

She Stoops to Conquer

Author Information

She Stoops to Conquer was written by Oliver Goldsmith (1730?-1774), a playwright, novelist, poet, and essayist. His most memorable novel is *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). His most memorable poems are "The Traveller" (1764) and "The Deserted Village" (1770). He was an excellent writer who was admired by the greatest authors of his day. Goldsmith was born in Ireland as the son of an Anglican minister. After graduating from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and the University of Leiden in The Netherlands. Then he roamed Europe, eking out a living by playing the flute and begging. After arriving in England in 1756, he worked as an apothecary's helper, a physician, an assistant teacher at a school, a translator of texts, and an author of magazine and newspaper articles. After establishing his reputation as a major writer, he spent his money just as quickly as he made it, gambling frequently, and was almost always in debt. Though a polished writer, he was a clumsy conversationalist. Though many of his fictional characters were attractive and desirable, he himself was homely, vain, socially inept, and a poor manager of his business affairs. Samuel Johnson—the great essayist, poet, critic, and lexicographer—said of him, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had" (qtd. in "Goldsmith, Oliver." *Britannica 2001 on CD-ROM*).

She Stoops to Conquer is a comedy by the Irish author Oliver Goldsmith, first performed in 1773. The play is a great favourite for study by English literature classes in Britain. It is one of the few plays from the 18th century to have an enduring appeal, and is still regularly performed today.

Plot Summary

In a downstairs room of their old mansion, Dorothy Hardcastle tells her husband that they need a little diversion—namely, a trip to London, a city she has never visited. Their neighbors, the Hoggs sisters and Mrs. Grigsby, spend a month in London every winter. It is the place to see and be seen. But old Hardcastle, content with his humdrum rural existence, says people who visit the great city only bring back its silly fashions and vanities. Once upon a time, he says, London's affectations and fopperies took a long time to reach the country; now they come swiftly and regularly by the coach-load.

Mrs. Hardcastle, eager for fresh faces and conversations, says their only visitors are Mrs. Oddfish, the wife of the local minister, and Mr. Cripplegate, the lame dancing teacher. What's more, their only entertainment is Mr. Hardcastle's old stories about sieges and battles. But Hardcastle says he likes everything old—friends, times, manners, books, wine, and, of course, his wife.

Living in their home with them is their daughter, Kate, a pretty miss of marriageable age, and Tony, Mrs. Hardcastle's son by her first husband, Mr. Lumpkin. As a boy, Tony bedeviled his stepfather, Mr. Hardcastle, with every variety of mischief, burning a servant's shoes, scaring the maids, and vexing the kittens. And, Hardcastle says, "It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popt my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face."

Now as a young man, Tony has become a fat slob who spends most of his time at the local alehouse. Soon he will come of age, making him eligible for an inheritance of 1500 pounds a year with which to feed his fancies. Mrs. Hardcastle wants to match Tony with her niece and ward, Constance Neville, who has inherited a casket of jewels from her uncle. As Miss Neville's guardian, Mrs. Hardcastle holds the jewels under lock and key against the day when Constance can take legal possession of them.

While Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle discuss the London trip that is not to take place, Tony passes between them and sets off for the alehouse, The Three Pigeons. Mrs. Hardcastle chases out the door after him, saying he should find something better to do than associate with riffraff.

Alone, Mr. Hardcastle laments the follies of the age. Even his darling Kate is becoming infected, for now she has become fond of “French frippery.” When she enters the room, he tells her he has arranged for her to meet an eligible young man, Mr. Charles Marlow, a scholar with many good qualities who “is designed for employment in the service of the country.” Marlow is to arrive for a visit that very evening with a friend, Mr. George Hastings. Young Marlow is the son of Hardcastle’s friend, Sir Charles Marlow. Kate welcomes the opportunity to meet the young man, although she is wary about her father’s description of him as extremely shy around young ladies.

By and by, Constance Neville comes in for a visit. When Kate tells her about young Mr. Marlow, Constance tells her that her own admirer, Mr. Hastings, a friend of the Marlow family. Miss Neville welcomes the attentions of Hastings but laments Mrs. Hardcastle’s attempts to pair her with her “pretty monster,” Tony, in an effort to keep Miss Neville’s jewels in the family. Tony and Constance despise each other.

Tony Plays Trick

Meanwhile, at the alehouse, Tony is having a ripping good time singing and drinking when Hastings and young Marlow come in asking for directions to the Hardcastle home. Having just arrived in the area from London after a wearisome trip, they have lost their way. Tony, who resents Mr. Hardcastle’s treatment of him lately, sees a way to get even: He tells Marlow and Hastings that Hardcastle is an ugly, cantankerous fellow and that his daughter is a “tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole.” But, he says, Hardcastle’s son (meaning himself) is a “pretty, well-bred youth that everybody is fond of.” Marlow says he has been told otherwise, namely, that the daughter is “well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother’s apron-string.”

Taken aback, Tony can only hem and haw. Then, deciding to work a mischief, he tells them the Hardcastle home is too far to reach by nightfall but that there is a nice inn just up the road. The “inn” is, of course, the Hardcastle home. When Marlow and Hastings arrive there, they note that the inn is old but commendable in its own way. Hastings comments that Marlow has traveled widely, staying at many inns, but wonders why such a man of the world is so shy around young women. Marlow reminds him that he is shy only around young ladies of culture and bearing. Around women of the lower classes, he is a nonstop talker, a wag completely at ease. Hastings replies: “But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.”

When Mr. Hardcastle enters, he welcomes them as the expected guests—the Marlow fellow who is to meet his daughter and Marlow’s friend Hastings. However, the young men—believing that they are at the inn described by Tony—think Mr. Hardcastle is the innkeeper, and treat him like one, giving him orders to prepare their supper and asking to see the accommodations. Hardcastle is much offended by their behavior, thinking them the rudest of visitors, for he remains unaware that they think they are at an inn. He keeps his feelings to himself.

When Hardcastle goes upstairs with Marlow to show him his room, Hastings runs into Constance Neville and, through his conversation with her, realizes that he is at the Hardcastle home, not an inn. Hastings decides to keep the information a secret from Marlow, fearing that Marlow would react to the mix-up by immediately leaving. Thus, he allows Marlow to believe that Constance and Kate are also guests at the “inn.”

When Marlow finally meets Kate, his shyness all but tongue-ties him. Almost every time he starts a sentence, Kate has to finish it. But she compliments him on being so clever as to bring up interesting topics of conversation. All the while that they talk, Marlow lacks the courage even to look at her face. He does not even know what she looks like.

In another room, Tony, who has returned from the pub, and Constance are insulting each other, as usual, to the dismay of Mrs. Hardcastle. After Hastings observes their spitfire give-and-take, he tells Tony he will take the young lady off his hands if Tony will help him win her.

“I’ll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her,” Hastings says. Tony replies: “Ecod, I will [help] to the last drop of my blood.”

