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Arms and the Man

George Bernard Shaw



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George Bernard Shaw

ARMS AND THE MAN

Edited By

Dr. Binny Deka



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George Bernard Shaw

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PREFACE

Arms and the Man written by George Bernard Shaw, popular English dramatist of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century requires no introduction. His dramas are thought provoking and unlike other such plays are also full of humour. *Arms and the Man*, one of his earliest dramas is no exception. Yet, he has successfully conveyed his message that war is horrible and that glorification of war is senseless.

It is hoped that this book will help students to gain a critical insight into the play.

Suggestions are welcome.

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LIFE AND WORKS

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was a prolific writer of plays, novels, short stories, articles and criticism. He was an imaginative writer, a journalist, a philosopher, a social reformer and a critic of literature as well as painting. Shaw was a versatile genius but he is chiefly famous as a playwright with fifty plays to his credit where he explores a variety of subjects from war to education; social inequality to religion. He was an original thinker who was successful in influencing English attitudes by viewing English society objectively.

Shaw was born in 1856 at Dublin, Ireland into a Protestant family. His father was George Carr Shaw, the youngest son in a family of thirteen children. Though George Carr Shaw became a minor officer in the courts of law at Dublin, he retired from it on a small pension and tried his hand at being a corn merchant but was unsuccessful. His mother Lucinda, was the daughter of an Irish landowner who became disillusioned by her husband's inability to support his family. Shaw's father was a drunkard and unable to bear it any longer Lucinda left him with her two daughters to go to London in 1873. Shaw was only sixteen and he began to live with his father. He attended Wesleyan Connectional School and then a private school in Dalkey before joining Dublin's Central Model School. His formal education ended at Dublin English Scientific and Commercial School and it was a period in his life which he did not enjoy. In fact later on in life he became more vociferous against the existing system of education which he believed succeeded only in deadening the spirit. At best his education was erratic and after three years of living with his father he followed his mother to London in 1876. Before coming to London he also served efficiently as a clerk and cashier in a land agent's office till April which he never enjoyed. The death of his sister Agnes, from food poisoning also prompted him to leave for London.

In London Lucinda, who had followed her musical guide Vandeleur Lee was singing at concerts and giving music lessons to eke out a living. She was capable of providing him with a little support and he supplemented it by writing musical reviews for Lee. His father also provided him with some amount of financial support. In the metropolis Shaw began to educate himself. He visited the British Museum and studied seriously at the public libraries. Earlier while he was at Dublin he had become acquainted with the work of such literary giants as John Bunyan, Charles Dickens, Shelley and Byron. He acquired knowledge of music at home from his mother and he visited the Dublin National Gallery of art where he gathered some experience of art and the theatre. The local theatres staged tragedies, comedies and melodramas; Shakespeare and adaptations of French plays which left an everlasting impression on Shaw's mind. In London, he began to write novels seriously and he joined politics. He wrote his first semi-autobiographical novel in 1879 titled *Immaturity* which was rejected by publishers. Between 1880 and 1883 Shaw wrote four more novels namely, *The Irrational Knot*, *Love Among the Artists*, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, and *An Unsocial Socialist* but they met the same fate as his first novel. Some socialist magazines published *The Irrational Knot* (1880) and *Cashel Byron's Profession* (1882) in a serialised form. Of these novels the first to be published was *Cashel Byron's Profession* 1886, *An Unsocial Socialist* in 1887, *The Irrational Knot* in 1905, *Love Among the Artists* in 1914 and *Immaturity* in 1931. In 1882 Shaw attended the American economist Henry George's lecture on "Land Nationalisation and the Single Tax" at the Non-conformist Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street and became aware of the importance of studying social issues from an economic point of view; next he turned towards Karl Marx and after reading his *Das Capital* Shaw decided that socialism could provide solutions to problems in society. Shaw joined the Social Democratic Federation but ultimately became a member of the Fabian Society. The society had been established in 1884 and Shaw became a devoted and sincere worker. It believed that socialism could replace capitalism provided it was brought about gradually or if it was an evolutionary change

rather than a revolutionary one. Shaw too believed that inequality in society had to be reduced; good and effective laws were required but they would not be able to improve matters unless good men and women were prepared to usher in change. He realized that good laws passed by a few good people could not necessarily form a good society. Darwin's theory of evolution also helped him to form his ideas.

Immensely influenced by these thinkers Shaw developed an objective and independent outlook. He became lifelong friends with a large number of other people like Beatrice and Sydney Webb and was exposed to a new environment through the Fabian Society. Hence, Shaw's concept of socialism was moulded by Fabianism, Marxism and creative evolution. According to him nothing was perfect; it was only through evolution and a process of continuous change that everything became perfect. He further questioned the existence of Christianity as he found it and developed his own belief in religion. In essence, Shaw formed his individual and fiercely independent ideas contrary to existing belief. He was acutely aware of the necessity of a strong economy probably because of the hardship he had faced in Dublin. In 1885 Shaw founded the London School of Economics and Political Science with his friends from the Fabian Society Sidney and Beatrice Webb and Graham Wallas.

Shaw could not gain popularity through his novels and in 1885 he met William Archer at the British Museum who sponsored him to join the Pall Mall Gazette as a critic and journalist. He began to review books, art, music in other journals as 'Dramatic Review' and 'Our Corner'. He became a drama critic for the first time for Frank Harris' 'Saturday Review' and he used his position to expose the hypocrisies of the Victorian drama and to create a ground for the theatre of actuality and thought. He not only made money through his job but also became a well known name through the initials G.B.S. though when he had started as a critic he had written under the pseudonym of 'Corno di Bassetto'. Articles written for 'The Saturday Review' were later published in a collected form in *Our Theatres in the Nineties* (1932). He published a book on music *The*

Perfect Wagnerite in (1898) and his music criticism written for 'Dramatic Review', 'Our Corner', 'The Pall Mall Gazette', 'The World' and 'The Star' was collected and published as *Shaw's Music*.

In 1897 Shaw was selected to stand for the post of Member of Parliament but he decided against it. However, he was elected as a local councilor to the London County Council.

While engaged in his political and socialistic activities he met an Irish heiress, Charlotte Payne-Townshend whom he married in 1898. It is believed that their marriage was never consummated at her insistence. Shaw had been involved in a number of affairs with married women. He was by no means a puritan and his views on sex were as independent and without scruples as his views on other subjects. To him sex was not a sin but a source of delight. Frank Harris believed that their union was based on their mental compatibility and her feminine tendency to nurse. Indeed Charlotte was a high spirited feminist who wanted to defy convention. They settled in Hertfordshire village of Ayot St Lawrence and led a happy companionable life which ended at her death in 1943.

William Archer had suggested that they should collaborate on adapting a French play as early as 1885 but it did not materialize ostensibly because Shaw had used the plot provided by him on other projects. But when Henrik Ibsen's plays began to generate interest in the new type of drama Shaw tried his hand once again at play writing. He considered Ibsen a pioneer of the modern drama of thought and wrote *The Quintessence Of Ibsenism* for a summer meeting for the Fabian Society. In 1892 he completed his first play *Widowers' Houses* and it was staged in the same year at London's Royalty Theatre. It drew mixed responses but he was able to further his political and socialistic ambitions through it. The play exposed the cruel world of slum landlordism and Shaw claimed that it created a sensation. In quick succession Shaw wrote three more plays, *The Philanderer*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *Arms and the Man*. Shaw had finally found his niche. Though *Arms and the Man* alone was staged immediately and it did not turn out to be a resounding success he continued writing plays. *Candida*, *You can Never Tell*, *The Devil's Disciple*,

Caesar and Cleopatra, *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, *Man and Superman*, *Major Barbara*, *The Doctor's Dilemma* appeared within the decade. By 1910 he was an established playwright and he went on to write more plays, about fifty in all.

As his fame increased Shaw began to publish his plays with lengthy prefaces wherein he expounded his views. He increased the stage directions in the printed versions to make it more appealing to the reader. The first of such publications was *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant* which appeared in 1898. At that time Shaw was involved in underwriting for the Royal Court Theatre. J.E. Vedrenne and Harley Granville-Barker of the theatre began to stage Shaw's plays which made him famous and he became acknowledged as a dramatist of the first order. His plays, *John Bull's Other Island* (1904), *Man and Superman* (1903), *Major Barbara* (1905), *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906) and *Caesar and Cleopatra* in 1907 were followed by plays like *Misalliance* (1910), *Fanny's First Play* (1911), *Androcles and the Lion* (1913) and *Pygmalion* (1914). Shaw and his plays gained such popularity that he came to be recognized as the foremost dramatist of London. This period up till the beginning of the first world war can be called the first phase of Shaw's career as a dramatist.

The second phase began with Shaw's *Commonsense about the War* (1914) where he expressed his anti-war views which was contrary to the pro-war mood at that time. The devastation of war had not been experienced then which made Shaw unpopular. He wrote *Heartbreak House* (1919) during the war and it was performed in 1920 in New York and 1921 in London. The play was not received warmly; Shaw also had changed. Though his wit remained intact his faith in humanity suffered. In 1921 *Back to Methuselah* appeared in a five part structure which Shaw considered his masterpiece. But it met the same fate as *Heartbreak House* despite its optimistic outlook. But his next play *St. Joan* (1923) became a huge success and it ran for two hundred and fortyfour nights at the New Theatre. Joan of Arc and her canonization had intrigued Shaw and he had considered it as a subject for his plays long before 1923. It gained instant popularity within London and internationally which paved the way for his

Nobel Prize for literature, 1925. Shaw however refused to accept it except, at his wife's request, the prize money which he donated to establish an Anglo-Irish literary Foundation.

In the third phase Shaw continued writing plays but they were neither as popular nor as significant as his earlier plays. *The Apple Cart* (1929), *Too True to be Good* (1931), *On the Rocks* (1933), *The Millionairess* (1935), *Geneva* (1938) and *In the Good King Charles Days* (1939) were the most significant plays of this period. Of them *The Apple Cart* was the only one which enjoyed similar popularity as his earlier plays. He was a powerful orator and people were generally eager to listen to him speak. Shaw published a number of books which contained his unique views on a number of topics like *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (1928) and *Everybody's Political What's What* (1944). An Irish man by birth Shaw had lived most of his life in London. In 1931 he travelled to Russia where he met Stalin. His admiration for Stalin created a controversy but he supported Stalinistic USSR openly and wrote in defence of its policy to liquidate people in the preface to his play *On The Rocks* (1933) along with a fair amount of criticism against it and expressing the view that killings ought to be humane.

Shaw wrote a number of short stories which was published in a collection called, *The Black Girl in Search of God and Some Lesser Tales* which was published in 1934. Though Shaw became famous primarily as a dramatist he is also remembered as a multi faceted genius. As C.E.M. Joad opined, 'He excelled in so many capacities, as prose-writer, pamphleteer, controversialist, orator, wit, political thinker, philosopher and public figure, as well as playwright, that it is difficult to view him as a whole, difficult to see the wood precisely because of the multitudinous excellences of the individual trees.' He was a loved and iconic figure in Ireland, London and internationally. When he died at the ripe old age of ninety-four admirers and detractors alike mourned the loss. He was cremated at Golders Green Crematorium and his ashes mixed with his wife were scattered at his country house at Ayot St. Lawrence, Hertfordshire which has been declared as National Trust Property.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1856 : Birth of George Bernard Shaw.
- 1871 : Leaves school to work at a Dublin Property Agency.
- 1873 : Shaw's mother leaves for London with his two sisters
- 1876 : Shaw moves to London
- 1879 : Writes his first novel *Immaturity*
- 1880-1883: Writes novels *Love Among the Artists*, *The Irrational Knot*, *Cashel Byron's Profession*, *An Unsocial Socialist*
- 1882 : Attends American Economist Henry George's lecture.
- 1884 : Joins the Fabian Society
- 1885 : Founded the London School of Economics with Sydney and Beatrice Webb and Graham Wallas. Meets William Archer and becomes a art and music critic for 'The Pall Mall Gazette' 'The World' and 'The Saturday Review'.
- 1886 : *Cashel Byron's Profession* published.
- 1887 : *An Unsocial Socialist* published
- 1891 : *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* published
- 1892 : First play *Widowers' Houses* staged at The Independent Theatre Society, London
- 1893 : Writes *The Philanderer* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*
- 1894 : *Arms and the Man* staged. Writes *Candida*
- 1898 : Marries Charlotte Payne-Townshend. Publishes *The Perfect Wagnerite* and *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* (Pleasant plays: *Arms and the Man*, *Candida*, *The Man of Destiny* and *You Can Never Tell*); (Unpleasant Plays: *Widowers' Houses*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, and *The Philanderer*).
- 1899 : Writes *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*
- 1901 : Three plays for Puritans published (*The Devil's Disciple*,

Caesar and Cleopatra, Captain Brassbound's Conversion)

- 1903 : *Man and Superman* published
- 1904-1907: Eleven of Shaw's plays staged by Harley Granville Barker and J. E. Vedrenne at The Royal Court Theatre.
- 1905 : *The Irrational Knot* published
- 1906 : *Dramatic Opinions and Essays* published. Writes *The Doctor's Dilemma*
- 1908 : Writes *Getting married*
- 1912 : Writes *Pygmalion*
- 1914 : *Love Among the Artists* published. *Common Sense About the War* published.
- 1919 : Writes *Heartbreak House*
- 1921 : Writes *Back to Methuselah*
- 1923 : Writes *Saint Joan*. Staged in New York
- 1926 : Awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, 1925.
- 1929 : Writes *The Apple Cart*
- 1931 : *Immaturity* published. Visits USSR. Meets Stalin.
- 1933 : Writes *On the Rocks*.
- 1934 : Writes *Short Stories*
- 1938 : *Pygmalion* turned into a film
- 1943 : Shaw's wife Charlotte dies
- 1944 : *Everybody's Political What's What?* published
- 1950 : Shaw dies at the age of ninetyfour.



GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S PHILOSOPHY

George Bernard Shaw had strong views on a large number of issues pertinent during his century and is of considerable value now. A man of extraordinary perception he is recognized as the voice of his age in the same way as Dr. Johnson was the voice of his time. He was an intellectual who viewed the ills of society objectively or without bias with the intention of saving it. His powerful thoughts influenced people and he was regarded as a revolutionary intellectual. He attacked the smug attitude of Englishmen and questioned existing beliefs. Shaw wrote essays not because he loved his art but because he found it an effective method of exposing his philosophy and influencing people with them to bring about change. He maintained art and theatre were meaningless to him without this function. Shaw was a propagandist first and an artist next. As such when he failed in his attempts to convey his ideas through novels, he turned towards drama which he found was eminently suitable for his purpose. Critics however argue that Shaw's approach was different from the propagandist who emphasized and expressed his own point of view, his approach can be called revolutionary for he exposed the majority, the minority and his individual point of view as well.

Born into a Protestant Christian family Shaw stopped praying when he was ten. It seems that one day while he was taking a walk over Dalkey Hill it struck him that there was no necessity of repeating his evening prayers every night when he had no faith in them. This was perhaps his moment of intellectual awakening. He had perhaps begun demolishing idols mentally from that tender age. The fact that his father was a drunkard unable to support his family, that his mother left him with his father probably because she loved her music more than anything else, and that he had to undergo a lot of suffering because of his poverty might have influenced his view on religion.

According to Sengupta in his book, *The Art of Bernard Shaw*, 'Shaw's religion has been oriented by his economics: Like Tolstoy he has often spoken of Christ and meant Marx. But he does not identify economics with religion; only he thinks that sound economics is a necessary preliminary to sound metaphysics... so long as there is no socialism with adequate subsistence for all, there can be no talk of real religion.' Indeed Shaw was against the organized form of Christianity and had no use of rituals. Yet he had never wanted the demolition of religion; on the contrary he wanted a 'redistillation' or reformation of religion. He believed in the Christianity of Jesus Christ but was against the one propagated by St. Paul as corrupt and depraved. Though he did not attend church publicly he read his Bible everyday and used a pocket Bible while journeying. This was because he had evolved his own ideas regarding religion. To him Jesus Christ was not God in the accepted sense of the term. He accepted Jesus Christ as a humanist who had willingly sacrificed for the society. Religion according to him was not blind faith but faith in every aspect of life. It had to be the life force of human civilization. Shaw was shrewd enough to understand that blind faith could not overcome the harsh realities of the modern world and a more realistic approach was the need of the hour. In this regard he may be called an iconoclast because he did not fear to oppose anything which he considered to be harmful for the society. A.C. Ward writes about Shaw's religious belief in the following way, 'Glimpses of the religious side of Shaw's nature appear in the majority of his plays, and very clearly in Saint Joan, where he took Joan of Arc both as a heroine of history and as a heroine of faith. She helped to free the land of France from the English armies in the fifteenth century, and she would obey only the voice of God which, she declared, spoke to her privately. She therefore refused to submit to the authority of priests and princes when they wanted her to behave contrary to what she believed God had told her, and she was burned as a heretic, as Shaw himself probably would have been if he had lived in Joan of Arc's century, for he had the same stubborn belief in the right of individual judgement based on the voice of conscience.'

On his arrival at London Shaw became influenced by Karl Marx's ideas and he became a staunch believer in socialism. He was also deeply influenced by Charles Darwin's theory of evolution which was taken forward by Lamark. Darwin's theory was based on evolution by natural selection; which essentially meant the survival of the fittest where the weak would be destroyed by the strong. Lamark's theory carried Darwin's idea forward by stating that living organisms change because they want to, introducing the element of mind or will which was missing in Darwin. Shaw's idea of evolution was different from them because he believed that superior intelligence and will power rather than physical strength was required for survival of the fittest. According to A.C. Ward, 'Shaw held that if we desire with passionate strength of will to be better and finer people and to live longer, in fact to be changed to Supermen, and if that strength of will is passed on to our descendants, what we desire will ultimately be brought about. The nations would then be ruled in wisdom and virtue, and war and other evils would vanish from the earth.' He joined the Fabian society and became a very devoted activist because he believed in their philosophy which favoured bringing change in society gradually instead of abruptly through revolution. After listening to a lecture delivered by the American economist Henry George, he became aware of the necessity of economic improvement to usher changes in society. He believed that socialism alone could close the gap which existed between the rich and the poor. Hence all these different influences helped Shaw to form his individual philosophy. The term 'Shavian' has been coined to refer to his philosophy. He desperately wanted political and economic freedom and social and economic equality which he believed could be possible only through socialism. But he was a strong supporter of individual liberty. Neither was he rigid in his beliefs. Eric Bentley rightly opines that, '...for Shaw, capitalism versus socialism though a prime question, was never the ultimate one, nor did he think the situation so simple that damage done to capitalism was necessarily a service done to socialism.' Influenced by the Fabian Society and the theory of evolution he was of the view that nothing was perfect. It was only a process of continuous change and evolution which ultimately led to perfection.

Shaw's political views were likewise influenced by his individual beliefs. He favoured the Fabian Society's method of changing the society from capitalism to socialism through debates, discussions and speeches by appealing to the rational quality of human beings. At first he believed that socialism could be brought about by a series of legislation within a democratic process which would decrease the gap between the rich and the poor in order to bring equality in society. But he realized that good legislation of a small number of people did not necessarily mean that the society would also be good. Hence it was necessary to have good men and women. He believed that socialism in the true sense of the term would permeate into the society only when men and women actually believed in it. Parliamentary legislation would become ineffective even though they were good without the involvement of such people in society who were willing to follow them because they believed in them. As a member of the Fabian Society he participated in the establishment of the labour party. He was selected to be a member of parliament but he decided against it. Later he was elected as a local county councilor. In *The Revolutionist's Handbook* Shaw criticised democracy as handing the country over to riff-raffs who can 'neither govern nor will let anyone else govern except the highest bidder of bread and circuses' which proves his farsightedness but his support of Stalinistic communism was still openly criticised. During the 1930's Shaw supported 'extermination' or as the Russians called it 'liquidation', as practiced by Stalin. Eric Bentley points out that, 'Shaw himself while sometimes willing to talk euphemistically of "weeding the garden" fastened on the word extermination, and explained that it goes on all the time, and that his study of capitalism had taught him how industrial change exterminated whole classes.' He further observes that there is a joke involved when Shaw stated that, 'the poor agreed with him and wished to be abolished, which presumably meant that they preferred to be rich.' Yet there is no doubt that Shaw was always a warrior who crusaded for human welfare.

The philosophy of life force espoused by Shaw came from

his understanding of Darwin's theory of natural evolution. He was not willing to believe that the entire aim of creation was to strive for survival where only the fittest would survive and because it denied the role of intelligence, beauty, strength of purpose, honour of aspiration and the power of the intellect. But Shaw believed that creative force did exist, which struggled to achieve 'omnipotence and omnipresence'. Every man and woman was born in order to achieve this goal. The creative force or the life force would keep on attempting to create better, superior forms of human beings so that it could create supermen, super super-men and so on. Life force would carry on its attempts to remedy its own errors. As a rationalist this idea appealed to Shaw for it was supported by such facts that the human body itself is an appropriate example of this attempt. There are some organs in the body that have been perishing because there are no use for them any more. It also provided a logical explanation for evil and pain. They (evil and pain) are caused by the organism's act of killing anything which kills and maims the body by its presence. The process by which this evolution takes place is painful but through it life force strives to reach superior heights. Shaw states, '...life-force however benevolent, proceeds by trial and error and creates the problem of evil by its unsuccessful experiments and its mistakes.' However, critics believe that Shaw's concept of life force was not based on his knowledge or understanding of biology but on his emotions. It was his love for humanity which convinced him that human beings were capable of rescuing themselves.

Regarding Shaw's concept of sin Irving Fiske writes, 'Man's only real original sin ... is his subjection to sin itself, which fills his mind and diverts it from the genuine issues. Man forgets that there was in the garden of Eden not only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to eat of which was death; but also the tree of life, of which he was not forbidden to eat, but did not taste.' Shaw himself stated, 'The original sin was not the eating of the forbidden fruit, but the consciousness of sin which the fruit produced.' A sinner according to Shaw is one who has no perception of good and evil: who does not seek true knowledge and is unable to repose faith in anything.

Though Shaw is unconventional in his beliefs it is amply evident that he always had the welfare of mankind at heart. Shaw insisted that, 'even perfectly rational solutions of our problems must be humane as well if they are to be accepted as good'. According to Fred D. Crawford, 'The insistence on humaneness, the demand that we say and do serve life, reiterates... emphasis on the sanctity of the person. For Shaw, ... each member of society possesses an inviolability founded on human dignity that even the welfare of others cannot override. Every birth is an "immaculate" conception, even a newborn a fresh attempt at realizing divinity.' He was a philosopher who tried to present a coherent view of life and also expressed his individual views about a number of diverse topics. Shaw never tried to convert others to his way of thinking for he was aware that perfection was achieved through evolution alone.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW AS A DRAMATIST

George Bernard Shaw's first drama *Widowers' Houses* was staged in 1892 when he was thirty-six years of age. Before that as early as 1885 his self appointed mentor William Archer had attempted to collaborate with him to write a play which had been titled 'Rhinegold' but which they abandoned after the completion of two acts. Archer backed out of it as he could not agree with Shaw's ideas of theatre. Christopher Innes writes that their collaboration was 'doomed to catastrophe' from the beginning because of, 'the sharp difference between their attitudes to drama and dramatic construction' which made Shaw 'a brilliant and exciting playwright and Archer a forgotten one.' Innes believes that, 'For Shaw, a play had to be "a vital growth and not a mechanical construction," and hence he refused to be held hostage by Archer's quasi-Aristotelian principles. A play should need no plot, Shaw continues, because "if it has any natural life in it; it will construct itself; it will construct itself, like a flowering plant, far more wonderfully than the author can possibly construct it." Shaw was moving towards a new form of drama, clearly a conscious effort to infuse drama with newness to serve the purpose of forcing people to thought and action. Innes adds that Shaw's early plays, 'bear unmistakable evidence of the new direction in which he was already trying to go in the 1890's-toward a more organic, dialectical, "musical" form of composition focused squarely on "a conflict of unsettled ideals" (to borrow an operative phrase from The Quentessence of Ibsenism).'

Shaw's drama was influenced by the plays of Henrik Ibsen and the music of Wagner. In fact his appearance on the scene as a dramatist just after the success of Ibsen's plays has elicited the observation that he had timed his entry perfectly. He completed the play which he had started with Archer and gave it the title *Widowers'*

Houses. In the preface to the first edition of the play he called it a propagandist play which was 'saturated with the vulgarity of the life it represents' and through it he intended people to form opinions and take action on that important social problem. He wanted to influence people to elect the progressive party at the next county election in London. Innes believes that this bold propaganda was toned down in a later edition of 1898 where, 'the plea for a socialist alternative to what seems an irremediable state of moral and social corruption is a more indirect one. The ongoing parody of the theatrical, psychological, and moral conventions is the strategy Shaw uses—in a manner that foreshadows Brecht—to disrupt the accepted ideas of his audience and readers and to force them to take an objective critical stance to the social issues at stake. The spectator must not be allowed to escape into an emphatic concern with what Shaw calls "the tragedy and comedy of individual character and destiny". All his plays exhibit his concern for the society and he attacks moral problems, social evils in them with the intention of reforming them. In *Arms and the Man* he attacks the senseless glorification of war, in *Man and Superman* he satirises the conventional concept of romantic love, *Doctor's Dilemma* is an attempt at reforming the ills of the medical profession, *Androcles and Lion* presents a view of religious faith and experience, *Getting Married* exposes the discrepancies of the English marriage system. In fact, according to Andrew Sanders, 'his drama is not so much didactic as instructive; his arguments fuse elements of socialism, science and philosophy in a way which continues to vex socialists, scientists and philosophers.'

