnus—and a number of fine, witty speeches, but it is great in parts and not as a whole. It lacks unity and balance and much that is inferior mingles with much that is great.

King Magnus is certainly a great character, a man of genius, and he makes witty and wise speeches, but the other characters—particularly his

ministers—are muddle-headed and people of no consequence. As A.C. Ward puts it, "The truth is that in the character of King Magnus Shaw created a genius who ran away with his creator. This was neither a fault nor an accident for which Shaw should be blamed. Every great writer is at certain times in his career controlled by forces greater than himself. It is impossible to believe that Shakespeare, for example. was, in himself as a moral man. greater than Hamlet and King Lear and all the other immortal characters he created in his plays. Shaw says in *Man and Superman* and elsewhere that human beings are instruments of the divine will, or the Life Force. He thought of the Life Force as a power whose purpose it is to evolve better and better men and women who will build gradually a better world, and great imaginative writers (such as Shaw) are themselves the agents of that ideal process of betterment, through the characters they are led to create and the thoughts and aspirations they encourage in their readers and audiences."[7]

Magnus is a great character not because he is a King, not because he is a better democrat than his supposedly democratic cabinet, but because he sets good standards of life, above the calculations of expediency and temporary advantage which are foremost in the minds of his cabinet ministers.

The Apple Cart is, no doubt, a great political play, but it has survived only because it is a great work of creative imagination, a great and complex work of art. The primary material of a playwright is not facts but persons-living characters whom he creates by the power of his imagination. The more he is possessed by creative energy as he writes his play, the greater with be the characters and greater the play. It sometimes happens, as in *The Apple Cart*, that one character takes so strong a grip Upon the author's imagination that the particular character dwarfs all the rest. And this is, as has already been suggested above, what King Magnus did to Bernard Shaw.

In contrast with the King the members of the cabinet (Lysistrata alone excepted) are of low intelligence and poor in skill. But standards of intelligence and skill have always to be reckoned in accordance with such other standards as they may meet. There is no absolute standard and it is most probable that the cabinet would appear sensible and alert if they were opposed by a King having no more than average human qualities. Though Magnus is a triumph of dramatic characterisation and one of the great figures in modern drama, he comes near to wrecking the play as a work of dramatic art, for his genius throws the piece out of balance. While in the end a compromise is reached in which neither side scores a practical triumph, the King achieves an overwhelming moral victory and the reader (or the spectator) feels that the cabinet were out-matched morally as well as intellectually from the start.

The verdict on *The Apple Cart* as a play must be that it is based upon a tiny idea, and that it has one great character and a number of great speeches, but to be wholly great a play must have balance and unity, it must be great both in its parts and as a whole. But such greatness the play lacks, It is great only in parts, and not as a whole. It lacks balance, and has a number of characters which are muddle-headed and confused and incapable of clear thinking and making fine speeches, replete with wit and wisdom. King Magnus alone has this distinction.

ARMS AND THE MAN

Bernard Shaw shot into fame as a dramatist with the staging of *Arms and the Man* in 1895, and ever since it has been regarded not only as one of the most popular plays of Shaw, but also as one of the most popular plays of the 20th century. Its popularity has been a continuing one.

There are various reasons for this abiding popularity of *Arms and the Man*. First, as A.C. Ward points out, it is both amusing and thought-provoking. It makes us laughs but it also makes us think, for it has a serious message or messages."[8] *Arms and the Man* is extremely effective on the stage; it is full of a number of laughter-provoking situations and witty, amusing dialogues. There is the amusing encounter in the very first Act of a helpless maiden and a soldier, with pistol in hand. It is the soldier who is afraid, who shys like a frightened mouse at the least movement, but the maiden is self-composed regarding the frightened soldier with amused contempt. But the situation is soon reversed, and the fugitive makes the girl see the truth of his point of view. There are a number of farcical situations in Act II, and Act Ill as well. There are, for example, the episode of, 'the chocolate cream soldier', the coat-episode, and the photograph-episode. There are also witty dialogues, retorts and repartees. The dramatist's intentions are comic, and much amused, we witness the comedy of the mask being taken off the face of love and romantic war. As Swinnerton puts it, "Shaw leaps hither and thither among solemn follies making them ridiculous." With a glee like that of Moliere. He exposes the absurd impulse to lie and to pose which is dominant in men and women. "He makes every lie achieve the ignominy of ludicrous exposure' "This is tin unmistakable mask of comic genius and in the field of farcical comedy, *Arms and the Man'*, remains unequalled in Shaw s works

The play is good entertainment, it makes us laugh, and it also arouses curiosity and suspense. It is an extremely effective stage-play. From the opening passage onwards, the development is natural and happy, and there are

numerous little surprises and unexpected turns of events. The first half of the opening Act is dramatic and tense, one feels the shock of the fugitive's appearance as much as Raina. The search for the fugitive, the pistol lying in front of the soldier's eyes, help to keep up the tension. Then the tension declines, and the comic gains the upper hand. Then again there is tension in the Second and Third Acts. There is the alarming sudden appearance of Bluntschli, Catherine's attempts to hide his arrival are at every moment in danger of frustration. The sword of Damocles hangs over her head, but the situation is saved by Nicola's tactfully taking the blame on himself. The tension again declines and we get the farcical scene of the two women together trying to Petcoff the head of the family. Tension reappears again in Act Ill when Petkoff fails to find his coat in the closet, and later on when he does not find the photograph in the pocket. The readers and the spectators are on tenderhooks, all the time, for an exposure is threatened every moment.

