



SYMBOLS IN *ARMS AND THE MAN*

SYMBOLS PROVIDE CLUES
TO THE DRAMATIC MEANING FOR THE AUDIENCE.

CHOCOLATE

Bluntschli carries chocolate into the battlefield rather than cartridges for a gun. The chocolate is a symbol of Bluntschli's realistic and pragmatic nature. This is reiterated by the fact that many soldiers carried rations of chocolate during war as a form of sustenance. By carrying chocolate and not ammunition, Shaw (a pacifist) also makes a point about the senseless violence of war.

VIRGIL'S *THE AENEID*

The opening line of Virgil's poem *The Aeneid* was the inspiration for the title of *Arms and the Man*. The line states, "Of Arms and the man I sing..." with the poem detailing Aeneid's heroic feats on the battlefield. The word 'arms' refers to weaponry or ammunition.

By naming the play *Arms and the Man*, Shaw's play leads audience's to believe it would detail gallant and brave acts on the battlefield. The title is instead deceptive, and is a contrast to the poem, as the play asks the audience to question man's involvement in war and challenges idealised views of battle and heroism.