The methods with which Shaw sought to bring change brought uniqueness to his drama. As Shaw himself put it he 'perversely distorted' conventional schemes of drama into 'a grotesquely realistic exposure' of social corruption that was incongruous. Innes opines that, 'The result is a deliberate, "revolting incongruous" inversion of the dramatic situations and its familiar conventions, designed to manipulate and ultimately invalidate the standard assumptions and responses of the previously complacent spectator.' Another method which Shaw used was his conflict

between right and wrong. But here the conflict is not between just clearly right and clearly wrong. In fact the, 'the villain is as conscientious as the hero if not more so : in fact, the question which makes the play interesting (when it is interesting) is which is the villain and which the hero.' Ibsen's influence is evident in Shaw's use of this technique. Innes states that this method which Shaw had chosen was, 'precariously balanced between the conventionality of popular theatre and a deliberate inversion of its clichés that his detractors called- and still call- mere 'paradox-making''. For the first time in British history of drama, contemporary social, political and religious problems were taken up as subjects for plays. His plays were aimed at addressing issues which affected a large section of the population in stark contrast to the plays which remained engrossed in the emotional entanglements of men and women.

As such Shaw's characters are unemotional creations; they are interesting because they appear different from conventional characters and are drawn in the light of reason. He stated that the purpose of his art was didactic. In the Epistle Dedicatory to *Man and Superman* Shaw wrote, 'For art's sake alone I would not face the toil of writing a single sentence.' He was an artist who loved music, painting and writing which he consciously tried to suppress because as A.C. Ward writes, 'He cared more—or forced himself to care more—for humanity and social justice.' Very often Shaw's characters are criticized as spokesmen for his ideology which turned them into unimpressive human beings. But this criticism is found to be baseless. According to A.C. Ward, 'this cannot be true, because in each of his plays his characters put forward opinions which conflict with each other. and Shaw leaves the reader (or the spectator in the theatre) to decide which is right. Andrew Sanders is of the opinion that Shaw's '...protagonists have a vivid if at times coarse energy'. Shaw has created immortal characters like Joan in *St. Joan*, Professor Higgins in *Pygmalion*, Bluntschli in *Arms and the Man*, *Candida* in *Candida* and so many others.

Commenting on Shaw's dialogue writing Ifor Evans maintains that, 'Shaw's real success as a dramatist is to be found not

so much in his ideas or characterization as in his superb mastery of dialogue. Shaw's plays may not present a good story, his characters may be shadowy, disembodied beings, his ideas too shocking and hence unaccountable, his attitude too paradoxical and his satire too cold and steely, but his dialogue is bewitching, incisive and irresistible. His plays invariably contained lengthy discussions on a variety of subjects which other dramatists never dared to experiment with. A.C. Ward believes that he was successful because, 'he could be witty and amusing and make people laugh even while he was dealing with the most serious topics, and partly because he built up his great scenes just as a composer builds up the music in an opera or a symphony.' He introduces one subject for discussion and then a little later brings in another subject just as a musical composer brings in one melody after the other and then the different subjects are knitted together into an intellectually interesting and artistically pleasing discussion. Andrew Sanders states, 'His dialogue can move easily, but disconcertingly, from broad comedy to anguish and declaration and back again to comedy.'

Wit and humour are two weapons which Shaw wields with particular ease in all his plays. He had inherited a dry Irish humour from his father which he put to good use to amuse his readers or audience. But this was not the only function of his wit. It was a rapier that could strike through any defence. He presented his observations of life and conduct under the cloak of satire and wit with the purpose of shocking his audience into seeing for themselves and overcoming such vices which Shaw wanted to reform. It therefore served his purpose of moral reformation. Since it was presented in an entertaining manner it helped to secure his audience and to propagate his ideas to a large number of people. Though he talked about serious and important problems of society or presented philosophical discussions or instilled new ideas through his plays he always kept his audience in raptures of laughter. He never lost an opportunity for fun and was quite unable to resist a verbal joke. He was a master at taking his audience by surprise and disturbing their complacency. He invariably exposed unpalatable or partial truths through his wit.

According to Bertolt Brecht, Shaw is a terrorist: 'The Shavian terror is an unusual one, and he employs an unusual weapon—that of humour.' Peter Raby is of the opinion that Shaw's use of humour was his greatest gift to the next generation of writers. In his article 'Theatre of the 1980's: Breaking down Barriers' he writes, 'But it was the more drastic and playful handling of Wilde and Shaw, with their verbal fireworks and love of paradox, their cunning exploitation of reversal and surprise, that shook the drama into life. Disarmingly, they trapped the audience within the action by their unsettling use of comedy, and their polished and misleadingly innocent technique formed a coactive bequest, gift-wrapped for the playwrights of the next century.'

Elizabethan dramatists did not have much use for stage directions and left it to the imagination of the stage managers and the audience. But Shaw always wrote detailed stage directions. They are considered an integral part of the play through which the dramatist created the setting, and the impression which he wanted to impart. As Shaw's plays became more famous he also added long prefaces, more so when they began to be published as books for the purpose of reading. These prefaces are now regarded as excellent essays and independent pieces of literature which contain Shaw's views on various subjects.

Sounds were of great interest to Shaw and he always wrote his plays in shorthand because he was trained in it and because it was based on phonetics rather than spelling. He considered the spellings of the English language confusing and complicated and advocated a simpler system of spelling which he tried to persuade the English people to adopt. For example he used to drop the 'u' in words like 'honour'. In his play *Pygmalion* he creates the character of Professor Higgins who is an expert at phonetics and who passes off a common street-girl as nobility by teaching her correct pronunciation. He tried to simplify the language for instance by doing away with the apostrophe—eg: I've, you've, that's, were't, won't and retained them in I'll, it's, he'll. He retained some archaic spelling eg: shew instead of show. He used to emphasise words by spacing

alphabets eg: please and using only italics for stage directions. Titles of books or plays would not be written within inverted commas in italics or in capital letters; they would be written normally. These modifications have caused considerable confusion while printing manuscripts.

Shaw was a feminist who advocated that if women themselves did not establish their femininity then they would never be emancipated. They would be regarded as doers of duty towards their husband, children, society, law and in any other spheres except liberating herself. He wanted women to play a more dynamic role in society; he wanted the suppression of women to end and became their voice. *Man and Superman* shows the conflict between man and women where the woman takes on the traditional role of the pursuing male. Though Shaw depicts his woman character of Ann Whitefield as a woman who wishes to take on the traditional role of the woman as wife and mother, she is otherwise fiercely independent and achieves her goal of marrying the man of her choice. She operates in a traditionally male dominated society and appears docile and uses all feminine wiles to secure what she has decided upon. In other plays as in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Pygmalion* and *St. Joan* he creates fearless, strong willed and determined women capable of withstanding the pressures of a tradition bound society. As always the twist he provides to conventional attitudes creates much amusement in the plays.

A self professed writer of immoral and heretical plays Shaw was a revolutionary who wanted to reform society. Stale customs that served no purpose had to be set aside because reverence to dead customs were death dealing. Society would not benefit from it. Hence Shaw took it upon himself to attack all those aspects of life or attitudes towards life which he believed was wrong or obsolete with the intention of altering them. He was a moral revolutionary who believed that if conscience could win over custom then a social revolution and a change in the social set-up would be achieved. Detractors have criticised him as a moralist first and an artist next for which his art suffered. His art was more didactic than aesthetic,

which critics believe made him neither a good moralist nor a real artist. His idea of life-force and superman were not original but had been exposed by Nietzsche. He is fiercely rational and emotions are meaningless to him. Though Shaw is regarded as a revolutionary some critics believe that he did not possess the strength to destroy he merely sought to replace old Gods with new ones. He found defects almost everywhere in society and took it upon himself to reform believing that his ideas were superior. Indeed critics opine that Shaw believed himself to be intellectually superior to others but the question remains as to what lasting, abiding effect his point of view has yielded.

HISTORY OF ARMS AND THE MAN

Arms and the Man is the first play of Shaw's *Pleasant Plays*. His diary records show that he began writing it on 26 November, 1893. He wrote it for his friend Florence Farr who had decided to present a season of plays at The Avenue Theatre. Farr's production opened on 29 March 1894, with a play by John Todhunter which failed miserably. She approached Shaw with the intention of staging his first drama *Widowers' Houses* but Shaw completed his manuscript and *Arms and the Man* was taken up for production. At that time Shaw was not a known name and he had to resort to publicity to get people to see his play. "The Telegraph" dated 23 April reported that his audience had been favourably disposed to his play. Critics neither praised nor rejected it but there were several objections to his perception of war. The play confused them for it did not fit into any conventional category of drama.

TITLE OF ARMS AND THE MAN

When Shaw began writing the play he gave it the title of *Alps and Balkans* and did not assign any names to his characters. He referred to them as the father, the daughter, the mother and so on. He was believed to have been a haphazard writer. He also did not have specific information about the war which he was supposed to write about and when he came to know about the Servo-Bulgarian war from the Annual Register in the library of the British Museum he had to make several alterations especially when he learnt that Serbia had lost the war contrary to his knowledge of Bulgaria's defeat. Shaw wrote, 'I have had to shift the scene from Serbia to Bulgaria, and to make the most absurd alterations in detail for the sake of local colour, which however, is amusing and will intensify the extravagance of the play and give it realism at the same time.'

Later he adopted the opening words of Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*:

Arms and the Man I sing who forced by fate

And haughty Juno's unrelenting hate.

The only reversal was that whereas Virgil glorifies war and narrates the story of the foundation of Rome after Aeneid's migration from Troy, Shaw wants to signify the futility of glorification of war through the title.

STORY OF ARMS AND THE MAN

The setting of the drama is Bulgaria. The action unfolds in the house of Major Petkoff who belongs to an ancient family of Bulgaria.

Act I—A bedroom. Raina Petkoff daughter of Major Petkoff is seen getting ready for bed at night after kissing the photograph of her lover Sergius Saranoff who is at war for his country against the Serbs. A bedraggled fugitive soldier of the Serbian army enters her room through the balcony and forces her at gun-point to hide him from the soldiers of the Bulgarian army who are pursuing him. He tells her that it would mean sure death to him if he was discovered. He is able to convince the romantic Raina to help him and she hides him behind the curtains of her room. The Bulgarian soldiers are unable to catch him even though his pistol lies on the couch in full view of everyone in the room. Only the maid, a young girl, Louka notices it and its significance is not lost on her; however she maintains her silence and the soldiers leave the room. The fugitive thanks Raina and tells her that he was a professional soldier and Swiss by nationality. He had joined the Serbian army because it was the first place on his way from Switzerland and not because he hated the Bulgarians. He then proceeds to eat chocolate cream biscuits as he is starving and falls into a deep slumber in her bed as she goes to enlist her mother's help in smuggling the man (Bluntschile) out from their house. They manage to do so by bundling him in an old coat belonging to Major Petkoff with the hope that they will never see him again.

Act II—Major Petkoff's garden. The war has ended and Major Petkoff and Sergius Saranoff return from the war. Raina and her mother learn from them that they had come across Bluntschile who had confided in them about the help he had received from two women and his narrow escape. Fortunately they are unaware of the identity of the women who had helped him. Sergius and Raina meet each

other after a long period of separation and we are presented with a scene where the lovers come together in what they believe is higher love. But immediately after that Sergius who has a roving eye indulges in a more natural romance with the socially low maid Louka who in turn dreams of elevating her social status. Major Petkoff notices the disappearance of his old coat but everything would have turned out right for the women if only Bluntschile had not come back to return the coat. Before they can send him on his way the Major meets him and recognizes him as his old acquaintance Captain Bluntschile who is not his enemy any more as the war had ended.

Act III—Major Petkoff's library. Capt. Bluntschile is invited by the Major to help him in developing a strategy which has fooled both him and Sergius. The practical soldier becomes involved in his work and at the same time gains the opportunity to speak to Raina. She questions him about her photograph which she had placed in the pocket of her father's coat with the message that it was for her chocolate cream soldier. Bluntschile is unaware about it and surmises that it was still in the pocket where she had kept it. This makes Raina anxious but she is successful in retrieving it before the full significance of the incident strikes her father. Meanwhile Sergius comes to know from Louka that Raina had concealed and aided Bluntschile to escape and challenges him to a duel which the latter tries to evade. Louka is a strong willed woman and because of her spirit Sergius is more or less pressurized into declaring his love for her and of his intention to marry her even though he is betrothed to Raina. The Major and his wife arrive on the scene and they come to know of the extraordinary situation which has developed. Bluntschile then declares his love for Raina and announces his intention to marry her. At first the Petkoff's are hesitant as they belonged to one of the richest families in Bulgaria with a high social standing. But when they come to know that Bluntschile had inherited a lot of property from his father and had become the owner of six palatial establishments they decided to give their consent. All obstacles are finally overcome for Raina's marriage with her chocolate cream soldier.

ARMS AND THE MAN AS A PLAY OF IDEAS OR PROPAGANDA

The three attitudes of an idealistic, romantic and realistic outlook are exposed in the play. Shaw does not ridicule any of them but he shows that the realistic attitude is the best way of looking at things. Economics plays a significant role in society and in creating and preserving relationships. Sergius is the embodiment of idealism. He lives in a world which he believes is beautiful, happy, honourable and the love he has for Raina is an idealized higher love. He has lost connection with reality. Realization dawns on him that life is not as he dreams it to be: higher love is exhausting; war patriots, heroes like Louka is a sham. He has to seek relief in Louka's arms in order to continue with his life though he wants to keep it a secret. Raina is a romantic who sees life through tinted glasses. She is protected, safe, happy and rich. She has no real realization of life, war, love or even deceit. Her fiancée is a hero, a king who can do no wrong. Louka and Bluntschile with their forthright attitude towards life are required to rescue Raina from the fairytale world which she inhabits. Ironically, though Bluntschile is a professional soldier and a practical man he is a romantic at heart who considers her worthy of worship from afar because of their social difference. Louka dreams of climbing the social ladder through a possible marriage with Sergius which she sets about to ensure in her individual proud and defiant way and is successful. Everything is resolved when the fixed margins of these three attitudes merge. Sergius finds his happiness with the servant girl Louka by giving up his pretense of higher love and social class considerations. Louka uses precisely those two means love and lower social status to secure Sergius as her husband. Raina is brought down to reality by Bluntschile when he exposes her as a liar but paradoxically declares that he admires her because of it for it constituted her charm. His romantic nature which prompted him to return the coat in person

is the direct reason for which the upheaval occurs. The Petkoffs are not agreeable to their marriage because as Catherine proudly states they belonged to an old and important family whereas he could not possibly provide the luxury to which Raina was accustomed. This problem is also solved through Bluntschile's recently acquired wealth at his father's death and all social considerations are ignored. They are granted her parent's blessing. Nicola, who has a wonderful sense of what reality constitutes backs down from marrying Louka but does not give up his dream of economic advancement in the form of owning a shop. The real world develops in spite of idealistic and romantic attitudes. The real world comprises of lies, deceptions, social conventions, ambitions, conflicts and wars. All these are to be found in the play from the moment Raina the romantic, decides to fool the Bulgarian cavalry officer to hide the Swiss soldier from them. Ultimately the truth is unraveled. The dramatist shows that accepting the ills of the world and viewing it in a realistic manner is beneficial for all.

The play is constructed on the backdrop of a historical war. Different attitudes to war are exposed by the various characters in the play. Though it has been argued that Shaw's traditional comedic framework is at work when Bluntschile says that it is more worthwhile to carry chocolate than bullets in war. G.K. Chesterton has compared Shaw's opinions with that of Tolstoy's. But unlike Tolstoy's real hatred for war and his wish to abolish it. Shaw objects to them 'so far as they are ideal, or idealized. Shaw hated the attractiveness of war more than war itself. He disliked the concept of idealized love more than love. Hence there is a basic difference of attitude to war between Tolstoy and Shaw. 'Tolstoy stands and thunders "There shall be no wars" Bernard Shaw merely murmurs, 'Wars if you must; but for God's sake not war songs.'

LIST OF CHARACTERS

[Avenue Theatre, 21 April 1894]

MAJOR PAUL PETKOFF	} Bulgarian officers	James Welch
MAJOR SERGIUS SARANOFF		Bernard Gould
CAPTAIN BLUNTSCHLI [a Swiss Officer in the Servian Army]		Yorke Stephens
Major Plechanoff [a Russian Officer in the Bulgarian Service]		A.E.W. Mason
NICOLA		Orlando Barnett
CATHERINE PETKOFF		Mrs Charles Calvert
RAINA PERKOFF		Alma Murray
LOUKA		Florence Farr

THE SCENES OF THE PLAY

The action occurs at Major Petkoff's House, in a small Bulgarian town, near the Dragoman Pass. The First Act takes place in November, 1885, immediately after the Battle of Slivnitza; the Second and Third Acts in the Forenoon and Afternoon of Slivnitza; the Second and Third Acts in the Forenoon and Afternoon of the 6th of March 1886, three days after the signature of the Treaty.

Act I	<i>Raina's Chamber</i>
Act II	<i>The Garden</i>
Act III	<i>The Library</i>

ACT-I

Night. A lady's bedchamber in Bulgaria, in a small town near the Dragoman Pass. It is late in November in the year 1885, and through an open window with a little balcony on the left can be seen a peak of the Balkans, wonderfully white and beautiful in the starlit snow. The interior of the room is not like anything to be seen in the east of Europe. It is half rich Bulgarian, half cheap Viennese. The counterpane and hangings of the bed, the window curtains, the little carpet, and all the ornamental textile fabrics in the room are oriental and gorgeous: the paper on the walls is occidental and paltry. Above the head of the bed, which stands against a little wall cutting off the right hand corner of the room diagonally, is a painted wooden shrine, blue and gold, with an ivory image of Christ, and a light hanging before it in a pierced metal ball suspended by three chains. On the left, further forward, is an ottoman. The washstand, against the wall on the left, consists of an enamelled iron basin with a pail beneath it in a painted metal frame, and a single towel on the rail at the side. A chair near it is Austrian bent wood, with cane seat. The dressing table, between the bed and the window, is an ordinary pine table, covered with a cloth of many colors, but with an expensive toilet mirror on it. The door is on the right; and there is a chest of drawers between the door and the bed. This chest of drawers is also covered by a variegated native cloth, and on it there is a pile of paper backed novels, a box of chocolate creams, and a miniature easel, on which is a large photograph of an extremely handsome officer, whose lofty bearing and magnetic glance can be felt even from the portrait. The room is lighted by a candle on the chest of drawers, and another on the dressing table, with a box of matches beside it.

The window is hinged doorwise and stands wide open, folding back to the left. Outside a pair of wooden shutters, opening outwards, also stand open. On the balcony, a young lady, intensely

conscious of the romantic beauty of the night, and of the fact that her own youth and beauty is a part of it, is on the balcony, gazing at the snowy Balkans. She is covered by a long mantle of furs, worth, on a moderate estimate, about three times the furniture of her room.

Her reverie is interrupted by her mother, Catherine Petkoff, a woman over forty, imperiously energetic, with magnificent black hair and eyes, who might be a very splendid specimen of the wife of a mountain farmer, but is determined to be a Viennese lady, and to that end wears a fashionable tea gown on all occasions.

CATHERINE (entering hastily, full of good news). Raina—(she pronounces it Rah-eena, with the stress on the ee) Raina—(she goes to the bed, expecting to find Raina there.) Why, where—(Raina looks into the room.) Heavens! child, are you out in the night air instead of in your bed? You'll catch your death. Louka told me you were asleep.

RAINA (coming in). I sent her away. I wanted to be alone. The stars are so beautiful! What is the matter?

CATHERINE. Such news. There has been a battle!

RAINA (her eyes dilating). Ah! (She throws the cloak on the ottoman, and comes eagerly to Catherine in her nightgown, a pretty garment, but evidently the only one she has on.)

CATHERINE. A great battle at Slivnitsa! A victory! And it was won by Sergius.

RAINA (with a cry of delight). Ah! (Rapturously.) Oh, mother! (Then, with sudden anxiety) Is father safe?

CATHERINE. Of course: he sent me the news. Sergius is the hero of the hour, the idol of the regiment.

RAINA. Tell me, tell me. How was it! (Ecstatically) Oh, mother, mother, mother! (Raina pulls her mother down on the ottoman; and they kiss one another frantically.)

CATHERINE (with surging enthusiasm). You can't guess how

splendid it is. A cavalry charge—think of that! He defied our Russian commanders—acted without orders—led a charge on his own responsibility—headed it himself—was the first man to sweep through their guns. Can't you see it, Raina; our gallant splendid Bulgarians with their swords and eyes flashing, thundering down like an avalanche and scattering the wretched Servian dandies like chaff. And you—you kept Sergius waiting a year before you would be betrothed to him. Oh, if you have a drop of Bulgarian blood in your veins, you will worship him when he comes back.

RAINA. What will he care for my poor little worship after the acclamations of a whole army of heroes? But no matter: I am so happy—so proud! (She rises and walks about excitedly.) It proves that all our ideas were real after all.

CATHERINE (indignantly). Our ideas real! What do you mean?

RAINA.. Our ideas of what Sergius would do—our patriotism—our heroic ideals. Oh, what faithless little creatures girls are!—I sometimes used to doubt whether they were anything but dreams. When I buckled on Sergius's sword he looked so noble: it was treason to think of disillusion or humiliation or failure. And yet—and yet—(Quickly.) Promise me you'll never tell him.

CATHERINE. Don't ask me for promises until I know what I am promising.

RAINA. Well, it came into my head just as he was holding me in his arms and looking into my eyes, that perhaps we only had our heroic ideas because we are so fond of reading Byron and Pushkin, and because we were so delighted with the opera that season at Bucharest. Real life is so seldom like that—indeed never, as far as I knew it then. (Remorsefully.) Only think, mother, I doubted him: I wondered whether all his heroic qualities and his soldiery might not prove mere imagination when he went into a real battle. I had an uneasy fear that he might cut a poor figure there beside all those clever Russian officers.

CATHERINE. A poor figure! Shame on you! The Servians have

Austrian officers who are just as clever as our Russians; but we have beaten them in every battle for all that.

RAINA (laughing and sitting down again). Yes, I was only a prosaic little coward. Oh, to think that it was all true—that Sergius is just as splendid and noble as he looks—that the world is really a glorious world for women who can see its glory and men who can act its romance! What happiness! what unspeakable fulfilment! Ah! (She throws herself on her knees beside her mother and flings her arms passionately round her. They are interrupted by the entry of Louka, a handsome, proud girl in a pretty Bulgarian peasant's dress with double apron, so defiant that her servility to Raina is almost insolent. She is afraid of Catherine, but even with her goes as far as she dares. She is just now excited like the others; but she has no sympathy for Raina's raptures and looks contemptuously at the ecstasies of the two before she addresses them.)

LOUKA. If you please, madam, all the windows are to be closed and the shutters made fast. They say there may be shooting in the streets. (Raina and Catherine rise together, alarmed.) The Servians are being chased right back through the pass; and they say they may run into the town. Our cavalry will be after them; and our people will be ready for them you may be sure, now that they are running away. (She goes out on the balcony and pulls the outside shutters to; then steps back into the room.)

RAINA. I wish our people were not so cruel. What glory is there in killing wretched fugitives?

CATHERINE (business-like, her housekeeping instincts aroused). I must see that everything is made safe downstairs.

RAINA (to Louka). Leave the shutters so that I can just close them if I hear any noise.

CATHERINE (authoritatively, turning on her way to the door). Oh, no, dear, you must keep them fastened. You would be sure to drop off to sleep and leave them open. Make them fast, Louka.

LOUKA. Yes, madam. (She fastens them.)

RAINA. Don't be anxious about me. The moment I hear a shot, I shall blow out the candles and roll myself up in bed with my ears well covered.

CATHERINE. Quite the wisest thing you can do, my love. Good-night.

RAINA. Good-night. (They kiss one another, and Raina's emotion comes back for a moment.) Wish me joy of the happiest night of my life—if only there are no fugitives.

CATHERINE. Go to bed, dear; and don't think of them. (She goes out.)

LOUKA (secretly, to Raina). If you would like the shutters open, just give them a push like this. (She pushes them: they open: she pulls them to again.) One of them ought to be bolted at the bottom; but the bolt's gone.

RAINA (with dignity, reproving her). Thanks, Louka; but we must do what we are told. (Louka makes a grimace.) Goodnight.

