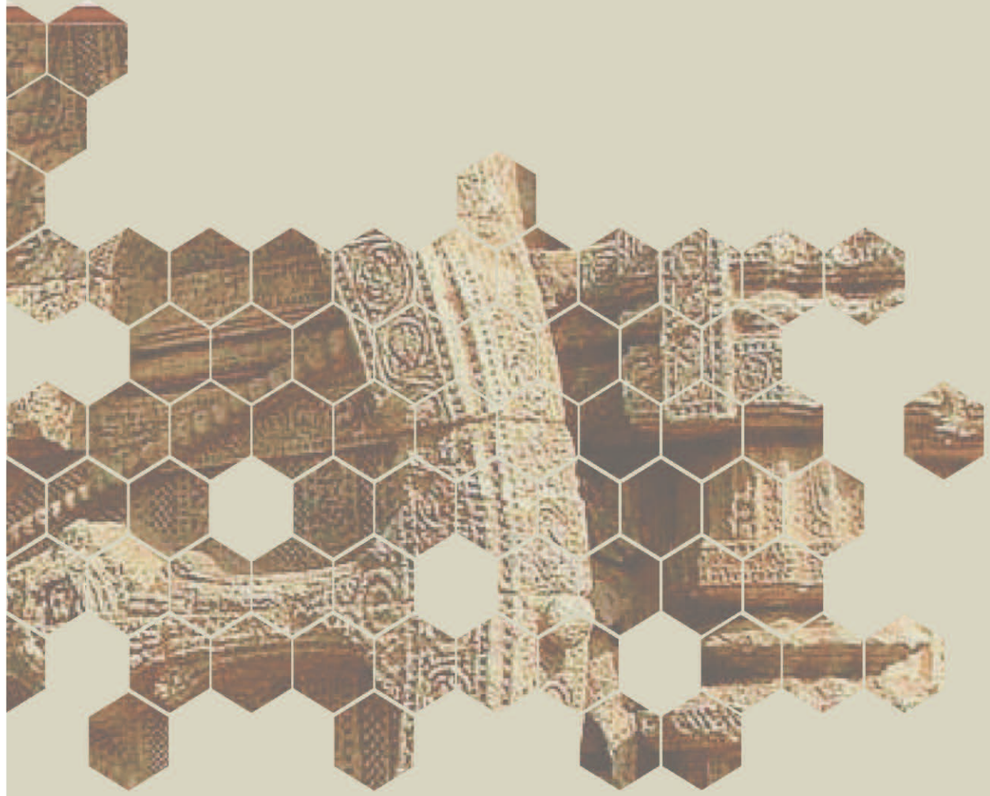

Drama-I

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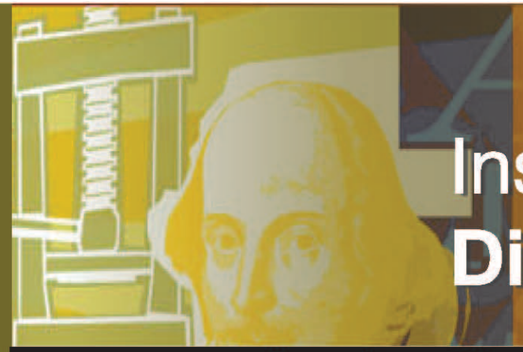

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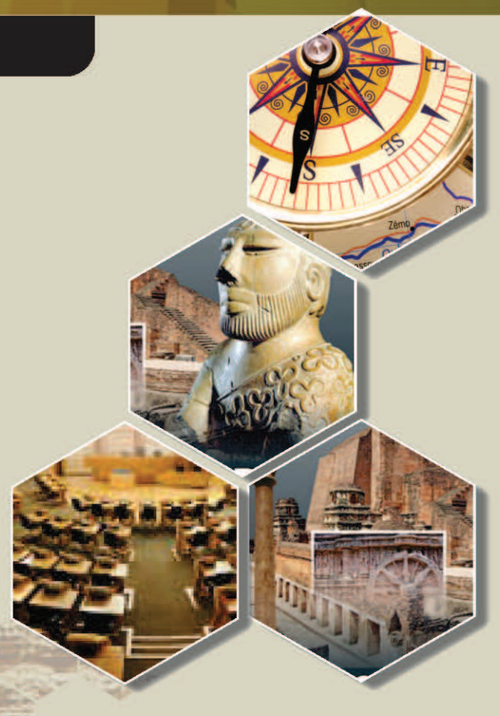

1MAENG2

DR. C.V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY
Chhattisgarh, Bilaspur
A STATUTORY UNIVERSITY UNDER SECTION 2(F) OF THE UGC ACT

1MAENG2
DRAMA-I

1MAENG2, Drama-I

Edition: March 2024

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Oedipus Rex

Reference- These lines have been taken from Sophocles classical tragedy Oedipus Rex, The lines form an important part of the Delphic oracle referred by the chorus in his song.

Context- Thebes suffers from famine and plague. To know how to get rid of it, king Oedipus sends Creon, his wife Jocasta's brother to Delphi, a shrine or temple dedicated to Apollo. The temple was situated in a deep rocky cleft near Mt. Parnassus in Phocis. Inside the temple a preistress of Apollo used to utter words in divine ecstasy in reply to the questions asked by worshippers. So often the words were confusing enough to be interpreted only by priests and prophets. The present oracle is obscure and ambiguous.

Explanation- The chorus has full faith in the Delphic oracle. He stresses the point that the oracle has warned against the murderer of Laius. Gods are angry with the man who dared to shed the royal blood. When Laius was killed, he was on a religious visit. To kill him was a satanic deed. But the warning is not only against the shedder of blood but the doer of unnamed deeds. It suggests the marriage of son with the mother. It is such an Incest that is still unnamed. It is a direct violation of the pious institution of marriage blessed by gods. Delphic oracle is against that man and he **must be expelled** from **Thebes** but the oracle does not throw light on the name and identity of that man. The chorus asks who that man can be but whoever that man is must leave the city by himself for he is guilty of regicide, murder of the king.

Note-

(i) *Faith in Delphic oracles.*

(ii) *Regi,cide-a severe sin.*

(iii) *deeds unnamed- still today the deed has no name but is known by the name of Oedipus; it is called Oedipus complex to develop sexual feelings for own mother.*

(iv) *Importance of the chorus.*

(ii) I wish I **had never seen you, son of Laius. Till yesterday you were a source of light for me but now you have become a night of endless darkness.**

Reference- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' famous classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. The lines are a part of the chorus' speech.

Context- The chorus has always been praising Oedipus in high terms. When he discovers that Oedipus is the worst sinner in the world, for he is guilty of killing his own father Laius. His other sin is beyond naming for he has married his own mother who has given birth to his children.

Explanation- The chorus claims that Oedipus' sight is disgusting. He suffers from a sense of guilt that he had been praising a sinner like Oedipus. When the sins were not discovered, the chorus admits that Oedipus was his ideal who used to inspire him to be wise. brave and prosperous like him. But now he is ashamed of knowing him. Now Oedipus cannot inspire anybody. He does not represent God. On the contrary in sin he has left behind even Satan. It is a sin itself to account for his foul doings spreading darkness of hell in the human world. He is brother of his own sons and daughters for his wife is his mother also.

Note-

(i) *Change in Oedipus' fortune.*

(ii) *Irony of time.*

(iii) *Moral of the play- 'None can be called happy until that day when he carries his happiness down to the grave in peace.'*

(iii) **What a life must yours be ! Who will admit you to the gatherings of the citizens and to the festivals? Who will marry you?**

Reference- These lines have been taken from the great Greek dramatist Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. The speech is made by Oedipus to his daughters.

Context- Oedipus' sins are discovered. **He** is guilty of killing his father Laius and marrying his own mother Jocasta. Jocasta hangs herself and Oedipus blinds himself feeling ashamed of his guilt.

Explanation- Oedipus accounts for his sins and extends its scope to the dark future of his daughters Ismene and Antigone. He does not care for his sons Eteocles and Polynices. But he feels guilty of spoiling lives of his daughters who will have to lead the life of forced renunciation. Now they are outcastes for no family will welcome their arrivals. They shall not be invited by anybody. They shall be victim of social neglect and insult. Perhaps all of their virtues are reduced to dust and ashes. Nobody will ever remember their virtues. Only it will always be remembered that they are daughters of sinful Oedipus who killed his father and married his own mother. It is the irony of the human world that boons are forgotten only curses are remembered. It is his fate that the sins committed unknowingly have obscured all of his virtues and

great services rendered to human society. His ill fate has overshadowed their lives too. Nobody will ever like to marry his daughters although they are highly virtuous.

Note-

(i) *Oedipus' agony.*

(ii) fll *fate of his daughters.*

(iii)lmpe,fection of human society.

(iv) *Oedipus' fear is baseless for Haemon, the son of Creon is bethrothed to Antigone, Oedipus' daughter.*

(iv) **None can be called happy until that day when he carries his happiness down to the grave in peace.**

Reference- These lines have been taken from the last speech by the chorus in Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex.

Context- 'Oedipus Rex' is the story of a man's rise to the sky and fall to the dust. The chorus points out this great irony of human fate.

Explanation- The chorus points out the difference between past and present in Oedipus' life. The past was full of success while the present of remorse. The higher a man jumps the deeper he falls down. It is difficult to determine what is fortunate and what unfortunate. It is the irony of time that proves that all blessings were infact curses. Man is always thoughtless and short visioned. He sees whatever appears not what really is. *All* were envious of Oedipus' success. All were jealous of his royal parentage. When he alone killed a group of warriors including king Laius, he took pride in his bravery. When he solveq the riddle by Sphinx, he took pride in his wisdom. When the royal queen Jocasta married him, he took pride in his luck and prosperity on becoming the king of Thebes. But whatever it was, was merely illusion. The bitter reality was still to be exposed that he was the cause of disaster in Thebes. He was guilty of patricide by killing his father Laius and marrying his own mother resulting in birth of two sons and two daughters who were his brothers and sisters also. Before knowing the truth. he was blessing to all but after exposure of the truth he became a curse to *all.* It is the moral of the fable that only death determines if the man was fortunate or unfortunate. Any moment all joys may disappear giving way to endless sorrows.

Note-

(i) *Moral of the play.*

(ii) *Cf Pope, Rape of the Lock-Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate.*

(iii) *Philosophy of life.*

(iv) *Proverbial statement.*

(v) **Beyond all telling, the city**
Reeks with the death in her streets, death bringing.
None weeps, and her children die,
None by to pity,
Mothers at every altar kneel.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' famous tragedy Oedipus Rex. Oedipus is the king of Thebes as well as the killer of the former king of Thebes, Laius. Oedipus is ignorant of the fact. Because of his sin the city of Thebes is cursed with plague. In these lines the chorus describes the misery of suffering citizens of Thebes.

Explanation- According to the chorus the miseries of unfortunate citizens are beyond description. All streets echo with laments for the houses are cursed with untimely deaths. Now people are so used to such heartbreaking news that nobody feels inclined to ask who is dead. When someone dies, his dead body lies unattended for there is none to shed tears or feel pity. Mothers are no more mothers for their children are dead. For the mercy of God, these mothers kneel at every temple to pray for peace of the departed souls. In this way the chorus appeal gods to shower blessings on Thebes by removing all sufferings. Besides, he wishes for arousing of pity in human hearts.

Note-

(i) *The chorus represents public opinion.*

(ii) *Want of pity-effect of numberless deaths.*

(vi) **You too have seen our city's affliction, caught**
In a tide of death from which there is no escaping-
Death in the fruitful flowering of her soil;
Death in the pastures; death in the womb of women:
And pestilence, a fiery demon gripping the city.
Stripping the house of Cadmus, the fattening hell,
With profusion of lamentation.

Reference to the Context- These pathetic lines have been taken from Sophocles' immortal play Oedipus Rex. The Priest of Zues, in these lines, gives a vivid description of common people's sufferings. He requests Oedipus to do something to help the unfortunate people of Thebes.

Explanation- According to the Priest, it is a very serious matter to be handled urgently by Oedipus who is the king of Thebes that common people are suffering so pathetically. He reminds Oedipus that no further report is required for nothing is hidden from his eyes.

Cesario immediately withdraws from the scene bidding goodbye to the good madam.

Comments: Viola feels herself in a fix for an open and direct reply to Olivia on her offer of her love. However, wise and intelligent as she is above her age, she gives a veiled answer and strengthens it by oath. At the same time she remains very much alert lest she should reveal her identity of a woman to the Lady who has all the time taken her as a youth and offered her love to him so passionately.

(xv) Go write..... about it.

(Sir Toby to Sir Andrew, Act III, Scene II, p. 186)

Context: At the mischievous suggestion of Fabian which has the support of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew has agreed to have a duel with the young messenger of Duke Orsino. For this purpose, he has to send a formal letter of challenge to Cesario (Viola).

Explanation: In these lines, Sir Toby gives Sir Andrew certain instructions for writing the letter of challenge. The instructions are however offered not in earnest but only to ridicule Sir Andrew and to expose the coward in him. Sir Toby says that Sir Andrew should write the letter in a spirited language, the words must be very plain and clear but the letter should bear a new style. Sir Andrew should ridicule the Duke's messenger as much as possible and should also address him most contemptuously so that his anger may be sufficiently aroused in order to fight the duel. He should also make in the letter as many false charges against the youth as may possibly be contained in the sheet of paper used which may be as big and wide as the Bed of Ware. He then asks Sir Andrew to go and begin writing the letter of challenge.

Comments: The suggestions made and instructions given by Sir Toby clearly reflect that they are abused and their role purpose is to ridicule Sir Andrew who is a known stupid and coward, and have fun. The developments in the subsequent scenes prove it and the duel does not take place.

(xvi) The offence..... pay dear.

(Antonio to Sebastian, Act III, Scene II, p. 194)

Context: Antonio urged by his deep love for Sebastian and also to ensure his safety has reached Illyria wbere they converse in a street. Antonio relates his earlier sea-fight against the ships of Duke Orsino due to which Illyria is now a hostile place for him.

Explanation: When Sebastian asks that Antonio must have killed many persons of the Count's ships, Antonio reply that he was not guilty of any such crime but then the circumstances of the situation might have caused a heavy bloodshed. Antonio further says that whatever loss the Count's ships might have suffered at the hands of Antonio, his men were possibly compensated in the meanwhile out of consideration of trade

is not responsible for them directly. Yet he has acted unwisely in those matters. When Jocasta was his mother, decidedly there ought to be a considerable age difference, yet he married her. When he has killed Laius near Thebes, he should have enquired if his victim was the king of Thebes. But he acted blindly being proud of his valour and wisdom. It is highly ironic that Oedipus had insulted the prophet Teircsias for his blindness and now he too is blind.

Note-

(i) *Oedipus' misfortune.*

(ii) *Oedipus' repentance.*

(iii) *Irony offate.*

(iv) *Destiny* is *character.*

Hamlet

(xiii) This is/a practice..... taint their wit.

(Viola, Act II, Scene I, p. 172)

Context: These lines conclude Viola's soliloquy in which she has indulged in after the Clown has moved to Lady Olivia to inform her about the arrival of Cesario (Viola).

Explanation: Viola holds the view that the art of jesting or fooling requires much of hard work and a long practice just like any other art trade and occupation. If a Fool speaks something foolish intelligently he is regarded a great jester and his performance is enjoyed and commended by the listeners. On the other hard, if an intelligent person speaks something wise/good but foolishly, he brings a bad natne for himself and is branded as a wise fool.

(xiv) I have..... good madam.

(Viola's reply to Olivia, Act III, Scene I, p. 182)

Context: These lines cover the reply of Cesario to Olivia's offer of her Love to him.

Explanation: When Olivia talks of her deep and passionate love for Cesario (real Viola) and enquires indirectfy if he has fallen in love with anybody. Cesario swears solemnly by his youth that he has only one soul and one heart to offer but he is not going to offer it to any woman on earth. He alone is the master of his heart. Cesario in reality is Violij, as such she has not fallen and can never fall in love with any womijn. Olivia, unfortunately. does not know the secret of Viola's sex and th,H is why Cesario's words appear to be a riddle to her. To save his delicate position at the moment and the confusion caused to Olivia by his reply,

Corinth brings the news of king Polybus' death, Oedipus gets rid of the fear that he may kill his father as was predicted by the oracle. Still there is one more prediction that Oedipus will marry his mother. Jocasta asks Oedipus to forget it for predictions never prove true.

Explanation- Jocasta asks Oedipus not to be superstitious in such matters. A man like him should never be afraid of such predictions particularly when the first prediction has already been proved false. His father has got a natural death while it was predicted that Oedipus would kill him. Likewise it too would prove false that Oedipus may marry his mother. She reminds Oedipus that the force of chance dominates human life. He does whatever chance directs him to do. Only chance knows that what is hidden in the womb of future. Such a thought is beyond reality that he will marry his mother. He should not fear for it. It is better to forget it though it is heard many men have got such dreams that they are their own mother's husband but dreams are dreams always far from reality.

Note-

(i) *Oedipus' fear*

(ii) *Jocasta's rational approach.*

(iii) *Irony for it is a reality instead of a dream that Jocasta is Oedipus' wife as well as mother.*

(xii) **Alas! All out! All known, no more concealment !**
O light! May I never look on you again,
Revealed as I am, sinful in my begetting,
Sinful in my marriage, sinful in the
shedding of blood!

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. Oedipus' guilt has been exposed. The whole story is so terrible that Oedipus has decided the reverest punishment for his sins.

Explanation- Since so long Oedipus has been searching the identity of king Laius' murderer. But now it is disclosed that none else but he himself is guilty of that murder. He has killed his father. He is thus, guilty of patricide. But Laius was the king, hence, he is guilty of regicide too. He is guilty of incest for Jocasta his wife at present was his mother too. He has children from her. Such a sinful man, Oedipus claims, has no right to see the light that is reflection of God. Oedipus, therefore, decides to blind himself. He has no courage to face the world but he does not decide to commit suicide for that would be an escape from punishment while Oedipus wishes to repent for his misconduct. Whatever sinful activities he has done are done unknowingly. In fact he

Note-

(i) *Teiresias' knowledge of secret things.*

(ii) *His prophet like attitude.*

(x) **..... What of Pythian fire**
The oracles, the prophesying birds,
The scream above us? I was to kill my father;
Now he lies in his grave, and here am I
Who never touched a weapon .....

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' famous tragedy Oedipus Rex. Oedipus had been afraid of the prediction that he would kill his father and marry with his own mother. To avoid such an indecent, Oedipus left Corinth where his father Polybus is the king and his mother Merope is the Queen. When a messenger from Corinth tells about death of the king of Merope, Oedipus becomes happy for now he is saved from the probable sin of killing his own father. He approves his wife Jocasta's viewpoint that no production can be absolutely true.

Explanation- According to Oedipus all oracles whether of Apollo or anyone else are mere probabilities in place of being absolute truths. It is mere superstition that predictions are made on the basis of birds' activities, which may be meaningful as well as meaningless. To believe in them is the mark of foolishness. He refers to the prediction that Oedipus would kill his father who is dead in a natural way. It proves the oracle was false. It is an example of dramatic irony for the predictions are not false. It is Oedipus' ignorance that he does not know his sinful guilt. He is guilt of regicide as well as patricide. He is guilty of incest as well. He has killed his father Laius who was king of Thebes. He has married Jocasta who is his mother too.

Note-

(i) *Oedipus' ignorance.*

(ii) *Dramatic irony.*

(xi) **Fear? What has a man to do with fear ?**
Chance rules our lives, and the future is all unknown
Best live as best we may, from day to day.
Nor need this mother marrying frighten you;
Many a man has dreamt as much. Such things
Must be forgotten, if life is to be endured.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' famous tragedy Oedipus Rex. When a messenger from

Lie all the curses I have laid on others.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. The city of Thebes is suffering miserably. People are dying untimely. It is learnt from the Oracle of Delphi that the killer of the former king of Thebes. Laius is present in the city. The city will get rid of the curse when the killer is banished from the city. Oedipus addresses the citizens in the courtyard of the royal palace.

Explanation- Oedipus declares that the murderer of king Laius must be punished. The problem is how to detect him. At present no body is out of suspicion. He claims that he puts himself too in this sphere. Whoever may be guilty of killing Laius or the supporter of the killer. but it is certain, he can't escape the punishment. he assures that in this matter he will stand as a common citizen. If it is proved after investigation, that he has knowledge of the murderer or he is providing shelter to the murderer, he will be ready to accept the punishment prescribed for others.

Note-

(i) *Oedipus' faith in justice.*

(ii) *Irony for Oedipus himself is guilty.*

(ix) **I know, as you do not. that you are living**

In sinful union with the one you love.

Living in ignorance of your undoing.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. Teiresias is a blind prophet. Creon brings him to Oedipus to explain the ambiguous predictions of the Oracle of Delphi. The prophet hurts Oedipus by suggesting that the killer of Laius is none else but Oedipus.

Explanation- Teiresias, the blind prophet accuses Oedipus for being the murder of king Laius. The charge is too severe for Odipus to be taken quietly. He blames Teiresias for being a party in that murder. According to Oedipus, Creon has grown faithless to the throne. To remove Oedipus from the throne, he has conspired with Teiresias. In a planned way, he has asked the blind prophet to interpret the oracle falsely to accuse Oedipus. In this way they wish to banish him and occupy the throne. Oedipus claims that Teiresias is a hypocrite, It enrages Teiresias who challenges Oedipus' knowledge and tells him that he is ignorant of his guilt. When he learns that he will be ashamed of himself. According to Teircsias Oedipus is involved in a sinful union. In spite of knowing clearly that Oedipus is guilty of killing his father and marrying his mother, the blind prophet does not disclose it for he does not wish to talk of sinful things.

Oedipus himself has witnessed the misery of his own countrymen. People are dying untimely. There was a time when Thebes was the most prosperous of all cities but now Thebes has become an abode of death. The dismal sight of death is visible alround. Women give birth to dead children. It seems a violent demon is destroying Thebes, which is the city and birth place of prince Cadmus who killed a dragon and sowed its teeth, from which many armed men rose and fought, five surviving to help Cadmus in building the city of Thebes. But the blessed Thebes is cursed-so bitterly that only cries and laments can be heard as if Thebes were hell.

Note-

(i) *Miserable state of Thebes.*

(ii) *Irony-Oedipus is responsible for the misery.*

(iii) *Cadmus-a mythological Prince.*

(vii) **..... I am not asleep.**

I weep; and walk through endless ways of thought.

But I have not been idle; one thing I have already done-

The only thing that promised hope.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from Sophocles' classical tragedy Oedipus Rex. The Priest of Zues refers to the misery of citizens of Thebes. The people are suffering endlessly. Hearing it, Oedipus assures the Priest that he is not ignorant of his citizens.

Explanation- Oedipus is the king of Thebes. He is devoted to public welfare. He wishes to see his citizens happy and prosperous. It hurts him that they are suffering so miserably and he is not able to help them. He tells the Priest that he is not ignorant of his peoples misfortune. Seeing their miseries he is deeply shocked. So often he sheds tears and walks with impatience. The problem is that he does not know the cause of this curse. He has sent his faithful Creon to the oracle of Delphi in hope of getting some clear hint regarding the cause of this calamity. It will help him in making the city free from the unfortunate disaster.

Note- It is Oedipus' irony that he does not know his own identity. In fact he is the cause of this public disaster. He is killer of his father who was the former king of Thebes. Unknowingly he has become husband of his own mother Jocasta. The sin is the root of the disaster. The public may get rid of sufferings if the sinner i.e., Oedipus is punished and banished from the city.

(viii) **Nor do I exempt myself from the imprecation;**

If, with my knowledge, houses or hearth of mine

Receive the guilty man upon my head

human life is only salvation and heavenly bliss. The Old Man implies that the Christian way of life and faith in God is the only way of living in peace and attaining the happiness of heaven. The passage also reflects the Old Man's belief that he cannot take Faustus out of the mud of sinfulness Faustus has struck in.

Oedipus Rex

Witness to great events- Sophocles was a native of Colonus on the outskirts of Athens. He was born in 496 B.C. and died in 406 B.C. Living through most of the fifth century B.C., he was a witness to such important events as the Persian invasions of Greece and their defeat, the growth of Athens as an imperial power and a centre of culture under the rule of Pericles, and the Ion g' and ruinous war with Sparta and her allies. His father Sophillus Was the owner of an arms factory. Sophocles took no active part in politics and had no special military gifts. In spite of that he was twice elected "Strategus" (a sort of military commander), and after the Sicilian disaster of 413 B.C., he was made one of the "Probouloi" (or special commissioners), no doubt by reason of his general fame and popularity.

A lovable person. Sophocles was a man of great charm, handsome, and well-to-do. Herodotus was one of his friends. Sophocles is regarded as having been a figure of ideal serenity and success. His life lay through the period of his country's highest prosperity. He was loved by everybody wherever he went. After his death he was worshipped as a hero. Aristophanes sums up his character in the words: "contented among the living, contented among the dead." He left two sons, one legitimate, and the other born of an illicit union. He was always comfortable in Athens and had no temptation to seek his fortune at foreign courts as some of his colleagues did.

Winner of many contests- Sophocles was an artist of the faultless type, showing few traces of the divine "discontentment", He learned music early in his life and at the age of sixteen he led a choir as harper in the thanksgiving for Salamis. He wrote some 120 plays and won many victories in dramatic contests. His first victory occurred in 468 B.C., when he defeated Aeschylus, being then only twentyeight years old. The first defeat of a veteran like Aeschylus by a member of the younger generation gave rise to a lot of bitterness. Thereafter Sophocles won the first position in as many as twentyfour contests. He contributed a good deal to the expression of that culture in the theatre which was its prime temple, performing also public duties which were as much the province of the artist as of the man of action. A biographer describes the life of Sophocles as- "a picture of a childhood spent under the be t influences

can derive greatest pleasure and become all-powerful in this world. Everything lying between the two poles of this earth will be under his complete command. His powers will far exceed those of kings and emperors who are honoured and obeyed only in their own kingdoms, But even the winds and clouds and other forces of nature come under the sway of a man adept in the art of magic. The limitless power of a magician stretches as far as the mind of man can reach making him as powerful as a mighty God. The hankering after limitless power and quest for supreme knowledge on the part of Faustus reveal the true spirit of the Renaissance in a convincing manner. By committing the blunder of choosing the art of magic as his subject for study Faustus also sows the seed of tragedy in his own life in this scene.

(xlvii) **Have I not made blind Homer sing to me**
Of Alexander's love, and Oenon's death?
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp
Made Music with my Mephistophilis?

Explanation- These lines occur in Doctor Faustus written by Christopher Marlowe. The passage is part of Faustus's soliloquy. In the foregoing lines he says that is heart now knows nothing but sensual pleasures. Here he tells himself that, by virtue of his magic, he has made Homer, the blind epic poet of ancient Greece, sing him the love story of Prince Alexander and Oenon and also of Oenon's death. His magic has also raised the spirit of Amphion and made it play on its melodious harp. And Amphion was a great musician of ancient Greece. By virture of the melodious music of his harp, he is supposed to have charmed the rocks to stand up and build high walls around Thebes for its fortification. And that very Amphion came from the world of the dead and played on his harp to entertain him [i.e. Faustus], thanks to the power of Mephistophilis. Faustus implies that his magic has entertained him with great poetry and music of ancient times.

(xlviii) **Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail**
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
By which sweet path thou mayst attain thy goal
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!

Explanation- This extract has been taken from Doctor Faustus, a tragedy written by Christopher Marlowe. The passage is part of the Old Man's speech. It is addressed to Faustus. Sympathising with miserable Faustus, the Old Man wishes he had power to bring him [i.e. Faustus] round to the right course of human life. The course is to repent of his sins and again have faith in Christ and God. This course is sweet and can lead him to his salvation and to heavenly bliss. And the goal of

Not sporting in the dalliance of love;

In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;

Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,

Intends our Muse to vaunt his heavenly verse;

Explanation- The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus opens with these lines. Here the Chorus speaks the prologue; and its main purpose is to help the development of the drama by making appropriate comments on characters and action. The Chorus is a well-known device introduced by the Greek dramatists; and the Elizabethans used it with variations, such as having only a single character in place of a group of singers and dancers, just to suit their purpose.

The plays of this period usually deal with the heroes and heroic deeds of great war or great love affairs and court intrigues. So in the very introductory lines the Chorus informs us that our poet has no intention of describing such mighty military achievements as happened in the fields of Thrasymene in northern Italy where in the second Punic War of B.C. 217 the great Carthagian general Hannibal inflicted a crushing defeat on the Romans. Here we find a bit of confusion of facts of history by Marlowe. Actually Mars, the Roman god of War, did not help the Romans to win a victory over the Greeks. The poet is also not in a mood to sing of great love affairs in the court of kings- affairs that often brought about the downfall of great dynasties of kings and emperors. While writing these lines, it is very likely that Marlowe might have in his mind his own drama "Dido- Queen of Carthage."

The Chorus clearly asserts that the theme of this drama would be nothing but the story of meteoric rise and tragic fall of Dr. Faustus, just an ordinary individual but famous for his great learning and scholarship.

(xlvi) **O, what a world of profit and delight,**

Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,

Is promised to studions artizan!

All things that move between the quiet poles

Shall be a my command.

Explanation- The passage occurs in Scene I in the first Act of the drama. We find Faustus sitting in his study. He has already made a thorough survey of all the branches of knowledge which he has already thoroughly mastered. Aristotle's logic, medicine, law and theology- all come under his scrutiny. But he finds all of them limited in scope and so discards them all. His final choice is the black art of magic which fascinates him most. In magic he finds infinite possibilities. A hardworking student after gaining mastery over this black art of magic

For learning me your language.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from the play, The Tempest which holds in many respects a distinctive place among the plays of Shakespeare. The play is the dramatist's 'last will and testament'. It is one of the most imaginative and romantic of all Shakespeare's plays, pervaded through and through with an atmosphere of romance and mystery. These lines occur in Act I, Scene II of the play.

These lines present Caliban in a bad light. He is not ashamed to tell Prospero that he is ungrateful. He perhaps makes no distinction between good and bad, and he is neither moral or immoral. Morals are beyond his grasp. Miranda calls him an adhorred slave who is only capable of doing ill and on whom goodness can leave no imprint. She says that when he gabbled like a brute, she taught him how to speak. But in return he tried to molest her and was deservedly made a slave.

Explanation- Caliban retorts very foolishly. He shows his insolence and ungratefulness in these lines. Having no human qualities and feelings he does not know what gratefulness means. He just remembers the supposed injustice which has been done to him by Prospero by depriving of his right of kingship over the island. He was the sole king and when Prospero came to the island he hood winked him through his kindness and sweet talks and coaxed him into showing him the resources of the island and then himself became the ruler, confining him (Caliban) to a rock. He has completely forgotten the kindness and sympathy which was extended to him by Prospero who put him in his own cell till one day he tried to outrage the purity of his daughter. When Miranda, too, reminds him o her kindness in teaching him how to speak and express himself coherently, he is totally unmindful of the pains taken by her over him. He replies, with a lack of gratitude, that she taught him language, and he has learnt how to make the best use of it. By learning how to speak, he has learnt how to curse them. That is the best use he can put his language to. Thus he is not only ungrateful but also abusive. The good thing which Miranda has taught him, how to speak, he is using it for a bad purpose, to abuse and curse Miranda and Prospero. This confirms the fact that even good becomes bad when it comes in contact with evil. And any help which might be given to them for their advancement is ultimately used by them to further their nefarious ends. Caliban then curses then, and says that may they suffer with red plague for the kindness which they showed towards him by teaching him how to speak.

Dr. Faustus

(xlv) **Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene**

Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians:

too lightly. He must therefore, put Ferdinand's love to the test before he is allowed to marry Miranda. He sees that they are totally bewitched by each other, each having fallen in love with the other. So, he desires to prevent Ferdinand's wooing from being too easily successful, test to easy winning by him may regard her as a woman of small value.

(xliii) **Not a hair perish'd;**
On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
But fresher than before; and, as thou bad'st me,
In troops I have dispers'd them 'bout the isle,
The king's son have I landed by himself;
Whom I left cooling of the air with sighs.
In an odd angle of the isle, and sitting.
His arms in this sad knot.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from the play, The Tempest which holds in many respects a distinctive place among the plays of Shakespeare. The play is the dramatist's 'last will and testament'. It is one of the most imaginative and romantic of all Shakespeare's plays, pervaded through and through with an atmosphere of romance and mystery. These lines occur in Act I, Scene II of the play.

Ariel, at the command of Prospero raises a storm in the sea. The ship carrying Alonso, the King of Naples, Ferdinand, his son, Sebestian his brother, Antonio, Prospero's brother and other sailors is tossed and turned by the stormy waves. Soon the ship is swallowed up by the waves. Ariel then comes to report his achievement to his master Prospero who inquires about the will being of the inmates of the ship.

Explanation. Ariel assured Prospero about the safely of all the passengers of the ship. No one had come to any harm. The inmates of the ship did not suffer from any kind of physical injury. Nothing was lost or destroyed. Even the clothes which they were wearing were not damaged. No spot or stain appeared on the clothes. The clothes worm by them appeared as fresh as when they had been put on. And as per Prospero's instructions, Ariel told him, he had scattered them in groups about the island. So all the passengers of the ship were wondering on the island in small bands. Whereas Ferdinand, the son of King Alonso was considered, Ariel informed Prospero, he reached the shore all by himself, guided by the invisible. Aries, and now he was emitting long sighs expressing his sorrow at the misfortune which had undertaken him inanout-of-the way corner of the island. He was sitting with his arms folded in a posture of dejection, showing his heart-felt grief at the loss which he had suffered.

(xliv) **You taught me language, and my profit on't**
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague ride you

Caliban has determined to take revenge upon Prospero and for this he requests the help of Trinculo and Stephano. The plan is that while Prospero would be sleeping in the afternoon they would first seize his books and then kill him. Caliban promises to Stephano Prospero's daughter as his queen and the dominion of the island after the death of Prospero. Stephano than broke out into a drinking song at the request of Caliban, it is soon followed by aerial music played to the same tune by Ariel. Stephano and Trinculo are a little startled.

Explanation. Caliban alone remains unmoved. He asks them not to be frightened. He rises high above Stephano and Trinculo in his capacity for the imaginative in thought. He shows natural feeling when he tells them that the island is full of mysterious sounds and sweet melodies which are pleasant to the ear, but are harmless. He says that sometimes any number of stringed instruments regaled his ears with sweet music and that sometimes unearthly voices sent him to sleep again even after he had waked from a long sleep. he adds that, in the second sleep induced by earthly voices, he dreamt a dream in which the clouds seemed to part and reveal to his vision treasures ready to shower upon him, so that when he woke up, he cried with the desire to dream the same dream over again.

(xlii) **They're both in either's power; but this swift business**
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
Make the prize light.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from the play The Tempest, one of the finest 'Romance' written by William Shakespeare. Forgiveness and reconciliation is the theme of this gem of a play. It is the most poetic play of Shakespeare and this accounts for its popularity from the time it was penned there hundred years ago to the present day. These lines occur in Act I, Scene II of the play.

Miranda sees Ferdinand, who is the first man to be seen by her apart from her father and seems attracted to his handsome features. For his part, Ferdinand, on seeing Miranda, believes that she is the island's goddess. The prince tells them the story of the shipwreck and how (as he believes) he is the solve survivor of the tempest, and Miranda openly admires him for his bravery and appearance. Prospero, is well-pleased to note that the young couple have fallen in love at first sight.

Explanation. Though happy and delighted at the state of affairs between Ferdinand and Miranda for he had noticed their attraction for each other. Prospero is not yet convinced of Ferdinand's good intentions and resolves to throw some difficulties in the path of lovers. Prospero is a man of ripe wisdom born of old age and experience of human nature. He is afraid that, if Ferdinand easily attains Miranda, He will not set any store by her because anything which is easily won may be valued

so long and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from the play The Tempest written by William Shakespeare. The Tempest ranks fairly high among Shakespeare's dramas. The drama is full of grace and grandeur. The keynote of the play is forgiveness and freedom. The play is romantic but is also classical in its severe beauty, its majestic simplicity, its intermingling of the lyrical and the ethical and its observance of the three unities of time, place and action.

A furious storm is blowing and the ship is threatened with disaster. Gonzalo is seeking an assurance from the Boatswain regarding the efforts being made by the sailors to save the ship. The Boatswain loses his temper and rebukes Gonzalo in the words quoted above.

Explanation. When Gonzalo warns the boatswain that he should remember that they were carrying royal personages as his passengers and should do his all to save the ship, the boatswain lost his cool and said that there was none on the ship whose life he valued more than his own and to save himself naturally he would do everything to save the ship. But the elements of nature could not be controlled by any human hand. Then, he jeering by said to Gonzalo that if he could command and control the elements of nature like the winds and the waves to maintain peace and calm he should do so because then they would have no difficulty in managing the ship. but since that was not possible he should retire to his cabin and let them work in peace. The boatswain counselled Gonzalo that he should be thankful that he has lived so long and wait in his cabin with mental preparation for the disaster to strike.

(xli) **Be not afeared; the isle is full of noises**
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming
The cloud methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me; that when I wake'd
I cried to sleep again.

Reference to the Context- These lines have been taken from the play The Tempest written by William Shakespeare. The Tempest belongs to the closing period of Shakespeare's dramatic career. It is called a "romance" because its main incidents are romantic in so far as they be outside the scope of common experience. Forgiveness and freedom, these are the keynotes of this play.

Comments: The Duke talks two much, is inconstant in expression and boasts of his love for Olivia which a true lover won't do. That his love is emotional and shallow is borne out by later developments in the play.

(xxxviii) Some are born. . . . . thrust upon 'em

(Maria in the letter to Malvolio Act, II, Scene V, p. 158)

Context: This sentence is contained in the anonymous letter Maria wrote Malvolio, which he is reading and feeling amused. The sentence required to be explained is a popular quaote of the play.

Explanation: In the preceding sentence of two letter two writer has written that she is superior to Malvolio in fortune but still he should not be afraid or feel hapless by her superior position for the reason that some persons are born in wealthy families and as such they are fortunate to hold a high position without any merit or labour. There are certain other persons, who are born poor but by dint of their hard labour and intelligence they attain a high position or earn great wealth or a good name or fame. There are still a few other persons who do not come under any of these two categories, and yet become great in their life time simply because some influential person offers them a high position in life and thus brings them into limelight. Thus greatness is thrust upon the persons of this category. Malvolio belongs to the last category because it is Olivia who had taken a fancy for him and that is why she is offering him the privilege of being her husband, thereby becoming as great as herself although he is merely a Steward.

(xxxix) This is/a practice. . . . . taint their wit.

(Viola, Act II, Scene I, p. 172)

Context: These lines conclude Viola's soliloquy in which she has indulged in after the Clown has moved to Lady Olivia to inform her about the arrival of Cesario (Viola).

Explanation: Viola holds the view that the art of jesting or fooling requires much of hard work and a long practice just like any other art trade and occupation. If a Fool speaks something foolish intelligently he is regarded a great jester and his performance is enjoyed and commended by the listeners. On the other hard, if an intelligent person speaks something wise/good but foolishly, he brings a bad name for himself and is branded as a wise fool.

The Tempest

(xl) **You are a counselor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more. Use your authority; if you cannot give thanks you have lived**

Explanation: Sir Andrew says that if you offer a person water or wine to drink when he is hungry, you make a fool of him. Similarly, if a written challenge for duel is sent to Malvolio and then nobody goes to fight with him he would be made a fool.

Comments: Sir Andrew's jokes are commonplace and absurd because he is a block-head.

(xxxvi) Then let thy love. . . . . very hour.

(Duke to Cesario, Act II, Scene Iv, p. 134)

Context: These are the concluding lines of the close conversation the Duke had with his young and handsome Boy, Cesario on the subject of love and marriage.

Explanation: The Duke advises his personal attendant Cesario (Viola in male disguise) to marry a woman younger to him (because he takes her to be a man) otherwise his attraction towards, and love for, his wife will not last for long because a woman's beauty and youth decay very soon just as the freshness and fragrance of a rose flower lasts only for a few hours or at the most for a few days.

Comments: It is interesting to know that Shakespeare had personal experience of marrying a woman, Anne Hathaway, who was senior to him in age by eight years. As such the lines have a tinge of personal pathos of the dramatist.

(xxxvii) There is no . . . . . .I owe Olivia.

(Duke to Viola, Act II, Scene IV, p. 140)

Context: When viola talks of the Duke's unrequited love and its pangs (to be suffered by the lover), the Duke contradicts Viola's views and boasts of his personal love. The dialogue of the Duke is presented here for explanation.

Explanation: When Viola tells the Duke that a woman may love with the same intensity as he loves Olivia, the Duke at once flares up and says that there is no woman on earth whose heart is as broad and deep as his heart is, and which can bear such an intense love as the Duke's heart can bear. He says that a woman's love is as short-lived and changeable as an appetite or taste that is derived from the palate and not from any deeper organ like the liver. (Liver in the days of Shakespeare was considered the seat of love and valour). That is why, a woman's love like every desire of the bodily organs, can be easily satisfied and once satiated it will produce dislike or disgust. But so far as the love of the Duke is concerned, it is as endless and unquenchable as the sea. The Duke says last of all that there cannot be any comparison between man's love and woman's love and particularly between his love for Olivia and any woman's love for the Duke or any other man.

of the messenger and his physical charms. The lines to be explained form the opening part of Lady Olivia's soliloquy.

Explanation: When the Duke's young messenger (real Viola in male disguise) goes away, Olivia thinks within herself about the actual words spoken by him during the interview, namely, that be belongs to a far more respectable family than he appears to be and that his social position is much higher than it seems to be, and that he is a gentleman. She is sure about the truthfulness of these words. In the opinion of Olivia the messenger's manner of speech, looks, physique, conduct and emotional loveliness (fivefold blazons) - all clearly indicate that he belongs to a very respectable family and also possesses many virtues. Olivia says that his words and behaviour lend a much greater look of aristocracy to his personality than anybody can guess from the ordinary role of a messenger which he played with her.

(xxxiv) No sooth sir ..... called Roderigo.

(Sebastian to Antonio Act II, Scene I, p104)

Context: Act. II, Scene I of the play introduces us to Antonio and Sebastian near the Sea-Coast. Antonio is the brave and noble sea-captain, who saved Sebastian (Viola's twin-brother) from the jaws of death while the latter struggled (after the ship-wreck) with fierce sea-waves to save his life. Since then Sebastian kept company with Antonio, who loved him very dearly. Sebastian now decides to go away; this makes Antonio very anxcious. The lines to be explained form a part of the close conversation Sebastian had with Antonio before leaving for Illyria.

Explanation: Antonio asks Sebastian to let him know where he would be going. Sebastian answers as follows: "To tell you the truth, I am not at all definite where I would be going; rather I will wander aimlessly. I feel that there is so fine a sense of courtesy in you that you will not ask me about matters which I do not wish to reveal. But then my sense of decency also prompt me to tell you about myself. Antonio, please know that my real name is not Roderigo.

(xxxv) T were as good a deed. . . . . a fool of him.

(Sir Andrew in Act II, Scene III, p. 126)

Context: Despite Malvolio's scolding, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and the Clown continued their vulgar dialogues. When Sir Toby asked Maria to bring to them a flagon of wine, Malvolio sounded her not to offer them wine and if she defies him, he would complaint against her to Lady Olivia. Maria feels hurt and contemptuously calling Malvolio an ass, asks him to go away and stand elsewhere shaking his ears. Than Sir Andrew makes a remark which is quoted here for explanation.

finds Malvolio a prejudiced and perverted person who cannot look at things naturally or from the normal point of view. Olivia says that Malvolio is very much in love with himself and, therefore, incapable of seeing anything from a liberal view. Then she remarks that one who is narrow-minded, prejudiced and self-conceited (like Malvolio) will regard even the most innocent and harmless things as most dangerous. As regards the Clown or a professional fool, who is allowed to talk any amount of nonsense at the expense of anybody, no one takes any offence at his remarks. People think that even when the Clown or the privileged fool censures or makes cutting jokes, his intention is not to wound anybody's feelings but merely to amuse or entertain his listeners and observers. Likewise, nobody takes any offence at the words of a well-known wise man when he finds fault with or scolds a wrong-doer, because his reproaches bear no malice and are regarded as moral precepts intended to reform or improve the moral character of the person concerned But Malvolio is so much self-conceited that even the most innocent jokes of the Clown are treated by him as offensive and bird-bolts/blunt arrows (harmless things) are considered as cannon bullets (most destructive things).

Comments: It is borne out from further developments that the Clown joined Maria's plot to bring disgrace to Malvolio to take revenge on Malvolio for his bitter remarks. This is supported by the Clown's words to the Lady in Act V asking her to remember Malvolio's words Madam, why laugh you at such a barren rascal? As you smile not, he's gagged. "

(xxxii) It alone. . . . . peace as matter.

(Viola to Olivia, Act I, Scene V, p. 94)

Context: In the course of their introductory conversation between the Lady Olivia and the Duke's young messenger (Viola in male disguise), the Lady asks the messenger to deliver his message, which she feels should be frightful. The messenger then gives a sweet reply.

Explanation: When Olivia tells the Count's young messenger that surely he has some frightful message to deliver as its preface is fearful, the messenger (Viola in male disguise) consoles her that the message is meant for her only. Further, he does not carry any declaration of war or any proposal for tribute on the part of the Lady. On the contrary, the message is of peace and harmony couched in sweet words.

(xxxiii) What is your parentage. . . . . five fold blazon.

(Viola to Olivia, Act I, Scene V, p. 102)

Context: After the Duke's young messenger (Viola in male disguise) left digusted calling Lady Olivia 'fair cruelty' due to her rejection of the Duke's offer of love, the Lady meditates over the replies

both these respects. Perhaps, he says, the gods are themselves responsible for inciting his daughters to revolt against him. If so, the gods should at least not make him such a fool that he should bear his daughters' ill-treatment of him submissively. He then appeals to the gods to stir in him a feeling of anger suiting a man of dignity like him. He appeals to the gods not to allow his man's cheeks to become wet and soiled with tears, because tears are a weapon which suits women only.

Twelfth Night

(xxx) Many a good hanging. . . . . bear it out.

(Clown to Maria in Act I, Scene V, p. 74)

Context: Act. I, Sc. V of the play has the first dialogue of Maria, Oliva's woman with Feste, the Clown in Olivia's House. Naturally it is witty as Maria is no less intelligent than the professional Fool. The sentence to be explained is the Cown's reply to Maria's sarcastic remark "Yet you will be hang'd for being so long absent, "or to be turned away-is not that as good as a hanging to you".

Explanation: When Maria threatens the Clown with dismissal from the service of Olivia - which should be as bad a punishment as hanging. the Clown says that if a person is hanged properly he dies, and this saves him from contracting a bad marriage i.e. one is saved from a miserable life if he is hanged before marriage; this also saves the would-be partner in life from unhappiness. The Clown further says that if he is dismissed from service now, it will not matter much because summer (spring season in England) is very near and no shelter from cold would be necessary; he won't suffer by the inclement weather of winter. So he has no reason to be afraid of hanging or to feel any anxiety for dismissal from service.

(xxxi) O you are sick. . . . . but reprove.

(Olivia to Malvolio in Act I, Scene V, pp. 80 & 82)

Context: When Olivia and the Clown are engaged in a long and witty dialogue Malvolio, who is also present there, does not appreciate the remarks, though witty, of the Clown and protests to the Lady, "I marked your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal", etc. While the Clown swallows the bitter remarks of Malvolio, the Lady felt offended at Malvolio's remarks "I protest that those so called wisemen, who appreciate the jokes of such fools are their foolish imitators. Then she displays her displeasure for Malvolio which is contained in the lines to be explained.

Explanation: When Malvolio expresses his hatred for the Fools and particularly for the Clown, Olivia takes offence, not because she is in favour of the Clown or any other fool but for the reason that she

having been praised for his plain-speaking by someone, now poses to be blunt and rude in his manner of speaking and who twists the habit of plain-speaking from its true nature, and turns it towards deception. Such a man, says Cornwall, cannot flatter anybody because, being an honest and staightforward man, he must speak the truth and must do so in a blunt, almost offensive manner. If people will swallow the rudeness, of such persons, then that is all right. But if they object to this rudeness, then he defends himself with the claim that he was only speaking frankly and plainly. Cornwall adds that he knows such rogues very well. They have, in their pretence of plain-speaking, more cunning and more evil aims than twenty servants who are over-humble and over-respectful, and who are very particular to carry out their duties in an exact manner.

Critical Comments- In these lines, Cornwall makes a generalization about persons who, under the garb of plain-speaking, become highly offensive and coarse in their speech. According to Cornwall, such persons are cunning, crafty, and evil-minded. Of course, there is much truth in Cornwall's description of servants of a particular kind. In fact, this speech shows that Cornwall too is a close observer of human behaviour and human conduct. The speech quoted here shows that Cornwall is not an empty-headed or shallow kind of man. However, Cornwall's words here do not apply to Kent and are not valid in his case. But rogues of the kind described by Cornwall certainly do exist in this world.

(xxix) **You see me here, you Gods, a poor old man,**
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stirs these daughter's hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks!

Reference to the Context- These lines are part of a speech by Lear to Regan in Shakespeare's play King Lear. After having left Goneril's palace in disgust, Lear has come to Regan in order to stay with her. But Regan defends Goneril's conduct and wants Lear to go back to Goneril. In the meantime, Goneril herself arrives there. Now both the sister combine to oppose their father's wish to continue to have his hundred knights with him when he begins his stay with Regan. In fact, they argue that he does not need even one knight to attend upon him. Lear thereupon tells his daughters that it is not a question of need but of dignity. Even the poorest of human beings have certain articles in their possession which they do not, strictly speaking, need. Lear goes on to say that what he really needs is patience or the power of endurance.

Explanation- Lear then addresses the gods in heaven. He says that he is a poor old man, as full of grief as of years, and that he is miserable in

between his other two daughters. Kent tries to stop Lear from going ahead with this division, but Lear tells him that his decision is final, whereupon Kent makes the speech quoted here.

Explanation- Kent speaks to Lear in a challenging tone and asks what the old man can do to stop Kent from speaking. Kent says that, as a duty- minded man, he is not afraid of Lear and will not refrain from speaking. He will not keep quiet when he finds that Lear, a powerful King, is yielding to flattery. An honorable man is bound to speak bluntly when his King behaves foolishly. Kent then urges Lear not to give away his power and authority but to hold back his decision and reconsider it carefully. He extorts Lear to put a check on the terrible speed with which he is giving away his kingdom and his power.

Critical Comments- These lines throw much light of Kent's character. Kent here shows himself to be a plain, blunt man. He is not afraid of speaking his mind. He is not a flatterer or a sycophant to concur with the King no matter what the King says. He realizes that Lear is committing a blunder and he tries his utmost to prevent Lear from this impetuous action. He appears here as a true counseller, though his advice goes unheeded. His intervention makes the opening scene even more dramatic.

(xxviii) **This is some fellow,**
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature : he cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth:
and they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly-ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Reference to the Context- These lines are spoken by Cornwall in Shakespeare's play King Lear. Cornwall had asked Kent why the latter had abused and insulted Oswald. In reply, Kent had said that servants like Oswald believe only in flattery and in cutting the bonds of affection which keep the members of a family attached to one another. Then, in reply to another question, Kent has said that he does not like Oswald's face, adding that he has seen better faces in his time than any face that he know sees before him. This last remark greatly annoys Cornwall who then makes the comment quoted here.

Explanation- Cornwall says that he understands the nature of this messenger, namely Kent. According to Cornwall, Kent is a fellow who,

Explanation: Olivia agrees with Malvolio that undoubtedly the foul conspiracy has very badly affected him i.e. he has suffered grievously on account of the conspiracy. She assures Malvolio that once the names of the conspirators are known, she will grant him the privilege to lodge the complaint as plaintiff, to accuse the persons responsible for the mischief as a Court and also to punish them on his own as a judge. She said all this to pacify Malvolio, who had been hurt physically, mentally and emotionally. Olivia herself admitted that "He hath been most notoriously abus'd."

(xxvi) How with. . . . . sides passed.

(Fabian to Olivia, Act V, Scene I, p. 290)

Explanation: Fabian confesses to Olivia how they had pursued the plan against Malvolio. Their purpose was to make fun and merriment at the cost of the Puritan steward. Fabian says that if the injuries are considered impartially, Malvolio has not suffered more than anybody else. Fabian means to say that the gentle spirit in which the plan was executed provoked laughter rather than a desire for revenge because there was provocation for the plot and the consequent injuries caused through execution of the plot were received by both the sides.

Note: This judgement of Fabian is not at all fair because Malvolio never provoked any of the plotters of the conspiracy against him. As a steward of the Lady, he wanted that the inmates of Olivia's House should observe self-discipline and not to turn the residence into an ale-house. Then again, how can Fabian say that both the parties have equally suffered? Who else except Malvolio has suffered? Does Fabian mean to say that locking up a sane person in a pitch dark room for days and then ridiculing him by setting the Clown on him by personating as a Clownish clergy is adding insult to injury. It is also a pity that Lady Olivia did not say a word against Fabian and other co-plotters and simply remarked to the Clown "Alas, poor Fool, how have they baffled thee."

King Lear

(xxvii) **What would'st thou do, old man?**
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak?
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound
When majesty falls to folly. Reserve thy state;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness.

Reference to the Context- These lines are spoken by Kent to Lear in Shakespeare's play King Lear in the very opening scene. Lear, feeling deeply annoyed with Cordelia, has divided her share of his kingdom

Context: These lines are a part of the Duke's dialogue with Olivia. He now indirectly makes Cesario a target of his wrath.

Explanation: The Duke tells Olivia that because she has rejected his offer of love and he knows will who is actually the cause of this rejection he wants to remove Cesario the Lady's delight, for ever from her sight whereafter she may he left alone as a cruel stone-hearted woman. The Duke confesses on oath by God that he too loves Cesario as much as Olivia loves him. Yet he cannot allow his page (Cesario) to occupy unlawfully the seat of a lover in the heart of Olivia, which rightfully belongs to him (the Duke). He wants to punish Olivia because she has enthroned Cesario in her heart simply to vex his Master (the Duke). In this way, the Duke wants to punish both Olivia and her darling Cesario, although he himself has been loving both of them so far.

(xxiii) O' thou. . . . . overthrow?