Hardcastle Annoyed

Mr. Hardcastle, meanwhile, is becoming more and more annoyed with Marlow for treating him like a lackey. Alone on the stage, Hardcastle laments, “He has taken possession of the easy-chair by the fire-side already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I’m desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.”

Kate has been upstairs changing into casual clothes. When she comes down and talks with her father, she bemoans Marlow’s incredible shyness while Hardcastle, in turn, complains about Marlow’s rudeness. They wonder whether they are talking about the same person.

While they converse, Tony, who knows where his mother keeps everything, gets the casket of jewels Mrs. Hardcastle is holding for Constance and gives it to Hastings as an inducement for Hastings to run off with Constance. Later, Mrs. Hardcastle discovers it missing and thinks a robber is about.

Meanwhile, a maid tells Kate that Marlow believes he is at an inn. The maid also tells her that Marlow mistook Kate for a barmaid after she changed into her casual attire. Kate decides to keep up the charade, changing her voice and demeanor in Marlow’s presence.

When he strikes up a conversation with her, he says she is “vastly handsome.” Growing bold, he adds, “Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of a trial, of the nectar of your lips.” (To audiences attending the play, Marlow’s bold behavior is not at all surprising, for they are aware that Marlow is a different man when in the presence of women of the servant class.) When old Hardcastle observes Kate and Marlow together, he sees Marlow seize Kate’s hand and treat her like a milkmaid. He’s thinking of turning Marlow out. When he makes his feelings known to Kate, she asks for an hour to convince her father that Marlow is not so bold and rude as her father believes he is. He agrees to her proposal.

The plot thickens at this point, for another visitor will shortly arrive—Marlow’s father, Sir Charles Marlow. It seems Miss Neville happened on a letter to old Hardcastle in which Sir Charles announced that he would arrive at the Hardcastle home a few hours after his son made his appearance. When she tells George Hastings of Sir Charles’s expected arrival at any minute, George worries that Sir Charles—who is aware of George’s fondness for Constance—will somehow upset their plans to run off together. Constance asks whether the jewels are safe. George assures her they are, for he has sent the jewels, via a servant, to Marlow for safekeeping.

Unfortunately, unknown to Hastings, Marlow has told the servant to give the casket of jewels to the “landlady” for safekeeping. So the jewels are back where they were originally, in Mrs. Hardcastle’s possession (as Miss Neville’s guardian). Tony tells his mother a servant was responsible for misplacing them. Satisfied, she returns to the task of promoting a romance between Tony and Constance, unaware that Hastings and the young lady are plotting to abscond.

Marlow is by now captivated by the barmaid and says to himself, “She’s mine, she must be mine.”

Meanwhile, old Hardcastle has had enough of impudent Marlow and orders him to leave. Marlow protests. Hardcastle rants and exits in a huff. When Kate enters, she realizes Marlow now knows something strange is going on, so she reveals that the inn is Hardcastle’s house. However, she describes herself as a “relative”—a “poor relation” who helps out. As such, she knows, Marlow will continue to talk to her freely, since a “poor relation” is the same in standing as a barmaid. Marlow, shaken and deeply embarrassed, says, “To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father’s old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself!

Marlow tells the “poor relation” that he will be leaving, in view of the circumstances, but notes that she has been the only positive thing that happened to him during the confusing and disconcerting ordeal. His words help

to identify the feeling she felt for him when they met: love. Her scheme of posing as a barmaid/poor relation to find out his real feelings—a scheme in which she stooped to conquer—has proved wise.

Further mix-ups develop involving Miss Neville's jewels and Mr. Hastings' planned elopement with Constance. Tony is implicated as the trickster who set in motion the comedy of errors by telling Marlow and Hastings that the Hardcastle home was an inn.

When Sir Charles arrives, he and old Hardcastle have a laugh about the mix-ups, but Hardcastle tells Kate that he is still unconvinced that Marlow is anything but rude and insulting. To prove that Marlow is a worthy man, Kate enacts one final scene as the poor relative while Marlow converses with her and Sir Charles and Hardcastle listen behind a screen. In the end, Kate reveals her identity to Marlow, and everyone understands the mistakes of the evening.

But there is a further development: Old Hardcastle reveals that Tony is "of age"—and has been for three months, meaning he has a right now to make up his own mind about his future. Immediately, as his first act as his own man, Tony goes against his mother's wishes and refuses to marry Constance Neville, freeing her to marry Hastings—and qualifying her to receive the jewels. In the end, the young lovers—Kate and Marlow, Constance and Hastings—are betrothed.

Mrs. Hardcastle comments, "This is all but the whining end of a modern novel."

Setting

Most of the action takes place in the Hardcastle mansion in the English countryside, about sixty miles from London. The mansion is an old but comfortable dwelling that resembles an inn. A brief episode takes place at a nearby tavern, The Three Pigeons Alehouse. The time is the 18th Century.

Characters

Mr. Hardcastle

Middle-aged gentleman who lives in an old mansion in the countryside about sixty miles from London. He prefers to the simple rural life and its old-fashioned manners and customs to the trendy and pretentious ways of upper-crust London.

Mrs. Dorothy Hardcastle

Wife of Mr. Hardcastle. Unlike her husband, she yearns to sample life in high society. She also values material possessions and hopes to match her son (by her first husband) with her niece, Constance Neville, in order to keep her niece's inheritance in the family.

Charles Marlow

Promising young man who comes to the country to woo the Hardcastles' pretty daughter, Kate. His only drawback is that he is extremely shy around refined young ladies, although he is completely at ease—and even forward—with women of humble birth and working-class status. He is a pivotal character in the play, used by author Goldsmith to satirize England's preoccupation with, and overemphasis on, class distinctions. However, Marlow's redeeming qualities make him a likeable character, and the audience tends to root for him when he

becomes the victim of a practical joke resulting in mix-ups and mistaken identities.

Kate Hardcastle

Pretty daughter of the Hardcastles who is wooed by Charles Marlow. When he mistakes her for a woman of the lower class, she allows him to continue to mistake her identity, thus freeing his captive tongue so she can discover what he really thinks about her.

Tony Lumpkin

Son of Mrs. Hardcastle by her first husband. He is a fat, ale-drinking young man who has little ambition except to play practical jokes and visit the local tavern whenever he has a mind. When Tony comes of age, he will receive 1,500 pounds a year. His mother hopes to marry him to her niece, Constance Neville, who is in line to inherit a casket of jewels from her uncle. Tony and Miss Neville despise each other.

George Hastings

Friend of Marlow who loves Constance Neville. While Marlow is busy with Kate, Hastings is busy with Constance. Hastings hatches a plan to elope with Constance and receives the help of Tony, who wants to erase Constance from his life—and his mother's constant efforts to match him with Constance.