Arms and the Man, of all Shaw's plays, is simplest in theme and clearest in outline. There are no digressions, superfluous excursions, and the action moves forward swiftly and directly. It is the least didactic of Shaw's plays. There is ample of discussion but it is an essential part of the action of the play. There is no discussion for the sake of discussion. Thus in Act I, there is long drawn out discussion on the nature of war, but as soon as Bluntschli has succeeded in puncturing Raina's romantic view of war, he conveniently drops down to sleep. He intuitively realises that he has become Raina's, "poor dear", and there is no further need of argument. There is thus a perfect combination of, 'action', and 'discussion'.

The characters of the play, too, have contributed a great deal to the popularity of *Arms and the Man*. Seven out of the eight characters are, "good acting parts". They are all interesting and individual in their own way, Sergius with his pompous pretentions, Raina with her feminine charms and romantic poses, the Petkoffs with their pride in their library and their electric bell,

Nicola with his shop-keeping mentality, but practical good sense, and Louka with her soul much above her station, and each contributes his or her own bit to the charm and fascination of the play. And then, above all, there is Bluntschli. ", A.C. Ward says, "To call him a great comic character would be extravagant, he is, however, a tenacious comic figure who is safe for a permanent place in the national gallery of stage-characters"[9] His exuberance carries him invigoratingly through the play and sweeps Raina down, from her dizzy heights of operatic hero-worship.

The play is popular by virtue of the remarkable tcchnical skill and originality of the poet. It is popular because of its theatrical effectiveness, and its highly amusing comedy. But this farcical surface is skilfully combined with the serious purpose of the dramatist. *Arms and the Man* makes any one laugh, but its laughter has a serious purpose. It also makes us think. There is the picturesque Bulgarian setting, the dashing uniforms and showy dresses, there is everything to delight and capture attention. But once the attention of the audience has been captured, it is made to think. Its most cherished idols are shattered one by one. The romantic views of love and war, romantic poses and lies of girls like Raina, and the social snobbery of men of wealth and position like the Petkoffs, are all exposed, satirised and ridiculed one by one. Then there is the audacity and unexpectedness of Shaw's attack. It is Bluatschli enthusiastic gobbling of Raina's chocolates that shocked and angered the men of war in the nineties; there would hardly have been any slur on their military honour, if Bluntschli had demanded a square meal and not chocolates, delicacies proper only for pretty school girls. A fugitive, cowardly soldier is used to expose the hollowness of the romance of war, and a poor maid-servant is enough for Shaw to satirise the romance of love.

Shaw's intentions are satiric, and his weapon is comedy, a weapon which is of perennial interest, and whose popularity continues undimmed through the ages. That is why while many tragedies and many tracts on war

and love have been forgotten, *Arms and the Man* enjoys an abiding popularity. Then again, war and love are its two themes, and these themes are of perennial interest. A.C. Ward puts "The play has a universal appeal, for the dramatist has not dealt with in this play simply with temporary injustices or passing follies of his own generation, but with certain human characteristics which last from generation to generation, though they may change their appearance as limes goes on".[10] Both the incidents and characters are universal in appeal even though they are not planned on a grand scale. Through Sergius and Louka the dramatist has given us his own definition of courage.

As Bernard Shaw himself tells us, the title of the play, *Arms and the Man*, has been taken from Dryden's translation of the opening lines of the Roman poet; Virgil's Aeneid. The opening lines in Dryden's translation run as follows,

"Arms and the Man I Sing, who forced by fate,

And haughty Juno;s unrelenting hate".

and this suggested to Bernard Shaw the title of his play and his choice has proved to be a happy one. The phrase used by the Roman epic poets Arma Virumque and Virgil. But Bernard Shaw reverses the process and changes the significance of the phrase. The technical originality of the play is that it is built not on pathos, but on bathos, and this technical peculiarity is indicated by the title itself.

Virgil's Aenied is an epic of war and adventure. It narrates the heroic deeds of the Greek hero, Aeneas, who took part in the war of Troy. After Toy was burnt, he left the city with his old father, wife and children, after facing numerous difficulties and dangers, he reached Italy, and conquered it. Thus Virgil in his epic sings of the glory of war and heroic valour. The phrase Arma Virumque in Virgil is a heroic expression which puts us in mind of the

stir and thrill of war and heroic exploits of great warriors. War is glorified, and man is shown to be a creature of heroic proportions. Aeneas is exalted as a great hero, he uses arms with heroic valour, and in the end emerges triumphant, towering head and shoulders both above his enemies and his associates. There is a mounting upward movement with the hero gaining instature with each successive deed of valour he performs. Thus than, as well as the arms which he uses are both extolled.

In the play, Bernard Shaw has reversed the process; Virgil's phrase receives an ironic treatment at the hands of the dramatist. He does not glorify war or the profession of a soldier; rather he strips them of their romantic glamour. No doubt the play opens with a tale of heroism and military alarms.

Catherine tells Raina of the heroic cavalry charge of the betrothed Sergius and the young lady is in raptures. He is the hero of the hour. Then there is the fugitive from the field of war, with soldier in arms close at his heels. He too, has, his own arms, a pistol, and later on he uses Raina's cloak as a shield. There is the search in Raina's room by the brave soldiers of the Bulgarian army. The entire atmosphere resounds with war cries and the clang of arms.