(Duke to Viola in Act V, Scene I, p. 272)

Explanation: The Duke is now convinced by the testimony of the Priest that Cesario has been betrothed to Olivia. The Duke feels much annoyed and addresses Cesario as a deceiving boy. He asks him how much he will be so when he will grow old and his hair will turn grey! He warns that Cesario's deceitful trick which he has played with the Duke, will outwit him (Cesario) and bring about his own downfall. With these words, the Duke bids farewell to Cesario asking him to go to such a place where they never meet again.

(xxiv) All the occurrence. . . . . this lord.

(Viola to Sebastian, Act V, Scene I, p. 280)

Context: The two lines under Explanation Conclude Viola's reply to Sebastian.

Explanation: Viola tells Sebastian that ever since she parted from her brother after the shipwireck the incidents and events to her life have been associated with Count Orsino and Lady Olivia. She means to say that she had not gone anywhere else or done any other job except working under Duke Orsino as his page or personal attendant and doing the job of a love messenger and meeting Lady Olivia on that account. This has involved the love tangle under mistaken identities.

(xxv) Prithee, he . . . . . own cause.

(Olivia to Malvolio, Act V, Scene I, p. 290)

Context: When Malvolio had related to Lady Olivia the worst injustice done unto him by her and her men, Olivia made some clarificatious about the letter (the root cause of all troubles suffered by the Steward and tried to pacify him in the words contained in fine lines of Act V) required to be explained,

Explanation: The Clown posing as Sir Topas the priest tells Malvolio that he feels darkness in the room simply because he is ignorant of true knowledge, Ignorance is a kind of darkness which does not allow a person to see anything however bright his place may be. The Clown here gives an example of darkness from which the Egyptians suffered because at the behest of God, Moses brought dense darkness and fog for them for three days. The Clown means so say that Malvolio has also been punished by God with darkness in his eyes because of his sins and crimes which he has committed as a Puritan or a hypocrat in religious matters.

(xx) Primo. . . . . three.

(Clown to Duke, Act V, Scene I, p. 260)

Context: When Duke Orsino accompanied by Cesario (Viola in male disguise) arrived at Olivia's House, he is greeted by the Clown. There after the Clown engages him in witty dialogues. When the Duke gives the Clown one gold coin, the latter asks for one more and the Duke obliges. The lines under Explanation contain the humorous remark of the Clown after he got two gold coins.

Explanation: The Clown has already got two gold coins from the Duke but he wants to have a third coin by one trick or the other; that is why he is talking of the numbers - one, two, three particularly in a game of dice in which the third throw generally is regarded a lucky throw because it provides a chance to make good the losses in the first and the second throws. The Clown further praises the triplex measure in dance. He also reminds the Duke of the bells of Saint Bennetts church which in their chiming repeat one, two, three (so that he gets the third coin) which must be sacred to the Duke particularly when the Duke is making love to Olivia and dreaming of his marriage with her.

(xxi) His life. . . . . adverse town.

(Antonio to the Duke in Act II, Scene I, p. 264)

Context: These lines form a continuity to Antonio's critical remarks against Sebastian.

Explanation: Antonio further tells the Duke that he has not only saved the youth from death but also bestowed upon him true love without limit. He completely dedicated himself to him with devotion. Now for the sake of his true love he has exposed his own life in danger by coming to Illyria and thereby running the risk of being arrested by the Duke's officers. He did all this simply out of his unbounded love for the youth; still then, the youth has proved to be an ungrateful person.

(xxii) Since you. . . . . spite.

(Duke to Olivia, Act V, Scene I, p. 268)

between the two countries. Last of all, he says that although most of the people of his city have paid the compensation he alone refused to pay his share. As such, if he is discovered or arrested by the Count's officers he will have to pay a heavy penalty and suffer much.

(xvii) I have. . . . . reproof.

(Olivia in Act III, Scene IV, p. 216)

Context: Despite open and contemptuous rejection of her passionate love by Cesario (Viola in male disguise), Olivia goes on making one attempt after another to win him (her) over. In these lines she expresses her dilemna and dejection.

Explanation: Olivia feels that she has been making a useless request to a cruel hearted fellow and in doing all this she has exposed her self-respect too much. Her conscience now reproaches her for the fault of falling in love. Yet her passionate love for the handsome youth is so strong that it challenges all rebukings.

Comments: Olivia's passionate love is really pitiable mainly because she is ignorant of Cesarios real sex. Immediately after this dialogue, she presents to Cesario an ornament containing her photo and requests him twice to come again tomorrow.

(xviii) But O how. . . . . the devil.

(Antonio in Act III, Scene Iv, p. 232)

Context: The lines to be replaind are the later part of Antonio's dialogue in which he describes the ungratefulness of sebastion.

Explanation: Taking Viola to be Sebastian Antonio says that he looked so virtuous and godly formerly i.e., when he lived with him (Antonio) but now he has turned out to be wicked and wretched. Further, he has disgraced his own handsome appearance. Antonio moralises over virtue and says that there is nothing wrong with human nature but a person becomes bad if his mind is bad. In human being the only blemish is the evil naturel of a person and the only deformity is unnatural hardness of the heart, i.e., ingratitude. Good qualities in man are the real marks of beauty. A person who is handsome in appearance but is wicked at heart i.e., ungrateful, is the creation of devil and is just like the trunk decorated outside but empty inside.

(xix) There is no . . . . . in their fog.

(Clown in Act Iv, Scene II, p. 246)

Context: The Clown disguised as Sir Topas, the priest has entered the dark room where Malvolio is confined as an alleged madman. As Sir Topas is none else but the Clown, he exchanges witty questions and answers with Malvolio. The sentence under explanation covers the Clowns philosophical reply to Malvolio's remark "I am not mad, Sir Topas. I say to you, this house is dark."

If Oedipus and Jocasta had remained ignorant of the sins committed by them till the natural end of their lives, there would have been no tragedy. Sophocles shows his dramatic skill in choosing as the theme of his play the circumstances leading to the discovery, the sins themselves being shown as having occurred in the past.

The theme of the play stated in the prologue- The play opens with the Theban citizens, led by their Priest, describing their misfortunes to their King, Oedipus, who, however, is already aware of their sufferings and who has already sent his brother-in-law, Creon, to the Delphic oracle to seek divine guidance. Almost immediately after Oedipus has informed the Priest of the steps which he has already taken, Creon arrives with a message from the oracle that the murderer of Laius must be found and banished from the city before the people can get any relief from their affliction. In this way the subject of the drama and the situation from which it starts are presented to us. The situation is the sufferings that have overtaken the city of Thebes, and the subject of the drama is the search for the criminal who murdered Laius. As a dutiful and conscientious King, Oedipus resolves to trace the murderer and to punish him with banishment, uttering at the same time a curse upon the criminal and those who may be providing shelter to him. In the announcement of the punishment for the murderer are the seeds of Oedipus's insistence on his own banishment from Thebes at the end of the play, just as in the resolve to trace the murderer are the seeds of his discovery of himself as the murderer of his father. Whether we know the myth and the story in advance or not, a lot of suspense is created in the prologue or the opening scene. If we do not know the story in advance, the situation arouses a deep curiosity about who the murderer is and why his identity has remained unknown for so many years; if we know the myth in advance, the suspense is caused by our desire to find out how Sophocles handles the myth.

The dramatic clash between the King and the prophet- The clash between Oedipus and Teiresias is highly dramatic. It is natural for Oedipus to summon the prophet in order to get from him a clue to the identity of the murderer. Teiresias is reputed to possess powers of divination, and Creon has advised Oedipus to send for the prophet, the advice being presently reinforced by the Chorus. Teiresias, of course, knows who the murderer is, but he would not like to disclose the shocking fact to Oedipus: He therefore evades Oedipus's question with the result that Oedipus misunderstands the whole situation, flies into a rage, and accuses Teiresias and Creon of having hatched a conspiracy against him. Teiresias loses his temper also, with the result that hot words ensue between the two men, and the prophet openly names Oedipus as the murderer, hurling certain other accusations at Oedipus, and foretelling in a veiled manner the tragic end that is in store for Oedipus.

divine birth of Oedipus, comes, ironically again, moments before the discovery of the truth through the questioning of the Theban shepherd.

The theme of the final ode- The last song of the Chorus expresses the idea that human happiness is short-lived, the fate of Oedipus being a clear illustration of this idea. Nobody ever won greater prosperity and power than Oedipus did. His triumph over the Sphinx not only showed his great wisdom but enabled him to save the people of Thebes. Thebes honoured him by making *him* its King. All the people of Thebes were proud of the majesty of his name. But now who is more wretched and more afflicted with misery than Oedipus? His life now has been reduced to dust and ashes. He has proved to be the husband of the woman who had given him birth. How could such a monstrous thing be endured so long and remain unknown so long q {fime has 'disclosed the truth and punished Oedipus for his unnatural mauiage. The Chorus ends- this song with a wish that it had never seen or known·Oedipus'. He who was the source of life for the Chorus has now proved to be a source of death to it.

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The plot-movement towards the .discovery ot: the guilt- The play Oedipus Rex opens many years after the committing by Oedipus of the two heinous crimes foretold by tbe Delphic oracle•. The' play opens when Oedipus, after havi$_{ng}$ killed his father Laius, has lived as his mother's husband for many years during which period he has begotten several children by his mother-wife. The earlier eyent-s, nam.ely, the prophecy of the Delphic oracle, the meas4res taken by King• Laius to avert the disaster, the flight of Oedipus froIQ. C,qriqth i or.Gier to avoid the fulfilment of the oracle, the figh\ on Jhe ,road-si and the murder of Laius, Oedipus's conquerjng th. phi by ..solving her riddle and consequently becoming the King of Thebes.,ai:id marrying the widowed Queen Jocasta who was no other than his own mother-all these events took place many years before, ·and tnese are· communicated to us only through narrative accounts"of them givet by Oedipus· and Jocas.ta. The play as such deals with the di'scbvery ·1;y Oedipus and Joc·asta of the sins they have unwittingly committed, tne ?'ccount o{ the sins being given to us incidentally because an occasion has arisen 0ll which Oedipus finds it necessary to narrate the story of his life to' Jocasta. Even during the narration of these events, Oedipus is completely ignorant, and so is Jocasta, of the sins that have been committed. The tragedy lies in the revelation or the disclosure of the guilt, and not •in the guilt itself. It is the revelation of the guilt that is dramatic. It is towards the revelation of the guilt that the development of the plot in the play has been moving.

piety. It the oracles of the gods are not fulfilled, people will lose their faith in the gods. People are tending to deny Apollo's power; Apollo's glory is no longer recognised to the same extent. Let the gods be come vigilant!

Critical comments- This ode is indicative of the importance which religion held in those days and the reverence which was, in general, paid to the oracles. The Chorus makes it clear that the divine laws, which had the sanction of the gods, must be obeyed by the people. The Chorus condemns pride and arrogance, and wants men guilty of such offences to perish. The Chorus also deplores people's dwindling religious faith and declining piety. In other words, the Chorus stands for religious sanctity and piety. The Chorus also shows its zeal for the observance of virtues like humility and self-restraint. In short, this ode has a moral and didactic quality. But that is not all. This ode has its relevance to both Oedipus and Jocasta. The song begins with a prayer for purity and reverence, and this is clearly an answer to Oedipus's and Jocasta's doubts about the oracles. It ends with an even more emphatic expression of fear of what will happen if people begin to refuse to believe the oracles. The middle portion of the song describes the man who is born of hybris or pride, such pride as displayed by Oedipus and Jocasta. This description follows to a large extent the conventional picture of the tyrant. The Chorus fears, that he, who behaves with pride and with an insolent self-confidence, will turn tyrannical and impious. If Zeus does not punish people's disbelief in oracles, all religion will become meaningless.

The theme of the fourth ode- The Chorus sings its fourth song just after Jocasta, feeling shocked by the discovery of Oedipus's identity, has left and Oedipus has called himself the child of Fortune. This song shows that the Chorus has, up to this point, not discovered the true identity of Oedipus. The Chorus speculates upon Oedipus's parentage and visualises a love-affair between a god and a mountain nymph. Instead of imagining any evil connected with the birth or parentage of Oedipus, the Chorus celebrates Mt. Cithaeron as the foster-nurse and birth-place of Oedipus and expresses the view that Oedipus was begotten as result of the union of a mountain-nymph with some god. This god could be Pan, or Apollo, or Hermes, or Dionysus.

Critical comments- This song is intended by the Chorus as a tribute to Oedipus. The loyalty of the Chorus to Oedipus remains undimmed so far, because the Chorus does not suspect any evil in Oedipus. The Chorus, indeed, exalts and deifies Oedipus. We have here a striking example of tragic irony. Neither Oedipus nor the Chorus knows the real truth but the audience has by now enough knowledge of the facts to perceive the great disparity between what Oedipus really is and what the Chorus thinks. him to be. This ode, celebrating the possible

is the murderer? asks the Chorus. The prophet has spoken terrible things denouncing Oedipus. Out of its respect for Teiresias, the Chorus cannot disbelieve him but out of their high respect for Oedipus the Chorus can not believe him to be guilty of any evil. The Chorus is, tberefore faced with a dilemma and cannot come to a conclusion. Why such allegationst against Oedipus? All secrets of earth are known to Zeus and Apollo. But no mortal, not even Teiresias, can clain to know everything. The Chorus will, therefore, not believe the allegations against Oedipus till these are proved. Oedipus had conquered -the Sphinx and won fame. The Chorus cannot consent to think him other than good.

Critical comments- This ode is highly dramatic and thoroughly relevant to the situation. There are two parts of this ode. In the first the Chorus speaks of the guilty man as a hoi;neless outcast shrinking from men's eyes. The Chorus utters a warning to this "shedder of blood", this doer of horrible deeds, to flee from Thebes if he wishes to escape the wrath of Zeus. This part of the ode obviously contributes to the atmosphere of awe and terror in t e play by visualizing the fate which the murderer of Laius will meet. In the second part of the ode the feeling of uncertainty experienced by the Chorus is expressed. The Chorus cannot disbelieve the words of Teiresias whom they know to be a true prophet; at the same time they cannot believe Teiresias who has accused their idol. Oedipus, of the murder of Laius. Thus this second part reveals the conflict of loyalties of the Chorus. Towards the end of the ode it is the Chorus's loyalty to Oedipus which wins. The Chorus recalls Oedipus's heroic action in conquering' the Sphinx and refuses to entertain any doubts about the goodness and nobility of Oedipus who has been denounced by Teiresias. The conflict in the mind of the Chorus is a reflection or echo of the conflict that must at this point be taking place in the minds of the audience which is seeing or reading the play for the first time without previbusly knowing the story. To this extent the second ode correctly represents the reaction of the spectators.

The theme of the third ode- The third song begins with an expression of the reverence which the Chorus feels for the laws framed by the gods. These laws have a divine origin, and mortal men had no part in framing them. Nor can these laws ever become invalid because the gods neither die nor grow old. The Chorus then speaks of pride which is a hateful characteristic of a tyrant. A tyrant is proud of his power and his wealth; a tyrant's wisdom collapses before his pride. This pride leads the tyrant to destruction from which nothing can save him. The Chorus next utters a prayer that a man, who is proud in word or deed and who has no fear of justice, should be overtaken by utter ruin. Those, who seek disho-nourable advantages and lay violent hands on holy things, can never be secure from the wrath of the gods. Finally, the Chorus expresses its dismay at the decline in religious faith and religious

in the play. The songs of the Chorus took the form sometimes of an invocation, sometimes a prayer, sometimes a wish, sometimes a lament, sometimes an expression of joy or grief. Thus the Choric odes covered a wide range of subjects and emotions.

The theme of the first song- In this play the first Choric ode is sung just when Oedipus has declared his resolve, to trace the murderer of Laius, and when the priest, feeling satisfied, disperses his followers who had come to submit a petition to the King. The Chorus, having learnt the message that has come from the Delphic oracle, here expresses its state of fear. Invoking three deities, Athena, Artemis, and Phoebus the Chorus seeks the three-fold power to save the city of Thebes from the fire and pain of the plague which is raging there. The Chorus then goes on to describe the conditions prevailing in the city. People are suffering sorrows which defy description. Sickness has taken the from of an epidemic and no remedy is available. The soil has become unproductive and women are giving birth to dead babies. Large numbers of dead people lie in the streets. Dead babies lie on the ground, unpitied and unburied, infecting the air with pollution. Young wives and aged mothers approach the altars and cry aloud in prayer. Although there is no war being fought, yet the terrible cry of the fierce god of war rings in the ears of the people. The Chorus appeals to the all powerful Zeus to hurl his thunderbolt upon the god of war in order to subdue him. The Chorus also appeals to Apollo, Artemis, and Bacchus to fight against the power of the savage god of war, and to drive him away from Thebes.

Critical comments- This opening song of the Chorus has two themes, the message from Delphi and the plague raging in the city. The Choral song does not produce any feeling of repetition. Both these themes which were presented vividly through the dialogue in the prologue, now become something much more immediate when presented through a song. A noteworthy point is that the two themes appear in the song in the reverse order, first the message and then the plague. The reverse order will make the transition from the prologue to the first episode more smooth. It is also to be noted that, while the prologue ended on a note of hope, the first Choric ode ends on a note of apprehension and prayer.

The theme of the second song- The Chorus sing its second song just after the departure of Teiresias who has had a quarrel with Oedipus. Teiresias has spoken to Oedipus most bitterly, accusing him of the murder of Laius and making many other offensive and insulting allegations. The Chorus asks the identity of the man who did the horrible deeds mentioned by the prophet. Let that man flee from the city of Thebes with the maximum possible speed because the son of Zeus, armed with his fires and his lightning, is coming to destroy that man. A command has come from the god to avenge the murder of Laius. Where

him anything and then uttered some frightening prophecies, Oedipus is discouraged by Jocasta to continue his investigation. But he pays no heed to her philosophy of living at random. She makes another effort to stop his investigations when she has herself realised the truth, but again she fails. The Theban shepherd too tries to dampen Oedipus's determination to know the truth, but in rain. It is this insistence on the truth that leads to the discovery in which lies the tragedy. We may, if we like, interpret this insistence on the truth as a form of pride, the pride of intellect, or the pride of knowing everything. The link of cause and effect is unmistakable between Oedipus's pride -of intellect and Oedipus's discovery of his sins. But there is no strong link between his pride and the actual committing of his sins because the sins would have been committed in any case, if the oracle was to be fulfilled. The oracle did say that Oedipus would be guilty of those sins, but no oracle said that Oedipus must discover the truth. What causes the tragedy is Oedipus's own loyalty to the truth. To this love of the truth we may, as already suggested above, give the name of the pride of intellect. What follows the discovery, the self-blinding and self-punishment, is another matter; what follows is deeply tragic also, but that is an offshoot of the discovery which is the major tragedy.

The indomitable spirit of the tragic hero- Oedipus is thus an authentic tragic hero in the .Aristotelian sense because, among other things, his tragedy is as much due to his own initiatives in.discovering the truth as to external circumstances. To the modem mind, a high social position is not necessary for the tragic hero. The modem reader does not recognise the validity of oracles, too. But, apart from these considerations, Oedipus is an authentic. tragic hero even from the modern reader's point of view. In Oedipus we see the helplessness of man in the face of the circumstances and we see at the same time man's essential greatnes s The manner in which Oedipus blinds himself after realizing his guilt, and the manner in which he endures his punishment raise him high in our esteem. He is introduced to us as a man heroic proportions in the prologue, and he departs at the close of the playas a man of a heroic stature. The spirit of Oedipus remains unconquered even in his defeat, and that isthe essential fact about a tragic hero.

The Chorus used to be an important ingredient in a Greek tragedy. Its utterances were closely related to the development of the plot. The Chorus was not just a spectator but a commentator. It took stock of the changing situations and developments, and expressed its reactions to them mostly in the form of songs which took the shape of odes. The Chorus represented the citizens and, asuch, could not betreated asan extraneous element

of all his love for the people, he wants full and absolute power, while in the case of Creon he comes close to committing a judicial murder.

His "hubris" or pride- An outstanding feature of Oedipus's character is an inherent feeling of pride in his own wisdom. This feeling of pride seems to have been considerably nourished and inflated by his success in solving the riddle of the Spinx. It is his boast that no seer, not even Teiresias, found the solution to that riddle. Oedipus's feeling of pride is the subject of indirect comment in one of the choral odes. Because of this hubris, or arrogance, Oedipus certainly alienates some of our sympathy. Self confidence is a good quality, but when it takes the form of pride, haughtiness, arrogance or insolence, it becomes disgusting and obnoxious. His attitude of intolerance towards both Teiresias and Creon and his highly offensive and insulting words to both of them create in us the impression that he is paving the way for his own downfall. Of course, Oedipus has already committed the crimes which make him a sinner in the eyes of the gods, in his own eyes, and in the eyes of other people; he killed his father and married his mother long before his defects come to our notice. But the tragedy lies not so much in the committing of those crimes as in his. discovery that he is guilty of them. If the crimes had remained unknown there would hardly have been any tragedy. Tragedy comes with the fact of discovery both for Jocasta and himself.

His pride not the direct cause of his sins- It would be a flaw in logic to say that Oedipus suffers because of his sin of pride. That he is guilty of this sin cannot be denied. But his pride is not the direct cause of his crimes or his tragedy. Having come to know from the oracle what was in store for him, he tried his utmost to avoid the fulfilment of the prophecies. It was completely in a state of ignorance that he killed his father and married his mother. His tragedy is a tragedy of error, not of any willful action. And yet it is possible to argue that, if he had been a little more careful, things would have taken a different shape. He might have avoided the quarrel on the road if he had not been so proud or hot-tempered; and he might have refused to marry a woman old enough to be his mother if he had not been blinded by the pride of his intelligence in solving the riddle of the Sphinx. But, then, the prophecies of the oracle would have been fulfilled in some other way, because nothing could have prevented their fulfilment. Pride, therefore, has little to do with Oedipus's killing his father and marrying his mother.

His pride the motivating force behind the discovery- But does pride have anything to do with the discovery of his crimes because, after all, the tragedy lies mainly in this discovery? We can be almost certain that, if Oedipus had not relentlessly pursued his investigations, he might have been spared the shock of discovery. Something in him drives him forward on the road to discovery. After Teiresias has first refused to tell

Oedipus's excellent qualities as a King and as a man- Oedipus is a good King, a great well-wisher of his people, a man of integrity, an honest and great administrator, and an outstanding intellect. He is also a pious man who believes in oracles, respects the bonds of family, and hates impurity. His belief in the prophecies of the gods is the very basis of the whole play; it is because he receives a message from the Delphic oracle that he undertakes an investigation into the murder of the late King Laius. Oedipus is highly respected by his people. The suppliant people approach him almost as a god and he is honoured as a saviour. The Priest recalls the valuable service that he rendered to the city of Thebes by conquering the Sphinx, and looks forward to his rescuing the people from the afflictions that have now descended upon the city. Oedipus responds to the appeal of the Priest whole-heartedly in fact he has already despatched Creon to consult the Delphic oracle, and soon he summons the prophet, Teiresias, to seek his guidance. When Creon reveals the cause of the city's suffering and the remedy communicated to him by the oracle, Oedipus declares his resolve to track down the criminal and he utters a terrible curse upon him. In the light of all this, we can say that Oedipus is almost an ideal King. He also shows himself as a devoted husband and as a loving father. He shows due consideration for the opinions and feelings of Jocasta. and he lavishes all his affection on his daughters. His relations with the Chorus are also very cordial and he shows all due courtesy to them, sometimes even acting upon the advice tendered by them. In short. both as a man and as a King, Oedipus is worthy of high respect.

The faults of Oedipus- However, Oedipus has his faults. He is hot-tempered, hasty in his judgment, excessively proud of his intelligence, and arbitrary in his decisions. He quickly loses his temper with Teiresias when he finds the prophet reluctant to reveal the things that he knows. He jumps to the conclusion that Teiresias has been bribed by Creon and that the two of them have hatched a conspiracy against him. No doubt, he first addresses Teiresias reverently, but his attitude changes suddenly and completely when he smells a danger to his Kingship. This attitude of distrust towards the prophet is in sharp contrast to Oedipus's genuine piety. Oedipus the ruler belongs, in spite of his piety, to the world of politics and human standards rather than to the divine order of the world. His piety fails also later on when, under the influence of Jocasta, he becomes somewhat sceptical regarding the oracles.

On the way to tyranny- The scene with Creon clearly shows Oedipus's arbitrariness and his dictatorial tendency. His attitude towards a tried and trusted kinsman is one of thoughtless and blind suspicion showing a hasty inference and a rash vindictiveness. It would seem that his position and authority are leading him to become a tyrant. In spite

with eminent success, for the creation of atmosphere, of contrast, of escape and relief. Oedipus Rex illustrates this in an abundant measure:. According to Aristotle, a Sophoclean Chorus is a character that takes an important role in the play, instead of merely making incidental music between the scenes as in the plays of Euripides.

Q. 6 Consider the protagonist of Oedipus Rex in the light of Aristotle's account of the tragic hero. Do you think that this protagonist is a man guilty of pride and so punished for his sin?

Or Sophocles's Oedipus has been called an authentic tragic hero. Why?

Ans. Aristotle's conception of a tragic hero- According to Aristotle, a tragic hero is a distinguished person occupying a high position or having a high status in life and in very prosperous circumstances falling into misfortune on account of a "hamartia" or some defect of character. Morally speaking, a tragic hero, in Aristotle's view, should be a good or fine man, though not perfect. There is nothing, says Aristotle, to arouse the feelings of pity or fear in seeing a bad character pass from prosperity to misfortune. At the same time, the ruin of a man who represents near-perfection in the moral sense is repugnant and horrible. Thus the tragic hero, for Aristotle, is a man not especially outstanding in goodness nor yet guilty of depravity and wickedness. The tragic hero is neither a moral paragon nor a scoundrel. Aristotle also demands that the tragic hero should be true to type, and consistent or true to himself. So far as the disaster or catastrophe in a tragedy is concerned, Aristotle would attribute it to an error rather than a deliberate crime.

Oedipus, as judged by Aristotle's criteria- The main requirements of Aristotle in regard to the tragic hero are thus (1) high special standing, (2) moral excellence or goodness, and (3) some fault of character, or some error committed by the heroin ignorance of the circumstances. Oedipus answers to all these requirements, though so far as the last-mentioned requirement is concerned, the matter has to be considered carefully. Oedipus is a man of royal birth; he is brought up by a King and a Queen and he himself afterwards becomes a King and marries a Queen. He is thus a man of social eminence. He is also a man possessing excellent qualities of character, though he is by no means perfect. We cannot say in categorical terms that his misfortune is due to any defect in his character, though his defects do produce the impression that such a man must pay for his defects. At the same time, it would not be correct to say that he is a puppet in the hands of fate. Within certain limits he is a free agent, though it must also be recognised that, no matter what other precautions he had taken besides those which he does actually take, the prophecy of the orade would yet have been fulfilled.

a state of "deep passion" and the Chorus rightly predicts that some "vile catastrophe" will emerge from what she is trying to suppress. Of course, neither the Chorus nor Oedipus is at this time aware of the real truth. In the final scene, the Chorus plays a more substantial part. The Chorus holds a dialogue with Oedipus, commenting on the latest development, expressing its horror and grief at Oedipus's self-inflicted blindness, probing Oedipus's mind with regard to his reasons for the self-blinding, offering sympathy and consolation to Oedipus in his misery, and emphasizing at the same time Oedipus's sinfulness. According to the Chorus, it would have been better for Oedipus to die than to live in blindness, in this dialogue, the Chorus does not influence the action in the least but its role as a questioner and as a commentator is valuable: through the questions which the Chorus asks Oedipus and through the comments which the Chorus makes upon the blinded Oedipus, we are enabled to know a good deal about how Oedipus's mind is working. Both the questions and the comments of the Chorus deepen the tragic effect. At the very end of the play the Chorus announces the moral that "none can be called happy until that day when he carries his happiness down to the grave in peace".

Providing a change of scene. It is also noteworthy that the Chorus occasionally provides a change of the scene which the audience is to imagine. During the scene between Oedipus and Teiresias, the attention of the audience is focussed upon their clash and the scene is literal, close and immediate: before Oedipus's palace. When they depart and the Choral music starts, the focus suddenly widens and the audience feels as if it had been removed to a distance. The audience becomes aware of the interested city around the bright arena.

The manifold uses of the Chorus. There are times when we feel the Chorus to be an encumbrance and wish that it were not there. On the other hand, the Greek dramatists realised the many important uses which the Chorus could be made to serve. It could expound the past, comment on the present, and forebode the future. It provided the dramatist with a mouthpiece and the spectator with a counterpart of himself. One of the most important functions of the Chorus was to reveal, in its widest and most mysterious extent, the theatre of human life which the play assumed. Even when the Chorus did not speak, but only watched, it maintained this theme and this perspective-ready to take the whole stage when the main characters departed. The Chorus also formed a living foreground of common humanity above which the heroes towered, and a living background of pure poetry which turned lamentation into music and horror into peace. It provided a wall separating the drama from the real world, and it served at the same time as a bridge between the heroic figures of legend and the average humanity of the audience. The masters of Greek drama used the Chorus,

faith in the oracles and in religious observances. It advocates a strict adherence to laws framed by the gods. In short, the Chorus is a champion of religious sanctity and it draws, too, moral lessons from the various happenings as, for instance, the lesson, drawn from the scene of discovery, that human happiness is short-lived.

The participation of the Chorus in the dialogue. The songs are not the only medium-through which the Chorus expresses its reactions to the changing and developing plot. The Chorus also sometimes takes part in the dialogue and, therefore, in the action even though-it is unable to influence the course of events in any appreciable manner. After Oedipus has proclaimed his purpose of tracing. Laius's murderer and has uttered a curse upon the criminal, the Chorus expresses the view that the oracle should have indicated the identity of the murderer. When Oedipus replies that-a god cannot be compelled to speak against his own will, the Chorus suggests that the prophet, Teiresias, should be requested to come and help in the investigation. As Oedipus has already sent for the prophet, the suggestion of the Chorus merely confirms the desirability of the course adopted by Oedipus and does not determine Oedipus's decision. Later, when Oedipus speaks harsh words to Teiresias, and Teiresias has spoken angrily also, the Chorus tries to soothe both of them, saying that they have both spoken in the heat of passion.

When, afterwards, Creon complains that he has falsely been accused of treason by Oedipus, the Chorus tries to assuage Creon's feelings by saying that Oedipus spoke those words under the stress of anger. When Jocasta arrives on the scene of the quarrel between her husband and her brother, the Chorus expresses the hope that she would be able to compose the quarrel, at the same time appealing to Oedipus to withdraw the sentence of death against Creon. When Oedipus persists in the sentence of death, the Chorus urges him not to discard an ally without proper verification of the facts. To Jocasta's question as to how this quarrel arose, the Chorus says that the trouble developed because of a "wild conjecture" on the part of Oedipus. Thus, throughout this scene, the role of the Chorus is conciliatory. The effort of the Chorus is to pacify both Oedipus and Creon and to soothe ruffled feelings. In doing so, the Chorus appears loyal to the King but loyal also to the interests of the country. There is not the least touch of selfishness or any bad motive in what the Chorus says. Ultimately, under the pressure of the Chorus, Oedipus does withdraw the sentence of death against Creon. To this extent, but to this extent only, the Chorus proves effective in influencing the action of the drama. Subsequently the Chorus comments upon the mood of grief of Jocasta when she, having learnt the real identity of Oedipus from the Corinthian messenger withdraws to her own chamber. The Chorus points out that the Queen has left in

The Choral odes. The Choral odes are lyrics intended to be danced and sung. Each song represents one passion or pathos in the changing action of the whole. This passion, like the other moments in the tragic rhythm, is felt at so general or so deep a level that it seems to contain both the mob fury and, at the other extreme, the patience of prayer. The opening song of the Chorus has two themes: the plague raging in the city of Thebes, and the message from Delphi. A feeling of apprehension and fear is the dominant mood of this ode in which a prayer for help and relief is offered to the gods. The second ode comes after Teiresias's denunciation of Oedipus. The Chorus here pictures the guilty man as a homeless outcast shrinking from men's eyes. The Chorus also expresses its feeling of perplexity in view of the accusations brought by Teiresias against Oedipus. The Chorus cannot disbelieve the prophet because of its respect for him, but it cannot believe the prophet either because of its respect for Oedpius. The Chorus is most reluctant to believe that Oedipus can be guilty of any evil. The conflict in the mind of the Chorus reflects the conflict which must at this point be taking place in the minds of the audience. The third song of the Chorus begins with the reverence which the Chorus feels for the laws framed by the gods. It then speaks of the "hybris" or pride which is a hateful characteristic of a tyrant. This ode, apart from emphasizing the importance of religion and religious observances, indirectly accuses both Oedipus and Jocasta of the fault of pride. Whether the Chorus consciously accuses Oedipus and Jocasta of the pride which could lead them to tyranny, is not quite clear but the audience is in any case made conscious of this defect in the characters of the King and the Queen. In its fourth song the Chorus speculates upon the divine origin of Oedipus. This ode is fraught with tragic irony because while the Chorus, like Oedipus himself, is ignorant of the true parentage of Oedipus, Jocasta and the audience have become aware of it. The last song of the Chorus expresses the idea that human happiness is short-lived, the fate of Oedipus being a clear illustration of this idea. This is a most pessimistic song: it is a song of despair, though the play itself does not end on a note of despair. Thus the various songs show the changing moods of the Chorus and, to a large extent, of the audience. The Chorus is not just a spectator but a commentator which takes notice of the changing situations and developments and expresses its reactions to them mostly in the form of songs. The songs of the Chorus take the shape sometimes of an invocation, sometimes a prayer, sometimes a wish, sometimes a lament, sometimes an expression of joy or grief.

The Chorus as the upholder of religious piety. The role of 'the Chorus as the upholder of religious piety and sanctity is noteworthy. The Chorus in its songs expresses a consistent reverence for the gods, and it expresses an unfaltering faith in the oracles. It deplores and condemns the general decline in religion and prays to the gods to restore people's

Oedipus, but in vain; he was determined to solve the problem of his own parentage. The immediate cause of his ruin is not fate or the gods; no oracle said that he must discover the truth. Still less does the cause of his ruin lie in his own weakness. What causes his ruin is his own strength and courage, his loyalty to Thebes, and his love of truth. In all this we are to see *him* as a free agent. And his self-blinding and self-banishment ire equally free acts of choice.

The responsibility of fate· and the responsibility of character. What is our conclusion, then? In spite of the evidence to prove Oedipus a free agent in most of his actions as depicted in the play, we cannot forget that the most tragic events of his life-his murder of his father and his marriage with his mother-had inevitably to happen. Here the responsibility of fate cannot be denied. But the discovery by Oedipus of his crimes or sins is the result of the compulsions of his own nature. The real tragedy lies in this discovery, which is due to the traits of his own character. If he had not discovered the truth, he would have continued to live in a state of blissful ignorance and there would have been no tragedy-no shock, no self-blinding, and no suffering (assuming, of course, that Jocasta too did not discover the truth). But the parricide and the incest-these were pre-ordained and for these fate is responsible:

In any consideration of Oedipus Rex, the role of the Chorus cannot be ignored. The Chorus used to be an inescapable part of ancient Greek drama, and its role was thought to be vital. The Chorus was a group personality consisting of twelve or fifteen elder citizens. This group was not intended to represent literally all of the citizens, but it did possess a representative character. Oedipus Rex opens with a large delegation of The ban citizens before Oedipus's palace, while the Chorus proper enters only after the prologue. Nor does the Chorus speak directly for the audience all the time. The Chorus represents the point of view and the faith of Thebes as a whole, and. by analogy, of the audience. Thus the Chorus represents the citizens and the audience in a particular way -not as a mob formed under the stress of some momentary feeling, but rather as an organ of a highly self-conscious community, something like the conscience of the race.

The Chores, one of the "dramatis personae". In its entry-song the Chorus invokes the various gods and describes the misfortunes which have befallen the city of Thebes. With-the entry of the Chorus, the list of the essential dramatis personae is complete, and the main action can begin. It is the function of the Chorus to mark the stages of this action, and to perform the suffering and perceiving part of the tragic rhythm.

The oracle's predictions inescapable. But the question that arises is: what is the connection between these defects of character in Oedipus and the sad fate that he meets. It may be said that, if he had not been hot-tempered, he might not have got entangled in a fight on the road and might thus have not been guilty of murdering his father. Similarly, if he had been a little more cautious, he might have hesitated to marry a woman old enough to be his mother. After all there was no compulsion either in the fight that he picked up during his journey or in the act of his marriage with Jocasta. Both his killing his father and his marrying his mother may thus be attributed to his own defects of character. At the same time it has to be recognised that the pronouncements of the oracles were inescapable. What was foretold by the oracle must inevitably happen. Even if Oedipus had taken the precautions above hinted at, the prophecy was to be fulfilled. The oracle's prediction was unconditional; it did not say that if Oedipus did such and such a thing he would kill his father and marry his mother. The oracle simply said that Oedipus would kill his father and marry his mother. What the oracle said was bound to happen.

Oedipus not a puppet, but a free agent in his actions on the stage. If Oedipus is the innocent victim of a doom which he cannot avoid, he would appear to be a mere puppet. The whole play in that case becomes a tragedy of destiny which denies human freedom. But such a view would also be unsound. Sophocles does, not want to regard Oedipus as a puppet; there is reason to believe that Oedipus has been portrayed largely as a free agent. Neither in Homer nor in Sophocles does divine fore-knowledge of certain events imply that all human actions are pre-determined. The attendant in the present play emphatically describes Oedipus's self-blinding as voluntary and self-chosen and distinguishes it from his involuntary murder of his father and marriage with his mother. Some of Oedipus's actions were fate-bound, but everything that he does on the stage, from first to last, he does as a free agent-his condemnation of Teiresias and Creon, his conversation with Jocasta leading him to reveal the facts of his life to her and to his learning from her the circumstances of the death of Laius, his pursuing his investigation despite the efforts of Jocasta and the Theban shepherd to stop him, and so on. What fascinates us in this play is the spectacle of a man freely choosing, from the highest motives, a series of actions which lead to his own ruin. Oedipus could have left the plague to take its course but his pity over the sufferings of his people compelled him to consult the oracle. When Apollo's word came, he could still have left the murder of Laius uninvestigated, but his piety and his love of justice compelled him to start an inquiry. He need not have forced the truth from the reluctant Theban shepherd, but he could not rest content with a lie and, therefore, wanted to probe the matter fully. Teiresias, Jocasta, the Theban shepherd,. each in turn tried to stop

for the tragic happenings to characters? Oedipus, the greatest sufferer in the play, has done nothing at all to deserve the fate which overtakes him. Nor do Laius and Jocasta deserve the fate they meet.

The goodness and intelligence of Oedipus. Let us, howaver, take a closer look at the character of Oedipus, the tragic hero of the play. Aristotle expressed the view that the tragic hero is a man highly esteemed and prosperous who falls into misfortune because of some serious hamartia or defect. Now, there can be no doubt at all about the essential goodness of Oedipus. He is an able ruler, a father of his people, an honest and great administrator, and an outstanding intellect. His chief care is not for himself but for the people of the State. The people look upon him as their saviour. He is adored and worshipped by them. He is also a religious man in the orthodox sense; he believes in oracles; he respects the bonds of family; and he hates impurity. Indeed, in the prologue of the play we get the feeling that Oedipus is an ideal King. That such a man should meet the sad fate which he noes meet is, indeed, unbearably painful to us.

Oedipus's defects of character. Oedipus is not, however, a perfect man or even a perfect King. He does suffer from a hamartia or a defect of character which makes him liable to incur the wrath of the gods. He is hot-tempered; rash, hasty in forming judgments, easily provoked, and even somewhat arbitrary. Even though in the beginning his attitude towards Teiresias is one of reverence, he quickly loses his temper and speaks to the prophet in a highly insulting manner accusing both him and Creon of treason. His sentencing Creon to death even though subsequently he withdraws the punishment shows his rashness and arbitrariness. Indeed, in the two scenes with Teiresias and Creon, Oedipus shows a blind suspicion towards friends, an inclination to hasty inference, and a strange vindictiveness. When he meets opposition, or thinks he does, he easily loses all self-control. His position and authority seem to be leading him to become a tyrant. (That is the reason why this play is also called Oedipus Tyrannus). Creon has to remind him that the city does not belong to him alone. Even when blinded he draws the reproach; "Do not crave to be master in everything always". All this shows that Oedipus is not a man of a flawless character, not a man completely free from faults, not an embodiment of all the virtues. His pride in his own wisdom is one of his glaring faults. His success in solving the riddle of the Sphinx seems to have further developed his inherent feeling of pride. No seer or prophet found the solution: this is Oedipus's boast. Pride and self-confidence induce him to feel almost superior to the gods. There is in him a failure of piety even. Under the influence of Jocasta, he grows sceptical of the oracles. Thus there is in him a lack of true wisdom, and this lack is an essential feature of the man who is on the verge of becoming an impious tyrant.

was told that his own son by Jocasta would kill him. Laius did everything possible to prevent such a disaster. As soon as Jocasta gave birth to a son, Laius had him chained and handed him over to a trustworthy servant with strict and precise instructions to the effect that that the child be exposed on Mt. Cithaeron and allowed to perish. No child could have survived under the circumstances. But the servant, out of compassion, handed over the child to a Corinthian shepherd who passed him on to the Corinthian King. The child grew up as the son of Polybus and Merope, the King and Queen of Corinth, and subsequently killed his true father, Laius. Of course, the son killed his father unknowingly and in complete ignorance of the real identity of his victim. But Apollo's oracle was fulfilled in the case of Laius even though he and his wife Jocasta took the extreme step of ordering the death of their own child, in order to escape the fate which had been foretold by the oracle.

Oedipus's efforts to avert his fate thwarted. Oedipus, the son whom Laius had begotten, had likewise to submit to the destiny which Apollo's oracle pronounced for him. Oedipus learnt from the oracle that he would kill his own father and marry his own mother. Like his parents, Oedipus tried his utmost to avert a terrible fate. He fled from Corinth, determined never again to set eyes on his supposed father and mother as long as they lived. His wanderings took him to Thebes the people of which were facing a great misfortune. King Laius had been killed by an unknown traveller (who was none other than Oedipus himself) at a spot where three roads met: the city was in the grip of a frightful monster, the Sphinx, who was causing a lot of destruction because nobody was able to solve the riddle which she had propounded. Oedipus was able to solve the riddle and thus put an end to the monster. As a reward for the service he had rendered to the city, Oedipus was joyfully received by the people as their King and was given Laius's widow as his wife. Thus, in complete ignorance of the identity of both his parents, he killed his father and married his mother. He performed these disastrous acts not only unknowingly and unintentionally, but as a direct result of his efforts to escape the cruel fate which the oracle at Delphi had communicated to him.

Characters not responsible for their fate. It is evident, then, that the occurrences which bring about the tragedy in the life of Laius, Oedipus, and Jocasta are the work of that mysterious supernatural power which may be called fate or destiny or be given the name of Apollo. This supernatural power had pre-determined certain catastrophic events in the life of these human beings. These human beings are even informed in advance that they will become the victims of certain shocking events; these human beings take whatever measures they can think of, to avert those events; and yet things turn out exactly as they had been foretold by the oracles. How can we attribute any responsibility

to the position of a suppliant. Jocasta's sarcastic comments on the oracles are also full of tragic irony, especially because the oracles are going to be proved to be true in a short while. The use of tragic irony is a device by means of which a dramatist heightehs the tragic effect. Sophocles is famous for his use of tragic irony, and this play clearly shows the skill with which he has employed it.

The role of the Chorus. Nor cah we ignore the role of the Chorus. The songs of the Chorus may be regarded as representing the reactions of the audience to the play as it unfolds itself. The function of the Chorus was to comment upon the major incidents as they occurred. In this way, the Chorus not only represented the feelings of the audience but also reinforced them, sometimes providing a kind of guidance to them. The entry-song of the Chorus is, for instance, an invocation to the gods to protect the people of Thebes. This song is indicative of the religious feelings of the Chorus and of the people whom it represents. The second song of the Chorus shows its perplexity at the allegations of Teiresias against Oedipus. This feeling of perplexity would naturally be shared by the reader or the spectator seeing the play for the first time. The third song of the Chorus expresses its reverence for the divine laws and condemns, indirectly, Oedipus's pride. The fourth song speculates upon Oedipus's parentage, visualising a love-affair between some god and a mountain-nymph. The tragic irony of this song is obvious. The last song of the Chorus expresses the idea that human happiness is short-lived, citing the case of Oedipus as a clear illustration. This song deepens our sense of tragedy. Today it is possible for us to regard the Chorus as an unnecessary element in the play or as an encumbrance. But the Chorus was an essential part of every drama in those days, and we just cannot shut our eyes to it. The Chorus does serve a dramatic purpose, as we have seen above. Here and there, the Chorus plays an active role in the action of the play also. For instance, the Chorus dissuades Oedipus from carrying out the sentence of banishment against Creon. The Chorus also soothes the feelings of Oedipus when he appears before them, blind and helpless, though the Chorus does not make light of the sinful deeds of which Oedipus has been shown to beguilty.

Oedipus Rex is, to a large extent, a tragedy of fate. The crucial events in the play have been pre-determined by fate or the gods. Human beings seem rather helpless in the face of the circumstances which mould their de tiny. King Laius

the scene with the Corinthian messenger brings the greatest possible shock for Jocasta, though Oedipus at this stage remains unenlightened. The shock for Oedipus comes after his questioning of the Theban shepherd in the scene that follows. The discovery by Oedipus is the culminating point of the play and of the excitement it produces.

Logical and convincing sequence of events. It is evident that everything proceeds in a logical and convincing manner. Nothing is forced; everything happens naturally, the only exception being the arrival of the Corinthian messenger at a time when Oedipus is investigating the murder of Laius. The arrival of the Corinthian messenger is certainly a coincidence, but it is the only coincidence in the play. The scenes we have surveyed produce various feelings in us-pity, fear, awe, admiration, resentment, irritation. But the dominant feelings are three-fear of what might happen and what really happens: pity at the sad fate of Jocasta and of Oedipus; and admiration for the integrity of Oedipus who pursues the investigation in spite of advice to the contrary by Jocasta and the Theban shepherd.

The peripeteia and the anagnorisis. Aristotle spoke of peripeteia and anagnorisis. A peripeteia occurs when a course of action intended to produce a certain result actually produces the reverse of it. Thus the Corinthian messenger tries to cheer Oedipus and dispel his fear of marrying his mother, but, by revealing who Oedipus really is, he produces exactly the opposite result. Similarly, Oedipus runs headlong in to the jaws of the very destiny from which he flees. The anagnorisis means the realisation of the truth, the opening of the eyes, the sudden lightning flash in the darkness. This moment comes for Jocasta at the end of the talk with the Corinthian messenger and for Oedipus at the end of the cross-examination of the Theban shepherd.

The moving last scene. The final scene of the play is highly moving. The account of the self-murder and the self-blinding is extremely horrifying; the lamentations of Oedipus show him for a while to be a helpless and pathetic figure, but soon his original imperiousness and pride reassert themselves and he insists on having his own way though he cannot. The last scene is very touching and at the same time highly uplifting and productive of that cathartic effect of which Aristotle has spoken.

Use of tragic irony. Another important feature of the construction of the plot of Oedipus Rex is the use of tragic irony. Tragic irony is to be found almost in every major situation in this play. Thus, when Teiresias accuses Oedipus of being the murderer, Oedipus thinks that the prophet, prompted and instigated by Creon, is out to defame and slander him, but Teiresias knows the exact truth (and so does the audience). Thereafter Oedipus speaks insultingly to Creon, not realising that very soon Creon will be the King while he himself will be reduced

All these incidents belong to what has been called the middle of the play. It will be noticed that the emotional excitement of the audience rises with each of these scenes and a tension is generated in their minds till the great shock comes with the discovery first by Jocasta, and then by Oedipus himself. The tragedy lies in the discovery of the guilt and not in the guilt itself, and so the feeling of pity and fear reach their height with the discovery by Oedipus. The end of the play consists of the scenes in which Oedipus laments this fate and the fate of his daughters and in which he is banished from Thebes at his own insistence. What strikes us most here is the orderly development of the plot. There are no digressions of any kind and nothing irrelevant. Every situation contributes to the furtherance of the plot, even the scene of Oedipus's quarrel with Creon.

Surprise and suspense. Surprise and suspense are two vital elements in a successful play. Both surprise and suspense are found in abundance in this play and they both produce highly dramatic effects. For instance, when Teiresias arrives, we are in a state of suspense because the prophet is now expected to disclose to Oedipus the identity of the murderer. Teiresias, however, tries to evade giving straight answers to Oedipus's questions with the result that Oedipus completely loses his temper and insults the prophet. The prophet is not the one to remain quiet. He hits back and he hits hard. He calls Oedipus the murderer and makes a number of veiled prophecies regarding Oedipus's ultimate fate. The utterances of Teiresias fill us with terror. The scene of this quarrel is highly exciting to the reader or the spectator. The pride and insolence of Oedipus have a disturbing effect on us, and we wonder what he will do. Then follows the quarrel with Creon in the course of which Creon, the moderate and mild-mannered man, defends himself as best as he can while Oedipus shows how stubborn he can be till the Chorus and Jocasta prevail upon him to withdraw the sentence of banishment against Creon.

Scenes leading to the final revelation. Then follow three scenes which lead to the final revelation-the scenes with Jocasta, the Corinthian messenger, and the Theban shepherd. This drama of revelation extends over five hundred lines or so. The excitement increases, rather than diminishes, by being spread out. Jocasta tries to make light of Oedipus's fear which has been aroused by the prophet's allegation. She says that no man possesses the secret of divination and that Teiresias's allegations should be dismissed. But Jocasta's own experience of the oracle, which she describes as evidence of the falsity of oracles, produces yet another doubt in the mind of Oedipus, and he tells Jocasta the story of his own life. Oedipus's fears fill Jocasta with dread and she offers worship to Apollo. But as soon as the Corinthian arrives and tells his news, Jocasta's skepticism returns with an even greater force. However, a little later,

and the Odyssey allude briefly to Oedipus. In the fifth century B.C. both Aeschylus and, Euripides wrote Oedipus plays neither of which survives. In later ages the theme attracted numerous dramatists, among them Seneca, Corneille, Voltaire, and Gide. But in most minds the name of Oedipus is linked with the dramatist Sophocles.

The first point to note about the plot of Oedipus Rex is that, like most Greek plays of ancient times, it observes all the there unities-unity of place, unity of time, and unity of action. The entire action of the play takes place at the royal palace in the city of Thebes. The entire action of the play occupies no more than the twentyfour hours which was the maximum duration permissible according to rules. Our entire attention is focussed on a single theme-the investigation made by Oedipus into the murder of Laius and the discovery of the truth. There are no side-plots, orunder-plots. The observance of unities is not by itself a great merit in a play. Shakespeare violated all the unities and yet attained great heights in the writing of drama. It cannot, however, be denied that the unities do make a play closeknit and produce a great concentration of effect, even though they restrict the freedom of the dramatist in several ways.

A beginning, a middle, and an end; increasing excitement. As required by Aristotle, Oedipus Rex has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is a situation which has definite consequences, though not very obvious causes; a middle is a situation with both causes and consequences; and an end is the result of the middle but creates no further situation in its turn. Oedipus Rex begins with a complaint by the people to the King, and the arrival of Creon with a command from the oracle that the unknown murderer of the last King, Laius, should be banished from the city. This beginning is the prologue in which the problem is stated and the way is prepared for the development of the real theme of the play. A feeling of suspense is also created in this opening scene. Then follow two important episodes: Oedipus's quarrel with Teiresias, and his quarrel with Creon. Both these scenes are highly dramatic, especially the former in which the prophet proves more than a match for Oedipus. The next episode, more important from the point of view of plot-development, is the arrival of a messenger from Corinth. Joca ta realises the truth and leaves in a state of great perturbation; while Oedipus, still ignorant, persists in his inquiry. The Theban shepherd arrives in response to the royal summons. ow Oedipus learns the truth which is unbearably agonizing. Soon an attendant comes and announces the self-murder of Jocasta and the self-blinding of Oedipus.

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Worthy of admiration- Sophocles is subject to a certain conventional idealism. He lacks the elemental fire of Aeschylus, the speculative courage and subtle sympathy of Euripides. Otherwise there can be nothing but admiration for him. Plot, characters, and atmosphere are dignified and Homeric; his analysis, as far as it goes, is wonderfully sure and true; his language is a marvel of subtle power; his lyrics are uniformally skilful and fine. Sophocles also shows at times one high power which only a few of the world's poets share with him. He feels, as Wordsworth does, the majesty of order and well-being; he sees the greatness of God, as it were, in the untroubled things of life. Few poets, besides him, could have shaped the great ode in Antigone upon the rise of man or the description in Ajax of the "Give and Take" in Nature. And even in the famous verdict of despair which he pronounces upon life in Oedipus at Colonus, there is a certain depth of calm feeling, unfretted by any movement of mere intellect.

Conclusion- A critic writes: "Sophocles was a prolific writer and one highly acclaimed during his own life-time. Several technical innovations in theatrical arts are attributed to him, including the introduction of scene-painting and the use of scenes involving three speaking parts; and he is said to have written a treatise on his art. He found time as well to hold several high public offices and to serve as a priest of a minor healing-god. He was honoured by those who knew him for his charm and his good temper."

Works

Of the more than 120, plays of Sophocles known to antiquity only seven tragedies have survived intact into modern times. These seven are:

(1) *Antigone*
(2) *Oedipus Rex, also known as Oedipus Tyrannus*
(3) *Electra*
(4) *Ajax*
(5) *Trachiniae*
(6) *Philoctetes*
(7) *Oedipus at Colonus.*

Not all of these can be dated with confidence. An ancient anecdote would date Antigone to about 442 B.C., and Ajax is generally placed somewhat earlier, for reasons of style. Philoctetes is known to have been produced in 409 B.C., and Oedipus at Colonus in 401 B.C., the latter after Sophocles's death. The dates of the remaining plays are uncertain but there are some grounds for dating Oedipus Rex to the years immediately following 430 B.C. Three of his extant plays deal with the legend of the Theban royal house. (They are the two Oedipus plays and Antigone). The main outlines of this legend he inherited. The Iliad

of a prosperous and enlightened home, a youth educated in a harmonious physical and intellectual discipline and endowed with grace and accomplishment, a manhood devoted to the service of the State in art and public affairs, and in old age regarded with affectionate respect."