Constance Neville

Comely young lady who loves Hastings but is bedeviled by Mrs. Hardcastle's schemes to match her with Tony. Constance, an orphan, is the niece and ward of Mrs. Hardcastle (who holds Miss Neville's inheritance in her possession until she becomes legally qualified to take possession of it) and the cousin of Kate.

Sir Charles Marlow- a father of young Charles.

Servants in the Hardcastle Household

Maid in the Hardcastle Household

Landlord of the Three Pigeons Alehouse

First Fellow, Second Fellow, Third Fellow, Fourth Fellow Drinking companions of Tony Lumpkin.

Type of Play

She Stoops to Conquer is a comedy of manners, meaning that it ridicules the manners (way of life, social customs, etc.) of a certain segment of society, in this case the upper class. The play is also sometimes termed a *drawing-room comedy*. The play uses farce (including many mix-ups) and satire to poke fun at the class-consciousness of 18th Century Englishmen and to satirize what Goldsmith called the "weeping sentimental comedy so much in fashion at present."

Style and Structure

Goldsmith's style is wry, witty, and simple but graceful. From beginning to end, the play is both entertaining and easy to understand, presenting few words and idioms that modern audiences would not understand. It is also well constructed and moves along rapidly, the events of the first act—in particular, references to Tony Lumpkin's childhood propensity for working mischief and playing practical jokes—foreshadowing the events of the following acts. There are frequent scene changes, punctuated by an occasional appearance of a character alone on the stage (*solus* in the stage directions) reciting a brief account of his feelings. In modern terms, the play is a page-turner for readers. Goldsmith observed the classical **unities** of time and place, for the action of the play takes place in single locale (the English countryside) on a single day.

First Performance

Goldsmith completed the play in 1773. It was first performed at Covent Garden Theatre in London on March 15 of that year. It was well received. Over the last two centuries, it has become one of the most popular comedies in English literary history. It is still performed often today throughout the English-speaking world.

Acting Approach

She Stoops to Conquer generally requires actors to deliver restrained, subtle performances for a production of the play to be successful. Overacting, typical in so many modern motion-picture comedies, can ruin the play. The best comedic actors—like Laurel and Hardy, W.C. Fields, Peter Ustinov, and Peter Sellers—use a straight face to bend people over with laughter.

Themes

Theme One

Appearances are deceiving, or you can't judge another human being by the quality of his or her wrapping. This appears to be the central theme of the play, as demonstrated primarily by the behavior of Young Marlow and Mrs. Hardcastle. Until Kate teaches him a lesson, Marlow responds to women solely on the basis of their status in society. He looks down on women of the lower class but is wholly at ease around them; he esteems women of the upper class but is painfully shy around them. Like the London society in which he was brought up, he assumes that all women of a certain class think and act according to artificial and arbitrary standards expected of that class. As for Mrs. Hardcastle, she appears to assess a person by the value of his or her possessions.

Theme Two

Love ignores social boundaries. Although prevailing attitudes among England's elite classes frown on romance between one of their own and a person of humble origin, Marlow can't help falling in love with a common "barmaid" (who is, of course, Kate in disguise).

Theme Three

There is hope for flawed humanity. Although Marlow makes a fool of himself as a result of his upper-class biases, Kate has enough common sense to see through the London hauteur encasing him and to appreciate him for his genuinely good qualities—which are considerable, once he allows them to surface. Also, Mrs. Hardcastle, in spite

of her misguided values, enjoys the love of her practical, down-to-earth husband. He, too, is willing to look beyond her foibles in favor of her good points.

Theme Four

Money breeds indolence. Tony Lumpkin will get 1,500 pounds a year when he comes of age. Thus, without financial worries, he devotes himself to ale and a do-nothing life.

Climax

The climax occurs when Kate reveals her true identity to young Marlow while Hardcastle and Sir Charles listen behind a screen.

Study Questions and Essay Topics

- Research the life of Goldsmith. Then determine to what extent the personality of Marlow reflects the personality of Goldsmith.
- Specifically, what incidents or scenes in the play most effectively poke fun at the class-consciousness of the English?
- What is the most glaring fault of each of the main characters?
- What redeeming qualities do the characters have?
- Why does Tony despise Constance Neville? Is the reason that his mother chose her for him? Or are there other reasons?
- What are the key mix-ups on which the plot depends?
- Which role in the play do you think poses the greatest challenge for an actor? Explain your answer.
- Write an expository essay focusing on Goldsmith's considerable influence on playwrights of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Identify several of the playwrights and explain in what way Goldsmith influenced them.
- Write an expository essay informing readers of what a typical English theatre was like in the 1700's.

Prologue

Mr. Woodward, a contemporary comic actor, walks on stage weeping at the death of comedy. His last hope is that Goldsmith's play will make him laugh and revive the comic arts. (This prologue was written by the era's foremost actor and producer, David Garrick).

Act I, Scene I

Mr. Hardcastle has selected for his daughter's husband someone neither have met, the son of his old friend, Sir Charles Marlow. Kate fears she will not like him because her father described him as handsome but reserved.

Act I, Scene II

At the Three Pigeons Tavern, Hardcastle's stepson, Tony Lumpkin, sings with his drinking buddies. The landlord

interrupts, saying that two London gentlemen have lost their way. As a joke, Tony tells the men, Marlow and Hastings, that they remain far from their destination, Hardcastle's house. Then, Tony directs them to his stepfather's house, describing it as an inn, run by an eccentric innkeeper who fancies himself a gentleman.

Act II, Scene I

Hardcastle expects a visit from his prospective son-in-law, Marlow, and explains to the servants how they are to behave. Because the Hardcastles seldom see company, their servants are farmhands and become confused when Hardcastle explains their duties.

Marlow explains to Hastings that while he can be affable and boisterous with serving women and barmaids, he remains painfully shy among proper ladies.

Tricked by Tony, Marlow and Hastings mistake Hardcastle for a common innkeeper. Instead of treating him like a country gentleman, they behave rudely.

Hastings meets Miss Constance Neville, the niece of Mrs. Hardcastle, and is surprised to find her in an inn. She corrects his mistake, explaining that this is not the Buck's Head Inn but Hardcastle's house. Hastings urges her to elope with him. Constance hedges, reluctant to leave behind her inheritance of jewels, which Mrs. Hardcastle greedily guards. Hastings approves of her plan to get the jewels but suggests they tell Marlow nothing. Hastings fears that if the reserved Marlow discovers that the mansion is not an inn, his embarrassment would drive him to leave, disrupting the lovers' plan.

When Marlow joins them, Hastings introduces Constance and Miss Kate Hardcastle, whom Marlow treats with extreme formality. Left alone together, Marlow's behavior becomes even more reserved, and at the end, Kate asks herself, "Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time." She finds Marlow attractive but wonders if anyone — perhaps she — can overcome his shyness?

When Mrs. Hardcastle joins Hastings' talk with Constance, her conversation reveals her pretensions and ignorance of fashionable London life. He pokes fun at Mrs. Hardcastle's incomplete knowledge of London's fashionable society, of which she so yearns to be a part.