The action evolves out of the background of war and deals with men in arms. But very soon, as the action develops, the hollowness and sham of war is exposed, and the romantic idealisation of war is given a shattering blow. It is shown that Sergius, the hero of Slivnitza, is a fool and an idiot, and that he ought to have been court-martialled for his rash action. It is known that soldiering is a, cowards art of attacking your enemy when he is at a disadvantage. That most soldiers are born fools is convincingly proved by the fact that the Bulgarian officer, who leads the search, fails to notice the revolver which has been staring him in the face all the time.

Thus Shaw, contrary to Virgil, shows that the glory of war and the heroism of soldiers are mere illusions. War is a ridiculous, horrible affair in

which people are mercilessly burnt alive. Sergius, instead of emerging as a heroic figure at the end, is exposed, ridiculed, and shown to be a mere fool, a man of clay, easily entrapped into marriage by a mere servant girl. The supremacy not of the arms or of heroic valour, but of the essential humanity of man is asserted. Man is essentially a creature of instincts and impulses, and his basic instinct is one of self-preservation. A soldier's staple fare is not arms of heroism, but food, and his chief concern is not military glory, but the preservation of his life. It is for this reason that Bluntschli runs away from the battlefield, and instead of cartridges he carries chocolates to the front. Man is not at all heroic, but a pathetic creature of flesh and blood, who is soon exhausted under the strain of war, like Bluntschli, and then is nervous and frightened like a mouse. It is danger alone which can rouse him to action.

Shaw has aptly called *Arms and the Man*, "an *anti-romantic comedy*", for in the play he has exposed the hollowness of the romantic notions of love and war. By Romanticism Shaw means all that is not based on fact and reality; all shams and false conventions are romantic because they are not based on facts, and their unreality and irrational nature can be easily demonstrated. Throughout his career, Shaw waged a war against romantic and idealistic notions of life, against shams and hypocrisy, and this war began with *Arms and the Man*. The play is anti-romantic, because in it Shaw has attacked the romantic idealisation of life; and it is a comedy because in it he has exposed and ridiculed the hollowness of romantic love and the heroic ideals of war. Shaw laughs, but his laughter has a serious intention. He is both witty and thought-provoking. It is a didactic play, the purpose of the dramatist being to make his readers see the truth about love and war.

The play opens on a note of romance. Raina is a romantic girl who stands on her balcony enjoying the beauty of the night and the snowy Balkans. She is betrothed to Sergius in every way a, "Byronic hero", who has gone to war like knights of the Middle ages. He makes a heroic cavalry

charge and wins a splendid victory. He becomes the hero of the hour and is adored and worshipped by Raina. On his return home, one can get a scene of higher and romantic love with Raina calling him her, "hero", and her, "king" and he addressing her as his "Queen", and saying that he could win the heroic victory only because she inspired him.

Both Raina and Sergius, as a matter of fact, live in a world of romance and unreality. In the very opening of the play Shaw shows how Raina has doubts about their romantic ideals. They are derived from their reading of Byron and Pushkin and the seeing of romantic plays. That is why their romance is soon shattered through its very first contact with reality. Bluntschli is the representative of solid reality. Through him the dramatist places the relevant facts and arguments before Raina and her idealistic romantic notions of war are soon shattered. (I) She is bluntly told that Sergius is a fool and block head, that he and his regiment nearly committed suicide, only the pistol missed tire. (ii) Further, she is told that food is more important in war than ammunition, that it is the duty of a soldier to live as long as he can, and with this end in view he should run away from the field, and that, "nine soldiers out of ten", are born fools. Gradually, she is made to see the facts of the case, and her romantic ideals of war are demolished. Similarly, Sergius is disillusioned by war, and realises that soldiering is a trade like any other trade. It is not heroism, but the, "coward's art", of mercilessly attacking when you are strong, and having your enemy at a disadvantage.

Similarly, both Raina and Sergius are disillusioned in their romantic ideals of love. Sergius finds to his great disappointment that behind his back Raina made love to Bluntschli, and Raina discovers that her hero is made of clay, and can flirt with her maid as soon as her own back is turned. Instinctively, she turns to Bluntschli not because he faces bullets, but because he faces facts. He helps her to find herself, to understand reality both about herself and about life. He breaks the web of illusion that is woven round her,

and makes her see the light of day. The hero of Slivnitza appears in a comic light; the absurdity of his 'heroics' is exposed and ridiculed.

Thus Shaw is a realist who, in the play, places before his readers the facts of life—the truth about love and war—his purpose being to make people think and understand. It is in this way that he spreads truth, and demolishes all that is false and irrational by focusing on it the searchlight of logic and reason. But it must be remembered that Shaw is not merely a realist, he is also an anti- romantic. It means that his realism is not mere photographic realism: there is also much heightening of reality. In order to achieve his anti-romantic purpose, the dramatist resorts to exaggeration of reality, and exaggeration often results in distortion and falsification of reality. His anti-romantic intentions militate against absolute fidelity to fact, and the dramatist often becomes unconvincing and incredible. A fugitive soldier may demand food, a square meal, when he is famished, but we find it hard to believe that he would demand chocolates. Sex may be an impersonal instinct, but in real life Sergiuses are usually married to Rainas and not to Loukas. Soldiers may be born fools, but it does not seem credible that they will not observe a pistol lying in their very eye, even after a thorough search, while an ignorant maidservant, Louka, notices it as soon as she enters the room.