Family difficulties- According to an anecdote, Sophocles had some family difficulties at the end of his life. These difficulties were due to his illicit connection with a woman named Theoris. His legitimate son Iophon tried to get a warrant for administering the family estate, on the ground of his father's mental incapacity. Sophocles read out to the Court an ode from his play Oedipus at Colonus which he was then writing, and was declared as having proved thereby his general sanity! He died a few months after his great colleague, Euripides, in whose honour he introduced his last chorus in mourning.

His development as a dramatist- Sophocles wrote pretty continuously for sixty years and he is believed to have given his own account of his development. He began by having some relation with the magniloquence of Aeschylus; next came his own "stern and artificial" period of style thirdly he reached more ease and simplicity and seems to have satisfied himself. Perhaps, the most important change due to Sophocles took place in what the Greeks called the economy of the drama. Sophocles worked as a conscious artist improving details, demanding more and smoother tools, and making up, by skilful construction, tactful scenic arrangement, and entire avoidance of exaggeration or grotesqueness, for his inability to walk quite so near the heavens as his great predecessor, Aeschylus. The stern and artificial period is best represented by the play, Electra. This play is artificial in a good sense through skill of plot, its clear characterisation, and its uniform good writing. It is also artificial in a bad sense. For instance, in the messenger's speech where all that is wanted is a false report of the death of Orestes, the dramatist has inserted a brilliant, lengthy, and quite undramatic description of the Pythian Games. This play is also stern because of some coldness and a natural taste for severity and dislike of sentiment.

A certain bluntness of moral imagination- There is in Sophocles a lack of speculative freedom. There is also in him a certain bluntness of moral imagination which leads, for instance, to one structural defect in Oedipus Rex. That piece is a marvel of construction; every detail follows naturally, and yet every detail depends on the characters being exactly what they were, and makes us understand them. The one flaw, perhaps is in Teiresias. That aged prophet comes to the King absolutely determined not to tell the secret which he has kept for sixteen years, and then tells it. Why? He tells it because of his uncontrollable anger at having been insulted by the King. An aged prophet, who does that, is a disgrace to his profession; but Sophocles does not seem to feel it.

And this is what transforms the single-minded revenger into the complex representative of us all.

In a Shakespearen tragedy the hero is an outstanding personality possessing many rare qualities which none of the characters possesses. He is a man of exalted position, possessing great courage, self-sacrificing spirit, a good deal of intelligence and such other virtues. But, then, he possesses also a great flaw or defect which is not necessarily a vice but which mars all other good qualities in him, particularly when he is placed in certain situations or circumstances, which require some quality which is just the opposite if that flaw and which, therefore, leads him to a tragedy. Had the hero been placed in other circumstances with the same flaw he would not have to suffer or face any kind of tragedy. This is how the peculiar flaw of character as well as the peculiar circumstances bring out the tragedy of the hero in the Shakespearen plays. Some of the Shakespearean scholars and critics have tried to interpret this peculiar situation or circumstance as fate over which there is no human control and which, therefore, often brings about tragedies in human life as in Shakespearean plays. But then, Shakespeare never allowed any Fate to come into the picture, he simply placed his hero in some situation with some defect or flaw of character which made him commit error of judgement and action, which is the real cause of tragedy in the play.

If we analyse some of the heroes of the Shakespearean tragedies we find various kinds of peculiarities of character, which stand paramount over other qualities or characteristics. For example, in King Lear, we find that the greatest defect in his character is his stupidity which he follows in old age, and due to this stupidity he distributes all his property to his daughters and afterwards gets himself kicked out from his own place. The two elder daughters, Generil and Reagan, take an undue advantage of the helplessness of King Lear and make him more helpless by refusing food and shelter, love and everything also to him. That is how the tragedy of his life is brought about by bis daughters or stupidity of old age.

In the case of Macbeth, he possesses a vaulting ambition but this ambition could not have its scope for fulfilment if he had not been encountered and instigated by the equivocations of the witches or had not Lady Macbeth also been equally ambitious like her husband or had not Duncan visited Macbeth's castle and been his guest and offered a golden opportunity to fulfill his vaulting ambition by murdering him in sleep. Of course, in the case of Macbeth, this vaulting ambition is a vice as in all other persons; but then, had Macbeth been placed in other circumstances, his vaulting ambition would. have died in his breast

punished, to do evil along with good; as such his reluctance to act and become a part of the evil is understandable. The world to which the hero's human destiny commits him is one in which Hyperion and the satyr are brother, sprung from the same stock, which also lives in him. Seeing Claudius, the satyr, apparently triumphant, he is possessed by a sense of the all too fertile viciousness of the life in which his own life shares. It is a life in which he must yet is reluctant to participate. He longs for death, refuses marriage and procreation (in rejecting Ophelia's love), his nature resistant to what nature wills. This, as Harold Jenkins points out, is the fundamental conflict in Hamlet. It is what gives complexity to his character and raises him to the stature of a Shakespearian tragic hero, much above the conventional Revenge play hero.

Growth and self-realization leading to greatness but unable to avert tragedy. In a tragedy the hero normally comes to the realization of a truth of which he had been hitherto unaware. Aristotle called it "a change from ignorance to knowledge". Shakespeare's tragic heroes indeed undergo a transformation, a growth in vision and understanding which makes them gain further nobility and stature, but this growth and its accompanying self- realization come too late to avert to the tragedy. Thus from the state of melancholy and depression that he is in at the beginning of the play when he sees Denmark as an "unweeded garden", Hamlet regains his composure to become a truly philosophical and noble soul by the end of the play. He had once been an ideal personality as Ophelia tells us; by the time of the final act of the play, he is before us with a greater stature than he ever had before.

The movement towards Hamlet's regeneration begins with his reflections on the player's speech about Hecuba; it advances further in the closet-scene, and it reaches its culmination in the grave-diggers' scene. In the churchyard scene we find hamlet meditating on death. But death is not now something to be longed for as a release from the ills of the flesh, nor something to be shunned from the dead of what comes after. Born on the day that the grave-digger began his occupation, Hamlet has lived all his life under death's shadow; and in the skulls thrown up by the grave-digger he sees quite simply the common destiny of men.

Conclusion. Shakespeare with his creative imagination and artistic skill could not make his Hamlet a conventional avenger. Hamlet has to become a different kind of revenger. Instead of the hero of concealed and unswerving purpose, celebrated for his courage and virtue, we have a hero who in seeking to right a wrong commits one, whose aspirations and achievements are matched by failures and offences, and in whom potentialities for good and evil hauntingly coexist.

fellows and friends but present enemies. Indeed Hamlet succeeds in overcoming his foes but only at a dreadful cost.

Character or destiny? Character is not the only factor that is responsible for the tragedy of Hamlet. External circumstances are also responsible for making Hamlet tragic hero. Shakespeare creates a feeling that there is a mysterious power in this universe, which is responsible for every small happening. The appearance of the Ghost and its revelation is a manifestation of Fate. Many of the things that take place in Hamlet's life are by chance but none of these is improbable. He kills Polonius by chance. The ship in which he travels is attacked by pirates, and his return to Denmark is nothing but chance. Gertrude drinks the poisoned wine, by accident, and dies. So fate in the shape of chance shapes the future of all characters including Hamlet. But the sense of fate is never so overwhelming as to cast character in shade; after all, it is Hamlet himself who is responsible for his tragedy.

How Hamlet differs from other tragic heroes. Though he possesses all the qualities of Shakespeare's tragic heroes, yet Hamlet is different from the others. He is the only tragic hero who evokes the sympathy of the readers at all times. As Hazlitt puts it "The distresses of Hamlet are transferred by the turn of his mind, to the general account of humanity. Whatever happens to him we apply to ourselves, because he applies it to himself as a means of general reasoning. He is a great moralizer, and what makes him worth attending to is that he moralises on his own feelings and experience. He is not a common place pedant." If Lear is distinguished by the greatest depth of passion Hamlet is the most remarkable for the ingenuity, originality and unstudied development of character.

Hamlet a tragic hero of greater complexity than a traditional 'avenger'. What is the problem in Hamlet's character that he cannot act in the main concern, whereas he shows promptitude in other matters such as killing Polonius, sending Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to death, and jumping on to the pirate ship to grapple with the pirates single-handledly? Hamlet's problem is the problem of the avenger, not just in terms of creating political and social repercussions, but also in moral terms of becoming involved in the every evil the avenger is trying to eradicate. This problem is especially great in the case of Hamlet who sees the whole of Denmark and the very nature of man as corrupted and rotten. He sees his task not simply as killing his father's killer but, by doing so, ridding the world of the satyr and restoring it to Hyperion. What Hamlet shrinks from is not the act of vengeance, but the whole burden of living. His questions-witness the soliloquies-concern not so much the nature of revenge as the nature of man; but these questions he is impelled to ask by reason of what in his revenger's dual role he has become. He is a hero whose tragic role it is to punish and be

own nature of 'self-analysis.' He is for ever looking into himself, delving into his own nature to seek an explanation for every action, and giving vent to his own thoughts in soliloquies. Coleridge says that his enormous intellectual activity prevents instant action and the result is delay and irresolution. Bradley gives his own explanation for his delay and irresolution. According to the learned critic, he suffers from melancholia, a pathological state only a step removed from insanity. His thoughts are diseased thoughts. What is required of Hamlet is prompt action, whereas he broods over the moral idealism which leads to his delay in action. When he gets an opportunity to kill Claudius, he puts aside the thought because he cannot strike an enemy while he is at prayer. Again he allows himself to be taken to England although he knows well that the plan is part and parcel of Claudius's evil intent. Hamlet himself is fully aware of his own irresolution. A Macbeth or Othello in Hamlet's position would have averted the tragedy by swift action but even they could not have overcome the powers of cruel destiny.

Causes for inaction. Several causes account for Hamlet's inaction. By nature he is prone to think rather than to act. He is man of morals and his moral idealism receives a shock when his mother remarries Claudius after his father's death. Chance too plays an important part in shaping his character. Chance places him in such a position in which he is incapable of doing anything. He feels sad at his position and says:

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right.

He becomes inconsistent and is no longer a person who reaches a conclusion only by reasoning. He cannot quite accept the role that nature has prescribed for him-that of a revenger-and thus he is unable to act quickly.

Conflict-internal and external : Like other tragic heroes Hamlet too has to face conflict, both internal and external. The internal conflict is between his moral scruples and the act of revenge which he is called upon to perform. Love of his father, the dishonour of his mother, and the villainy of his uncle prompt him to take revenge while his nobility, his moral idealism, his principles and his religion revolt against such a brutal act. The result is that, torn within himself, he suffers mental torture.

The external conflict is with Claudius-'the mighty opposer'-and the murderer of Hamlet's father. To Hamlet, Claudius is a smiling damned villain, a seducer and a usurper of his rights to Denmark's throne; he is one against whom he has to take revenge. The other external conflicts are with Laertes, his friend and the brother of his beloved Ophelia, with Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, his former school

for his inaction and for unwarily putting himself in the hands of his enenues.

Conclusion. The manner in which several characters including Hamlet are killed almost at the same time does, however, strengthen a sense of Fate operating in the play. The Queen's unknowingly drinking the poisoned wine, and the exchange of rapiers between Hamlet and Laertes we feel, are the work of Fate. But all this happens because Hamlet, lacking in the capacity for the needful action, failed to act when he should have acted.

Hamlet is the centre of action in the play. This is a play so dominated by one character that Hamlet without the 'Prince' is impossible to imagine. The play deals with his suffering and t_ragic death. The other characters in the play serve as foils to him. Hamlet's tragedy is a particular example of a universal predicament; action is necessary, but action in a fallen world involves us in evil. To attempt to shuffle off responsibility by refusing to act, or by shuffling off this mortal coil-by 'handling god back his ticket,' as Dostoevsky puts it-involves us equally in guilt.

An exceptional individual. Like other tragic heroes of Shakespeare he is also endowed with exceptional qualities like royal birth, graceful and charming personality and popularity among his own countrymen. "He is essentially a scholar and a thinker, and his noble brain conceives the finest thoughts. He bas a high intellectual quality as Ophelia observes:

0 what a noble mind is here O'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
Th' observed of all observers.

He is religious-minded and is very sensitive. In spite of possessing all these high qualities which rank him above the other characters the flaw in his character, named as 'tragic flaw' by AC. Bradley, leads to his downfall and makes him a tragic hero.

The tragic flaw. The tragic flaw in the character of Hamlet is that he thinks too much and feels too much. He is often disturbed by his

show more than anything else the basic contradiction in him between his desire to execute revenge and his incapacity to do so. So far as a realization of his duty is concerned, he makes up his mind at the very outset but he is unable to carry his resolve into effect. "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I", he says. He scolds himself for merely "unpacking" his heart with words, like a shrew and not wreaking vengeance upon his uncle, the "bloody villain". However, we can to some extent condone his delay in view of his suspicion that the Ghost could have been some evil spirit and his consequent desire to verify the truth of the Ghost's charge against Claudius. His next soliloquy opening with "To be, or not to be" (Act III, Sc.I) shows him weary-hearted and sick of life, obviously because he has yet done nothing in the direction of revenge. This soliloquy confirms our impression of Hamlet as a speculative man with an irresolute mind and an incapacity for any premeditated action of a momentus nature. He contemplates the extreme step of committing sucide as escape from the onerous responsibility which has been imposed upon him and which he is unable to discharge. Subsequently, an excellent opportunity offers itself to him to kill Claudius but now his religious scruples stand in the way, though it is possible that these scruples are a cloak for his temperamental incapacity to give effect to his resolve, In any case he shrinks from attacking Claudius when the latter is at prayer. In a subsequent soliloquy, his last (Act IV, Sc. IV) Hamlet again scolds himself for his inaction : "How all occasions do inform against me; And spur my dull revenge". A man is no better than a beast if he is satisfied only with eating and sleeping. God gave reason to man so that he might make use of it. What is it, Hamlet asks, that has prevented him from carrying out his purpose for so long? It is either "bestial oblivion or some craven scruple/the thinking too precisely on the event" that is responsible for his procrastination. This in this soliloquy too Hamlet's wavering nature is emphasized. His conscience keeps urging him to revenge, but a natural deficiency in him always thwarts his purpose. At this particular time he once again strengthens his resolve, saying that henceforth his thoughts would be bloody or nothing worth. But again he does nothing till he is forced into a situation which is not of his making.

Hesitation and irresolution. Even after the scene with Osric, as Coleridge points out, we see Hamlet still indulging in reflection, and hardly thinking of the task he has just undertaken: he is all dispatch and resolution, as far as words and present intentions are concerned, but all hesitation and irresolution when called upon to carry his words and intentions into effect. He is full of purpose but devoid of that quality of mind which accomplishes a purpose. In the infirmity of his disposition he gives himself up to his destiny, saying: "we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow". He thus expresses his belief in the working of Fate but we know that he himself is largely to blame

been thus created (by Fate), and gives expression to his feeling of inadequacy in the following words:

The time is out of joint : O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right

The Ghost appears again to Hamlet, "This time the Ghost has come to what is Hamlet's almost blunted purpose". Our feeling that Fate intervenes in human affairs is strengthened by this second visitation. Fate seems to be insisting that Hamlet should do something and not allow himself to drift. Other manifestations of Fate are also to be found in the play. The accidental encounter of the ship, by which Hamlet is voyaging to England, with a pirate vessel is one such manifestation. If this accident had not occurred, Hamlet would have reached England, perhaps never to return. But Fate wills it otherwose. Fate brings him back to Denmark so that the story takes the course that it does.

The responsibility of Character : The Tragic Flaw. At the centre of the tragedy, however, is the defect in Hamlet's own character. True that Fate has placed the Prince in a difficult situation, but another man in this place would have executed the revenge promptly, after a confirmation of the Ghost's allegation at any rate, and have done with it. But Hamlet hesitates and wavers. This vacillation is the tragic flaw in his character. The course that a man of action would adopt in such a situation is clear-instant pursuit of revenge. But Hamlet is not a man of action; the only action that he is capable of is impulsive action. He is not capable of pre-meditated or planned action. He is primarily a philosopher, a thinking man, and one who thinks too much, and this excessive reflectiveness on his part renders him incapable of action. His is the "tragedy of thought".

Not a coward by any means. Hamlet is no coward. He is, indeed, drawn as one of the bravest of his time. Nor does he suffer from want of forethought or slowness of understanding, for he sees through the very souls of all who surround him. Nor yet is he ineffectual under ordinary circumstances. He has a deserved reputation in Denmark for manliness. He keeps up his fencing practice. He threatens with death those who would restrain him from speaking with the Ghost- even his friend Horatio-and stabs the concealed Polonius unflinchingly. On the sea voyage to England, he boards the pirateship single-handed after having arranged without remorse for the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. And yet so far as his duty of avenging his father's murder is concerned, he fails to act and shows himself as procrastinator.

Inward-looking and self-analytical. Hamlet is by temperament inward-looking and introspective. He is constantly analysing himself and delving into his own nature to seek an explanation for this or for that, and giving vent to his deepest thoughts in soliloquies. His soliloquies

are punishable under the schemes of unseen forces. To quote Bradley "the ghost, we feel, is a representative of that hidden ultimate power which rules the universe and the messenger of divine justice."

The supernatural in Hamlet also bring to light the superstitious mind of Renaissance which was then gradually turning to rationality of the reformation period. This fact is elaborated in the gradual development of Hamlet's mind. In the beginning Hamlet is over-powered by the influence of the spirit but by the time we come to fifth act we find him absolutely free from superstitional belief in ghost. The supernatural has practically vanished from his mind and he acts on his own account, using his intellect and conscience. The ghost does not reappear and shake his disposition. Hamlet accomplishes the revenge quickly on his own initiative.

Thus we see that the ghost in 'Hamlet' is not used simply to provide food for sensations to vulgar superstitious crowd but also to make his dramatic art more poetic and psychological than that of any of his predecessors.

Shakespeare largely holds character itself responsible for the tragedy in the life of human beings. The sufferings and misfortunes which lead to the final disaster in a Shakespearean tragedy are not merely sent from above, nor do they happen by accident, they result chiefly from the actions and character of those concerned. Not character alone, but character chiefly, is responsible for suffering and tragedy. In other words the accent falls on human responsibility rather than on the supernatural suggestion of a higher power operating in the universe and causing human beings to suffer needlessly or causelessly. Every tragic hero in Shakespeare suffers from a flaw or defect or deficiency, which, in the last resort, leads to his downfall and death. But this fault in the character of a hero is not wholly or solely responsible for tragedy. Fate or destiny as a power beyond the control of human being also plays a part, in its own mysterious, inexplicable fashion.

The working of fate in "Hamlet". The play Hamlet certainly produces in us the feeling that there is some mysterious power in the universe which upsets human hopes, plans and calculations. The very appearance of the Ghost in this play is a situation for which Fate is responsible. The Ghost is not a fragment of Hamlet's fancy, because others beside him have seen the Ghost with the passage of time. Hamlet would have recovered from the feeling of melancholy, which afflicts him after his father's death and his mother's hasty re-marriage, but Fate intervenes in the form of the Ghost who not only makes a shocking disclosure to Hamlet but imposes a task or duty on Hamlet to avenge his father's murder. Hamlet feels dismayed by the situation which has

So far as 'Hamlet' is concerned, the supernatural is an essential part of the machinery of the play. It is the revelation of the Ghost to Hamlet that sets the forces of the whole tragedy in motion. Nobody knows the cause of elder Hamlet's death except Claudius. We can't expect Claudius to betray his own self and confess to someone that it was he who had poisoned his brother. The secret of the heinous murder would have remained a secret for ever, had not the Ghost come to the scene. And as Verity has pointed out 'without the ghost' initial revelation of the truth to Hamlet, there would have been no occasion for revenge and in other words, no tragedy of Hamlet.' Thus the Ghost in Hamlet is the motivating force which pushes on the theme of the play to its final tragic destination.

It will not be out of place to point out in this connection that the supernatural is a link between 'Julius Caesar','Hamlet' and 'Macbeth'. The Ghost in Hamlet resembles the Ghost of Caesar which appears before Brutus in his tent and the apparition of Banquo at Macbeth's feast. But there is a marked difference between these three apparition. The appariton of Banquo in 'Macbeth' seems to be of a subjective nature in as much as it is visible to only a single person. But like the Ghost in 'Julius Caesar'. the Ghost in 'Hamlet' is seen by Marcellus, Bernardo and a sceptical man like Horatio. And the Ghost holds a long conversation with Hamlet and reveals to him a secret which no one except Claudius knows. In 'Hamlet' the ghost is essentially objective and cannot be neglected or pronounced as an illusion or hallucination in a week mind. It is independent of the imaginations of those who perceive it. It is a real existence outside the sphere of hallucination. It is more than a reflection or projection of Hamlet's mind. It is not the reflection of Hamlet's desire for revenge or his curiosity for real cause behind the mystery of his father's sudden death.

The appearance of ghost when Hamlet and his mother Gertrude are engaged in conversation, has a moral significance. The ghost is visible to Hamlet but invisible to the Queen. According to Verity 'it seem to symbolise the affinity between father and son, and the absolute breach between husband and wife... Hamlet's power to see and hold converse with the Ghost is a measure of the gulf between mother and son'. Besides, Shakespeare makes the ghost an artistic, psychological and spiritual force which shapes the destiny of the whole state of Denmark. The supernatural in 'Hamlet' makes the audience feel the horror and mystery of unknown forces interfering in the common activities of human beings.

Shakespeare used the supernatural to invest the theme of the play with mystery. This element creates an atmosphere of awe which makes the tragedy more impressive. It was meant to remind the readers that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our every day philosophy. He wanted to show that vicious act and foul deeds

motive of the play, but they certainly enhance its iutellactual appeal. These reflections on life and the searching analyses of its mysteries have a universal appeal to the thoughtful mind of every age.

The problem of delay has assumed manifold dimension in this play. It has led to various interpretations by different critics who have brought out the different aspects of Hamlet's character and personality. Hamlet's moral idealism has added a few dirnensson to the play. The clash between faith and reason, between imaginative idealism and stark realism has deepened the emotional content of the play. Brandes remarks. "Three hundred years after his creation, Hamlet is still the confident and friend of sad and thoughtful soul in every land. There is something unique in this. With such piercing vision has Shakespeare searched out the depths of his own, and at the same time of all human nature and so boldly and surely has he depicted the outward semblance of what he saw, that centuries later men of every country and of every race have felt their own being moulded like wax in his hand and have seen themselves in his poetry as in a mirror."

Shakespere has introduced character-contrast in this play. Hamlet is contrasted with Horatio on the one hand and with Laertes and king Claudius on the other. In Horatio's character, blood and jndgment are well mingled with each other in due balance and proportion. Horatio is not passion's slave. Both Laertes and Claudius are practical and unscrupulous. Fortinbras's clear sighted purpose and determined will are set in contrast to Hamlet's proerastination and a vacillating mind. Hamlet's capacity for self analysis and objectivity are new elements in English drama. The dramatic criticism in the form of instructing the players is also a novel feature of the play.

All these things taken together make Shakespeare's Hamlet something different from an ordinary revenge-play. The modern reader is interested in Hamlet not because it is a revenge play but because it is a moving tragedy of human life.

The supernatural was a recognised instrument of drafll:atic art in Elizabethan times. It was also an essential feature of Revenge play. The dramatists of that age used this element in their tragedies or comedies because the common folk of that age believed in ghosts, witches, spirits and fairies. Persecution of witches and sorceres was practised almost all over the land. Working upon the tradition of the supernatural. Shakespeare used this element in many of his tragedies and comedies with different purpose and in different situation. Whether Shakespeare himself believed in ghost or witches is another thing but he does utilize the supernatural in his plays dexterously.

(c) The task of avenging the murder is laid upon the shoulders of a close friend or relative.

(d) This task is accepted as something sacred.

(e) The evenger face many difficulties and impediments in the performance of his task.

(f) Ultimately revenge is taken with terrible consequences to the avenger and the avenged.

(g) The play is full of violence and bloodshed, adultery and incest, thrilling fights, sensational horrors and other melodramatic elements.

(h) The language used is artificial and pompous and the style is flowery and grandiloquent.

G.B. Harrison says, "The story of the revenge play begins with the crime, usually murder, but with varying motives. The duty of vengeance is laid on the next of kin, who is faced with the problem of identifying the murder, a matter of some diffculty. He encounters many impediments of vengeance. Finally, in the last act, comes the triumphant conclusion when the original murder is appropriately dispatched, and since play goers liked their tragedies to be richly coloured, the venger, and all others nearly concerned perish together in one red ruin."

It is clear that all the basic elements of a revenge play are found in Shakespeare's Hamlet. The Ghost of the late king of Denmark appear in full dress and armour and reveals the identity of the murderer, the task of taking revenge is entrusted to Hamlet the prince who accepts it as a sacred duty. He encounters many difficulties in the performance of his task. Ultimately he is successful in completing his task but in the process both the avenger and the avenged are killed. Plots and counter plots, the treachery of friends, assumed and real madness, fighting and bloodshed, sensational events and other basic elements of a revenge-play are to be found in Hamlet, and so it may be called basically a revenge-play.

And yet it differs from a revenge-play for it contains elements which are not to be found in an ordinary revenge-play Shakespeare has given an intellectual and emotion re-orientation to the entire play. The crudities have been removed and subtle characterisation has been introduced. The result is that the play has become, by the creative genius of Shakespeare, not so much a tragedy of a revenge as the tragedy human of a soul.

There are many things in the play which have a purely intellectual appeal. Hamlet's thoughts on the problems of the life and death, the existence of evil and corruption in society, death of loyalty friendship, purity and sincerity in this world the influence of fate on human life, the question of tolerating or fighting evil or putting an end to one's life to escape from its evils. All these are not germane to the revenge -

he must prevent detection of *his* in most thoughts a thorough sudden and involuntary betrayal. This is why he assumes madness.

That he is not really mad but only feigns madness is clear from his soliloquies which reveal profound reason or depths of great wisdom. No where do we find lack of reason or incoherent ideas in them. His behaviour towards Horatio is completely normal. He behaves like a mad man only towards those whom he wants to deceive.

The king and his followers like Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern always try to pluck out the secret of his heart and mind and it is Hamlet's constant endeavour to confuse and perplex them. Polonius is befooled but Claudius is too shrewed to be deceived by Hamlet. He is not convinced of Hamlet's madness. He regards Hamlet as a dangerous person whom he wants to put to death as early as possible. And Hamlet himself confides the secret to his mother :

That I essentially am not in madness,

But mad in craft (Act III, Sc. IV)

Had Shakespeare wanted to depict Hamlet really mad, he would have done it clearly and emphatically as he did in the case of Ophelia. In fact, Hamlet, feigned madness stands out in sharp contrast to the real madness of Ophelia Stopford Brooke rightly observes in his book, Ten More Plays of Shakespeare : 'The fact is that Shakespeare never intended to represent Hamlet as mad or half mad or verging on madness. he expressly made him a feigner of madness, and when he wished to represent real madness and to contrast it with feigned madness, he created the real madness of Ophelia and did it with wonderful truth and skill There is not a trace of madness in Hamlet." Sir Arthur Quiller Couch emphatically assert. "Hamlet is sane. Considering the shock he has undergone, we may almost say there was never man saner."

It is true that Hamlet is basically a revenge-play, and yet it differs from revenge-play. A typical revenge-play is the spanish tragedy by Thomas Kyd.

The basic elements of a revenge-play may be enumerated as follows

(a) I deals with some crime, usually murder.

(b) The Ghost of the dead appears to reveal the identity of the criminal.

normal and he is quite salfe. In other words, Hamlet is sometimes mad and at times quite sane.

We must clearly understand what madness means before we can discuss this view. Accrding to Prof. Nicoll, madness is that state of mind in which a person loses, momentaraily or permanently, control of himself, and utters words and performs action; not based on reason. "In other words, a marked loss of mental balance is a sign of madness." Proceeding on his views of madness Prof. Nocoll considers that Hamlet shows definite signs of madness in the following scene among others, in the scene after he has met the Ghost, in the scene of the play within the play, in the scene of the graveyard where he fights with Laertes.

There can be no doubt on the occasions mentioned above, Hamlet's behaviour is unnatural and reveals chaos and confession of the mind. if a temporary mental disorder on some grave provacation means madness, Hamlet is surely mad on these occasions. But it is a fact of common knowledge that almost all of human beings have behaved in an abnormal manner on some occasions. A great frustration, a sudden bereavement, an un-expected crisis upsets our mental balance and our behaviour becomes abnormal and extraordinary. And yet nobody calls us mad on those occasions. It has been rightly observed that a definition of insanity which includes Hamlet would sweep at least threee fourths of mankind into the mad house. The second view, therefore, does not give a convincing interpretation of Hamlet's personality.

I think that Hamlet is sane as sane can be. I subscribe to the third view which says that Hamlet is the sanest man in all Denmark. We know that Hamlet is a man of intellectual genius, strong moral sensibility and a powerful imagination. When his world of moral idealism is shattered to pieces by the Ghost's revelation of his mother's adultery and his father's foul murder he speaks and acts in an abnormal manner. His extraodinary behviour in a play scene and in the graveyard scene is the outcome of a great emotional shock and mental frustration. As it has been explained above, this does not warrant the conclusion that he is mad.

On the other hand, we must admit that even on these grave occasions Hamlet recovers his balance of mind within a short time. When his mind is almost unhinged under the shattering impact of the Ghost's revelation, Hamlet soon recovers his mental balance and decides that he must wear the garb of madness in the future to conceal the terrible secret haunting his mind. He fears that he may reveal the secret in a moment of excitement but if he appears to be mad, his words and behaviour will be ignored by the king. That is the reason why he says to Horatio and other friends that he will henceforth "put an antic disposition on" Hamlet realises that he requires time to think out and perfect the plan of revenge, and mean while

the praise, pain is forgotten and Sakuntala forgives him. In true Natyasastra spirit the conclusion happens on a happy note.

> *"The absence of tragic catastrophe in the Hindu drama is not merely an uncommon omission, such catastrophe is prohibited by a positive rule, and the death of either the hero or the heroine is never to be announced. With that regard, indeed, for decorum, which even Voltaire thought might be sometimes dispensed with, it is not allowed in any manner ensanglanter la scene and death must be invariably inflicted out of the view of the spectators. Attention to bienseance is carried even of a serious nature, hostile defiance, solemn imprecations, exile, degradation, and natural calamity... " (532-33).*

Sanskrit dramas exhibited great faith in the celebration of life and those forces that promoted positive and festive nature of it. Abhijnana Sakuntalam embodies this life-view boldly, turning the tragic turns of events into keys that open the locked treasure house of brilliant side of characters, the inner spiritual strength that enables them to overcome the momentary calamities and resume the jubiliation of the great festival called life. The entire play is suffused with the air of joyous participation in each other's emotions, sharing of experiences as we see in the responses of Anasuya, Priyamvada, Kanva, Madhavya, Sakuntala, Matali, and others, and joint celebration. Life is one great ecstatic festival, a point of view that goes contrary to the westein tragic sense so beautifully articulated in Thomas Hardy's famous line:

> *"... happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain."* **-Mayor of Caster bridge**

Hamlet

The first view is absolutely wrong. Hamlet is the Hero of the play and no dramatic purpose could be served by making Hamlet a mad man. Hamlet is not meant to be a study in abnormal psychology. Madness implies total derangement of mind and the consequent irresponsibility of action. Lowell aptly remarks : "If you deprive Hamlet of reason, there is no truly tragic motive left. If Hamlet is irresponsible the wh,ole play is a chaos." Thus we find that the first view, "Hamlet is mad as piad can be", is absolutely and must be rejected.

The second view is, "Hamlet ishalf mad." The underlying idea is that Hamlet behaves in an abnormal way on certain occasion'S and his abrormal behaviour shows his insanity. At other time his behaviour is

Schlegel observes, 'the terms Tragedy and Comedy wholly is inapplicable, in the sense in which they were employed by the ancients! 'They were of a mingled web and blend', seriousness and sorrow with levity and laughter. They never offer, however a calamitous conclusion, which as Johnson remarks, was enough to constitute a Tragedy in Shakespeare's days; and although they propose to excite all the emotions of the human breast, terror and pity included, they never effect this object leaving a painful impression upon the mind of the spectator. The Hindus, in fact, have no Tragedy.".

The Great Turning Point

Maharishi Durvasa's curse may be considered the great turning point in Abhijnana Sakuntalam, leading to radical transformation in the life of Dusyanta and Sakuntala, and bringing about general sorrow in the hermitage. Nevertheless, the crucial factor was the loss of ring which the King had given to her, and was to play significant role in enabling him to bringing back his memory, but was lost in the river while she crossed it on her way to his Palace. This leads to a crisis that leaves both the hero and the heroine estranged and saddened. In spite of his total memory loss, Dusyanta feels uneasy about the whole event.

My mind hovers, uncertain, like a bee
circling at day break over the jasmine's dew-filled cup.
I can not permit myself to possess it;
Nor can I bring myself to relinquish it.

Sakuntala is snatched up by the celestial power and disappears in the sky, leaving all astounded. Dusyanta till Act VII hovers like uncertain mist, floating sadly over a pleasant past. The recovery of the ring is dramatic, almost an impossible event of a fish happening to swallow it and the fisherman finding it after cutting open its belly! The whole episode is romantic in its fabulous character, a once-in-a thousand chance has once again become a pivotal element, for it brings about, like Durvasa's curse, a second great transformation. The play moves towards the abandoned wife, lost in a forest life where she devotes herself to rearing her son Sarvadaman, predicted to be the founder King of Bharata; and the memory of her husband. The King himself appears as a husk of his own self, raving and ranting about in self-reproachful tone his fault in repudiating his wife, and living out his days on her portrait. However, these scenes lack the depth of tragic treatment. His tragic feeling is too romantically sentimental revealing the pathetic, self-centred musings of Dusyanta obsessed with a ponderous guilt-sense and eager to set things right. After that the reconciliation is quick enough. The reunion with Sakuntala is embellished with a second joyous occurrence of the meeting of his son; Dusyanta is amply rewarded-all

The literary category of tragedy thus provided to western dramatists a significant site for analyzing and responding to the inequitable justice dispensed to human actors in the theatre of this world. It questioned intensively the fickleness of Fate, the absurdities of destiny in punishing the simple and innocent beings and rewarding the crooks. Man has ever been baffled by these quirks, that failed to be explained reasonably. King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Oedipus, Electra, Antigone, Scores of strong, ambitious, characters of elevated station have found themselves pitted against a blind wall that rendered them miserable and utterly susceptible. Macbeth's pathetic "life is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing" is as much a desperate ejaculation of enlightened consciousness sitting over the wreckage of his life as the expression of dejection at man's puny stature and inability to do anything according to his will in view of the enormity of Divine justice.

Tragedies represented a serious endeavour to analyze and understand the hidden forces that impelled human behaviour along certain courses of action, his irrepressible urges and motives and the inevitability of Fate, conjunction of the two bringing about irreversible catastrophes.

A play like Abhijnana Sakuntalam presents through its 'oriental brilliancy of colouring, so striking a resemblance, upon the whole, to our romantic drama, that it might be suspected' that love of Shakespeare had influenced the translator, if other orientalists had not borne testimony to the fidelity of his translation. There is nothing in the first three acts to presage the enormous sad change that would come over Dusyanta and Sakuntala. The idyllic dream-world of the penance-groves is the playground of subtle and tender love and much playful erotic dalliance covers their time. It appears an unceasing stretch of gorgeous season of blossoms, fragrance and amorous gestures. All conjoin to bring about their love to great fruition, the ascetic prolonging Dusyanta's stay with request to provide protection from wild animals and demons, and he readily complying, Anasuya and Priyamvada offering ample encouragement to Sakuntala's budding love, inclination, and finally Kanva expressing his approval to their Gandharva marriage. In a western dramatist this part would certainly contain hints of the coming debacle, there would be sufficient presentiment. But here the joyous immersion in love is universally celebrated, the romantic strain is enhanced by Madhavya's bantering remarks too. As the famous scholar M. Krishnamachariar points out, "The Hindu plays confine themselves neither to the crimes nor to the absurdities of mankind, neither to the momentous changes, nor lighter vicissitudes of life; neither to the terrors of distress, nor the gaieties of prosperity. In this respect they may be classed with much of the Spanish and English drama to which, as

characters. The coy girl "as delicate as a newly-opened jasmine flower" reveals in Act IV her fiery nature unwilling to accept humiliation from one to whom she has yielded her life and love. Underneath the delicate exterior she possesses a strong, tough heart which stands her in good stead in moments of crises. She does not mince words in lashing out at Dusyanta who not only refutes her claims, but questions her virtuous character. From now on the play concentrates on the inner drama of Dusyanta, the qualities of mental strength and weakness, the gnawing sense of wrong-doing and upright moral certitude that Kalidasa lays bare. As Dr. Chandra Rajan says, "Wherever the curse operates the human failing is trivial compared to the enormity of suffering entailed. It concretizes that troubling question which faces every human being at one time or another. Why did this happen ? why does it have to be so ? The curse also shapes the answer to that question in the form of that uncertain c(;!rtitude with which man has to shore up his crumbling faith in order to survive, call it Fate or Karma or 'the absurd' or simple acceptance. Sakuntala laments Fate, 'Fate shows it's inexorable' ."

In most of the plays, whether Greek, Latin, English or Sanskrit curse appears as a reminder to human characters that life is not a long idyllic stretch of joyous festivities or unending spring.

In moments of pleasure man tends to get blinded by the heady mists and deviates from his moral duties. Curse, whatever its source, comes out of the blue to remove those mists from his vision, and put him to harsh tests whereby he has to prove his worth and inner strength. Durvasa's, curse might have originated in flimsy occurrences, but it provides a dynamism to the play or effects a great transformation in life and perception of both Sakuntala and Dusyanta.

Broadly speaking, Kalidasa belonged to a period in ancient India which had witnessed significant advancement and achievements in the field of philosophy, metaphysics and theology. It was a period far advanced in evolving a coherent and mature life-view, the cosmological interpretations of life and man's relation with the divine forces, as compared with those in Greece and Roman intellectual world. The mysticism of life did not much baffle man. As one scholar observes, "... the problems which the Greek dramatists have dealt with in their tragedies have already been disposed of by the ancient seers of India after years and years of profound meditation over the mystery of life and death, of free will and predestination of human effort and cosmic order; and the result of other speculations have been immortalized in metaphysical works, such the Brahmanas, the Avanyakas and the Upanisads" (Mirashi: 383).

and harmony of the whole play. But the poet has left a small rent in the veil through which we can get an idea of the royal sin.

Does the curse spell the price Sakuntala has to pay for allowing the thought of her husband overpower her completely? There is apparently no convincing reason why she should so completely detach herself from the external world, considering that she has been happily wedded with all consenting to it, and all her wishes have been fulfilled. Therefore, the Durvasa curse is justified. As for Dusyanta, one can see in the curse, punishment for the King's excessive amorousness. He himself has too far strayed away from the path of his duty, and have more than once been seen to express his unwillingness to go to his capital till his wedding transpires. Even when his mother' calls him, he devises an easy way out of it by sending Madhavya as his younger brother. This kind of indulgent behaviour is unbecoming to one who commands wide and universal reputation as sovereign King without parallel; and a great administrator. His love dalliances keep him too deeply engrossed and perhaps too long in the penance-grove to be received with approbation by the wise sages like Durvasa. The latter, therefore, arrives as a form of penalization for both Sakuntala and Dusyanta.

Irony in Behaviour

In the beginning of Act I we see an ascetic observing to the deer-chasing King that Kanva had gone to Soma-tirtha "enjoining his daughter Sakuntala to receive guests with due hospitality"; and yet we see that he neglects Durvasa, the Maharishi who himself announces his arrival. This reveals a deep irony of fate that while more than once Dusyanta is referred to as honourable guest whose comfort is every hermitage-dweller's duty, "We have the honour of waiting on a distinguished guest (Anasuya); "Sakuntala, courtesy demands that we keep our guest company, come, let us all sit down", and so on; Durvasa remains badly neglected, even his loud voice falls on Sakuntala's deaf ears. Young lady who has been so prompt in attending to one guest (for reasons of love-attachment ?) suddenly lapses from her duty. Does it point to the fact that they all fall prey to human weaknesses ? A second irony, rather a subtle one is that Kanva, who had gone to Soma-tirtha "to propitiate adverse fate, threatening her happiness", could not prevent the 'adverse fate' from playing a cruel game on her. His happiness at having her Gandharva wedding with Dusyanta, the most suitable match, is overshadowed with Durvasa's curse which soon works its dark charm on her conjugal joy.

Dramatic Denouement

In terms of dramatic denouement, one can view curse as a triggering factor lifting the veil from the inner nature of the chief

often asked the question whether the couple deserved the curse. In spite of his noble character and helpful nature of protecting the sacrifice-performing sages, why has he been shown to be handicapped by the curse of the maha-rishi who is enraged on such a flimsy pretext. In mythical times curses used to be showered for minor negligences and tragic consequences used to visit simple beings for silly reasons. M.R. Kale wonders "if their behaviour is unobjectionable why should they suffer separation" ? Dusyanta, though overflowing with love and passionate yearning for Sakuntala at first sight, never showed signs of violating norms of decency; he has all along been in possession of admirable self-control and restraint and went about finding out Sakuntala's lineage and, so on. Since the curse is visited on Sakuntala because she did not heed the arrival of Durvasa and failed to attend as a guest is supposed to attended to, it would be in the fitness of things to point out that Sakuntala herself exhibited exemplary behaviour, exhuding love and attachment to all in the hermitage, and modesty of demeanour befitting her station. She impresses us by her bashfulness, self-restraint and innocence, there is no hint of any romantic overtures on her part: and even when she received from Dusyanta clear signs of his reciprocity, she remains admirably within decent limits.

Significantly Durvasa is not shown in person, it is Priyamvada and Anasuya who report his arrival and a voice in the background. This happens in the Prelude to the play. This further indicates the theatrical nature of the curse, a device that puts in motion certain kinds of developments. In the words of K. Krishnamurthy, "The device of the curse is employed here to serve a dual purpose. It explains the suffering the heroine is made to undergo before the final reconciliation, as partly rooted in her nature. Also it shields the hero even when he disowns marriage with Sakuntala. The commutation of the curse to the effect that the King's signet ring will be the means of ending the separation prepares the way for the play's happy ending". This is a simplistic explanation. Some scholars including S.K. De see in the curse the part of a stem but beneficent providence; on the other hand as Rabindranath Tagore interpretes it, it is there to remind Sakuntala how neglect of basic duty could lead to disastrous consequence; for a girl bred in the discipline of hermitage this is unpardonable. These are the words of Gurudev Tagore, Our rebellious passions raise storms. In this drama Kalidasa has extinguished the volcanic ire of tumultuous passion by means of the tears of the penitent heart. But he has not dwelt too long in the disease-he has just given a glimpse of it and then dropped the veil. The desertion ofSakuntala by the amorous Dusyanta, which in real life would have happened as the natural consequence of his character, is here brought about by the curse of Durvasa. Otherwise, the desertion would have been so extremely cruel and pathetic as to destroy the peace

Exquisite are Sirisa blossoms-
see how they sway-
curled with delicate filaments-
kissed, lightly, lightly
by murmurous bees-
lovely women-
exulting in their youth-
place the blossoms
tenderly-
as ornaments over their ears-

These verses are not just oozing sensuous appeal of a deliciously sweetened air, they inaugurate a life-view which is not much occupied with such matters as hereafter, the tragic shadows overtaking life's crucial stages and pro founder questionings of divine judgements that were voiced by the great Romans and the Greeks like Sophocles and Aeschylus and the Elizabethans. It is here that the comparison between Kalidasa, or for that matter the ancient Indian dramatists in general and the Greeks have been profitably drawn. In the words Profs. Mirashi and Navlekar, "Moreover, the problems which the Greek dramatists have dealt with in their tragedies have been disposed of by the ancient seers of India after years and years of profound meditation over the mystery of life and death of free will and predestination, of human effort and cosmic order; and the results of their speculations have immortalized in metaphysical works such as, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanisads" (383).

Nevertheless the play poses certain questions touching human relations, the nature of love and fallibility or frailty of human character. The very title suggests knowing or recognizing Sakuntala, by the token of love. "What is knowing ?" as Dr. Rajan asks. It takes a curse to cloud his memory and when it lifts, the true nature of his love is revealed to him; his "knowing of Sakuntala" is different in the latter three acts from his 'knowing her' in the first three acts. Her beauty itself appears to act as barrier to his recognition of her true character. The curse of Durvasa thus acts as a crucial agent of transformation that brings about drastic upheaval in the life of all. Primarily it is a classical device, something that one finds in major tragic plays of Greek and Latin dramatists, as in Oedipus Rex and Electra whereby the nobility and strength of the central characters are tested. It comes unawares and takes the lives of all by storm.

It is to be noted that in the original tale in Mahabharata from which the play derives its theme, the curse does not figure. Critics have

suffers, he being portrayed in delicate human shades with all the imperfections and fickleness of human nature. One wonders if the poet puts the roles of the hero and the King under scrutiny. The play is a romance and ends happily. The playwright follows the norms of Natyasastra; in the strict classical tradition, creating a hero who is in conformity with the established image. Yet he is much more than mere these roles. The incompatibility that we notice has its origin in the 'roles', the classical 'mould' with its regid requirements and stylized framework within a full-blooded human being is filled. This man with all bis temperamental complexities, emotional dilemmas and passional compulsions tends to spill over the classical mould, the role expectation maxima and reminds us frequently of his essential humanness. We may see in it an irony if we wish to do so, but it is not difficult to see that Kalidasa was more interested in the particular human drama whose features often crossed path with the dhirodatta nayak and the royal sage images and general ironic tension in the play.

Kalidasa's works indicate that he lived in a time that was marked by positive ways of thinking and there was a tendency to live life to the full. There is a fullness of portrayal of life in his plays as well as poetry; where each moment is described with relish and as one scholar opines, "his works breathe a spirit of cheerful optimism, bright outlook on life, and faith in energetic endeavour." The energy referred to in the above quotation is the energy of life-the opulence of Kalidasa's metaphors and his sweet, sensuous diction suggest a view of life that concentrated its focus on the 'now', the 'present' and 'here', immersing in the concrete and tangible world of objects, smells, colours, and shapes.

It is the celebration of life in all its variations that gets articulated in Kalidasa. The intention "to treat the audience to something that will delight their ears" is set in the Prologue of the play in the sentence spoken by the Sutradbar. Kalidasa appears to be especially in love with seasons 'enjoyable in so many ways'. The Prologue sets the tone, and obviously the tone is inspired by the palpable opulence and delicious feel of nature s beauty. Mark these two verses: the first is recited by the director or the Sutradhar.

Day draws to a close in quiet beauty;
plunging in cool waters is delightful;
sleep drops softly in thick-shade haunts;
woodland breezes blow fresh and fragrant
having consorted with Patali flowers.

And the next one is recited by the Actress;

The question is put not only to the lover and the husband who is morally committed to his act, but to the King, who is duty-bound to see that justice is done to a wronged woman, though he himself is guilty of the deed. Samgrava reminds him of the moral implications: 'People suspect a woman with her husband living, to be otherwise even though chaste, when exclusively residing in her Kinsmen's family. Hence (it is that) a young woman is desired by her relatives to be with her husband whether she is loved by him or not. 'Durvasa's curse put Dusyanta into a helpless position, exposing him to his own self: "I am seriously censured", he says. The great ideals which he embodied in the role of the King and the Hero, suddenly appear too fragile and are cruelly targeted by Kanva's disciples in the act: "In men elated with the pride of affluence, such affections mostly take effect." He is no longer the same hero and the same King whom all admired. His ideals appear to have forsaken him. Although the curse is fully operative, it appears that certain disturbing questions are raised.

Disturbing Questions

Ironically enough, the Prelude to this Act contains the eulogies sung by two bards; 'Unmindful of your own ease, you toil each day for the world's sake-such is your way of life " and "Grasping the rod of justice you bring to heel those who are set on evil path ", etc.

The King himself says, "Every man who gains the object of his desire is happy. Only to kings does the gain itself bring misery"; the statement rings with profound irony for the events that are to unfold only bear out the hidden truth too glaringly. The cup of his misery is about to overflow. Dr. Chandra Rajan comments, "A King who gains or inherits sovereignty has to keep it, guard it presumably, by whatever means are deemed necessary, what then is the ideal of Kingship ? More important, what does the word raja-rishi, royal sage, mean ? How is the King a sage? Is the word a mere 'praise word' as the young hermit says in unconscious irony? A public image as different from or opposed to a private image? The play raises many questions but by no means in a strident manner" (88).

The 'royal sage' shows far too amorous proclivities in the first half of the play in far too frank a manner and sensuous images. Can the irony be missed ? On the one hand we see him being praised sky high for his brave feats, his indispensable position as the vanquisher of the foremost foes, on the, other, he is irredemiably assailed by sexual passion for Sakuntala and is easily brought to knees with supplication. Again in Acts VI and VII the reader cannot but see too sharp a contrast between his role as a dhirodatta hero and invincible King and the utter helplessness to which he has been reduced. His self-reproachful utterances stand too starkly against the harsh, taunting words that he speaks in Act V. Curiously enough, the image of the dhirodatta nayak

too far apart, and the reconciliation, re-union and restoration can not be celebrated in either of them. The contrast is beautifully played upon by the poet. There appears to be some similarity between Act One and Act Seven. In the former the King enters in a world replete with birds, buds, blossoms, etc. and is overwhelmed by heady fragrance and sensuous appeal, and works his way into the heart of fresh and youthful Sakuntala. In the latter (Act VII), the king once again enters the forest of Maricha, but this time the attributes of the forest are jewel like 'emitting golden fluid'. Kimpurushas is called 'The Golden peaked'. From time to time the description suggests light and gem-like fire suffusing the various objects of the forest, different words for light are used, the concrete metaphors giving way to those referring to qualities and internal attributes. As Maricha says, 'An image takes no effect on the surface of a mirror having its' transparency obscured by dust, but finds an easy access when it is clean'. The world assumes finer spiritual quality of consciousness, and the attraction between Dusyanta and Sakuntala originates from a mutual realization of the deeper character that reveals through a spiritual transformation: 'Darling', says Dusyanta, 'even the cruelty inflicted by me upon you has come to have a favourable end, since I now find myself recognized by you.' Dr. Rajan says, 'In the last act, time past, present and future are brought together in Maricha's blessings, to be contained within the golden round of Time; the world in the text yugasotu-parivartanaih is literally 'the revolutions of hundreds of epochs ' (aeons).

The Ironical Ring

It is ironical indeed that the King who so passionately falls in love at first sight with Sakuntala and shows inordinate impatience to marry her without waiting for the return of her foster-father Kanva, should need a 'token' of love, i.e. the ring for recognizing her. The King in his Royal Palace works judiciously and discreetly for dispensing justice to the public. He wants evidences. When the party of the ascetics visits his Royal Palace with Sakuntala with a request to accept her as his legally wedded wife, he, under effect of the curse, fails to recognize her. It is the 'token of recognition' as evidence, that is the last, refuge. There is a subtle irony here, extremely cruel for Sakuntala. Her own husband needing an evidence of love ! And that token is missing. 'The play examines accepted ideals and the relation of what seem, to what is, of semblance to truth, through the comments of Madhavya and by means of ironies built into the structure and language of the play.' (C. Rajan).

The role of the King is subjected to close scrutiny in Act V where there are emotional exchanges between Kanva's disciples and the King and his courtiers. It is Samgarava who exposes the duality in Dusyanta's attitude when he says, "what, is it the disgust for a deed done, or opposition to a moral duty, or a (conscious) disregard of things done ?"

for him.' Subsequent scenes reveal more compassionate nature, and he gradually comes to know that the brave child is his own son. However, his reactions could well be any father's reactions. Similarly, when he sees Sakuntala, 'dressed in dusky garments... pure, upright' his heart brims over with love and remorse. 'She keeps the long vow of cruel separation from me who acted so heartless to her'. The great King now becomes an ordinary husband falling at her feet and grieving repentantly over his repudiation of her. For her present condition he blames himself, supplicating her pardon.

As a King

We have already noted that the King has been universally hailed as the royal sage and the great sovereign whom 'all find kingship's perfect pattern' and whose very name quells the hearts of the fiercest foes and cruelest demons. Kanva himself acknowledges him as the most deserving groom for Sakuntala, easily consenting to their Gandharva marriage. His dutifulness towards his subjects is seen in his prompt action against the demons who periodically attack the worship-performing sages, and disturb the peace of the penance-groves. At the news of the death of Dhanavriddhi in the worst moments of his mental dejection, Dusyanta displays exceptional poise and decrees that the deceased merchant's child-in-the womb be declared as the true heir of his vast property. As M.R. Kale remarks, 'The King, though himself commanding universal respect, feels unbounded reverence for the sages and his conduct is marked by a proper sense of what their austere lives deserve at the hands of worldly men... The King was highly cultured; for his remarks are so thoughtful and weighty that they bespeak a very high degree of refinement. He has an observant eye which marks the beauty of natural objects. His acquaintance with many of the fine arts is thorough; he can appreciate music and be sensible to its impressions; he shows a deep knowledge of painting'.

In Abhijnana Sakuntalam we are face to face with two different worlds-the world of palace life and green world of innocent beings leading a life of purity and simplicity. The sovereign of the palace gets enamoured of the forest life, and feels a harmonious consonance with it. It is a sharp contrast that the poet presents. The King expresses his deep sense of peace and tranquility in the first and last acts: 'O wondrous! This is a sport far more blissful than Paradise itself. I feel as if I am immersed in the Pool of Nectar'.

One sees his love sprouting in the penance-grove and the idea of marrying Sakuntala transforms into reality. In the palace, on the other hand, Dusyanta is seen as woe-begone man, devoid of all vitality and enthusiasm. Anxiety appears to sit on his brow and darken it by degrees. In the words of Dr. Chandra Rajan, "The two worlds of the play, the green world of the woods and the gilded world of the Royal Court are

demeaning to his character. His love transcends this so-called 'carnality'; during this dramatic period of his separation from her, and in his reactions when the curse spell wears off, as those of a repentant and self-reproachful husband. This is also a natural reaction of a man whose love is far deeper than perhaps he himself realized. The dark shadow of guilt sits heavily on his conscience. He blames himself and tries to find succour in Sakuntala's portrait that he painted. He feels that by inflicting greater pain on himself he can in some measure atone for his act.

Once she stood before my eyes and I spurned her,

now, I adore her painted in a picture.

