

**SUBJECT : ENGLISH**

**B.A.(HONS.) PART-II, PAPER-III**

**TOPIC- SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER**

**BY DR.PRABHAT RANJAN KARN**

**ASSOC. PROF., DEPT.OF ENGLISH**

**DR.L.K.V.D. COLLEGE, TAJPUR**

## **CHARACTER SKETCH OF TONY LUMPKIN**

The character of Tony Lumpkin plays pivotal role in the play around which all the characters and incidents revolve. He is the most interesting and amusing character and all the comic scenes of the play owe directly or indirectly to him. Without Tony we cannot think of the fun and mirth, the complication of the action and the final resolution.

Tony is the son of a country gentleman and Mrs. Hardcastle. But Tony is born of Mrs. Hardcastle's former

husband. He inherits fifteen hundred pounds a year which he will claim upto attaining the years of discretion. Though he has attained that age three months ago, his step father and mother try to keep it secret. He never went to school. He is completely an illiterate fellow, unable to properly decipher even a letter. While attempting to read the letter of Hastings Tony says, “Here are such handles... and dashes that one can scarcely tell the head from the tail”. He can somehow manage the outside of the letter, containing his name but when he opens it, he says, “ it is all – buzz”.

Tony is a mischievous fellow who delights himself in playing jokes on all and sundry without consideration of their position. He is ‘a mere composition of trick and mischief’ as his step-father says about him. Among his tricks mention may be made of his burning the footman’s shoes, frightening the maid and worrying the kittens etc. and above all, one day he fastened his father’s wig to the back of his chair and when he went back to

bow, he popped his bald in the presence of a female guest. All these prove how mischievous and trickstering fellow Tony is.

In fact, such jokes of Tony are the fountain of the whole plot. All mirth and fun of the play are derived from these mistakes, for a country squire to befool the town beaux, to the top of his bent is no doubt a creditable achievement. Again when his mother wants to pinhole Constance in aunt Pedigree's house, so that she might not demand the jewels and elope with her lover, Tony hits upon the device of the mock ride and brings the lovers together again. He takes the mother round and round the house while she thinks that she is going forward. She is at last made to suppose that they have lost their way in a place infested with highwaymen. In all these cumbersome plots we somehow feel to be on the side of Tony rather to be on the side of the sympathizers with his victims.

Despite all his joking and trickstering spirit Tony has got a sound heart. He baffles all the schemes of his mother when

the latter seeks to foist upon him his undesirable cousin Constance. When he comes to know that Constance has a “spark” in Hastings, he sincerely helps the progress of their love affair, by stealing jewels, by arranging for their elopement etc. Of course, it would leave him free to marry his country beauty, Bet Boucher, and this might be his original motive in the matter dealing with the Constance-Hastings episode. Nevertheless, it speaks a sound heart and sincerity of feeling.

\*\*\*\*\*