Arms and the Man was very highly applauded when it was first enacted on the stage. Apart from the problems raised in the play, the very form of it was an attractive and forcible innovation. Classic plays which were wholly heroic, comic plays which were wholly ironical, were common enough. Commonest of all in this particular time was the play that began playfully, with plenty of comic business, and was gradually sobered by sentiment, until it ended on a note of romance or even of pathos. A commonplace little officer, the butt of the mess, becomes by the last act as high and hopeless a lover as Dante. Or a vulgar and violent pork butcher remembers his own youth, before the curtain goes down

The first thing that Bernard Shaw did when he stepped before the foot lights was to reverse the process. He resolved to build a play not on pathos but on bathos. The officer should be heroic first and then every body should laugh at him. This has been very well illustrated in Arms and the Man. Sergius in the beginning of the play is vested with full military glory. He has led a cavalry charge against the battery of the foe and has won the battle of Slivnitza. The result is that his praises are sung loudly in the town and Raina, his betrothed. is wild with joy. But Bluntschli, the matter of fact man, comes in contact with her and proves that her hero is a mere fool and that the art of fighting is a coward's art. The result is that her faith in his heroism is rudely shaken.

Her romantic notions of love have also been shown to be equally hollow and worthless. Sergius, the apostle of higher love, adored by Raina, carries on secret flirtation with her maid-servant, Louka, and ultimately marries her. On the other hand, Raina who was engaged to the renowned soldier (Sergius) ultimately marries Bluntschli, a mere professional soldier. Raina and Sergius come down to the level of Louka and Bluntschli; Louka and Bluntschli do not rise to the level of Sergius and Raina. The play in this way ends in bathos.

This very technical originality, bathos, is indicated by the title of the play. The name itself is meant to be bathos; *Arms and the Man*. It indicates a comic-ironic treatment of the theme of Virgil's Anied. Instead of glorifying war and soldiering, the dramatist has shown its hollowness. Soldiers are shown not as heroes but as cowards.

Shaw was a professed social reformer, and satire was the weapon he used to convert the nation to his own point of view. In one play after another, he lashes at one social evil after another. In Arms and the Man, he has satirised the romantic ideals of life, more specially the romantic view of war and soldiering, and romantic love, and social snobbery. His aim was to bring abciut a correct understanding of the nature of war and love.

Shaw's biggest laugh is at the expense of the supposed heroism of soldiers and militarists. In the beginning, we are told of the heroic cavalry charge of Sergius, and Raina is in raptures. But very soon arrives Bluntschli on the scene, and he focuses the search light of reason on war and soldiering and reveals to Raina their real nature. He makes her realise that Sergius' cavalry charge was in reality a rash and foolish act he and his regiment simply committed suicide only the pistol missed fire. He further tells her that nine soldiers out often are born fools, a view which is soon proved to be true by the fact that the Bulgarian officer fails to notice the pistol which has been staring in his face all the time. Further, he tells her the truth that food is more important on the front than ammunition, that it is the duty of a soldier to live as long as he can, and that, with this end in view, he should run away from the field. In the course of the play, we see the heroic ideals of Raina gradually crumbling down and falling to pieces. Sergius' heroic poses, 'I never apologise', 'nothing binds me', 'I never withdraw' are ridiculed, and shown to be sheer stupidity and obstinacy. In this way, Shaw has emphasised the truth about soldiers and the wars they fight.

Similarly, Shaw has satirised the ideal of love. Raina is a romantic girl who, at the opening of the play, stands at the balcony admiring the beauty of the night. Sergius is her lover and hero. On Sergius' return from the war, one can get a scene of "higher love". They call each other, 'my Queen', 'my hero', 'my king', etc. They are in ecstasy and cannot live without each other even for a minute. But their "higher love", is merely a pose, a sham, a mockery. As soon as Raina's back is turned, Sergius makes love to Louka, just as Raina made love to Bluntschli behind his back. The state of her heart is revealed by her words to her mother. "I know Sergius is your pet. I sometimes wish you could marry him instead of me. You would just suit him. You would pet him and spoil him and mother him to perfection. I do not care whether he finds out about the chocolate cream soldier or not. I half hope he may." Nothing can bring out better the hollowness of romantic love.

Raina and Sergius have both set each other on high pedestals, but the dramatist reveals the truth about such romantic adoration. Sergius is not the chivalrous knight which Raina takes him to be. He is proud, boastful, inefficient, and stupid. He strikes poses and so is easily befooled and entrapped into marriage by a mere servant girl. Raina also is as much a creature of common clay as Sergius. She tells lies and spies upon her knight and hero. She strikes poses and her actions are childish, like those of a school girl of seventeen. Bluntschli sees through her and ridicules her poses, her noble attitudes, and her emotional thrilling tones.

Social snobbery, too, comes within the lash of Shaw. The Petkotis are proud of their library, their two staircases, and their electric bell. One may no longer be proud of such things, or regard them as distinctions. But the mentality still persists. It is the same mentality which makes us proud of our T.V. sets, our motor cars, and our air-conditions, spacious residences. Shaw has satirised such false notions of social superiority, and has tried to curb them by laughing at them. Raina and Sergius, despite all their social pride, are as much creatures of clay as Louka, and Louka does actually move up and become a lady.