LOUKA (carelessly). Good-night. (She goes out, swaggering.)

(Raina, left alone, goes to the chest of drawers, and adores the portrait there with feelings that are beyond all expression. She does not kiss it or press it to her breast, or shew it any mark of bodily affection; but she takes it in her hands and elevates it like a priestess.)

RAINA (looking up at the picture with worship). Oh, I shall never be unworthy of you any more, my hero—never, never, never.

(She replaces it reverently, and selects a novel from the little pile of books. She turns over the leaves dreamily; finds her page; turns the book inside out at it; and then, with a happy sigh, gets into bed and prepares to read herself to sleep. But before abandoning herself to fiction, she raises her eyes once more, thinking of the blessed reality and murmurs)

My hero! my hero!

(A distant shot breaks the quiet of the night outside. She starts, listening; and two more shots, much nearer, follow, startling her so that she scrambles out of bed, and hastily blows out the candle on the chest of drawers. Then, putting her fingers in her ears, she runs to the dressing-table and blows out the light there, and hurries back to bed. The room is now in darkness: nothing is visible but the glimmer of the light in the pierced ball before the image, and the starlight seen through the slits at the top of the shutters. The firing breaks out again: there is a startling fusillade quite close at hand. Whilst it is still echoing, the shutters disappear, pulled open from without, and for an instant the rectangle of snowy starlight flashes out with the figure of a man in black upon it. The shutters close immediately and the room is dark again. But the silence is now broken by the sound of panting. Then there is a scrape; and the flame of a match is seen in the middle of the room.)

RAINA (crouching on the bed). Who's there? (The match is out instantly.) Who's there? Who is that?

A MAN'S VOICE (in the darkness, subduedly, but threateningly). Sh—sh! Don't call out or you'll be shot. Be good; and no harm will happen to you. (She is heard leaving her bed, and making for the door.) Take care, there's no use in trying to run away. Remember, if you raise your voice my pistol will go off. (Commandingly.) Strike a light and let me see you. Do you hear? (Another moment of silence and darkness. Then she is heard retreating to the dressing-table. She lights a candle, and the mystery is at an end. A man of about 35, in a deplorable plight, bespattered with mud and blood and snow, his belt and the strap of his revolver case keeping together the torn ruins of the blue coat of a Servian artillery officer. As far as the candlelight and his unwashed, unkempt condition make it possible to judge, he is a man of middling stature and undistinguished appearance, with strong neck and shoulders, a roundish, obstinate looking head covered with short crisp bronze curls, clear quick blue eyes and good brows and mouth, a hopelessly prosaic nose like that of a strongminded baby, trim soldierlike carriage and energetic

manner, and with all his wits about him in spite of his desperate predicament—even with a sense of humor of it, without, however, the least intention of trifling with it or throwing away a chance. He reckons up what he can guess about Raina—her age, her social position, her character, the extent to which she is frightened—at a glance, and continues, more politely but still most determinedly) Excuse my disturbing you; but you recognise my uniform—Servian. If I'm caught I shall be killed. (Determinedly.) Do you understand that?

RAINA. Yes.

MAN. Well, I don't intend to get killed if I can help it. (Still more determinedly.) Do you understand that? (He locks the door with a snap.)

RAINA (disdainfully). I suppose not. (She draws herself up superbly, and looks him straight in the face, saying with emphasis) Some soldiers, I know, are afraid of death.

MAN (with grim goodhumor). All of them, dear lady, all of them, believe me. It is our duty to live as long as we can, and kill as many of the enemy as we can. Now if you raise an alarm—

RAINA (cutting him short). You will shoot me. How do you know that I am afraid to die?

MAN (cunningly). Ah; but suppose I don't shoot you, what will happen then? Why, a lot of your cavalry—the greatest blackguards in your army—will burst into this pretty room of yours and slaughter me here like a pig; for I'll fight like a demon: they shan't get me into the street to amuse themselves with: I know what they are. Are you prepared to receive that sort of company in your present undress? (Raina, suddenly conscious of her nightgown, instinctively shrinks and gathers it more closely about her. He watches her, and adds, pitilessly) It's rather scanty, eh? (She turns to the ottoman. He raises his pistol instantly, and cries) Stop! (She stops.) Where are you going?

RAINA (with dignified patience). Only to get my cloak.

MAN (darting to the ottoman and snatching the cloak). A good idea. No: I'll keep the cloak: and you will take care that nobody comes in and sees you without it. This is a better weapon than the pistol. (He throws the pistol down on the ottoman.)

RAINA (revolted). It is not the weapon of a gentleman!

MAN. It's good enough for a man with only you to stand between him and death. (As they look at one another for a moment, Raina hardly able to believe that even a Servian officer can be so cynically and selfishly unchivalrous, they are startled by a sharp fusillade in the street. The chill of imminent death hushes the man's voice as he adds) Do you hear? If you are going to bring those scoundrels in on me you shall receive them as you are. (Raina meets his eye with unflinching scorn. Suddenly he starts, listening. There is a step outside. Someone tries the door, and then knocks hurriedly and urgently at it. Raina looks at the man, breathless. He throws up his head with the gesture of a man who sees that it is all over with him, and, dropping the manner which he has been assuming to intimidate her, flings the cloak to her, exclaiming, sincerely and kindly) No use: I'm done for. Quick! wrap yourself up: they're coming!

RAINA (catching the cloak eagerly). Oh, thank you. (She wraps herself up with great relief. He draws his sabre and turns to the door, waiting.)

LOUKA (outside, knocking). My lady, my lady! Get up, quick, and open the door.

RAINA (anxiously). What will you do?

MAN (grimly). Never mind. Keep out of the way. It will not last long.

RAINA (impulsively). I'll help you. Hide yourself, oh, hide yourself, quick, behind the curtain. (She seizes him by a torn strip of his sleeve, and pulls him towards the window.)

MAN (yielding to her). There is just half a chance, if you keep your head. Remember: nine soldiers out of ten are born fools. (He hides

behind the curtain, looking out for a moment to say, finally) If they find me, I promise you a fight—a devil of a fight! (He disappears. Raina takes of the cloak and throws it across the foot of the bed. Then with a sleepy, disturbed air, she opens the door. Louka enters excitedly.)

LOUKA. A man has been seen climbing up the water-pipe to your balcony—a Servian. The soldiers want to search for him; and they are so wild and drunk and furious. My lady says you are to dress at once.

RAINA (as if annoyed at being disturbed). They shall not search here. Why have they been let in?

CATHERINE (coming in hastily). Raina, darling, are you safe? Have you seen anyone or heard anything?

RAINA. I heard the shooting. Surely the soldiers will not dare come in here?

CATHERINE. I have found a Russian officer, thank Heaven: he knows Sergius. (Speaking through the door to someone outside.) Sir, will you come in now! My daughter is ready.

(A young Russian officer, in Bulgarian uniform, enters, sword in hand.)

THE OFFICER. (with soft, feline politeness and stiff military carriage). Good evening, gracious lady; I am sorry to intrude, but there is a fugitive hiding on the balcony. Will you and the gracious lady your mother please to withdraw whilst we search?

RAINA (petulantly). Nonsense, sir, you can see that there is no one on the balcony. (She throws the shutters wide open and stands with her back to the curtain where the man is hidden, pointing to the moonlit balcony. A couple of shots are fired right under the window, and a bullet shatters the glass opposite Raina, who winks and gasps, but stands her ground, whilst Catherine screams, and the officer rushes to the balcony.)

THE OFFICER. (on the balcony, shouting savagely down to the

street). Cease firing there, you fools: do you hear? Cease firing, damn you. (He glares down for a moment; then turns to Raina, trying to resume his polite manner.) Could anyone have got in without your knowledge? Were you asleep?

RAINA. No, I have not been to bed.

THE OFFICER. (impatiently, coming back into the room). Your neighbours have their heads so full of runaway Servians that they see them everywhere. (Politely.) Gracious lady, a thousand pardons. Good-night. (Military bow, which Raina returns coldly. Another to Catherine, who follows him out. Raina closes the shutters. She turns and sees Louka, who has been watching the scene curiously.)

RAINA. Don't leave my mother, Louka, whilst the soldiers are here. (Louka glances at Raina, at the ottoman, at the curtain; then purses her lips secretively, laughs to herself, and goes out. Raina follows her to the door, shuts it behind her with a slam, and locks it violently. The man immediately steps out from behind the curtain, sheathing his sabre, and dismissing the danger from his mind in a businesslike way.)

MAN. A narrow shave; but a miss is as good as a mile. Dear young lady, your servant until death. I wish for your sake I had joined the Bulgarian army instead of the Servian. I am not a native Servian.

RAINA (haughtily). No, you are one of the Austrians who set the Servians on to rob us of our national liberty, and who officer their army for them. We hate them!

MAN. Austrian! not I. Don't hate me, dear young lady. I am only a Swiss, fighting merely as a professional soldier. I joined Servia because it was nearest to me. Be generous: you've beaten us hollow.

RAINA. Have I not been generous?

MAN. Noble!—heroic! But I'm not saved yet. This particular rush will soon pass through; but the pursuit will go on all night by fits and starts. I must take my chance to get off during a quiet interval. You don't mind my waiting just a minute or two, do you?

RAINA. Oh, no: I am sorry you will have to go into danger again. (Motioning towards ottoman.) Won't you sit—(She breaks off with an irrepressible cry of alarm as she catches sight of the pistol. The man, all nerves, shies like a frightened horse.)

MAN (irritably). Don't frighten me like that. What is it?

RAINA. Your pistol! It was staring that officer in the face all the time. What an escape!

MAN (vexed at being unnecessarily terrified). Oh, is that all?

RAINA (staring at him rather superciliously, conceiving a poorer and poorer opinion of him, and feeling proportionately more and more at her ease with him). I am sorry I frightened you. (She takes up the pistol and hands it to him.) Pray take it to protect yourself against me.

MAN (grinning wearily at the sarcasm as he takes the pistol). No use, dear young lady: there's nothing in it. It's not loaded. (He makes a grimace at it, and drops it disparagingly into his revolver case.)

RAINA. Load it by all means.

MAN. I've no ammunition. What use are cartridges in battle? I always carry chocolate instead; and I finished the last cake of that yesterday.

RAINA (outraged in her most cherished ideals of manhood). Chocolate! Do you stuff your pockets with sweets—like a schoolboy—even in the field?

MAN. Yes. Isn't it contemptible?

(Raina stares at him, unable to utter her feelings. Then she sails away scornfully to the chest of drawers, and returns with the box of confectionery in her hand.)

RAINA. Allow me. I am sorry I have eaten them all except these. (She offers him the box.)

MAN (ravenously). You're an angel! (He gobbles the comfits.) Creams! Delicious! (He looks anxiously to see whether there are any

more. There are none. He accepts the inevitable with pathetic goodhumor, and says, with grateful emotion) Bless you, dear lady. You can always tell an old soldier by the inside of his holsters and cartridge boxes. The young ones carry pistols and cartridges; the old ones, grub. Thank you. (He hands back the box. She snatches it contemptuously from him and throws it away. This impatient action is so sudden that he shies again.) Ugh! Don't do things so sudden, gracious lady. Don't revenge yourself because I frightened you just now.

RAINA (superbly). Frighten me! Do you know, sir, that though I am only a woman, I think I am at heart as brave as you.

MAN. I should think so. You haven't been under fire for three days as I have. I can stand two days without shewing it much; but no man can stand three days: I'm as nervous as a mouse. (He sits down on the ottoman, and takes his head in his hands.) Would you like to see me cry?

RAINA (quickly). No.

MAN. If you would, all you have to do is to scold me just as if I were a little boy and you my nurse. If I were in camp now they'd play all sorts of tricks on me.

RAINA (a little moved). I'm sorry. I won't scold you. (Touched by the sympathy in her tone, he raises his head and looks gratefully at her: she immediately draws back and says stiffly) You must excuse me: our soldiers are not like that. (She moves away from the ottoman.)

MAN. Oh, yes, they are. There are only two sorts of soldiers: old ones and young ones. I've served fourteen years: half of your fellows never smelt powder before. Why, how is it that you've just beaten us? Sheer ignorance of the art of war, nothing else. (Indignantly.) I never saw anything so unprofessional.

RAINA (ironically). Oh, was it unprofessional to beat you?

MAN. Well, come, is it professional to throw a regiment of cavalry on a battery of machine guns, with the dead certainty that if the

guns go off not a horse or man will ever get within fifty yards of the fire? I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw it.

RAINA (eagerly turning to him, as all her enthusiasm and her dream of glory rush back on her). Did you see the great cavalry charge? Oh, tell me about it. Describe it to me.

MAN. You never saw a cavalry charge, did you?

RAINA. How could I?

MAN. Ah, perhaps not—of course. Well, it's a funny sight. It's like slinging a handful of peas against a window pane: first one comes; then two or three close behind him; and then all the rest in a lump.

RAINA (her eyes dilating as she raises her clasped hands ecstatically). Yes, first One!—the bravest of the brave!

MAN (prosaically). Hm! you should see the poor devil pulling at his horse.

RAINA. Why should he pull at his horse?

MAN (impatient of so stupid a question). It's running away with him, of course: do you suppose the fellow wants to get there before the others and be killed? Then they all come. You can tell the young ones by their wildness and their slashing. The old ones come bunched up under the number one guard: they know that they are mere projectiles, and that it's no use trying to fight. The wounds are mostly broken knees, from the horses cannoning together.

RAINA. Ugh! But I don't believe the first man is a coward. I believe he is a hero!

MAN (goodhumoredly). That's what you'd have said if you'd seen the first man in the charge to-day.

RAINA (breathless). Ah, I knew it! Tell me—tell me about him.

MAN. He did it like an operatic tenor—a regular handsome fellow, with flashing eyes and lovely moustache, shouting a war-cry and

charging like Don Quixote at the windmills. We nearly burst with laughter at him; but when the sergeant ran up as white as a sheet and told us they'd sent us the wrong cartridges, and that we couldn't fire a shot for the next ten minutes, we laughed at the other side of our mouths. I never felt so sick in my life, though I've been in one or two very tight places. And I hadn't even a revolver cartridge—nothing but chocolate. We'd no bayonets—nothing. Of course, they just cut us to bits. And there was Don Quixote flourishing like a drum major, thinking he'd done the cleverest thing ever known, whereas he ought to be courtmartialled for it. Of all the fools ever let loose on a field of battle, that man must be the very maddest. He and his regiment simply committed suicide—only the pistol missed fire, that's all.

RAINA (deeply wounded, but steadfastly loyal to her ideals). Indeed! Would you know him again if you saw him?

MAN. Shall I ever forget him. (She again goes to the chest of drawers. He watches her with a vague hope that she may have something else for him to eat. She takes the portrait from its stand and brings it to him.)

RAINA. That is a photograph of the gentleman—the patriot and hero—to whom I am betrothed.

MAN (looking at it). I'm really very sorry. (Looking at her.) Was it fair to lead me on? (He looks at the portrait again.) Yes: that's him, not a doubt of it. (He stifles a laugh.)

RAINA (quickly). Why do you laugh?

MAN (shamefacedly, but still greatly tickled). I didn't laugh, I assure you. At least I didn't mean to. But when I think of him charging the windmills and thinking he was doing the finest thing—(chokes with suppressed laughter).

RAINA (sternly). Give me back the portrait, sir.

MAN (with sincere remorse). Of course. Certainly. I'm really very sorry. (She deliberately kisses it, and looks him straight in the face, before returning to the chest of drawers to replace it. He follows

her, apologizing.) Perhaps I'm quite wrong, you know: no doubt I am. Most likely he had got wind of the cartridge business somehow, and knew it was a safe job.

RAINA. That is to say, he was a pretender and a coward! You did not dare say that before.

MAN (with a comic gesture of despair). It's no use, dear lady: I can't make you see it from the professional point of view. (As he turns away to get back to the ottoman, the firing begins again in the distance.)

RAINA (sternly, as she sees him listening to the shots). So much the better for you.

MAN (turning). How?

RAINA. You are my enemy; and you are at my mercy. What would I do if I were a professional soldier?

MAN. Ah, true, dear young lady: you're always right. I know how good you have been to me: to my last hour I shall remember those three chocolate creams. It was unsoldierly; but it was angelic.

RAINA (coldly). Thank you. And now I will do a soldierly thing. You cannot stay here after what you have just said about my future husband; but I will go out on the balcony and see whether it is safe for you to climb down into the street. (She turns to the window.)

MAN (changing countenance). Down that waterpipe! Stop! Wait! I can't! I daren't! The very thought of it makes me giddy. I came up it fast enough with death behind me. But to face it now in cold blood!—(He sinks on the ottoman.) It's no use: I give up: I'm beaten. Give the alarm. (He drops his head in his hands in the deepest dejection.)

RAINA (disarmed by pity). Come, don't be disheartened. (She stoops over him almost maternally: he shakes his head.) Oh, you are a very poor soldier—a chocolate cream soldier. Come, cheer up: it takes less courage to climb down than to face capture—remember that.

MAN (dreamily, lulled by her voice). No, capture only means death;

and death is sleep—oh, sleep, sleep, sleep, undisturbed sleep! Climbing down the pipe means doing something-exerting myself—thinking! Death ten times over first.

RAINA (softly and wonderingly, catching the rhythm of his weariness). Are you so sleepy as that?

MAN. I've not had two hours' undisturbed sleep since the war began. I'm on the staff: you don't know what that means. I haven't closed my eyes for thirty-six hours.

RAINA (desperately). But what am I to do with you.

MAN (staggering up). Of course I must do something. (He shakes himself; pulls himself together; and speaks with rallied vigour and courage.) You see, sleep or no sleep, hunger or no hunger, tired or not tired, you can always do a thing when you know it must be done. Well, that pipe must be got down—(He hits himself on the chest, and adds)—Do you hear that, you chocolate cream soldier? (He turns to the window.)

RAINA (anxiously). But if you fall?

MAN. I shall sleep as if the stones were a feather bed. Goodbye. (He makes boldly for the window, and his hand is on the shutter when there is a terrible burst of firing in the street beneath.)

RAINA (rushing to him). Stop! (She catches him by the shoulder, and turns him quite round.) They'll kill you.

MAN (coolly, but attentively). Never mind: this sort of thing is all in my day's work. I'm bound to take my chance. (Decisively.) Now do what I tell you. Put out the candles, so that they shan't see the light when I open the shutters. And keep away from the window, whatever you do. If they see me, they're sure to have a shot at me.

RAINA (clinging to him). They're sure to see you: it's bright moonlight. I'll save you—oh, how can you be so indifferent? You want me to save you, don't you?

MAN. I really don't want to be troublesome. (She shakes him in her

impatience.) I am not indifferent, dear young lady, I assure you. But how is it to be done?

RAINA. Come away from the window—please. (She coaxes him back to the middle of the room. He submits humbly. She releases him, and addresses him patronizingly.) Now listen. You must trust to our hospitality. You do not yet know in whose house you are. I am a Petkoff.

MAN. What's that?

RAINA (rather indignantly). I mean that I belong to the family of the Petkoffs, the richest and best known in our country.

MAN. Oh, yes, of course. I beg your pardon. The Petkoffs, to be sure. How stupid of me!

RAINA. You know you never heard of them until this minute. How can you stoop to pretend?

MAN. Forgive me: I'm too tired to think; and the change of subject was too much for me. Don't scold me.

RAINA. I forgot. It might make you cry. (He nods, quite seriously. She pouts and then resumes her patronizing tone.) I must tell you that my father holds the highest command of any Bulgarian in our army. He is (proudly) a Major.

MAN (pretending to be deeply impressed). A Major! Bless me! Think of that!

RAINA. You shewed great ignorance in thinking that it was necessary to climb up to the balcony, because ours is the only private house that has two rows of windows. There is a flight of stairs inside to get up and down by.

MAN. Stairs! How grand! You live in great luxury indeed, dear young lady.

RAINA. Do you know what a library is?

MAN. A library? A roomful of books.

RAINA. Yes, we have one, the only one in Bulgaria.

MAN. Actually a real library! I should like to see that.

RAINA (affectedly). I tell you these things to shew you that you are not in the house of ignorant country folk who would kill you the moment they saw your Servian uniform, but among civilized people. We go to Bucharest every year for the opera season; and I have spent a whole month in Vienna.

MAN. I saw that, dear young lady. I saw at once that you knew the world.

RAINA. Have you ever seen the opera of Ernani?

MAN. Is that the one with the devil in it in red velvet, and a soldier's chorus?

RAINA (contemptuously). No!

MAN (stifling a heavy sigh of weariness). Then I don't know it.

RAINA. I thought you might have remembered the great scene where Ernani, flying from his foes just as you are tonight, takes refuge in the castle of his bitterest enemy, an old Castilian noble. The noble refuses to give him up. His guest is sacred to him.

MAN (quickly waking up a little). Have your people got that notion?

RAINA (with dignity). My mother and I can understand that notion, ~~you call it~~. And if instead of threatening me with your pistol as you did, you had simply thrown yourself as a fugitive on our hospitality, you would have been as safe as in your father's house.

MAN. Quite sure?

RAINA (turning her back on him in disgust.) Oh, it is useless to try and make you understand.

MAN. Don't be angry: you see how awkward it would be for me if there was any mistake. My father is a very hospitable man: he keeps six hotels; but I couldn't trust him as far as that. What about YOUR father?

RAINA. He is away at Slivnitza fighting for his country. I answer for your safety. There is my hand in pledge of it. Will that reassure you? (She offers him her hand.)

MAN (looking dubiously at his own hand). Better not touch my hand, dear young lady. I must have a wash first.

RAINA (touched). That is very nice of you. I see that you are a gentleman.

MAN (puzzled). Eh?

RAINA. You must not think I am surprised. Bulgarians of really good standing—people in OUR position—wash their hands nearly every day. But I appreciate your delicacy. You may take my hand. (She offers it again.)

MAN (kissing it with his hands behind his back). Thanks, gracious young lady: I feel safe at last. And now would you mind breaking the news to your mother? I had better not stay here secretly longer than is necessary.

RAINA. If you will be-so good as to keep perfectly still whilst I am away.

MAN. Certainly. (He sits down on the ottoman.)

(Raina goes to the bed and wraps herself in the fur cloak. His eyes close. She goes to the door, but on turning for a last look at him, sees that he is dropping off to sleep.)

RAINA (at the door). You are not going asleep, are you? (He murmurs inarticulately: she runs to him and shakes him.) Do you hear? Wake up: you are falling asleep.

MAN. Eh? Falling asleep—? Oh, no, not the least in the world: I was only thinking. It's all right: I'm wide awake.

RAINA (severely). Will you please stand up while I am away. (He rises reluctantly.) All the time, mind.

MAN (standing unsteadily). Certainly—certainly: you may depend on me.

(Raina looks doubtfully at him. He smiles foolishly. She goes reluctantly, turning again at the door, and almost catching him in the act of yawning. She goes out.)

MAN (drowsily). Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep—(The words trail off into a murmur. He wakes again with a shock on the point of falling.) Where am I? That's what I want to know: where am I? Must keep awake. Nothing keeps me awake except danger—remember that—(intently) danger, danger, danger, dan—Where's danger? Must find it. (He starts off vaguely around the room in search of it.) What am I looking for? Sleep—danger—don't know. (He stumbles against the bed.) Ah, yes: now I know. All right now. I'm to go to bed, but not to sleep—be sure not to sleep—because of danger. Not to lie down, either, only sit down. (He sits on the bed. A blissful expression comes into his face.) Ah! (With a happy sigh he sinks back at full length; lifts his boots into the bed with a final effort; and falls fast asleep instantly.)

(Catherine comes in, followed by Raina.)

RAINA (looking at the ottoman). *He's gone! I left him here.*

CATHERINE, Here! Then he must have climbed down from the—

RAINA (seeing him). Oh! (She points.)

CATHERINE (scandalized). Well! (She strides to the left side of the bed, Raina following and standing opposite her on the right.) He's fast asleep. The brute!

RAINA (anxiously). Sh!

CATHERINE (shaking him). Sir! (Shaking him again, harder.) Sir!! (Vehemently shaking very hard.) Sir!!!

RAINA (catching her arm). Don't, mamma: the poor dear is worn out. Let him sleep.

CATHERINE (letting him go and turning amazed to Raina). The poor dear! Raina!!! (She looks sternly at her daughter. The man sleeps profoundly.)

ACT II

The sixth of March, 1886. In the garden of major Petkoffs house. It is a fine spring morning; and the garden looks fresh and pretty. Beyond the paling the tops of a couple of minarets can be seen, shewing that there it a valley there, with the little town in it. A few miles further the Balkan mountains rise and shut in the view. Within the garden the side of the house is seen on the right, with a garden door reached by a little flight of steps. On the left the stable yard, with its gateway, encroaches on the garden. There are fruit bushes along the paling and house, covered with washing hung out to dry. A path runs by the house, and rises by two steps at the corner where it turns out of the right along the front. In the middle a small table, with two bent wood chairs at it, is laid for breakfast with Turkish coffee pot, cups, rolls, etc.; but the cups have been used and the bread broken. There is a wooden garden seat against the wall on the left.