His sufferings, his confining himself within doors, and his obsession with Sakuntala's idea are enough indications that the noble hero's love being far from frivolous, is rooted deep in his character and in order to gain her back he is ready to do anything. This contrasts starkly with the pre-Durvasa-curse period (first three acts) where the sensuous charm of Sakuntala's beauty is cloyingly projected and takes firm possession of his mind. This is enough to lead anyone to imagine that Dusyanta's love-fever is more of a carnal nature and he is eager to get into the black-bee's role. The tragic interregnum, however, brings out the spiritual transformation in him. Though Kalidasa once again uses rich metaphorical language, about Dusyanta's love, as Sanumati says, 'He is a man of steady affections.' His sorrowful ravings and his blind emotional attempts to paint the exactitude of Sakuntala move the celestial nymph Sanumati when she says, "you have completely wiped off Sakuntala's grief at having been spurned, my friend; I have seen it for myself" (Act VI). He is too weak here, too fragile, too helpless and, too human; we can not but sympathise with him. Even the glib-tongued Vidusaka remarks: 'There he goes again; the Sakuntala-fit is upon him.' Such a single-minded devotion to his beloved is in accordance with the laid down principles of dhirodatta nayak of the Natyasastra.

Another instance of the display of his human character is the way he solves the problem arising out of the drowning of the chief merchant Dhanavridhi 'who carried on a flourishing trade overseas.' Since he was not known to have left behind any son, the King wants his minister to enquire whether any of his several wives was pregnant. Upon having been informed that one of them, 'the daughter of a merchant prince of Saketa had her Pumsavana rites duly performed', he orders that the deceased merchant's wealth must go to him.

This not only shows that he was a justice-loving King but also that he was full of emotions and love for his subjects.

His fatherly instinct is naturally awakened on seeing the child Sarvadaman. 'I guess that being childless, my heart tills with tenderness

takes the place of the bee whom he envied for his 'hovering close to her ear as if eager to whisper a secret, sneaking in to taste her ripe lower lip-the quintessence of lover's delight-'

His asides are full of carnal emotions. Kalidasa avails to himself the full freedom here to create magical webs of sensuous poetry to reveal the roused feelings of the hero. For a time we forget that he is a king and warrior, and admire him as any other man completely taken over by the feeling of love for woman who is equal to him in all respects. In the penance grove Dusyanta is seen as 'courteous, kindly, generous, competent, gentle-spoken, eloquent, intelligent, stable, young, self-respecting and loving. He is so deeply in love with Sakuntala that when the call of duty comes demanding his presence in the capital, he shows his reluctance. He wants to remain close to where she stays and thus asks Madhavya, the Vidusaka to go to the city in his place. Nothing escapes the eye of the Court jester, and he remarks that the King seems to have turned the penance grove into a pleasure-garden! But it is the great attraction of the King for Sakuntala, that exquisite ornament of the Hermitage, that out weighs his other cares. The pull of love is too strong to be resisted and he feels that it would be an error to let this occasion slip by. He wishes to marry Sakuntala and suggests the sanctioned Gandharva marriage. The great love-scenes of the first three acts project both Dusyanta and Sakuntala in the marvelous colours too human and too delicate to fail to appeal to us. It is this presentation of the essential humanness of the 'royal sage' on the one hand, and the 'celestial born sprung from a lovely Apsara' on the other, that sets the tone for the drama of human emotions. It is after all a tale of human emotions, and human destiny, the joys and sorrows of human experience. Through his intense suffering as much as his joyous experience is shown as emerging a far nobler character, a larger-than life-personage.

In his suffering Dusyanta reveals another aspect of his character, the deep remorse and penitence lead him into the depths of the tragic consciousness of his deed. In Act VI Dusyanta, having seen the lost ring which he had given to wife, is struck by the injustice of his act of her repudiation. 'Previously buried in slumber though being roused by my fawn-eyed beloved, this accursed heart of mine has now awakened to experience the anguish of remorse.' 'The Sakuntala malady', as the Vidusaka terms it, seizes him again. This part of the play discloses to us the other side of his character, the one that convinces us that he is far more stable in his love devoted to his wife and his love goes far beyond the mere carnal level. Some modern critics in their efforts to re-assess his character in the light of modern theories, see Dusyanta as driven by carnality who sees Sakuntala as 'an object of pleasure to be enjoyed'. This view fails to see that it is only natural for any man to crave an extraordinary beauty of a forest maiden and there is nothing in it

norm strictly and so all his heroes are kings endowed with sublime qualities, sweet-tongues, and are magnanimous. He shows firm resolve and determination, is not boastful, selfish whose high spirit is concealed and who is true to his engagements. As Edwin Gerow remarks, 'The nakaka celebrates a reality of the highest type, the ideal hierarchy that is dharma; its characters are drawn from a rather restricted circle of epic heroes and heroines. Their myths are in one way or another responsible for the other world, the everyday world outside the theatre'.

Kalidasa portrays Dusyanta as a complex character. He is both an ideal King and an ideal hero.

As a Hero

As a hero he is full human qualities. The finest sensibilities are beautifully and precisely delineated by the poet. In the penance groves, after he gets into his clothes in those of the ordinary man, he is shown to act and react as any ordinary being, though as M.R. Kale observes, the nobility of his character and restraint of speech never leave him. He is immediately enchanted by the luxuriant surroundings and welcomes the peaceful atmosphere: 'Peaceful is the site of hermitage' (Santamidmsrampadam). He is young and full of passionate emotions. The very first sight of the asraman girls overpowers his senses and as any male would respond, he says,

If girls bred in a hermitage
can boast of such beauty rare in palaces,
is there any denying woodland vines
far surpass those nurtured in gardens?

Subsequent scenes bring out his too human weakness for the breathtaking beauty of the maiden Sakuntala who appears to him 'lissom girl.....lovelier far, dressed in bark!' Kalidasa here has foregrounded those qualities in him that make him an ideal human being. He is attractive, for his handsome, and brilliant personage can not remain undetected and Sakuntala herself is shown to have felt an irresistible attraction: 'How is it that the sight of this person fills me with emotions out of place in a penance-grove'. Care is, however, taken that even in these weak moments Dusyanta's noble character remains unsullied. His language is exquisitely winning, full of poetic suggestiveness, and his conversation with Priyamvada and Anasuya treads cautious path. He is never seen to cross the limits of decency, but turns the minor opportunities to his advantage. The black bee episode has the two-pronged benefit-it rescues the sweet Sakuntala from the impudent villain, 'honey-foraging thief!', thus showing his duty and courteous behaviour, and it brings him closer to her which has been his wish, awakening in her the first sprouts of tender love-he, in other words,

saying that Indra has immediately sent for him to destory demons. The King mounted on the chariot, at once proceeds on to the abode of Indra.

Seventh Act. After the King has got victory over demons, the King is given a warm reception in his honour. On way back to his Kingdom, the King came across the ½shram' of Maricha, the hermit on the mount, Hemkoot, the King alight there in his honour. In the Ashram, the King met unique child. The child is counting the teeth of a cub of lioness. The King having seen the child, begins to love him like his own son. Through the hermit woman of the Ashram it becomes known to the King that the child's mother's name is Shakuntala who is an abandoned woman. Shakuntala comes there and recognising her husband salutes him. The King fall on the feet of Shakuntala asks her pardon. After this both wife along with the son proceed to see Maricha hermit. In the end receiving the blessings of hermit Maricha they return happily to their home Kingdom by Indra's chariot. Finally with the "Bharat-word" the comedy comes to the conclusion.

Dusyanta occupies a place in Sanskrit drama that has been devised in the classical dramatic theory for the dhirodatta nayak, and the playwright has carefully moulded him for this place. In the very beginning of the play his dominant qualities of bravery, warrior-like prowess, fearlessness, readiness to defend the peaceful hermits in preservation of dharma, etc. have been projected. In his chase of antelopes he ventures into the penance-grove and the voices of the ascetics stay his striking hand: "your weapon is for the protection of the distressed and not for striking at the innocent." Whenever the peace and security of the peace-loving civilians or domestic animals are in danger, the King is appealed to, for his courage is boundless and his very name brings great assurance to all. As the Priest says in Act V, 'there is the worthy protector of the (four) castes and the (four) orders of life'. Dusyanta the King has been shown in all the laudable colours as full of humanity, in possession of the highest sense of justice and compassion for the weak and defenceless. His sympathy ranges from an unprotected, feeble animal and the easy reaching out to the beauty of nature seeking to establish a relationship with it, to the human beings engaged in their assigned duties. In Act VI we see that Lord Indra himself makes appeal to him to vanquish the demons for "that race of demons, named Durjaya, the descendants of Kalanemi ..... is not to be conquered by your friend Indra; and you are thought of as its stayer in the van of battle." His exceptional heroism was acknowledged by all, both in this world and in the celestial dominions. According to Natyasastra the hero is the master of matchless power, strength and courage. Kalidasa followed this

girl-companions are tension-free thinking that Shakuntala has with her a ring presented to her by the King as sign of his love. On coming back, Kanva the hermit receives information regarding 'Gandharva-marriage' solemnized by King Dushyant and Shakuntala and at the same time he also comes to know that Shakuntala as a result of this marriage is in the family way. Hence he decides to send Shakuntala to Hastinapur with Gautami and with other two of his pupils. In the fourth Act the picture of Shakuntala's departure has been presented in a very heart touching manner. Silken dresses and decoration items are obtained from forest trees, Shakuntala takes leave from forest-trees, deer and her forest girl companions at the time of her departure. At this juncture there is marvellously heart-touching and thrilling description of her departure. The picturesque description of heart touching tender emotions has been presented here. The advice given to Kanva to Shakuntala and message given by him for the King are quite natural and animate. The hermit experiences great satisfaction and joy in sending Shakuntala to her husband's house.

Fifth Act. Along with Gautami and with other two pupils Shakuntala arrives in the royal palace of the King: The King gives them a warm reception. Afterwards the pupils conveying the message of their master asks the King to accept Shakuntala, but the King being under the spell of curse has forgotten everything and shows his inability to recognize Shakuntala. Shakuntala extends her hand to show the ring given by the King, but to her disappointment she comes to know that the ring is not in her finger. There is hot exchange between the pupils and the King ultimately the King refuses to recognize Shakuntala. It is then proposed that until the time the King's son is born to Shakuntala she will reside in the house of his family priest. Meanwhile a fairy comes and steals her away. This happening is conveyed to the King too by the family priest. The King is lost in thinking alone in utter disappointment.

Sixth Act. While Shakuntala had lost her ring in the Shachi pilgrim place on the way to Hastinapur, it had been found by a fisherman from the stomach of a fish. The fisherman goes to sell the ring in the Marker. Policemen, on seeing the King's ring took the fisherman to be a thief and so they took him to the King. As soon as the King saw the ring, the spell of the curse is nullified from him, as a result he remembers Shakuntala and feels the stone of separation of Shakuntala's sorrow on his heart. The King wants to get rid of his grief in the company of the jester. He (King) gets the incomplete picture of Shakuntala and tries to complete it, but constantly his sorrow is on the increase. At the same time the King receives information of death of an issueless businessman. So the King putting him in his place and considers himself to be without child becomes unconscious due to impact of sorrow. In the meantime Meethli, the Indra's Charioteer arrives there and diverts King's attention

request. The King communicates the fondness that he has developed for Shakuntala to his friend, the jester persuades him to stay in the 'Ashram'. At that very moment hermit 'Kumar' comes to the King and prays him to stay in the Ashram to protect the 'yagya' (a religious Hindu performance). The King finding an opportune occasions expresses his willingness. It is at that very time that an envoy from Hastinapur arrives and he conveys the King the message of being called by his mother. The King sends the jester along with his Army to his mother and for the fear that lest his jester friend disclose the secret of his love for Shakuntala says to the jester that the conversation regarding his love for Shakuntala was mere a joke and never a reality.

Third Act. In this act the love of the King and Shakuntala attains maturity and therefore the love has been depicted in its impatient state. Shakuntala being fond of Dushyant is suffering from love-fever and is lying on the bed of flowers in the pavilion. On the other side, the King too wants to have some enjoyment after keeping busy with the tiresome jole of protecting the 'yagya'. As such the viats climbers pavilion privily standing by from behind the tree King overhears the conversation going on between Shakuntala and her two girl-companions. Agreeing to the fact that she (Shakuntala) is fond of King Dushyant and she cannot live without seeing him, Shakuntala enables her girls-companions to decide to get a love-letter written to the King regarding her immense (Shakuntala's) love for the King. This was done to draw the King nearer to Shakuntala. Shakuntala is sceptical about the affirmative response of King's love for her. The King getting suitable time enters the climbers-pavilion and also fully explains beyond doubt his love for Shakuntala. All of a sudden, girl-companions go away from there leaving them both alone. Then the King puts forth the proposal to Shakuntala for a 'Gandharv' marriage. After lapse of sometime Gautami enters with some water. The King again hides himself behind the tree.

Gautami goes away from there along with Shakuntala and the King too proceeds to protect the 'yagya'.

Fourth Act. In this duration the 'Gandharv-marriage' of Dushyant, the King and Shakuntala is completed. While going back to his Kingdom the King gives assurance to Shakuntala of her being called to his Kingdom through his royal officials. After departure of the King, when Shakuntala is sitting lost in his imagination, 'Durvasa' hermit arrives there who is not honoured by Shakuntala as a guest, hence being offended by Shakuntalas' neglect he curses her, "In whose remembrance you are not paying your attention to a great hermit like me, he will not be able to recognise your, despite your best efforts to make him recognise you." Shakuntala's girl companions at once falls at his feet, then Durvasa gives assurance that on showing anything of identification, the effect of his curse may lose its efficacy. Therefore, the

opening chapter of "Mahabharat" which makes mention of King Dushyant and Shakuntala. Although the main story of "Mahabharat" is dry and devoid of any ideal, even then, Kalidas considering it to be the main source has amazingly written this great dramatic composition.

In short the story and the plot of "Shakuntalam" are contained in the following form. This drama is divided into seven Acts which all put together' make it complete, placing it among one of the best 'dramas' ever written in Sanskrit language.

First Act. According to the convention after recitation of the prologue the stage manager gives an account of the summer season. Afterwards, the poet has beautifully presented the picture of King Dushyant before the audiences. Mounted on a royal chariot, the King is chasing a wild deer in the form of a hunter. As soon as the King prepares his bow by putting the arrow in a shooting position, the same time 'Vaishnakh', the hermit along with his group of pupils residing in the forest makes his entry. 'Vaishnakh instructing the King regarding the deer belonging to the hermitage asks not to kill the deer. When the King agreed not to kill the deer, the hermit being pleased with the King, blessed. The King with the boon of getting a son who would be an emperor, and at the same time invited the King to his hermitage for receiving the honour of being his royal quest. The hermit Kanva is out on the pilgrimage. The whole responsibility rests on the shoulder of Shakuntala. Showing his regard for the hermit, the King accepts his invitation. The King leaving the charioteer outsides, makes humble entry in the hermitage. There the King comes to see three beautiful girls who were watering the garden plants. The King falls in love with Shakuntala at the very first sight and becomes her fan and drinks of her beauty-wine from behind the trees. At that very moment a black-bee comes to torture Shakuntala and all those three girls calls the King for their help-sake. The King finding the occasion suitable for him approaches near them, chats with them. During the course of conversation, the King discovers the fact, that Shakuntala is the daughter of Vishwamitra and Menka, who having been abandoned by them was subsequently reared by hermit Kanva. She is a Kshatriya girl, (a girl of martial class) therefore, the King makes up his mind to marry her. Shakuntala too falls in love with the King and becomes fond of him. The King conceals his royalty. Meanwhile the King comes to know that some agitated elephant is entering the hermitage. All the three companion girls being frightened proceed towards the 'Ashram' and the King also heads that way to clear the obstacle from the way.

Second Act. In the initial stage of the second Act, the information about the King's hunting-activity is received through the jester. Being fed up of the hunting, the jester withholds the King from hunting. The King too being impatient of the love of Shakuntala accedes to his

In the suggested five-act-arrangement of the play, it is argued that the same effect can be brought by changing the contents of scenes.

The prelude in the beginning of the third act, it is suggested, can inform us about the success of Dushyant in a battle against demons. The story of the ring could be given in details in the seventh act when the King refers to it in his conversation with the sage Marica. The main scene of the sixth act could be given as prelude to the seventh act.

A proper analysis of the whole play reveals that the second and the sixth acts are indispensable. Without the second act, the union between Dushyant and Shakuntala would appear to be impelled by scenes and without proper scrutinization of each other's feelings. To bring out Dushyant's nobility and restrained passion the second act is absolutely necessary. Between the separation and the 're-union', some longer, effective scene must intervene to suggest the gap of time, and hence the sixth act is essential. Moreover, it makes us familiar with the innermost recesses of Dushyant's heart through his remorse; and thus it inspires our confidence in the life that follows the re-union. The fisherman-scene coming in the beginning of the sixth act gives us a respite and, the tension caused by the tragic events in the court-scene of the fifth act is slackened. The second act justifies the union in the third act, and the sixth act justifies the re-union in the seventh act. Thus from the dramatic point of view, these two acts are very necessary. In fact, the construction of these two acts indicated Kalidas's skill in uniting artistic design with psychologically convincing exposition.

The description of hunting (Act II), the entry of the chamberlain (Act V) and the King's entry in the Fire-Chamber (Act V) may appear unnecessarily long to the present readers. The description of hunting could have been shortened, but the audience in Kalidas's times must have enjoyed this description as hunting was then a popular pastime. The two verses of Yaitalikas show us how noble and selfless Dushyant is and the long scene that deals with the entry of the King in the Fire-Chamber shows Dushyant's high regard for the sages, his readiness to perform duties and his polite behaviour. The description of the great qualities of Dushyant that are revealed here justifies the restrained speech of Dushyant when he repudiates Shakuntala.

Every detail in the play has, thus been carefully worked out so as to serve some significant purpose.

"Abhigyan Shakuntalam" is one of the best dramas written in Sanskrit language with the peerless pen of the great poet Kalidas. Such a matchless and unrivalled portrayal of love and beauty in Sanskrit literature is not available anywhere-else. The story and the plot of "Abhigyan Shakuntalam" are based on the description contained in the

Design of the Play

It has been suggested that the play must originally have been of five acts only, and that the present version is an extended from of the original. Various modifications of the framework of the play are suggested.

A closer observation will however, prove that the design of the play is very carefully planned, and the structural scheme is artistically commendable.

The seven acts of the play form a symmetrical design. The Union, the separation, and the re-union of Dushyant and Shakuntala are the three main parts of the play. The fourth act, which follows the union and leads to the repudiation occupies the central position, and links up the first three and the last three acts.

There is a close similarity in the construction of the first two and the last two acts. In the first act, the King enters in the hermitage of Kanva, experiences the throbbing of his right arm and then meets Shakuntala. In the seventh act also we find that the King enters in the hermitage of Marica, experiences the throbbing of his right arm and is reunited with Shakuntala. In the second and the sixth acts, the King and his friend Vidusaka talk about Shakuntala. In both these acts the King is eager to meet Shakuntala. At the end of the second act the sages come with a request which helps him to meet Shakuntala. At the end of the sixth act also Matali comes with a request which helps the King to be reunited with Shakuntala.

Between the third and the fifth act also we find some similarity. In the third act, the friends of Shakuntala hand her over to the King; the King and Shakuntala have some discussion and in the end Gautami enters and Shakuntala is led away by her. In the fifth act also, the hermits hand over Shakuntala to Dushyant; the King and Shakuntala have some discussion and in the end Menaka takes her away.

The broad framework of the play, thus, shows a close-knit symmetry, though the acts differ to a great extent in many other ways. The sentiment, the background, the situation, etc. are not similar but the structural arrangement of the play is no doubt a conscious effort.

In the first act, the lovers see each other, and there is hardly any conversation between them. In the third they meet and are spiritually united. The second act stands between these two acts. In the fifth act they are separated and in the seventh they are reunited. The sixth act stands between these two acts. In the second and the sixth acts, which thus intervence, we have a delineation of the King's feelings.

They are an artistic necessity: and Kalidas's clever artistry is seen in this design. It is wrong to suppose that the original arrangements must have had a compact organisation in five acts.

development of her limbs (Act -qгt <fc=mmPHJ. 4',H9.q1 ; Act I. 19; II 2; III 8.) There was nothing artificial in her beauty; it was essentially natural (31 qg:), and free from coquettish trappings of which she had no conception. This proves the handsomeness of her external person, hut her heart was equally beautiful. She was a lovely young maiden, the soul of womanly modesty, and altogether insensible to the influence of passion till she saw the King. Her life, therefore, was one of feminine purity of mind and of womanly virtues-greatly due to the general surroundings amidst which she lived-which characterized her nature throughout her life, though a change was effected in its relations by her married condition. Her modesty was so great that ever since the time when she felt herself invaded by a feeling which was strange to her in her hermit-life (Act I fcfi : I 'iR 8<i 14-11llf). she kept it concealed even from her dearest friends, till her love-affected condition and the entreaties of her friends forced her to reveal it to them (Act III <TT!:>r,ffe lfl:r : : &c.). So far she presents an illustration of the Aryan female modesty. When encountered by her lover she is again the same picture of womanly modesty, peculiar to Hindu women, (Vide the latter Part of Act III). Though troubled by the arrows of Cupid she showed a full sense· of female honour. Her words "ffl -oo fcHllll 4<1<1111l 1 @litji(G1: >r'l9Tfii" prove her lively sense of feminine dignity and her respect for her elders. This raises her character immensely in our eyes. When wedded to the King by the legal form of marriage, she presents another interesting side of Hindu womanhood. Though openly discarded by the King and though for a time justly angry with him, she does not in the least lose her affection for her lord, and does not forget her duties as a married woman towards him. She leads an ascetic's life during her separation, ever keeping the image of her beloved husband in her heart (Act VII. 21), thus fully proving the truth of Kashyapa's words 3WlRIT ll4ti111. &c, 3Wlfl includes Sak also.

Her kind and sympathetic nature manifests itself in her affection far the trees of the penance-grove and the animals wherein. She has learnt to love the whole creation. The following references will make this clear-Act I. ;r ctcRf oTTff-;,;rrTT I 3lf if m ms "Rli; cll<lfl<1q('ff:lls ct'lf'l@'Hljd1cl 1TP-CJ : I 'lJ'cl'ffi; QGIS f<l(14fl6lllfi-l Act IV 9; emf ffl' cl1:;jlj'lffii <11c1e14:;ifti; emf Q,qc-,wl '41flofl 'l & c.; Act IV, 14. Shakuntala's affection for her father was also unbounded, as is plain from the fourth act. The friendship, or even sisterly affection, that existed between her and her two friends is finely delineated, and is another attractive trait of her character. The picture of Shakuntala, as delineated by our poet, is one of his masterpiece.

his arrows; other instances are ft14dtjo,Sljj'dlf1dlicH1fi;d4ct1c11f-H1q(tTTIT 1q&c.: 31mf 'Cfiu61tHi!-4Rb1: &c. (Act I), 61q-!1-!Pajf>i His regard for his mother (Act II. I 1.f:ffi: &c.) deserves to be noted as another praiseworthy feature of his character. His general nobility of mind and moral rectitude can he demonstrated from the following incidents in act

His lofty sense of regal duties does the highest credit to the greatness of his mind. The following references out of many, amply bear out this point: V 5,7,8, 9; VI -<1-Ilfl1l-!P.ffil{Hi &c. His proclamation f<1l'41<1 &c shows his regard for the subjects' weal, and his order to his minister about the disposal of Dhanamitra's property bears testimony to his anxiety not to enrich is treasury by unjust means. There are incidents in the drama which testify to his high martial power. He was the bravest of the brave, so much so that even Indra, the lord of the gods, sought his helps (II. 15, VI. 29, 30). The King's love for Shakuntala though sensual to a certain extent, is deep-rooted and permanent; and his mental affliction, after the unconscious dismissal and rejection of the Heroine, is so touching as to give a full idea of what his real feelings were, (Act VI). The King was highly cultured; for his remarks are so thoughtful and weighty that they bespeak a very high degree of refinement. He has an observant eye which marks the beauty of natural subjects. His acquaintance with many of the fine arts is thorough; be can appreciate music and be sensible to its impressions; he shows a deep knowledge of painting. In short, the Hero is depicted in such colours as make him quite worthy of the honour. He is a typical sovereign, and the various traits of his character are shown in bold relief by the poet. His picture is thus interesting and noble, and completely fulfils the expectations raised by the poet's genius.

Ans. Shakuntala, the Heroine of the drama, is a beautiful picture of womanhood. The daughter of the sage Vishvamitra and the heavenly nymph Menaka, she was abandoned by her parents in a forest, where she was fed by birds before she was carried by Kanva and brought up as his daughter. Brought up amidst hermitage-environments and among men leading ascetic lives, she too had imbibed the spirit of that life. She thus presents the picture of a damsel influenced by higher forces which greatly moulded her life. Of this we shall speak later on. Firstly we will say something about her person. Shakuntala had more than human beauty: she had heavenly beauty inherited from her mother (I. 23). Being thus a paragon of beauty, the irresistible charms of her exceptional loveliness fascinated the heart of the King whose several descriptions point to the same (Act I. 16, 17, 18; Act II. 9). Shakuntala was not a girl; she was a youthful maiden between fifteen and eighteen with full

King Dushyant i. the Hero of this drama. Whatever might be hi Kingly qualities or failing a related in the Purana we are not concerned with them here. We will delineate his character a. painted by our poet in the drama.

As already remarked, Du hyant is a hero; and he is repre ented in the play a po e ed of almost all the qualities which form the connotation of such a hero. We shall specify here the principal point in the character of Du hyant. He appears to be young, between thirty and thirty-five, as i hown by hi ardent longing for cha.e, which occupation requires, youthful energy. The inference is corroborated by the Senapati's words and by the fact that he is made the hero of a love drama. His love-born condition, o pathetically described in the third and sixth acts, again prove the same hypothe is. I lis fir t appearance makes an imposing impres. ion upon Priyamvada, as i plain from her word. This show that he wa youthful, hand ome, majestic and of sweet addre.s.

Another point to be noted in his character is the extreme nobility of his mind. Let us first point it out as regard hi. love for Shakuntala. He wa youthful and had in hi favour the royal cu. tom, which sanctioned polygamy in the case of King . True that he was not a rigid monogamist; but it must be conceded to his honour that he wa· not a reckle s libertine. He wa fully imbued with the high principle of moral conduct, and he never manifest any-time the least ymptom of illicit and lewd pa sion. It wa quite natural for him to be truck with the fascinating youth and uperb charm of the Heroine (Act I., 16, 17); but as a man of honour he wished to a certain whether Shakuntala was married or even betrothed. He checked hi. fir t burst of love till that time, though he was so confident of his nobility that he wa pretty surely convinced of the legality of the connexion (1.20) It is only after ascertaining the real parentage of Shakuntala and further that he was not married, that he allows his mind to harbour the feeling of love (1.25). His sub equent speech prove the ame nobility of hi. mind. Another feature of this character i his utmo t re pect for the sages and great solicitude for their comfort. There i really. omething very attractive and reverence inspiring in the lives of hermit. Their innocent elf-denying and pure life cannot but command respect from all who come in contact with them, and as we approach such environments, we feel we dreathe a purer air, the higher impul es of our mind being arou. ed and we are naturally brought under the purifying influence of the life of renunciation. The King though himself commanding univer al re pect, feels unbounded reverence for the sages and his conduct is marked by a proper en. e of what their au tere live" tleserve at the hand of worldly men. The fir t in tance of thi respect i, -,een when the King withdraw

his mind in the company of his confidant, the Vidushaka, but at every moment he finds his grief harrowing deep down into his soul. And to make matters worse, he receives a letter from his minister, announcing the death of a merchant named Dhanamitra, who dies sonless and whose property, consequently, goes to the royal treasury. This leads him to reflect pensively on his own sonless state, until the grief caused thereby makes him unconscious. A welcome diversion is created at this time by Matali, Indra's charioteer, who arrives with a message from his master to Dushyant to come and proceed forthwith to do battle with certain troublesome demons, the enemies of the King of gods. Dushyant assents and leaves in Indra's car to proceed on his expedition.

Act VII. The King is successful in his expedition and is dismissed by Indra after being received with extraordinary honour. While returning through the sky in the car driven by Matali, he alights on the mountain Hemakuta where the holy sage Kashyapa (Maricha) resided, and whom the King wanted to salute reverently on his way. He goes to the, hermitage, While Matali. is gone to "Seek Kashyapa, King Dushyant comes across a young boy, the very image of himself, playing with a lion's cub. At his sight the King experiences a strange emotion, as though the boy were his own son. It gradually comes out in the course of a talk with the boy's attendant females that he belongs to the Puru race (Dushyant's own race) and that his mother's name is Shakuntala. The King, now suspects the truth, viz., that most likely the boy is his own son; it is confirmed by the entrance of Shakuntala herself who recognizes her lord. Mutual explanations follow and the pair is reconciled. Kashyapa then enters; he explains the incident of the curse and how it clouded Dushyant's memory, so that the repudiation was not the King's fault. He pronounces his blessings on the couple and sends them off, together with their son, in that same car of Indra, to their capital where they lived ever happily afterwards. The play then ends with the customary stanza of Benediction (Bharatavakya).

It will be noted that the principal points in the development of the plot of the play are: (1) the introduction of Dushyant into the penance-grove of Kanva; (2) the mutual love-at-first-sight of Dushyant and Shakuntala; (3) their gandharva marriage; (4) the curse of the Durvasa with its disastrous result; (5) the departure of Shakuntala for Hastinapura; (6) the loss of the token-ring; (7) the repudiation of Shakuntala and her being carried away to a celestial asylum; (8) the discovery of the ring and the consequent agony of the King on recovering his memory; (9) Dushyanta's journey to heaven and back again in Indra's car; (10) his unexpected meeting with a refractory boy in the hermitage of Marich; (11) the search for the amulet by which the boy is proved to be his son; (12) the meeting with Shakuntala and (13) the happy union of the lovers in the end.

token of recognition. (This has an important bearing on the plot, as well be seen later.) The two companions say nothing about the curse to anyone; they do not communicate it even to Shakuntala, as they thought it was not advisable to worry her with it, and especially as some token of recognition could easily be produced when the occasion needed it. All this is related in an Interlude. In the act proper, we learn that Kanva has come to know of Shakuntala's marriage and that he has approved of it. In the meanwhile the curse has begun to operate and Dushyant has completely forgotten everything about his forest-bride. But those in the hermitage are not aware of that; and, as Shakuntala has by this time developed signs of pregnancy they are now preparing to send her to her lawful husband. The whole scene depicting her departure from the penance-grove where she had resided so long, and where every plant, creeper and animal was bound to her by ties of affection, is very touchingly portrayed. It contains also Kanva's well known advice to Shakuntala on the duties of a wife and a daughter-in-law.

Act V. The scene now shifts to Dushyant's capital. The ascetics escorting Shakuntala, arrive at the royal palace and wish to see the King, who, having forgotten everything, calmly orders his chamberlain to admit the party into his royal presence, little suspecting their mission. After an exchange of greetings, Sarngarava, the chief of the sages that accompanied Shakuntala, congratulates the King on his marriage, and invites him to accept his wife as the Queen. The King, to whom all this comes as a complete surprise, denies all knowledge of the affair, and even Shakuntala fails to rouse his curse-swept memory. As a last resort she wants to show him his ring, which he had given her at parting and which would have been a sure token; but, as ill-luck would have it, it had slipped off her fingers during the journey. Mutual recriminations lead to nothing, and she and her party leave the audience hall. Outside, while she is bemoaning her fate, a celestial lady descends from heaven and carries her away. The King and his courtiers are astonished at this superhuman intervention, which however they are unable to explain; and the curtain drops, leaving the King musing in a gloom of vexatious uncertainty.

Act VI. The ring which Shakuntala had dropped in a pool of water on her journey is discovered inside a fish by a fisherman, whom the police accuse of theft and take him to the King for being properly dealt with. He is of course let off by Dushyant, who, at the sight of that token of recognition, is freed from the influence of sage Durvasa' curse, and now distinctly remembers his marriage with the repudiated Shakuntala and all the details connected with it. He is now deeply grieved, but is helpless. He is closely followed in the course of his sorrow by Sanumati, a heavenly nymph, who is interested in Shakuntala, owing to her connexion with Menaka, Shakuntala mother. The King seeks to divert

over ears in love, and determined to encamp there and see it through. Shakuntala, too, on her part is struck by the grace and charm of the new visitor Cf. राजानमवलोकयन्ती सव्याजं विलम्य, etc.)

Act II. The second act introduces the King in a love-sick condition and the Vidushaka, his companion and the privileged court-jester, is trying in his own way to soothe and divert his royal master's mind. The King first of all directs his General to stop the chase and to order his followers not to disturb the hermitage, and then he acquaints the Vidushaka with his having fallen in love, at first sight, with Shakuntala, the adopted daughter of the great Sage Kanva. The King asks his friend to find out some means by which he can manage to stay in the vicinity without arousing comment or suspicion, when his difficulty is solved, quite unexpectedly, by some ascetics coming in and requesting the King to stay and look after the safety of their sacrificial rites, which were being disturbed by evil spirits. It proves an opportune and welcome invitation, and the King accepts it. At the same time he sends off the Vidushaka to the capital to be near his royal mother, and, lest he might talk and make his forest love known to others he tells him, with all appearance of sincerity, that the affair of Shakuntala was all a joke, and signified nothing. (परिहास-विजल्पितं Act II, 18)

Act III. In the interlude it is states that Shakuntala, too, is now affected by the malady of love, and is lying on a flower-bed with her two companions ministering unto her cooling remedies. Then the King is introduced in a love-sick condition; and chance leads him near the same bower wherein are seated Shakuntala and her companions. In the course of her conversation with the latter, Shakuntala confesses her passion for Dushyant, who takes advantage of this opportunity to make a formal declaration of his suit. At this lovers' union the companions discreetly withdraw but Shakuntala is almost immediately called off by an elderly relative. The disconsolate King finds active work in his accepted occupation of keeping off the evil spirits from the sacrificial altars.

Act IV. During the interval after the last act, Dushyant has married Shakuntala by the Gandharva form of marriage and has then left for the capital, having promised to send a suitable guard to take his bride to her rightful home, Dushyant's palace. While Shakuntala is alone in the hermitage, her thoughts being away with her absent husband, she fails to offer proper hospitality to the choleric sage, Durvasa, who came to the ashram as a guest. The hot-tempered sage curses her with the words-"He of whom thou are thinking, neglecting to receive me properly as a guest-he won't remember you even when reminded (of you)". One of Shakuntala's companions, however, pleads Shakuntala's absent mindedness, and obtains from the sage forgiveness and concession in so far that, the curse would cease to have effect on the production of some

3. *Abhijnana Sakuntalam*

Out of these works emerges Kalidasa as a supreme aesthetician, a master of surggestive poetry whom Anandavardhana, the great proponent of Dhvanisastra school, called the unparalleled poet of suggestive beauty. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, "Kalidasa has shown that while infatuation leads to failure, beneficence achieves complete fruition, that beauty is constant only when upheld by virtue, that the highest form of love is the tranquil, controlled and beneficent form, that in regulation lies the term charm and lawless excess the speedy corruption of beauty. He refuses to acknowledge passion as the supreme glory of love; he proclaims goodness as the final goal of love".

The Abhigyan-Shakuntalam is a Nataka in seven Acts, based on the well-known love-story of King Dushyant and the maiden Shakuntala, as given in the ancient Indian epic, the Mahabharata. The scene of the first four Acts is laid at Kanva's hermitage at the foot of the Himalayas, and later it shifts to the capital, Hastinapura (Acts V - VI.) and finally to Maricha's hermitage on the Hemkuta mountain. We give below a detailed analysis of the story of the play, act by act, so that the various topics to be dealt with subsequently will be more readily intelligible to the student.

Act I. After the Benedictory stanza invoking Siva, the Manager briefly refers to the season, "which is grishma, and then leaves, adroitly introducing King Dushyant in full hunting garb, followed by his charioteer. While the king is about to shoot his arrow at an antelope pursued by him, he is interrupted by an ascetic, who informs him that the animal belongs to the ashram of Kulapati Kanva, and the sanctity of the place must not be violated by its slaughter. The King refrains from killing, and is then invited to receive such hospitalities as the ashram could offer. Sage Kanva is away, but his daughter Shakuntala is there, who would most surely look after the guest's comfort. The King accepts the invitation, and, asking his charioteer to wait outside, enters the hermitage. There he finds three girls of exquisite loveliness, watering the flowering plants and shrubs; he at once falls in love with Shakuntala who is one of them, the other two being her companions. At a suitable point in their talk the King, who was hitherto concealed in the background, goes forth and addresses them. In the course of the general conversation that ensues, he learns that Shakuntala is Kanva's adopted daughter, being born of Menaka by Vishvarnitra and deserted by her natural parents. He thus discovered her to be of Kshatriya parentage, and therefore a suitable bride for him. He, however, does not revel his true character to them but intends for the present to remain incognito: In the meanwhile, news comes of an elephant running amok and causing damage, and at that the company breaks up. The King departs, head

21. *Navaratnamath,*
22. *Puspabanavitasa,*
23. *Maharaudastava,*
24. *and 25. Mangalastaka,*
26. *Mahapadmastaka,*
27. *Ratnakosa,*
28. *Raksatakavya,*
29. *Laksmistava,*
30. *Laghustava,*
31. *Vidvadvinadkavya,*
32. *Vrindavankavya,*
33. *Vaidyamanorama,*
34. *Suddhichandika,*
35. *Sringartilaka,*
36. *Sringarsastaka,*
37. *Sringarasarkavya,*
38. *Syamatadaulaka,*
39. *Sritabodh,*
40. *Saptasloki Ramayan,*
41. *Setubandha.*

Of these mentioned above all scholars acknowledge unaminously that the first seven were written by Kalidasa. These are 1. Abhijnana Sakuntalam, 2. Vikramorvasiya, 3. Malavikagnimitram, 4. Raghuvansam, 5. Meghadutam, 6. Ritusambharam, 7. Kumarsambhavam.

Though chronology of these work's composition may not for sure be known, owing to absence of any biographical details, majority of scholars agree that they can be arranged in the following manner, mainly basing their arguments on the internal evidence.

Poems –

1. *Kumarsambhavam*
2. *Meghadutam*
3. *Raghuvansham*
4. *Ritusamharam*

Plays –

1. *Malavikagnimitram*
2. *Vikramorvasiya*

passed through it. Kalidasa's writings reflect the city's opulence and achievements, its beauty and prosperity in unmistakable terms. In fact it had become model for any urban life, and whenever any writer's works contained portrayal of the city with its teeming life, people, palaces, markets and streets, the example was Ujjayini. Stanzas of Meghadutam breath refreshing pertume of poetic excellence describing "flower-fragrant mansions" "Sipra's cool breezes/scented with the fragrance of lotuses", demonstrating the same fondness with which Kalidasa cherished the images of the city as Geoffrey Chaucer does of London in The Canterbury Tales or Charles Dickens does in his novels.

Kalidasa's Works

The great poet, Mahakavi Kalidasa is himself silent about his art and works; leaving scholars and students to make conjectures about the exact number of his works. Doubts have been raised regarding some of the works generally attributed to him, due to the fact, perhaps, as M.R. Kale says, that there were at least three other poets whose name was Kalidasa. He mentions Rajasekhara "who wrote epoki jiyate hanta Kalidaso na kenachit/Srngare lalitodgare Kalidasatray, kimvi".

We shall see here the works that are generally attributed to him:

1. *Abhijnana Sakuntalam,*
2. *Vikramorvasiya,*
3. *Malavikagnimitram,*
4. *Raghuvansham,*
5. *Kumarasambhavam,*
6. *Meghadutam,*
7. *Kuntaleswardautya,*
8. *Ritusamharam,*
9. *Ambatsava,*
10. *Kalyanastava,*
11. *Kalastrotra,*
12. *Kavyanatakalankarah,*
13. *and 14. Gangashtakah (in two parts),*
15. *Gatarpar,*
16. *Chandikandakastotra,*
17. *Charchastava,*
18. *Jyotirvidubharan,*
19. *Durghatakavya,*
20. *Nalodaya,*

defeated Huna chieftain Mihirakula. In Meghadutam the smallest descriptions of the terrain and surroundings contain the poet's keen emotion for the places and suggest his affinity. "The poet describes the topography of the Vindhyas and the Malwa region with a loving exactitude as if the landscape lay on the palm of his hand. Malwa, in central India (now part of Madhya Pradesh), is watered by many rivers and streams, rising from the Vindhya ranges and draining its slopes and valleys. Malwa's landscapes streaked by its rivers and streams with glades and pleasure-gardens on their banks; dotted with groves and meadows and woodlands stretching along the slopes of the hills; its holy spots and long low hills containing caves overgrown with bushes, stir the poet's imagination and evoke in us the beauty that it once was. It may well be that the poet belonged to this region and that Ujjayini was his place of birth".

In Meghadutam the flight of the cloud-messenger to the Mt. Kailasa is an occasion to reveal the stunning natural beauty of the region laying bare the spectacular beauty.

When you reach that royal city, Vidisa by name widely renowned, you shall at once obtain the unalloyed fulfillment of a lover's desire, tasting Vetravati s sweet waters as a lover his beloveds lips, with sonorous thunder passing along her banks as she flows with knitted brows of tremulous wavelets. (26)

There you shall alight seeking rest on Nicai hill thinking with delight at you touch as Kadambas burst into sudden bloom; the hill loudly proclaims through grottoes exhaling fragrances of pleasure, passions unrestrained of the city s youth dallying there in love-sports with courtesans. (27)

Even the most significant features are mentioned with touching fondness: Nicaigiri, Vanavati, Gandhavati, Nirvindha (a streamlet), Gambhiri, and so on. The poet, no doubt, knew the place intimately. "They were the delight of his early days. These details and the emotional attachments reflected in his writing for them suggest that he had his home in Vidisha."

Ujjayini– Ujjayini holds a special place in Kalidasa's writings as any reader of his literature can see.

It was one of the major cities of ancient India with a long history of political and commercial activities, capital of powerful kingdom and boasting of a tradition of refined culture. To history it is known by such names as Puskarandini, Visata, and Mahakalapuri. It was well-connected with such important cities as Pataliputra and port cities like Broach and Patala which connected India with Greece and Rome. Ujjayini was the glittering seat of learning and intellectual activities as is evident from such monuments as the observatory and the prime-meridian which

been spent in ancient Avanti region which is to-day identified as Malwa, and that Ujjayini city had a special spot for him, considering the luxurious stylistic flavour he shows to it.

To Ujjayini glowing in splendour
Like a brilliant piece of Paradise
Come down to earth with traces of merits
of dwellers in Paradise returning;
the fruit of their good deeds almost spent.

(Meghadutam, Stanza 32)

It is said that it is in Ramatek, near Nagpur that Kalidasa composed Meghadutam, and a beautiful architectural memorial has been built at the place where he is believed to have sat to compose the work. Vidarbha figures in Malavikagnimitra whose heroine is the princess of the region, sister of "one of the rival cousins fighting for the throne". Another Vidarbha princess Indumati occurs in Raghuvansham; in Canto VI we see the scene of the marriage procession with her chosen bridegroom Aja passing through the Capital, and the battles fought by Aja with her rivals who attacked him in the forests ofVidarbha. When Vidarbha is mentioned, it is in laudatory language. V.V. Mirashi and Navlekar find a specific 'Vidarbha touch' about his style.

> *"Kalidasa in his writings has adopted the Vaidarbhi style of composition which is distinguished by elegance of thought and expression, fineness of sentiment and imagination, and avoidance of cumbrous compounds and obscure words. All these facts show that his original home was in Vidarbha"* **(86).**

However, the same scholars opine that these are mere conjectures and do not constitute the final resolution of the enigma of the poet's place of birth and living. If Vidarbha occurs prominently in his writings so does the Himalayan region. These scholars conclude,

> *"We admit that he speaks of Vidarbha in glowing terms, but does he give evidence anywhere of his acquaintance with the topography of the country, his knowledge of its minute features, as Sir Walter Scott does give in his novel of his beloved Caledonia such as Waverley, Rob Roy, The Heart of Midlothan, and in his poems The Lady of the Lake, The Lay of the Last Minstrel? Hence Vidarbha too cannot be accepted as the birth place of our poet"* **(87).**

Vidisha– Some scholars, prominent among them being Professor S.M. Paranjape and Hara Prasad Shastri, believe that Kalidasa's place of living was Vidisha or Dasapura in Mandasor. It is also put forward that he was the protege of King Yasodharman who in A.D. 528 had

conversant with all arts and sciences, and was endowed with poetic power of the highest order". An interesting point in the whole argument is that it is based on legends and hearsay which barely stands close examination. The adage of his being a dunce is an unconfirmed fable and has become so well-established that it has come to be generally accepted as a biographical episode, but in a serious academic discussion it is not believed.

Kashmir– Another school of Sanskritists try to establish Kashmir as the poet's birth and dwelling place. One of the proponents of this thesis is Professor Lachhmidhar Kalla of Delhi University who argues that the familiarity with which various aspects and moods of the Himalayas have been described can only be done by one who has observed the beauty of the mountains for a long time and at close quarters. The first scene in Kumarsambhavam presents magnificent descriptions of the range. Similarly, the mount Gandhamadana in Vikramorvasiya near which Puruvavas and Urvasi meet for the first time is near Kashmir, where later the King roams in search of the suddenly disappeared Urvasi "in a dazed state". Himalayan scenes also occur in Raghuvansham where Vasistha has his hermitage; and in Abhijnana Sakuntalam also Kanva's hermitage is located in the vicinity of the Himalayas:

> *"O king! We are on our way to gather wood for the sacrificial Fire. There, clinging to the slopes of the Himalaya, along the banks of the Malini is visible the Hermitage of our Guru, the Patriarch Kanva where Sakuntala dwells like its garden deity".* **(Act I).**

Do these and several other descriptions scattered all over Kalidasa's writings prove that he had his dwelling place in Kashmir, or as some scholars believe, the region happened to be frequently visited by pilgrims? It is likely that Kalidasa knew some places in Kashmir and often took poet's licence to alter their names and locations using only the natural flavour which could strongly suggest his close familiarity with them. As Profs. V.S. Mirashi and Navlekar point but, "In Kashmir itself are to be seen the Sindhu and Malina rivers, the Sacitirtha, the Somatirtha, the Brahmasaras, and the Sakragatala. Although the Sacitirtha, a holy bathing place consecrated to Indrani and Sakravatava, a flight of steps sacred to Indra, are both situated in Kashmir yet the names being familiar to Kalidasa from birth, he changed their location to the vicinity of Hastinapur a for the convenience of his plot." (78).

At this juncture we cannot go into a detailed examination to which the Kashmir thesis has been put, but suffice it to say that scholars have generally rejected it.

Vidarbha and Vidisha– There are two other likely places with which Kalidasa has been associated, one Vidarbha and the other Vidisha. His writings make it clear that at least a major part of his life must have

son 'Skanda'. "Kalidasa has named his great poem Kumarasambhavam after this Kumara" (Chaturvedi: 16). With regard to Raghuvansham it is agrued that if the poet had to write his poem about the great king, he would have made the title suitable and wouldn't have made veiled reference, leading to confused conjectures.

A detailed study of the subject shows that almost all the conceivable aspects have been explored in order to arrive at a definite idea of the period of Kalidasa, but no appreciable success has been achieved. The subject is as full of uncertainties and alive to fierce debate as ever, with the opinions divided into various layers. One thing strongly emerges out of it: while in our times, particularly under the influence of western thinking and psychology, much importance is given to artist's personality, personal details like dates and biographical particularities were generally overlooked in Indian tradition. "The poet has effaced the authority of his own voice from his texts. It is open to the reader to see this self-effacement from a metaphysical point of view as a transference of authority to a voice beyond time, to the voice of silence that shaped the universe; or to perceive the texts as situated within time and responsive to cultural shifts in the course of time but not fixed in any specific context. The name Kali-dasa would relate equally to both meanings of the word Kali in the name; Creative Power and Time" (Chandra Rajan: 24).

Place

Related with the question of date is the question of place too. Which place did Kalidasa belong to ? The question still remains without a definite answer. His birth place has been a topic of extensive and busy guesswork locating it anywhere from Kashmir to Bengal and Satahputa to Vidisha and Ujjayini. However, from the frequent mention or rich references to the Malwa region in his works it has been established that the poet spent a major part of his life in that area. Nevertheless, claimants from other regions too come forward to assert that the "brightest star in the galaxy of Sanskrit poets and dramatists, the crest-jewel of this land of Bharata was born in their provinces". Bengal is one of those regions that vehemently forward the idea of Kalidasa's birth taking place there. Considerable activities, festivals, fairs and scholarly events take place in Bengal. A plethora of myths and dates has grown around Kalidasa, in support of this thesis. One of them is that he was a polygamist and had three wives one of whom was named Vidyunmala with whom he lived for some time in the village of Takshanitata. Another village Sripata Doggachia claims that the poet married a second time there and even his son's wedding was solemnized there. However, the strongest argument is that his name indicates that he was a servant (dasa) of Kali. He was a dunce, they say, till he came of age and it was by the grace of Kali that he "became thoroughly

is referred to as Vikramaditya; about whom numerous stories had sprung up in ancient times. Indeed such myths and legends are woven around him that the historicity of the dates and names is difficult to establish. It is said that at least three kings at various times assumed the name as title meaning The Sun of Valour. One of them was king Yasodharman ofMalwa who vanquished the Huns in the 6th A.D.; another was Chandragupta II and the third was the most illustrous of the Satvahana Kings Gautamiputra Satakarni (1st century A.D.), a good looking warrior-king. Tracing a different line of thinking Dr. Chandra Rajan says,

> *"Kalidasa's patron is identified by some scholars as king Vikramaditya, son of Mahendraditya of the Parmar dynasty ruling at Ujjain in the first millenniu B.C. This dynasty betrayed to the Malwas mentioned in history as one of the clans following a republican form of government. It has also been suggested that the description of the Asura Taraka and his evil forces in Kalidasa's long poem Kumarasambhavam is a veiled reference to the invading Sakas who were then in occupation of Sind and were pushing into Malwa. This would be at the close of the first millennium B.C. and accord with the first century B.C. date of 57 B.C. for the poet and of his association with the Vikramaditya who defeated the Sakas"* **(308-9).**

3. The third theory places the great poet in the period between the fourth and fifth century A.D. in the reign of Chandragupta II. Who proclaimed himself Vikramaditya after completely conquering the Sakas in western India. That the title Vikramaditya was adopted by the Gupta emperor has been supported by the western thinkers like Sir William Jones and Keith. They believe that he patronized Kalidasa which would place the date about 400 A.D. Then scholars believe that Kalidasa's writings suggest a period full of contentment and prosperity, relaxation and luxury which is comparable to the reign of Chandragupta II (A.D. 380-413). In his works can be found references to certain events that also suggest that he lived in the reign of the great Gupta King: (i) The horse-sacrifice described in Raghuvansham which could well be the one celebrated by Samudragupta; (ii) the occurrence of Kumara in this play and Kumarasambhavam could be Kumara Gupta son of Samudragupta. (iii) In his work Kalidasa shows a definite preference for the root gup (to protect) and its derivatives especially the past participle 'Gupta'. This is a covert reference to the Gupta Kings who were his patrons.

'Siva's son 'Skanda'

However, like several other theories, this theory has also been strongly contested and repudiated as several historical evidences have been put forward to show that the points raised in support of it cannot stand. Words like Gupta used by Kalidasa usually refer to Lord 'Siva's

evidence found in his play Malavikagnimitra whose bharatavakya or epilogue mentions the king:

Twam me prasadsumukhi bar chandi
Nityametavadeva mrigaye pratipaksahetoh !
Asasyamitivigamprabhavati prajanam
Sampatysyati na khalu goptari nagnimitre !!

'O angry lady, may you always have a lovely face, being favourably disposed towards me. I ask for this much only from you for the sake of this co-wife (Malavika). As for other things to be desired such as freedom of the subjects from calamities, they are seen to be accomplished so long as Agnimitra is ruling.

This is one of the few plays where the ruling king has been mentioned and on this basis it has been conjectured that Kalidasa must have lived during his time, 150 B.C. or thereabouts.

Besides it, there is also mention of Vidisha which happened to be the capital of Agnimitra. That the horse-sacrifice of Vasumitra was intercepted and disrupted by the yavan (Greeks) and the ensuing fight also find mention in Kalidasa's writings. According to a writer, "Kalidasa suggests in his Raghuvansa (iv 60-61) that Raghs encountered the yavanas in the Parasika country. This points to the time of Agnimitra as the Greeks were this ruling in Persia. Their empire in Asia collapsed some time after the end of that 'Sunga King's reign'.

2. The second theory puts the date somewhere in the first century when Vikramaditya is supposed to have ruled at Ujjayini. The king is believed to have started the era which has been given his name in 58 B.C. A Jain work Kalakacharya kathanaka makes mention of war between Sakas and Vikramaditya when the former invaded the kingdom and made the king, Gardabhilla prisoner for abducting the sister of Kalka, the teacher. Vikramaditya was the king of Malwa. He also finds mention in a few other works like Kathacaritasagara, and Brihatkathamanjari. The Prakrit Galhasaptasati of the Satvahana king Haln also contains tales of his feats and heroic exploits and humane qualities. The whole theory suffers from absence of any proof of the 'historic' passages and events which are furnished as supportive material. As has earlier been mentioned, the very existence of Vikramaditya has been debated. The Kalakacharyakathanaka belongs to a much later date and Vikram's name occurs for the first time in 10th century A.D. Besides, in the first century B.C. Ujjayini and its surroundings were part of the Satvahana kingdom and were not ruled by Gardabhilla. Gardabhilla is mentioned in the Puranas, but only after the decline of the Satvahanas among whom there is none called Vikram or Vikramaditya. Scholars also believe that Gathasaptasata is a conglomerate of several fanciful tales, it must be Chandragupta II who

Chandragupta, Sudraka and writers like Panini, Patanjali, Bhasa, Bharata, etc. Somehow myth and history got inextricably mixed up in ancient times, or those people simply did not care much about leaving behind these data! Period after period, ruler after ruler this continues, a baffling void filled with brilliant achievements, dazzling feats, rarely paralleled at any time, anywhere, but who did it and when remain unanswered. The measure of confusion this generates can best be guessed when we learn that there was no king named Vikramaditya. In the words of V. V. Mirashi and Navlekar, "..... there is no conclusive proof of the existence of any Vikramaditya in the first century B.C.. The era now associated with his name was originally known as Krita. Vikrama's name became connected with it for the first time in the 10th century A.D. The Kalakacharyakalhanaka is a late work of uncertain date. Its story of Vikrama is not likely to have a historical basis;... The gatha describing the munificence of Vikramaditya may have reference to the Gupta King, Chandragupta II Vikramaditya, about whom similar stories were current in ancient times. There is thus not an iota of evidence to prove that there was a king named Vikramaditya ruling from Ujjayini in the first century B.C. (9-10).