Shaw has ruthlessly exposed the vanities and follies of man. However, the play is not all satire. There is much in it which is pure comedy. Often the dramatist laughs, without any corrective intention, merely for the sake of the laugh, There is much true comedy between the midnight encounter of Raina and Bluntschli. Further, Nicola's confusion when he is charged with having spoiled the toy soldier of Raina is purely comic. Similarly, one does have a hearty laugh at the spectacle of Raina and Catherine together trying to pacify Major Petkoff.

Sergius-Louka episode in *Arms and the Man* is of essential dramatic significance. Louka is the maid-servant of the Petkoffs. She is young and beautiful, a young lady of considerable physical charms. Moreover, she has a

soul above her station, treats her betrothed Nicola, as a mere servant, is insolent towards Raina, and with Catherine also goes as far as she can. She is also clever and intelligent. As Sergius puts it, she is, "witty as well as pretty". Her ambition is to marry into the nobility and thus to become a rich lady.

Soon after the arrival of Sergius, one witnesses a scene of 'higher love', between him and Raina. They are alone in the garden but soon Louka arrives to clear the tea things and make the table tidy. The two apostles of higher love decide to go out for a walk so that they may enjoy some privacy. Raina goes in to bring her hat, and as soon as her back is turned Sergius turns to Louka for relaxation after the strain of higher love and tries to kiss her. Louka cleverly suggests that they should go into the stable, so that they may not be seen from the house, for sass she, Miss Raina is sure to be spying upon them. Shaw, angrily warns her not to insult the higher love, but continues with her love making. As he holds her in his arms, Louka insinuates that Raina has a lover,, but refuses to give him further information. In his anger, Sergius holds her so violently that her arm is bruised. Louka wants that he should kiss her wound, and thus cure it. Sergius refuses to do so at the time.

Louka is encouraged by Sergius' flirtation, and so, on the next occasion, plainly tells her that Raina's lover is a Swiss soldier, and that if he ever returns, Miss Raina is sure to marry him. She then asks him to apologise for the hurt he has caused her, but Sergius replies that he never apologises. Louka, then tells him that a brave person does what he wants to do without caring for public opinion. If she herself were even the Empress of Russia. she would have the courage to marry' the man she loved. At this Sergius replies that he, too, would marry her, if he loved her, but he loves Raina and so would marry her. Finding the time suitable, Louka reveals that Bluntschli is the lover of Raina and since he has returned she would marry the Swiss and not him.

On hearing this, Sergius is beyond himself with rage and says that he would marry her, if he ever again touched her. Next he challenges Bluntschli to a duel. However, the Captain assures him that Raina had received him in her bedroom only because he. had a loaded pistol in his hand, aimed at her head, and that nothing improper ever passed between them. Raina now suddenly realises that Louka must be his informer and that he had been flirting with her in the morning. Indignantly, she says that he must fight a duel with Nicola and not with Bluntschli, and that his new love, Louka, must, at that moment, be listening at the door. In order to prove that at least this charge against Louka is false, Sergius opens the door and Louka is actually found eavesdropping.

Major Petkof's old coat and the photograph which Raina puts in it, play an important role in the development of the plot of the play. Bluntschli enters Raina's bedroom as a fugitive chased by Bulgarian soldiers. His life is in great danger for he is sure to be killed if arrested. Raina takes pity on him, hides him behind the curtain, and in this way saves him from the soldiers who come to search her room. She even permits him to stay in her room for the night. Next morning, he is smuggled out of the home disguised in an old coat of Major Petkoff who is out fighting at the front. She places in the pocket of the coat her photograph with the words, "Raina, to her chocolate cream soldier: A Souvenir", written on it.

The coat and the photograph figure again in the next Act. Major Petkoff feels uneasy in the new coat and complains that he could not find his old coat in the closet. Catherine at once says that it must be in the closet, and Nicola is sent to fetch it without delay. Major Petkoff bets with Catherine any jewellery she may like from Bucharest against a week's house-keeping allowance, and Sergius bets his best charger against an Arab mare for Raina. To the Major's great surprise, Nicola returns with the coat, the very next moment, and tells them that he found it in the closet. The poor Major

helplessly exclaims that he must be suffering from hallucination and poor eye-sight. One cannot help laughing at the discomfiture of the poor man. He is being befooled both by his wife and his daughter.

Soon after, when they are alone together in the library, Raina asks Bluntschli what he thinks of her for placing her portrait in the pocket of the old coat. To her great surprise, Bluntschli tells her that he did not find it. And it is possible, it is still there. As a matter of fact, for sake-keeping he had pawned the coat. Raina angrily exclaims that he has a low shop-keeping mind and thinks of things which never enter the mind of a gentleman. The real difficulty is that she had inscribed some words on it; and if her father finds the Photograph there would be serious difficulty. Soon after, Major Petkoff comes and complains that somebody with a differently shaped back has been wearing his coat, for it has all burst open at the back. Catherine was mending it at the time. Just then Nicola brings the coat in, pretending to help her father to put on the coat, Raina cleverly removes the photograph and throws it at the table. Bluntschli, covers it with a sheet of paper. Sergius, who is also present, watches the whole proceeding much amazed.

Act I is in the nature of Exposition to the play. It introduces us to the principal characters of the play. Raina is introduced directly and Bluntschli, Catherine, and Louka are indirectly, through conversation between Catherine and Raina, and Sergius and Major Petkoff. The two basic themes of the play, war and love, are also introduced and it is suggested that it is the romance of war which feeds the romance of love.