Hastings and Tony converse. Hastings loves Constance and wants to marry her, while Tony detests the thought of marrying Constance but is being urged to by his mother (so that she can maintain control of Constance's jewelry). They develop a plan to help them both. Hastings asks Tony's assistance in eloping with Constance, and Tony agrees, adding that he will also help her remove her inheritance of jewels.

Act III

Hardcastle, perplexed, wonders why his friend, Sir Marlow, recommended that Kate marry young Marlow, who seems rude and unmannered. When joined by Kate, they discuss Marlow's behavior and seem to be talking about two different people. In a sense, of course, they are. When with Hardcastle, whom he believes to be an eccentric

innkeeper, Marlow behaves wildly and without manners. Knowing Kate to be a fine lady, however, Marlow remains shy and reserved. Father and daughter agree to reject a match with Marlow as unsuitable, but for different reasons — Hardcastle because of Marlow's apparent wildness, Kate because of his reserve.

Tony has Constance's jewels sent to Hastings but with no explanation about where they came from or what is to be done with them. Constance, unaware, asks Mrs. Hardcastle's permission to wear them. Constance believes that with the jewels in her possession, she can abscond with them when eloping. The jewels rightly belong to Constance, and Mrs. Hardcastle has difficulty finding a reason to refuse to give them to her. Tony suggests she say the jewels have been lost. Mrs. Hardcastle does so, but when she discovers the jewels have been lost, she tells Tony. He laughs, pretending to think her still playing a scene, though he knows the jewels are lost, because he took them.

When Kate discovers that Tony tricked the visitors into believing her father's house to be an inn, she urges all to maintain the deception. Consequently, Marlow mistakes Kate for a barmaid and flirts with her, behavior to which she responds. Hardcastle enters just in time to see Marlow seizing Kate's hand. Marlow rushes off, with Hardcastle even more convinced of Marlow's impropriety, while Kate insists she can prove the respectability of Marlow, to whom she has taken a fancy.

Act IV

Constance tells Hastings that they expect a visit from Marlow's father, Sir Marlow. Marlow wonders why Hastings has sent him a casket of jewels. Worried about their safety, Marlow returns them to the woman he believes to be the landlady but who is actually one of the Hardcastles' servants. The servant returns Constance's jewels to Mrs. Hardcastle, from whom they had been taken by Tony in the first place. When Hastings enters, Marlow reveals his infatuation with the barmaid (actually Kate). Hastings asks about the jewels, only to be told that Marlow has given them to the landlady (Mrs. Hardcastle). Hastings, who must continue the inn masquerade, cannot reveal the Hardcastles' identity. Consequently, Hastings decides he and Constance must elope without the jewels.

When Hardcastle tells Marlow that his servants have gotten drunk, he is astounded to learn they did so on Marlow's instructions! As Hardcastle storms out, outraged, Marlow realizes his mistake, confusing Hardcastle's house with an inn. Kate enters, confirming Marlow's suspicion. She conceals her identity, however, continuing to present herself as a barmaid. He tells her he would marry her, in spite of her lower class origins, if society — and his father — permitted, but he suspects that cannot be. She now understands his generous nature and sincerity.

With the jewels back in her possession, Mrs. Hardcastle urges Tony to marry Constance the following day, but unbeknownst to her, Tony already has arranged to provide horses enabling Constance and Hastings to elope. When Mrs. Hardcastle discovers their plan, she storms off, furious, ordering Constance to accompany her to her Aunt Pedigree's house, where she will be kept safe from Hastings and their unapproved marriage.

The act ends with Marlow angry with Hastings for concealing the true nature of the mansion, and Hastings incensed with Marlow for inadvertently returning Constance's jewels to Mrs. Hardcastle. Constance goes off to

the supervision of Aunt Pedigree and all seems lost, until Tony insists he has a plan.

Act V, Scene I

Sir Marlow and Hardcastle enter, aware of Tony's joke and laughing about Marlow's mistaking Hardcastle's mansion for an inn.

When told of his son's love for Kate, Sir Marlow remains skeptical that his son could overcome his reserve with a proper lady. Kate, of course, fails to mention that when Marlow declared his love, her barmaid's disguise concealed her identity.

Act V, Scene II

Instead of taking Mrs. Hardcastle and Constance to Aunt Pedigree's house, Tony leads them in a circle, until they find themselves tired, hungry, and — without realizing it — right back where they started. Mrs. Hardcastle becomes furious with Tony when she discovers his prank. Hastings, reunited with Constance, demands she leave the jewels behind and elope with him, but she refuses, urging "prudence." She hopes that, in time, she can marry with both Hardcastle's approval and her inheritance.

Act V, Scene III

Kate, to convince Hardcastle and Sir Marlow that Marlow loves her, hides them where they can secretly observe the lovers' interview. Kate then confronts Marlow, who has come to say goodbye. Knowing that Marlow would become shy if he knew her true identity as a proper lady and Hardcastle's daughter, Kate continues her pretence of being a barmaid. Marlow passionately confesses his love, offering his heart despite the differences in their social classes. Finally, Hardcastle and Sir Marlow interrupt, revealing Kate's true identity.

Mrs. Hardcastle thinks that Constance and Hastings have eloped without the jewels, but they have not. They enter and beg Hardcastle's permission to marry. Hardcastle tells Tony that he has been of age — and therefore eligible to refuse Constance's hand in marriage — for three months. Mrs. Hardcastle has kept this secret from him in hopes of convincing them to marry so she could keep control of Constance's jewels. Tony refuses Constance, whom he does not love, enabling her to marry Hastings, whom she does love. The play ends with Mrs. Hardcastle's greedy plot foiled and both couples — Marlow and Kate and Hastings and Constance — ready to wed.

Epilogue

Spoken in Goldsmith's voice, the epilogue summarizes the action, hoping that the humorous tale of how Kate "stooped to conquer" justifies the author's abandonment of sentimental comedy.

Plot Summary

Wealthy country man Mr Hardcastle arranges for his daughter Kate, to meet Charles Marlow, the son of a wealthy aristocrat, hoping the pair will marry. Unfortunately Marlow is nervous around upper-class women, yet the complete opposite around the lower-class females. On his first acquaintance with Kate, the latter realizes she will have to pretend to be common, to make marital relations with the man possible. Thus Kate stoops to conquer, by posing as a barmaid, hoping to put Marlow at his ease so he falls for her in the process.