Mahakavi Kalidasa presents the finest example of the tremendous uncertainty and vagueness regarding all the important facts about his biography. Enormous amount of conjectures surrounds his name, keeping scholars endlessly busy, and contrasting opinions flounder in different directions.

Date

In the opinion of Dr. Chandra Rajan three dates have been put forward, far from exact, and spanning centuries. Some of them emanate from Kalidasa's plays like Malavikagnimitram and Raghuvansam where references have been picked up carefully and with a degree of hope. Great scholars from the nineteenth-century to modern times have all got involved in this fascinating exercise like Sir William Jones, Professor Buhler, Prof. Max Muller, Prof. A.B. Keith, E.B. Cowell, Pusalkar, V.V. Mirashi, K.C. Chattopadhyaya, D.V. Ketkar, S.R. Roy, S.M. Paranjape, C.V. Vaidya, K.M. Shembavanekar, and numerous others. What we have as a result of decades of this endeavour is a multiplicity of theories and nothing tangible and conclusive. The very exercise of obtaining an idea about these various theories would cover more pages than the scope of this book would permit. We shall, however, present only those broad dates which are agreed upon by majority of scholars as affording the possible periods.

1. According to a popular theory Kalidasa lived in the court of Agnimitra Sunga who ruled as his father's viceroy at Ujjayini. The period of Sunga empire spans 184 B.c. to 78 B.C. and its rule covered most of northern and central India. This theory derives support from the

the Delphic oracle, Oedipus calls himself the shedder of his father's blood, the husband of his mother; and the begetter of brother-sons. In his dialogue with Creon at the end, Oedipus cites the authority of the Delphic oracle in demanding banishment as his due. The oracle had said that the parricide was to die or to be banished; and that command of the oracle must also be carried out. Creon therefore agrees to banish Oedipus.

Conclusion- Thus are the various pronouncements of the Delphic oracle fulfilled: (i) Laius is killed by his own son, (ii) Oedipus is the killer of his own father, and he becomes the husband of his own mother, and (iii) the killer of Laius is banished from Thebes.

Abhigyana Shankuntalam

One of the serious difficulties faced by modern scholars concerns the exact factual data pertaining to ancient Indian society and history. The remoteness of time poses serious problems, the intervening history having eradicated most of the evidences which would have offered definite facts; but more than this for a literary historian, it is near impossibility to say anything with certainty because the writers and ancient scholars appeared, as if by common consensus to be self-effacing, and did not consider it necessary to leave any information about themselves. "Hence from scanty material scattered here and there we possess but shadowy information about their private life and public career. .." (Y.Y. Mirashi, Navalekar: 2). Scholars have lamented this tendency which left us with almost nothing on which to base our vision of ancient history with any degree of certainty. The tradition of history-writing did not grow here, "The so-called historical works-which are so few in number as to be counted over one's fingers-namely, Kalhan's Rajatarangini, Bana's Harsacarita, Rajasekhara's Viddhasalabhanjika, Padmagupta's avasahasarikacarita, Bilhana's Vikramankadevacarita, are rather historical romances in prose or verse, in which facts are dressed up in fiction and character and incident are so invested with super human grandeur that it is difficult to tell the grain from the chaff' (ibid: 1).

Myth and History

Even about the great emperors and rulers like Asoka, Vikramaditya, Samudragupta, etc. we know next to nothing. Most of the history needs to be reconstructed out of the remnants or vestiges left to us in the form of fragments of scripts, architectural works, coins, rock-edicts or vague references in literature. Even the dates are missing, so we do not know about the exact periods of such kings as Bhoja,

aware, that he has already, though unknowingly, committed those very deeds which had been predicted by the Delphic oracle and which he had endeavoured to avoid. After listening to his story Jocasta once again makes a sarcastic comment upon the oracles. "A fig for divination," she says.

The Chorus's regret at the loss of people's faith in oracles- The Chorus now sings another song, this time deploring the loss of people's faith in oracles. It is highly regrettable, says the Chorus, that the oracles are not being duly respected and honoured by the people, that Apollo's glory is fading, that Apollo's name is being denied, that there is no godliness in mankind. These words of the Chorus are highly significant in view of the fact that both the prophecies, the one received by Laius and the other received by Oedipus, have already been fulfilled though all the concerned characters including the Chorus are yet completely ignorant of the fulfilment.

The fulfilment of the prophecies of the oracle- When the Corinthian messenger arrives with his news, Jocasta finds another opportunity to scoff at the oracles: "Where are you now, divine prognostications!" Oedipus kept avoiding Polybus all these years so as not to kill him. And now Oedipus has died a natural death, and not by any act of Oedipus's. Jocasta, like Oedipus, does not know that Polybus was not Oedipus's father. A moment later Oedipus joins Jocasta in scoffing at the Delphic oracle. "So, wife, what of the Pythian fire, the oracles?" says Oedipus. Oedipus was to kill his father but now Polybus has died when Oedipus was nowhere near Poly bus. The prophecy of the oracle, says Oedipus, has proved wrong and lies dead like Polybus. We find Oedipus, who was in the beginning a wholehearted believer in the oracles, now becoming a sceptic. Thus to his pride is being added the fault of impiety or irreverence. However, Oedipus is still afraid of the other half of the prophecy and, when the Corinthian messenger tries to relieve his anxiety on this score, Jocasta receives the shock of her life on learning that Oedipus is no other than her own son who, she had thought, had perished as an infant. Oedipus, however, is still in the dark about the facts. The Chorus now sings a song which has an ironical ring because the Chorus imagines Oedipus to be the offspring of the union of a god and a mountain-nymph. The Chorus reiterates its faith in Apollo and in the Delphic oracle: "Phoebus, our Lord, be this according to thy will! "Then comes the discovery for Oedipus, which shows that the entire prophecy of the Delphic oracle has been fulfilled in every particular.

References to the Delphic oracle in the concluding portion- Some more references to the Delphic oracle are made in the concluding portion of the play. In answer to a question by the Chorus, Oedipus says that, although Apollo had laid all this agony upon him, his action in blinding himself was completely his own. In terms of the prophecy of

basis of the word of the oracle, namely that the only way of deliverance from the plague is to kill or banish the murderer of Laius. This scene ends with a furious quarrel between the two men and the Chorus then sings a song in which it refers to the words of the Delphic oracle:

"From the Delphian rock the heavenly voice denounces
The shedder of blood, the doer of deeds unnamed.
Who is the man?"

The Chorus, which has complete faith in the oracle, warns the guilty man against the wrath of the gods. The Chorus also expresses its view in this song that all secrets of earth are known to Zeus and Apollo, but that no mortal prophet can claim to know everything. The authority of the oracle is thus re-asserted by the Chorus, and we are made once more conscious of the great prestige enjoyed by the oracle.

The oracle received by Laius- A little later we meet the person who does not attach any importance to oracles or to those human beings who are credited with powers of divination. This person is no other than Jocasta, the Queen. Jocasta believes neither in the oracles of gods nor in prophets. As evidence in support of her view, she refers to an oracle given to Laius, not indeed from Phoebus, but from Phoebus's priests, that he should die by the hand of his own child to be delivered by Jocasta. This oracle proved to be false, says Jocasta, because Laius was killed by robbers on the highway, while the child, when it was hardly three days old, had been fettered and exposed on the mountain-side to perish. Jocasta's speech here is a striking example of tragic irony because, while she believes that the oracle received by Laius has proved to be false, in actual fact the oracle has proved to be true, though Jocasta does not yet know the truth. Jocasta's belittling the oracle constitutes an act of "hybris" on her part and, therefore, deserving of punishment.

The oracle received by Oedipus- When Oedipus hears that Laius was killed at a place where three roads met, he remembers having killed some persons at such a place though at this stage he does not have any suspicion that he is the son of Laius. He goes on to tell Jocasta the story of his own early life and what the Delphic oracle had told him in reply to his question regarding who his parents were. The Delphic oracle had given him an answer that spelt misery and horror for him. The oracle had said that he would kill his father and marry his mother. In order to avoid committing such monstrous deeds, he had fled from Corinth, determined never to see his father Polybus and his mother Merope again. His journey away from Corinth had brought him to Thebes, but not before he had killed some persons on the road-side and not before he had conquered the Sphinx. The Thebans had made him their King and had given their widowed Queen, Jocasta, to him in marriage. Oedipus's speech too is full of tragic irony, because he is not in the least

to be an essential part of religion. He who did not believe in the oracle was regarded as impious and irreverent.

The message of the Delphic oracle- It is a message from the Delphic oracle that sets the plot of the play afoot. Creon brings the news that the sufferings of the Theban people will be relieved only if the murderer of the fate King, Laius, is traced and expelled from the city or put to death. Apollo or Phoebus has sent word that there is an unclean person polluting the soil of Thebes and that that person must be driven away or killed before people can obtain any relief. Oedipus, who is a great well-wisher of his people, immediately announces his resolve to do the oracle's bidding. namely to find out the criminal and punish him. By this announcement Oedipus shows his faith in, and allegiance to, the Delphic oracle. He undertakes to investigate the murder of Laius, saying "All praise to Phoebus"! The opening words of the entry song of the Chorus thus refer to the message of the Delphic oracle;. "From the Pythian house of gold, the gracious voice of heaven is heard." The entry-song of the Chorus is followed by a long, speech from Oedipus proclaiming the punishment of banishment for the. criminal. When the Chorus suggests that the identity of the criminal should be sought from Phoebus who has disclosed the reason for the misfortunses of the people of Thebes, Oedipus reverently replies that it is not in the power of any human being to compel a god to speak against his will. Thereupon the Chorus suggests that Teiresias be entreated to help in the matter because he is very close to Phoebus and possesses powers of divination. To this Oedipus replies that he has already sent for Teiresias, having been advised by Creon to do so.

The sacred authority of the Delphic oracle; the importance of the oracle in starting the plot. It is clear from all this that everybody concerned has full faith in the words of the Delphic oracle who, on being approached, revealed the cause of the troubles afflicting the people of Thebes and also suggested the remedy. There is not a single dissident voice so far as the authority of the Delphic oracle is concerned. The King believes the oracle; Creon believes the oracle; and the Chorus, which represents the citizens, believes the oracle also. Oedipus's investigations into the murder of Laius and his discovery of the truth constitute the main substance of the play; the investigations and the discovery are, in fact, the very theme of the play; and the message of the Delphic oracle is the motivating force behind the undertaking of Oedipus to find out and punish the criminal. Thus the Delphic oracle serves as the starting-point or the driving force for the drama to commence.

The Chorus's strong faith in the Delphic oracle- In the scene between Oedipus and Teiresias, there is hardly any reference to the Delphic oracle, apart from Oedipus's seeking the prophet's help on the

that Oedipus learns the truth; and the truth is appalling for him and for us.

Emphasis on human greatness- An important ingredient in a tragedy is the emphasis on human greatness. Great as Oedipus has been portrayed so far, his real greatness has yet to be pointed out. After the disclosure, Jocasta kills herself and Oedipus blinds himself. The blinded Oedipus, though in a state of despair, and suffering agonies on account of his sense of guilt arid shame, yet shows an indomitable spirit. Oedipus has been defeated by circumstances and by his own actions, but his spirit has not been crushed. He shows himself still capable of self-assertion. He still retains his authoritative manner, his imperiousness, and some of his pride, even though he has lost all hope. He matched his wits against the gods, and failed. But even in defeat and in failure he shows his essential nobility. "Sophocles's tragedy presents us with a terrible affirmation of man's subordinate position in the universe, and at the same time with a heroic vision of man's victory in defeat".

Delphi, a temple dedicated to Apollo-Delphi was the name of a shrine or temple dedicated to Apollo. This temple was situated in a deep rocky cleft near Mt. Parnassus in Phocis. The highway to Delphi was very steep and difficult to climb. (It was on this road that Oedipus was supposed to have killed his father). Delphi was originally known as Pytho but, when Apollo took it over, he established his famous oracle there. The temple achieved a very wide reputation and became extremely rich as a result of the gifts presented to it. Inside the temple sat a priestess of Apollo on a tripod and uttered in a divine ecstasy incoherent words in reply to the questions asked by visitors, worshippers, and suppliants. These words were then interpreted by a priest in the form of verses. The Delphic oracle was primarily concerned with questions of religion, but questions pertaining to worldly matters were also answered. So far as the questions dealt with the future, the answers were often obscure and ambiguous.

The key position of the Delphic oracle in the plot of this play-The Delphic oracle plays a most important role in Oedipus Rex, controlling the action of the play almost at every step. If the Delphic oracle were to be eliminated, the play would fall to pieces. The Delphic

oracle.....i§, indeed, the very basis and foundatioH of the whole play. Without It, the play simply disintegrates. The D\..lphIc oracle has, therefore, a key position in the development of the plot. The play is based upon a myth, a myth which ha:i its <htgm in the Delnbic oracle. The importance of the Delphic oracle cannot, there n;re, he underestimated. It 'ls noteworthy also that the Delphic orack enjoyed a high prestige and authority in those days, even though there were sceptics who scoffed at it. The he lief in tht. Delphic oracle \\=" i.ought

wretchedness at the doubts that are tormenting him. By now, our curiosity and suspense have further been increased. Oedipus is feeling more and more troubled by doubts, and his apprehensions have begun to trouble Jocasta's mind also. The scene with Jocasta thus carries the story further towards the discovery.

The stunning disclosure- The next development in the plot is the arrival of the Corinthian messenger. On hearing the news this messenger has brought, Jocasta immediately reverts to her former, habitual scepticism, and she urges Oedipus to shed all fear of oracles and to live as best as be can. When the messenger learns the cause of Oedipus's fears about the future, he tries to comfort Oedipus by informing him that he is not the son of Polybus and Merope, which he believes himself to be. When the messenger reveals the circumstances in which he himself had handed over Oedipus as an infant to Polybus, the real identity of Oedipus as her own son flashes upon the mind of Jocasta and she turns white with terror. Her only anxiety now is that Oedipus should be spared the knowledge of his own identity. But Oedipus is determined, now more than ever, to know his parentage. The arrival of the Theban shepherd leads to the final discovery in the play. This is the supreme moment of the tragedy in the play. The Theban shepherd tries his utmost to keep back the information which would have a stunning effect on Oedipus, but Oedipus forces the Theban shepherd to come out with the truth. When the truth does come out, it is the most agonizing moment of Oedipus's life. The realisation, that the words of the oracle have proved true and that he had really killed his father and married his mother, comes to Oedipus as an unbearable shock. This moment marks the climax of the play. This is the most painful moment for the audience also. Oedipus had tried his utmost to prevent the fulfilment of the oracle's prophecy, but he had failed. Circumstances and, to some extent, his own temperament had gone against him and he had committed the very sins which he had tried to avoid.

The various steps in the process of discovery- The tragedy lies in Oedipus's discovery of his guilt, and this tragedy he has himself brought about. Teiresias had tried to keep Oedipus in the dark, but Teiresias's attitude had only aroused Oedipus's ire. He was determined to find out Laius's murderer, mainly to bring relief to his suffering subjects. He could not shirk his duty as the King. The words of Teiresias had mentally disturbed him and produced a doubt in his mind. The doubt was strengthened by Jocasta's account of the manner in which Laius had met his death. The Corinthian messenger's information marked the next step in the process of the discovery, and the process was completed by the information obtained from the Theban shepherd under the pressure exerted upon him. Thus it is as a result of Oedipus's efforts to punish the murderer of Laius and to find out his own parentage

The verbal fight between Oedipus, the man with supreme secular authority, and Teiresias, the man with supreme spiritual powers, is very exciting from the point of view of the audience or the readers, arousing. as it does, several emotions. The scene throws much light on the characters of both the men and clearly brings out the defects in Oedipus's character, defects which seem to justify, to some extent, the punishment that ultimately befalls him, though the punishment is not a direct result of these defects. We find Oedipus to be hot-tempered, rash, hasty in drawing inferences, suspicious, arbitrary, and moving towards tyranny. The prophecy by Teiresias arouses feelings of uncertainty and perplexity in the Chorus, and we fully share these feelings. The Chorus is utterly unaware of the true facts and is not prepared to accept the accusations of Teiresias on their face value. In any case the clash between the King and the prophet takes the story one step further towards the ultimate discovery.

The contrast between Oedipus and Creon- The scene with Creon is not so dramatic from the emotional point of view, but it serves an important dramatic purpose. This scene emphasizes the contrast between the mild and moderate Creon, and the rash and autocratic Oedipus. Oedipus pays no heed to Creon's defence of himself and sentences Creon to death or at least to banishment. The hybris of which Oedipus is guilty is further emphasized in this scene, though we find also that Oedipus is not totally unresponsive to the advice given to him by the Chorus and by Jocasta in the matter of the alleged crime pf Creon.

The scene with Teiresias, another step forward in the direction of the discovery- The accusations of Teiresias have deeply disturbed the mind of Oedipus. Jocasta tries to soothe her husband's feelings by saying that no man possesses the secret of divination and that the words of Teiresias should, therefore, not weigh upon his mind. As evidence of the falseness of oracles, Jocasta refers to the prophecy made by the oracle with regard to the manner of Laius's death. The tragic irony of Jocasta's advice to Oedipus here is noteworthy; the evidence which she cites to support her view of the falseness of oracles is precisely the evidence which, without her knowing it, supports the truth of oracles. Jocasta's account of the circumstances of the death of Laius serves only to strengthen the doubt that has arisen in Oedipus's mind as a result of the accusation by Teiresias. Oedipus would now like to interrogate the sole surviving member of Laius's party. At the same time he gives Jocasta an account of his own early life before his arrival in Thebes and his marriage with her. Jocasta, however, ridicules the prophecy which the oracle had communicated to Oedipus, namely that he would kill his father and marry his mother. However, even Jocasta presently offers worship to Apollo because she is deeply troubled by Oedipus's

disowning and disinheriting Cordelia and in driving her out of Britain. Besides, the Fool is a slave to habit like anybody else in this world. He has been enjoying unlimited freedom of speech; and so, even when Lear is experiencing emotional and mental distress, the Fool cannot help making witty and jocose comments on the blunder which Lear has committed at the very outset.

Dramatic and Melodramatic Situations– King Lear, like any other tragedy of Shakespeare, abounds in highly dramatic and melodramatic scenes and situations. The first dramatic situation occurs in the very opening scene when Lear becomes furious at his favourite daughter Cordelia's failure to come up to his expectations in expressing her affection for him. In this state of fury, he not only disowns and disinherits Cordelia but also passes an order of banishment against Kent. Thus at the very outset we have one of the most exciting and distressing scenes in the play. Then we have Lear's quarrel with Goneril and his cursing her in a most dreadful and awful manner. A little later, we have the scene in which Lear has to confront both his daughters who have combined against him and both of whom he now decides to leave, though he does not know where he will go. Then there is the scene on the heath when Lear is enduring the violence and rage of the elements. The scenes of madness in the play also belong to the same category. A dramatic scene occurs also when Albany denounces his wife in very strong terms. Among the melodramatic scenes are the blinding of Gloucester; the duel between Cornwall and a servant: the stabbing to death of that servant by Regan; the fight between Edgar and bswald with the latter being killed in the encounter; the duel between Edgar and Edmund, with the latter receiving a fatal wound. These melodramatic incidents add to the effect of horror in the play.

A typical tragedy by Shakespeare– King Lear is a typical tragedy by Shakespeare. Like the other tragedies by him, this play too presents a hero who suffers misfortunes and meets a sad fate mainly on account of his own faults which in this case are a hasty temper, an intolerant attitude towards everybody, an excessive egoism, and an incapacity to judge the character of those around him. Circumstances also contribute to the misfortunes of the hero, as they do in the other tragedies. In this case, Nature shows its cruel side by making a storm blow exactly at a time when Lear has left his daughters and has nowhere to go to. The storm has its own share in bringing about Lear's madness. The storm intensifies Lear's suffering. Pity and fear are the dominant feelings produced by this play, and a catharsis of these feelings has certainly been brought about so that we leave the play with a sense of exhilaration and exaltation rather than with a feeling of divine injustice and hostility. The play is not pessimistic as is supposed by some critics. It is true that Cordelia's death, being undeserved and almost gratuitous, has a

character. While in the opening scene he strikes us as being vain, arrogant, egotistical, self-centred, dictatorial, and unbalanced in his judgment, towards the close he becomes gentle, kind, self-effacing, and humble. Indeed, humility is his most striking quality in his last appearances in Acts IV and V. The change in his character and outlook is brought about by his misfortunes, his suffering and his madness. It is for this reason that Bradley has suggested that the play can justly be described as the redemption of Lear.

The three daughters of Lear have also been convincingly drawn and, although Goneril and Regan seem to be a replica of each other, they have been differentiated from each other, in only by the greater cruelty and fierceness of Regan. The characters are clearly divisible into good ones and bad ones. Goneril, Regan, Cornwall, and Edmund are the evil-doers in the play; while Cordelia, Kent, Edgar, and Albany represent loyalty, a spirit of service, a sense of justice, and a goodness of heart. The character-contrasts add to the interest of the play. There is a contrast between the wicked daughters and the noble one; there is a contrast between the villainous son Edmund and the noble-minded son Edgar; there is the evil-minded son-in-law Cornwall, and the good-hearted son-in-law Albany; there is the greedy and selfish suitor, Burgundy, and there is the unselfish and romantic lover, the King of France. The variety and the range of characters in the play is, indeed, surprising; but the character-portrayal shows no sign of faltering anywhere. Some critics have perceived an inconsistency in the portrayal of Cordelia; but, if once we understand that Cordelia is by nature a reserved and reticent type of person, we shall not find any contradiction in her character.

The Fool and His Function— King Lear is different from the other tragedies of Shakespeare in so far as it contains a Fool who is absent from the other tragedies. There are certainly comic scenes in the other tragedies but no professional Fool or jester to serve as a commentator on the actions of the hero and the other persons in the play. The Fool here is one of the important characters. As is to be expected, he combines wit with wisdom. His sarcastic remarks lighten the sombre atmosphere of the play, but they aggravate Lear's mental distress. While Lear is already feeling tormented by the thought of his daughters' ingratitude, the Fool's sharp, though witty remarks intensify Lear's mental suffering and play no small a part in driving him to madness. The Fool is certainly devoted to his master, and remains loyal to him throughout. He suffers the cruelty of the elements in the company of his King without complaining. Nor does he make his sarcastic remarks with the deliberate intention to add to Lear's torment. His remarks, though cruel in their impact on Lear's mind; are just an expression of his annoyance with Lear for the latter's unwise and hasty action in

him, and Gloucester would have realized the unlikelihood of a letter being written by Edgar to Edmund. Then, Gloucester would have no need to go to Dover for the purpose of committing suicide; and Gloucester would certainly have been surprised when Edgar begins to use dialect while speaking to Oswald. Furthermore, there is no good reason why Edgar should not reveal his identity to his father, and why Kent should also preserve his disguise until the last scene. Edmund, after receiving a fatal wound, delays unnecessarily in telling of the danger to Lear and Cordelia. While Bradley feels uneasy on account of these improbabilities, Kenneth Muir, another eminent critic, assures us that most of these improbabilities would not be noticed in the theatre, and that they cannot therefore reduce the effectiveness of the play on the stage.

Apart from this, Kenneth Muir has something to say in defence of each of these improbabilities. Edmund's forged letter can be regarded as a more plausible method of initiating a conspiracy than by word of mouth because the writer could deny the handwriting or pretend that he was only trying to test his brother's affection for their father; and Gloucester, having believed the notion of a plot against his life, was not likely to experience any doubt so far as the device of writing a letter was concerned. As for Gloucester wanting to go to Dover in order to commit suicide Shakespeare wanted all his characters to assemble at Dover for the last act of the play. But the question still remains why Gloucester should want. to commit suicide at Dover. Perhaps Gloucester had seen a certain cliff at Dover, and it had remained in his mind, so that now, when he is in a half-crazy condition, he feels an irrational urge to end his life there. And Kenneth Muir goes on to say that the other seeming improbabilities are not really so glaring or gross as Bradley thinks. In this respect, however, Bradley's point of view seems to be more weighty than the reply to it given by Kenneth Muir. An improbability is an improbability, and by no argument can it be explained away; and in any case there is hardly a play by Shakespeare which does not contain improbabilities.

Character-Portrayal– Shakespeare is a great creator of character; and his character-delineation is always masterly. In this play we have too large a number of characters, mainly because there is also a secondary plot and the characters who figure in that secondary plot had also to be accommodated in the play. But each of the characters, whether belonging to the main plot or belonging to the sub-plot, has vividly been presented. Each of them is made to live in the pages of the play. There is the protagonist himself. The portrayal of Lear is one of the great triumphs of Shakespeare. From the time of his division of his kingdom in the opening scene to his death in the final scene, Lear has been drawn with a sureness of touch. There is a marked development in his

imagination. At the same time, two cases of a similar nature produce an impression of a great commotion in the moral world, so that the total picture becomes vast and gigantic. Thus, on the whole, the double plot in this play is an advantage.

The Unhappy Ending, and Its Appropriateness– The play ends with the hanging of the innocent Cordelia and the death of Lear who has already undergone tremendous suffering in the course of the events. This unhappy ending has not been approved by some critics. In fact, the feeling against this ending was at one time so strong that Nahum Tate, the poet-laureate during the Restoration, produced a modified version of the play, according to which the play ends with the reinstatement of Lear on his throne and the triumph of Cordelia who is shown as having been in love with Edgar whom she marries towards the close. This revised version of the play held the stage for a very long time, till it lost favour with the critics and the public and was ultimately rejected. Most critics now fully approve of the original ending of the play, painful though it is. Schlegel is one of those critics who have approved of the unhappy ending. According to him, a dramatist cannot give a happy ending to a tragedy and it is wrong to alter the original ending of this play in order to show Cordelia as being victorious and happy. As for the fate of Lear, his death is the only appropriate end because it would be meaningless for him to live any longer in this world when he has suffered so many misfortunes. And what can be a more truly tragic end for him than to die of grief over the death of Cordelia?

If Lear is to be saved in order to pass the remainder of his days in happiness, the whole play would lose its significance. With regard to the unhappy ending, Bradley adopts a somewhat ambiguous attitude. But we are inclined to accept the original ending given to the play by Shakespeare himself. A tragedy must produce an overwhelming emotional effect on the readers and the audience. The original ending does produce such an effect which is in harmony with the tremendous emotional effect produced by Lear's earlier misfortunes, especially his madness during the storm and afterwards. The powerful emotional effect of the original ending has its own share in bringing about the catharsis of pity, fear, and kindred emotions.

Improbabilities in the Play– Some critics have found a number of improbabilities in the play, and they believe that these improbabilities make the story unconvincing and even produce an effect of absurdity. Bradley, for instance, strongly feels that the improbabilities and inconsistencies in the play constitute a serious defect. According to him, the improbabilities in this play far surpass those of the other great tragedies in number and in grossness. And, he says, these improbabilities are particularly noticeable in the secondary plot. According to him, Edgar would be unlikely to write to Edmund when he could speak with

rightly says, there is "matter and impertinency mixed" in Lear's speeches, and these speeches show "reason in madness".

Reason in Madness; and Madness in Reason– If Lear's speeches show reason in madness, the speeches and actions of certain other characters show madness in reason. Edmund, Cornwall, Goneril, and Regan are all supposed to be intelligent, rational persons but their resorting to evil and their going to extremes in this respect shows a complete want of judgment, foresight, and even common sense. Indeed, their cruel and fierce actions are a glaring breach of the norms of human life and of the ordinary decencies of social and family life. Lear himself, even before he actually goes mad, acts like a madman in the opening scene when he disowns and disinherits Cordelia and banishes Kent.

The Double Plot, and the purpose served by it– King Lear has a double plot. The main plot in the play pertains to Lear, his three daughters, and his two sons-in-law. The sub-plot pertains to the Earl of Gloucester and his two sons, Edgar who is his son by marriage, and Edmund who is his illegitimate son. The sub-plot in the play has been thought by some critics to be a flaw because, in their opinion, the sub-plot interferes with the unity of the action in the play and complicates matters. According to Bradley, for instance, King Lear suffers from a structural weakness which arises chiefly from the double action. (This double action, Bradley points out, is a peculiarity of King Lear among the tragedies). By the side of Lear, his daughters, Kent, and the Fool, who are the principal figures in the main plot, stand Gloucester and his two sons who are the chief figures in the secondary plot. Bradley goes on to say that, although by this double action Shakespeare secured certain highly advantageous results, the disadvantages resulting from it were dramatically greater. The number of essential characters is so large, their actions and movements are so complicated, and events towards the close crowd on one another so thickly that the reader's attention is overstrained, and the reader feels emotionally fatigued.

The opposite approach to the double plot in this play is that the subplot has so closely been interwoven with the main plot that the unity of the whole is not in the least weakened, and that the dramatic effect of the play is heightened by the sub-plot which parallels the main plot and reinforces it. This approach is emphasized by the German critic, Schlegel, who says that the two plots in the play have been dovetailed into one another with great ingenuity and skill. We are, in this respect, inclined to agree with Schlegel rather than with Bradley. The two plots greatly resemble each other in so far as in both cases an infatuated father proves to be blind towards his goodhearted and well-meaning child, while the unnatural child or children, whom he prefers, cause the ruin of all his happiness. And yet the circumstances of the two cases are so different that the two stories form a complete contrast for our

his daughters, when the son is persecuted by the father, and when madness threatens the human order. Accordingly, the first Act contains little Nature imagery; in the second Act it begins to grow; and it attains to its height in the third and fourth Acts which show us the forsaken Lear in madness.

Themes of the Play- King Lear is predominantly a study of evil. Among the characters are a number of villains and evil-doers, who are by nature spiteful and malignant. These characters include Goneril, Regan, Edmund, and the Duke of Cornwall. Goneril is ably assisted by her steward, Oswald. These evil-doers are devoid of conscience; they experience no moral scruples. What is more, they all die without any regret, remorse, or compunction, with the possible exception of Edmund who, at the last moment, gives way to a sudden impulse of goodness and reveals, even though it is too late, his and Goneril's plot to have Cordelia hanged. The wicked actions of these evil-doers in the play are a result chiefly of the ingratitude of children towards their fathers, so that the parent-child relationship becomes an outstanding theme in the play. Lear and Gloucester have good children and evil children. Both of them suffer agonies as a result of the ingratitude of their evil children, and are both consoled and comforted by the good children. But the play is not only a tragedy of parents and children. It is also a tragedy of kingship. Power corrupts not only the possessor's capacity for loving but the spontaneity of the love of others. What is more, the appetite for flattery grows by what it feeds on; those who refuse to flatter are hated and banished, while the flatterers are rewarded. This violation of the duties of kingship is the initial deed from which the tragedy arises. Then there is also the theme of justice which figures in the play.

There is a scene in which Lear puts his daughters on trial in a court of law, though the trial takes place as a projection of the mad Lear's fancy. In a later scene, Lear returns to the subject of justice and authority. Madness too may be regarded as a theme in this play. It is not only Lear who is driven to a state of frenzy and madness. In the scene on the heath, we witness the actual madness of Lear, the feigned madness of Edgar, the professional madness (or folly) of the Fool, and the madness of the elements whose fury and violence aggravate the general insanity. The Fool rightly observes: 'This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen." In a later scene (IV, vi) Lear, still completely mad, appears before Gloucester and Edgar, talking disconnectedly. Dressed fantastically with wild flowers, he speaks in a declamatory and rhetorical manner on such subjects as flattery, adultery, women's uncontrollable lust, the abuse of authority, the discriminatory manner in which justice is dispensed hy the courts of law, and so on. But, as Edgar

Scythian as his kith and kin than recognize Cordelia as his daughter. A moment later, he refers to Cordelia as "unfriended, new-adopted to our hate, dowered with our curse and strangered with our oath". When Lear later loses his temper with Goneril, he utters a terrible curse upon her; and the imagery here also is most effective in expressing rage, fury, and cruelty. Here Lear appeals to the goddess Nature to render Goneril barren and infertile, to dry her reproductive organs so that no child can ever come forth from her body. And, if at all she gives birth to a child, let the child be a child of spleen so that it can stamp wrinkles on her youthful forehead and can cause furrows in her cheeks through her flowing tears. Similar fierce imagery is employed by Lear afterwards when, speaking to Regan, he calls upon lightning to scorch and burn the eyes of Goneril: "You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames into her scornful eyes."

Some other kinds of Imagery– Images depicting gentleness and sympathy are found in a gentleman's description of Cordelia's reactions to the letters conveying to her the wretchedness of her father: her smiles and tears are compared to sunshine and rain at once and her tears are like "pearls from diamonds dropped." There is astrological imagery in some of the soliloquies of Edmund and in one or two of Gloucester's speeches. There are interesting pictures of bastardy in the first of Edmund's soliloquies. There is comic imagery in the abusive words and phrases employed by Kent for the steward Oswald.

Imagery chiefly in the speeches of Lear and his companions– As a critic tells us, imagery is for Lear his most characteristic form of utterance. More and more Lear loses contact with the outside world, so that words become for him less a means of communication with others than a means of expressing what goes on within himself. The characters around Lear, too, the Fool, Edgar, and Kent-speak a language rich in imagery. However, the other group of characters, the wicked ones, Edmund, Goneril, Regan, and Cornwall seldom employ images. These characters speak rationally and in a deliberate manner. Their language does not reveal to us what is taking place within them. They are the calculating, cool, and unimaginative persons who are incapable of creative imagery. They have no relationship to Nature or to the elemental powers. Their world is the world of reason.

Imagery resulting from the inner drama– The middle Acts of the tragedy, Acts II-IV, are the richest in imagery. The outer action here is less important and is pushed into the background. The main emphasis here is upon what is happening to Lear and within Lear. The inner drama here is more important; and imagery is the only adequate form of expression for such an inner process. The non-human world of Nature enters into the play in the same measure as the human world breaks down and falls to pieces. This happens when the father is expelled by

made him ride on a horse, trotting over narrow bridges, to follow his own shadow. A little later, Edgar speaks of a particular devil who, according to him, causes cataract and squint in the eyes, who makes the hare-lip, and who hurts the poor creatures of the earth. Still later, Edgar speaks of five fiends, the fiends of lust, dumbness, stealing, murder, and grimacing. This imagery is linked with the imagery of evil and corruption which has previously been dealt with.

Nature-Imagery– Then there is Nature-imagery in the play. Nature has two aspects: the benevolent aspect and the malevolent aspect. Nature is a benign force, binding all created things together in their true relationships. Nature in this sense involves harmonious co-existence, co-operation, loyalty, and affection. Kent and Edgar believe in Nature in this sense. Lear and Gloucester believe in it too. Edmund, however, is a worshipper of Nature in the other sense. In the other sense, Nature is a force encouraging the individual to think only of the fulfilment of his own desires. Accordingly, Edmund, says:

Thou Nature, art my goddess; to thy law

My services are bound.

Nature in its malevolent aspect manifests itself in the storm against which Lear has to contend. Some of the most vivid imagery in the play pertains to this storm. Apart from Kent and one other person, Lear himself gives us a graphic description of the storm when he throws a challenge at the winds, the thunder, the lightning, etc. He calls upon the elements to do their worst. He speaks of the "sulphurous and thought-executing fires", and the "vaunt couriers of oak-cleaving thunder-bolts", and he defies all the fury and rage of Nature, saying: "Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain !" We have some more Nature-description, equally graphic, in the passage in which Edgar gives to his father an impression that he is standing on the top of the cliff to which he wanted to be led. Edgar tells his father that anyone standing at that spot would feel dizzy on looking downwards. The crows below look small like beetles from that height; a man gathering herbs half way down the rock looks as small as his own head; the fishermen walking upon the beach below appear like mice; the tall sailing-vessel anchored near the coast looks as small as a buoy. This description is so vivid that, while going through it, we ourselves begin to feel dizzy at the thought that we are standing on the top of a cliff and looking downwards at the objects and things below.

Fierce Imagery– Then we have imagery expressing cruelty, brutality, and fierceness. In the very opening scene, when Lear loses his temper with Cordelia, he swears by "the mysteries of Hecate and the night", and by "all the operation of the orbs", that he will have nothing to do with her. He says that he would rather recognize the barbarous

We are made to visualize the physical and mental suffering of Lear in the storm, of Lear when he stands just outside the hovel hesitating whether to enter or not, and his suffering in the farm-house. Similarly, we are made to witness the blinding of Gloucester and all the degradation and humiliation to which he is subjected by Regan and Goneril. Again and again, Lear speaks of the patience which he needs to endure his suffering, "You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need" and "I will be the pattern of all patience." Lear represents suffering man; he symbolizes homo patiens. His madness is part, and the most shocking part, of his suffering. Cordelia gives to the doctor a vivid picture of her father when he is "as mad as the vexed sea", singing aloud, crowned with all kinds of rank weeds and nettles. A little later, he appears fantastically dressed with wild flowers and delivers several speeches with Gloucester and Edgar as his audience. Edgar, listening to these speeches, comments:

O ! matter and impertinency mixed;

Reason in madness.

The imagery of reason in madness is balanced by the imagery of madness in reason.

The Unforgettable Imagery of Sin and Evil– The imagery of sin, crime, evil, and corruption is also very prominent in the play. It appears chiefly in the speeches of Lear during and after the storm. When the storm is blowing hard, Lear says that this is the time when the gods can discover their enemies, and he mentions different kinds of sinners: the bloody murderer, the perjurer, the pretender to virtue, the incestuous man, the villain who plots against the life of others, and so on. When Lear puts his daughters on trial in the farm-house, he feels that one of the two criminals has been allowed to escape, and so he says: "Corruption in the place! False justicer, why hast thou let her escape." Subsequently, Lear talks about the flatterers who, by their flattery, mislead and misguide a king; he speaks of the adultery and lechery which are rampant; he dwells upon the excessive and uncontrollable sexuality of women; he speaks of the police constable who, while lashing a prostitute, is himself burning with a sexual desire for her body; he speaks of the usurer sentencing a cheat to death; and so on. This is some of the most vivid and unforgettable imagery in the play.

The Imagery of Devils and Demons– Edgar, in his role of the Bedlam-beggar, introduces demons and devils in his talk. He constantly speaks of being troubled and tormented by "the foul fiend". When he first encounters the Fool and the others during the storm, he tells them that the foul fiend has led him through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, over bog and fen; that the foul fiend has put knives under his pillow, and poison beside his soup; that the foul fiend has

hog, the lion, the bear, the wolf, the fox; the monkey, the polecat, the civet-cat, the pelican, the owl, the crow, and many more animals are mentioned in the course of the play, some of them being mentioned again and again. Often, and especially in the talk of Edgar as the Bedlam-beggar, these references to animals have no symbolic meaning but sometimes, even in his talk, certain animals are mentioned for their typical qualities; for instance: "hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey." At one place, Lear says: "The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to it with a more riotous appetite." Sometimes a character is compared to one or other of the animals. For instance, Goneril is described as a kite, and her ingratitude is compared to a serpent's tooth. Again, Goneril is described as having struck her father most serpent-like upon his very heart; her visage is "wolvish"; she has tied sharp-toothed unkindness like a vulture upon her father's breast. For her husband, Goneril is a gilded serpent; to Gloucester her cruelty seems to have the fangs of a boar. Similarly, certain other characters are also described in terms of animals. Indeed, as Bradley says, the souls of all the beasts in turn seem to us to have entered the bodies of these mortals: horrible in their venom, savagery, lust, deceitfulness, sloth, cruelty, filthiness, etc.

The Recurrent Images of Clothes– Another recurrent image is that of clothes. The civilized man is contrasted with the essential man. As Lear says, man borrows his clothes from animals. Seeing the naked Bedlam-beggar, Lear says that this man represents the essential human being while he himself and his companions (Kent and the Fool) represent the sophisticated man, because the former has no clothes on, while Lear himself and the others are wearing clothes. The Bedlam-beggar, he says, owes no silk to the worm, no hide to the beasts, no wool to the sheep, and no perfume to the civet-cat. Thus the Bedlam-beggar is "the thing itself'. "Un-accommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal" as the Bedlam-beggar is. In an earlier speech, Lear points out the big difference between the gorgeous clothing of a lady with the almost bare body of a poor man. In the scenes of madness, Lear harps on the way clothes, which symbolize distinctions of class and wealth, lead to a perversion of justice. For instance, he says:

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;

Robes and furr'd gowns hide all.

Imagery of the Suffering Man– According to one of the critics, the most important and the most frequent image in the play is that of the human body in anguished movement, tugged, wrenched, beaten, pierced, stung, scourged, dislocated, flayed, gashed, scalded, tortured, and finally broken on the rack. Lear, Gloucester, Edgar, and Cordelia are the worst sufferers in the play; they are the most persecuted individuals though their sufferings are shared by Kent and by the Fool.

herself commits suicide when she finds that her incriminating letter has fallen into her husband's hands and that the man whom she had wanted as a lover lies fatally wounded. Soon afterwards Edmund too dies. Thus all the evil-doers have met the fate which they rightly deserved. But the question is why they were all led from one criminal act to another till they were overtaken by Nemesis. The obvious answer to this question is that they were all mad, even though they appeared to be sane and rational. Their madness lay in their perverted attitude to life. They did not recognize the moral and social values and principles by which human life should be guided, and obedience to which is essential for the preservation of human society. These characters represent the forces of moral anarchy, and in that respect they were all mad, even though not mad in a literal or clinical sense. The madness of this group of "sane" persons is balanced by the reason of the group of the "insane" ones. In short, it is possible to describe King Lear as a play which depicts reason in madness, and madness in reason.

Several Kinds of Imagery in the Play- The imagery employed by Shakespeare in any of his plays is important. It is even more important in King Lear where it serves a very useful dramatic purpose. As in most other plays of Shakespeare, the imagery here is exceptionally vivid and makes a powerful impact on our minds. Shakespeare here gives us plenty of evidence of his pictorial art. Much of the imagery in the play is, however, of the unpleasant, and in some cases, disgusting kind. There are several kinds of imagery that we come across in this play. There is animal imagery; there is imagery pertaining to clothes; there is the imagery of suffering; there is the imagery of poverty and wretchedness; there is the imagery of sin, crime, evil, and corruption; there is the imagery connected with demons and devils; there is the imagery which depicts cruelty and brutality; there is the imagery depicting gentleness and pity; there is the imagery of madness; there is astrological imagery and there is comic imagery.

Animal Imagery and Its Function- The animal imagery in this play is the most conspicuous, as also most frequent. One hundred and thirty-three images pertaining to sixty-four different animals have been counted in the play. This ima ery is intended partly to show man's place jq th@ fhfliO pf tl ing aPA iq brillg oui th s bhµm;rn ll;Hµr pf th vi! characters; partly to show man's weakness compared with the animals; and partly to compare human existence to the life of the jungle. References to animals are scattered throughout the play, and it seems that Shakespeare could hardly write a page of this play without an allusion to some animal. The dog, the horse, the cow, the sheep, the

by Lear are the sermon, the prayer, and the trial. He speaks almost like a preacher and an orator; and his speeches are certainly much more impressive just as they are much wider in scope and sweep.

Shakespeare's Recipe for the Treatment of Madness– The representation of Lear's madness in this play is one of the great achievements of Shakespeare. But what is an even greater achievement is the method by which Shakespeare shows Lear as being restored to sanity. Indeed, the methods used to treat the old King's insanity anticipate those which are employed nowadays as the result of modern scientific study and experience. Giving rest to the brain, and music, are still regarded as most effective therapy in the case of mental patients. In fact, it has been recognized that, although more than three hundred and fifty years have passed since Shakespeare wrote this play, scientific researches have added very little to his methods of treating the insane.

Reason in the Madness of Lear, Edgar, and the Fool– There is reason in the wild and apparently nonsensical speeches of the Fool who gives to Lear constant reminders of Lear's folly in having given away all his power and authority to his two daughters. There is reason in Edgar's madness because we know that the nonsense which he is speaking is deliberate and a mere pose. There is reason in the mad speeches of Lear, as we have seen. What remains to be seen is madness in reason.

Madness in the reason of Goneril and others– Edmund, Goneril, Regan, and Cornwall-all these persons strike us as intelligent human beings. They are all in full possession of their senses. Nobody can say that there is any touch of madness or insanity in anyone of them. They are to be classed with rational human beings whose mental faculties are intact and whose powers of understanding and comprehension are perfectly normal. And yet these persons act in a mad way. Edmund conceives a plan to dispossess his brother Edgar in order to grab his father's estate. He then betrays his father's secret activities to Cornwall who takes the extreme step of blinding Gloucester but himself meets a premature end in the process of doing so. Goneril feels sick of her father and his knights within a few days of Lear's commencement of his stay with her, with the result that there is a furious quarrel between the two. This is followed by Regan's adopting the same callous and intolerant attitude towards her father. Neither of the two sisters realizes that her behaviour is totally unfilial. Both depart from the moral, social, and family code of duty, just as Edmund has already departed from the same code by plotting against his father as well as his brother. Later in the play, the two sisters turn hostile to each other because of their jealousy over Edmund with whom both have fallen in love. In this way the two sisters violate yet another code: both conceive an illicit passion for Edmund. Yet another code of duty is violated when Goneril, out of her jealousy of her sister, administers poison to the latter. Eventually she

with the ingratitude of his daughters. In one of his speeches Edgar compares himself with all kinds of animals. He describes himself as a hog in sloth, a fox in stealth, a wolf in greediness, a dog in madness, and a lion in prey. The mad Lear is somehow greatly impressed by Edgar and would like to discuss abstract questions with him. In fact, Lear takes him to be a philosopher and a learned Theban.

Reason in Lear's Madness– Later in the play, Lear appears faritastically dressed with wild flowers. Seeing Gloucester and Edgar (whom he does not recognize) he begins to deliver rhetorical speeches. Now, although these speeches come from the lips of Lear in a state of madness, yet there is much truth and substance in them. In these speeches, which are in no way connected with one another, Lear talks about the evil of flattery, about the excessive lust and sexuality of women, about the hypocrisy of those who punish the sinners, about the wickedness of those who are supposed to dispense justice, and about the essentially tragic character of human life: "When we are born we cry that we are come to this great stage of fools." Hearing these speeches, Edgar thus comments on them:

O ! matter and impertinency mixed;

Reason in madness.

There is no doubt about the element of reason in Lear's mad speeches. In fact, in a state of madness Lear becomes wiser than he was in his state of sanity. It is a paradox, but a fact, that, when Lear in the opening scene was in the full possession of his senses, he behaved like a madman; but that now, when he has become insane, he is talking like a real social critic and moralist, and his talk contains much sense.

Three kinds of Madness differer.tiated from one another– Three kinds of madness have carefully been differentiated by Shakespeare from one another. The Fool has a quality of savage innocence that Lear and Edgar lack. He is a professional Fool. His stock consists largely of songs, riddles, nonsense-rhymes and a mock prophecy. These he employs as oblique and self-protective comments on the world. If we refer to him as a madman, it is only because he does not put his ideas in a coherent and logical form. His remarks appear to be the ravings of a madman, but he has plenty of sense, knowledge, and wisdom. He can, for instance, clearly foresee that Regan will treat her father no better than Goneril has done. Edgar, on the other hand, is the possessed man. He believes that he is haunted by the fiend. He constantly talks about the fiend, about cold, about hunger, and about similar other inconveniences. Just as the Fool sees folly everywhere, so Tom sees torment everywhere. Tom's vision is that of hell. Lear's madness shares characteristics with both of these, but is different from each. Lear uses no songs or rhymes of which both the Fool and poor Tom make use. The forms employed

moment the first rumblings of the storm are heard. The storm in human affairs finds its correspondence in a storm in Nature. "O Fool, I shall go mad;" says Lear at this point. Exposure to the storm completes what the ingratitude of his daughters began. But when Lear makes his next appearance, calling upon the storm to destroy everything, urging the gods to find out their hidden enemies, or addressing the "poor naked wretches" he is not yet wholly mad, though he admits that his wits are beginning to turn. What finally pushes him over the border-line is the sudden appearance of poor Tom who is both a living embodiment of naked poverty and who also seems to be mad. Edgar, as we know, is only feigning madness; but this feigned madness hastens the madness of Lear who is already feeling hard-pressed by the violence and fury of the storm in Nature. Lear remarks that Edgar's wretched condition must also be due to the ingratitude of Edgar's daughters, "those pelican daughters". The Fool comments that "this cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen". Soon afterwards we find Lear trying to identify himself with the naked Tom by tearing off his own clothes.

The Symbolic Significance of Madness– The madness of the elements, the professional madness of the Fool, the feigned madness of Edgar, and the real madness of Lear together symbolize the break-up of society and the threat to the universe itself under the impact of ingratitude and treachery. When Gloucester appears and is told by Kent that Lear's wits have begun to unsettle, Gloucester says: "I'll tell thee friend, I am almost mad myself'. Here we have another person who, though not actually mad, thinks that he might go mad; and the reason why he thinks himself to be on the verge of madness is the supposed ingratitude of his son, Edgar, a reason which links Gloucester's dreaded insanity with Lear's actual insanity. Thus at this time (Act III, Scene iv), the only person in this group on the heath who is left wholly sane is Kent.

Lear's Trial of His Daughters– It is in a state of complete madness that Lear puts his two ungrateful daughters on trial. He has the illusion that both Goneril and Regan are present before him, and he appoints the Fool, the Bedlam-beggar, and Kent to take their places on the bench as judges. Thus in his madness the ingratitude of his daughters is haunting his mind. Feeling utterly exhausted, he falls asleep and is soon afterwards carried out of the farm-house to be driven to Dover.

Edgar Obsessed with the Foul Fiend– Edgar in his state of feigned madness says that he is being haunted by the devil. Edgar shows an obsession with "the foul fiend" just as Lear had shown an obsession

very powerful on our minds. The fact that Lear goes mad under the pressure of his daughters' ingratitude and his exposure to the fury of the storm, shows how deeply the hero in this play is affected by his misfortunes. Lear's madness is not, however, the only madness in the play. We also have the madness of Nature as represented by the storm; and even the Fool is mad in a certain special sense. These different kinds of madness meet in the scene on the heath (Act III, Scene iv), and two of these (that of Lear and that of Edgar) meet again later (in Act IV, Scene vi).

Lear's Madness Caused By a Series of Shocks– The stages of Lear's descent into madness are clearly indicated by Shakespeare. Lear is certainly not mad in the opening scene even though Kent explains his rudeness towards Lear on the ground that Lear is mad. "Be Kent unmannerly when Lear is mad," 'says Kent. But all that Kent means by this remark is that Lear is acting like a madman by ignoring the claims of Cordelia and by dividing his entire kingdom between his other two daughters. It is only later that Lear goes mad, and he is driven to madness by a series of shocks. First, there is the disappointment caused to him by Cordelia's failure to come up to his expectations in the opening scene when he asks her to tell him how much she loves him. This disappointment certainly weighs heavily upon his mind. A favourite notion of his has been ewloded by Cordelia's attitude which he had never expected. Then comes the shock of Goneril's refusal to continue to abide by the arrangement according to which Lear was entitled to maintain a hundred knights at his daughters' expense to attend upon him. When Goneril seems to ignore his feelings in the matter, Lear says: "Doth any here know me ? ..... who is it that can tell me who I am ?" The Fool comments that Lear has been reduced to Lear's shadow. Later in the same scene, Lear begins to realize that he has wronged Cordelia, and so he says:

O most small fault,

How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!

In the next scene he comes to a full recognition of his folly and says: "I did her wrong." At the end of the Act (I) he has his first suspicion of the coming insanity: "O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven." The third great shock comes when Lear finds Kent in the stocks. This insult to his royal dignity causes the first physical symptoms of hysteria. The fourth shock is the unexpected unfavourable attitude of Regan, and the rejection of Lear jointly by Regan and Goneril, which follows immediately. He decides to leave both his daughters, and at that very

and Kent associates it witti th Qfuel and unjust treatment of the King by his ungrateful daughters.

Regan has had no Qhance till then of being harsh and unreasonable to Leqr as ht} h - so far betm st&ying with her elder sister.

5. Lear and Goneril both separately wish to hurry to Regan (after Lear's unpleasant break with Ooneril) and send their messengers to her and they both ask their m{'ssengers to bring back replies to their messages. Still it is nqt Ql af how the messengers (Kent and Oswald) could come baok anq whflt ans,w@f could be required as the King and Goneril themselves were following the messengers on their heels.

6. It is also not cl ar what stops Edgar from revealing his true identity to his father who woµld have been very happy.

7. Siplilarly th 13ru-l gf K nt after his banishment from the kingdom disguises pimself s Cahis &nd S@Qures employment as Lear's servant and despite Corpelif!'s rnqirnst at Dover he continues to retain his disguise. But the purpos of thts, is not made clear.

8. There is still another inconsistency. In claiming Cordelia's hand in marriage the Duke of Burgundy Is given perference and first choice over the l(ipg of Frn1w. Even the King of France asks the Duke of Burgunqy to giv his refusal before the King of France makes his choice.

9, Th@r is inexplicable delay in Edmund's effort to save Cordelia anct Le&r who hav@ b@n instructed to be executed by Edmund earlier.

10. Them is no information about the fate of the Fool.

AQcon:lin to A.C, Bradley the great Shakespearean critic:

Shakespear was more particular about "the dramatic effect of the gre t sc n{'s md upon certain effects not wholly undramatic, was exception lly careless of probability, clearness and consistency in smaller matters, introducing what was convenient or striking for a momentary purpose without troubling himself about anything more than the moment",

Severftl KJnds of **Madness in the Play-** There is no madness in the old play of King Leirt from which Shakespeare derived much of his rnat rial for hi play. Nor is there any madness in the story of Lear as told by Hollnshed, Spenser or in any other version before Shakespeare's time, &nd none in Sidney's story which provided the basis for Sh lcespeare's sub plot. Shakespeare's introduction of madness in his play must therefore have been prompted by strong dramatic motives and, indeed, the effect of madness as depicted in Shakespeare's play is

stories which he does not invent but the supreme artist invests these stories with rare charm and beauty with the help of blending the stories of the main and subplots and presenting the events and occurrences in a manner which is aesthetically satisfying.