Act I is built round the confrontation of the romantic and realistic attitudes towards war; Act II is built round the opposition between romantic and realistic attitude towards love. In Act I it is Bluntschli who shatters first Raina's romantic notions of war and makes her realise the truth about war; in Act II, it is the practical Louka who exposes the hollowness of romantic love. The love scene between Sergius and Louka is almost a parody of the scene of

higher love between Sergius and Raina. Similarly, Raina's conversation with her mother soon after reveals the state of her heart. The play, is hung, as it were, on the cunningly told tale of the lost coat with the photograph in its pocket. Numerous hints and suggestions, dropped from time to time, bring out the crucial, pivotal significance to the plot of Petkoff's old coat. It is this coat in which Bluntschli is smuggled out of the house by Raina and Catherine, and it is this very coat which provides Bluntschli with an excuse for paying the Petkoffs a second visit. His arrival with the coat is one of the major complications of the play. The readers are in suspense to know as to ho Catherine would extricate herself from the difficult situation. These dialogues are of great psychological as well as theatrical interest. There are witty retorts and repartees and the dialogues are brisk and lively, with each of the characters trying to uphold his or her own point of view. The conflict is not one of characters or of wills, but of ideas. Ultimately the romantic mask is turned off Raina's face, and she is made to realise the truth about romantic love, just as earlier she had realised about war the truth.

The technical novelty of' the play lies in its extensive use of bathos or anti-climax. Bluntschli and Louka do not soar to the romantic heights of Sergius and Raina; instead they—Sergius and Raina—drop down to the level of Louka and Bluntschli. The here of Slivnitza is shown to be a romantic fool, Raina is proved to be a hyprocrite and liar, made of the same clay as Louka, and the realist Bluntschli is shown to have an, incurably romantic disposition. Raina and Sergius are shown be disenchanted with their romantic notions, and Bluntschli, is shown as an enchanted soul whom nothing will disenchant. This is resolution the anti-climax and the device raises the play to the heights of pure comedy, despite that' purely farcical elements that mingle with it.

Bluntschli is the most fascinating, the most interesting, character in *Arms and the Man*. He is the 'hero' of the play. He is the central figure in the play, who sets the plot moving and keeps up the movement throughout. The

heart of the play, its life and vitality, lies where Bluntschli is, and Act II grows a bit tiresome, only because he does not act in it. His arrival in Raina's bedroom in Act I starts the action of the play, his second visit in Act II introduces the principal complication, and in Act III it is he who resolves the complication and brings it to a satisfactory conclusion. Just as Hamlet would fall to pieces without the prince of Denmark, so also Arms and the Man would disintegrate, if Bluntschli is taken out of it. As one critic puts it, he is a masterpiece of comic characterisation, and the source of fun and humour in the play. it is he who keeps the readers laughing by his sparkling wit and humour, and by his shrewd exposure of the folly of others.

Bluntschli combines levity with seriousness, his laughter has a serious purpose It he who demolishes the romantic ideals of both Sergius and Raina. In this respect, he is the mouthpiece of Shaw. It is he who expresses dramatist's views on war and love, "War when you must, but for God's sake no glorification of it". It is he who shows the truth about the war. War is something horrible and brutal. It may become necessary sometimes, but no songs should be sung to its glory. It is through Bluntschli that the dramatist exposes the true nature of war and soldiering. Soldiers are not noble heroes as Raina considers them to be, but cowards who run away from the field to save their skins. They are ordinary creatures of flesh and blood, who suffer from hunger and fatigue. They too need food and rest, like all of us, and they fight only because they must. It is he who tells the truth that on the front food is more important than ammunition, and that it is a soldier's duty to live as long as he can. He makes Raina see the truth about Sergius' cavalry charge, and so punctures not only her romantic ideals of war, but also her romantic love. He contributes to her knowledge of Sergius, as well as of her own self. He is a realist, and thus he serves as a foil to the romantic Raina and Sergius. He is a realist, shrewd and practical, while Sergius is obtuse, boastful, and romantic to the core. He lacks practical ability, and experience of real life.

However, even this apostle of realism has a romantic side to his nature. One of the anti-climaxes of the play is the discovery that the realist Bluntschli has an incurably romantic disposition that he too is a romantic idiot, like Sergius and Raina. He himself dwells on his romantic traits and tells us that he ran away twice from home when he was a boy, went into the army instead of his father's business, and climbed the balcony of the house, when a man of sense would have dived into a cellar. Further, he came back sneaking to have another look at the lady, and he takes her to be a school-girl of seventeen, while she is in reality a woman of twenty-three. With all his enormous wealth inherited so very suddenly, he seems to be an emperor of fairyland who ultimately offers to marry the fair princess. Whether Bluntschli is a realist or a romantic is hard to decide. The dramatist has posed the problem, leaving the readers to find out their own solution.

Not only is Bluntschli the mouthpiece of Shaw, he is also a typical Shavian hero. He is a man not of heroic but of commonplace courage; he is a 'hero' not because he faces bullets, but because he faces facts—facts about war and the profession of a soldier, facts about love and marriage, facts about human nature in general. In this respect, he stands in sharp contrast to Sergius. A typical Shavian hero is a self-acting man who acts upon instinct, and not according to social codes and convention. Instinctively, he is good and correct. Instinctively, Bluntschli runs away from the field, enters Raina's room, and in defiance of all codes of chivalrous and gentlemanly conduct uses Raina's undress as his shield. When hungry, he demands chocolate, and goes to sleep as soon the danger to his life is over.