One of the sub-plots to this is a comic misunderstanding between Hastings, Marlow and Mr Hardcastle. Before his acquaintance with Kate, Marlow sets out for the Hardcastles' manor with his friend George Hastings, himself an admirer of Miss Constance Neville, another young lady who lives with the Hardcastles. During the journey, the two men become lost and stop off at The Three Pigeons pub for directions. Tony Lumpkin (the son of Mrs Hardcastle and who will acquire a fortune when becoming of "age"), encounters the two strangers at the alehouse, and realising their identities, plays a practical joke by telling them that they are a long way from their destination and will have to stay overnight at an inn. He furthers the joke by telling the twosome the Hardcastles' old house is the inn, thus the pair arrive and treat it as such, and also treat Hardcastle as the mere inn keeper. This leads to Hardcastle becoming both enraged and convinced that Marlow is inappropriate for his beloved Kate; he changes his mind when realising the truth behind Marlow's behaviour.

Another sub-plot is that of the secret affair between Miss Neville and Hastings. Neville desperately wants her jewels that were left for her, and that are guarded by her aunt and Tony's mother, Mrs Hardcastle; the latter wants Neville to marry her son to keep the jewels in the family. Tony despises Constance (Miss Neville), and thus agrees to steal his mother's jewels for Miss Neville, so she will then flee to France with Hastings.

The play concludes with Kate's plan succeeding, thus she and Marlow become engaged. Tony discovers he is of "age", despite his mother not telling him so, thus he receives the money he is entitled to. He refuses to marry Neville, who then is eligible to receive her jewels and to get engaged to Hastings; this she does.

Plot

The central plot of the play follows Charles Marlow, a wealthy young man who is being forced by his family to consider a potential bride whom he has never met. He is anxious about meeting her; he suffers from shyness around women of some wealth, but around women of the lower classes transforms into a positively lecherous rogue. He sets out for the Hardcastle's manor with a friend, George Hastings, himself an admirer of Miss Constance Neville, another young lady who lives at the Hardcastle's. During the journey the two men become lost and stop at The Three Pigeons for directions.

Tony Lumpkin comes across the two strangers at an Alehouse, and realising their identity, plays a practical joke by telling them that they are a long way from their destination and will have to stay overnight at an inn. The "inn" he directs them to is in fact the home of his parents, the Hardcastles. When they arrive, the Hardcastles, who have been expecting them, go out of their way to make them welcome. However, Marlow and Hastings, believing themselves in an inn, behave in a fashion not suited to such manors (even if Liberty Hall is crumbling).

Meanwhile, Tony's sister, Kate, our bride-to-be, learning of the error and also acquainted with her suitor's shyness, masquerades as a serving-maid in order to get to know him. Marlow falls in love with her and plans to elope with her but because she appears of a lower class acts in a very bawdish manner around her. All misunderstandings are resolved by the end, thanks to an appearance by Sir Charles Marlow, and Marlow and Kate live happily ever after.

Characters

Charles Marlow - The central male character, the main plot revolves around Marlow as he attempts to woo Miss Kate Hardcastle. A well-educated fellow, Marlow presents himself as brash and rude to Mr. Hardcastle, owner of Liberty Hall, whom Marlow believes to be an innkeeper. Around women of a lower social standing Marlow is a lecherous rogue, but around women of class he shuts up completely, struggling to speak and stuttering. It is this fact, along with his mistaking of Kate's identity and the his mistaking Liberty Hall for an inn, which creates the backbone of the plot.

George Hastings - Friend of Charles Marlow and the love of Miss Constance Neville. George and Constance together discover Tony's trickery. Hastings and Constance work with Mrs. Hardcastle and Lumpkin to continue to deceive young Marlow while Kate pursues him. Meanwhile, George and Constance work with Lumpkin to obtain Constance's jewels from Mrs. Hardcastle. Hastings is actually a little jealous of Lumpkin.

Mr Hardcastle - Mr Hardcastle, who is mistaken by Marlow for the innkeeper, is a rumbling, bumbling man, stuck in his crumbling mansion. He is very much occupied with the 'old times' and likes nothing better than to tell his war stories and drop names, such as the Duke of Marlborough. He doesn't care for the new fashions of the cities, and all that 'fopperie' and insists that his daughter, of whom he is very fond, dress plainly in the evenings. Mr Hardcastle is a man of manners and, despite being highly insulted by Marlow's treatment of him, manages to keep his temper with his guest until near the end of the play. Hardcastle also demonstrates a wealth of forgiveness as he not only forgives Marlow once he has realised Marlow's mistake, but also gives him consent to marry his daughter. Hardcastle is chief in restoring normal order and clearing up the various mistakes in the play.

Mrs Hardcastle - Somewhat of a pantomime character, Mrs Hardcastle is presented as the overbearing nuisance mother who interests herself heavily in other people's business — often against their wishes. Because of this she is somewhat a figure of ridicule within the play. She spoils her son Tony and makes excuses for him not being all that clever; later on she offers herself to a supposed highwayman in order to protect her son. Apart from this selflessness, Mrs Hardcastle can also be seen as a very selfish character — she plans on marrying her niece to her son purely to keep a jewel fortune in the family, even though it is readily apparent that neither Tony or Constance cares at all for the other in anything other than a platonic sense. Mrs Hardcastle is obsessed with the city of London and the affairs of high society there. This helps highlight the divide between town and country, a major theme of the play. Mrs Hardcastle is presented, however, as being decidedly behind the times in terms of fashion, although she remains convinced she is at the cutting edge. Her superfluous use of French phrases such as 'tete-a-tete' only serves to increase this perception. Mrs Hardcastle is the only character who is not happy at the end of

the play.

Miss Kate Hardcastle - The object of Marlow's affection, Kate is ordered to dress plainly by her father in the evenings. When Marlow first meets her she is in fashionable dress, as she enjoys the 'fripperies of town' as much as her mother. Our lead male stumbles and stutters over his words in front of her, so embarrassed in refined ladies' company that he cannot even look upon her face. Later on in the evening Marlow meets Kate in plain dress and thus he mistakes her for a lower class woman (the barmaid). She plays along with this in order to see if he is as witless as he seems and describes herself as a poor relation of the Hardcastle's (a common figure in 18th century literature). Marlow quickly falls in love with her and even decides to elope with her despite her supposed lower-class status.

Miss Constance Neville - Niece of Mrs Hardcastle and cousin to Tony, Constance is heir to a large fortune of jewels. She is secretly an admirer of George Hastings, but is promised — against her wishes — to be married to her cousin Tony. Constance attempts to elope with Hastings in one of the many dramatic follies of the play. This is essentially the sub-plot of 'She Stoops to Conquer'.

Tony Lumpkin - The main comic character, Tony is the son of Mrs Hardcastle and step-son of Mr Hardcastle. He is promised in marriage to his cousin, Constance Neville, a match neither member of the pair approves of. As Tony is not 'of age' he cannot yet refuse such a union, which was concocted by Mrs Hardcastle purely to keep Constance's considerable fortune of jewels within the family. Tony is not very clever and seems to spend a large amount of his time at 'The Three Pigeons', the local alehouse. Tony is a mischievous scamp with his heart in the right place (demonstrated by Hastings coming to like Tony by the end of the play). He is at one end of a spectrum of education and appropriate behaviour; Hastings represents the opposite end, the height of academia and gentlemanly behaviour, whilst Marlow appears somewhat in the middle. It is Tony's initial deception of Marlow, for a joke, which sets up the plot.

