

BEAU TIBBS (Oliver Goldsmith)

The essay, Beau Tibbs is an extract from the collection of essays, 'The Citizen of the World' written by Oliver Goldsmith. He introduces an imaginary philosophic china man named Lien-chi-Altangz who was a serious observer of men and things.

Beau Tibbs is a record of the experiences of the Chinese philosopher in England. In the first part of the essay, the Chinese philosopher is introduced to Tibbs through the man in Black. Tibbs is an extraordinary character. He wears peculiar dress. His clothes are old which show his poverty. But he talks continuously of his intimate associations with aristocrats. He says to the man in Black that the Duke of Piccadilly has offered him a good sum of money. His statements are generally false and contradictory. He says that he has dined with the Duchess of Piccadilly in the town. But after a while, he speaks of his dining with the Duke in the country on the same day. The Chinese philosopher asks him to explain his position. He then says that he takes two dinners everyday. It shows that Tibbs is in habit of telling lies. He has habit of borrowing money from others, and never pays back the borrowed amount. One day he is found in rags, and the next day in fine clothes. He talks with distinguished persons in a familiar way but, in fact, he is not familiar with them.

Beau Tibbs thinks that people do not know about his poverty. He knows the art of flattery by which he can charm all, and ask for

money from there.

In the second part of the essay, the Chinese philosopher visits Tibbs' house. Tibbs overtakes him in public walk and begins to behave oddly. He salutes several well dressed persons, though they don't return his salutes cordially. At times, he takes out a pocket book and takes down notes. The Chinese philosopher is disgusted with him and fails to tolerate his uncommon activities. One day he invites the Chinese philosopher to dine with him. He speaks highly of Mrs. Tibbs and his daughter, whom he wants to get married with the son of a noble man. All this shows that Tibbs was a man of great poses and pretensions. The Chinese philosopher also realized that Tibbs is a tall talker. His house is located at an ugly place, but he talks about the beauty of its surroundings. At last, the philosopher leaves Tibbs' house under the pretext of keeping some previous engagements.

Thus the essay gives the sketch of an extra ordinary character. It also reveals the picture of social life. Those who try to hide his poverty and show false richness are objects of pity.