However, the Shavian hero is neither a coward, nor one who is given to sensual indulgence. He is hard working, having an extraordinary capacity for sustained work, over a long period of time. He has more than average vitality, and ample of sound commonsense enables him to see the reality and overcome temptations and passions like that of love and hatred. All these

qualities does Bluntschli have. His conduct is instinctive, and so he is noble and generous. He is shrewd and can see through things at once. Thus he at once realises that forage is the problem and arranges the dispatch of the regiment, within minutes. Like Caesar in Caesar and Cleopatra, and Napoleon in the Man of Destiny, he, too, may indulge in the pleasures of love and sex, but at the call of business he rises above such human weaknesses.

Thus Caesar leaves Cleopatra and his pleasure in Egypt at the call of Rome. So also Bluntschli leaves Raina, as soon as he remembers his business engagement. He looks at the watch, suddenly becomes business-like, his heels click, he makes them a military bow, and at once departs, promising to return exactly at five in the evening on Tuesday. All are amazed at this human machine, and Sergius exclaims: "What a man! Is he a man?"

The dramatist does not answer Sergius' question. He simply poses a problem and leaves us to find out our own solution. However, since in the drama, the dramatist has extolled man, and not arms, Bluntschli may be taken to be the sort of man that would meet the dramatist's approval. He, in short, is the representative of average humanity; he is what Shaw would like Man to be. He represents a step forward towards the evolution of the Shavian superman. He is the real hero of the play. Sergius cannot be the hero of the play, for he is exposed and ridiculed and by the end of the play stripped of his poses and pretence. Bluntschli is the means through which he is ridiculed and exposed. The roles of the two men are reversed, and the shabby fugitive of Act I marries Raina, the heroine of the play, and Sergius her maid-servant.

Arms and the Man is a play rich in humour. It illustrates every shade and variety of Shavian humour. There is enough of humour of character in the play. A number of characters are definitely humorous in conception. Major Petkoff, Catherine Petkoff, Sergius and Captain Bluntschli are all humorous creations as in their thoughts, words of actions, they are below the normal or the expected level. The Petkoff's with their pride in the electric bell, in their

two staircases and their library, are rich sources of humour. One is amused at the discomfiture of Catherine, as Bluntschli decides to stay with them as their guest, while Catherine wants him to go away immediately to prevent a disclosure of their having sheltered. Bluntschli, is a masterpiece of comic characterisation and the source of much fun and humour in the play, with his carving for chocolate creams and with his shying like a frightened horse. He is nervous like a mouse. Later on, he creates loud laughter when he judges Raina to be a, "school-girl of seventeen", or when he enumerates the various items of his enormous wealth.

Nor is humour of situation lacking in the play. There is, for example, the very first scene in the bedroom of Raina. The humour arises from the confrontation of the instinctive conduct of Bluntschli with the conventional Conduct and beliefs of Raina. He is an intruder, a fugitive and an enemy, and she is the daughter of one of the most influential men in Bulgaria. It is expected that he would be perturbed, while she would remain self-possessed. But the contrary happens. The instinctive man, Bluntschli, is self-possessed, while the lady, who has nothing but romance and convention to depend upon, is perturbed. Finally, the intruder is able to convert the lady to his own point of view. Numerous other examples of the humour of situation may be easily cited from the play.

Instances of humour in a higher vein are also not lacking. Shaw's humour often verges on the farcical. For example, the coat-episode, the photograph episode, and the chocolate-cream episode are all sources of farcical humour. The key-note of a farce is exaggeration to arouse broad hoarse laughter. Shaw's habit of deflating big names or giving people nicknames is another source of broad humour in his plays. Thus in this play Raina nicknames Bluntschli as, chocolate-cream soldier, because he eats chocolates. The higher love of Raina and Sergius, the military heroism of Sergius, the servility of Nicola, and his looking a fool and taking all the

Countless examples of Shavian wit, too are scattered all up and down the play. As blame on himself, are overdone and verge on the farcical. Shaw revels in puns paradoxes, retorts and repartees. He has a knack of saying fine sparkling things. Sometimes, Shaw's wit is light and innocent: It being merely humour arising from the use of words; and at other times it has a rapier-like thrust and is sharp and biting. For example, when Petkoff returns from the front, Catherine proudly tells her that she has got fitted an electric bell in their home, because civilised people do not shout for their servants. At this Petkoff retorts, "Civilised people do not hang out their washing to thy where visitors can see it, so you would better have all that put somewhere else." But it is he who gets the worst of it for Catherine silences him with her clever repartee, "I do not think really civilised people notice such things." When Sergius asks Louka, "If you were in love with me, would you spy out of windows on me?" Louka wittily replies, "Well you see, Sir since you are half a dozen gentleman all at once, I shall have a great deal to look after," and Sergius is obliged to praise her, "witty as well as pretty". Louka's wit is sharp and biting when she retorts to Sergius, "Whatever clay Jam made of you are made of the same." Numerous examples of Shavian wit, both in a gentler vein and a sharp, pungent vein, can be cited from the play.