Despite all the love, beauty and care bestowed on the construction of plots certain improbabilies and inconsistencies occur which are described and discussed below.

1. Edgar and Edmund are legitimate and illegitimate sons respectively of the Earl of Gloucester living under the same roof in the Gloucester Castle. Why should then, Edgar writes (according to Edmund's conspiracy) a letter to Edmund instead of communicating directly by word of mouth and that too when the matter broached in the letter happens to be of such a sensitive nature?

The Earl of Gloucester also does not seem of to notice why Edgar should write to Edmund.

Again the Earl of Gloucester does not recognize the handwriting of his own son and heir, Edgar and without scrutinizing and verifying accepts what Edmund desires him to accept and believe.

2. Similarly Edgar blindly walks into Edmund's trap (like his father) blindly without doubting the veracity of Edmund's statement. He does not take the trouble of approaching his father to find out the cause of his anger and unhappiness with Edgar. He, on the advice of Edmund, starts avoiding his father.

3. It also sounds incredible that the Earl of Gloucester when thrown out of his own Castle gate after his blinding and humiliation wanders without any help on the heath to "smell" his way to Dover.

The attempt to commit suicide by Gloucester also seems an incredible occurrence in so far as the Earl accepts Edgar's explanation.

Edgar's language at this time also presents an inconsistency in so far as he speaks differently-in a gentle manner with Gloucester and in the diatect of peasants when Oswald appears on the scene then switches back to the cultured language of gentlemen and the Earl of Gloucester does not express any surprise.

4. Although only a fortnight has elapsed since the opening of the play and Lear's breach with his eldest daughter Goneril with whom King Lear was living for a month according to the terms of abdication of power by Lear and there are already rumours of war between the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Cornwall (the husbands Goneril and Regan respectively), and also of the landing of French army on the English soil

Even "the good in the play is also of early human nature"... The character of the story and the atmosphere of the play lead us back to the twilight of a remoteage. The atmosphere is pagan in a very conspicuous manner:

King !ear swears by Apollo, Jupiter and by the sacred radiance of the sun. and invokes:

The mysteries of Hecat and the night,

By all the operations of the orbs

From whom we exist and cease to be

and this is patently pagan. This is not restricted to Lear alone but it pervades the atmosphere (the heathen nature). Kent, Cordelia, Edmund, Gloucester, Edgar all may be cited to be contributing to this pagan element.

The Earl of Gloucester in misery and agony lament:

As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;

They kill us for sport.

Similarly Edmund observes:

The gods are just, and our pleasant vices

Make instruments to Plague us.

Many references to beasts of prey cause the atmosphere to reek with animal savagery.

For instance:

...false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand, hog in sloth

fox in stealth, woff in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.

Or The fitchew nor the solied horse goes to it with a more riotous appetite.

As we read the play we begin feeling that the souls of all beasts have entered the minds and bodies of the mortal humans who are horrible in their venom, savagery, lust, deceitfulness, cruelty, filthiness, feebleness, nakedness, defencelessness, blindness.

No other tragedy of William Shakespeare is of more primeval and elemental atmosphere than 'King Lear'. According to Muir the play is neither pessimistic nor pagan but Maxwell holds that "'King Lear' is a Christian play about a pagan world."

William Shakespeare is the greatest poet-dramatist of the English language and literature. He was a versatile genius and a consummate artist. He displays extraordinary ability and technical skill in the construction of plots of his dramas. He exploits the potentialities of the

The treatment meted out to the king by his daughters and also to the Earl of Gloucester by the Duke of Cornwall in the former's own home are unthinkable in an age of refinement, culture and enlightenment.

Even the noble and faithful Earl of Kent partakes some of the bluntness and of other characters.

It is not the cearseness of conduct and expression which is reflected in the play but it is something more-there is remorselessness, consciencelessness, malignance and wickedness of a very base order which pervade and vitiate the atmosphere.

The play is full of horror because it depicts the breach and dissolution of family ties. It is the cause of unnatural cruelty to fathers (Lear and Gloucester) by their own children (Goneril- Regan on one hand and Edmund on the other), to sisters sister by sisters (to Cordelia by Goneril and Regan and to brother by brother (to Edgar by Edmund). So where there should have been love and respect we find hatred, cruelty, treachery and humiliation.

Besides the comment of Schlegel we have the observation made by Gervinus who says, "....the family horrors as we read in 'King Lear' have abounded for centuries, even among christian races. In to such times....Shakespeare has transported us in the most tragic of his tragedies.... The poet places us in the very centre of such an age, and brings actively before us a whole race, endowed with that barbaric strength of passion, in which almost without exception, the resistance of reason and conscience over the emotions of passion is powerless or dead ;.... No sting of conscience pricks most of the evil-doers either before, during or after the deed; no agonised reflection upon consequences restrains from crime; here is no Hamlet, no Macbeth, with excited fancy, with terrifying powers of imaginations, with the tender yearnings of an innate moral nature. These daughter of Lear, this Edmund, this Cornwall, this Oswald, frustrated in their designs, meet death without a symptora of remorse. ..... All human nature, in such a generation, goes blindly to extremes.

The background of the play is such that it lends credibility of existence and occurrence to the incidents of the play. The incidents of the opening scene can be credible only in a dreary and barbarous age.

King Lear's whim of listening to the professions of love by his three daughters takes him to the extreme of abdicating royal authority and income. He thus seals his own fate.

Both Internal and External Conflicts *exist* in Shakespeare's 'King Lear'. The External Conflict is between two groups one consisting of the evil doess Goneril, Regan, Duke of Cornwall Edmund and Oswald and the other Lear, Cordelia, Earl of Kent, Earl of Gloucester, Edger and Duke of Albany. The Internal Conflict is in the soul of King Lear himself and beside this the external storm on the heath pales into insignificance.

Thus on the evidence of above facts we may safely confer that 'King Lear' which is considered the most tragic of all Shakespeare's tragedies is a typical Shakespearean Tragedy.

William Shakespeare did not invent the stories for his dramas. He selected the stories from the available sources. In the case of 'King Lear' he selected the main story of Lear from Holinshed's Chronicles, an old play presented on the stage in his times, from an old ballad and from Spenser's Faerie Queen and coupled with it the incident of the Earl of Gloucester similarly selected from old sources. He makes suitable changes and adds, deletes or modifies to complete the play. It is the genius and art of Shakespeare which has made him immortal.

At the story of King Lear and the story of Gloucester belong to the past and form the stories of the main plot and subplot. These stories belong to the age of romance which in fact was a dreary and barbarous age and William Shakespeare retains the same atmosphere to form its background.

Shakespeare emphasises the circumstance that the people of England of that period were still heathens. It is for this reason that we come across so much of crudity of manners and culture even among the aristocracy. The instances to substantiate the above observations are numerous:

The shameless manner in which the Earl of Gloucester confesses the bastardy of Edmund is unbecoming of the sophistication and social etiquette of the Elizabethan Age.

The cruel, barbarous and haughty Duke of Cornwall, the two daughters, Goneril and Regan are also crude and barbarous:

Besides being royal he is large-hearted, noble and dignified (when he is in control of his wandering wits). Cordelia speaks of Lear :

" 'T is wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all."

In Shakespearean Tragedy the trials and tribulation of the tragic hero stem from same flow in his own nature. Thus the hero is the author of his own misery and ultimate doom. It is for this reason that it is said that in Shakespearean Tragedy "character is desting". In King 'Lear' Lear's own rashness, passion and vanity spell his tragedy.

Again in Shakespearean Tragedy the sufferings, trials, tribulations and agony of the tragic hero are exceptionally miserable and poignant. The magnitude and intensity of sufferings are contrasted with his former prosperity and happiness. His sufferings effect the purgation of emotion (Katharsis) of spectators.

The pathetic outbursts of Lear in the night storm on the heath are heart-rending and have about them a rare charm and grandeur which evokes pity and terror both in the spectators. His sufferings turn his wits. It can be asserted without fear of contradiction that 'King Lear' is the most tragic of all Shakespeare's tragedies.

There is still another feature of Shakespearean Tragedy. The hero rises to the heights of grandeur, to evoke sympathy for his tragic fate, just prior to this tragic end. Just before his death Lear regains his wits and it was during one of these lucid intervals that he realises the miseries and hardships suffered by the unfortunate poor people, that he did not do anything for them when he could, he recognized the injustice done by him to his sweet, noble and virtuous Cordelia, avoids meeting her even while he was at Dover on account of a sovereign shame, recognizes Cordelia and Kent begs forgiveness of his daughter for his conduct towards her. His reunion with Cordelia is most poignant.

This is true that the tragedy of the hero is traced back to his own actions-tragic flow-but this is aided and strengthened by external factors, which may be some abnormal state of mind supernatural element such as ghosts and witches and some coincidental actions occurrence. In 'King Lear' the action of Lear's tragedy is accelerated by Lear's insanity and Gloucester's tragedy is hastened by the chance occurrence of the Duke of Cornwall and Regan at Gloucester Castle and thus give opportunity to Edmund to exploit this to his advantage.

Development of action of events in a play is another important feature of Shakespearean Tragedy. The conflict is of two types- external conflict and internal conflict. The external conflict is physical and may be between two persons or two groups or between a person and a group.

which the audience can read into the words, either at the moment they are uttered or later on in retrospect. So it does not matter whether the two contrasted implications are realized are immediately. The secondary meaning may not be known to the person addressed or even to it may be concealed from the speaker, and the person spoken to but the spectators/audience may understand and know it. Thus there may be three variations of dramatic irony:

(i) The secondary sense is not known to the speaker himself to the audience.As

"..... *Be Kent unmannerly*

When Lear is mad. "

and we know that Lear went mad. Thus Kent's utterance (above) is ironical.

(ii) The secondary sense is not clear to the audience at the time of actual utterance but becomes evident in retrospect; and

(iii) The secondary sense is clear neither to the audience nor to the speaker at the time of speaking but becomes evident later on.

Thus dramatic irony is a very significant device to create and sustain the interest of the audience.

William Shakespeare has been acclaimed as the greatest dramatist and poet of the English language and literature. And William Hazlitt considers 'King Lear' as the best of all Shakespeare's plays.

In the light of Shakespeare's genius and 'King Lear's reputation we shall try to establish 'King Lear' as a typical specimen of Shakespearen Tragedy. But before doing so we shall make an effort to know what Shakespearean Tragedy is.

Shakespearean Tragedy is a story of the affliction and agony and ultimately of the tragedy of the hero who is inevitably and invariably a person of great eminence and very high social status (Macbeth, Othello, Julius Caesaer, Hemlet, King Lear are all examples of this fact). Such a personage is gifted with exceptional qualities of head and heart and mostly a person of noble birth. In 'King Lear', Lear, royal to the very marrow of his bones and to his finger tips, is the central and key figure. Besides being royal he is large-hearted, noble and dignified (when he is in control of his wandering wits). Cordelia speaks of Lear :

" 'T is wonder that thy life and wits at once

Had not concluded all."

Scene III of Act IV takes place in the French Camp near Dover on the eighth day. King Lear avoids meeting Cordelia. The events of Scenes IV, V and VI occur on the ninth day-Lear decked with weeds and flowers is found by Cordelia's officers , the British forces are on the march, Gloucester is saved by Edgar from committing suicide and Edgar slays Oswald when the latter tries to kill Gloucester.

The events of Scene VII of Act IV and Scerie I, II, and III of Act V, take place on the tenth day. It is just likely that some time might have elapsed between the occurrences of ninth and tenth days.

Thus the total duration taking into consideration the intervals that have elapsed between various scenes enacted actually on the stage cannot be, in any case, more than a month. It may be three weeks even.

spice and salt make the food delicious besides making it wholesome and healthful so are certain devices employed by the dramatists to make the play worth enjoyment.

William Shakespeare is the greatest dramatic artist and poet of English language and literature. He is the most consummate artist. Whatever he does he does naturally and artistically. We cannot perceive the signs of labour and effort. Every artistic grace seems natural and automatic.

Among the many elements introduced in the plays are pathos, humour, irony etc. here we shall discuss briefly the element of dramatic irony in Shakespeare's tragedy 'King-Lear'. Dramatic Irony is a king of contrast.

It generally happens, in dramatic literature mostly, that something said by a character has two contrasted implications one for the speaker and the other for the readers spectators. It may be an action also. For instance King Lear's professed intention in addicating royal power, authority, and income is two fold. He seeks to enjoy peace in his old age and also to avoid bloodshed and ill-well among his three daughters for the kingdom after his death. But in actual practice just the reverse of what King Lear intends happens. His action becomes instrumental in causing Lear humiliation and in destroying his peace and in becoming the cause of all the bloodshed and wickedness in the play. Thus it is the most significant and glaring instance of dramatic irony in the play.

Thus the device of dramatic irony on the part of the dramatist produces two points of contrasted views. It consists in the use of words by a speaker conveying to the audience, in addition to their own ostensible meaning, another and an ominous one hidden from himself,

It has already been pointed out that internal evidence is the basis of this affort. Thus according to Daniel:

The Scene I occupies one day. The Scene II occupies the second day. Daniel interprets the speech of Gloucester (Act I Scene II Lines 23-24)

Kent banish'd thus! And France in choler parted!

And the King gone to-night!

to mean that the king departed on the previous night.

Then Edgar, the legitimate son of the Earl of Gloucester, deceived by Edmund, remains in hiding for about two weeks and so about a fortnight elapses after the enactment of Scene II. This conclusion has been arrived at by Lear's speech (Act I. Scene IV Lines 279-280)

What! fifty of my followers at a clap;

Within a fortnight!

The action in Scene III takes the third day indicated by the expression "a little affernoon".

We have already spoken about Scene IV taking place after about a fortnight, Next Scene V takes place on the same day i.e., the fourth.

Act II begins towards the night of the fourth day (of action on the stage- not the total period since the beginning of the play). In Scene I the mock fight between Edmund and Edgar takes place, Edgar becomes a proclaimed offender, the Duke of Cornwall and his wife Regan arrive at the Gloucester Castle at night. The Scene II also takes place at about the same time because Kent and Oswald bearing letters form the king and Goneril respectively have followed Cornwall and Regan.

Scenes III and IV of act II and the Scenes I, II, III, IV, V and VI of Act III claim the fifth day on the stage. Much happens on these occasion and in these scenes and quite rapidly too.

Scene VII of Act III takes place on the sixth day. Goneril and Edmund leave for Duke of Albany's palace. Eyes of the captured old Earl of Gloucester are taken out and he is turned out of his own Castle door, Edgar disguised as a naked made beggar leads him to Dover.

Thus the events of Scene VII of Act III together with those of Scene I of Act IV occupy the sixth day.

Scene II of Act IV occupies the seventh day when Goneril and Edmund reach Albany's place and the messenger arrives here with the news of the death of Duke of Cornwall.

There is an interval about the duration of which Daniel is not scene.

is possible to argue that the Ghost here represents only Hamlet's own conscience urging and spurring Hamlet to revenge and, to some extent, scolding him for his inaction. But, then, Shakespeare could not have intended the Ghost to be accepted as real in Act I and to be interpreted as the voice of Hamlet's conscience here in the closet scene, as that would mean a contradiction. Both Bradley and Coleridge agree that the Ghost in the closet scene is not a hallucination, not a product of Hamlet's fancy. Bradley thinks that the Queen's failure to see the Ghost is due to the Ghost's ability to confine its manifestation to a single person in a company and the Ghost's desire in this case not to afflict the Queen with a visitation. The fact that the Ghost is not seen by the Queen has, besides, a moral implication suggesting that the woman has strayed so far from the path of honour that she is unable to receive spiritual visions. The Queen's failure to see the Ghost shows also that while there is a close and intimate relationship between father and son, there is a lack of any such close affinity between mother and son. In any case the second appearance of the Ghost and the Ghost's words that it has to come to whet Hamlet's blunted purpose have an obvious dramatic significance. This significance lies in the emphasis that is here put upon Hamlet's irresolution and his continuing neglect of duty, an important aspect of the character of Hamlet who has just impulsively killed a man hiding behind the arras but who is incapable of taking premeditated revengeful action against the King.

King Lear

Critical note on the duration of the action of 'King Lear'

The curiosity to know how much time might have elapsed in the occurrence as the action depicted in a particular play and also how much time has elapsed for the scenes and occurrences actually staged.

As a result of such curiosity efforts have been made to ascertain the duration of action of William Shakespear's masterpiece 'King Lear'. The best indication of the duration of time is provided through internal evidence and Eccles, the editor of the 1794 edition of 'King Lear' tried to ascertain the time consumed during the action of the tragedy. While trying to do this Eccks even went to the extent of taking the liberty of changing the order of scenes in Act IV.

Another effort, which was more convincing, was made by P.A. Daniel. His analysis was published in "The Translation of the New Shakespeare Society" (1877-1879). According to him the dramatic action (the action that was presented on the stage) took as many as ten days.

and Barnardo. It is then seen by Marcellus, Barnardo, and Horatio. Subsequently it is seen by Horatio, Marcellus, and Hamlet. It is true that the Ghost does not speak to any of the other persons and speaks only to Hamlet, and that also when Hamlet is alone. But this is not enough to establish that the Ghost has only a subjective existence or is a figment of Hamlet's imagination. Besides, we should not forget that Elizabethan audiences did believe in ghosts and that it was not a farfetched device for Shakespeare to introduce a ghost in this play. After all, Shakespeare introduced supernatural elements in some other plays too-in Julius Caesar and Macbeth, for instance. Nor have the majority of people ceased to believe in ghosts even today. We still have supernatural elements in some of our films and we have not ceased to respond to supernatural suggestions. And, to clinch this part of the argument, even if this Ghost were purely subjective, its dramatic importance in motivating the action of the play would still remain. The idea of revenge originates from the appearance of the Ghost to Hamlet and from the Ghost's words to Hamlet. (The Ghost's words could be a product of Hamlet's own fancy because the Ghost did not speak to anyone else, despite Horatio's effort in this direction.)

The Subterranean Speeches of the Ghost, Meaningless- However, it is not quite clear why Shakespeare employs the clumsy device of making the Ghost say repeatedly to Hamlet from under the ground: "Swear". The intervention of the Ghost through these subterranean speeches seems not only uncalled for but is jarring. This part of the Ghost's role is devoid of any dramatic significance. If anything, it weakens the effect already produced.

A Task Imposed on Hamlet- The Ghost's revelation greatly disturbs Hamlet's mind. It now becomes Hamlet's sacred duty to avenge his father's murder, and this is a task which he finds irksome. We already see Hamlet's aversion for action in these words of his:

> The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right!

An Antic Disposition; and a Play within the Play-The appearance of the Ghost is responsible for two other important developments in the play. A doubt enters Hamlet's mind as to the genuineness of the Ghost's revelation: the Ghost could be some evil spirit which came to tempt him. Accordingly, Hamlet would seek a confirmation of what the Ghost has told him. In his search of this confirmation Hamlet decides to put on an "antic disposition", and later to "catch the conscience of the King" through a play that he will stage.

The Second Appearance of the Ghost- The Ghost appears again when Hamlet is having a talk with his mother in her chamber. But this time the Ghost is visible only to Hamlet, while Hamlet's mother feels

incredulity. The supernatural element is heightened when Horatio refers to the strange things that were witnessed in Rome before the assassination of Julius Caesar. This being the Ghost of the late King of Denmark, it is probably a foreshadowing of some coming evil for this country. Critics are almost unanimous in praising the subtle means by which Shakespeare has produced an atmosphere of uncertainty, suspense, mystery, and fear in the opening scene by the talk about the Ghost, by its actual appearance, and by its effect on Horatio. Both Barnardo and Horatio accept the Ghost as a portent, or as an omen foreshadowing a coming event. The belief that disturbances in Nature foretell and accompany disturbances in human affairs has its sources in astrology and religion; and the belief was current in Shakespeare's day.

The Ghost's Appearance, a Bad Omen- It is when Horatio says that the appearance of the Ghost is a bad omen for the country that Marcellus asks why the manufacture of weapons of war is going on at a feverish speed in the kingdom. Horatio then explains the threat of war to Denmark from young Fortinbras. After the Ghost has gone, Horatio suggests that the matter should be brought to the notice of Hamlet, and the others agree. Thus we may conclude that the first scene leaves us with a haunting scene of unexplained evil troubling both the dead and the living.

The Secret Disclosed by the Ghost- Subsequently Hamlet sees the Ghost of his dead father and learns a shocking secret. The Ghost reveals how Claudius, who wears the crown of Denmar know, had murdered his brother, the then reigning monarch, by pouring poison into his ear when the latter was asleep, and how the murderer had given out that the monarch had died of a serpent's sting. The Ghost speaks in very harsh words of the murderer who has not only usurped the throne of Denmark but won the Queen to his shameful lust. The Ghost now lays a duty upon Hamlet. Hamlet must avenge his father's murder. He must not allow the royal bed of Denmark to be a "couch for luxury and damned incest", though he must do no injury to the Queen.

The Motive for Revenge Provided by the Ghost- Thus the supernatural appearance of the Ghost is most vital to the play. The play is concerned largely with the theme of revenge, and the motive for revenge is provided by the Ghost. The Ghost is indispensable from the point of view of the plot which hinges on the secret revealed by it to Hamlet. Of course, we may feel inclined to regard the Ghost as a personification of a vague suspicion in Hamlet's own mind that his father had not died of a serpent's bite but had been murdered by his uncle, the present King. But had it been Shakespeare's intention to treat the Ghost as a physical representation of mental doubts and suspicions, the Ghost would have been seen only by Hamlet. As it is, the Ghost has an objective reality. It is first seen, on two different occasions, by Marcellus

Ophelia. The result is that, so far as his relations with Ophelia are concerned, we have to depend only on external evidence.

Three Powers of the Soul Dramatized- According to one critic, the first six soliloquies of Hamlet dramatize the three powers of the soul-namely, memory, understanding, and will-and show how his memory and understanding are opposed to his will, while the seventh soliloquy is concerned with all three powers of the soul though the battle in Hamlet's mind is never decided at a conscious level.

Over-analysis of Motives- The soliloquies of Hamlet deepen Hamlet's tragic character by portraying him as a "thinking" man. His excessive introspection checks action by too curious a consideration of the need and justice of the action contemplated. The soliloquies contain an over-analysis of the motives of the action that is required of him. His mind weighs all that may conceivably be said for and against the course proposed.

The dramatic significance of the Ghost in Hamlet

Three-fold Significance of the Ghost- The Ghost in Hamlet has at least a three-fold dramatic significance. The Ghost, by introducing an element of mystery and fear, contributes to the general tragic atmosphere of the play. The Ghost motivates the entire action of the play by imposing a task upon Hamlet. And the Ghost shows up the characters, and drives home a certain moral effect.

An Atmosphere of Supernatural Mystery and Fear- The Ghost in Hamlet represents the supernatural element in this play and introduces an element of mystery and fear in it. The atmosphere of mystery is produced in the very opening scene when Marcellus asks: "What, has this thing appeared again to-night ?" Horatio is the sceptical scholar who will not believe in the existence of a ghost unless he sees it with his own eyes. When the Ghost appears, Horatio says: "It harrows me with fear and wonder". There is no doubt that the preliminary talk about the Ghost creates tension and fear, and that the actual appearance of the Ghost on the stage would "harrow" the audience too with "fear and wonder". Even in these scientific days, if we are reading a ghost story at night in lamp-light in a secluded cottage, we shudder with fear when the ghost is about to be introduced. The opening scene of Hamlet is, therefore, bound to be most effective when presented on the stage (and even otherwise, that is, in the study). The sense of mystery is deepened when the Ghost looks offended by Horatio's speaking to it and then stalks away. Horatio is now trembling and looking pale with fear. It is natural that the amazement and horror of Horatio should be proportionate to the degree of his former self-confidence and incredulity. The supernatural element is heightened when Horatio refers

to the hero's two tragic errors (failure to kill the King at his prayers, and the murder of Polonius). The third movement leads to the finale and the consummation, with four corpses on the stage. Thus Hamlet obeys the laws of dramatic construction.

The Prince of Denmark, the Focus of the Play; His Many-sidedness- Secondly, the focus of the play is the personality of the hero which gives to the playa unity which is the requirement of all great works of art. There may be different interpretations of the character of the Prince of Denmark and different approaches to him, but there can be no doubt that he is the centre of our interest. He is the most many-sided of Shakespeare's creations. Shakespeare presents him to us in all sorts of company. We see him with the girl he loves and with the mother whom he had adored. We see him with his closest friend whose temperament is the complement of his, and we see him with his school-fellows as he once knew them and as he learns to know them. He is a very different person with Claudius, with Laertes, and with Polonius. We laugh with him at Osric; with him we hold our breath in the dread presence of the Ghost. Perhaps he charms us most when he is with the common people, with the players and with the grave-diggers. And then, above all, we listen to him when he is alone; he confides to us his many moods. We know what others think of him, we know what he thinks of others, and we know also what he thinks of himself.

The Speculative, Irresolute Man- Nor is it fair to Shakespeare to say that Hamlet's character has been portrayed incoherently. Certain contradictions in the portrayal may be hard to reconcile but the central conception of Hamlet as the speculative man, irresolute, wavering, and lacking in the capacity for premeditated action, is clear enough. The figure of Hamlet, as it shaped itself in Shakespeare's imagination, is one of the very few immortal figures of art and poetry. He is one of the few world-characters: a supreme embodiment of the universal in the individual. As Goethe says, in this play Shakespeare sought to depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to the performance of it. And, as Coleridge tells us, in Hamlet we see a great intellectual activity and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it. Hamlet is brave and careless of death; but he vacillates because of his extreme sensitiveness, and procrastinates because of his excessive "thinking". T.S. Eliot, of course, disagrees with both Goethe and Coleridge, but the dominant impression that the play produces in us is one that conforms to the view expressed by these two men. Hamlet is too introspective and self-analytical as all his soliloquies show: "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I", "To be or not to be that is the question", "..... now could I drink hot blood", "Now might I do it pat, now he is praying", and so on. Hamlet is all self-reproach and irresolution. He does a lot, no doubt, but whatever he does is impulsive action. This play is preeminently the

No Objective Correlative to Hamlet's Emotion- T.S. Eliot tries to elaborate his view by remarking that Shakespeare found no "objective correlative" to Hamlet's emotion. Hamlet the man is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in excess of the facts as they appear. Hamlet's disgust is occasioned by his mother but his mother is not an adequate equivalent for this emotion; his disgust envelops and exceeds her. It is thus a feeling which he cannot understand and cannot objectify; and it therefore remains to poison life and obstruct action. None of the possible actions can satisfy this feeling; and nothing that Shakespeare can do with the plot can express Hamlet for him. The main reason for Shakespeare's failure in this play, according to Eliot, is that Shakespeare was rewriting an old play, and that traces of the crude original remained in the finished work.

Other Criticisms of the Play- Now, there is no doubt that Shakespeare's play can be criticized on various artistic grounds. The Hamlet who makes such speeches as "To be or not to be" and "What a piece of work is a man!" is difficult to reconcile with the Hamlet who insults Ophelia with his obscenities, who wishes to ensure the damnation as well as the death of his enemy, who murders Rosencrantz and Guildenstern without any scruple, and who speaks of the corpse of Polonius as "the guts". Accordingly, one of the critics tells us that an old play is wrenched by Shakespeare to new significance so that it was inevitable that the play should show the effects of the strain. The survival of cruder methods from the old melodrama give a touch of positive incoherence to Hamlet's character. There are a number of points which it is difficult to explain. Hamlet's age at the beginning of the play appears to be about eighteen; and yet, if we are to believe the First Grave-Digger, Hamlet at the end of the play is thirty years old. Horatio seems at one moment to be a stranger to Denmark and at another to know more about the causes of the armaments race than some others. Again, a large proportion of the main events which carry forward the action of this play, seem like chance events. They seem the work of fortune in her most casual, most random capacity. The "players" arrive entirely by chance; it is chance that the one opportunity Hamlet had to kill, proved no opportunity at all because the King was praying; the killing of Polonius is a chance; and so is Hamlet's meeting at sea with the pirates and subsequent return to Denmark.

The Artistic Construction of the Play- In spite of its faults and imperfections, Hamlet is a work of art, and a triumph of art. In the first place it has "form", with its action falling into three movements. The first movement (which fills Act I) is an act of exposition, leading to the words, "murder" and "revenge", and establishing Claudius as the mighty opposite of Hamlet. The second movement is devoted to creating, in the round, the personality of the hero, to proving Claudius's guilt, and

He says in Act V, Sc$_1$ ii, This is htJt a fatalist's surrender of his personal responsibility; it is the realization that man is not a totally free agent. With this realisation Hamlet cal1 face the fencing match without concern for self. He has come face to face with death in the graveyard scene. He has seen the body of an old friend dug up to make room for the body of the woman he loves. He can now defy augurs, for augurs can foretell only such things as success or failure: but only the man himself can face his own private horror and tise above it. So we have hamlet saying:

Th@ readiness is all.

Readiness Is bt)th a submission to providence and being irt a state of preparedrtess. Death matters, but readiness matters more. Shakespeare's heroes never renounce th wdtld; Hamlet's dying concern is for the welfare of the state and his tlwn worldly reputation. But these values, though never d€flied$_1$ are not the primary values at the end of the tragedies, What matters at the end of the tragedies is the spirit of man achieving grandeurj what matters is not success or failure but what a man is. And that is what we are left contemplating at the end of Hamlet-the nature of matt. We understand with Hamlet that the world is to be accepted as it is, a place where evil holds the poisoned rapier and the poisoned chalice waits; and in which if we win at all, it costs not less than everything. But in losing everything in such a way lies the glory of man:

Eliot's Criticism of the Play- T.S. Eliot has expressed the view that Hamlet, so far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, is most certainly an artistic failure. In several ways the play is puzzling and disquieting as is none of the others. Of all the plays, it is the longest and is possibly the one on which Shakespeare spent most pains; and yet he has left in it superfluous and inconsistent scenes which even hasty revision should have noticed. Both workmanship and thought, T.S. Eliot goes on to say, are in an unstable position. Coriolanus may not be as "interesting" as Hamlet, but it is, with Antony and Cleopatra, Shakespeare:s most assured artistic succ;ess. And probably more people have thought Hamlet a work of art because they found it interesting, than have found it interestiJ1g because it is a work of art. Eliot calls Hamlet the "Mona Lisa" of literature.

other characters of the play and thereby acquaints the audience with character development. It helps in the development of the plot, for in soliloquies are revealed the speakers' aims, proposals and decisions regarding an action. Only through this device can the dramatist communicate the secret thoughts of a speaker to the audience though it remains a secret to the other characters of the play. In Hamlet there are seven soliloquies spoken by Hamlet and they all reveal his speculative nature, the cause of his delay, his contempt for the world and his relations with others and so on. Through Claudius and Ophelia's soliloquies we get a clearer picture of both of their feelings. This is the only place where the characters could freely give vent to their feelings. Critics are of the opinion that if we were to remove the soliloquies, we would miss the opportunity of understanding the most precious aspect of Hamlet's character.

Comic elements. The comic element in Shakespeare's plays serves various purposes. It makes the play more realistic for earthly life which is a blend of both happiness and sorrow. Nobody is blessed either with happiness alone or with sorrows only. So even when a tragic play is enacted, a blending of both comedy and tragedy makes it more realistic. Secondly a touch of the comic relieves the people from the tragic tension of the play; at the same time it heightens the tragic effect.

The play within the play. The play within the play is enacted to confirm the Ghost's words of Claudius's guilt. Hamlet succeeds in his aim. In spite of that he still delays his action. It intensifies Hamlet's irresolution. Secondly it gives an opportunity to Shakespeare to criticize the contempory actors and playwrights. Hamlet is Shakespeare's mouthpiece in his attempt to advice the actors-to "suit the action to the word, the word to the action."

The language of the play. Shakespeare is much praised for his language for he freely uses the language without subjecting himself to any set rules and regulations. His use of recurrent images-dealing with disease, corruption, pain, suffering, death and the breaking of the laws of nature-similes and metaphors, and puns, all amuse and give intellectual pleasure to the audience. He does not stick to a single form, but uses prose for comic or less serious episodes and to suggest the speech of insane people, and blank verse for more serious passages. With this alternation of forms, Shakespeare emphasises the difference in the behaviour, status, emotions of character, as well as the intensity of scenes.

The tragic effect of 'Hamlet' and Hamlet's self-realization. In a tragedy the hero usually comes to the realization of a truth of which he had been hitherto unaware. In Shakespearian tragedy, there is a transformation in the character of the hero. When we first meet Hamlet he is in a state of depression. He has found corruption not only in the state but in existence itself. We soon learn that he had not always been so. By the final scene, his composure has come back to him. He no longer appears in slovenly dress; he apologises to Laertes, and he treats

is considered to be insane. But there is strong evidence to prove that his madness is feigned for Hamlet himself talks of putting 'an antic disposition.' He feigns madness when he chooses to, such as in the presence of Polonius, Claudius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and acts normally in the presense of those with whom it is safe to do so. However, he assumes madness not as a means to wreak vengeance but as a means to cloud his inaction due to his irresolution.

Character of Fate. It is true that the tragedy of Hamlet is mainly due to fault in the character. Though he is endowed with exceptional qualities like the other heroes of Shakespeare, Hamlet meets his tragic death on account of his irresolution which leads to his inaction. Fate plays an important part in everybody's life. It is Hamlet's fate that he has to avenge his father's death. It is only at the end that Hamlet realizes that one should act as best as one can for:

These is special providence in the fall of a sparrow...

Supernatural element. Shakespeare's use of supernatural elements which are neither gross and crude nor extraneous to the action was aimed at satisfying his audience which had a belief in supernatural power. The supernatural element of the play is provided by the appearance of the Ghost to provide an atmosphere of mystery and fear. This device serves different purposes of the dramatist. It creates an atmosphere of forewarning in the hearts of people that unnatural deeds are going to take place. It reminds us of the fact that there is a link between earth and the supernatural world, and the supernatural power has control over earthly strength. Above all it helps in the development of the plot for it is the Ghost which reveals to Hamlet the truth about his father's death and enjoins upon him the duty of avenging his father's death. It reveals an intimate relationship between father and son, which is absent in the relationship of Hamlet and his mother, for the Ghost speaks only to Hamlet.

Soliloquies. Shakespeare makes use of soliloquies to reveal the inner thoughts of characters as well as each character's opinion about other characters of the play and thereby acquaints the audience with character development. It helps in the development of the plot, for in soliloquies are revealed the speakers' aims, proposals and decisions regarding an action. Only through this device can the dramatist communicate the secret thoughts of a speaker to the audience though it remains a secret to the other characters of the play. In Hamlet there are seven soliloquies spoken by Hamlet and they all reveal his speculative nature, the cause of his delay, his contempt for the world and his relations with others and so on. Through Claudius and Ophelia's soliloquies we get a clearer picture of both of their feelings. This is the only place where the characters could freely give vent to their feelings. Critics are of the opinion that if we were to remove the soliloquies, we

Ans. Opening Scene. Shakespeare's opening scenes are always masterly in effect. The opening scene strikes the key-note of the play. It prepares the audience and arouses interest in the audience as well as creates the desired atmosphere before introducing the major characters. Shakespeare has conveyed the atmosphere of gloom, mystery and unrest in the country-neither the King nor the Ghost is at peace. The opening scene provides the audience with a number of facts-unexpected death of the King; Hamlet has not succeeded his father; a danger of an attack from Norway. Thus Shakespeare catches the attention of the audience and prepares them for the incidents to follow. Indeed, he has successfully overcome the initial difficulty of every dramatist.

Plot construction. Far from being a dramatic failure, Hamlet is a well-constructed play. It is a work of art which abides by the rules and laws of a good literary work. The whole play falls into three movements. The first is the 'Act of exposition.' The Ghost exposes the act of murder and entrusts the hero with the duty of revenge. This first movement leads to the second movement and creates the personality of the hero. He feigns madness, and gets the play enacted to prove the King's guilt. Here, the whole thing turns against Hamlet himself to bring about the tragedy in the third and final movement. The hero kills a father and has to die by the vengeance of a son. The final movement exposes the contrast and similarities between laertes and Hamlet and arouses the hero's feelings to finish his action as well as the play. Thus the movement of the plot is well-constructed. The main revenge theme is well interrelated with other themes of faithlessness, love, ambition, madness, honour, sanity-themes which can be understood by everyone. Finally there is establishment of order and coherence.

Hamlet's irresolution and procastination. Though Hamlet has got the strongest possible promptings such as the murder of his father, his mother's dishonour, Claudius usurping his crown, the Ghost's revelations, yet why does he delay action? It is due to his irresolution and procastination. Hamlet, by nature, is prone to think rather than act. He sets aside the golden opportunity that comes in his way to kill Claudius when he is alone at prayer, on grounds of moral idealism. His internal and external conflicts are the obstacles in his way to success. Because of his brooding nature he digs the grave for the Polonius family and finally for himself. He is conscious of his irresolution, but cannot help it. The result of the irresolution is that though much is expected of him only little is achieved by him.

Problem of Hamlet's madness. Much has been written on Hamlet's madness-whether it is genuine or feigned. A few critics are of the opinion that it is genuine in his talk with Ophelia when his offers are refused by her. Hence he speaks daggers to her and asks her to join a nunnery. Again in the churchyard when he grapples with Laertes he

womanly love and all womanly fidelity and constancy. We notice how Hamlet says that frailty is the name of women, and that is why he hates his mother as well as Ophelia while they are alive but after their death they are purified in his eyes; but then, the tragedy is complete in the grave of both Gertrude and Ophelia as it is also complete in the grave of himself and of Laertes and Claudius, the main victim of Hamlet's revenge.

In Shakespearean tragedy, character is destiny in the sense that character is responsible for all the misfortunes or calamities that follow and ruin the life and career of the hero in the play. But then, it does not mean that character is the sole factor in shaping the destiny of the hero: circumstances or situations also are contributory factors just as they happen in actual life in which not merely the defects of human nature but also something of the environments, circumstances and situations, over which there is no human control, are also partly responsible for bringing about calamities to the hero as well as to others in the play. Character may be the main factor because human character is supposed to have free will which *guides* his actions and shapes his destiny; but otherwise the circumstances and situations in the physical or material world are powerful enough to change the destiny of man. For example, in actual life, sometimes the son of a poor man may turn out to be a great political leader or a great scientist or a great writer, or just as the son of a millionaire or a great ruler or a great politician may be a beggar or a criminal or a fallen creature in morals and other respects, so nobody can say that circumstances alone shape the destiny of man or that character alone builds his career.

But, according to Greek conception, man is a mere puppet in the hands of his circumstances, and as such his virtues or vices, his defects or merits of character have nothing to do with his success or failure, or with his fortune or misfortune in life. This is, of course, an extreme view which is not at all true because we find in actual life that human will and environments both shape the destiny of man. Shakespeare who always held the mirror up to nature must have taken into consideration the influence of circumstances as much as the tendencies of human nature while driving his characters to a happy or an unhappy end. The supernatural element in Shakespeare tragedies is a potent influence that goes to make up the element of fatality in the life and career of the hero as we find in HAMLET. The Ghost is one of the greatest influences that drive to instigate Hamlet to his revenge or in Macbeth it is the witches that provoke the ambition of Macbeth and drive him to his tragic end by their equivocations which tempt men with honest trifles and betray them in the deepest consequence.

without being put to action. Therefore, it is not merely his ambition, which is the flaw in his character, but also the peculiar circumstances of the King's visit to his castle and also his encounter with the witches that are really responsible for the tragedy of Macbeth.

The real flaw in Othello's character is his credulous nature, which makes him suspicious, and his credulity and suspicious are further fanned by the villainy of Iago. So, Othello's credulity and Iago's villainy are the real cause of the tragedy of Othello. It is Iago who forms the peculiar circumstance or who creates the situation for Othello to be the victim of credulity and suspicion and thereby wreacks the peace and happiness of his life by strangling to death his innocent Desdemona.

In Julius Caesar we find the great flaw of imperialism or haughtiness which creates enmity in persons like Brutus and other senators; but then, had there been no jealous and evil-minded persons like Cassius, Brutus could not have been mis-guided and Caesar would not have been murdered, and consequently, there would have been no tragedy in the play.

In the case of Hamlet we find in him one flaw-his thoughtful, philosophic and speculative nature, which makes him slow and cautious and calculating in all his actions. This slowness or delay in action is the real cause of the tragedy in his life. There is doubt in his mind whether the ghost is really his father's spirit.

The spirit I have seen
May be a devil; and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape .....
..... I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

Of course, side by side, Claudius, who is an incarnation of lust and greed for power, creates the peculiar circumstances such as the murder of Hamlet's father and the seduction of Hamlet's mother for the fulfilment of both the weaknesses. That is how the tragedy of Hamlet is brought about. Had there been no Claudius and had not Hamlet been a man of speculative nature, no misfortune, no suffereing could have come to him. Shakespeare in his great teagedies creates peculiar characters and also special circumstances which slowly lead up to the tragedy. In Hamlet there is the Ghost which also serves as the peculiar circumstance to lead Hamlet, the hero, to the fulfilment of revenge which, however, is not the real flaw in Hamlet's character. His trait for his love, for his father and mother, his love of the virtues of fidelity, constancy and loyalty, all of which are turned into disqualifications by the idealistic spirit of Hamlet, who cries against all womanly virtues, all

the unity of action has been preserved. The reason is that these two under-plots are very brief and are not entirely irrelevent. they do not effect the singleness of impression which this play produces, If we regard Prospero's exercise of his magic power as the main theme of the play, then even the two conspiracies, one by Caliban and the other by Antonio and Sebastian, fall into place as integral parts of the play.

This is what a critic has to say about the unity of action in the tempest. "In the tempest the main interest is Prospero's exercise of his magic powers. The storm and drifting ashore of the vessel; the frustration of the two conspiracies, one of which is directed against Prospero; the magic banquet and the masque; the assembly of the characters at the close; the betrothal and final righting of wrongs; in fine, all the chief incidents of the Tempest are brought about by Prospero working through the agency of Ariel, and his influence, whether he be present or not, is felt throughout. So entirely does the action of the piece depend upon his will that the play might have been called by his name 'Prospero'.

Plenty of Supernatural situations- 'The tempest' contains a very large number of supernatural elements. The whole action of the play is governed by magic. Practically every important event in the play is a result of Prospero's magic power. The storm and the supposed shipwreck, the rescue of the passengers and their being scattered in different groups on the island, the ship being safely brought ashore with the sailors sent to sleep in the ship's hold, the coming together of Ferdinand and Miranda, the defeat of the Conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian, the foiling of Caliban's intrigue, the strange banquet and its disappearance, the songs and music of Ariel, the masque of Juno, the teasing and tormenting of Caliban by the spirits, all these are supernatural situations.

Supernatural beliefs of Shakespeare's time- In Shakespeare's time many superstitious and supernatural beliefs were current. Belief in magic was very widespread. Two kinds of magicians were supposed to exist in those days-those who commanded the services of certain superior supernatural beings, and those who were believed to have entered into contract with the devil. Prospero belongs to the first category. He commands eleven demons, and goblins through the medium of Ariel, and he uses his powers for beneficent purposes. In accordance with popular tradition, Shakespeare has given due prominence to Prospero's use of his books, his magic wand, and his mantle. Prospero employs all four classes of spirits-spirits of fire, water, earth and air-but always either directly or indirectly through the medium of Ariel. He employs them for various purposes. The supernatural beings in this play represent not the principle of evil but the principle of good. Besides, the supernatural beings here act

extent, of Antonio and Sebastian. The play ends with a scene of reconciliation and restoration.

The intrigue of Caliban- The intrigue of Caliban against his master, Prospero, is a brief and comic under-plot in the play. In spite of Prospero's efforts to humanize and civilize Caliban the latter remains a brute and always hates Prospero. This monster even tried to violate the honour of Miranda. He always utters curses upon Prospero. When chance brings him into contact with the drunken Stephano and Trinculo, he hatches a plot for the murder of Prospero. The plot is, however, frustrated by Ariel and all the three conspirators are chased away by Prospero's spirits appearing in the shape of dogs and hounds. It is apparent that Caliban's intrigue is not very closely interwoven with the main plot which is Prospero's revenge upon his enemies, Antonio, Alonso and Sebastian. This under-plot provides a comic interest in the play and serves also as a relief to the tension caused by the conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian against Alonso.

The Conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian- Another under plot in the play is the conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian to murder Alonso. Finding Alonso and other members of the party asleep, Antonio instigates Sebastian to murder his brother Alonso, a suggestion to which Sebastian agrees without much hesitation. This plot is also foiled by Ariel, when the two villains are out to strike at their victims, Ariel awakens the unsuspecting Alonso and Gonzalo. This under-plot also does not have a very close connection with the main plot. It, however, serves to emphasise the villainy and the wickedness of Antonio and sebastian and thereby makes Prospero's forgiveness of these evildoers even nobler. Besides, this intrigue is an example of what is known as "parallelis". Just as Antonio was trecherous towards his brother Prospero, so Sebastian proves treacherous towards his brother Alonso.

Love of Ferdinand and Miranda- The love of Ferdinand and Miranda, which constitutes one more under-plot, is closely interconnected with the main plot. Miranda is the daughter of Prospero, while Ferdinand is the son of Prospero's enemy, Alonso. The falling in love of these two is intended to emphasize the reconciliation and restoration of happy relations between opposing parties which form the keynote of the whole play. The theme of the play being forgiveness and reconciliation, the union of Ferdinand and Miranda sets the seal upon that forgiveness and binds Prospero and Alonso with a close tie. Besides, the wrong that was done to the infant Miranda is now rectified by her union with Ferdinand. Thus the love affair of Ferdinand and Miranda, apart from providing a romantic interest in the play appears to be an inseparable part of the larger design of bringing about the final reconciliation.

In spite of the existence of there under-plots, two of which are not very closely related to the main plot, critics insist that in The tempest

prisoner, calls out to MaJvolio and speaks to him as if he (Malvolio) were really mad. Malvolio tries his utmost to convince the curate that he is not mad; but the curate (who is no other than the Clown and who is at this time acting as Sir Toby's collaborator) insists that MaJvolio is mad. Here the irony results from the contrast between the Clown's pretence that he is the curate and the reality which is that the Clown is only abetting and aiding Sir Toby in his malicious design against Malvolio.

The Purpose Served By Irony in This Play- Almost all the humour, and some of the wit, in this play arise from the use of irony; and thus the irony here serves to enhance or heighten the comic effect though in a few cases such as that of Olivia and Antonio, and to some extent in Malvolio's case, the use of irony has a slightly melancholy or saddening effect on the characters involved, and also on us.

The Tempest

Unity of action-So far as the plot of the Templet is concerned, it is generally said that the play observes the unity of action. The unity of action requires that a play should contain one main and central interest of motive. Strictly speaking, the unity of action does not permit any sub-plots or under-plots. There should be one single plot and all situations and incidents should contribute to its development, without diverting the attention of the audience to other matters. Generally speaking the romantic comedies of Shakespeare contain one main plot and several sub-plots. The tempest is no exception. However, in this play a singleness of impression is produced inspite of the introduction of a couple of under-plots; for this reason the critics say that the unity of action in this play has been preserved.

The main plot-The main plot in the tempest is the story of Prospero's sweet revenge upon his enemies through the exercise of his magic powers. Prospero has been robbed of his dukedom by his villainous brother, Antonio, with the active support of Alonso, King of Naples. Along with his infant daughter, Miranda, he was exposed to the dangers of waves and winds on the sea and only through the kindness of Providence did he land safely upon an Island. He has spent twelve years of solitary life on the Island and has been able to attain vast supernatural powers. Then comes an opportunity for revenge. His enemies fall into his hands. They are entirely at his mercy. But Prospero's revenge is forgiveness. "Rarer action is in virtue rather than vengeance," he says, but the evil-doers must not be forgiven too easily. They must be made conscious of their guilt and they must be made to feel remorseful and repentant. Through the agency of Ariel, Prospero

ucceeds in awakening the conscience of Alonso and, to a much lesser

gets betrothed to him, still thinking him to Cesario. There is irony behind all these situations because only Cesario and we know the real identity of Cesario, whereas none of the other characters knows it. The Clown, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, and Olivia herself make all sorts of mistakes because they mistake Sebastian for Cesario. Then Antonio, mistaking Cesario for Sebastian, begins to accuse Cesario of ingratitude because Cesario says that he does not even know who Antonio is. Cesario's failure to recognize Cesario causes much pain and distress to Antonio who wrongly thinks that his friend Sebastian has proved an ungrateful man. Here the irony makes the situation somewhat painful to us also, but all the other situations owe their comic side to the irony resulting from Viola's disguise.

The Irony of the Duke's Passion for Olivia- All the situations enumerated above are characterized chiefly by comic irony which results from Viola's male disguise. But we have some more situations also in this play which are characterized by comic irony. The Duke appears to us to be an ardent, romantic lover because of the highly poetical and eloquent speeches which he has been making about Olivia's beauty and about his love for her. But ultimately, when Cesario's real identity becomes known, and when the Duke finds that Olivia has already got betrothed to Sebastian, he quickly transfers his love from Olivia to Viola, and offers to marry Viola. This shift in the Duke's stand exposes the hollowness of the love which he had been avowing for Olivia. In other words, the Duke's love for Olivia proves to have been more of a myth than a fact, so that all his poetic speeches throughout the play come to have an ironical character, though this irony is only perceived by us at the end of the play while the Duke himself is still ignorant of this irony. In this case the comic irony is perceived by the readers and the audience retrospectively.

The Irony Behind Malvolio's Interpretation of Maria's Letter- Then there is a lot of comic irony behind Malvolio's reading of the letter forged by Maria, and behind his reactions to the contents of that letter. We know that Malvolio is reading a forged letter but he himself believes that the letter had been written by Olivia. When he appears in yellow stockings, which have been cross-gartered, and with a smile which does not seem to end, we are greatly amused because of the irony behind the situation. Malvolio genuinely believes that he is acting in accordance with Olivia's wishes as expressed in the letter, but we and some of the characters (Maria, Sir Toby, Fabian, and the Clown) know very well that the letter had been forged by Maria, and that Malvolio has become a dupe of that ingenious device which Maria had adopted to befool him.

The Irony of the Clown's Disguise as a Curate- There is similar irony behind the Clown's disguise as the curate, Sir Topas. The Clown, standing outside the dark room where Malvolio is being held as it

particular situation becomes even more ironical when Cesario speaks of a sister who had fallen in love and who, having felt compelled to keep her love a secret, had pined a thought, and had sat like Patience on a monument, smiling at grief. Cesario here goes on to say that he is all the daughters of his father's house; and this remark is in itself ironical. Both Cesario and we know that he is talking about his own love for the Duke, and that the sister about whom he is talking is he (or she) himself, but the Duke does not have the least notion of the real facts of the case, and he therefore takes Cesario's remarks on their face value.

The Irony Behind Olivia's Passion for Cesario- A similar irony is to be found in all the meetings which take place between Cesario and Olivia. Cesario comes to Olivia with a message from the Duke, and Olivia, who is not in love with the Duke, falls in love with Cesario at first sight, not knowing that Cesario is, in reality, a woman. Thus a situation, which is amusing for us, develops because we are in full possession of the facts of the case, while Olivia is ignorant of them. Olivia becomes infatuated with Cesario and, throwing all her dignity and even all decorum to the winds, begins to speak to Cesario about her passionate love for him in an ardent and vehement manner. This sort of thing goes on till the very end when Cesario's real identity is disclosed by Cesario himself. In this case, Olivia does suffer some distress because of Cesario's continuing indifference towards her; but these meetings between Cesario and Olivia certainly have their comic aspect because of the irony behind them.

The Irony Behind Sir Andrew's Challenge to Cesario- Viola's male disguise leads to several other situations of the same kind. The Clown, for instance, speaks to Cesario as if Cesario were actually a man. Then Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and Fabian also deal with Cesario as if he were a man. In fact, Sir Toby, wanting to have some fun, brings about a situation in which Sir Andrew writes a challenge to Cesario to fight a duel with him. Sir Andrew is actually a coward who would certainly not want to fight a duel, while Cesario is in reality a woman who does not even know how to handle a sword and who, therefore, becomes terribly nervous at the very thought of the duel to which he has been challenged. This situation gives rise to a lot of mirth which Sir Toby and his companions enjoy fully, and which we also enjoy. All the comedy of this situation is the result of the irony which exists here.

The Irony of Mistaken Identities- Subsequently Viola's disguise leads to the Clown's mistaking Sebastian for Cesario; and Sebastian, not knowing who the Clown is, gets rid of him by giving him a tip. Soon afterwards Sebastian is mistaken for Cesario by Sir Andrew and Sir Toby, with the result that the two knights draw their swords against Sebastian, thinking him to be Cesario, and get wounded by Sebastian in the fight which ensues. Then Olivia herself mistakes Sebastian for Cesario and

case. In such a situation the readers or the audience in a theatre know the true facts of the case while some of the characters in the story are absolutely ignorant of the true circumstances though some other characters may be in the know of those circumstances. Sometimes irony may result from the contrast between what a character in a story thinks is going to happen or is likely to happen and what actually happens. The reverse of what a character anticipates may happen; and then we perceive the irony only when the reverse has happened and recall what the character or characters had anticipated. Sometimes we understand all the implications of a situation while some of the characters or all the characters are ignorant of some of the implications or of all the implications. Such a situation would also then be ironical. Irony is deliberately employed by an author to add to the tragic or the comic effect of a remark or of a situation or of a happening, as the case might be. In other words, irony may be used to heighten the comic effect or the tragic effect, depending upon the circumstances of the case. Irony permeates the whole of Twelfth Night. Indeed, the whole play is pervaded by irony; and there is hardly a situation which does not gain a special interest by virtue of the irony in it or behind it.