Sir Charles Marlow - Father of Charles Marlow, he follows his son, a few days behind. Unlike his son, he does not meet Tony Lumpkin in the Three Pigeons, and thus is not confused. He is an old friend of Mr. Hardcastle, both of them once having been in the British military, and is quite pleased with the union of his son and his friend's daughter. Sir Charles Marlow enjoys the follies of his son, but does not understand these initially. However, he is quite upset when his son treats Kate as a barmaid

الترجمة للعربية
تتمسكن حتى تتمكن
بواسطة
اوليفر غولدسميث

انها الإنحناءات لقهر هو كوميديا من قبل كاتب الايرلندي اوليفر غولدسميث ، الأولى أنجزت في عام 1773. المسرحية هي المفضلة عظيمة لدراسة الأدب من خلال دروس اللغة الإنجليزية في بريطانيا. انها واحدة من عدد قليل من المسرحيات من القرن الثامن عشر أن يكون نداء دائم ، وما زالت تجري بانتظام اليوم.

الحبكة

الحبكة الرئيسية للمسرحية حول تشارلز مارلو ، رجل ثري الشباب الذين يجري أجبرت عائلته على النظر في إمكانية العروس الذي كان قد اجتمع ابدا. فهو يشعر بالقلق حول اجتماع لها ؛ أنه يعاني من الخجل حول المرأة من بعض الثروات ، ولكن حول النساء من الطبقات الدنيا يتحول إلى في العزبة مع صديق ، جورج هاستينغز ، نفسه معجبا ملكة جمال كونستانس نيفيل وأخرى سيده Hardcastle المارقة إيجابيا فاسق. انه يحدد لل خلال الرحلة الرجلين تنوء وتتوقف عند الحمام لثلاثة اتجاهات 's. Hardcastle شابة تعيش في

توني ومبكين يأتي عبر اثنان من الغرباء في هذا البار ، وتحقيق هويتهم ، يلعب مزحة من خلال ابلاغهم بأنهم بعيدون كل البعد عن وجهتها ، وسوف ، الذين كانوا Hardcastles عند وصولها ، و Hardcastles تضطر إلى المبيت في حانة. ونزل "" انه توجه لهم هو في الواقع في منزل والديه ، و يتوقعون منها ، والخروج من وهم في طريقهم لجعلها موضع ترحيب. ومع ذلك ، مارلو وهاستينغز ، معتقدين أنهم في الحانة ، تتصرف بطريقة غير (مناسبة لمثل هذه عزبات) حتى لو كانت الحرية هي قاعة المتداعية

وفي الوقت نفسه ، توني أخت ، وكيت ، ونحن العروس ليكون ، والتعلم من الخطأ ، وأيضا التعرف على الخاطب والخجل ، والتنكر لخدمة خادمة حولها. جميع حالات bawdish من أجل التعرف عليه. مارلو يقع في حبها وخطط للهروب معها بل لأنها تظهر من أفعال الطبقة الدنيا بطريقة جدا. سوء الفهم يتم حلها بحلول نهاية ، وذلك بفضل ظهور السير تشارلز مارلو ، ومارلو وكيت والعيش بسعادة وبعد

الشخص المسرحية

وقال زميل تعليما Hardcastle. تشارلز مارلو -- إن الطابع المركزي الذكور ، والمؤامرة الرئيسي يدور حول مارلو في محاولته لجذب الأنسة كيت ، صاحب قاعة ليبرتي ، ومنهم مارلو تعتقد أن فندق. حول المرأة من مكانة اجتماعية Hardcastle جيدا ، مارلو يقدم نفسه على صراخ وقحا للسيد أدنى مارلو هو فاسق مارقة ، ولكن حول النساء من الطبقة انه مصاريع تماما ، تكافح من أجل الكلام والتأتأة. هذا هو الواقع ، ومعه ظنا من كيت. هوية وله أن ينتبه ليبرتي قاعة خان ، الذي ينشئ العمود الفقري لهذه المؤامرة جورج هاستينغز -- صديق لتشارلز مارلو وحبه للجمال كونستانس نيفيل. جورج وكونستانس معا اكتشاف توني الخداع. هاستينجس والعمل مع وومبكين على مواصلة خداع مارلو الشباب بينما كيت تتبع له. وفي الوقت نفسه ، جورج وكونستانس العمل مع Hardcastle السيدة كونستانس هاستينجس هو في الواقع قليلا بالغيرة من ومبكين. Hardcastle ومبكين للحصول على كونستانس المجوهرات من السيدة ، الذي هو مخطئ من مارلو لفندق ، هو الهادر ، التلعثم الرجل ، عالقة في بلدة القصر المتداعية. فهو Hardcastle السيد -- Hardcastle السيد كثيرا المحتلة مع "الأزمنة القديمة" ويحب شيئا أفضل من أن نقول له قصصا عن الحرب وأسماء قطرة ، مثل دوق مارلبورو. انه لا يهتم لموضات هو Hardcastle ويصر على أن ابنته ، ومنهم من هو مغرم جدا ، واللباس بوضوح في المساء. السيد 'fopperie' جديدة من المدن ، وجميع ذلك رجل الأخلاق ، وعلى الرغم من كونها شديدة للإهانة من مارلو والعلاج منه ، وتمكن من الحفاظ على أعصابه مع ضيفه حتى قرب نهاية للمسرحية يدل أيضا على ثروة من الصفح لأنه لا يغفر مارلو مرة مارلو انه ادرك الخطأ الذي ارتكبه ، ولكن أيضا تمنحه الموافقة على الزواج Hardcastle هو كبير في استعادة النظام الطبيعي وإزالة الاخطاء مختلفة في اللعب Hardcastle. من ابنته

يرد على النحو الأم ازعاج الطاغية الذي المصالح نفسها Hardcastle إلى حد ما ذات طابع فن التمثيل الإيمائي ، السيدة -- Hardcastle السيدة بقوة في أعمال الناس الآخرين -- في كثير من الأحيان ضد رغباتهم. لأن هذه هي الى حد ما شخصية للسخرية داخل المسرحية. انها غنائم ابنها توني ويجعل له الأعداء ، لا يجري كل ذلك ذكية ؛ في وقت لاحق انها تقدم نفسها الى قاطع طريق المفترض من أجل حماية ابنها. بصرف النظر عن هذا يمكن أيضا أن ينظر إليه باعتباره شخصية أنانية جدا -- على أنها تعززم الزواج من ابنة أخيها لابنها بحثة للحفاظ على Hardcastle الإيثار ، السيدة ثروة جوهرية في الأسرة ، وعلى الرغم من أنه يبدو واضحاً أن أيا من توني كونستانس أو يهتم على الإطلاق لأخرى في أي شيء آخر غير شعور مهووس مدينة لندن وشؤون المجتمع العالية هناك. هذا يساعد على تسليط الضوء على الفجوة بين المدينة والريف ، Hardcastle الأفلاطونية. السيدة يرد ، لكن ، وكما يجري بالتأكيد وراء مرات من حيث الموضة ، وعلى الرغم من انها لا تزال Hardcastle موضوعاً رئيسياً للمسرحية. السيدة هو Hardcastle مقتنعة انها في طبيعة. لزوم لها استخدام عبارات مثل الفرنسية 'تيتي تيتي' ، واحد لا تؤدي إلا إلى زيادة هذا التصور. السيدة الشخصية الوحيدة التي ليست سعيدة في نهاية المسرحية