Though, as we have considered above, there is ample of farce in the play. *Arms and the Man* is not a farce, but a true comedy. The purpose of a comedy is to ridicule and expose some human or social folly or weakness. It laughs at human folly, but the purpose of the laughter is to drive that folly, out of courts, Though there is ample or farcical, loud laughter in the play, the laughter has a serious purpose, and this differentiates the play from a farce. Shaw laughs, hut his laughter has a serious purpose. He is a comedian with a serious purpose. He provokes mirth, but he also provokes thought.

In *Arms and the Man*, the dramatist's intentions are comic, and the use of bathos or anti-climax is the instrument through which he achieves his

comic Intention. Sergius and Raina become comic figures, as the hollowness of their romantic love, and their romantic attitudes and poses, is exposed. Raina and Sergius come down to the level of Louka and Bluntschli. The romantic mask is torn off their faces, and the essential inner self is revealed. The dramatist has succeeded in his comic intention. He shows that war is not heroic, but something horrible and brutal; soldiers are not heroes but fools and cowards, who fight only because they are compelled to fight. Sergius' heroic victory appears in a comic light, when it is discovered that he could win only because the Serbian gunmen had the wrong ammunition with them. Sergius makes love to Louka as soon as Raina's back is turned, soon after, "the higher love scene". Similarly, Raina wishes to do something which would scandalise Sergius, and half wishes that he should find out about her having sheltered in her bedroom her chocolate-cream soldier. Thus Shaw has demonstrated the folly of romantic ideals of love and war, his purpose in writing the plays. He has provided ample of fun and humour for his readers and audience, but he has also achieved his serious purpose.

Nicola and Louka are the two servants belonging to Major Petkoff's household. They are engaged to be married, and had received some money and ornament on the day of their betrothal. They are seen together for the first time in Act II. Nicola advises Louka to behave respectfully towards her mistress, but she does not listen to his advice. On the contrary, she tells him that he has the soul of a servant. She aspires to become a grand lady and so refutes his arguments. The whole, dialogue between the two is spirited and comical, and reveals their respective nature:

"LOUKA : You have no spirit. I should like to catch them saying a word against me!

NICOLA : (pityingly) I should have expected more sense from you, Louka But you 're young: you 're young.

LOUKA: Yes; and you like me the better for it, don't you? But I know some family secrets they wouldn't care to have told, young as I am. Let them quarrel with me, f they dare!

When Nicola advises her to be careful, for after her dismissal from service, no one will listen to her she replies:

LOUKA: (With searching scorn): You have the soul of a servant, Nicola.

NICOLA: (complacently): Yes: that's the secret of success in service".

They then meet in Act III. Nicola again gives her sound advice and tells her to mend her manners. Nicola's advice is very practical. He tells her that he knows that she has a soul above her station and wishes to marry some wealthy man of rank. He will like to see her a rich lady rather than make her his wife, for he wished to set up a shop in Sofia and looks forwards to her recommendation for the success of his business. He sees the possibility of her marriage with as rich a man as Sergius. But Louka again taunts him and says perhaps he would not like her to be his wife, for as a wife she would only cost him money. This is another instance of his servile mentality.

Then towards the close of the play, Nicola comes forward to the help of Louka. Sergius is in love with Louka and intends to marry him, but Major Petkoff says that the girl was engaged to Nicola and could not, therefore, marry Sergius. Here Nicola breaks in and sets the matters right:

"NICOLA: I beg your pardon, Sir There is a mistake. Louka is not engaged to me.

PETKOFF: Not engaged to you, you scoundrel! Why, you had twenty-five levas from me on the day of your betrothal, and she had that gilt bracelet from Miss Raina".

And one can see that after this explanation, she is free to marry Sergius, for all difficulties being removed, Sergius now makes her his wife. Thus the Nicola-Louka episode is very interesting and gives amusement to the audience as well as to the reader. There is, more over, a pleasant contrast between their respective natures, the one having a soul above, her station, and the other being the very soul of a servant.

However, the way in which Nicola helps Louka appeals to the practical Bluntschli. He is all admiration for him, and says, "Nicola is the ablest man, I have met in Bulgaria. I will make him the manager of a hotel, if he can speak French and German." Bluntschli's estimate of Nicola's ability is true to a very great extent. Many examples of his sound practical sense are scattered all up and down the play. His advice to Louka is entirely sound and practical.

When he finds that she has a, "soul above her station", and is ambitious to become a rich lady, he at once realises that she will not make to him a good wife. With him she will remain unhappy, and dissatisfied, and so decides to give her up, and renounces all claims to her. It is neither heroism, nor cowardice, but practical commonsense. The way in which he seeks to help her by telling Sergius that she comes to the library to read books, speaks volumes of his tact and sagacity.

Nicola's tact, intelligence, and presence of mind, are also seen in the way in which he takes all the blame upon himself, and saves his mistress and Raina from much embarrassment. When Petkoff questions him regarding the toy- soldier of Raina, which he is supposed to have spoiled, he gives evasive replies which would do credit to a diplomat dealing with affairs of state. He is a shrewd judge of human nature, and has a correct understanding of the characters both of Sergius and Bluntschli. He knows that Bluntschli is no fool, while Sergius is certainly one. As a servant, he is complacent, satisfied, and entirely faithful to those whose bread he eats. In this respect, he certainly has the soul of a servant. But his tact, his sagacity, his sound commonsense and his astuteness, also justify Bluntschli's praise of him.

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