Louka, smoking a cigaret, is standing between the table and the house, turning her back with angry disdain on a man-servant who is lecturing her. He is a middle-aged man of cool temperament and low but clear and keen intelligence, with the complacency of the servant who values himself on his rank in servility, and the imperturbability of the accurate calculator who has no illusions. He wears a white Bulgarian costume jacket with decorated harder, sash, wide knickerbockers, and decorated gaiters. His head is shaved up to the crown, giving him a high Japanese forehead. His name is Nicola.

NICOLA. Be warned in time, Louka: mend your manners. I know the mistress. She is so grand that she never dreams that any servant could dare to be disrespectful to her; but if she once suspects that you are defying her, out you go.

LOUKA. I do defy her. I will defy her. What do I care for her?

NICOLA. If you quarrel with the family, I never can marry you. It's the same as if you quarrelled with me!

LOUKA. You take her part against me, do you?

NICOLA (sedately). I shall always be dependent on the good will of the family. When I leave their service and start a shop in Sofea, their custom will be half my capital: their bad word would ruin me.

LOUKA. You have no spirit. I should like to see them dare say 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 if they dare!

NICOLA (with compassionate superiority). Do you know what they would do if they heard you talk like that?

LOUKA. What could they do?

NICOLA. Discharge you for untruthfulness. Who would believe any stories you told after that? Who would give you another situation? Who in this house would dare be seen speaking to you ever again? How long would your father be left on his little farm? (She impatiently throws away the end of her cigaret, and stamps on it.) Child, you don't know the power such high people have over the like of you and me when we try to rise out of our poverty against them. (He goes close to her and lowers his voice.) Look at me, ten years in service. Do you think I know no secrets? I know things about the mistress that she wouldn't have the master know for a thousand levas. I know things about him that she wouldn't let him hear the last of for six months if I blabbed them to her. I know things about Raina that would break off her match with Sergius if-

LOUKA (turning on him quickly). How do you know? I never told you!

NICOLA (opening his eyes cunningly). So that's your little secret, is it? I thought it might be something like that. Well, you take my advice, and be respectful; and make the mistress feel that no matter what you know or don't know, they can depend on you to hold your tongue and serve the family faithfully. That's what they like; and that's how you'll make most out of them.

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

NICOLA (complacently). Yes: that's the secret of success in service. (A loud knocking with a whip handle on a wooden door, outside on the left, is heard.)

MALE VOICE OUTSIDE. Hollo! Hollo there! Nicola!

LOUKA. Master! back from the war!

NICOLA (quickly). My word for it, Louka, the war's over. Off with you and get some fresh coffee. (He runs out into the stable yard.)

LOUKA (as she puts the coffee pot and the cups upon the tray, and carries it into the house). You'll never put the soul of a servant into me.

(Major Petkoff comes from the stable yard, followed by Nicola. He is a cheerful, excitable, insignificant, unpolished man of about 50, naturally unambitious except as to his income and his importance in local society, but just now greatly pleased with the military rank which the war has thrust on him as a man of consequence in his town. The fever of plucky patriotism which the Servian attack roused in all the Bulgarians has pulled him through the war; but he is obviously glad to be home again.)

PETKOFF (pointing to the table with his whip). Breakfast out here, eh?

NICOLA. Yes, sir. The mistress and Miss Raina have just gone in.

PETKOFF (fitting down and taking a roll). Go in and say I've come;

and get me some fresh coffee.

NICOLA. It's coming, sir. (He goes to the house door. Louka, with fresh coffee, a clean cup, and a brandy bottle on her tray meets him. Have you told the mistress?)

LOUKA. Yes: she's coming.

(Nicola goes into the house. Louka brings the coffee to the table.)

PETKOFF. Well, the Servians haven't run away with you, have they?

LOUKA. No, sir.

PETKOFF. That's right. Have you brought me some cognac?

LOUKA (putting the bottle on the table). Here, sir.

PETKOFF. That's right. (He pours some into his coffee.)

(Catherine who has at this early hour made only a very perfunctory toilet, and wears a Bulgarian apron over a once brilliant, but now half worn out red dressing gown, and a colored handkerchief tied over her thick black hair, with Turkish slippers on her bare feet, comes from the house, looking astonishingly handsome and stately under all the circumstances. Louka goes into the house.)

CATHERINE. My dear Paul, what a surprise for us. (She stoops over the back of his chair to kiss him.) Have they brought you fresh coffee?

PETKOFF. Yes, Louka's been looking after me. The war's over. The treaty was signed three days ago at Bucharest; and the decree for our army to demobilize was issued yesterday.

CATHERINE (springing erect, with flashing eyes). The war over! Paul: have you let the Austrians force you to make peace?

PETKOFF (submissively). My dear: they didn't consult me. What could I do? (She sits down and turns away from him.) But of course we saw to it that the treaty was an honorable one. It declares peace.

CATHERINE (outraged). Peace!

PETKOFF (appeasing her).—but not friendly relations: remember that. They wanted to put that in; but I insisted on its being struck out. What more could I do?

CATHERINE. You could have annexed Servia and made Prince Alexander Emperor of the Balkans. That's what I would have done.

PETKOFF. I don't doubt it in the least, my dear. But I should have had to subdue the whole Austrian Empire first; and that would have kept me too long away from you. I missed you greatly.

CATHERINE (relenting). Ah! (Stretches her hand affectionately across the table to squeeze his.)

PETKOFF. And how have you been, my dear?

CATHERINE. Oh, my usual sore throats, that's all.

PETKOFF (with conviction). That comes from washing your neck every day. I've often told you so.

CATHERINE. Nonsense, Paul!

PETKOFF (over his coffee and cigaret). I don't believe in going too far with these modern customs. All this washing can't be good for the health: it's not natural. There was an Englishman at Phillipopolis who used to wet himself all over with cold water every morning when he got up. Disgusting! It all comes from the English: their climate makes them so dirty that they have to be perpetually washing themselves. Look at my father: he never had a bath in his life; and he lived to be ninety-eight, the healthiest man in Bulgaria. I don't mind a good wash once a week to keep up my position; but once a day is carrying the thing to a ridiculous extreme.

CATHERINE. You are a barbarian at heart still, Paul. I hope you behaved yourself before all those Russian officers.

PETKOFF. I did my best. I took care to let them know that we had a library.

CATHERINE. Ah; but you didn't tell them that we have an electric

bell in it? I have had one put up.

PETKOFF. What's an electric bell?

CATHERINE. You touch a button; something tinkles in the kitchen; and then Nicola comes up.

PETKOFF. Why not shout for him?

CATHERINE. Civilized people never shout for their servants. I've learnt that while you were away.

PETKOFF. Well, I'll tell you something I've learnt, too. Civilized people don't hang out their washing to dry where visitors can see it; so you'd better have all that (indicating the clothes on the bushes) put somewhere else.

CATHERINE. Oh, that's absurd, Paul: I don't believe really refined people notice such things.

(Someone is heard knocking at the stable gates.)

PETKOFF. *There's Sergius. (Shouting.)* Hollo, Nicola!

CATHERINE. Oh, don't shout, Paul: *it really isn't nice.* PETKOFF. Bosh! (He shouts louder than before.) Nicola! NICOLA (appearing at the house door). Yes, sir.

PETKOFF. If that is Major Saranoff, bring him round this way. (He pronounces the name with the stress on the second syllable—Sara-h-noff.)

NICOLA. Yes, sir. (He goes into the stable yard.)

PETKOFF. You must talk to him, my dear, until Raina takes him off our hands. He bores my life out about our not promoting him—over my head, mind you.

CATHERINE. He certainly ought to be promoted when he marries Raina. Besides, the country should insist on having at least one native general.

PETKOFF. Yes, so that he could throw away whole brigades instead of regiments. It's no use, my dear: he has not the slightest chance of

promotion until we are quite sure that the peace will be a lasting one.

NICOLA (at the gate, announcing). Major Sergius Saranoff! (He goes into the house and returns presently with a third chair, which he places at the table. He then withdraws.)

(Major Sergius Saranoff, the original of the portrait in Raina's room, is a tall, romantically handsome man, with the physical hardihood, the high spirit, and the susceptible imagination of an untamed mountaineer chieftain. But his remarkable personal distinction is of a characteristically civilized type. The ridges of his eyebrows, curving with a ram's-horn twist round the marked projections at the outer corners, his jealously observant eye, his nose, thin, keen, and apprehensive in spite of the pugnacious high bridge and large nostril, his assertive chin, would not be out of place in a Paris salon. In short, the clever, imaginative barbarian has an acute critical faculty which has been thrown into intense activity by the arrival of western civilization in the Balkans; and the result is precisely what the advent of nineteenth-century thought first produced in England: to-wit, Byronism. By his brooding on the perpetual failure, not only of others, but of himself, to live up to his imaginative ideals, his consequent cynical scorn for humanity, the jejune credulity as to the absolute validity of his ideals and the unworthiness of the world in disregarding them, his wincings and mockeries under the sting of the petty disillusion which every hour spent among men brings to his infallibly quick observation, he has acquired the half tragic, half ironic air, the mysterious moodiness, the suggestion of a strange and terrible history that has left him nothing but undying remorse, by which Childe Harold fascinated the grandmothers of his English contemporaries. Altogether it is clear that here or nowhere is Raina's ideal hero. Catherine is hardly less enthusiastic, and much less reserved in shewing her enthusiasm. As he enters from the stable gate, she rises effusively to greet him. Petkoff is distinctly less disposed to make a fuss about him.)

PETKOFF. Here already, Sergius. Glad to see you!

CATHERINE. My dear Sergius! (She holds out both her hands.)

SERGIUS (kissing them with scrupulous gallantry). My dear mother, if I may call you so.

PETKOFF (drily). Mother-in-law, Sergius; mother-in-law! Sit down and have some coffee.

SERGIUS. Thank you, none for me. (He gets away from the table with a certain distaste for Petkoff's enjoyment of it, and posts himself with conscious grace against the rail of the steps leading to the house.)

CATHERINE. You look superb—splendid. The campaign has improved you. Everybody here is mad about you. We were all with enthusiasm about that magnificent cavalry charge.

SERGIUS (with grave irony). Madam: it was the cradle and the glory of my military reputation.

CATHERINE. How so?

SERGIUS. I won the battle the wrong way when our worthy Russian generals were losing it the right way. That upset their plans, and wounded their self-esteem. Two of their colonels got their regiments driven back on the correct principles of scientific warfare. Two major-generals got killed strictly according to military etiquette. Those two colonels are now major-generals; and I am still a simple major.

CATHERINE. You shall not remain so, Sergius. The women are on your side; and they will see that justice is done you.

SERGIUS. It is too late. I have only waited for the peace to send in my resignation.

PETKOFF (dropping his cup in his amazement). Your resignation?

CATHERINE. Oh, you must withdraw it!

SERGIUS (with resolute, measured emphasis, folding his arms). I never withdraw!

PETKOFF (vexed). Now who could have supposed you were going to do such a thing?

SERGIUS (with fire). Everyone that knew me. But enough of myself

and my affairs. How is Raina; and where is Raina?

RAINA (suddenly coming round the corner of the house and standing at the top of the steps in the path). Raina is here. (She makes a charming picture as they all turn to look at her. She wears an underdress of pale green silk, draped with an overdress of thin ecru canvas embroidered with gold. On her head she wears a pretty Phrygian cap of gold tinsel. Sergius, with an exclamation of pleasure, goes impulsively to meet her. She stretches out her hand: he drops chivalrously on one knee and kisses it.)

PETKOFF (aside to Catherine, beaming with parental pride). Pretty, isn't it? She always appears at the right moment.

CATHERINE (impatiently). Yes: she listens for it. It is an abominable habit.

(Sergius leads Raina forward with splendid gallantry, as if she were a queen. When they come to the table, she turns to him with a bend of the head; he bows; and thus they separate, he coming to his place, and she going behind her father's chair.)

RAINA (stooping and kissing her father). Dear father! Welcome home!

PETKOFF (patting her cheek). My little pet girl. (He kisses her; she goes to the chair left by Nicola for Sergius, and sits down.)

CATHERINE. And so you're no longer a soldier, Sergius.

SERGIUS. I am no longer a soldier. Soldiering, my dear madam, is the coward's art of attacking mercilessly when you are strong, and keeping out of harm's way when you are weak.

That is the whole secret of successful fighting. Get your enemy at a disadvantage; and never, on any account, fight him on equal terms. Eh, Major!

PETKOFF. They wouldn't let us make a fair stand-up fight of it. However, I suppose soldiering has to be a trade like any other trade.

SERGIUS. Precisely. But I have no ambition to succeed as a

tradesman; so I have taken the advice of that bagman of a captain that settled the exchange of prisoners with us at Peerot, and given up.

PETKOFF. What, that Swiss fellow? Sergius: I've often thought that exchange since. He over-reached us about those horses.

SERGIUS. Of course he over-reached us. His father was a horse and livery stable keeper; and he owed his first step to his knowledge of horse-dealing. (With mock enthusiasm.) Ah, he was a soldier every inch a soldier! If only I had bought the horses for my regiment instead of foolishly leading it into danger, I should have been a field-marshal now!

CATHERINE. A Swiss? What was he doing in the Servian army?

PETKOFF. A volunteer of course—keen on picking up a military profession. (Chuckling.) We shouldn't have been able to begin fighting if these foreigners hadn't shewn us how to do it: we knew nothing about it; and neither did the Servians. Egad, there'd have been a war without them.

RAINA. Are there many Swiss officers in the Servian Army?

PETKOFF. No—all Austrians, just as our officers were all Russians. This was the only Swiss I came across. I'll never trust a Swiss again. He cheated us—humbugged us into giving him fifty able-bodied men for two hundred confounded worn out chargers. They were even eatable!

SERGIUS. We were two children in the hands of that consummate soldier, Major: simply two innocent little children.

RAINA. What was he like?

CATHERINE. Oh, Raina, what a silly question!

SERGIUS. He was like a commercial traveller in uniform. Bourgeois to his boots.

PETKOFF (grinning). Sergius: tell Catherine that queer story he

friend told us about him—how he escaped after Slivnitsa. You remember?—about his being hid by two women.

SERGIUS (with bitter irony). Oh, yes, quite a romance. He was serving in the very battery I so unprofessionally charged. Being a thorough soldier, he ran away like the rest of them, with our cavalry at his heels. To escape their attentions, he had the good taste to take refuge in the chamber of some patriotic young Bulgarian lady. The young lady was enchanted by his persuasive commercial traveller's manners. She very modestly entertained him for an hour or so and then called in her mother lest her conduct should appear unmaidenly. The old lady was equally fascinated; and the fugitive was sent on his way in the morning, disguised in an old coat belonging to the master of the house, who was away at the war.

RAINA (rising with marked stateliness). Your life in the camp has made you coarse, Sergius. I did not think you would have repeated such a story before me. (She turns away coldly.)

CATHERINE (also rising). She is right, Sergius. If such women exist, we should be spared the knowledge of them.

PETKOFF. Pooh! nonsense! what does it matter?

SERGIUS (ashamed). No, Petkoff: I was wrong. (To Raina, with earnest humility.) I beg your pardon. I have behaved abominably. Forgive me, Raina. (She bows reservedly.) And you, too, madam. (Catherine bows graciously and sits down. He proceeds solemnly, again addressing Raina.) The glimpses I have had of the seamy side of life during the last few months have made me cynical; but I should not have brought my cynicism here—least of all into your presence, Raina. I—(Here, turning to the others, he is evidently about to begin a long speech when the Major interrupts him.)

PETKOFF. Stuff and nonsense, Sergius. That's quite enough fuss about nothing: a soldier's daughter should be able to stand up without flinching to a little strong conversation. (He rises.) Come: it's time for us to get to business. We have to make up our minds how those three regiments are to get back to Phillipopolis:—there's no forage for them on the Sophia route. (He goes towards the house.) Come along. (Sergius is about to follow him when Catherine rises and

intervenes.)

CATHERINE. Oh, Paul, can't you spare Sergius for a few moments? Raina has hardly seen him yet. Perhaps I can help you to settle about the regiments.

SERGIUS (protesting). My dear madam, impossible: you—

CATHERINE (stopping him playfully). You stay here, my dear Sergius: there's no hurry. I have a word or two to say to Paul. (Sergius instantly bows and steps back.) Now, dear (taking Petkoff's arm), come and see the electric bell.

PETKOFF. Oh, very well, very well. (They go into the house together affectionately. Sergius, left alone with Raina, looks anxiously at her, fearing that she may be still offended. She smiles, and stretches out her arms to him.)

(Exit R. into house, followed by Catherine.)

SERGIUS (hastening to her, but refraining from touching her without express permission). Am I forgiven?

RAINA (placing her hands on his shoulder as she looks up at him with admiration and worship). My hero! My king.

SERGIUS. My queen! (He kisses her on the forehead with holy awe.)

RAINA. How I have envied you, Sergius! You have been out in the world, on the field of battle, able to prove yourself there worthy of any woman in the world; whilst I have had to sit at home inactive,—dreaming—useless—doing nothing that could give me the right to call myself worthy of any man.

SERGIUS. Dearest, all my deeds have been yours. You inspired me. I have gone through the war like a knight in a tournament with his lady looking on at him!

RAINA. And you have never been absent from my thoughts for a moment. (Very solemnly.) Sergius: I think we two have found the higher love. When I think of you, I feel that I could never do a base deed, or think an ignoble thought.

SERGIUS. My lady, and my saint! (Clasping her reverently.)

RAINA (returning his embrace). My lord and my g—

SERGIUS. Sh—sh! Let me be the worshipper, dear. You little know how unworthy even the best man is of a girl's pure passion!

RAINA. I trust you. I love you. You will never disappoint me, Sergius. (Louka is heard singing within the house. They quickly release each other.) Hush! I can't pretend to talk indifferently before her: my heart is too full. (Louka comes from the house with her tray. She goes to the table, and begins to clear it, with her back turned to them.) I will go and get my hat; and then we can go out until lunch time. Wouldn't you like that?

SERGIUS. Be quick. If you are away five minutes, it will seem five hours. (Raina runs to the top of the steps and turns there to exchange a look with him and wave him a kiss with both hands. He looks after her with emotion for a moment, then turns slowly away, his face radiant with the exultation of the scene which has just passed. The movement shifts his field of vision, into the corner of which there now comes the tail of Louka's double apron. His eye gleams at once. He takes a stealthy look at her, and begins to twirl his moustache nervously, with his left hand akimbo on his hip. Finally, striking the ground with his heels in something of a cavalry swagger, he strolls over to the left of the table, opposite her, and says) Louka: do you know what the higher love is?

LOUKA (astonished). No, sir.

SERGIUS. Very fatiguing thing to keep up for any length of time, Louka. One feels the need of some relief after it.

LOUKA (innocently). Perhaps you would like some coffee, sir? (She stretches her hand across the table for the coffee pot.)

SERGIUS (taking her hand). Thank you, Louka.

LOUKA (pretending to pull). Oh, sir, you know I didn't mean that. I'm surprised at you!

SERGIUS (coming clear of the table and drawing her with him). I am surprised at myself, Louka. What would Sergius, the hero of Slivnitsa, say if he saw me now? What would Sergius, the apostle of the higher love, say if he saw me now? What would the half dozen Sergiuses who keep popping in and out of this handsome figure of mine say if they caught us here? (Letting go her hand and slipping his arm dexterously round her waist.) Do you consider my figure handsome, Louka?

LOUKA. Let me go, sir. I shall be disgraced. (She struggles: he holds her inexorably.) Oh, will you let go?

SERGIUS (looking straight into her eyes). No.

LOUKA. Then stand back where we can't be seen. Have you no common sense?

SERGIUS. Ah, that's reasonable. (He takes her into the stableyard gateway, where they are hidden from the house.)

LOUKA (complaining). I may have been seen from the windows: Miss Raina is sure to be spying about after you.

SERGIUS (stung—letting her go). Take care, Louka. I may be worthless enough to betray the higher love; but do not you insult it.

LOUKA (demurely). Not for the world, sir, I'm sure. May I go on with my work please, now?

SERGIUS (again putting his arm round her). You are a provoking little witch, Louka. If you were in love with me, would you spy out of windows on me?

LOUKA. Well, you see, sir, since you say you are half a dozen different gentlemen all at once, I should have a great deal to look after.

SERGIUS (charmed). Witty as well as pretty. (He tries to kiss her.)

LOUKA (avoiding him). No, I don't want your kisses. Gentlefolk are all alike—you making love to me behind Miss Raina's back, and

she doing the same behind yours.

SERGIUS (recoiling a step). Louka!

LOUKA. It shews how little you really care!

SERGIUS (dropping his familiarity and speaking with freezing politeness). If our conversation is to continue, Louka, you will please remember that a gentleman does not discuss the conduct of the lady he is engaged to with her maid.

LOUKA. It's so hard to know what a gentleman considers right. I thought from your trying to kiss me that you had given up being so particular.

SERGIUS (turning from her and striking his forehead as he comes back into the garden from the gateway). Devil! devil!

LOUKA. Ha! ha! I expect one of the six of you is very like me, sir, though I am only Miss Raina's maid. (She goes back to her work at the table, taking no further notice of him.)

SERGIUS (speaking to himself). Which of the six is the real man?—that's the question that torments me. One of them is a hero, another a buffoon, another a humbug, another perhaps a bit of a blackguard. (He pauses and looks furtively at Louka, as he adds with deep bitterness) And one, at least, is a coward-jealous, like all cowards. (He goes to the table.) Louka.

LOUKA. Yes?

SERGIUS. Who is my rival?

LOUKA. You shall never get that out of me, for love or money.

SERGIUS. Why?

LOUKA. Never mind why. Besides, you would tell that I told you; and I should lose my place.

SERGIUS (holding out his right hand in affirmation). No; on the honor of a—(He checks himself, and his hand drops nerveless as

he concludes, sardonically)—of a man capable of behaving as I have been behaving for the last five minutes. Who is he?

LOUKA. I don't know. I never saw him. I only heard his voice through the door of her room.

SERGIUS. Damnation! How dare you?

LOUKA (retreating). Oh, I mean no harm: you've no right to take up my words like that. The mistress knows all about it. And I tell you that if that gentleman ever comes here again, Miss Raina will marry him, whether he likes it or not. I know the difference between the sort of manner you and she put on before one another and the real manner. (Sergius shivers as if she had stabbed him. Then, setting his face like iron, he strides grimly to her, and grips her above the elbows with both hands.)

SERGIUS. Now listen you to me!

LOUKA (wincing). Not so tight: you're hurting me!

SERGIUS. That doesn't matter. You have stained my honor by making me a party to your eavesdropping. And you have betrayed your mistress—

LOUKA (writhing). Please—

SERGIUS. That shews that you are an abominable little clod of common clay, with the soul of a servant. (He lets her go as if she were an unclean thing, and turns away, dusting his hands of her, to the bench by the wall, where he sits down with averted head, meditating gloomily.)

LOUKA (whimpering angrily with her hands up her sleeves, feeling her bruised arms). You know how to hurt with your tongue as well as with your hands. But I don't care, now I've found out that whatever clay I'm made of, you're made of the same. As for her, she's a liar; and her fine airs are a cheat; and I'm worth six of her. (She shakes the pain off hardily; tosses her head; and sets to work to put the things on the tray. He looks doubtfully at her once or twice. She

finishes packing the tray, and laps the cloth over the edges, so as to carry all out together. As she stoops to lift it, he rises.)

SERGIUS. Louka! (She stops and looks defiantly at him with the tray in her hands.) A gentleman has no right to hurt a woman under any circumstances. (With profound humility, uncovering his head.) I beg your pardon.

LOUKA. That sort of apology may satisfy a lady. Of what use is it to a servant?

SERGIUS (thus rudely crossed in his chivalry, throws it off with a bitter laugh and says slightly). Oh, you wish to be paid for the hurt? (He puts on his shako, and takes some money from his pocket.)

LOUKA (her eyes filling with tears in spite of herself). No, I want my hurt made well.

SERGIUS (sobered by her tone). How?

(She rolls up her left sleeve; clasps her arm with the thumb and fingers of her right hand; and looks down at the bruise. Then she raises her head and looks straight at him. Finally, with a superb gesture she presents her arm to be kissed. Amazed, he looks at her; at the arm; at her again; hesitates; and then, with shuddering intensity, exclaims)

SERGIUS. Never! (and gets away as far as possible from her.)

(Her arm drops. Without a word, and with unaffected dignity, she takes her tray, and is approaching the house when Raina returns wearing a hat and jacket in the height of the Vienna fashion of the previous year, 1885. Louka makes way proudly for her, and then goes into the house.)

RAINA. I'm ready! What's the matter? (Gaily.) Have you been flirting with Louka?

SERGIUS (hastily). No, no. How can you think such a thing?

RAINA (ashamed of herself). Forgive me, dear: it was only a jest. I am so happy to-day.