The Irony in the Situations in Which Cesario and the Duke Figure- Viola's disguising herself as a man and giving to herself the name of Cesario gives rise to most of the irony in this play. Viola, disguised as a man having the name of Cesario, gets a job in the Duke's service and rapidly gains promotion, so that the Duke begins even to speak to her (or to him) about his personal life. The Duke tells Cesario about his passionate love for Olivia, and he then deputes Cesario to go and deliver a message of love from him to Olivia. In other words, the Duke now appoints Cesario as his emissary to woo Olivia on his behalf. Now, we know that Cesario is in reality a woman by the name of Viola, but the Duke is not aware of the true identity of Cesario. The Duke wrongly thinks Cesario to be a man. Thus the situation becomes amusing for us; and our amusement here results from the contrast between what the Duke thinks to be the case and what we know to be actually the case. This situation becomes even more amusing because of its irony when the Duke begins to admire Cesario's face and features, saying that Cesario's lips are smooth and beautifully red, and that his voice is as sweet as a woman's. Cesario knows and we also know, that he is in fact a woman with such lips and such a voice; but the Duke is absolutely ignorant of the true facts of the case. Later too every situation in which the Duke and Cesario figure, is marked by a similar irony. On one occasion, for instance, the Duke expresses the view that women's love is fickle while men are constant in their love, and Cesario thereupon expresses the opposite view, saying that men say more and swear more but that their love is more of a show and a display while women are capable of loving firmly and without fluctuating in their love. This

Sir Toby, but who had also been humiliated and degraded by having been treated as a madman and being imprisoned in a dark room by the group of conspirators, with the Clown fully cooperating with them in his role of the curate, Sir Topas.

The Songs and Their Relevance-This brief survey of the development of all the three strands of the story shows how closely all the strands have been interwoven to create a unified design. One important aspect of the structure of the play, however, remains to be considered. The Clown sings three or four songs in the course of the play, one of which he sings at the very end as a sort of epilogue to the play. Now, these songs too have been brought into a close relationship with the plot and cannot therefore be regarded as something superfluous or something thrust upon the play. The first song, "O mistress mine" is sung by the Clown at the specific request of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew who are in a merry mood and are enjoying themselves, as is their wont. The two knights even give some money in advance to the Clown for singing a song; and the Clown sings this particular song because they have asked for a love song. The next song, "Come away, come away death," is sung by the Clown at the Duke's request. The Duke had heard this song on the previous night and had liked it very much because it "dallies with the innocence of love." Besides, this song suits the Duke's habitual mood which is one of melancholy. The next song, sung by the Clown, is intended by him to ridicule and harass Malvolio still further; and this song is perfectly in keeping with the Clown's purpose to mock at and persecute the steward who had, early in the play, censured the Clown without any reason whatever. The final song of the Clown serves as the prologue, and it also has some significance' as a comment on the various stages of human life. Thus none of the songs is irrelevant to the play. In fact, all the songs are integral to the play's structure.

The Meaning of Irony-Irony always results from some kind of contrast, generally a contrast between appearance and reality. The commonest form of irony occurs when a man makes a remark when he means just the opposite of what he has said. But irony may also result from a contrast between what a character in a play or in a novel says and what actually is the case. In other words, a character may say something which 1s opposite to the reality of a situation, though he himself is not aware of the reality. The speaker himself does not know the reality while we know it. Thus the speaker says something in ignorance of the reality which is just the reverse of what he has said. Similarly, irony may arise from a contrast between what some of the characters in the story believe to be the case and what actually is the

to be mistaken for Sebastian. The possibility of such misunderstandings contributes greatly to the complication in the main plot as also in some of the events in the sub-plot pertaining to Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Sir Toby. In the next scene of this Act, Viola is made aware of the fact that Olivia has fallen in love with her. Viola does not know how this tangle will resolve itself. The tangle has resulted from her assumption of a male disguise. In the scene, which follows, Malvolio incurs the wrath of Sir Toby and Maria, while the Clown is already annoyed with him. Maria conceives of a plan to befool Malvolio in order to teach him a bitter lesson for having shown disrespect to Sir Toby and his companions. Thus the sub-plot about the gulling of Malvolio now takes shape, with Maria hitting upon a definite device which consists in giving Malvolio the impression that Olivia is in love with him and would like to marry him. In this way the events continue to happen, sometimes the developments in the main romantic plot being depicted before us, and sometimes developments in the comic sub-plots being presented to us. Olivia falls more and more deeply in love with Cesario who refuses her love, while the Duke's passion for Olivia does not diminish in the least even though she continues to reject his suit. At the same time Sir Andrew continues with his illusion that Olivia would soften towards him even though we know that no such thing would happen, and that Sir Toby is giving Sir Andrew this hope and this encouragement only to exploit him financially. An important development in the comic sub-plot pertaining to Malvolio takes place when Malvolio begins to think that Olivia has really fallen in love with him and when, encouraged by a letter forged by Maria, he puts on yellow stockings, cross-garters them, and appears before Olivia with an endless smile on his face. Malvolio's behaviour at this time is so absurd and preposterous that Olivia describes it as "midsummer madness". Maria's plan has really borne fruit, and Malvolio has most effectively been gulled.

The Comedy of Errors, and the Resolution of the Complications- The main plot also has its comic side. Sebastian is mistaken by the Clown, by Sir Andrew, and by Sir Toby successively, for Cesario, and then even by Olivia who actually manages to get betrothed to him, thinking him to be Cesario. Cesario, on the other hand, is mistaken as Sebastian by Antonio who is soon afterwards taken into custody by the Duke's officers. Sir Andrew, who had attacked Sebastian, thinking him to be Cesario, is hit back by Sebastian and badly wounded. Sir Toby receives similar treatment from Sebastian. All the confusions are, however, cleared when Cesario discloses his real identity as a woman of the name of Viola. Sebastian is now reunited with his sister Viola; Olivia is content to accept Sebastian as her would-be husband because he resembles Cesario in every respect; and the Duke now decides to transfer his love from Olivia to Viola. The only malcontent at the end is Malvolio who had not only been ridiculed and gulled by Maria and

of the three strands. What is even more important is the fact that the main plot is brought into an intimate relationship with both the comic sub-plots, so that a unified pattern emerges at the end of the play, and even during the play.

What Happens, and Whom We Meet, in Act I of the Play- In the opening scene of this play we meet the love-sick Orsino and learn about his beloved Olivia's resolve to lead a secluded life for seven years on account of her grief over the death of her brother. In the following scene, we meet Viola and learn about the ship-wreck in the course of which she had been rescued by the ship's captain, and we learn also about the possibility of her twin brother having survived the ship-wreck. In the next scene we are introduced to some of the characters, namely Sir Toby Belch, Maria, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, who figure prominently in the two comic sub-plots. In the next scene we find that Viola, who has assumed the disguise of a man having the name of Cesario, has taken up a job in the service of Duke Orsino, and that the Duke has decided to make use of Cesario as an emissary to carry his messages of love to Olivia. The Duke does not know that Cesario is actually a woman of the name of Viola. Viola herself now falls in love with the Duke who is in love with Olivia. In the final scene of Act I we meet Olivia herself, and we also meet the Clown whom she maintains in her service at her residence, and Malvolio, who is her steward. Then Cesario arrives to deliver the Duke's message of love to Olivia who does not love the Duke at all and who now falls in love with Cesario, not knowing that Cesario is actually a woman in the disguise of a man. Act I has thus introduced us to all the major, and even the minor, characters of the play, with the exception of Sebastian and Antonio whom we shall meet in the first scene of Act II. In Act I we have also been acquainted with some of the important facts which serve as a basis for the subsequent developments in the play. The main complication of the play has already taken shape by the end of this Act, and the germ of the two comic sub-plots already exists in Sir Andrew's ambition to marry Olivia, and in Malvolio's disparaging remarks about the Clown.

Further Developments in the Main Plot and in the Sub-Plots- In the opening scene of Act II we meet Sebastian, Viola's twin brother, who had been rescued from drowning in the sea by a sea-captain of the name of Antonio. Sebastian now decides to try his luck at Duke Orison's court, while Antonio, who has become very devoted to Sebastian, decides to follow Sebastian at a later date even though he has many enemies at Orison's court. With the appearance of Sebastian on the scene, the seeds of the misunderstandings and the confusions, which will soon take place, have duly been sown because Sebastian resembles Cesario in physical appearance and in almost every other respect, so that Sebastian is likely to be mistaken for Cesario, and Cesario is likely

man living in a world of the imagination till he is shocked out of his dream-world and brought into contact with the realities of his situation. Viola is a charming woman, humorous, witty, optimistic, acquitting herself well enough in her male disguise, and ultimately achieving the fruition of her love. Olivia is an amiable, genial, even vivacious, lady, independent-minded, candid, free from all inhibitions, attaining her heart's desire, though in a somewhat modified form. Maria, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, Fabian-they are all real human beings, in fact too real in their zest for life, their merry-making, and their devil-may-care attitudes. Nor is Malvolio-a Puritan of sorts, loving himself and deluded into the belief that his employer (Lady Olivia) has fallen in love with him-any less real.

Shakespeare's Non-Observance of the Three Classical Unities- Shakespeare *did* not pay any heed to the classical rule about the three Unities of time, place, and action in the writing of his plays. And yet the construction and the structure of the plots in his dramas show him as a superb craftsman. Twelfth Night violates all the three unities. The action of this play extends over several weeks or, perhaps, months; the scene of the action shifts from the capital city of Illyria to the sea-shore, and from the sea-shore to the capital city of Illyria; and, in the city itself, from the Duke's palace to Countess Olivia's residence, and from there to the city streets. Furthermore, we do not have here a single story but a combination of two or three stories. The point to note is that the non-observance of the unities has not in any way done any damage to the play which is one of the best so far as the execution of the dramatist's design in writing this play is concerned.

Three Strands of the Story of the Play-The plot of this play has three strands. First, we have the main plot of which the theme is love. Duke Orsino has fallen in love with Countess Olivia who falls in love with Cesario who, being in fact a woman in the disguise of a man, has fallen in love with the Duke. Thus here is a tangle which needs to be resolved, and which is duly resolved towards the end of the play. Then there are two comic sub-plots: one is the gulling of Malvolio, and the other is the gulling of Sir Andrew. These two sub-plots develop almost simultaneously with the development of the main plot, so that we do not, at any point in the course of the play, become so engrossed in the main plot as to forget the sub-plots. In successive scenes, the development of the comic sub-plots is brought to our notice even as the romantic main plot is moving forward briskly. The interest of the story, and of all the three strands of it, does not diminish or dwindle or decline at any point. In fact, we wait eagerly for the next development in each

Cesario, who belongs to the main plot, on the other. But it is only at the end that Malvolio is brought into a relationship with the main plot when he is summoned by Olivia because she wants him to arrange for the release of the sea-captain who had rescued Viola. Sir Andrew is certainly related to the main plot because he is a candidate for the hand of Olivia; and then he is brought into contact with Cesario who too belongs to the main plot. But it must be admitted that the inter-connection between the main plot and the two subplots is flimsy, so that we cannot claim for this play that unity of action which was the requirement of ancient classical drama. And yet the playas a whole does possess a harmonious structure so that at no point do we get a mental jerk or jolt. The comedy of the play coheres well with the romantic elements; and no impression of any disharmony and no jarring effect are produced. As A.W. Verity points out one notable quality of this play is "its harmony of design and execution". The main plot and the sub-plots are worked out "with no omissions or superfluous details, so that each part is fitted to its place; and they are all combined into a harmonious whole,"

Plenty of Action in the Play- If there is plenty of witty and amusing dialogue in this play, and if there are a plenty of amusing situations too, there is also plenty of action and adventure in it. Of course, we do not have any sensational and melodramatic incidents or events; but there is no dearth of incident and activity. There is a ship-wreck; and there is the rescue of Viola and of Sebastian by two different sea-captains. There is a brief account of the past life of Antonio who proved himself to be a bold and daring fighter on the sea, so that the Duke addresses him as a "notable pirate" and "salt-water thief'. Then there are quarrels, brawls, and fights in which Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, Antonio, and Sebastian get involved and, in the course of which, Sir Andrew and Sir Toby acquire bleeding coxcombs (that is, bleeding heads). Viola's disguise as a man, who acts as the Duke's emissary of love, is in itself an adventure; and Olivia's bold action in getting a priest and prevailing upon Sebastian to get betrothed to her is another adventure. The fooling of Malvolio involves a lot of behind-the-scene activity on the part of Maria, Sir Toby, and Fabian. All these incidents certainly make the story of the play an absorbing one.

Character-Portrayal- In the last resort, it is by virtue of the vividness and variety of characterization that a play endures; and Twelfth Night is by no means wanting in this respect. We here meet a large number of characters who actually live before us and who convince us of their existence by their actions and their talk. The characters here are no dummies or puppets but actual human beings who move about, talk, and manifest their wishes, desires, likings, dislikes, thoughts, and motives through what they say and what they do. The Duke is a fanciful

the proposed duel between him and Cesario by offering to Cesario his horse as a sort of bribe or compensation. Then there is the humour of the situation in which Olivia wooes Cesario, not knowing that Cesario is a woman. Here the humour arises from the irony behind the situation. And there are a number of other situations also in this play which amuse us because of the irony behind them.

Wit- Twelfth Night abounds in witty remarks which come from several characters. There is the professional wit of the Clown; and there is the wit of Sir Toby and his confederate, Maria. Viola and Olivia are witty too; and Duke also makes a slight contribution to the totality of wit in the play. There are witty exchanges between the Clown and Olivia, between the Duke and the Clown, and between Olivia and Viola. The two wittiest persons in the play are Sir Toby and the Clown; and their wit is often of the sparkling kind. In fact, with the exception of a few dull remarks, everything that either Sir Toby or the Clown says is witty. To take only a couple of examples of the wit of these two persons, Sir Toby says to the steward, Malvolio, who is a kind of puritan: "Dost thou think because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" This remark has become famous and is often quoted. And the Clown, on being told by Cesario that he had seen him recently at Duke Orsino's palace, says: "Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun, it shines everywhere." The Clown also shows his wit in proving to Olivia that she is foolish in mourning the death of her brother whose soul, according to her own admission, is at this time in heaven, enjoying heavenly bliss.

The Structure of the Play, and its Essential Unity- Shakespeare did not, of course, observe the three classical unities in his plays except in one play (namely The Tempest). Thus Twelfth Night does not have a single plot. It has, of course, a main plot but it has also two subplots which occupy considerable space in the play. The action of the play is spread over several weeks or perhaps months. And the unity of place too has not been observed because certain incidents occur on the sea-shore, certain incidents at Olivia's house, certain incidents at the Duke's palace, and so on. The main plot concerns the love of the Duke for Olivia, Olivia's love for Viola, and Viola's love for the Duke. These love-affairs constitute one single pattern because they are closely interwoven. One of the two subplots pertains to Malvolio who is befooled by Maria, Sir Toby, and Fabian. The other sub-plot pertains to Sir Andrew who is gulled by Sir Toby and Fabian. Both these sub-plots run parallel to the main plot, and at various points in the play they are brought into some sort of a relationship with the main plot. At one point Sir Toby and Sir Andrew get entangled with Cesario, thinking him to be a brave young man; and, at another point, they become entangled with Sebastian whom they have mistaken for Cesario. Here we have some inter-connections between Sir Toby and Sir Andrew on one hand and

emissary, Cesario, not knowing that Cesario is actually a woman. Subsequently, Olivia marries Sebastian who closely resembles Cesario (or Viola) in appearance and in every other detail, and the Duke marries Cesario who has turned out to be Viola. In the course of the wooing, which goes on in the course of the play, the Duke speaks in passionate terms about his love for Olivia whose beauty and charm he praises in glowing words. Likewise, Olivia speaks of her love to Cesario in an ardent and fervent manner. What is more, Olivia falls in love with Cesario at first sight, just as the Duke had fallen in love with Olivia at first sight. Love at first sight is always more romantic than other forms of love. But love is not the only romantic element in this play. There is something romantic about the friendship of Antonio and Sebastian. Antonio takes a fancy to Sebastian and then risks his life for the sake of Sebastian. This friendship reminds us of a similar friendship between Antonio and Bassanio in the play, The Merchant of Venice. There is something romantic about our Antonio's past life also. Antonio had, on one occasion, fought against the Duke's fleet of ships on the sea, and had distinguished himself by his bravery and daring. There is also the romance of improbable incidents and coincidences in the play Both Sebastian and Viola are rescued from drowning in the sea by sea captains but neither of them knows that the other has also been rescued. Then both Viola and Sebastian try their luck at the court of Duke Orsino though they do so separately, without knowing anything of each other's whereabouts, and without even knowing about each other's survival.

The Comic Elements in the Play- There is a lot of comedy in this playas there is in Shakespeare's other romantic comedies. The comic spirit in Shakespearean drama always manifests itself in two forms-as humour and as wit. Humour is something wider in scope than wit. Wit is always wordy; that is, wit always shows itself in words, in what is said or spoken or written in words; while humour is a general term for anything that makes us laugh, whether it is a remark or a situation or a happening or an incident. In Twelfth Night, humour appears in the fooling of Malvolio and in the gulling of Sir Andrew. Malvolio is befooled on the basis of his vanity or his ego or his feeling of self importance or his self-conceit. He is made to believe (by Maria) that his employer, Lady Olivia, is in love with him, and would like to marry him; and. as a result of this delusion, he behaves in a most absurd and ridiculous manner which would send the audience in a theatre into peals of laughter. Sir Andrew is gulled because of his stupidity. He is first made to believe that he can win the heart of Lady Olivia and win her hand in marriage. Actually, Sir Andrew is a credulous and vain country knight who stands not the ghost of a chance of winning Olivia's heart. He too behaves most foolishly, thus exciting our mirth. And then he is further befooled by his friend (Sir Toby) who gets him involved in a quarrel with Cesario. Sir Andrew is a coward who tries to withdraw from

exits, leaving only the Clown behind on the stage. This song serves as the epilogue to the play, besides serving certajn other purposes. This song contains a brief account of the various stages in the development of a human being, from childhood to adulthood, then to manhood and matrimony, and finally to old age. This agrun is partly a pessimistic song because rajnfall is a phenomenon which occurs throughout the life of a man. Rainfall symbolizes, of course, disappointment or misfortune, as opposed to sunshine which symbolizes happiness and joy. Some critics have expressed the view that this is a trivial song irrelevant to the play, while others have regarded it as a significant and meaningful song. According to one critic, this song, sung by Shakespeare's most philosophical clown, conveys the idea that what is true of the individual life as described in this song is true of all mankind. This song, then, though apparently nonsensical, is in reality a commentary on the events of the play. The last line of each stanza: "For the rain it raineth every day," is a refrain in the singing of which the whole audience would join, thus neutralizing the pessimistic idea of the song but also heightening the pessimistic effect by their collective singing. The last two lines of the song are addressed directly to the audience and contain the singer's promise that it would be the effort of the actors to please the audience every night by their performance of this play. Some critics have rejected this song as sheer nonsense but they are mistaken in this attitude. Shakespeare was not only a dramatist but an actor and a practical man of affrurs, out to entertain all those willing to pay for their amusement. He knew very well the value of nonsense in entertaining the audience. Everyone, whose life is at all worth living, has a capacity for nonsense on certain occasions. Shakespeare thought that some nonsense would be appropriate at the end of Twelfth Night, especially because the nonsense here has a mixture of wisdom in it and because that element of wisdom can serve as a commentary on the events of the play and is a fitting corollary to the first song beginning: "O mistress mine!"

A Romantic Co edy- Twelfth Night may be classified as a romantic comedy. As such it belongs to the category of The Merchant of Venice. Much Ado About Nothing, and As You Like It. The label "romantic comedy" is used for those plays which combine romantic elements with comic elements, and which have a happy ending.

The Romantic Elements in the Play- The most romantic element in any form of literature is love, that is, the love of men for women, and of women for men. A love-affair is always something romantic; and in Twelfth Night loves constitutes the main theme of the story. When the play opens, we find Duke Orsino speaking of his love for Olivia and subsequently wooing Olivia through his emissary, Cesario. But Cesario, who is really a woman by the name of Viola, falls in love with the Duke, while Olivia, who is loved by the Duke, falls in love with the Duke's

suffered any such disappointment, he would be able to function as a jester in Olivia's household. Far from conveying the Clown's own feelings, this song accords well with the Duke's temperamental melancholy because only moments later, the Clown says to the Duke: "Now the melancholy god protect thee!" The Clown evidently knows that the Duke would feel more pleased with a sad song than with a joyous one. Once again we may note that the Clown is given some money for his singing, this time by the Duke for whose entertainment the song has been sung. When the Duke gives him the money, the Clown makes it clear that he has not found singing a laborious task because singing is itself a source of pleasure to him. Thus the Clown enjoys singing and at the same time makes some money by the exercise of his talent for singing.

The Clown's Next Song, a Comic One to Humiliate Malvolio. The Clown sings another song when, in the disguise of Sir Topas the curate, he stands outside the dark room in which Malvolio has been imprisoned by Sir Toby. Through this song the Clown first tells Malvolio that he would surely go and bring some paper and ink for him to enable him to write a letter to his mistress (Olivia), and then he begins to mock at Malvolio by speaking about Malvolio as if Malvolio were the devil while he himself were the old Vice riding on the back of the devil and beating the devil with a wooden dagger. Now, this song is also suited to the occasion on which it is being sung, like the two previous songs. Here the Clown, acting as Sir Toby's agent, is harassing and tormenting Malvolio; and that is why he speaks about Malvolio in a disparaging and even insulting manner, and speaks of himself as old Vice beating Malvolio, the devil. In this connection it should be remembered that old Vice used to be a character in the "morality" plays of the fifteenth century. This character used to carry a wooden dagger and he used to make fun of the devil by leaping on the devil's back and beating him with the dagger, even though at the end the devil carried Vice off on his back to hell. The devil used to keep his nails unpared or untrimmed. Therefore, when the Clown here tells Malvolio to trim his nails, it is equivalent to calling Malvolio a devil. Furthermore, in Shakespeare's own time the devil was supposed to have got into the body of a man who had gone mad. Already, the Clown in the role of Sir Topas has said that Satan or the fiend or the devil has entered Malvolio's body; and in this song the Clown merely repeats that idea. But the main thing is that this song contributes to the Clown's harassment and humiliation of Malvolio who is at this time being treated by his tormentors as a madman. This song, therefore, enhances the comic effect of the whole episode of the gulling of Malvolio, even though in this last phase of this episode Malvolio wins our sympathy too.

The Last Song, Its Value and Significance. The last song comes at the end of the play when all the other characters have made their

her time and not to delay her response to his love. The lover points out to his mistress the fact that love is not to be enjoyed in the future but in the present: "Present mirth hath present laughter." He further points out to her that the pleasure of love cannot be multiplied by being postponed: "In delay there lies no plenty." He then asks her to come and kiss him sweet and twenty because the period of youth in human life does not last very long. The last line of this song, "Youth's a suff will not endure," has been regarded by some as indicating the Clown's own pessimism. But this interpretation is not very convincing because the Clown is singing a song which he has not himself composed but which he had picked up from somewhere and memorized. It should be regarded as a purely objective kind of love-song having nothing to do with the Clown's personal thinking. Most probably this song was an old ballad not even composed by Shakespeare but in existence previously. It is also to be noted that this song is by no means irrelevant to the occasion on which it is sung. Sir Andrew and Sir Toby are in a merry mood, and they are both fond of music. It is perfectly natural for them to ask the Clown to sing a song for their pleasure; and the Clown is glad to oblige them, especially because he has been given some money in advance. The Clown is a needy fellow who welcomes tips of this kind. Then the song has its inherent value also because it celebrates the joy of youthful love which expects to be fulfilled without any delay. The Clown has a sweet voice and he has here sung a beautiful love-song. No wonder that even a fool like Sir Andrew comments on the song in the following words: "A mellifluous voice, as I am a true knight." Furthermore, this song becomes the starting-point for the collective singing of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew, and the Clown, whose loud voices soon afterwards provoke Malvolio to rebuke the singers, and especially Sir Toby.

The Sadness of the Second Song, and Its Appropriateness. The next song is sung by the Clown at the special request of the Duke who had heard it on the previous night and who now tells Cesario that this song is one which is generally sung by women spinning and knitting wool when they sit in the light of the sun and weave their threads. This song, the Duke further says, expresses a simple truth and deals lovingly with "the innocence of love". In this song the lover calls upon death to come to him, and bids life get away from him because he has been "slain by a fair cruel maid". The lover then says that no one as faithful as he ever lived in this world and died of love. He further says that no flowers be placed on his coffin and that no friend should come to attend his burial. The spirit of this song is in sharp contrast to that of the first song which the Clown had sung. This is a mournful song lamenting the lover's disappointment and frustration, and anticipating his death as a consequence of that frustration. Here again we must not make the mistake of thinking that the Clown is expressing any personal disappointment in love. We cannot believe that, if the Clown had

major songs besides the one which comes at the end. Apart from that, there are a few references to music in general at various points in the play. Considering that this play was written to be performed on occasion of the Feast of the Epiphany on the 6th January (that is, on the twelfth night after Christmas), it should not surprise us that music and singing figure so prominently in the play. Music and song are part of almost every festival; and as the twelfth night after Christmas is a night of festival, music and song would inevitably form part of the celebrations of that festival. Here the role of music is fundamental to the very spirit of the play. The Duke's opening speech shows that his musicians are playing instrumental music which he regards as the food of love and which he demands to an excess so that he may soon afterwards feel tired of it. Then, later in the play, the Duke again asks for music: "Give me some music" (Act II, Scene iv). The Duke here calls upon someone to sing the "old and antic song" which he had sung last night.

However, the song had been sung by the Clown who appears a few moments later and sings it for the Duke's pleasure and receives some money from him as a reward. Subsequently Olivia tells Cesario that she would rather listen to his voice than to the music of the spheres. Evidently, to Olivia's ears Cesario's voice would sound sweeter than the music which the planets were supposed to produce in the course of their revolutions. Thus music in this play does occupy an important position, perhaps as a subsidiary theme.

All the Songs in This Play, Sung By the Clown. Then we come to the songs sung by the Clown. It was not Shakespeare's original intention to assign all the singing to the Clown, Feste. This becomes evident from the fact that Viola was to be presented to the Duke as a eunuch who could "sing and speak to him in many sorts of music", and not as an attendant to serve him. Even in Act II, Scene iv, it is Viola disguised as the attendant Cesario who is asked by the Duke to sing him the "old and antic song" which had been sung to him on the previous night; and here too it is Feste the Clown who actually sings that song because it had been sung on the previous night also by Feste. In any case, all the songs, as they stand in the play, are sung by the Clown; and singing thus becomes the Clown's additional qualification because as the Clown he is not required to be a singer as well, his only role as a Clown being that of the professional jester. It seems that the company of actors who performed this play in Shakespeare's time had a singer among them, and that this particular actor performed both the roles, that of the jester and the singer.

The First Song, and Its Dramatic Importance. The first song sung by the Clown begins with the line, "O mistress mine, where are you roaming?" This song is sung by the Clown at the special request of the two knights. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, both of whom pay him some

that the Clown is a poet who has himself composed songs to express his own frustration in love and in life generally. There is only a passing reference to his sweetheart, and there is no reason to assume that his absence from duty at Olivia's house is due to any personal unhappiness. All his jokes are merry or cheerful jokes without any taint of personal sadness.

The Persecution of Malvolio - Of course, there are situations in this play where some of the characters feel deeply troubled; and there are recurrent touches of melancholy and sadnes. The most distressing event in the play for us is the cruel manner in which Malvolio is treated by Sir Toby, Maria and Fabian, though this remark does not apply to the entire plot hatched against him by Maria and the others. We are here thinking only of that part of the plot in which Malvolio is treated as a madman and imprisoned in a dark room. It is only this part of the play which causes us some pain. Here the plotters go much beyond the scope of comedy, and here they harass, persecute, humiliate, and degrade Malvolio so much that he becomes a truly pathetic figure and ceases to be a comic one. Here even the Clown joins the others in tormenting Malvolio. Here even we begin to think that Malvolio is being notoriously abused or wronged.

The Distress of Some of the Other Characters - Then we also have a few other depressing situations in the play. Antonio's dismay at not being recognized by Cesario is certainly amusing but it has its depressing aspect also. Till the final recognition scene, Antonio remains in a state of the deepest disappointment and distress because of what he believes to be Sebastian's ingratitude. We certainly pity Antonio in this predicament of his. Then there is the frenzy of Olivia's love. While Cesario's indifferent and even scornful attitude towards Olivia does have its amusing aspect, Olivia's ignorance of the real identity of Cesario imparts to her love a certain sadness; and even in the long run we cannot believe that Olivia is feeling that intensity of joy at her forthcoming marriage to Sebastian as she would have felt in getting married to Cesario if Cesario had turned out to be a man. Of course, there is nothing to sadden us about the Duke's decision to marry Viola because his love for Olivia had not really been the kind of passion which he had claimed it to be. And, of course, there is no reason for us to feel any pity for Viola who has achieved her heart's desire. On the whole, then, we cannot describe Twelfth Night as a painful comedy, though we do surely agree that it is a delightful romantic comedy with strong hints of sadness in it.

The Importance of Music in "Twelfth Night"

Music has an important place in the scheme of Twelfth Night as a play which begins with a reference to the effect of music on a lover's mind, and which ends with a meaningful song that also serves as the epilogue to the play. In the course of the play we have as many as three

come when he would not be able to afford cakes and ale, and when there would be no Sir Andrew to spend money on him. Maria resents being a subordinate in Olivia's house, and it is to escape from this bondage and the sense of subordination that she marries Sir Toby who would certainly not make an ideal husband. All three - Feste, Sir Toby, and Maria - make jokes, laugh, and put on a show; and yet the general impression which they produce on an audience is not simply one of Merry England; and, in fact, they assume an air of jollity as a cover. We never quite forget that Sir Toby is milking Sir Andrew that maria befools and harasses malvolio chiefly to entangle Sir Toby in marriage, and that Feste humours the knights who call him "sot" in order to obtain sixpences from them. Through the haze of the good cheer of all these persons, we can see "the smiler with the knife under the cloak", says our critic. The sub-plot pertaining to Malvolio, in this critic's opinion, contributes not merely a frolic, not merely sunny radiance and good nature, but a sense of the precariousness of life and even the fragility of life.

The Pain and Distress of the Principal Characters - But this is not all. Our critic then speaks about the sadness of Malvolio who is subjected to a most unjust and degrading treatment by Sir Toby and his confederates. Of course, there is much comedy in the manner in which Malvolio is treated, but there is much that is painful too in this treatment. This critic also speaks about the sad moments of the principal characters in the play. Orsino seems to him in pain throughout the play, though the pain is more of an imaginary nature than real. Viola and Olivia are both driven to frenzy and desperation by their love. The sadness of the principal characters finds a concentrated expression in the final scene. Though the double marriage at the end has generally been regarded as the happy ending of a romantic story, we should remember that the two pairs of lovers consciously enter a love-relationship with their partners only in the closing moments of the play. Orsino decides to marry Viola without having previously known that Viola had been in attendance upon him in her male disguise of Cesario; and Olivia agrees to marry Sebastian, not knowing previously that the man with whom she had fallen in love was actually a woman in a man's disguise, and that her fiance now is that woman's twin brother.

No Sadness in Maria's or Toby's Outlook, in Our Opinion - Now, we cannot deny that there is considerable truth in this critic's view. There certainly are several depressing situations and distressing actions in this play, though we would not go so far as to regard even Sir Toby, Maria, and Feste as examples of unhappiness. There is no substantial evidence to support the view that Feste the Clown is a mournful figure. Feste's songs cannot be treated as expressions of the state of his own mind. We cannot believe that the Clown has himself composed these songs. He has merely memorized some popular songs which he then sings to entertain his listeners. By no stretch of the imagination can we believe

The Clown is in the employment of Olivia; but he comes into contact with the Duke, with Cesario (or Viola), and even with Sebastian. In fact, the Clown encounters each of the characters of the play at one point or the other. He is a really witty clown who is always ready with some amusing remark or the other. He is able to prove, for instance, that Olivia is a fool because she is mourning the death of her brother who has gone to heaven where he is enjoying heavenly bliss. The Clown also makes a witty remark by commenting upon the Duke's character in one of his speeches : "Now the melancholy god protect thee, and the tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for thy mind is a very opal". In fact, barring a few nonsensical remarks, every remark made by the Clown is a witty one. The wit of Olivia and Viola adds to the comedy of the play, as does the wit of Sir Toby and Maria.

Twelfth Night is a painful comedy

According to a critic, Twelfth Night is one of the most delightful of Shakespeare's comedies but, despite its delightfulness and its undoubtedly genial spirit, it also hints at life's dark shadows. Another critic goes much further and expresses the view that Twelfth Night may aptly be described as a painful comedy. This second critic adduces considerable evidence in support of his view. He begins with the Clown, Feste, who has generally been regarded as the master-mind and controller of Twelfth Night, and as the comic spirit and president of the play. This critic does not agree with the view that Feste represents the spirit of serenity and gaiety, and that he lives in a sunny realm of flitting fancies. He does not agree that there is always sunshine in Feste's heart, and that the radiance of this sunshine spreads over the whole scene in which he moves. According to this critic, even the songs sung by Feste are not merry and gay songs, not even the first song in which the lover invites his beloved to come and kiss him sweet and twenty. The closing line of this song, according to this critic, is definitly sad : "Youth's a stuff will not endure." The second song sung by Feste is definitely pessimistic because the lover here speaks of the death which he is about to meet because of the cruelty of his beloved. As for the last song sung by Feste, the very refrain of this song is indicative of its general pessimism : "For the rain it raineth every day." This refrain, says our critic, expresses the very essence of Feste who sings it after all the other characters have left the stage.

The Apprehensiveness Behind the Gaiety of Sir Toby and Maria - Our critic then goes on to consider Sir Toby and Maria who are the moving spirits of the comic plot against Malvolio. These two persons certainly love a good laugh but even they, according to our critic, live in economic dependence and they do not like it. Feste has to take tips, and resents the necessity. But Sir Toby also knows that an evil day would

him immediately, without any hesitation, and kiss him sweet and twenty because present mirth has present laughter, and because youth is a stuff will not endure. This is surely a romantic lover's passion seeking its fulfilment. The second song, "Come away, come away death", is a disappointed lover's lament at the callousness of his sweetheart. The lover here complains: "I am slain by a fair cruel maid." The lover believes that he is already dead and is going to be buried. He would not like any flowers to be placed on his coffin, and he would not want any friend of his to come and mourn his death. This song bemoans a disappointed lover's sad fate, but there can be no doubt about the romantic nature of this lover and of his passion.

The Comedy Arising from the Befooling of Malvolio - The comedy in Twelfth Night is provided chiefly by Sir toby, Maria, and Fabian, all of whom join together in gulling Malvolio. Maria's device for befooling Malvolio and the success of that device constitute the highlight of comedy in this play. Malvolio is already having a silly notion, which had, even initially, received encouragement from Maria, that Olivia has a soft corner for him in her heart. Maria has studied Malvolio's character well, and has come to the conclusion that he is a self- opinionated and conceited man. She therefore builds her plan to befool him on this trait in his character.

The Befooling of Sir Andrew, and Also of Cesario - Sir Toby befools Sir Andrew also, thus adding to the humour of the play. Sir Andrew is a simpleton who has been given an impression by Sir Toby that Olivia will, in course of time, agree to marry him. Harbouring this hope, Sir Andrew spends money on Sir Toby's drinking and becomes a puppet in Sir Toby's hands. Sir Toby enjoys a lot of fun at Sir Andrew's expense in other ways also. For instance, he tells Sir Andrew of the many accomplishments, such as dancing, which he possesses and which he must not hide from other people. "Wherefore are these things hid ? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before them ? Sir Toby asks Sir Andrew, thus pulling Sir Andrew's leg. Later, Sir Toby instigates Sir Andrew to write a challenge to Cesario; and then, with the assistance of Fabian, he befools both Sir Andrew and Cesario. This befooling of the two persons, both credulous and therefore gullible, also provides much merriment to Sir Toby and Fabian, and also to us. As Cesario is also here drawn into the comic plot against Sir Andrew, some sort of connection in established between the main plot and this sub- plot. As for the comic plot against Malvolio, such a connection already exists because Malvolio is Olivia's steward, and the two moving spirits behind that plot are also members of Olivia's household.

The Clown's Contribution to the Comedy of the Play - The Clown contributes much to the comedy of this play; and the Clown belongs to the main plot as well as to the comic sub-plot pertaining to Malvolio.

The Duke's Passionate Love for Olivia, a Romantic Element - The chief romantic element in Twelfth Night is, of course, sexual love of a passionate kind. In the very opening scene, we find Duke Orsino pining for Lady Olivia with whom he had fallen in love at first sight. In a love-sick mood the Duke calls upon his musicians to continue playing on their instruments to feed his passion of love. He talks in a poetical manner about the effect of music on the human heart, and he speaks in an even more poetical manner about the nature and quality of the passion of love. Love, he says, has the power to give rise to countless images and shapes in the human mind, so that "it alone is high fantastical". The Duke than goes on to speak in a poetical manner about his amorous desires which are pursuing him in the same manner in which merciless hounds pursue a deer. The Duke is obviously a romantic kind of lover. Later in the play the Duke speaks in glowing terms about the beauty of his beloved Olivia, describing her as the "miracle and queen of gems."

Olivia's Passion for Cesario, Another Romantic Element - Olivia's love is definitely genuine and therefore much more romantic in the final reckoning than that of the Duke. She too falls in love at first sight, and love at first sight is always regarded as being more romantic. Now, Olivia does not have the least idea that Cesario, with whom she has fallen in love, is in reality a woman in the disguise of a man. She tells Cesario in frank terms that she had felt compelled to convey her love to him through the ring which she had sent him, and that it had not been possible for her to hide her love. She says in this context that, if Cesario says something to show that he too loves her, she would regard his words as being sweeter than the music of the spheres.

Viola's Romantic Passion for the Duke; and Sebastian's Ecstasy - It is Viola's passion for the Duke which proves to be most truly and genuinely romantic. She too falls in love at first sight, and she inwardly resolves to marry the man (namely the Duke) who has caught her fancy : "Whoever I woo, myself would be his wife." When she tells Olivia how a disappointed lover behaves, she is indirectly describing the intensity of her love for the Duke. She tells Olivia that a disappointed lover would build a willow cabin at his beloved's gate, wtire love-poems addressed to her, and shout her name in the dead of the night to the echoing hills. Speaking to the Duke, she again gives expression to her own love in an indirect manner, attributing her love for the Duke to her sister who is, of course, a fictitious person. She thus describes the plight of her love-sick-sister.

Two Romantic Love-Songs, Sung By the Clown - The romantic character of the play is, of course, enhanced greatly by the two songs of love which the Clown sings. The first song, "O mistress mine, where are you roaming?" expresses the lover's wish for his sweetheart to come to

and his power of expression are at their highest. This is the time of his supreme masterpieces. His attention is, however, occupied exclusively with the darker side of human experience. The sins and weaknesses of man form the theme of his plays; the emphasis is thrown on evil and the tone is either grave or fierce.

(4) **Period of the Later Comedies or Dramatic Romances (1608-1612) :** The plays of this period are: Pericles; Cymbeline; The Winter's Tale; The Tempest; and the unfinished Henry VIII. During this period the temper of Shakespeare has changed from bitter and gloomy to serene and peaceful. The heavy clouds have melted away from the sky. A tender and gracious tone prevails. The groundwork is still furnished by tragic passion, but the evil is no longer permitted to have its way. The evil is controlled and conquered by the good. At the same time, they show the decline of Shakespeare's dramatic powers. They are often careless in construction and unsatisfactory in characterization, while there is a decline in style and versification also.

Critical note on Twelfth Night as a romantic comedy

A Skilful Mingling of the Romantic and the Comic Elements :- A romantic comedy by Shakespeare is a combination of romance and comedy, that is, a mingling of certain romantic elements and certain comic elements. The mingling of the two ingredients, romantic and comic, is always skilful in the sense that no discordant note is struck, and that the two ingredients do not seem to have been artificially brought together. In other words, there is always a skilful interweaving of the romantic with the comic elements. In Twelfth Night, we find an abundance of comedy, and we also have a substantial romantic content; and both these ingredients have certainly been brought into a close relationship with each other.

The Meaning of Romance - The word "romance" in general means passionate love between men and women, though it has certain other meanings as well. Romance includes any kind of fervour and any deep sentiment. Thus, in Twelfth Night the friendship of Antonio and Sebastian is definitely romantic. The word "romance" also implies danger , adventure, and a heroic spirit. Anything thrilling or sensational is romantic. And this too we find in Twelfth Night. This is clearly perceptible in Antonio's war-like past, and in the daring which both Antonio and Sebastian show in facing Sir Toby and Sir Andrew. Furthermore, the word "romance" implies improbability, surprise, and coincidence. In Twelfth Night we have such improbable incidents as the rescue of both Viola and Sebastian by different sea-captains, and thereafter both Viola and Sebastian wanting to try their luck at Orsino's court. There is a lot of improbability in the manner in which, on several occasions, Sebastian is mistaken for Cesario and vice versa.

an actual shipwreck. It is quite evident that Shakespeare thought little of success and had no idea that his dramas were the greatest that the world had ever produced. He made no attempt to collect or publish his work. After a few years of quiet at Stratford-on-Avon Shakespeare died on the anniversary of his birth, April 23, 1616. On his tombstone the following lines are inscribed:

Good friend for Jesus sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here;
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones.

Thousands of people visit Shakespeare's tomb every year. His tomb has become almost a place of pilgrimage for his admirers.

Shakespeare's Plays

Shakespeare's poetic and dramatic career has been divided into four periods corresponding to the growth and experience of his life and mind. These divisions cite as follows:

(1) **Period of Early Experimentation (1588-1593) :** To this period belong: Titus Andronicus; Henry VI (three parts); Love's Labour's Lost; Comedy of Errors; Two Gentlemen of Verona; Richard III; Richard II; Romeo and Juliet. To this period belong also the two poems: Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece. The work of this period is as a whole, extremely slight in texture; the treatment of life is superficial; there is no depth of thought or characterisation; and the art is evidently immature. The work is characterised by youthful exuberance of imagination, by extravagance of language, and by a constant use of puns, conceits, and other affectations. .

(2) **Period of the Great Comedies and Chronicle Plays (1594-1600) :** The words of this period are: King John; The Merchant of Venice; Henry IV (Part I and Part II); Henry V; The Taming of the Shrew; The Merry Wives of Windsor; Much Ado About Nothing; As You Like It; and Twelfth Night. These plays show a rapid growth and development in the poet's genius. They reflect a deeper knowledge of human life. and human nature; the characterisation and the humour have become more penetrating; thought has become more weighty; rhyme has largely been abandoned for prose and blank verse, and the blank verse itself has lost its stiffness.

(3) **Period of the Great Tragedies, and of the Sombre or Bitter Comedies (1601-1607)** : To this period belong: Julius Caesar; Hamlet; All's Well That Ends Well; Measure for Measure; Troilus and Cressida; Othello; Lear; Macbeth; Antony and Cleopatra; Coriolanus; and Timon of Athens. This is a period of gloom and depression and it marks the full maturity of his powers. His dramatic power, his intellectual power,

There is every reason to believe that his life in London, unlike that of the typical actor and playwright, was not wild and dissolute.

Apprenticeship and the Experimental Stage : Shakespeare's first work may well have been that of a general helper, an odd job man, about the theatre; but he soon became an actor. The records of the old London theatres show that in the next ten years he gained a prominent place. Within two years he was at work on plays and his course was exactly like that of other playwrights of his time. He worked with other writers, and he revised old plays before writing his own and so gained a practical knowledge of his art. He soon broke away from this apprentice work and then appeared in quick succession, Love's 'Labour's Lost, Comedy of Errors, Two Gentlemen of Verona, the English Chronicle plays (Henry VI, Richard III, Richard II. King John), A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Romeo and Juliet. The wide variety of these plays as well as their frequent crudities, marks the first or experimental stage of Shakespeare's work. It is as if the author were trying the temper of his audience, for to please his audience was the ruling motive of Shakespeare.

Growing Popularity : Shakespeare's poems, rather than these early dramatic attempts, mark the beginning of his success. Venus and Adonis became' immensely popular in London. It was dedicated to the Earl of Southampton and brought from him a large amount of money as a gift. This money Shakespeare invested shrewdly, and soon he became part owner of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres. At these theatres his plays were presented by his own companies of actors. His success and popularity grew enormously. Within a decade of his arrival in London, he had become one of the most famous actors and literary men in England.

The Period of Maturity : Following his experimental work, there came a series of great plays from his pen-The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Lear, Antony and Cleopatra. It is believed that the great tragedies of this period point to personal misfortunes in the life of Shakespeare but what these misfortunes were it is difficult to guess. It was probably this unknown sorrow which turned his thoughts back to his native village and caused a dissatisfaction with his work and profession. In 1597 he bought the finest house in Stratford and soon added a tract of farming land to complete his estate. His home visits became more and more frequent till, about the year 1611, he left London and settled permanently at Stratford-on-Avon.

Last Years at Stratford : Though still in the prime of life, Shakespeare gave up his dramatic work to live the comfortable life of a country gentleman. Some of his later plays show a decline from the quality of his previous work. His last play was The Tempest based upon

Early Occupations : When Shakespeare had attained the age of 14, his father lost his little property and fell into debt. The boy probably left school to help to support the family of younger children. It is not exactly known what occupation he followed for the next eight years. From evidence found in his plays, it is maintained that he was a country schoolmaster and a lawyer's clerk; but if evidence of this kind be collected from his various plays, then Shakespeare will be found to have been a botanist, a courtier, a clown, a king, a woman, a Roman, etc. He was everything in his imagination, and it is impossible from a study of his scenes and characters to form a definite opinion about his early occupations.

Marriage : In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a peasant family. She was eight years older than Shakespeare. From many mocking references to marriage made by the characters in Shakespeare's plays and from the fact that he soon left his wife and family and went to London, it is generally alleged that the marriage was a hasty and unhappy one. But here again such internal evidence is untrustworthy. There are quite a number of references in his plays to the happy side of love and marriage, and on this ground we could as well say that Shakespeare's marriage was a happy one. And the fact, that after his enormous success in London he retired to Stratford to live quietly with his wife and daughters, confirms this conclusion.

Departure from Stratford : About the year 1587, Shakespeare went to London where he joined Burbage's company of actors. According to a tradition, his reason for leaving Stratford was that he had been caught stealing a deer from Sir Thomas Lucy's park and he fled from Stratford to escape the consequences. But it is not certain whether, at the time Shakespeare is said to have stolen a deer, there were any deer or park at the place referred to. At any rate, it is unworthy to construct out of rumour the story of a great life which had no contemporary biographer.

Life in London : Of his life in London from 1587 to 1611, nothing definite is known. It was the period of his greatest literary activity. He entered into the stirring life of England's capital with the same perfect sympathy and understanding which he had shown among the simple folk of his native Warwickshire. He came to be known among his followers as "the gentle Shakespeare". Ben Jonson said of him: "I loved the man and do honour to his memory, on this idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest and of an open and free nature." To judge from only three of his earliest plays (Love's Labour's Lost; Comedy of Errors; and Two Gentlemen of Verona), it would seem that in the first five years of his London life he had gained entrance to the society of gentlemen and scholars, and was ready by knowledge and observation as well as by genius to depict the whole stirring life of the English people in his plays.

Objective :- *In this unit you will read two plays of William Shakespeare - Twelfth Night and* The *Tempest. Twelfth Night is a romantic comedy whereas the Tempest has a tragic backdrop.*

Twelfth Night

Life and Plays of William Shakespeare

The Life of William Shakespeare

No Reliable Biography Available : No truly reliable or authentic biography of Shakespeare can be written because very little about the man has come down to us from genuine sources. The available facts about his life are based chiefly on guess-work and conjecture.

Parentage : William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564 in the village of Stratford-on-Avon in the county of Warwickshire. His father John Shakespeare was a farmer's son who came to Stratford about 1531, and began to prosper as a trader in corn, wheat, leather, and agricultural products. His mother Mary Arden was the daughter of a prosperous farmer, descended from an old family of mixed Anglo-Saxon and Norman blood. It is generally believed that neither the poet's mother nor his father could read or write.

Early Experiences : Of Shakespeare's education little is known. For a few years he probably attended the Grammar School at Stratford where he picked up "small Latin and less Greek". His real teachers meanwhile were the men and women and natural influences which surrounded him. Stratford is a charming little village in the beautiful county of Warwickshire. Near at hand were the forests of Arden, the old castles of Warwick and Kenilworth, and the old Roman camps and military roads,- all of which appealed powerfully to the boy's active imagination. Every aspect of the natural beauty of this exquisite region is reflected in Shakespeare's poetry; just as his characters reflect the nobility and the littleness, the gossip, vices, emotions, prejudices, and traditions of the people about him. The nurse in Romeo and Juliet, for instance, is simply the reflection of some forgotten nurse with whom Shakespeare had talked by the wayside, one whose endless gossip but also the dreams, the unconscious poetry that sleeps in the heart of the common people, appealed tremendously to Shakespeare's imagination and are reflected in his greatest plays. In the same way, his education at the hands of Nature came from keeping his heart as well as his eyes wide open to the beauty of the world. Because he noted and remembered every significant thing in the changing scenery of earth and sky, no other writer has ever equalled him in the perfect natural setting of his characters.

depressing effect on us, but our exhilaration arises from her rare fortitude and her stoic acceptance of her fate, as well as from Lear's heroic endurance of his misfortunes.

Dramatic Irony– Dramatic irony arises from a contrast between appearance and reality, most often from a contrast between what a character says and what truly is the case or what afterwards proves to be the case. There are several examples of the use of this device in King Lear. When Lear has quarrelled with Goneril, he says that he has another daughter to whom he can go and with whom he can stay. But afterwards Regan proves to be even more callous than Goneril, thus belying Lear's hope. There is thus dramatic irony in Lear's expression of his belief that he will be treated hospitably by Regan. Similarly, there is dramatic irony is Regan's remark to Edmund that he has truly proved to be a dutiful son to Gloucester by having informed him in time of Edgar's plot against his father's life, when the real fact is that Edmund is betraying both his brother and father. Dramatic irony generally heightens the tragic effect in a tragic play, and is intended to add to the comic effect in a comic play.

As a Stage Play– Lamb expressed the view that the Lear of Shakespeare could not be acted, that "Lear is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage". Lamb meant that an actor could not effectively represent on the stage the volcanic explosions of Lear's passions. Bradley expressed much the same view when he said that "King Lear is too huge for the stage". Bradley admitted that King Lear was a great stage-play but he modified this remark by saying that King Lear was as a whole, "imperfectly dramatic". But Kenneth Muir Points out that King Lear has been strikingly successful on the stage and that the role of Lear has been filled creditably, and even brilliantly, by actors who have failed in the easier parts of Macbeth and Othello. Granville-Barker too expresses the view that King Lear does possess the requisite qualities needed for a successful stage-play. In view of these two opinions, we should have no doubts about the actability of King Lear.

A Dramatization of a Moral Problem– According to one view, all Shakespeare's tragic plays are dramatizations of certain moral problems. There is a moral problem at the centre of King Lear too. This moral problem is created largely by Lear in the very opening scene, but Cordelia too contributes to this problem by her conduct. Lear divides his kingdom between his two elder daughters, and disinherits and disowns the youngest daughter, Cordelia, at the same time banishing the Earl of Kent. Lear fails both as a king and as a father. But Cordelia too fails as a daughter by her inability to humour Lear. Kent incurs an undeserved penalty by his straightforwardness and sincerity. Thus the opening scene gives rise to the problem of domestic and personal relationships which are closely linked with royal power and authority. The same problem appears soon afterwards in the sub-plot. The rest of the play is a working-out of the complex problem.

years after he had lost his surviving son, death came upon the sick old man on August 6, 1637, he left behind him an unfinished work of great beauty, Lhc pnstoral Li1ama of The Sad Shepherd. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and on his tombstone were inscribed lhe words: "O Rare Ben Jonson". In Lhc beginning of the eighteenth century, a portrait bust was put up to his 11H:111ory in the Poet' Comer by Ilarlcy. Eurl of Oxro rd.

Not so Jealous- The old belief that Jonson was filled with malignant jealousy of the greatest of his fellow-dramatists has proved to be wrong. Occasional jesting allusions to particular plays of Shakespeare were certainly made by Jonson, but these amount to nothing collectively; and against them have to be set the many pleasant traditions concerning the long intimacy between the pair, and Jonson's tribute to the great bard.

Non-Dramatic Work- Jonson's learning and industry appear abo in his non-Liramatic works which include the Epigram. and a large number of lyrics amJ epistles. Mention must also be made of the Discoveries or Timber, a commonplace book of aphorisms noted by the poet in his dajly readings.

His Work, a Mirror of His Times- The strength of Jon on\, dramatic genius lay in his power of depicting a great variety of characters; and in comedy alone he succeeded in finding a wide field for the exercise of this power. The real atmosphere of his comedies is that of London town, and his times live for us in his men and women, his country-gulls and town-gulls, his alchemists and exorcists, his "skeldring" captains and whining Puritans, and the whole ragamuffin rout of his Bartholomew Fait, the comedy par excellence of Elizabethan low life. He described the past times, fashionable and unfashionable, of his age, its feeble upcrstitions and ils flaunting naughtinesse!-„ its vapouring affectations and its lying effronteries, with an odou1 as of "divine tobacco pervading the whole.

Conclusion- Though Jonson never allogether recognized the truth of the maxim that the dramatic art has, µroperly !-,peaking, no didactic purpose, his long and laborious !ifc was not wasted upon a barren endeavour. In tragedy he added two wnrb of unusual merit of English dramatic literature. In comedy his aim was higher, his effort more sustained, and his success more solid than that of any of his fcl low. In the sphere of the masque, he helped to open a new and attrnctivc path. His intellectual endowments surpassed those of mo!-,t of the great English dramatist in richness and breadth; and in energy of application he probably left them all behind. Inferior to more than one of his fellow-dramatists in tl1e power of imaginative sympathy, he was among the first and forcmo..,l of the Elizabethans in the power of observation.

whom, however, he seems soon to have quarrelled. The masques of this period are: The Masque of Blackness; Hymenaei; The Masque of Beauty; The Hue and Cry After Cupid; The Masque of Queens (described by Swinburne as the most splendid of all masques); and Oberon. In 1616, a modest pension was conferred on him, and in the same year Jonson published the first volume of his collected works.

Other Literary Pursuits– In 1613, Jonson went to France as tutor to the eldest son of Sir Walter Raleigh (who was then a State prisoner in the Tower of London). After 1616, he continued to produce masques and entertainments when called upon to do so; but he was attracted by many other literary pursuits. He was already the presiding genius of the meetings of literary persons at Mermaid Tavern in Brest Street, Cheapside.