وجوه مارلو والمودة ، وكيت هو أمر لباس بوضوح من قبل والدها في المساء. عندما يجتمع مارلو الأولى لها وهي في -- Hardcastle يغيب كيت من بلدة' بقدر أمها. لدينا قيادة يتعثر الذكور والتعنتة خلال كلماته أمام عينيها ، حتى في أخرج 'fripperies' ثوب من المألوف ، كما انها تتمتع السيدات المكرر 'الشركة انه لا يستطيع حتى ان ننظر الى وجهها. في وقت لاحق في المساء مارلو يجتمع مع كيت في اللباس العادي ، وبالتالي كان لها اخطاء لامرأة الطبقة السفلى (ساقية). وهي تلعب مع هذا من أجل معرفة ما اذا كان هو وأحمق كما انه يبدو وتصف نفسها بأنها بالنسبة للفقراء في القرن). مارلو سرعان ما يقع في حبها وحتى تقرر هرب معها على الرغم من المفترض لها th وهو شخصية مشتركة في الأدب (18 Hardcastle أدنى مرتبة

لتوني ، كونستانس وريثة ثروة كبيرة من المجوهرات. انها تسعى سرا معجبا جورج Hardcastle نيفيل يغيب كونستانس -- بنت أخ وابن عم السيدة هاستينغز ، ولكن هو وعد -- رغما عنها -- أن تكون متزوجة من ابن عمها توني. كونستانس محاولات للهروب مع هاستينغز في واحدة من الحماقات 'مثيرة العديد من اللعاب. هذا هو أساسا حبكة فرعية 'والإنحناءات لقهر

انه وعد في الزواج من ابنة عمه ، Hardcastle. وخطوة نجل السيد Hardcastle توني ومبكين -- إن الطابع الرئيسي هزلية ، توني هو ابن السيدة كونستانس نيفيل ، وهو عضو في مباراة لا يوافق على هذا الزوج. كما توني ليس 'من العمر' انه لا يمكن حتى الآن ترفض مثل هذا الاتحاد ، الذي كونستانس بحثة للحفاظ على ثروة كبيرة من المجوهرات داخل الأسرة. توني ليست ذكية جدا ، ويبدو أن تنفق مبلغا Hardcastle بادرت إليه السيدة مع قلبه في المكان المناسب (أبداه هاستينغز القادمة لمتل توني mischievous كبيرا من وقته في 'الحمام ثلاثة' ، والبار المحلية. توني هو النذل بحلول نهاية المسرحية). فهو في نهاية واحدة من طائفة والتعليم والسلوك المناسب ؛ هاستينغز ويمثل الطرف المقابل ، ذروة الأوساط الأكاديمية وسلوك نبيل ، مارلو في حين يبدو نوعا ما في الوسط. فمن توني الخداع الأولي لمارلو ، لنكتة ، وهو يضع هذه المؤامرة السير تشارلز مارلو -- الأب شارل مارلو ، انه يتبع ابنه ، بعد أيام قليلة وراءها. خلافا لابنه ، وقال انه لا يلي توني ومبكين في الحمام ثلاث ، كل منهما مرة واحدة علما انه كان في الجيش البريطاني ، ومسروق جدا مع الاتحاد ابنه Hardcastle وبالتالي لا يتم الخلط. وهو صديق قديم للسيد وصديقه ابنه. السير تشارلز مارلو تتمتع حماقات ابنه ، ولكن لا يفهم هذه البداية. بيد أنه مستاء جدا عندما ابنه كيت يعامل بوصفه ساقية

غولدسميث (أوليفر -)

(1774-1730)

أوليفر غولدسميث Oliver Goldsmith كاتب إنكليزي - أيرلندي نال شهرة كبيرة في فترة قصيرة لم تتجاوز خمس عشرة سنة، وقد تميّزت كتاباته بدفع المشاعر وسحر الأسلوب وروح الفكاهة مما أكسبه شعبية وشهرة بصفته رائداً من رواد الأدب الإنكليزي. ارتكزت شهرته بالدرجة الأولى على سلسلة مقالاته «رسائل صينية» Chinese Letters التي نُشرت تحت عنوان «مواطن من العالم» The Citizen of the World عام (1762)، وعلى قصيدته «القرية المهجورة» The Deserted Village عام (1770)، وروايته الوحيدة «قس ويكفيلد» The Vicar of Wakefield عام (1766)، ومسرحيته «تمسكنت فتَمَكَّنْتُ» She Stoops to Conquer عام (1773).

ولد غولدسميث قرب بالاس Pallas في مقاطعة لونغفورد Longford في أيرلندا، وكان الولد الخامس من ثمانية أولاد لتشارلز وأن غولدسميث، وبعد ولادته مباشرة استقرت العائلة في ليسوي Lissoy قرب كيلكيني وست Kilkenny West حيث عمل والده راعياً للأبرشية. تلقى غولدسميث تعليمه الأساسي في مدرسة محلية وفي مدارس البلدات القريبة الأخرى، وفي عام 1745 دخل كلية ترينيتي Trinity College في دبلن طالباً مساعداً (وهو الطالب الذي يكسب قسماً من تكاليف دراسته بتقديم خدمات لزملائه الطلاب) وأمضى سنوات صعبة حتى تخرج فيها عام 1750. وبعد محاولات فاشلة لتحضير نفسه لمهنة الكهنوت والتعليم والقانون ذهب إلى اسكتلندا عام 1752 لدراسة الطب في جامعة إدنبره، ولكنه لم يحصل

على درجة جامعية، وبعد عام ونصف ذهب إلى هولندا لمتابعة دراسته في جامعة لايدن Leiden، وعوضاً من عودته إلى أيرلندا انطلق في رحلة على الأقدام إلى فرنسا وسويسرا وإيطاليا يعزف الناي ويعني للحصول على الطعام أو المبيت.