(He goes quickly to her, and kisses her hand remorsefully. Catherine comes out and calls to them from the top of the steps.)

CATHERINE (coming down to them). I am sorry to disturb you, children; but Paul is distracted over those three regiments. He does not know how to get them to Phillipopolis; and he objects to every suggestion of mine. You must go and help him, Sergius. He is in the library.

RAINA (disappointed). But we are just going out for a walk.

SERGIUS. I shall not be long. Wait for me just five minutes. (He runs up the steps to the door.)

RAINA (following him to the foot of the steps and looking up at him with timid coquetry). I shall go round and wait in full view of the library windows. Be sure you draw father's attention to me. If you are a moment longer than five minutes, I shall go in and fetch you, regiments or no regiments.

SERGIUS (laughing). Very well. (He goes in. Raina watches him until he is out of her sight. Then, with a perceptible relaxation of manner, she begins to pace up and down about the garden in a brown study.)

CATHERINE. Imagine their meeting that Swiss and hearing the whole story! The very first thing your father asked for was the old coat we sent him off in. A nice mess you have got us into!

RAINA (gazing thoughtfully at the gravel as she walks). The little beast!

CATHERINE. Little beast! What little beast?

RAINA. To go and tell! Oh, if I had him here, I'd stuff him with chocolate creams till he couldn't ever speak again!

CATHERINE. Don't talk nonsense. Tell me the truth, Raina. How long was he in your room before you came to me?

RAINA (whisking round and recommencing her march in the

opposite direction). Oh, I forget.

CATHERINE. You cannot forget! Did he really climb up after the soldiers were gone, or was he there when that officer searched the room?

RAINA. No. Yes, I think he must have been there then.

CATHERINE. You think! Oh, Raina, Raina! Will anything ever make you straightforward? If Sergius finds out, it is all over between you.

RAINA (with cool impertinence). Oh, 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.

CATHERINE (opening her eyes very widely indeed). Well, upon my word!

RAINA (capriciously—half to herself). I always feel a longing to do or say something dreadful to him—to shock his propriety—to scandalize the five senses out of him! (To Catherine perversely.) I don't care whether he finds out about the chocolate cream soldier or not. I half hope he may. (She again turns flippantly away and strolls up the path to the corner of the house.)

CATHERINE. And what should I be able to say to your father, pray?

RAINA (over her shoulder, from the top of the two steps). Oh, poor father! As if he could help himself! (She turns the corner and passes out of sight.)

CATHERINE (looking after her, her fingers itching). Oh, if you were only ten years younger! (Louka comes from the house with a salver, which she carries hanging down by her side.) Well?

LOUKA. There's a gentleman just called, madam—a Servian officer.

CATHERINE (flaming). A Servian! How dare he—(Checking herself bitterly.) Oh, I forgot. We are at peace now. I suppose we shall have them calling every day to pay their compliments. Well, if he is an

officer why don't you tell your master? He is in the library with Major Saranoff. Why do you come to me?

LOUKA. But he asks for you, madam. And I don't think he knows who you are: he said the lady of the house. He gave me this little ticket for you. (She takes a card out of her bosom; puts it on the salver and offers it to Catherine.)

CATHERINE (reading). "Captain Bluntschli!" That's a German name.

LOUKA. Swiss, madam, I think.

CATHERINE (with a bound that makes Louka jump back). Swiss! What is he like?

LOUKA (timidly). He has a big carpet bag, madam.

CATHERINE. Oh, *Heavens*, he's come to return the coat! Send him away—say we're not at home—ask him to leave his address and I'll write to him—Oh, stop: that will never do. Wait! (She throws herself into a chair to think it out. Louka waits.) The master and Major Saranoff are busy in the library, aren't they?

LOUKA. Yes, madam.

CATHERINE (decisively). Bring the gentleman out here at once. Imperatively.) And be very polite to him. Don't delay. Here (impatiently snatching the salver from her): leave that here; and go straight back to him.

LOUKA. Yes, madam. (Going.)

CATHERINE. Louka!

LOUKA (stopping). Yes, madam.

CATHERINE. Is the library door shut?

LOUKA. I think so, madam.

CATHERINE. If not, shut it as you pass through.

LOUKA. Yes, madam. (Going.)

CATHERINE. Stop! (Louka stops.) He will have to go out that way (indicating the gate of the stable yard). Tell Nicola to bring his bag here after him. Don't forget.

LOUKA (surprised). His bag?

CATHERINE. Yes, here, as soon as possible. (Vehemently.) Be quick! (Louka runs into the house. Catherine snatches her apron off and throws it behind a bush. She then takes up the salver and uses it as a mirror, with the result that the handkerchief tied round her head follows the apron. A touch to her hair and a shake to her dressing gown makes her presentable.) Oh, how—how—how can a man be such a fool! Such a moment to select! (Louka appears at the door of the house, announcing "Captain Bluntschli," and standing aside at the top of the steps to let him pass before she goes in again. He is the man of the adventure in Raina's room. He is now clean, well brushed, smartly uniformed, and out of trouble, but still unmistakably the same man. The moment Louka's back is turned, Catherine swoops on him with hurried, urgent, coaxing appeal.) Captain Bluntschli, I am very glad to see you; but you must leave this house at once. (He raises his eyebrows.) My husband has just returned, with my future son-in-law; and they know nothing. If they did, the consequences would be terrible. You are a foreigner: you do not feel our national animosities as we do. We still hate the Servians: the only effect of the peace on my husband is to make him feel like a lion baulked of his prey. If he discovered our secret, he would never forgive me; and my daughter's life would hardly be safe. Will you, like the chivalrous gentleman and soldier you are, leave at once before he finds you here?

BLUNTSCHLI (disappointed, but philosophical). At once, gracious lady. I only came to thank you and return the coat you lent me. If you will allow me to take it out of my bag and leave it with your servant as I pass out, I need detain you no further. (He turns to go into the house.)

CATHERINE (catching him by the sleeve). Oh, you must not think

of going back that way. (Coaxing him across to the stable gates.) This is the shortest way out. Many thanks. So glad to have been of service to you. Good-bye.

BLUNTSCHLI. But my bag?

CATHERINE. It will be sent on. You will leave me your address.

BLUNTSCHLI. True. Allow me. (He takes out his card-case, and stops to write his address, keeping Catherine in an agony of impatience. As he hands her the card, Petkoff, hatless, rushes from the house in a flutter of hospitality, followed by Sergius.)

PETKOFF (as he hurries down the steps). My dear Captain Bluntschli-

CATHERINE. Oh Heavens! (She sinks on the seat against the wall.)

PETKOFF (too preoccupied to notice her as he shakes Bluntschli's hand heartily). Those stupid people of mine thought I was out here, instead of in the—haw!—library. (He cannot mention the library without betraying how proud he is of it.) I saw you through the window. I was wondering why you didn't come in. Saranoff is with me: you remember him, don't you?

SERGIUS (saluting humorously, and then offering his hand with great charm of manner). Welcome, our friend the enemy!

PETKOFF. No longer the enemy, happily. (Rather anxiously.) I hope you've come as a friend, and not on business.

CATHERINE. Oh, quite as a friend, Paul. I was just asking Captain Bluntschli to stay to lunch; but he declares he must go at once.

SERGIUS (sardonically). Impossible, Bluntschli. We want you here badly. We have to send on three cavalry regiments to Phillipopolis; and we don't in the least know how to do it.

BLUNTSCHLI (suddenly attentive and business-like). Phillipopolis! The forage is the trouble, eh?

PETKOFF (eagerly). Yes, that's it. (To Sergius.) He sees the whole

thing at once.

BLUNTSCHLI. I think I can shew you how to manage that.

SERGIUS. Invaluable man! Come along! (Towering over Bluntschli, he puts his hand on his shoulder and takes him to the steps, Petkoff following. As Bluntschli puts his foot on the first step, Raina comes out of the house.)

RAINA (completely losing her presence of mind). Oh, the chocolate cream soldier!

(Bluntschli stands rigid. Sergius, amazed, looks at Raina, then at Petkoff, who looks back at him and then at his wife.)

CATHERINE (with commanding presence of mind). My dear Raina, don't you see that we have a guest here—Captain Bluntschli, one of our new Servian friends?

(Raina bows; Bluntschli bows.)

RAINA. How silly of me! (She comes down into the centre of the group, between Bluntschli and Petkoff) I made a beautiful ornament this morning for the ice pudding; and that stupid Nicola has just put down a pile of plates on it and spoiled it. (To Bluntschli, winningly.) I hope you didn't think that you were the chocolate cream soldier, Captain Bluntschli.

BLUNTSCHLI (laughing). I assure you I did. (Stealing a whimsical glance at her.) Your explanation was a relief.

PETKOFF (suspiciously, to Raina). And since when, pray, have you taken to cooking?

CATHERINE. Oh, whilst you were away. It is her latest fancy.

PETKOFF (testily). And has Nicola taken to drinking? He used to be careful enough. First he shews Captain Bluntschli out here when he knew quite well I was in the—hum!—library; and then he goes downstairs and breaks Raina's chocolate soldier. He must—(At this moment Nicola appears at the top of the steps R., with a carpet bag. He descends; places it respectfully before Bluntschli; and waits for

further orders. General amazement. Nicola, unconscious of the effect he is producing, looks perfectly satisfied with himself. When Petkoff recovers his power of speech, he breaks out at him with) Are you mad, Nicola?

NICOLA (taken aback). Sir?

PETKOFF. What have you brought that for?

NICOLA. My lady's orders, sir. Louka told me that-

CATHERINE (interrupting him). My orders! Why should I order you to bring Captain Bluntschli's luggage out here? What are you thinking of, Nicola?

NICOLA (after a moment's bewilderment, picking up the bag as he addresses Bluntschli with the very perfection of servile discretion). I beg your pardon, sir, I am sure. (To Catherine.) My fault, madam! I hope you'll overlook it! (He bows, and is going to the steps with the bag, when Petkoff addresses him angrily.)

PETKOFF. You'd better go and slam that bag, too, down on Miss Raina's ice pudding! (This is too much for Nicola. The bag drops from his hands on Petkoff's corns, eliciting a roar of anguish from him.) Begone, you butter-fingered donkey.

NICOLA (snatching up the bag, and escaping into the house). Yes, sir.

CATHERINE. Oh, never mind, Paul, don't be angry!

PETKOFF (muttering). Scoundrel. He's got out of hand while I was away. I'll teach him. (Recollecting his guest.) Oh, well, never mind. Come, Bluntschli, let's have no more nonsense about you having to go away. You know very well you're not going back to Switzerland yet. Until you do go back you'll stay with us.

RAINA. Oh, do, Captain Bluntschli.

PETKOFF (to Catherine). Now, Catherine, it's of you that he's afraid. Press him and he'll stay.

CATHERINE. Of course I shall be only too delighted if (appealingly) Captain Bluntschli really wishes to stay. He knows my

wishes.

BLUNTSCHLI (in his driest military manner). I am at madame's orders.

SERGIUS (cordially). That settles it!

PETKOFF (heartily). Of course!

RAINA. You see, you must stay!

BLUNTSCHLI (smiling). Well, If I must, I must! (Gesture of despair from Catherine.)

ACT III

In the library after lunch. It is not much of a library, its literary equipment consisting of a single fixed shelf stocked with old papers, covered novels, broken backed, coffee stained, torn and thumb-ed, and a couple of little hanging shelves with a few gift books on them, the rest of the wall space being occupied by trophies of war and the chase. But it is a most comfortable sitting-room. A row of three large windows in the front of the house shew a mountain panorama, which is just now seen in one of its softest aspects in the mellowing afternoon light. In the left hand corner, a square earthenware stove, a perfect tower of colored pottery, rises nearly to the ceiling and guarantees plenty of warmth. The ottoman in the middle is a circular bank of decorated cushions, and the window seats are well upholstered divans. Little Turkish tables, one of them with an elaborate hookah on it, and a screen to match them, complete the handsome effect of the furnishing. There is one object, however, which is hopelessly out of keeping with its surroundings. This is a small kitchen table, much the worse for wear, fitted as a writing table with an old canister full of pens, an eggcup filled with ink, and a deplorable scrap of severely used pink blotting paper.

At the side of this table, which stands on the right, Bluntschli is hard at work, with a couple of maps before him, writing orders. At the head of it sits Sergius, who is also supposed to be at work, but who is actually gnawing the feather of a pen, and contemplating Bluntschli's quick, sure, businesslike progress with a mixture of envious irritation at his own incapacity, and awestruck wonder at an ability which seems to him almost miraculous, though its prosaic character forbids him to esteem it. The major is comfortably established on the ottoman, with a newspaper in his hand and the tube of the hookah within his reach. Catherine sits at the stove, with

her back to them, embroidering. Raina, reclining on the divan under the left hand window, is gazing in a daydream out at the Balkan landscape, with a neglected novel in her lap.

The door is on the left. The button of the electric bell is between the door and the fireplace.

PETKOFF (looking up from his paper to watch how they are getting on at the table). Are you sure I can't help you in any way, Bluntschli?

BLUNTSCHLI (without interrupting his writing or looking up). Quite sure, thank you. Saranoff and I will manage it.

SERGIUS (grimly). Yes: we'll manage it. He finds out what to do; draws up the orders; and I sign 'em. Division of labour, Major. (Bluntschli passes him a paper.) Another one? Thank you. (He plants the papers squarely before him; sets his chair carefully parallel to them; and signs with the air of a man resolutely performing a difficult and dangerous feat.) This hand is more accustomed to the sword than to the pen.

PETKOFF. It's very good of you, Bluntschli, it is indeed, to let yourself be put upon in this way. Now are you quite sure I can do nothing?

CATHERINE (in a low, warning tone). You can stop interrupting, Paul.

PETKOFF (starting and looking round at her). Eh? Oh! Quite right, my love, quite right. (He takes his newspaper up, but lets it drop again.) Ah, you haven't been campaigning, Catherine: you don't know how pleasant it is for us to sit here, after a good lunch, with nothing to do but enjoy ourselves. There's only one thing I want to make me thoroughly comfortable.

CATHERINE. What is that?

PETKOFF. My old coat. I'm not at home in this one: I feel as if I were on parade.

CATHERINE. My dear Paul, how absurd you are about that old coat! It must be hanging in the blue closet where you left it.

PETKOFF. My dear Catherine, I tell you I've looked there. Am I to believe my own eyes or not? (Catherine quietly rises and presses the button of the electric bell by the fireplace.) What are you shewing off that bell for? (She looks at him majestically, and silently resumes her chair and her needlework.) My dear: if you think the obstinacy of your sex can make a coat out of two old dressing gowns of Raina's, your waterproof, and my mackintosh, you're mistaken. That's exactly what the blue closet contains at present. (Nicola presents himself.)

CATHERINE (unmoved by Petkoffs sally). Nicola: go to the blue closet and bring your master's old coat here—the braided one he usually wears in the house.

NICOLA. Yes, madam. (Nicola goes out.) PETKOFF. Catherine.

CATHERINE. Yes, Paul?

PETKOFF. I bet you any piece of jewellery you like to order from Sophia against a week's housekeeping money, that the coat isn't there.

CATHERINE. Done, Paul.

PETKOFF (excited by the prospect of a gamble). Come: here's an opportunity for some sport. Who'll bet on it? BLUNTSLI. I'll give you six to one.

BLUNTSLI (imperturbably). It would be robbing you, Major. Madame is sure to be right. (Without looking up, he passes another batch of papers to Sergius.)

SERGIUS (also excited). Bravo, Switzerland! Major: I bet my best charger against an Arab mare for Raina that Nicola finds the coat in the blue closet.

PETKOFF (eagerly). Your best char-

CATHERINE (hastily interrupting him). Don't be foolish, Paul. An Arabian mare will cost you 50,000 levas.

RAINA (suddenly coming out of her picturesque reverie). Really, mother, if you are going to take the jewellery, I don't see why you should grudge me my Arab.

(Nicola comes back with the coat and brings it to Petkoff, who can hardly believe his eyes.)

CATHERINE. Where was it, Nicola? NICOLA. Hanging in the blue closet, madam. PETKOFF. Well, I am d-CATHERINE (stopping him). Paul!

PETKOFF. I could have sworn it wasn't there. Age is beginning to tell on me. I'm getting hallucinations. (To Nicola.) Here: help me to change. Excuse me, Bluntschli. (He begins changing coats, Nicola acting as valet.) Remember: I didn't take that bet of yours, Sergius. You'd better give Raina that Arab steed yourself, since you've roused her expectations. Eh, Raina? (He looks round at her; but she is again rapt in the landscape. With a little gush of paternal affection and pride, he points her out to them and says) She's dreaming, as usual.

SERGIUS. Assuredly she shall not be the loser.

PETKOFF. So much the better for her. I shan't come off so cheap, I expect. (The change is now complete. Nicola goes out with the discarded coat.) Ah, now I feel at home at last. (He sits down and takes his newspaper with a grunt of relief.)

BLUNTSLI (to Sergius, handing a paper). That's the last order.

PETKOFF (jumping up). What! finished?

BLUNTSLI. Finished. (Petkoff goes beside Sergius; looks curiously over his left shoulder as he signs; and says with childlike envy) Haven't you anything for me to sign?

BLUNTSLI. Not necessary. His signature will do.

PETKOFF. Ah, well, I think we've done a thundering good day's work. (He goes away from the table.) Can I do anything more?

BLUNTSLI. You had better both see the fellows that are to take these. (To Sergius.) Pack them off at once; and shew them that I've marked on the orders the time they should hand them in by. Tell them that if they stop to drink or tell stories—if they're five minutes late, they'll have the skin taken off their backs.

SERGIUS (rising indignantly). I'll say so. And if one of them is man enough to spit in my face for insulting him, I'll buy his discharge and give him a pension. (He strides out, his humanity deeply outraged.)

BLUNTSCHLI (confidentially). Just see that he talks to them properly, Major, will you?

PETKOFF (officially). Quite right, Bluntschli, quite right. I'll see to it. (He goes to the door importantly, but hesitates on the threshold.) By the bye, Catherine, you may as well come, too. They'll be far more frightened of you than of me.

CATHERINE (putting down her embroidery). I daresay I had better. You will only splutter at them. (She goes out, Petkoff holding the door for her and following her.)

BLUNTSCHLI. What a country! They make cannons out of cherry trees; and the officers send for their wives to keep discipline! (He begins to fold and docket the papers. Raina, who has risen from the divan, strolls down the room with her hands clasped behind her, and looks mischievously at him.)

RAINA. You look ever so much nicer than when we last met. (He looks up, surprised.) What have you done to yourself?

BLUNTSCHLI. Washed; brushed; good night's sleep and breakfast. That's all.

RAINA. Did you get back safely that morning? BLUNTSCHLI. Quite, thanks.

RAINA. Were they angry with you for running away from Sergius's charge?

BLUNTSCHLI. No, they were glad; because they'd all just run away themselves.

RAINA (going to the table, and leaning over it towards him). It must have made a lovely story for them—all that about me and my room.

BLUNTSCHLI. Capital story. But I only told it to one of them—a particular friend.

RAINA. On whose discretion you could absolutely rely?
BLUNTSCHLI Absolutely.

RAINA. Hm! He told it all to my father and Sergius the day you exchanged the prisoners. (She turns away and strolls carelessly across to the other side of the room.)

BLUNTSCHLI (deeply concerned and half incredulous). No! you don't mean that, do you?

RAINA (turning, with sudden earnestness). I do indeed. But they don't know that it was in this house that you hid. If Sergius knew, he would challenge you and kill you in a duel.

BLUNTSCHLI. Bless me! then don't tell him.

RAINA (full of reproach for his levity). Can you realize what it is to me to deceive him? I want to be quite perfect with Sergius—no meanness, no smallness, no deceit. My relation to him is the one really beautiful and noble part of my life. I hope you can understand that.

BLUNTSCHLI (sceptically). You mean that you wouldn't like him to find out that the story about the ice pudding was a—a—a-You know.

RAINA (wincing). Ah, don't talk of it in that flippant way. I lied: I know it. But I did it to save your life. He would have killed you. That was the second time I ever uttered a falsehood. (Bluntschli rises quickly and looks doubtfully and somewhat severely at her.) Do you remember the first time?

BLUNTSCHLI. II No. Was I present?

RAINA. Yes; and I told the officer who was searching for you that you were not present.

BLUNTSCHLI. True. I should have remembered it.

RAINA (greatly encouraged). Ah, it is natural that you should forget

it first. It cost you nothing: it cost me a lie!—a lie!! (She sits down on the ottoman, looking straight before her with her hands clasped on her knee. Bluntschli, quite touched, goes to the ottoman with a particularly reassuring and considerate air, and sits down beside her.)

BLUNTSCHLI. My dear young lady, don't let this worry you. Remember: I'm a soldier. Now what are the two things that happen to a soldier so often that he comes to think nothing of them? One is hearing people tell lies (Raina recoils); the other is getting his life saved in all sorts of ways by all sorts of people.

RAINA (rising in indignant protest). And so he becomes a creature incapable of faith and of gratitude.

BLUNTSCHLI (making a wry face). Do you like gratitude? I don't. If pity is akin to love, gratitude is akin to the other thing.

RAINA. Gratitude! (Turning on him.) If you are incapable of gratitude you are incapable of any noble sentiment. Even animals are grateful. Oh, I see now exactly what you think of me! You were not surprised to hear me lie. To you it was something I probably did every day—every hour. That is how men think of women. (She walks up the room melodramatically.)

BLUNTSCHLI (dubiously). There's reason in everything. You said you'd told only two lies in your whole life. Dear young

lady: isn't that rather a short allowance? I'm quite a straightforward man myself; but it wouldn't last me a whole morning.

RAINA (staring haughtily at him). Do you know, sir, that you are insulting me?

BLUNTSCHLI. I can't help it. When you get into that noble attitude and speak in that thrilling voice, I admire you; but I find it impossible to believe a single word you say.

RAINA (superbly). Captain Bluntschli! BLUNTSCHLI (unmoved). Yes?

RAINA (coming a little towards him, as if she could not believe her

senses). Do you mean what you said just now? Do you know what you said just now?

BLUNTSCHLI. I do.

RAINA (gasping). Il W! (She points to herself incredulously, meaning "I, Raina Petkoff, tell lies!") He meets her gaze unflinchingly. She suddenly sits down beside him, and adds, with a complete change of manner from the heroic to the familiar) How did you find me out?

BLUNTSCHLI (promptly). Instinct, dear young lady. Instinct, and experience of the world.

RAINA (wonderingly). Do you know, you are the first man I ever met who did not take me seriously?

BLUNTSCHLI. You mean, don't you, that I am the first man that has ever taken you quite seriously?

RAINA. Yes, I suppose I do mean that. (Cosily, quite at her ease with him.) How strange it is to be talked to in such a way! You know, I've always gone on like that—I mean the noble attitude and the thrilling voice. I did it when I was a tiny child to my nurse. She believed in it. I do it before my parents. They believe in it. I do it before Sergius. He believes in it.

BLUNTSCHLI. Yes: he's a little in that line himself, isn't he? RAINA (startled). Do you think so?

BLUNTSCHLI. You know him better than I do.

RAINA. I wonder—I wonder is he? If I thought that—! (Discouraged.) Ah, well, what does it matter? I suppose, now that you've found me out, you despise me.

BLUNTSCHLI (warmly, rising). No, my dear young lady, no, no, no a thousand times. It's part of your youth—part of your charm. I'm like all the rest of them—the nurse—your parents-Sergius: I'm your infatuated admirer.

RAINA (pleased). Really?

BLUNTSCHLI (slapping his breast smartly with his hand, German fashion). Hand aufs Herz! Really and truly.

RAINA (very happy). But what did you think of me for giving you my portrait?

BLUNTSCHLI (astonished). Your portrait! You never gave me your portrait.

RAINA (quickly). Do you mean to say you never got it?

BLUNTSCHLI. No. (He sits down beside her, with renewed interest, and says, with some complacency.) When did you send it to me?

RAINA (indignantly). I did not send it to you. (She turns her head away, and adds, reluctantly.) It was in the pocket of that coat.

BLUNTSCHLI (pursing his lips and rounding his eyes). Oh-ooh! I never found it. It must be there still.

RAINA (springing up). There still!—for my father to find the first time he puts his hand in his pocket! Oh, how could you be so stupid?

BLUNTSCHLI (rising also). It doesn't matter: it's only a photograph: how can he tell who it was intended for? Tell him he put it there himself.

RAINA (impatiently). Yes, that is so clever—so clever! What shall I do?

BLUNTSCHLI. Ah, I see. You wrote something on it. That was rash!

RAINA (annoyed almost to tears). Oh, to have done such a thing for you, who care no more—except to laugh at me—oh! Are you sure nobody has touched it?

BLUNTSCHLI. Well, I can't be quite sure. You see I couldn't carry it about with me all the time: one can't take much luggage on active service.

RAINA. What did you do with it?

BLUNTSCHLI. When I got through to Peerot I had to put it in safe keeping somehow. I thought of the railway cloak room; but that's the surest place to get looted in modern warfare. So I pawned it.

RAINA. Pawned it!!!

BLUNTSCHLI. I know it doesn't sound nice; but it was much the safest plan. I redeemed it the day before yesterday. Heaven only knows whether the pawnbroker cleared out the pockets or not.

RAINA (furious—throwing the words right into his face). You have a low, shopkeeping mind. You think of things that would never come into a gentleman's head.

BLUNTSCHLI (phlegmatically). That's the Swiss national character, dear lady.

RAINA. Oh, I wish I had never met you. (She flounces away and sits at the window fuming.)

(Louka comes in with a heap of letters and telegrams on her salver, and crosses, with her bold, free gait, to the table. Her left sleeve is looped up to the shoulder with a brooch, shewing her naked arm, with a broad gilt bracelet covering the bruise.)

LOUKA (to Bluntschli). For you. (She empties the salver recklessly on the table.) The messenger is waiting. (She is determined not to be civil to a Servian, even if she must bring him his letters.)

BLUNTSCHLI (to Raina). Will you excuse me: the last postal delivery that reached me was three weeks ago. These are the subsequent accumulations. Four telegrams—a week old. (He opens one.) Oh! Bad news!

RAINA (rising and advancing a little remorsefully). Bad news?

BLUNTSCHLI. My father's dead. (He looks at the telegram with his lips pursed, musing on the unexpected change in his arrangements.)

RAINA. Oh, how very sad!

BLUNTSCHLI. Yes: I shall have to start for home in an hour. He has left a lot of big hotels behind him to be looked after. (Takes up a heavy letter in a long blue envelope.) Here's a whacking letter from the family solicitor. (He pulls out the enclosures and glances over them.) Great Heavens! Seventy! Two hundred! (In a crescendo of dismay.) Four hundred! Four thousand! Nine thousand six hundred!!! What on earth shall I do with them all?

RAINA (timidly). Nine thousand hotels?

BLUNTSCHLI. Hotels! Nonsense. If you only knew!—oh, it's too ridiculous! Excuse me: I must give my fellow orders about

starting. (He leaves the room hastily, with the documents in his hand.)

LOUKA (tauntingly). He has not much heart, that Swiss, though he is so fond of the Servians. He has not a word of grief for his poor father.

RAINA (bitterly). Grief!—a man who has been doing nothing but killing people for years! What does he care? What does any soldier care? (She goes to the door, evidently restraining her tears with difficulty.)

LOUKA. Major Saranoff has been fighting, too; and he has plenty of heart left. (Raina, at the door, looks haughtily at her and goes out.) Aha! I thought you wouldn't get much feeling out of your soldier. (She is following Raina when Nicola enters with an armful of logs for the fire.)

NICOLA (grinning amorously at her). I've been trying all the afternoon to get a minute alone with you, my girl. (His countenance changes as he notices her arm.) Why, what fashion is that of wearing your sleeve, child?

LOUKA (proudly). My own fashion.

NICOLA. Indeed! If the mistress catches you, she'll talk to you.

(He throws the logs down on the ottoman, and sits comfortably beside them.)

LOUKA. Is that any reason why you should take it on yourself to talk to me?

NICOLA. Come: don't be so contrary with me. I've some good news for you. (He takes out some paper money. Louka, with an eager gleam in her eyes, comes close to look at it.) See, a twenty leva bill! Sergius gave me that out of pure swagger. A fool and his money are soon parted. There's ten levas more. The Swiss gave me that for backing up the mistress's and Raina's lies about him. He's no fool, he isn't. You should have heard old Catherine downstairs as polite as you please to me, telling me not to mind the Major being a little impatient; for they knew what a good servant I was—after making a fool and a liar of me before them all! The twenty will go to our savings; and you shall have the ten to spend if you'll only talk to me so as to remind me I'm a human being. I get tired of being a servant occasionally.

LOUKA (scornfully). Yes: sell your manhood for thirty levas, and buy me for ten! Keep your money. You were born to be a servant. I was not. When you set up your shop you will only be everybody's servant instead of somebody's servant.

NICOLA (picking up his logs, and going to the stove). Ah, wait till you see. We shall have our evenings to ourselves; and I shall be master in my own house, I promise you. (He throws the logs down and kneels at the stove.)

LOUKA. You shall never be master in mine. (She sits down on Sergius's chair.)

NICOLA (turning, still on his knees, and squatting down rather forlornly, on his calves, daunted by her implacable disdain). You have a great ambition in you, Louka. Remember: if any luck comes to you, it was I that made a woman of you.

LOUKA. You!

NICOLA (with dogged self-assertion). Yes, me. Who was it made you give up wearing a couple of pounds of false black hair on your head and reddening your lips and cheeks like any other Bulgarian girl? I did. Who taught you to trim your nails, and keep your hands clean, and be dainty about yourself, like a fine Russian lady? Me! do you hear that? me! (She tosses her head defiantly; and he rises, ill-humoredly, adding more

coolly) I've often thought that if Raina were out of the way, and you just a little less of a fool and Sergius just a little more of one, you might come to be one of my grandest customers, instead of only being my wife and costing me money.

LOUKA. I believe you would rather be my servant than my husband. You would make more out of me. Oh, I know that soul of yours.

NICOLA (going up close to her for greater emphasis). Never you mind my soul; but just listen to my advice. If you want to be a lady, your present behaviour to me won't do at all, unless when we're alone. It's too sharp and imprudent; and impudence is a sort of familiarity: it shews affection for me. And don't you try being high and mighty with me either. You're like all country girls: you think it's genteel to treat a servant the way I treat a stable-boy. That's only your ignorance; and don't you forget it. And don't be so ready to defy everybody. Act as if you expected to have your own way, not as if you expected to be ordered about. The way to get on as a lady is the same as the way to get on as a servant: you've got to know your place; that's the secret of it. And you may depend on me to know my place if you get promoted. Think over it, my girl. I'll stand by you: one servant should always stand by another.

LOUKA (rising impatiently). Oh, I must behave in my own way. You take all the courage out of me with your coldblooded wisdom. Go and put those logs on the fire: that's the sort of thing you understand. (Before Nicola can retort, Sergius comes in. He checks himself a moment on seeing Louka; then goes to the stove.)

SERGIUS (to Nicola). I am not in the way of your work, I hope.

NICOLA (in a smooth, elderly manner). Oh, no, sir, thank you kindly. I was only speaking to this foolish girl about her habit of running up here to the library whenever she gets a chance, to look at the books. That's the worst of her education, sir: it gives her habits above her station. (To Louka.) Make that table tidy, Louka, for the Major. (He goes out sedately.)

(Louka, without looking at Sergius, begins to arrange the papers on the table. He crosses slowly to her, and studies the arrangement of her sleeve reflectively.)

SERGIUS. Let me see: is there a mark there? (He turns up the bracelet and sees the bruise made by his grasp. She stands motionless, not looking at him: fascinated, but on her guard.) Ffffl Does it hurt?

LOUKA. Yes.

SERGIUS. Shall I cure it?

LOUKA (instantly withdrawing herself proudly, but still not looking at him). No. You cannot cure it now.

SERGIUS (masterfully). Quite sure? (He makes a movement as if to take her in his arms.)

LOUKA. Don't trifle with me, please. An officer should not trifle with a servant.

SERGIUS (touching the arm with a merciless stroke of his forefinger). That was no trifle, Louka.

LOUKA. No. (Looking at him for the first time.) Are you sorry?

SERGIUS (with measured emphasis, folding his arms). I am never sorry.

LOUKA (wistfully). I wish I could believe a man could be so unlike a woman as that. I wonder are you really a brave man?

SERGIUS (unaffectedly, relaxing his attitude). Yes: I am a brave man. My heart jumped like a woman's at the first shot; but in the charge I found that I was brave. Yes: that at least is real about me.

LOUKA. Did you find in the charge that the men whose fathers are

poor like mine were any less brave than the men who are rich like you?

SERGIUS (with bitter levity.) Not a bit. They all slashed and cursed and yelled like heroes. Psha! the courage to rage and kill is cheap. I have an English bull terrier who has as much of that sort of courage as the whole Bulgarian nation, and the whole Russian nation at its back. But he lets my groom thrash him, all

the same. That's your soldier all over! No, Louka, your poor men can cut throats; but they are afraid of their officers; they put up with insults and blows; they stand by and see one another punished like children—aye, and help to do it when they are ordered. And the officers!—well (with a short, bitter laugh) I am an officer. Oh, (ferverently) give me the man who will defy to the death any power on earth or in heaven that sets itself up against his own will and conscience: he alone is the brave man.

LOUKA. How easy it is to talk! Men never seem to me to grow up; they all have schoolboy's ideas. You don't know what true courage is.

SERGIUS (ironically). Indeed! I am *willing to be instructed*.

LOUKA. Look at me! how much am I allowed to have my own will? I have to get your room ready for you—to sweep and dust, to fetch and carry. How could that degrade me if it did not degrade you to have it done for you? But (with subdued passion) if I were Empress of Russia, above everyone in the world, then—ah, then, though according to you I could shew no courage at all; you should see, you should see.

SERGIUS. What would you do, most noble Empress?

LOUKA. I would marry the man I loved, which no other queen in Europe has the courage to do. If I loved you, though you would be as far beneath me as I am beneath you, I would dare to be the equal of my inferior. Would you dare as much if you loved me? No: if you

felt the beginnings of love for me you would not let it grow. You dare not: you would marry a rich man's daughter because you would be afraid of what other people would say of you.

SERGIUS (carried away). You lie: it is not so, by all the stars! If I loved you, and I were the Czar himself, I would set you on the throne by my side. You know that I love another woman, a woman as high above you as heaven is above earth. And you are jealous of her.

LOUKA. I have no reason to be. She will never marry you now. The man I told you of has come back. She will marry the Swiss.

SERGIUS (recoiling). The Swiss!

LOUKA. A man worth ten of you. Then you can come to me; and I will refuse you. You are not good enough for me. (She turns to the door.)

SERGIUS (springing after her and catching her fiercely in his arms). I will kill the Swiss; and afterwards I will do as I please with you.

LOUKA (in his arms, passive and steadfast). The Swiss will kill you, perhaps. He has beaten you in love. He may beat you in war.

SERGIUS (tormentedly). Do you think I believe that she—she! whose worst thoughts are higher than your best ones, is capable of trifling with another man behind my back?

LOUKA. Do you think she would believe the Swiss if he told her now that I am in your arms?

SERGIUS (releasing her in despair). Damnation! Oh, damnation! Mockery, mockery everywhere: everything I think is mocked by everything I do. (He strikes himself frantically on the breast.) Coward, liar, fool! Shall I kill myself like a man, or live and pretend to laugh at myself? (She again turns to go.) Louka! (She stops near the door.) Remember: you belong to me.

LOUKA (quietly). What does that mean—an insult?

SERGIUS (commandingly). It means that you love me, and that I have had you here in my arms, and will perhaps have you there again. Whether that is an insult I neither know nor care: take it as

you please. But (vehemently) I will not be a coward and a trifler. I choose to love you, I dare marry you, in spite of all Bulgaria. These hands ever touch you again, they shall touch my affianced bride.

LOUKA. We shall see whether you dare keep your word. But take care. I will not wait long.

SERGIUS (again folding his arms and standing motionless in the middle of the room). Yes, we shall see. And you shall wait my pleasure.

(Bluntschli, much preoccupied, with his papers still in his hand, enters, leaving the door open for Louka to go out. He goes across to the table, glancing at her as he passes. Sergius, without altering his resolute attitude, watches him steadily. Louka goes out, leaving the door open.)

BLUNTSCHLI (absently, sitting at the table as before, and putting down his papers). That's a remarkable looking young woman.

SERGIUS (gravely, without moving). Captain Bluntschli.

BLUNTSCHLI. Eh?

SERGIUS. You have deceived me. You are my rival. I brook no rivals. At six o'clock I shall be in the drilling-ground on the Klissoura road, alone, on horseback, with my sabre. Do you understand?

BLUNTSCHLI (staring, but sitting quite at his ease). Oh, thank you, that's a cavalry man's proposal. I'm in the artillery; and I have the choice of weapons. If I go, I shall take a machine gun. And there shall be no mistake about the cartridges this time.

SERGIUS (flushing, but with deadly coldness). Take care, sir. It is not our custom in Bulgaria to allow invitations of that kind to be trifled with.

BLUNTSCHLI (warmly). Pooh! don't talk to me about Bulgaria. You don't know what fighting is. But have it your own way. Bring your sabre along. I'll meet you.

SERGIUS (fiercely delighted to find his opponent a man of spirit). Well said, Switzer. Shall I lend you my best horse?

BLUNTSCHLI. No: damn your horse!—thank you all the same, my dear fellow. (Raina comes in, and hears the next sentence.) I shall fight you on foot. Horseback's too dangerous: I don't want to kill you if I can help it.

RAINA (hurrying forward anxiously). I have heard what Captain Bluntschli said, Sergius. You are going to fight. Why? (Sergius turns away in silence, and goes to the stove, where he stands watching her as she continues, to Bluntschli) What about?

BLUNTSCHLI. I don't know: he hasn't told me. Better not interfere, dear young lady. No harm will be done: I've often acted as sword instructor. He won't be able to touch me; and I'll not hurt him. It will save explanations. In the morning I shall be off home; and you'll never see me or hear of me again. You and he will then make it up and live happily ever after.

RAINA (turning away deeply hurt, almost with a sob in her voice). I never said I wanted to see you again.

SERGIUS (striding forward). Ha! That is a confession. RAINA (haughtily). What do you mean? SERGIUS. You love that man!

RAINA (scandalized). Sergius!

SERGIUS. You allow him to make love to you behind my back, just as you accept me as your affianced husband behind his. Bluntschli: you knew our relations; and you deceived me. It is for that that I call you to account, not for having received favours that I never enjoyed.

BLUNTSCHLI (jumping up indignantly). Stuff! Rubbish! I have received no favours. Why, the young lady doesn't even know whether I'm married or not.

RAINA (forgetting herself). Oh! (Collapsing on the ottoman.) Are you?

SERGIUS. You see the young lady's concern, Captain Bluntschli. Denial is useless. You have enjoyed the privilege of being received in her own room, late at night—

BLUNTSCHLI (interrupting him pepperily). Yes; you blockhead! She received me with a pistol at her head. Your cavalry were at my heels. I'd have blown out her brains if she'd uttered a cry.

SERGIUS (taken aback). Bluntschli! Raina: is this true?

RAINA (rising in wrathful majesty). Oh, how dare you, how dare you?

BLUNTSCHLI. Apologize, man, apologize! (He resumes his seat at the table.)

SERGIUS (with the old measured emphasis, folding his arms). I never apologize.

RAINA (passionately). This is the doing of that friend of yours, Captain Bluntschli. It is he who is spreading this horrible story about me. (She walks about excitedly.)

BLUNTSCHLI. No: he's dead—burnt alive.

RAINA (stopping, shocked). Burnt alive!

BLUNTSCHLI. Shot in the hip in a wood yard. Couldn't drag himself out. Your fellows' shells set the timber on fire and burnt him, with half a dozen other poor devils in the same predicament.

RAINA. How horrible!

SERGIUS. And how ridiculous! Oh, war! war! the dream of patriots and heroes! A fraud, Bluntschli, a hollow sham, like love.

RAINA (outraged). Like love! You say that before me. BLUNTSCHLI. Come, Saranoff: that matter is explained.

SERGIUS. A hollow sham, I say. Would you have come back here if nothing had passed between you, except at the muzzle of your pistol? Raina is mistaken about our friend who was burnt. He was not my informant.

RAINA. Who then? (Suddenly guessing the truth.) Ah, Louka! my maid, my servant! You were with her this morning all that time after—after—Oh, what sort of god is this I have been worshipping! (He

meets her gaze with sardonic enjoyment of her disenchantment. Angered all the more, she goes closer to him, and says, in a lower, intenser tone) Do you know that I looked out of the window as I went upstairs, to have another sight of my hero; and I saw something that I did not understand then. I know now that you were making love to her.

SERGIUS (with grim humor). You saw that?

RAINA. Only too well. (She turns away, and throws herself on the divan under the centre window, quite overcome.)

SERGIUS (cynically). Raina: our romance is shattered. Life's a farce.

BLUNTSCHLI (to Raina, goodhumoredly). You see: he's found himself out now.

SERGIUS. Bluntschli: I have allowed you to call me a blockhead. You may now call me a coward as well. I refuse to fight you. Do you know why?

BLUNTSCHLI. No; but it doesn't matter. I didn't ask the reason when you cried on; and I don't ask the reason now that you cry off. I'm a professional soldier. I fight when I have to, and am very glad to get out of it when I haven't to. You're only an amateur: you think fighting's an amusement.

SERGIUS. You shall hear the reason all the same, my professional. The reason is that it takes two men—real men—men of heart, blood and honor—to make a genuine combat. I could no more fight with you than I could make love to an ugly woman. You've no magnetism: you're not a man, you're a machine.

BLUNTSCHLI (apologetically). Quite true, quite true. I always was that sort of chap. I'm very sorry. But now that you've found that life isn't a farce, but something quite sensible and serious, what further obstacle is there to your happiness?

RAINA (riling). You are very solicitous about my happiness and his. Do you forget his new love—Louka? It is not you that he must fight

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now, but his was, Nicola!

SERGIUS. Rivall! (Striking his forehead.)

RAINA. Did you not know that they are engaged? SERGIUS. Nicola! Are fresh abysses opening! Nicola! !

RAINA (sarcastically). A shocking sacrifice, isn't it? Such beauty, such intellect, such modesty, wasted on a middle-aged servant man! Really, Sergius, you cannot stand by and allow such a thing. It would be unworthy of your chivalry.

SERGIUS (losing all self-control). Viper! Viper! (He rushes to and fro, raging.)

BLUNTSCHLI. Look here, Saranoff; you're getting the worst of this.

RAINA (getting angrier). Do you realize what he has done, Captain Bluntschli? He has set this girl as a spy on us; and her reward is that he makes love to her.

SERGIUS. False! Monstrous!

RAINA. Monstrous! (Confronting him.) Do you deny that she told you about Captain Bluntschli being in my room?

Bluntschli, No, but

RAINA (interrupting). Do you deny that you were making love to

her when she told you?

SERGIUS. No; but I tell you-

RAINA (cutting him short contemptuously). It is unnecessary to tell us anything more. That is quite enough for us. (She turns her back on him and sweeps majestically back to the window.)

BLUNTSCHLI (quietly, as Sergius, in an agony of mortification, sinks on the ottoman, clutching his averted head between his fists). I told you you were getting the worst of it, Saranoff.

SERGIUS. Tiger cat!

RAINA (running excitedly to Bluntschli). You hear this man calling me names, Captain Bluntschli?

BLUNTSCHLI. What else can he do, dear lady? He must defend himself somehow. Come (very persuasively), don't quarrel. What good does it do? (Raina, with a gasp, sits down on the ottoman, and after a vain effort to look vexedly at Bluntschli, she falls a victim to her sense of humor, and is attacked with a disposition to laugh.)

SERGIUS. Engaged to Nicola! (He rises.) Ha! ha! (Going to the stove and standing with his back to it.) Ah, well, Bluntschli, you are right to take this huge imposture of a world coolly.

RAINA (to Bluntschli with an intuitive guess at his state of mind). I daresay you think us a couple of grown up babies, don't you?

SERGIUS (grinning a little). He does, he does. Swiss civilization nursetending Bulgarian barbarism, eh?

BLUNTSCHLI (blushing). Not at all, I assure you. I'm only very glad to get you two quieted. There now, let's be pleasant and talk it over in a friendly way. Where is this other young lady?

RAINA. Listening at the door, probably.

SERGIUS (shivering as if a bullet had struck him, and speaking with quiet but deep indignation). I will prove that that, at least, is a calumny. (He goes with dignity to the door and opens it. A yell of fury bursts from him as he looks out. He darts into the passage, and returns dragging in Louka, whom he flings against the table, R., as he cries) Judge her, Bluntschli-you, the moderate, cautious man: judge the eavesdropper.

(Louka stands her ground, proud and silent.)

BLUNTSCHLI (shaking his head). I mustn't judge her. I once listened myself outside a tent when there was a mutiny brewing. It's all a question of the degree of provocation. My life was at stake.

LOUKA. My love was at stake. (Sergius flinches, ashamed of her in spite of himself.) I am not ashamed.

RAINA (contemptuously). Your love! Your curiosity, you mean.

LOUKA (facing her and retorting her contempt with interest). My love, stronger than anything you can feel, even for your chocolate cream soldier.

SERGIUS (with quick suspicion—to Louka). What does that mean?

LOUKA (fiercely). It means—

SERGIUS (interrupting her slightly). Oh, I remember, the ice pudding. A paltry taunt, girl.

(Major Petkoff enters, in his shirtsleeves.)

PETKOFF. Excuse my shirtsleeves, gentlemen. Raina: somebody has been wearing that coat of mine: I'll swear it—somebody with bigger shoulders than mine. It's all burst open at the back. Your mother is mending it. I wish she'd make haste. I shall catch cold. (He looks more attentively at them.) Is anything the matter?

RAINA. No. (She sits down at the stove with a tranquil air.)

SERGIUS. Oh, no! (He sits down at the end of the table, as at first.)

BLUNTSCHLI (who is already seated). Nothing, nothing.

PETKOFF (sitting down on the ottoman in his old place). That's all right. (He notices Louka.) Anything the matter, Louka?

LOUKA. No, sir.

PETKOFF (genially). That's all right. (He sneezes.) Go and ask your mistress for my coat, like a good girl, will you? (She turns to obey; but Nicola enters with the coat; and she makes a pretence of having business in the room by taking the little table with the hookah away to the wall near the windows.)

RAINA (rising quickly, as she sees the coat on Nicola's arm). Here it is, papa. Give it to me, Nicola; and do you put some more wood on the fire. (She takes the coat, and brings it to the Major, who stands up to put it on. Nicola attends to the fire.)

PETKOFF (to Raina, teasing her affectionately). Aha! Going to be very good to poor old papa just for one day after his return from the wars, eh?

RAINA (with solemn reproach). Ah, how can you say that to me, father?

PETKOFF. Well, well, only a joke, little one. Come, give me a kiss. (She kisses him.) Now give me the coat.

RAINA. Now, I am going to put it on for you. Turn your back. (He turns his back and feels behind him with his arms for the sleeves. She dexterously takes the photograph from the pocket and throws it on the table before Bluntschli, who covers it with a sheet of paper under the very nose of Sergius, who looks on amazed, with his suspicions roused in the highest degree. She then helps Petkoff on with his coat.) There, dear! Now are you comfortable?

PETKOFF. Quite, little love. Thanks. (He sits down; and Raina returns to her seat near the stove.) Oh, by the bye, I've found

something funny. What's the meaning of this? (He put his hand into the picked pocket.) Eh? Hallo! (He tries the other pocket.) Well, I could have sworn—(Much puzzled, he tries the breast pocket.) I wonder—(Tries the original pocket.) Where can it—(A light flashes on him; he rises, exclaiming) Your mother's taken it.

RAINA (very red). Taken what?

PETKOFF. Your photograph, with the inscription: "Raina, to her Chocolate Cream Soldier—a souvenir." Now you know there's something more in this than meets the eye; and I'm going to find it out. (Shouting) Nicola!

NICOLA (dropping a log, and turning). Sir!

PETKOFF. Did you spoil any pastry of Miss Raina's this morning?

NICOLA. You heard Miss Raina say that I did, sir. PETKOFF. I know that, you idiot. Was it true?

NICOLA. I am sure Miss Raina is incapable of saying anything that

is not true, sir.

PETKOFF. Are you? Then I'm not. (Turning to the others.) Come: do you think I don't see it all? (Goes to Sergius, and slaps him on the shoulder.) Sergius: you're the chocolate cream soldier, aren't you?

SERGIUS (starting up). Il a chocolate cream soldier! Certainly not.

PETKOFF. Not! (He looks at them. They are all very serious and very conscious.) Do you mean to tell me that Raina sends photographic souvenirs to other men?

SERGIUS (enigmatically). The world is not such an innocent place as we used to think, Petkoff.

BLUNTSCHLI (rising). It's all right, Major. I'm the chocolate cream soldier. (Petkoff and Sergius are equally astonished.) The gracious young lady saved my life by giving me chocolate creams when I was starving—shall I ever forget their flavour! My late friend Stolz told you the story at Peerot. I was the fugitive.

PETKOFF. You! (He gasps.) Sergius: do you remember how those two women went on this morning when we mentioned it? (Sergius smiles cynically. Petkoff confronts Raina severely.) You're a nice young woman, aren't you?

RAINA (bitterly). Major Saranoff has changed his mind. And when I wrote that on the photograph, I did not know that Captain Bluntschli was married.

BLUNTSCHLI (much startled protesting vehemently). I'm not married.

RAINA (with deep reproach). You said you were.

BLUNTSCHLI I did not. I positively did not. I never was married in my life.