ظهر غولدسميث في أوائل عام 1756 في لندن محاولاً عبثاً أن يثبت نفسه طبيباً، فانتقل إلى الكتابة بادئاً بالنقد الأدبي والترجمة ثم المقالات والحكايات والأشعار في المجلات الدورية المشهورة، وقد ترجم أعمالاً كثيرة لفولتير وبلوتارخس. تعرّف صموئيل جونسون Samuel Johnson والرسام جوشوا رينولدز Joshua Reynolds اللذين أحلاه عضواً في نادي جونسون الثقافي المشهور الذي أسسه عام 1763، وكان من أعضاء النادي أيضاً الممثل ديفيد غاريك David Garrick، والكاتب جيمس بوزويل James Boswell الذي تحدّث عن غولدسميث في السيرة التي كتبها عن جونسون. كان غولدسميث في بعض الأوقات شخصية مثيرة للضحك بسبب عدم لباقة وطباعه الريفية الفظة مع أفراد المجتمع اللندني، وعُدَّ مهرج الجماعة وهو دور تقبّله بسرور. وقد تميّز غولدسميث بهذا التناقض بين شخصيته في المجتمع وشخصيته الأدبية. وعندما ظهرت قصيدته الأولى «المسافر» The Traveler عام (1764)، كان من الصعب على أعضاء النادي أن يصدقوا أن هذه القصيدة من تأليفه، حتى إن أحدهم ذهب إلى حد استجوابه استجواباً دقيقاً لكي يتأكد. وقد كتب غولدسميث في السنوات العشر التالية في جميع الأجناس الأدبية، وفي أي موضوع كان يفرضه عليه الناشرون فجنى أموالاً طائلة، إلا أنه كان كريماً إلى حد الإسراف.

تميّزت مؤلفات غولدسميث بالتنوع، إذ قدّم للقراء نقداً اجتماعياً وتاريخياً وشعراً ومسرحاً ورواية. كان مفتوناً بالحياة، ويهدف إلى إسعاد البشرية بحثاً عن الناس على القناعة والرضا بالقدر. وقد وصف في مقالاته «رسائل صينية» انطباعات مُفكّر صيني زار مدينة لندن، وذكر فيها حسنات وسيئات الحياة الإنكليزية السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية والدينية وقارنها بالحياة الصينية، وحذّر فيها من الحرب والغزو والاستعمار، لأن الطمع هو سبب الحروب والدمار. وفي روايته الوحيدة «قس ويكفيلد»، سجّل بطل القصة الدكتور بريمرز Primrose، رجل الدين العبقري الذي يروي القصة، المصائب التي حلّت بعائلته المتواضعة بعد أن كانت عائلة سعيدة. وقد جسّدت هذه الرواية صورة الحياة الريفية بأحداث مثيرة وعواطف مفعمة بالقيم الأخلاقية، وأحبها القراء لروح السخرية فيها، ولا سيما عندما صار وصف القس لضعف الشخصيات الأخرى مرآة لشخصيته.

أما أهم أشعار غولدسميث فهما القصيدتان «المسافر» و«القرية المهجورة» اللتان كانتا سبب شهرته الأدبية، وقد استخدم فيهما أسلوب الابتاعيين الجدد من حيث وحدة الموضوع واستخدام الدوبييت الملحمي (البيتان المزدوجان) heroic couplet. يصف في الأولى حسنات الشعوب الأوروبية وسيناتها كالفرنسيين والسويسريين والهولنديين والإيطاليين ويقارنهم بالإنكليز. ويصف في الثانية كيف تدفع الضغوط الاقتصادية والاجتماعية الفلاحين إلى ترك أراضيهم عن طريق بيعها للأغنياء، ويركز في وصفه على حبه لحياة الريف البسيطة.

من أشهر مسرحيات غولدسميث «الرجل الدمث» The Good Natur' Man عام (1768)، و«تمسكنت فتمكّنت»، وهما مسرحيتان مسليتان تعتمدان على شخصيات مرسومة بوضوح وخفة ظل مع مواقف هزلية متقنة، إذ كان غولدسميث يسعى إلى إعادة الضحك للمسرح والمرح لحياة الناس.

أما كتاباته في السير فأفضلها «حياة ريتشارد ناش» The Life of Richard Nash عام (1762). ومن كتاباته التاريخية «تاريخ إنكلترا في سلسلة رسائل من رجل نبيل إلى ابنه» The History of England in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to His Son عام (1764) التي كتبها في مجلدين، و«تاريخ إنكلترا» The History of England عام (1771) في أربعة مجلدات، و«تاريخ روما» The History of Rome عام (1769) في مجلدين، لكنه لم يعتمد في دراساته التاريخية على البحث العلمي بل على قراءة كتب التاريخ فقط، ومع ذلك بقيت هذه الكتب معتمدة في المدارس الإنكليزية والأمريكية مدة قرن كامل. كتب غولدسميث أيضاً «تاريخ الأرض والطبيعة المتحركة» The History of Earth and Animated Nature عام (1774) في ثمانية مجلدات، وهي دراسة شاملة للتاريخ الطبيعي مستقاة من مصادر عدة أغناها غولدسميث بملاحظاته الشخصية.

لم يُصنّف غولدسميث في مرتبة عظماء الكتاب، ومع ذلك فإن له معجبين كثر، إذ كان في أسلوبه يبعث المرح والنور والحكمة عند القارئ. وقد تحدّث في شعره كما في نثره بوضوح وجزالة في الأسلوب متماشياً مع التألق البياني، حتى إن صموئيل جونسون لخص منجزاته في كلمات رثاء باللاتينية كُتِبَتْ على نصب تذكاري لغولدسميث في زاوية الشعراء في مقبرة وستمنستر في لندن قال فيها: «لم يترك غولدسميث أي جنس أدبي من دون أن يجربه، وما كتب في أي شيء إلا وتوجّه».

COMMENTS

1700s: During the 18th century, entirely arranged marriages were rare, but a young women rarely had the right to select a husband entirely on her own. More customary was for the father to select the prospective husband, while the daughter had the right to accept or refuse him. In *She Stoops to Conquer*, Mr. Hardcastle has selected Marlow, the son of an old friend, but he assures Kate he would never control her choice.

Today: The majority of people who marry make their own decisions and join together primarily for love.

1700s: India was a British colony ruled largely by the East India Company, for whom Constance's uncle was a director.

Today: India is one of the world's largest democracies.

1700s: Mr. Hardcastle complains that life in the country has changed since he was a young man and offers no protection against the corruption of London life. Better roads and coaches carry mail and newspapers, connecting the city and country. London fashions and manners infiltrate even rural estates.

Today: Many people live in suburbs which lie between urban and rural areas. Not only mass transit, but mass media and the Internet connect communities throughout the world.

1700s: Mrs. Hardcastle's comment that "since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman" refers to the fact that, with advancing medical science and the advent of numerous vaccines against diseases, very few women were scarred by smallpox. A case of smallpox as a child left its mark on Goldsmith.

Today: Children receive inoculations against a host of diseases, including measles and polio, which for earlier generations caused illness, disfigurement, and death.