PETKOFF (exasperated). Raina: will you kindly inform me, if I am not asking too much, which gentleman you are engaged to?

RAINA. To neither of them. This young lady (introducing Louka,

who faces them all proudly) is the object of Major Saranoffs affections at present.

PETKOFF. Louka! Are you mad, Sergius? Why, this girl's engaged to Nicola.

NICOLA (coming forward). I beg your pardon, sir. There is a mistake. Louka is not engaged to me.

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

NICOLA (with cool uncton). We gave it out so, sir. But it was only to give Louka protection. She had a soul above her station; and I have been no more than her confidential servant. I intend, as you know, sir, to set up a shop later on in Sofea; and I look forward to her custom and recommendation should she marry into the nobility. (He goes out with impressive discretion, leaving them all staring after him.)

PETKOFF (breaking the silence). Well, I am —hml

SERGIUS. This is either the finest heroism or the most crawling baseness. Which is it, Bluntschli?

BLUNTSCHLI Never mind whether it's heroism or baseness. Nicola's the ablest man I've met in Bulgaria. I'll make him manager of a hotel if he can speak French and German.

LOUKA (suddenly breaking out at Sergius). I have been insulted by everyone here. You set them the example. You owe me an apology. (Sergius immediately, like a repeating clock of which the spring has been touched, begins to fold his arms.)

BLUNTSCHLI (before he can speak). It's no use. He never apologizes.

LOUKA. Not to you, his equal and his enemy. To me, his poor servant, he will not refuse to apologize.

SERGIUS (approvingly). You are right. (He bends his knee in his grandest manner.) Forgive me!

LOUKA. I forgive you. (She timidly gives him her hand, which he kisses.) That touch makes me your affianced wife.

SERGIUS (springing up). Ah, I forgot that! LOUKA (coldly). You can withdraw if you like.

SERGIUS. Withdraw! Never! You belong to me! (He puts his arm about her and draws her to him.) (Catherine comes in and finds Louka in Sergius's arms, and all the rest gazing at them in bewildered astonishment.)

CATHERINE. What does this mean? (Sergius releases Louka.)

PETKOFF. Well, my dear, it appears that Sergius is going to marry Louka instead of Raina. (She is about to break out indignantly at him: he stops her by exclaiming testily.) Don't blame me: I've nothing to do with it. (He retreats to the stove.)

CATHERINE. Marry Louka! Sergius: you are bound by your word to us!

SERGIUS (folding his arms). Nothing binds me.

BLUNTSCHLI (much pleased by this piece of common sense). Saranoff: your hand. My congratulations. These heroics of yours have their practical side after all. (To Louka.) Gracious young lady: the best wishes of a good Republican! (He kisses her hand, to Raina's great disgust.)

CATHERINE (threateningly). Louka: you have been telling stories.

LOUKA. I have done Raina no harm.

CATHERINE (haughtily). Raina! (Raina is equally indignant at the liberty.)

LOUKA. I have a right to call her Raina: she calls me Louka. I told Major Saranoff she would never marry him if the Swiss gentleman came back.

BLUNTSCHLI (surprised). Hallo!

LOUKA (turning to Raina). I thought you were fonder of him than of Sergius. You know best whether I was right.

BLUNTSCHLI. What nonsense! I assure you, my dear Major, my dear Madame, the gracious young lady simply saved my life, nothing else. She never cared two straws for me. Why, bless my heart and soul, look at the young lady and look at me. She, rich, young, beautiful, with her imagination full of fairy princes and noble natures and cavalry charges and goodness knows what! And I, a common-place Swiss soldier who hardly knows what a decent life is after fifteen years of barracks and battles—a vagabond—a man who has spoiled all his chances in life through an incurably romantic disposition—a man—

SERGIUS (starting as if a needle had pricked him and interrupting Bluntschli in incredulous amazement). Excuse me, Bluntschli: what did you say had spoiled your chances in life?

BLUNTSCHLI (promptly). An incurably romantic disposition. I ran away from home twice when I was a boy. I went into the army instead of into my father's business. I climbed the balcony of this house when a man of sense would have dived into the nearest cellar. I came sneaking back here to have another look at the young lady when any other man of my age would have sent the coat back—

PETKOFF. My coat!

BLUNTSCHLI.—Yes: that's the coat I mean—would have sent it back and gone quietly home. Do you suppose I am the sort of fellow a young girl falls in love with? Why, look at our ages! I'm thirty-four: I don't suppose the young lady is much over seventeen. (This estimate produces a marked sensation, all the rest turning and staring at one another. He proceeds innocently.) All that adventure which was life or death to me, was only a schoolgirl's game to her—chocolate creams and hide

and seek. Here's the proof! (He takes the photograph from the table.) Now, I ask you, would a woman who took the affair seriously have sent me this and written on it: "Raina, to her chocolate cream soldier—a souvenir"? (He exhibits the photograph triumphantly, as if it settled the matter beyond all possibility of refutation.)

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BLUNTSCHLI (surprised). Hallo!

LOUKA (turning to Raina). I thought you were fonder of him than of Sergius. You know best whether I was right.

BLUNTSCHLI. What nonsense! I assure you, my dear Major, my dear Madame, the gracious young lady simply saved my life, nothing else. She never cared two straws for me. Why, bless my heart and soul, look at the young lady and look at me. She, rich, young, beautiful, with her imagination full of fairy princes and noble natures and cavalry charges and goodness knows what! And I, a common-place Swiss soldier who hardly knows what a decent life is after fifteen years of barracks and battles—a vagabond—a man who has spoiled all his chances in life through an incurably romantic disposition—a man—

SERGIUS (starting as if a needle had pricked him and interrupting Bluntschli in incredulous amazement). Excuse me, Bluntschli: what did you say had spoiled your chances in life?

BLUNTSCHLI (promptly). An incurably romantic disposition. I ran away from home twice when I was a boy. I went into the army instead of into my father's business. I climbed the balcony of this house when a man of sense would have dived into the nearest cellar. I came sneaking back here to have another look at the young lady when any other man of my age would have sent the coat back—

PETKOFF. My coat!

BLUNTSCHLI.—Yes: that's the coat I mean—would have sent it back and gone quietly home. Do you suppose I am the sort of fellow a young girl falls in love with? Why, look at our ages! I'm thirty-four: I don't suppose the young lady is much over seventeen. (This estimate produces a marked sensation, all the rest turning and staring at one another. He proceeds innocently.) All that adventure which was life or death to me, was only a schoolgirl's game to her—chocolate creams and hide

and seek. Here's the proof! (He takes the photograph from the table.) Now, I ask you, would a woman who took the affair seriously have sent me this and written on it: "Raina, to her chocolate cream soldier—a souvenir"? (He exhibits the photograph triumphantly, as if it settled the matter beyond all possibility of refutation.)

PETKOFF. That's what I was looking for. How the deuce did it get there?

BLUNTSCHLI (to Raina complacently). I have put everything right, I hope, gracious young lady!

RAINA (in uncontrollable vexation). I quite agree with your account of yourself. You are a romantic idiot. (Bluntschli is unspeakably taken aback.) Next time I hope you will know the difference between a schoolgirl of seventeen and a woman of twenty-three.

BLUNTSCHLI (stupefied). Twenty-three! (She snaps the photograph contemptuously from his hand; tears it across; and throws the pieces at his feet.)

SERGIUS (with grim enjoyment of Bluntschli's discomfiture). Bluntschli: my one last belief is gone. Your sagacity is a fraud, like all the other things. You have less sense than even I have.

BLUNTSCHLI (overwhelmed). Twenty-three! Twenty-three! (He considers.) Hm! (Swiftly making up his mind.) In that case, Major Petkoff, I beg to propose formally to become a suitor for your daughter's hand, in place of Major Saranoff retired.

RAINA. You dare!

BLUNTSCHLI. If you were twenty-three when you said those things to me this afternoon, I shall take them seriously.

CATHERINE (loftily polite). I doubt, sir, whether you quite realize either my daughter's position or that of Major Sergius Saranoff, whose place you propose to take. The Petkoffs and the Saranoffs are known as the richest and most important families in the country. Our position is almost historical: we can go back for nearly twenty years.

PETKOFF. Oh, never mind that, Catherine. (To Bluntschli.) We should be most happy, Bluntschli, if it were only a question of your position; but hang it, you know, Raina is accustomed to a very comfortable establishment. Sergius keeps twenty horses.

BLUNTSCHLI. But what on earth is the use of twenty horses? Why, it's a circus.

CATHERINE (severely). My daughter, sir, is accustomed to a first-rate stable.

RAINA. Hush, mother, you're making me ridiculous.

BLUNTSCHLI. Oh, well, if it comes to a question of an establishment, here goes! (He goes impetuously to the table and seizes the papers in the blue envelope.) How many horses did you say?

SERGIUS. Twenty, noble Switzer!

BLUNTSCHLI. I have two hundred horses. (They are amazed.) How many carriages?

SERGIUS. Three.

BLUNTSCHLI. I have seventy. Twenty-four of them will hold twelve inside, besides two on the box, without counting the driver and conductor. How many tablecloths have you?

SERGIUS. How the deuce do I know?

BLUNTSCHLI. Have you four thousand?

SERGIUS. NO.

BLUNTSCHLI. I have. I have nine thousand six hundred pairs of sheets and blankets, with two thousand four hundred eiderdown quilts. I have ten thousand knives and forks, and the same quantity of dessert spoons. I have six hundred servants. I have six palatial establishments, besides two livery stables, a tea garden and a private house. I have four medals for distinguished services; I have the rank of an officer and the standing of a gentleman; and I have three native languages. Show me any man in Bulgaria that can offer as much.

PETKOFF (with childish awe). Are you Emperor of Switzerland?

BLUNTSCHLI. My rank is the highest known in Switzerland: I'm a free citizen.

CATHERINE. Then Captain Bluntschli, since you are my daughter's

choice, I shall not stand in the way of her happiness. (Petkoff is about to speak.) That is Major Petkoffs feeling also.

PETKOFF. Oh, I shall be only too glad. Two hundred horses! Whew!

SERGIUS. What says the lady?

RAINA (pretending to sulk). The lady says that he can keep his tablecloths and his omnibuses. I am not here to be sold to the highest bidder.

BLUNTSCHLI. I won't take that answer. I appealed to you as a fugitive, a beggar, and a starving man. You accepted me. You gave me your hand to kiss, your bed to sleep in, and your roof to shelter me-

RAINA (interrupting him). I did not give them to the Emperor of Switzerland!

BLUNTSCHLI. That's just what I say. (He catches her hand quickly and looks her straight in the face as he adds, with confident mastery) Now tell us who you did give them to.

RAINA (succumbing with a shy smile). To my chocolate cream soldier!

BLUNTSCHLI (with a boyish laugh of delight). That'll do. Thank you. (Looks at his watch and suddenly becomes businesslike.) Time's up, Major. You've managed those regiments so well that you are sure to be asked to get rid of some of the Infantry of the Teemok division. Send them home

by way of Lom Palanka. Saranoff: don't get married until I come back: I shall be here punctually at five in the evening on Tuesday fortnight. Gracious ladies—good evening. (He makes them a military bow, and goes.)

SERGIUS. What a man! What a man!

SUMMARY OF ACT -I

Act I opens in a small town of Bulgaria near the Dragoman Pass in late November 1885. It is night time and the scene is set in a lady's bedroom. A beautiful scenery of the Balkans is described in almost picture postcard perfection. '...wonder fully white and beautiful in the starlit snow, seems quite close at hand, though it is really miles away,' as the mountains which appear from Raina's balcony seems like a setting for a fairy tale like romance and at the same time establishes the theme of appearance and reality or the illusion inherent in this theatrical setting. The description of the interior of the room reveals that it is filled with contradictions to which the playwright draws our attention. It is half rich Bulgarian and half cheap Viennese. Everything oriental in the room is gorgeous and everything occidental is paltry; the dressing table is of common pine but the mirror on it is expensive. The figure of Christ dominates the walls while the chest of drawers are dominated by the photograph on an easel of a very handsome and dashing officer of the Bulgarian army. Beside it there are several paper backed novels, and a box of chocolate cream biscuits. Specific historical and geographical information in the stage direction serves to contrast the almost unreal perfection of the scenic beauty.

When the action unfolds we are told that, news had arrived from the war where Sergius, Raina's fiancé, the officer whose photograph adorns her chest of drawers, has become 'the idol of the regiment' because of his brave attack on the Serbs. The word 'idol' connotes worship, the uppermost sentiment in Raina's mind as she learns of his heroism. She and her mother Catherine are ecstatic over their victory and Raina observes that their ideas of what Sergius would do, their patriotism and their heroic ideals had all been proved

true. Raina and Sergius had founded their ideas and their relationship from their reading of Byron and Pushkin and the opera. She is filled with contentment because she knows now that he is as heroic and wonderful as he looked. At that moment a servant girl who looked handsome, proud and pretty unlike most maids enters to tell them that the Serbian soldiers were on the run and they might try to take refuge in their locality and so were being warned by their own soldiers to keep doors and windows locked as a precaution. Catherine exits to secure her household while Louka follows her but shows Raina that a bolt from her window was missing and it could be opened with a push. Raina is left alone in the room. She goes to the chest of drawers and picks up her fiancé's portrait with feelings which the dramatist describes in the following way, 'She does not kiss it or press it to her breast, or shew it any mark of bodily affection; but she takes it in her hands and elevates it, like a priestess.' She murmurs the words 'my hero! my hero!' selects a novel and settles down to read until she falls asleep. Raina's world is based on fiction not on reality. Her reactions and impulses are romantic and she has no idea that her idea of Sergius's world is too theatrical to be true. She does not realize the actual pressure of living in a real world inhabited by *Sergius where death and destruction are very real.*

Raina is faced with reality soon after when a fugitive enters her room through a window opening to her balcony. Bluntschli, the Serbian fugitive is referred to as 'a man's voice, a voice' and lastly 'the man' until the end of the first act. He is drawn realistically and he speaks bluntly; a sort of person whom Raina has never come across. He forces her at gun-point to hide him because if their officers caught him he would be slaughtered like a pig. He resorts to snatching away her night gown as he believes it would be his best defence to keep unknown soldiers out of a modest woman's bedroom to which Raina characteristically and predictably replies, 'It is not the weapon of a gentleman.' But The soldier replies without shame, 'It is good enough for a man with only you to stand between him and death.' Soon a knock on her door confirms the arrival of the Bulgarian soldiers and the fugitive realizing that his time has come

gives her robe back to her and prepares to defend himself. But Raina decides to help him and hides him behind a curtain; throws aside the robe which she had donned a moment ago and affecting a sleepy and disturbed air opens the door. A Russian Officer in a Bulgarian uniform searches the room and unbelievably does not notice the fugitive's revolver lying on the ottoman. However it is observed by Louka who is insolent enough to let Raina know—silently—that she is aware of the fugitive hiding behind the curtain. Once the officers leave, the fugitive thanks Raina gallantly declaring that he will serve her until death. He tells her that he is not a Serb but a Swiss, a professional soldier who had joined the Serbs because their country was the nearest on his way from Switzerland. The Man is so refreshingly genuine that as they converse most of Raina's cherished ideals of manhood begin to crumble. He tells her that his revolver is not loaded; he has no ammunition and adds, 'What use are cartridges in battle? I always carry chocolate instead.' He tells her that he is hungry and Raina goes scornfully to her bedside and offers the chocolate cream biscuits lying there. The man wolfs them down and searches for more scraping the box with his fingers and sucking them. He tells Raina, 'You can always tell an old soldier by the inside of his holsters and cartridge boxes. The young ones carry pistols and cartridges and the old ones grub.' Raina is shocked and declares that she is braver than him and is further alarmed by his reply that they have been under constant fire for three days and even though he was a professional soldier he could bear only two days of fire, exceeding which he was as frightened as a mouse. He asked her if she wanted to see him cry because all she needed to do was to scold him gently. Raina is immediately sympathetic but becomes enthusiastic when he begins to narrate the cavalry charge which she knows had been led by Sergius. The Man calls it the most unprofessional strike that he had ever witnessed because the Bulgarian had led his men into a death trap. Sheer good luck had saved them because the Serbs had been supplied with wrong ammunition which made them defenceless against the onslaught. However he describes Sergius and his seemingly glorious charge in an appropriately grand

manner. 'He did it like an operatic tenor. A regular handsome fellow, with flashing eyes and lovely moustache, shouting his war-cry and charging like Don Quixote at the windmills.' Raina shows him Sergius's photograph and the Man recognizes him for the officer who had led the charge and who in his opinion ought to be court-martialled for his ignorance. He is filled with remorse when he realizes that Raina is connected to Sergius in some way and tries to minimize the harm already done. She however tells him to leave the way he had entered her room but is drawn once again to the soldier when he declares that climbing down the pipe made him feel giddy. She names him her Chocolate cream soldier and goes down to seek her mother's help as she is at her wits end and did not know how to send him safely on his way. While she goes out of the room to bring her mother the fugitive falls asleep on her bed. Catherine is anxious and tries to shake him awake but Raina gives herself away when she tells her mother that he should be allowed to sleep as 'the poor darling is worn out'. Her mother is amazed and shocked at her sympathy and warns her sternly against any emotion towards the Man.

It is apparent that the meeting of Raina and Bluntschile is one of opposites. Raina lives in her unreal world and manages to include the practical soldier Bluntschile into it. He becomes her *chocolate cream soldier* and decides to offer him safety and hospitality; an idea which she derives from the opera Ernani. She expects Bluntschile to know about it but realizes that her concept of honour and hospitality is meaningless to him. Nevertheless Raina is unable to keep him at a distance emotionally.

SUMMARY OF ACT-II

The specific date of sixth of March, 1886 on which Act II begins makes it historically real and significant. It unfolds in Major Petkoff's fresh and pretty garden on a fine spring morning. But in contrast to this feeling of joy and freedom, 'A few miles further the Balkan mountains rise and shut in the landscape' as if what seems to be idyllic may not be true. Several complications develop in Act II.

The fruit bushes along the boundary of the house are covered with washing spread out to dry. It reinforces the impression of the Petkoff's social ambiguity which had been established with the description of Raina's room which lacked harmony. The garden is fitted with a table and two chairs on which the remnants of a breakfast can be seen. Louka and Nicola two servants are conversing beside it. Nicola is a middle aged bald man servant who knows and accepts his station in life and takes pride 'on his rank to servitude'. In contrast Louka the servant girl is smoking a cigarette and is listening to the man's lecture with apparent disdain. Nicola has no illusions whereas Louka is defiant and is not willing to be subservient to her situation. They are supposed to marry and Nicola urges her to be more respectful to her employers as that was what was expected of her and which would be more beneficial to her. Louka does not agree and their conversation ends only with the arrival of their master Major Petkoff.

As The master of the household returns from war, his wife Catherine comes down hurriedly to welcome him but contrary to expectation her welcome is not as effusive as one would imagine for a husband who has returned safely from war. She is hastily attired in a Bulgarian apron and half worn out dressing gown but she looks surprisingly 'handsome and stately'. She stoops over the back of her husband's chair to kiss him but becomes highly agitated when she

learns that a treaty was signed three days ago in Bucharest by which the army had been demobilized and the war had come to an end. She declares that if she had her way she would never have opted for peace; 'You could have annexed Serbia and made Prince Alexander Emperor of the Balkans. That's what I would have done.' She is mollified only when her husband tells her that he had missed her and did not wish to remain any longer away from her. The irony in his words 'But I should have had to subdue the whole Austrian Empire first;' is totally lost on her. Both Catherine and her daughter Raina are too romantic with a glorified view of honour and war; The reality, the practical suffering of war has no bearing on their conception of war. This outlook is reinforced when she asks her husband whether he had behaved appropriately before the Russian soldiers and her inordinate pride in her installation of the electric bell. Though Petkoff seems a dim witted person he too shows his worth when he counters Catherine's claim of not shouting for servants by civilized person with, 'Civilized people don't hang out their washing to dry where their visitors can see it; so you'd better have all that (indicating the clothes on the bushes) put somewhere else.'

Their tete-a-tete is interrupted by the arrival of Major Sergius Saranoff. He looks as tall, handsome and energetic as the picture in Raina's bedroom. Stage directions describe him in the following manner, 'The result is precisely what the advent of nineteenth century *thought first produced in England*: to wit, Byronism. By his brooding on the perpetual failure, not only of others, but of himself to live up to his ideals: by his consequent cynical scorn for humanity: by his jejune credulity to the absolute validity of his concepts and the unworthiness of the world disregarding them; by his wincings and mockeries under the sting of the petty disillusion which every hour spent among men brings to his sensitive observation, he has acquired the half tragic, the half ironic air, the mysterious moodiness, the suggestion of a strange and terrible history that has left nothing but undying remorse, by which Childe Harold fascinated the grandmothers of his English contemporaries.' A third chair is brought

for him and he tells them of the great mistake he had committed on the battle-field which had cost him his career in the army from which he had therefore resigned. The Petkoffs are surprised to hear the outcome of what at least Catherine and Raina had believed was a magnificent cavalry charge. Sergius informs them, 'I won the battle the wrong way while our worthy generals were losing it the right way.' In short he had begun and ended his run in the army with that single charge. He wishes to meet Raina and she appears on cue eliciting admiration from her father but an irritated rejoinder from his wife that she had the abominable habit of eavesdropping on conversations.

Raina and Sergius's meeting at this moment is reminiscent of Catherine's meeting with her husband as both of them are formal and correct in their behavior as if they are performers in a well orchestrated opera. He informs her of his resignation from the army and puts forth his cynical perception of war, 'Soldering... is the coward's art of attacking mercilessly when you are strong, and keeping out of harm's way when you are weak. That is the whole secret of successful fighting. Get your enemy at a disadvantage; and never, on any account fight him on equal terms.' He also tells them he will never withdraw the resignation as it was not in his character to withdraw from anything. Further complications arise when Petkoff asks Sergius to narrate the 'queer' story of the Swiss officer from the enemy camp who had escaped from the Bulgarians with the help of two Bulgarian ladies who had bundled him off with the master's old coat while he was fighting in the war. Unknown to the two men the two ladies are shocked at the Swiss soldier's indiscretion and to cover up their anxiety leaves the table as if their insensitive tale had deeply shocked them. When he meets her next they are tactfully left alone by the elder Petkoffs. A romantic scene follows but their love is of the highest order, almost sublime with Raina calling Sergius her king, hero, lord and Sergius referring to her as his queen, and saint. Their embrace lacks the passion associated with lovers reunited after a long separation and after returning from war. They are interrupted by Louka and Raina leaves the room to fetch

her hat prior to going out. Left alone with Louka Sergius's 'face radiant with the loftiest exaltation' changes dramatically and is replaced by a stealthy look. He begins to 'twirl his moustache mischievously with his left hand akimbo on his hip.' He strikes his heels in a swagger and strolls over to Louka and deliberately involves her in conversation by asking her if she knew anything about higher love. He confides that it is very exhausting and that some relief was needed after it as if he wanted to rationalize his own action of trying to seduce her, 'What would the half dozen Sergiuses who keep popping in and out of this handsome figure of mine say if they caught us here?' Louka resists his advances and confronts him with the awful truth that he was making love to her behind Raina's back and she was doing the same behind his. She further let him know that this was so for all so called 'gentlefolk' in the same way in which Sergius had placed her in the lower strata of society because of her ignorance of higher love. She attacks his double standards when he kisses her behind Raina's back but will not allow her to speak scathingly about the higher love he shares with Raina. When he learns through Louka about Raina's lover he is jealous and condemns Louka for making him a party to her eavesdropping and thereby staining his honour to which Louka responds with a spirited rejoinder, 'she's a liar; and her fine airs are a cheat; and I am worth six of her'. She is courageous enough to present her arm to be kissed by him as an apology for his misbehavior but Sergius moves away from her. Raina returns and they are about to go out when he is called into the house by Catherine because Petkoff required some assistance in his work. Catherine and Raina are amazed at the manner in which the Swiss soldier had betrayed their trust. Catherine wishes that the matter never comes to light while Raina flippantly says that she wouldn't care even if the truth is discovered.

At that very moment Louka comes to announce the arrival of a Serb who wanted to meet the lady of the house. Catherine realizes immediately that the fugitive from that night had come to return the coat. She takes a lot of precaution to show him out of the house without the knowledge of her husband but Petkoff himself

runs down from the library as he had seen him enter the house through the window. Petkoff believes that he is the right person to help him solve his problem of deployment of three cavalry regiments to Philippopolis. Bluntschile grasps the difficulty at once but hesitates to accept his invitation to lunch as he is aware that his presence is not welcomed by Catherine. However Petkoff persuades her to invite him and as he is about to mount the steps to the house when Raina sees him and involuntarily exclaims 'the chocolate cream soldier'. Everyone is shocked at her exclamation but Catherine manages to save the situation. Raina's explanation of Nicola spoiling her chocolate cream pudding makes Petkoff suspicious and he declares that Nicola must have taken to drinking because he had shown a guest to the stables and then had broken Raina's creation. As he speaks Nicola appears at the top of the steps carrying the bag which Bluntschile had carried the coat in and places it beside him. There ensues a hilarious scene where Nicola is unaware of the amazement that his action produces until Petkoff wants an explanation and he assures him that he was working under the Mistress's instructions. Catherine feigns ignorance which the perfect servant Nicola understands and apologises for his mistake to everyone. But Petkoff in a rage calls after him to slam the bag down on Raina's ice pudding which is too much for even Nicola to bear and he drops the bag in agitation evoking a roar of anger from his master. He disappears as soon as possible with the bag. Catherine and Raina try their best to pacify Petkoff. Molified somewhat he invites Bluntschile to stay in their house as their guest and Catherine too extends her welcome which their guest accepts.

SUMMARY OF ACT -III

Act III resolves most of the complications which had arisen in Act II. The scene is set in the library. The time is early afternoon after lunch. Elaborate stage directions place the people who are in the room, each occupied with their individual work. Mr. and Mrs. Petkoff, Raina, Sergius and Bluntschile are all sitting in the library which does not boast of a good or recent stock of books. But it is warm and comfortable. The Balkan mountains can be seen through the windows of the room; the walls are decorated with trophies of war and hunting expeditions. There is a kitchen table in the middle of the room where Bluntschile is engrossed in doing his work. Sergius is sitting beside him, idly, because he realizes that Bluntschile does not require help from him as he was a far more efficient and knowledgeable officer than he could ever hope to be. Major Petkoff occupies the ottoman in the room and is busy reading a newspaper. Catherine is embroidering while Raina is supposed to be reading a book but is actually daydreaming with her eyes on the Balkans through windows.

Major Petkoff declares the day to be perfect with nothing to do except taking rest but he states that he would have felt much more at home with his old coat on his shoulders than the one he was forced to wear as his old coat was missing. There follows a humorous scene where the irony is on the master of the house for apart from him everyone else knows that some misadventure had taken place in the household. Catherine presses the electric bell to call Nicola and instructs him to bring The master's coat which was hanging in blue closet. Nicola being the perfect servant that he is, goes and brings the coat which Bluntschile has returned just a few hours ago. Petkoff who was sure that his coat was missing had announced that he would buy his wife a piece of jewellery if he lost against a month's household

money if she lost. Bluntschile does not allow himself to be drawn into the bet but Sergius enters the fray by announcing against Petkoff that he would gift Raina an Arab mare from Petkoff's stable against his best charger that the coat would be found in the closet. Nicola reenters the room with the coat much to the major's amazement. Meanwhile Bluntschile completes all the orders that were to be drawn and instructs Sergius that it would be best if he gave his orders immediately to the concerned regiments. Sergius stands up at once and leaves the room; Bluntschile advises Petkoff to go along with Sergius who in turn asks his wife to go along with him as he knows that the men were more likely to listen to her than to him. Catherine accompanies him and Bluntschile observes disparagingly, 'What an army! They make cannons out of cherry trees, and the officers send for their wives to keep discipline.'

Raina who had so far been silent advances towards Bluntschile with a mischievous look and carries on a conversation with him from the moment they had left off when Bluntschile had been an enemy and fugitive. Raina accuses him of being ungrateful for he had narrated the entire incident of his narrow escape to his friend who in turn had divulged it to Petkoff and Sergius. She tells him that she had not been disgraced and he had not been challenged to a duel only because they were not aware of the identity of the two women. Raina is agitated because she had spoken two lies on his behalf when she wanted her marriage to Sergius to be as perfect as possible. Her idealism does not affect Bluntschile who remains practical as ever. He reveals that he understands her histrionics for what it actually was and practically exposes her as a liar. Paradoxically, this exposure is accepted calmly by her after an initial outburst. Raina asks, 'How did you find me out?' Bluntschile answers, 'Instinct, dear young lady. Instinct and experience of the world'. When Raina confides, 'I mean the noble attitude and the thrilling voice. (They laugh together) I did it when I was a tiny child to my nurse. She believed in it. I do it before my parents. They believe in it. I do it before Sergius, He believes in it.' She believes that he will despise her for it. But astonishingly it is Bluntschile who reveals himself,

'I'm like the rest of them...I'm your infatuated admirer.' Raina is startled not only by this unexpected revelation but also by Bluntschile's assessment that Sergius was as consummate a liar as her own self.

However another more urgent development causes Raina a lot of anxiety when she realizes that Bluntschile had never received her photograph which she had slyly placed in the pocket of the old coat in which he had been smuggled out. To make matters worse she had even written on it and in all likelihood it was still within the pocket unknown to her father who was wearing it. But before the problem can be resolved Louka comes in with several letters on a salver for Bluntschile. Louka is as insolent as ever for she considers Bluntschile as an enemy even though the war was over. He learns that his father had expired and that he had inherited property and wealth because of it. He immediately sets about to attend his affairs and seems to forget about Raina. Louka remarks that the Swiss man was heartless and the reason for it did not lie in him being a soldier because Sergius still had a lot of heart left in him. Raina leaves the library as Nicola enters it.

The two servants who are soon to be married possess two distinct attitudes. Nicola desires Louka while she treats him disdainfully. He is complacent and is comfortable in his class and does not want any change. He saves for the future and declares that he will be the master of his house to which Louka retorts that she will never allow him to marry her. She is ambitious, proud and desires to be rich. She believes he is a coward and he believes her to be too impudent and sharp to be the lady which she so desperately wants to become.

This meeting is followed immediately by Louka and Sergius's meeting. It is even more clear that there is strong mutual attraction between them. But the huge discrepancy in their social status is uppermost in Louka's mind. However since Louka is courageous, ambitious and clever she turns it to her advantage and wrings out an admission of love and a promise to marry her from Sergius in

spite of the fact that he is still engaged to marry Raina. She alludes frequently to her lower and Sergius' higher social standing and to the poverty which separates them in society. Louka says,

Louka: Don't trifle with me, please. An officer should not trifle with a servant.
Or,

Louka: Did you find in the charge that the men whose fathers are poor like mine were any less brave than the men who are rich like you?

Again,

Louka: if I loved you, though you would be as far beneath me as I am beneath you, I would dare to be the equal of my inferior... You would not dare: you would marry a rich man's daughter because you would be afraid of what other people would say of you. Sergius on his part is equally candid with her in sharp contrast to his behavior with Raina. He does not feel the necessity of pretending with her. He says,

Sergius: No Louka your poor men can cut throats; but they are afraid of their officers; they put up with insults and brows; they stand by and see one another punished like children... when they are ordered to ... I am an officer.

And,

Sergius: If I loved you and I were the Czar himself, I would set you on the throne by my side. You know that I love another woman, a woman as high above you as heaven is above earth. And you are jealous of her.

Stung by his words Louka grasps the opportunity to inform him about Raina's love for Bluntschile. Sergius does not believe her to which she counters swiftly with, 'Do you think that she will believe the Swiss if he told her now that I am in your arms.' Sergius is in a state of complete confusion and despair but even then he declares, 'Remember you belong to me' and 'If these hands ever touch you again, they shall touch my affianced bride.' However, Louka is not

entirely convinced of his intention.

When Bluntschile arrives Sergius challenges him to a duel because he believes that it is the honourable thing to do under the circumstances. Like a medieval knight he informs Bluntschile that he will be armed with his sabre and he will be on horseback. But in an anticlimax the latter says he will be armed with a machine gun as he belongs to the artillery. Sergius offers him a horse as he believes that both of them should have equal opportunities at a duel. But Bluntschile tells him bluntly that he will prefer to be on foot. Raina enters the room and realises what has happened. She is anxious for their safety and Bluntschile tells her that neither of them will come to any harm and in the morning he would be on his way home and they would never hear of him again. 'You and he will then make it up and live happily ever after.' His words reinforce the fairy tale like quality of Raina and Sergius' romance. However reality strikes when Raina confesses that she had never said she wanted to see the last of Bluntschile. Sergius considers it a confession of love and harbours the suspicion that Raina has been unfaithful to him. Finally, Bluntschile understands the challenge of a duel and clears all suspicion. 'Your cavalry men were at my heels. I would have blown out her brains if she'd uttered a cry.' This revelation leads to another revelation that Sergius' informant had been Louka and Raina informs him that she is aware of his love for the servant girl as she had seen them making love but had not questioned it then.

Sergius too admits that their romance is 'shattered' and disillusionment sets in, he declares 'Life's a farce'. He decides to call off his duel which is accepted by his opponent with equanimity and observes that, 'I'm a professional soldier... You're only an amateur: you think fighting's an amusement'. The statement is a verbalization of Bluntschile's opinion of Sergius and a reinforcement of the theme of Raina and Sergius living in a world of make belief. Hence when Sergius is confronted with reality he loses control. He learns that his new found love is engaged to Nicola. Raina too plays her part of the wounded fiancée even though she too has betrayed a sacred trust and quarrels with him. Bluntschile plays the role of a pacifier and

remains calm and practical as ever., 'I'm only very glad to get you two quieted. There, there! Let's be pleasant and talk it over in a friendly way. Where is this other young lady?' Raina suggests that she is listening at the door which turns out to be a correct assessment of her nature. But Louka defends herself by saying that her love was at stake. This sentiment is endorsed by the Bluntschile who draws a parallel of her situation to one of his when he too had stooped to eavesdropping. 'It's all a question of the degree of provocation. My life was at stake'.

The entire matter is resolved when Mr. Petkoff enters the room and his old coat is brought in a moment later by Nicola after it has been mended. Though Raina manages to extract her photograph from the pocket of the coat and pass it on to Bluntschile right under Sergius' nose her hopes are dashed when Petkoff makes it clear that he has already seen and read the words 'Raina, to her chocolate cream soldier: a souvenir' written on it. Incensed at being made a fool of he vows to find out what it all means. Finally the truth is revealed. Nicola states that he was never engaged to Louka clearing the way for Louka and Sergius. In keeping with his character, his only hope is that he will be happy to win her lady's custom when he opens his shop. Mrs. Petkoff who has also joined the others is aghast at the turn of events and tells Sergius that he was spoken for and he could not marry a servant girl to which he characteristically replies, 'Nothing binds me' (with his arms folded) just as he had stated in earlier instances, 'I never withdraw' or 'I never apologize'. For once Bluntschile congratulates his mulish adamancy and remarks that his heroics did have some 'practical and purpose'. Catherine accuses Louka of being the reason for this debacle but she defends herself once again most admirably that she had done no harm except confiding in Sergius that if the Swiss gentleman came back then Raina would never marry him. For the first time in the play Bluntschile becomes thoroughly agitated and reassures everyone present that he could not even dream of such an eventuality. According to him he was a common soldier who had spent fifteen years of his life in the barracks and battles whereas she was a fairylike creature with her

head filled with romantic dreams. He was thirtyfour while she was a young girl of seventeen. She had saved his life for which he was indebted to her. But he reveals his nature as an incurable romantic which had led to this entire mess. He says, 'An incurably romantic disposition. I ran away from home twice when I was a boy. I went into the army instead of my father's business. I climbed into the balcony of this house when a man of sense would have dived into the nearest cellar. I came sneaking back to have another look at the young lady when any other man of my age would have sent the coat back.' Raina is however impressed by his attempt to resolve the issue but tells him that she is twenty-three and not seventeen as he had surmised. Under the changed circumstances Bluntschil immediately asks for her hand in marriage. However Mr. and Mrs. Petkoff are in a dilemma because the Petkoff family had a history of twenty years and was one of the richest and important families of Bulgaria. Over and above that Raina was accustomed to living in luxury which Sergius might have provided since his twenty horses were a good index of his wealth. Bluntschile reveals that he is a far richer man than Sergius. He had inherited two hundred horses, seventy carriages, six palatial establishments, three hundred servants, two livery stables, a tea garden, a private house and a huge number of sheets, blankets, either downs, spoons, forks and knives. Besides he had the rank of an officer and the standing of a gentleman. Petkoff is overwhelmed by this show of wealth and asks him, 'Are you Emperor of Switzerland?' and he answers, 'My rank is the highest known in Switzerland: I am a free citizen'. His wealth convinces the Petkoffs that it would be permissible to overlook his ancestry under the circumstances and all obstacles are removed for Raina to marry her chocolate cream soldier.

Bluntschile once again reverts to his business like self and commands both Petkoff and Sergius to carry out his instructions while he leaves for his hometown. He tells Sergius to wait for a fortnight until his return to marry and in a most military like manner makes his exit. Sergius utters the last words of the play which externalizes the admiration which he always had for Bluntschile, 'What a man! Is he a man?'

GLOSSARY

Bedchamber: bedroom

Bulgaria: country in the Balkan peninsula earlier under the Turkish Sultan .

Dragoman Pass: Name of a mountain pass in the west Balkans

1885: Servo-Bulgarian war.

Viennese: bought from Vienna the capital of Vienna.

Shrine: place of worship

Image of Christ: A Christian household. Bulgarians were Roman Catholics

Turkish ottoman: backless , low stuffed seat originating from Turkey.

Oriental: Eastern

Occidental: western

Enameled iron basin: a place where one can wash oneself; basin is made of iron finished with an outer coating of enamel.

Variegated: of different colours

Native cloth: Bulgarian cloth

Easel: picture frame (in this context)

Lofty bearing and magnetic glance: Outwardly impressive personality but proves to be a foolish person.

You'll catch your death: to fall ill/to catch a cold

Battle: reference to battle at Slivnitsa between the Bulgarians and the Serbians

Idol of the regiment: considered as a hero

Surging enthusiasm: increasing enthusiasm

Cavalry charge: attack by soldiers mounted on horses

Russian Commanders: Russian Commanders who were fighting for Bulgaria

Acted without orders: Catherine believes Sergius's charge to be

heroic when in reality he had broken army regulations when he had not waited for his orders.

To sweep through their guns: The Serbs had no ammunition which made it possible for Sergius and his men to move swiftly in spite of their guns.

Avalanche: downward movement of huge amounts of snow at high speed on mountains.

Dandified: dressed up

Byron: George Gordon Byron commonly known as Lord Byron (1788-1824). English Romantic poet famous for *She Walks in Beauty*, *When We Two Parted*. So, We'll go no more a roving and narrative poems *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan*.

Pushkin: Russian Romantic poet (1799-1837). He is considered to be the founder of modern Russian literature.

Opera: a musical drama

Prosaic: factual, dull

With a happy sigh: a sign of feeling contented

Fusillade: a volley of gun shots

Silhouette: the outline of something which appears dark against a light background

Tunic: jacket which is worn as a part of a uniform. It is usually long, plain, close fitting with a high stiff collar.

Unkempt: untidy, dirty

Carriage: how a person carries himself

Hardly presentable: Raina is wearing her nightgown and so is not appropriately dressed to receive anyone

Sabre: a long heavy cavalry one edged sword with a slightly curved blade

Petrified: frightened

Affably: in a friendly manner

Narrow shave: a close escape

A miss is good as a mile: English proverb which means that there is no consolation in missing one's target by saying that he was very close to achieving it.

All nerves: very nervous

Supercilious: arrogant, haughty, overbearing, showing disdain

Wearily: exhausted

Pulling at his horse: to rein in his horse with the intention of restraining his movement

Bunched: moving in a group

Projectiles: an object which has no capacity for self-propulsion; a propelled object as a bullet, rocket or missile

Operatic tenor: High male voice range. In operas the tenor voices are classified as dramatic, lyric and heroic.

Charging like Don Quixote at the windmills: comic figure who believes that he is fighting with the enemy when he is actually fighting with the arms of the windmills.

Don Quixote: Don Quixote is the chivalrus but impractical hero of Cervantes romantic comedy; an impractical idealist

Court martialled: tried by military court for indiscipline or other irregularities

Missed fire: no ammunition

Deeply wounded: shocked at learning the truth

Stifled: to suppress

Tickled: amused

Giddy: unstable

At her wits end: thoroughly confused, with no solution in sight

Pouts: provocative gesture with her lips as a sign of contempt

Bucharist: capital of Rumania

Ernani: name of four act Italian opera composed by Giuseppe Verdi based on the play *Hernani* by Victor Hugo (1844).

Devil in red velvet: In the opera of Goethe's *Faust* the devil is

dressed in a red velvet coat and soldiers sing in a chorus

Good standing: of high social status

Worn out: exhausted

ACT-II

Paling: a fencing which is made with pointed sticks

Minaret: turret of a mosque

Shewing: showing

Washing: washed clothes spread out to dry in the sun

Lecturing: giving advice

Complacency: Satisfied with oneself to a fault

Rank in servitude: position of a servant

Sash: A band worn over the shoulder as a symbol of rank

Knickerbockers: full breeches (trousers) gathered and banded above the knee

Gaiters: a heavy cloth or leather covering for the leg from the instep (between toe and ankle) to the ankle or knee

A high Japanese forehead: appears like a Japanese man because he has shaved his hair making his forehead look unnaturally high

Mend your manners: to learn to behave properly

The like of you and me: reference to their common state of poverty and so called lower social status

Levas: in plural of Leva-currency of Bulgaria

Blabbed: to speak without thinking

Man of consequence: an important person

Cognac: name of town in France. Here reference to a brandy which carries the name because it is prepared there

Apron: an outer garment worn over the entire or part of the body to protect clothing and fastened at the back.

Demobilize: to disband the army

Peace: Catherine has no understanding of war and what it entails

so she uses the word in a derogatory sense as if they had lost the war by making peace with Serbia.

Prince Alexander: Alexander Joseph, Prince of Bulgaria (1857-1893) under the Sultan of Turkey

Philippopolis: an ancient city in southern Bulgaria

He bores my life: Sergius annoys Petkoff by speaking constantly about his promotion.

Untamed mountaineering chieftain: chief of some mountain clan who looks wild.

A Parisian salon: Paris Salon began as an official art exhibition in 1725, France. It became the popular as the annual or biannual art event in the western world; a gathering or reception in a Parisian house by which the elite came together.

Byronism: it was the fashion to emulate the poet Byron's attitude towards life

Brooding: in deep thought

Jeune: Immature, childish, insipid, without interest or knowledge

Childe Harold: Reference to Byron's famous poem 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' where Childe Harold is the hero.

The grandmothers of his English contemporaries: the grandmothers in England who might have had grandsons like Sergius and his contemporaries loved 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' when it was published in 1918.

Drily: without enthusiasm

Cradle and the grave: reference to the beginning and the end of his military reputation as he had committed a mistake by attacking the Serbs

Wrong way: not professional

Right way: accepted to be the right way of taking orders

Routed: defeat

Cossack: They live in southern European Russia and adjacent parts of Asia known as formidable cavalry men

- Ecru:** a light fawn colour of unbleached linen
- Gold tinsel:** which glitters as if it were gold
- Posing regally:** Raina stands like a queen
- Bagman:** a travelling salesman
- Pirot:** a town in Serbia
- Overreached us:** cheated or duped them
- Livery stable keeper:** any person who provides stables for horses and gives them out on rent for money.
- Egad:** an English colloquial meaning -By God!
- Humbugged:** to be deceived by someone
- Chargers:** Horses in the front lines of battle
- Consummate:** perfect
- Bourgeois to his boots:** a thoroughly middle class man
- Commercial traveller's manner:** smooth talk of travelling salesman
- Seamy side:** seen the underbelly of life, dark side of life
- Stuff and nonsense:** archaic expression to mean something unworthy of notice
- Loftiest exaltation:** to be in a lofty and exalted state of mind
- Mischievously:** with intention of making mischief, with wrong intention
- Akimbo:** with hands on the hips and elbows turned outwards
- swaggering:** to walk forward with exaggerated movement in order to draw attention
- fatiguing:** tiring
- popping in and out:** Sergius seems to have different personalities at different occasions.
- Inexorably:** unrelentingly
- Little witch:** bewitching quality of a woman
- Charmed:** entranced
- Hero, Buffoon, humbug, blackguard, coward:** Sergius uses these

- words to describe his personality
- I should lose my place:** to lose her job at the Petkoff's house
- Sardonically:** with a bitter taunt
- Eavesdropping:** deliberately listening to somebody's conversation secretly
- Chivalry:** qualities of a knight like bravery, honour, courtesy, honesty, gallantry
- Shake:** a kind of head gear
- Vienna fashion:** Fashion prevalent in the fashion capital, Vienna. But Raina is dressed in a way which was fashionable in Vienna the previous year. So she is really not in fashion
- Flirting:** to make playful or romantic overtures
- Coquettish:** a flirt generally a woman who makes teasing and sexual advances
- The little beast:** the Swiss fugitive
- Her fingers itching:** desire to punish someone for something
- Salver:** a flat tray on which visiting cards are carried to present to someone
- Flaming:** angry
- National animosities:** The Bulgarians are against the Serbs
- Testily:** with annoyance
- Butter fingered donkey:** clumsy person with no strength in his hands
- The sack:** to turn him out of his job
- Driest military manner:** adopting his best military manners

ACT-III

- Broken backed:** books with broken spines probably because of frequent usage.
- Trophies:** mementoes of war and hunting expeditions

Much the worse for wear: the kitchen table seems to be an old used one

Canister: a container

Eggcup: special cups designed to hold eggs.

Gnawing: to chew on something

Divan: a long backless sofa

Draws up the orders: writes down the orders

You haven't been campaigning: not taken active part in war

Done: accepted, agreed

Six to one: manner of betting

Steed: horse

Pack them off: to send them on their way

I'll buy his discharge: Will throw him out of the army even if he has to buy the soldier's discharge

To spit in my face: dares to disobey

Cherry tree: a tree which bears small red fruits with a stone(seed) within it

Docket: a register where entries are made

Capital story: interesting tale

Flippant: without seriousness

Wry: humorously sarcastic or ironic, mocking statement

Other thing: hatred

Short allowance: too limited. Raina's lie is exposed.

Thrilling voice: in a superficially exalted voice

Hand aufs Herz: German meaning hand on heart

Vexed: annoyed

Railway cloakroom: luggage room of a railway station

Pawned it: the coat was given as a pledge or guarantee against a loan

She flounces away: walks away in a show of disapproval

Free gait: easy free way of walking

Lips pursed: to gather or contract lips into wrinkles or folds

Crosses herself: draws the cross of Christ symbolically on herself

A fool and his money are soon parted: English proverb. Nicola considers Sergius a fool for parting with his money.

They knew: The Petkoffs knew about it

Sell your manhood: to sacrifice his dignity

Squatting down: sitting on his heels

Adding coolly: with great control

Little less of a fool: wise

Little more of one: more foolish than what Sergius already is

Sedately: calmly

Trifle with me : play the fool with me

Like a woman's at the first shot: he was extremely nervous like a woman

Levity: light hearted

Bull terrier: a breed of ferocious dog

Short harsh laugh: contemptuous laughter aimed at his ownself

Czar: Emperors of Russia were called Czar

Affianced : engaged

I brook no rivals: Sergius will not tolerate competition

Drilling ground: parade ground

I call you to account: I challenge you

Pepprily: angrily

Blockhead: foolish ,dull person

How dare you : affront to Raina's dignity

Shells: bombs with shells

Our romance is shattered: their lofty ideals of noble love is destroyed

- Abysses:** deep chasm, deep gorge, bottomless pit
- Viper:** a snake ;a dangerous person
- Tiger cat :** spiteful, cunning woman
- Nursetending:** nursing
- Calumny:** false and malicious statement to wilfully harm or injure someone's reputation
- In his shirtsleeves:** wearing a shirt without a coat
- Darts:** moves with speed
- Picked pocket:** to pick or steal from a pocket
- Enigmatically:** puzzling
- Cool unction:** soothingly
- To give Louka protection:** to ward off unwanted male advances
- Good republican:** refers to himself as a republican because he is a Swiss citizen and his country Switzerland is a republic
- Telling stories :** spreading rumours
- Sagacity:** wisdom
- Comfortable establishment:** in luxury
- Three native languages:** Italian, Fench and German languages are used in Switzerland
- Timok Division:** Timok is the name of a river in Bulgaria. an army division is named after it
- Loin Palanka:** name of a town in Bulgaria

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS

1. Why is the play 'Arms and the Man' popular? Attempt a critical analysis of the play.
2. Examine the play 'Arms and the Man' as a propaganda play or a play of ideas.
3. Comment on the title of the play.
4. Has Shaw been successful in his attempt to satirise war? Discuss The element of satire in 'Arms and the Man'.
5. Discuss the three male characters of the play: Bluntschile, Sergius and Petkoff.
6. Form an opinion of Nicola and his servile attitude in 'Arms and the Man'.
7. Discuss the characters of Catherine, Raina and Louka. Give reasons to justify your views.
8. 'There is an element of socialism or social equality in the play' Justify the statement with examples from the text.
9. Narrate the different episodes in the play and comment on their importance. (the fugitive episode, the coat episode, the chocolate cream soldier episode, the Sergius-Louka episode, and the Nicola -Louka episode.)
10. Write short notes on dialogue , characterization and stage direction in the play.
11. Do you consider the Petkoffs to be redundant in the play. Give reasons for your answer.

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