Visit to Scotland– In 1618, he resolved to have a real holiday, and about mid-summer started for his ancestral country, Scotland (his grandfather having come from Annadale). He had determined to make the journey on foot; he was followed by John Taylor, the water-poet, who proposed to accomplish his pilgrimage without a penny in his pocket. Jonson spent more than a year and a half in Scotland. The best-remembered hospitality which he enjoyed was that of the learned Scottish poet, William Drummond. The literary product of this association was Jonson's Conversations. In these famous jottings, Jonson lives to this day, delivering his censures in an expansive mood. His host describes him as "a great lover and praiser of himself, a condemner and scorner of others." A poetical account of his journey was burnt with Jonson's library, a calamity which befell him probably in 1623-24.

Honoured by Oxford: Increase in Pension– After his return to London in May, 1619, Jonson visited Oxford to receive the honorary degree of M.A. Among his noble patrons were the Countess of Rutland and her cousin, Lady Wroth. In 1621, his pension was increased to two hundred pounds, though the increase proved to be temporary. In 1625, Jonson produced The Staple of News, a comedy excellent in some respects but little calculated to become popular.

Later Work– In 1626, Jonson had a paralytic stroke In 1628, he was arrested by mistake on the false charge of having eulogised the assassin of Buckingham, but was soon released. In 1629, he produced the comedy of The New Inn, which was condemned on its first performance, and Jonson defended himself against his critics in his spirited Ode to Himself. To his later years belong the comedies, The Magnetic Lady (1632) and The Tale of a Tub (1633), and some masques. Jonson had now quarrelled with Inigo Jones, and mocked him in his last comedy.

Death: Burial in Westminster Abbey– Jonson was by now the acknowledged chief of the English world of letters. When, nearly two

Whether this was a criticism based on material evidence or an unconscious slip, Jonson in the same year produced one of the most famous English comedies, Every Man in His Humour, which was first acted by the Lord Chamberlain's Company. Shakespeare was one of the actors in this first production of Jonson's comedy. Every Man in His Humour was published in 1601; but the critical prologue first appeared in 1616.

Conversion to the Catholic Faith– Before the year 1598 was out, however, Jonson again found himself in prison, and this time in danger of being sentenced to death. In a duel, he had killed an actor of Henslowe's Company. Of course, he acted in self-defence, and the attack on him had probably something to do with Jonson's work for a rival company. In prison, Jonson was visited by a Roman Catholic priest, and the result was his conversion to the Church of Rome, to which he adhered for twelve years. He pleaded guilty to the charge of manslaughter brought against him but, after a short imprisonment, he was released after being branded on his left thumb.

Literary Battles– The affair did not affect his reputation as a dramatist. In 1599, he brought out Every Man Out of His Humour, in which he opened battle, though not yet openly, on contemporary writers. Cynthia's Revels, which appeared in 1601 and was primarily designed as a compliment to Queen, Elizabeth, contained attacks on his old friends and associates, Dekker and Marston. According to Jonson, his quarrel with Marston had begun by the latter attacking his morals, and in the course of it they had come to blows. Learning the intention of the two writers, whom he had satirized, to wreak literary vengeance upon him, he anticipated them in The Poetaster, in which he ridiculed both of them.

In Prison Again– In 1603, Jonson produced the first of his two extant tragic works. This play was Sejanus. It sought to restore classic loftiness to tragedy. But the groundlings were appalled by its long speeches. The number of its admirers was very small, and there was violent popular protest against it. Not long after this, Jonson joined Chapman and Marston in writing Eastward Ho. For the satire in this play against Scots in general, Chapman and Marston were put in prison, and Jonson voluntarily joined them. There was talk of ears and noses being cut off; but powerful friends intervened, and all three escaped unmutilated.

His Best Work: Plays and Masques– Jonsons showed his real talents as a dramatist during the earlier half of the reign of King James I, and by the year 1616 he had produced nearly all the plays which are worthy of his genius. They include the tragedy of Catiline, and the comedies of Volpone, The Silent Woman, The Alchemist, Bartholomew Fair, and The Devil is an Ass. During the same period, he produced several masques, most of them in collaboration with Inigo Jones with

to soliloquize in public. The same holds true with the allegory of time. In the body of the play scene succeeds scene, not indeed in any order, but in one which is more of psychological than chronological significance. Towards the end, references to time begin to multiply. In the final monologue a clock is on the stage, and Faustus's imagery, now seeking to halt time, now yielding to it in despair, only succeeds in making it fly the faster. This he seems to be rushing upon his doom. And in the opening monologue, he rushes on to the act from which the doom proceeds. Both points are the same, for the consequences follow immediately upon the act. The play is symmetrical as well as a closed circle: it ends where it begins : it leaves Faustus where and as it found him-doomed.

Every Man in His Humour

Early Life and Education- Ben Jonson was born in Westminster in late 1572, a month after the death of his fath r. Two years after his birth, his mother married again; her second husband was a master brick-layer who sent his step-son to a private school in St. Martin's Lane. Later, Jonson went to Westminster School at the expense of William Gamden, the Headmaster of the famous school, and the firm friend of his pupil in later life. Immediately on leaving school, Jonson was put to his step-father's trade. According to some biographers, he went to Cambridge, but there is no record of his presence there in the registers. He soon had enough of brick-laying.

Marriage and Children- Ben Jonson married some time in, or before, 1592. His eldest daughter, Maria, died in November, 1593 when she was only six months old. His eldest son died of the plague ten years later. A younger son died in 1635. His wife was a shrew; and for a period of five years he preferred to live without her, enjoying the hospitality of Lord Albany (afterward Duke of Lennox). HP -:ommemorated two of his several children in touching little tribu ı. uf verse.

An Actor and Playwright- Jonson's first connection with the theatre was as a member of a touring company of actors in 1597. As such be went to London, but it was as a writer that he was picked up by Henslowe, the manager of London's second company, who advanced twenty shillings to him in December, 1597 for a play to be completed before Christmas. The play was the Isle of Dogs. It was officially condemned as seditious and slanderous, and several members of the company were imprisoned, Jonson among them. Soon he was back, writing plays for Henslowe, none of which has been preserved. By the autumn of 1598, he was hailed as one of "the best for tragedy", without any reference to a connection on his part with the other branch of the drama.

astrology'. But the joy of learning is no more permissible to Faustus than that of domestic bliss. Faustus has renounced learning that can lead to knowledge, love, and ultimately the vision of God. Mephistophilis refuses to answer when Faustus asks : "Tell me who made the world". The whole economy of hell is disturbed: Lucifer appears with his fellow-prince, Beelzebub, and demands obedience. As a substitute for the vision of God, Lucifer shows him the Seven Dealy Sins, and at the end of the parade Faustus says :"O, this feeds my soul". Then he goes on to express a desire to see hell and return: 'O, might I see hell, and return again. How happy were I then!" Thus Faustus falls a victim to the vice of curiosity.

Significance of the Seven Deadly Sins. Faustus is not an ordinary man to be moved by the Seven Deadly Sings. The show of the Seven Deadly Sins brings Faustus back to the path of Hell. Sins are already in the soul of Faustus and the show externalises them. The whole procession is led by Pride. Pride is the worst vice that brings about downfall. And Faustus is puffed up with pride to fly too near the sun with "waxen wings" to bring about his own ultimate doom and damnation. The stipulated span draws to a close and before the allegory ends, the last gift (Helen) of the Evil Angel has already crumbled in the hands of Faustus.

Significance of the Old Man. Faustus neglects the eternal that cannot but avenge itself. By the choice of evil, Faustus has forfeited not only spiritual but physical integrity, as he is destroyed by the passage of time (in the allegory). The Old Man reminds him of this. Faustus becomes furious with the Old Man and asks Mephistophilis to torment him. But Mephistophilis is powerless against one who, unlike Faustus, lays fast hold on the eternal. The Old Man will 'fly into his God' but Faustus has nowhere to fly but to what remains of his youth.

Allegory : not simple but complicated. In the play, one picture is not substituted for and, therefore, weakened by another: two pictures are retained and strengthen one another. Faustus suffers not merely by seeming to struggle with an outside enemy, but he actually has such an enemy; he does not merely seem to be torn within, but he is so torn. Against Lucifer he must struggle with the persistence called for against himself : and against himself he must struggle with the violence for which Lucifer calls. The temporal allegory is effective in a similar way. As long as Faustus is alive, he has hope and, therefore, pain of this intensity. At the same time, he has no hope, for he is already dead in a way. He must continue after death to suffer the utmost that he has ever suffered in life.

Conclusion. Allegory provides material and machinery for the body of the play and also shapes it. The play begins with a monologue and ends with one. Towards the end the stage thins out, and Faustus is left alone with the scholars. The scholars are conveniences to allow him

not significant now as the one thing, now as the other, by a sort of alternation : but continuously and simultaneously as both.

The Good Angel and the Bad Angel. The good Angel represents the principle of goodness and this principle is not affected by whether Faustus is loyal to it or not. Faustus can neither increase nor lessen its perfection : nor can he create or destroy it. But the Good Angel also symbolises a part of Faustus's nature Only by loyalty to this part of his nature can Faustus attain his own perfection and thereby get peace : if disloyal, he is tormented by regret for the perfection he has missed. And thus the allegory suggests a synthesis: that Faustus's life though single and indivisible, is both his and not his own. The Good Angel could ensure lasting happiness, while Helen ensures a momentary happiness, as she is a shade and not substantial.

Allegorical devices of space and time. Between Faustus and the Good Angel, the distinction relating to space is a device. Between Faustus's death and his signing of the bond, the separation relating to time is also a device. The two are separated by a period of twenty-four years. This period is significant as itself, but it is symbolical also of the moment of signing, which is the moment of Faustus's plunge to spiritual death. He kills his soul for it does not need twenty-four years to weaken or to wither. But as death, whether spiritual or physical, does not destroy a soul, the consequences of signing the bond are not restricted to a moment. Faustus is allowed to explore evil with all patience and diligence. During this period each of the Angels continues in his double role : as part of Faustus, expressing his preoccupations, and as external agent, either encouraging those preoccupations or to end them. The Evil Angel and the devils are more prominent in the earlier scenes. And Faustus cannot resist any invitation to evil.

Symbolic significance of characters. Faustus is a man with the admixture of virtue and vice in his soul. "The Good and Evil Angels are really externalisations of the two aspects of Faustus's own character : on the one had, conscience, and on the other, that aspiration to the novel and romantic that led to his downfall". Helen, the only paragon of excellence, fascinates Faustus. And this reveals the Renaissance characteristic of love and adoration of classical art and beauty. Her shade or apparition bespeaks of sensual pleasures of life which are but transitory, and lead to despair and damnation. The gifts of the devil can never satisfy and cannot be everlasting. Faustus has obtained power and wealth. But once the attempt is made to use them, disillusion begins. Faustus in his inexperience thinks that, having sold himself to the devil, he will be allowed to retain some part of his integrity: for instance that he may use the new found wealth to set up a household. That is why he asks for a wife; she is brought but proves to be an ugly devil. Faustus's fleshly desires are satisfied, but the result is that his spiritual desires become the more insistent. The devil is summoned to discuss 'divine

when Faustus cries out his very soul, we just watch incapable of having any one particular feeling. Plot or no plot, Doctor Faustus engulfs the reader in the waves of tragedy that fret and foam in its serious scenes.

Introduction : What is Allegory. Allegory is an extended metaphor in which the characters, actions or ideas imply some other meanings. Often allegories are simple stories conveying metaphorically some spiritual or ethical ideas with a didactic purpose. Morality plays are more or less allegorical in which the meanings are implied and not expressly stated.

Moral allegory in **Doctor Faustus.** The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe is a play which embodies a moral allegory relating 'the form of Faustus's fortunes, good or bad', and this moral allegory is of universal significance. The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus serves as a religious, rather Christian moral sermon which announces that he, who shuns the path of virtue, denounces God and His Laws, and aligns himself with the forces of evil to gain limitless power and position, is doomed to despair and eternal damnation. The following lines clearly express the moral allegory of the play:

Faustus is gone : regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practice more than heavenly power permits.

-Chorus

"No finer sermon that Marlowe's Faustus ever came from the pulpit. What more fearsome exposure was ever offered of the punishment man brings upon himself by giving way to temptations of his grosser appetites?"

Faustus - An allegory embracing realism. Miracle and Morality plays have some stock devices; and Marlowe's Doctor Faustus is no exception to this. The Good Angel and the Bad Angel, the Devils. the Old Man the Seven Deadly sings, etc. introduced in the play are open to allegorical interpretation. The two Angels are messengers of power independent of Faustus, while Helen, though a phantom, is not just a figment of Faustus's imagination. Helen represents the lust of eye and flesh in the world. The play, though an allegory, does not altogether exclude realism; it employs realism as an instrument. Certain characters of the play are chosen to serve a double purpose: characters are significant as symbols by virtue of what they symbolise, but they are significant also as themselves by virtue of what they are. And they are

and the Evil Angels, in such a manner as to heighten the character of Faustus by contrast. "Each and all of these subordinate characters are dedicated to the one main purpose of expressing the psychological condition of Faustus from various points of view - the perplexities o his divided spirits, his waverings of anguish and remorse, the flickerings of hope extinguished in the smoke of self-abandonment to fear, the pungent pricks of conscience soothed by transient visions of delight, the prying curiosity which lulls his torment, at one movement, the soul's defiance 'yielding to despair, and from despair recovering fresh strength. To this vivisection of a ruined man, all details in gloomy scene contribute. Even the pitiful distractions - pitiful in their leaden dullness and blunt edge of drollery - with which Faustus amuses his worse than Promethean leisure unitll the last hour of his contract sounds, heighten the infernal effect."

Great Play But A Flawed One. Now, the dramatic and the poetic virtues of the play make it a really "great" play. But when we come to the word "play", we also find some shortcomings in it. According to Swinburne, "it has hardly the structure of a play". According to Boas, the main plot has a great beginning and even a greater end. But it has no middle in it. With regard to plot-construction as a whole, "Doctor Faustus is largely a collection of heterogeneous scenes loosely pinned together." (Nicoll). It means that its plot-construction is very loose. Further, the comic and farcical scenes are not in harmony with the dignity of the solemn theme. According to Allardyce Nicoll, the spiritual conflict" is certainly somewhat primitive in its expression." According to most scholars Faustus's character is giagantic but an imperfect one. Further, there are no female characters worth the name. The Duchess speaks little and Helen does not speak at all. It is as if Marlowe disliked female characters.

Conclusion. Despite defects Doctor Faustus is a great play and a great tragedy. A close examination will reveal to us how wonderfully Marlowe has succeeded in producting a work of art from the chaotic Northern and Teutonic Faustiad. The Most striking thing that endows the play with a tragic unity is the character of the hero whose mind is a battle-ground between the forces of curiosity and conscience. Marlowe's indisputable merit consists in delineating with great tragic power the figure of a great tragic hero. Marlowe's Faustus, scholarly and skeptical, defiant and desperate, combines in himself the characteristics of a medieval rebel and a Renaissance adventurer. It is the psychological study of this character that Marlowe draws with great mastery, and it is this that makes Doctor Faustus more a dramatic poem than a drama proper. The mental conflict of Faustus is presented with great tragic intensity, enhanced every now and then by the whispers of the Good and Bad Angels. We witness the course of this conflict with alternating moods of fear, pity, sympathy, and awe, till in the final scence

Faustus that he could not serve him without Lucifer's permission. Faustus then voluntarily offered to surrender his soul after twenty-four years, if during that period Mephistophilis promised to be his slave and did his biddings. Lucifer agreed, and demanded a promise executed in Faustus' blood. Faustus did so and set out in quest of knowledge and pleasure, travelling about invisible. He had an aerial flight 'seat in a chariot burning bright', and visited Trier, Paris, Naples, Campania, Venice, Padua, Rome. By way of demonstrating his power and superiority, Faustus fooled the Pope, called up the spirits of Alexander and his paramour, provided grapes to the Duchess of Vanhold in mid-winter and, at the request of his scholar friends, summoned the spirit of Helen of Troy-Helen whose face 'launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium'. At times Faustus was seized by the desire for repentance but the exhilaration of pleasure was too great, and the powers of Evil too strong. Finally, as the period of contract expired, Faustus made frantic appeals to God and Christ : but precisely at the stroke of twelve, he was borne away by the Devils to his everlasting doom.

Plot of 'Doctor Faustus'. As already mentioned Doctor Faustus consists only of scenes, of fourteen short scenes. Marlowe never cared to arrange them in Acts and Scenes according to the traditional manner. Some of the recent editors, have, however, attempted to do so. According to this arrangement the first Act consists of the first four scenes. The next two scenes constitute the second Act. The seventh scene, with the Chorus preceding it, is the third Act. Scenes eight, nine, ten and eleven are marked off as the fourth Act. The last two scenes form the fifth Act.

Whatever argument we like and follow, the fact remains that the interest and appeal of the play does not in the least depend upon its division into Acts and Scenes, or Movements or Episodes. Lacking as it does structural unity and technical perfection, the play has the greater merit of unity of character. It is the dominating figure of Faustus that holds the play together and imparts to it such dramatic quality and emotional appeal as can never belong to it by any other method. As in Hamlet, so in this drama, the central personality himself is the play, a living play with living acts and scenes, and incidents and episodes. His adventure itself in the realm of knowledge is full of dramatic possibilities; and the conflict in his mind between his allegiance to the Devil and his desire to repent for it and seek God's pardon is, of course, dramatic in the extreme.

Characterisation of 'Doctor Faustus'. Characterization in Doctor Faustus is, in general, weak and shadowy. Marlowe concentrates all his power of character delineation on Faustus. Mephistophilis too, gets his share, though to a much less degree. But all the other characters are faint and feeble. In fact, Marlowe seems to have designed these minor characters, Valdes and Cornelius, the scholars, the Old Man, the Good

Conflict in Dr. Faustus. The mystery of life is an alluring and impenetrable one. Innumerable have been the attempts of scholars and scientists, poets and prophets, to pluck out the heart of this mystery. Yet baffling one and all, it continues to be a mystery. Part at least of this mystery is due to the perpetual conflict between good and evil - a conflict without beginning and end. The conflict is terrible, but in that very terror there is an irresistible fascination. It is such a fascination that the play of Doctor Faustus exercises on its readers. Faustus, the Teutonic and medieval skeptic, personifies disbelief in all its strength and weakness. Tired of what he calls barren knowledge, he deliberately seeks to learn and practise magic, magic that has been practised since the beginning of the history of thought by those who have chosen the wrong road. Blind in his blind determination, Faustus becomes deaf to the counsels of good that are constantly whispered into his ears by the Good Angel. Such is the power of Evil that when once it takes a man by the throat, it will not leave him until it strangles him. This kind of crucifixion which carries with it its own moral, cannot but make an appeal to the mind of man in all ages and countries. Sin working out its own nemesis, brings the catastrophe of the play into vital relation with human conduct. And who can resist its appeal?

Fascinating appeal: The attempt to acquire forbidden things and the attempt to secure martyrdom. And too, there is ever present in man an irrepressible temptation to reach that which is beyond his grasp, to conquer the infinite, to touch the impalpable, to see the invisible, to attain the impossible. In spite of examples from history, in spite of warnings and threats, man never gives up this instinct of his, never rests contented with what he has. He is forever eager to follow the dubious trail of some melting mirage of the mind, and ready to stake his all, if necessary, in its pursuit. Doubtful though of his success, he still throws his red gauntlet in the face of fate, defies chance and circumstance, and hopes to reach his goal. My be the roses of reward will not be his, but his surely will be crown of martyrdom. And both the attempts - the attempt to acquire forbidden things and the attempt to secure martyrdom - have their fascinating appeal. And Faustus, as we know, is both the hero and martyr of forbidden knowledge.

An interesting story. The story of Doctor Faustus may be synoptically stated thus. There was once a German scholar, John Faustus by name. He was a Doctor of Divinity - excelling all "whose sweet delight disputes in heavenly matters of theology'. Not satisfied with 'learning golden gifts', he took to the study of cursed necromancy. He was convinced that 'a sound magician is a mighty god', and that if he became one, all things that move between the quiet poles will be at his command. So he decided to enlarge his sphere of knowledge by cultivating magic. He conjured up Mephistophilis, servant to great Lucifer - 'arch-regent and commander of all spirits'. Mephistophilis told

Bohemain joy in mere pleasure, his own thirst for fresh sensations, his own poetic spirit, his own vehement disregard of restraint, a disregard which brought Marlowe to a tragic and unworthy end."

This drama ,hould be regarded as a skeletal structure of the play written by Marlowe, for the surviving manuscripts are so interspersed with comic scenes and the lines themselves so often revised according to whims of the actors that the original writing must be culled out of the surviving version. Even so, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus is worth reading and study because of the many remaining examples of the poet's skill it contains. In addition to the adulterated poetry in this play there is also the problem of the tainted characterization and symbolism; for while the personality of Mephistophilis isoften caricaturized and while the exploits of Faustus are frequently rendered pure low comedy, still the Marlowe version of the two principal characters is evident in the sober and more consistent moments of the play. As an added contribution to existing Faustian literature, Marlowe's Doctor Faustus is an artistic effort, although not comparable in depth or scope to the treatment given to this theme by Goethe.

Eternal significance. There is evidently more than what meets the eye in Doctor Faustus, otherwise, its story-element which is too brief and simple, has not by itself the power of creating a lasting impression and an abiding appeal. The play may have had an immediate interest to the people of the Renaissance age because it was written in and for that age, and also because Faustus typifies the genuine Renaissance passion for knowledge infinite. The play, it is true, is a typical Renaissance rendering of the story upon which it is based. But the fact that it is still a favourite of every reader of English drama in spite of three-and-half centuries of changing tastes and temperaments, goes to prove that Doctor Fclusts has its greatness not as a mere typical Renaissance play but as a play embodying eternal significance.

Central figure of Dr. Faustus'. Faustus, the chief and central figure of Marlowe's play, stands not for a character, not for a man, but for Man, for everyman. The grim tragedy that befalls him is not a personal tragedy, but one that overtakes all those who dare 'practise more than heavenly power permits.' The terrible conflict that rages in his mind is not peculiar to him alone, but common to all who waver between truth and delusion. The play presents not the conflict between man and man, but the eternal battle between the world-old protagonists -Man and Spiritual Power. And the battle takes place not in any known battlefield but in the invisible and illimitable region of the mind. And the object of fight -not scepters and crowns, not kingdoms and empires but the knowledge of man's final fate!

scepticism in religion and that with a sounder and deeper faith he had come to the knowledge of repentance. Nor indeed is he ever the pure scoffer. It is certain that the author of Faustus must himself have walked some way along the path of religious doubts and groping and must have known the sufferings attendant upon the journey."

Scepticism and Perplexity. Marlowe must have written Faustus in a mental state of spiritual vacuity and loss of faith. "As Faustus wavers between his Good and Evil Angels, between God and the Devil, so we may suppose Marlowe also hesitated between the submissive acceptance of a dogmatic system and a pagan simplicity of outlook to which instinct and temperament prompted him." The following words of Faustus which express his deep spiritual anguish may be taken as expressing the intense agony of the dramatist himself : "But Faustus" offence can never be pardoned; the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus ..... for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heave, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy, and must remain in hell for ever." And when his friends advise him to call on God, he exclaims with deep anguish : "On God, whom Faustus hath abjured; on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed; Ah, my God, I would weep; but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of the tears; Yes, life and soul - O, he stays my tongue : I would lift up my hands but see, they hold them, they hold them!"

Knowledge, Power, Sensuality. Faustus' thirst for knowledge, for, "knowledge infinite", for power that knowledge give, for omnipotence, and for the craving for worldly pleasure, are closely expressive of the dramatist's own sensuality, his own thirst for knowledge and power. Faustus loves knowledge not for its own sake but for the power which knowledge gives, and the opportunities for sensual gratification which it places within one's reach. Faustus is thus a sensualist, and in this respect he reflects the dramatist's own sensuality. Faustus' kissing Helen and doting over her just before his death puts us in mind of the circumstances of Marlowe's own death as described by Havelock Ellis. Marlowe was at the little village of Deptford, not may miles from London. There was turbulent blood there, and wine : there were courtesans and daggers. Here Marlowe was slain, killed by a serving man, a rival in a quarrel over bought kisses." marlowe's love of beauty, both of nature and of the body of woman, is shared by Faustus as is evident from his glowing tribute to the beauty of Helen.

Conclusion : Poetic Spirit. The poetry of the passage shows that Faustus is a born poet, as Marlowe himself was. "This passage", says Wynne, "has probably never been surpased in its magic idealization of that which is essentially base and carnal. Poetry such as this has power to blind us for a moment to the underlying meaning: Faustus enjoys a temporary transfiguration. His creator has inspired him with his own

Thmburlaine and finds supreme expression in the vision of beauty incarnate in Helen:

..... fairer than the vaning air

Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

Marlow's sensivity, linked with his dramatic art, enables him to seize on an express passion which presumably he never felt : the terror of Faustus awaiting damnation, or the greed of Barabas gloating over his gold. It is this sensitivity to passion and to passionate desire that makes Marlowe's heroes, even the pathetic Edward, real and living beings, something other than the stiff figures of academic tragedy. Here too we recognize in later tragedy the authentic gift of Marlowe. With all its faults and extravagance and careless work, Elizabethan drama is keenly sensitive to human passion and to its destructive effect upon the lives of men, and Marlowe contributed much to this sensitivity.

The Subjective Note. Drama is the most objective of all the arts, and a dramatist, to be successful, must efface his personality completely. Howver, Marlowe was more a poet than a dramatist; his dramas are the dramas of a poet of genius, and hence it is that they are pervaded with the subjective element. His heroes are self- portraits, their views and their aspirations are those of their creator himself. Hence a study of the plays sheds valuable light on the man; and a knowledge of the biography of the poet helps in understanding the plays.

Dr. Faustus : a Self portrait. The present play is no exception to the rule. Dr. Faustus is a self-portrait, there being striking parallelisms and similarities between Marlowe and the learned doctor. The careers of Marlowe and Doctor Faustus show close similarities. Marlowe was of humble birth, but was endowed with eminent gifts. Thus as Harold Osborne writes, "Marlowe himself, like Faustus, came of parents 'base of stock', and was destined for the church but turned elsewhere; he was undoubtedly keenly interested in secular knowledge: was reputed a scoffer at religion; and incurred the charge of blasphemy."

Inordinate Ambition : Spiritual Suffering. The inordinate ambition of Marlowe and the revolt against religion, and against society, which is its natural corollary, is also shared by Dr. Faustus. Such revolt is bound to result in suffering, in despair and in defeat. One cannot defy the laws of man and God with impunity. Marlowe defied them, and Faustus defies them, and so like him suffers terribly. In other words, the spiritual history of Faustus is a rendering of the dramatist's own inner struggle, his own despair and frustration. As Harold Osborne writes, "The description of Faustus' repentance, despair, and mental anguish are among the most vivid and poignant part of the play. It is, of course, pos ·ible to suppose that Marlowe had passed through a stage of youthful

Edward II is the first noteworthy attempt to construct a tragedy out of English historical material."

HIs Influence. Referring to the influence of Marlowe on the Elizabethan drama and especially on Shakespeare, Schelling has remarked in his book, Elizabethan Drama : "Marlowe gave the drama passion and poetry; and poetry was his most precious gift. Shakespeare would not have been Shakespeare had Marlowe never written or live. He might not have been altogether the Shakespeare we know." In this very connection Monto writes: Marlowe was really the Columbus of the new literary world. He emancipated the English mind from classical nations of stiff decornum- the necessary accompaniment of the large theatre and the mask - and by so doing, opened up infinite possibilities of passionate life. Men struggling passionately after antagonistic aims could now be brought face to face; and the ups and downs, the hopes and fears, the shrinkings and the darings of the struggle and the characters of the combatant, could be placed in swift and dazzling and heart-shaking succession visibly before the eyes of the spectators. The stage even dared to show how men and women bore themselves in the presence of incensed Death - how there spirits qualied or remained constant in fierce defiance with the knife at their throat. Never was there an emancipation so calculated to excite the human intellect to the very utmost of its powers."

Parrot and Bell are of the view that, "Marlowe's contribution to Elizabethan tragedy is too varied and potent to be summed up in a paragraph; yet a few phases may be pointed out. In the first place, there is in all of Marlowe's work a sense of power, a vigorous driving energy, conspicuously absent in the work of earlier men. Himself a child of the Renaissance, he embodies in his creation the lust for power so characteristics of that age. Hence comes his glorification of such a figure as Tamburlaine with his wild desire :

To ride in triumph through Persepolis.

There is in Marlowe little or none of that sense of nationality and patriotism so strong in Shakespeare. He could never, one believes, have written a play like Henry V. He is the individualist of the Renaissance. His stormy individualism impregnates later Elizabethan tragedy and begets a group of villain-heroes or of strong men fighting, often in vain, against an overwhelming force. Elizabethan drama differs from the Greek in many ways : in one especially, its insistence on the right of the individual to push to his goal.

"Yet there is something more in Marlowe than the mere lust for power. There is the Renaissance sensitively, its passion for beauty. It is this passion which gleams through the gorgeous pageantry of

constitute Marlowe's claim to be styled the founder and father of our stage" (Symonds), From the chaotic and conflicting elements around him, he drew forth the unity of the English Drama, and produced the thing which was to be so great and so perfect. He saved the drama from "rhyming mother-wits." freed it from "such conceits as clownage keeps in pay," and led it to the stately tents of war. In other words, he provided an entertainment in which heroic action are displayed with the pomp of a new style. Clownage was retired to a secondary place, yet the essential features of romantic drama - its power to fascinate and please people of all tastes - was not abandoned.

Tragedy on a Grand Scale. He first tought the art of designing tragedies on a grand scale, displaying unity of action, unity of character and unity of interest. He first produced drama, worthy of the that august title. (Before him dramas were merely pagaents or versified tales "arranged in scenes"). His Tamburlaine shook the London stage, and every subsequent drama shows in some part of it the influence of Marlowe. "His actual achievement may be judged imperfect, unequal, immature, and limited. Yet nothing lower than the highest rank can be claimed for one who did so much in a space ort, and under conditions so unfavourable." Shakespeare at the last completed and developed to the utmost that national embryo of art which Marlowe drew forth from the womb of darkness, anarchy, and incoherence."

Changed the Conception of Tragedy. He changed the conception of tragedy : (a) He made tragedy a matter of individual heroes. (b) He introduced superhuman figures who struggle with the limitations of human life and suffer constantly as a result. (c) He introduced the element of struggle. His heroes are not helpless puppets in the hands of fate; they fight against it. (d) He introduced inner conflict. (e) He freed Tragedy from didacticism; his purpose is not to incalculate moral lessons. (f) He made character the basis of tragic action.

His Contribution. In fact in each of his important plays Marlowe contributed something new to the Elizabethan drama. Pinto, in his book The English Renaissance writes; "In Marlowe's Tamburlaine English poetry has become bright and translucent, "all air and fire," to use the words applied to him by a contemporary. The last remains of late-medieval dullness and opacity have gone. In his second great play, Doctor Faustus, Marlowe uses one of the great myths of the Renaissance and creates a kind of intellectual and philosophical Tamburlaine, striving not for wealth and dominion, but for Sensuous and intellectual experience. "In this play he reveals for the first time in English drama the full possibilities of psychological tragedy, the anguish of mind at war with itself. In The Jew of Malta there is an inferesting suggestion of ironic comedy which probably influenced Ben Jonson, and

be lost between the prejudices of a literary class, the purile amusements of the multitude and the disfavour of conservative moralists. "From this peril Marlowe saved the English drama. Amid the chaos of conflicting elements, he discerned the true and living germs of national art, and set its growth beyond all risks of accident by his achievement" (Symonds).

Father of Romantic Drama. Marlowe is the true father of the English Drama for he was the first to perceive the capacitics for noble art inherent in Romantic Drama and he adapted it to high purpose by his practice. He was that the romantic drama, the drama of the people, had a great future before it and so devoted his energies to its perfection. Romantic drama resulted from the fusion and most diverse elements, It was often confused and incoherent. Out of confusion, Marlowe brought order : he worked by selection and exclusion on the material available to him, and his success in this double process is the proof of his originality. His genius is seen in the fact that he turned to the national romantic drama and not to the classic; to the popular, instead of to the literary type.

Revolutionised the Medium and Form of Drama. He used the blank verse suggested to him by classical drama, and by his practise of it made it a suitable medium for dramatic expression. To employ blank verse, instead of rhyme, for the romantic drama was the first step in the revolution he brought about. He thus transfigured the form of the English drama. He was the first to divide the drama into Acts and scenes and thus to impart to it structural coherence. Though Ward divided Dr. Faustus merely into scenes, Boas divides it into Five Acts on the basis of its five structural divisions.

Transformed its Substance. He transfigured its matter or substance also, and thus showed himself a creative poet. The Shakespearean Drama was made possible only because of his contribution. He found the English stage given to aimless trivialities: "He introduced a new class of heroic subjects, eminently fitted for dramatic handling" (Symonds).

"He moulded characters, and formed a vigorous conception of the parts they had to play." In Marlowe we find for the first time character development. Though Dr. Faustus is a one-man play, in Edward II we find interplay of character. "Under his touch dialogue moved with spirit; men and women spoke and acted with the energy and spontaneity of nature. (symonds). He for the first time, gave life like characters, characters who are no mere puppets, but who live their own lives.

Imparted Poetry and Groudeur. He brought poetic genius to the task. "The adaptation of blank verse or the romantic drama, the blending of classical form with popular material, and the specific heightenting of both form and matter by the application of poetic genius to the task,

appear to Faustus in Act I, scene I, and Act II, scene i and scene ii. Good Angel advises him to give up necromancy and turn back to the path of Christian faith. Evil Angel advises him to study necromancy and work for his material well-being. In Act V, he is also visited by an Old Man who represents old firm faith. He also advises him to pray for mercy to Christ. In Act II, scene ii, the Seven Deadly Sins are paraded across the stage by Lucifer.

Conclusion - So most 19th century critics remarked that Doctor Faustus is a Renaissance Morality. But some modern critics consider the play a romantic tragedy with certain features of the Morality play, and the chorus of the classical tragedy. Charles Hastings observes that Marlowe combined the different elements of drama which appealed to him most and created the romantic tragedy in the form of the present play. Another critic remarks that the theme of the play is religious. The last scenes of Doctor Faustus hammers home the view that the play is a religious morality of the Renaissance. Writes Legouis that in this play Marlowe "was too near the faith to be indifferent ..... He shook his fist at heaven and feared at the same moment that heaven might fall and crush him."

Inaugurated a New Era. Marlowe has been justly called, "the father of the English Drama," "The Morning star of the English Drama," etc. for he marks the end of the first period in the history of Drama, and the beginning of the second, the era of artistic drama over which he presides. His advent marks the end of Medieval drama and the birth of the great Renaissance drama.

Saved English Drama from Chaos and Danger. When he came to London, to quote Swinburne, he was, "a bay in years, a men in genius, and god in ambition." He found English drama in a chaotic state. Various species of drama were in vogue : comedies, tragedies, farce, melodrama, interlude, chronicles, poetic and courtly plays, scholarly compositions on the model of Seneca, Plautus and Terence, were all being staged with more or less success. Theatres were springing up, and acting had become one of the recognised professions. "But none could say where, or whether, the germ of a great national art existed". The people delighted in buffoonery and scenes of bloodshed, while the scholars despoised it. The rhob itself was divided in it tastes and lrHerests. A pthverful bod}' bf citizens ldoked upon the stage with ti1stavdJr: e seemed a dahger lest the fortunes of the stage should Ther

delight. After discussing the merits and demerits of a number of subjects, he chooses necromancy. It is because :

"A sound magician is a mighty god"

Thereafter he studies and practises necromancy whole-heartedly. He believes that he can gain everything through the magic powers of Mephistophilis. So his main endeavour is to summon up Mephistophilis and gain his favour.

His Bargain - Then one day he is successful in calling up Mephistophilis. The latter appears to him. He commands Mephistophilis to go back and appear in the form of a Franciscan friar. Mephistophilis obeys him. Then Faustus sends him back to Lucifer with one proposal. It is that Faustus is ready to sell his soul to Lucifer for a twenty-four years' life of all voluptuousness, and for the services of Mephistophilis during that period. Lucifer agrees to the proposal. Faustus writes to this effect a deed of gift in his own blood.

Faustus's Sin - Faustus's sin is pride of the highest degree. So he believes that his mind is of a superior quality worthy of studying only necromancy. Then he takes a devil for his wife and dawns him- self. He also indulges in the life of voluptuousness for twenty- four years. He watches the whole universe from his dragon-drawn chariot. He calls up the spirits of blind Homer and Amphion and makes them sing to him. He calls up the spirit of Helen and kisses her. He insults the Pope and the friars in Rome. He shows his feats of magic here and there.

Retribution - Then follows the retribution. Soon he is disillusioned from the mistaken belief that voluptousness can make him happy. His life becomes miserable. By the beginning of Act II, scene II, he begins to repent of his folly. Lucifer and Beelzebub appear and threaten him with great punishment. Then on the last day of his life, particularly during the last hour, Faustus writes in great agony of hellish fear. He prays to the spheres, the sun, the stars, Jesus Christ, God and even the stars of his nativity to save him somehow or other. But at last the clock strikes twelve p.m., and the devils take his soul away to hell for eternal damnation.

The Epilogue - Then the epilogue follows. The Chorus tells us that the tragic fate of Faustus teaches us a moral. It is that people should keep away from supernatural things and powers. Men should not meddle in them more than human nature allows. They should not try to arm themselves with supernatural powers for the fulfilment of their human wishes and unreasonable ambitions.

Good and Bad Angels and Seven Deadly Sins - The play is also characterized by the common features of old moralities. Here Good Angel and Bad Angel appear to Faustus every now and then and try to win them to their paths. For example, the Good Angel and Evil Angel

not heed his warning. He confounds and illusion with a reality. Dr. Faustus also regards Mephistophilis as a sort of an obedient genie.

How is this Mephistophilis

Full of obedience and humility!

Mephistophilis is always at the back and call of Dr. Faustus and is responsible for everything power and fall of Dr. Faustus. He is thus a symbol of unbriddled power of Hell.

Introduction - Broadly, a play which is produced to teach a moral is called a "morality", and also a Morality play. The Moralities belong chiefly to the 15th and 16th centuries. Originally they were religious plays. The favourite theme of the religious morality was a debate or battle between the forces of good and evil for the human soul. It staged allegorical characters, and its ending reflected a moral lesson. Although a religious play, a Morality is different from a Mystery or a Miracle play. Broadly, the Mystery plays dramatised scriptural subjects, chiefly the Nativity, the Passion and the Resurrection. The Miracle plays dramatised the lives of saints or legends of miraculous interventions of the Virgin. The distinction between the two is, however, not absolute. For many mystery and miracle plays are of mixed nature. But a Morality play is quite different from a Mystery or Miracle play in that it stages allegorical characters in place of characters taken from the Bible or from lives of saints. Some Moralities were also produced to teach secular lessons such as : The rich must be charitable to the poor; children must respect their parents; geography should be diligently studied. John Rastell's Interlude of the Four Elements (1519) was one of them. But after 1550 the Morality plays began to disappear from the English stage. Yet the traces of their influence could be seen in the pageant and the masque.

Doctor Faustus - 'A Renaissance Morality' - In 1588, Marlowe brought forward his Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, also called Doctor Faustus. It has a number of the salient features of a Morality. It begins and ends with a moral. The fifth Act as a whole is devoted to echo the cardinal Christian belief that a sinner's soul is damned to hell for ever. Some dramatic critics therefore have remarked that the play is a Renaissance Morality.

Morality Features of the Play - The Play begins with a Prologue recited by a chorus man. He says that the play represents the life of a brilliant wit called Doctor Faustus. He was a bright intellect and earned great name and fame in the field of learning. Because of his vanity and ambition he began to study necromancy and was condemned to hell for ever. Then comes the opening scene. It represents Faustus as a great intellect in search of a noble profession that can bring him great profit and

imagination. For it is he who takes Dr. Faustus all over the world and helps him in getting the same Whatever Dr. Faustus likes Mephistophilis has played a very dramatic role in 'Dr. Faustus'. Mephistophilis is the source by which Faustus draws his supernatural powers and how he is also the source of his fall from heaven.

Mephistophilis is the evil genius of Faustus. When he signs away his soul to Satan. Mephistophilis is entirely at his service. All the wonderful things are wanted by Faustus are due to the Mephistophilis's help. The situation in which Faustus found himself thus partly depends on him.

He thus acts as the functionary of Satan (Lucifer) and is an incarnation of evil, but he does not influence the decision of Dr. Faustus in any matter. He has not been portrayed as the conventional villain or the temptered the Devil of the morality play. Marlowe has transferred him into a symbolic figure of great human and dramatic significance. Mephistophilis is not the cause of Faustus damnation in reality but he (Dr. Faustus) himself creats his fate. The evil is within him. He warns Faustus against entering into a pact with Satan.

And if Faustus had any illusions about hell, he dispenses

thing why, this is hell, nor am I out of it:

Thintest thau that I, who saw the face of God,

And tested the eternal joys of heaven,

And not formented with ten thousand hells.

In being dprived of everlasting bliss.

He is believer in the existence of God, heaven and hell. He has been the face of God and has enjoyed the bliss of heaven. Though, he also suffers from the punishment of hell, yet he is not ready to repent and turn to God. He admits that God is more powerful than Lucifer but because he is the most faithful servant of Lucifer he is not ready to give him up. He accepts Dr. Faustus as his master for full twenty four years and obeys his every command to establish Dt. Faustus as the greatest magician all over the world. He told Dr. Faustus abour the existance of God, His son Christ, Heaven, Hell, Lucifier and his followers, the dammed spirits, good, evil etc. He answers about heavenly bodies, their motion etc. He gave the drag on drawn chariot to Faustus to watch the whole universe. He has brought the spirit of Helen for Faustus who kisses and urged her to be his wife forever. He made Dr. Faustus insults the Pope. But, when Dr. Faustus was trying to turn to God we must have been pained of heart at Dr. Faustus. His explanation of human pride insolence and sing and his warning to Dr. Faustus regarding unevitable ruin should have sufficed to prevent him from sin. But, Dr. Faustus does

Catastrophe of the last scene in which there is only suffering and no action.

The Three Plots- There can be no denying the fact that the play is structually weak, and apparently there is much looseness and laxity of design. Marlowe has closely followed the undramatic sequence of events in the English Faustus Book, and the indiscriminate mingling of the comic and the tragic is not very artisitc. However, if we examine the matter a bit deeply, we shall find that Goethe's praise of it, "How nobly it is all planned" - is justified. The fact is that in Dr. Faustus, there are three plots. First there is the serious and tragic main plot dealing with the ambitions and ideals of Faustus, his struggles to achieve his ambition, and his ultimate tragedy. Secondly there is the comic under plot, presented as an anti-climax or a counter blast to the main-plot, showing Faustus' ideas and aspirations, as it emphasises the fact that the comic and serious, are the vidiculous and the sublime, are closely related aspects of life, the two sides of the same coin.

Besides these two plots, there is a third plot also, which may be called the over-plot want of a better name. This over plot or philosophical plot represents the struggle between the forces of good and evil in the universe, and in the soul of man, and it is this philosophic1 over-plot which Goethe had in his mind when he eloquentJ praised of the play as being "nobly planned."

The Beginning and the End- More especially, both the beginning and the end of this play are nobly executed though there is certainly some weakness in the middle part. The opening of the play depicting the signing of the terrible contract with the devil is sensational and thrilling. It is a gripping and absorbing in its interest, for it is an expression of the deed seated longing in the human heart for the impossible, the unknown and the far off. At the end we hear the heart rending cry of Faustus, as he pray on vain for salvation, and as the devils comes to take his soul to hell, and to eternal damnation. Again and again in the play, attention is focussed on the spiritual suffering of Faustus and his soul islaid bare before the readers.

Doctor Faustus wants tofulfill his desires and for them hehad learned the art of calling up the spirits of dead and gone. With the result he called Mephistophilis the assistant of Lucifer (Satan) the prince of hell. He is the superior of all angels working under Lucifer.

He is a conventional character of religious drama. But, it is possible to look upon him and Dr. Faustus's devlish ambition for unlimited knowledge and also the restraint power of his poetic

tempted by magic particularly. When he had already mastered so may arts and sciences. The chorus in the play does not reduce or relieve in the least the tragic tone of the play of the tragic tension of its atmosphere which is, however, done by some of the clownage scenes.

The chorus appers for the fourth and last time at the end the play. Now it points out the moral of the play:-

Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,

Only to wonder at Unlawful things,

Whose dampness doth entice such forward wits.

To practice more than heavenly power permits.

Thus the role of chorus in the lay is one of essential significance.

The Plot : Its Faults- Faustus has come in for a good deal of criticism at the hands of critics. It has been called loose and weak, and it has been said that in the play various incidents, and episodes do not follow each other logically and inevitably. It is merely a success loose compilation of fourteen-scenes and the order of may of them can be changed without the injury to the play. There is no plot in the ordinary sense of the word, no attempt because such is uncalled for, to arrange the matter into delicate progression. The play is a series of scenes, some splendid, some petty, loosely related into a time sequence, and rounded off by the foreseen catastrophe.

Natural Division of the Play- The play is structurally loose and hence it will not be proper to divide it into the acts of a classical drama. Originally it was not so divided, and it is only some later critics who have imposed the division on it. Mrs. Una Ellis Fermour say that we can trace six main episodes, Faustus surveys his position and makes the choice that begins the action and sets the play moving toward the crisis. In the next, he takes, the first significant step and summons Mephistophilis to as he has determined in the scene before. Still his mind is rising in its purpose and its desires. In the third great scene comes the crisis, the selling of his soul, with vaccilation attendent upon a crisis, leaving uncertain which way the action will move. In the next scene of importance, Faustus' regret begins, and the evil powers double their efforts and triumph, so that the action instead of swaying to and from between balanced conflict, now sets downward. The last struggle of the good forces fills the next scene where the old man pleads with Faustus as the two Angels had done in the first half, and where the forces of evil make their most strenous effect and gain their final triumph. The period of cortest ends, as did the first, with the confirmation of the terrible bond, and the whole is sealed by the apparition of Helena. The fight is over now and the moment rushes down to the

The 'Chorus' was a necessay feature of the ancient Greek drama. In the Greek tragic dramas, the 'Chorus' ued to serve purposes. The Chorus used to chant lyric poetry and thus helped to relieve or reduce the tragic tone of the tragic drama. Shakespeare however used to reduce or relieve the tragic tendion in his tragedies by means of the comic senses in various ways by introducing the clown, by playing upon words, by witty and humorous remarks by certain characters in the play. In the Greek dramas as in the early English drama. There was very little of scenic representation upon the stage, and therefore, the chorus used to describe the scenes and fulfilled the purpose of scenic representation. The chorus used also to suggest and indicate the atmosphere of the play in which it was moving.

In Doctor Faustus, the chorus appears four times. The play opens with the speech of chorus. In its opening speech, the chorus tells us that the play *would* not deal with war of love, the common themes of dramatists. Rather it will deal with the life and fortunes of Faustus. Then, it proceeds to give an account of the earlier life career of Faustus which is not be character on the stage

Nor is he born, his parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town called Rhodes;
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went,
Where as his kinsman chiefly brought him up.
So soon he profits in divinity,
The fruitful plot of scholarism graced,
That shortly he was graced with doctors name,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes,
In heavenly matters of theology."

The chorus in 'Doctor Faustus' serves the purpose of Prologue which relates the life history of the hero i.e. Doctor Faustus, how he was born, how he was educated, how he specialized and excelled in the various arts, how he become self-conceited due to his learning and scholarship, how he finally took up necromancy or magic as his pursuit in preference to religion or divinity, medicine or philosophy, law or any other branch of study. The chorus does not state or even hint, how Faustus made a contract with the Devil in order to extend his knowledge and power without any limit and how after having dabbled in magic, he paid the severest panelty of a painful death and also permanent damnation in hell. The chorus in the present play does not indulge in any kind of moralizing comments; it does not help the audience with any hint about his tragic doom nor does it explain, why Faustus was

pursues the same course-triumph followed by a mighty fall. From the technical point of view, Marlowe's best work is Edward II, but it cannot be compared in psychological interest or poetic grandeur with Doctor Faustus. For this great symbolic tragedy deals with a theme which was part not only of the author's inner experience but of the very stuff which nourished the Renaissance spirit. The Pride of intellect by which both the Faustus of Marlowe and the Lucifer of Milton fell, was the subtlest and most dangerous temptation of the age. After wandering for centuries through the mists of ignorance, man found himself once more before the tree of knowledge. There, within his reach, burned like a thousand lamps the coveted fruit of his desire; but there, too, coiled about the roots, lay the old serpent, still unconquered, still thirsting for his soul's blood.

The Works of Marlowe

1. **Tamburlaine the Great** (in two parts of which the first appeared in 1587 and the second in 1588) is the story of Timur, the Tartar who began his life as a shepherd chief and ultimately became a great conqueror. Tamburlaine the Great may be called a pure "hero-play".

2. **The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus** (1588), is also a hero-play (though written along more subtle lines). It is a dramatised story of the life and death of a medieval scholar who sells his soul to the devil, in return for a life of power and pleasure.

3. **The Jew of Malta** (1589), is a study of lust for wealth, which centres around Barabas, a terrible old money-lender (who is strongly suggestive of Shakespeare's Shylock)

4. **Edward II** (1592), is unquestionably Marlowe's masterpiece, so far as play-making goes, though it contains fewer quotable passages of pure poetry than any of the others. It is a tragic study of a king's weakness and misery. This play is a worthy predecessor of Shakespeare's historical dramas.

Other plays in which Marlowe is said to have had a share are: The Massacre at Paris (1593); and Dido, Queen of Carthage (1593). Both, these were written in collaboration with Thomas Nashe. His hand has been traced in a few other plays as well.

Besides these plays, Marlowe also wrote a poem called Hero and Leander (1592), in which, apart from the drama, the Renaissance movement is seen perhaps at its highest point in English poetry. The tide of Italian eroticism and sensuousness is also seen here at its height. (This poem was completed by George Chapman).

Marlowe also wrote one of the finest lyrics in the English language: The Passionate Shepherd To His Love, a poem of pure fancy and radiant melody.

Metamorphoses. His spirited translation of Ovid's Amores (printed in 1596) commenced at Cambridge. His translation of The First Book of Lucan, also printed after his death in 1600, belongs to the last years of his short life. Hero and Leander, too, belongs to these last years.

"There is something in the meteor-like suddenness of his appearance in the skies of poetry, and in the swift flaming of his genius through its course, that seems to make inevitable his violent end. He sums up for us the Renaissance passion for life, sleepless in its search and daring in its grasp after the infinite in power, in knowledge and in pleasure."

Marlowe, during his life-time, had the reputation of being an "atheist and epicure", and a mocker of religion. His contemporaries, Thomas Kyd and Richard Baines, brought against him many charges of blasphemy, heresy, and atheism. He was accused for instance, of saying: "That the first beginning of religion was only to keep men in awe, and that Moses was a juggler, and Aaron a cozener, the one for his miracles to Pharaoh to prove there was a God, and the other for taking the earrings of the children of Israel to make a golden calf." Other reported sayings are of an even more serious nature; and it seems Marlowe delivered a lecture in defence of atheism and perhaps started on an atheistical treatise. There is no need to shut our eyes to these charges. We may admit them as true, but at the same time we should not jump to the conclusion that Marlowe was incapable of reverence or a serious evaluation of Christianity. His sceptical and rebellious temperament was not simply his personal tendency; it made him one of the great representative figures of his time, capable of the fullest experience of the intellectual and moral troubles of his generation.

Marlowe was the greatest of a group of young writers generally called the "University Wits". Before his untimely death at the age of twenty-nine, he had founded English romantic tragedy, had written one of the greatest poetical dramas in the English language, and had converted the stiff mechanical blank verse of Gorboduc into a vital form which Shakespeare in his turn could make fit for the speeches of his greatest characters. But Marlowe was far more than a pioneer. He shines across the centuries in the blaze of his genius. No one but Milton could bend the bow of the grand style as he bent it. His poem, Hero and Leander, proves him a son also of the gentler Muse of sweet sensuousness. His dramas show only moderate constructive ability or power of characterisation, but they carry the reader away by the sheer force and beauty of their language, and by the great visions which they call up in the mind. Tamburlaine, his. earliest and crudest character, comes upon the stage driving a team of kings before his chariot; Barabas rules the world by the power of gold; Faustus sells his soul to become a magician. Each is inspired by a lust of power, and the tragedy always

then went to London where he became an actor, living in a low-tavern atmosphere of excess and wretchedness. In 1587, at the age of twenty-three, he produced his first play, Tamburlaine, which brought him instant recognition. Thereafter, although he led a wretched life, he remained loyal to a high literary purpose. In five years, while Shakespeare was serving apprenticeship, Marlowe produced all his great work. Then he was stabbed in a drunken fight and died wretchedly as he had lived. He was only twenty-nine when he died. The epilogue of Faustus could very well be inscribed on his tombstone:

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,

And burned is Apollo's laurel-bough

That sometime grew within this learned man.

Francis Kett, the mystic, who was burned in 1589 for heresy, was a fellow and tutor of his college at Cambridge. It is surmised that this man had some share in developing Marlowe's opinions in religious matters. Marlowe also knew Thomas Kyd, who was a man of unorthodox opinions. Marlowe too, was associated with what was denounced as Sir Walter Raleigh's school of atheism, and held opinions which were then regarded as highly objectionable and obnoxious. In October, 1588, Marlowe gave bail for his appearance for some unknown offence. Serious charges were brought against him in 1593. As a result of certain confessions made by Thomas Kyd under the influence of torture, the Privy Council started an investigation of the charges of atheism and blasphemy against Marlowe. But Marlowe's career was abruptly cut short.

Various accounts of Marlowe's death have been given by various writers. However, according to the most reliable version, based on the evidence of documents in the Public Record Office, Marlowe was killed by a companion of his, one Ingram Frizer, at an inn on the 30th May, 1593. Frizer and Marlowe, together with two friends named Robert Poley and Nicholas Skeres, had gone to the inn to drink and dine. A quarrel arose about paying the bill. Marlowe in a sudden fit of temper attacked Frizer from behind. In the ensuing struggle Frizer stabbed Marlowe who died instantly. Frizer was subsequently pardoned on the ground that he had killed Marlowe in self defence. A full account of the documentary evidence which supports this version of Marlowe's death is given in Dr. Hotson's book, The Death of Christopher Marlowe, which appeared in 1925. Dr. Hotson points out that Ingram Frizer was a "gentleman" and did not, even after killing Marlowe, forfeit the good graces of his employers, the Walsinghams, who were friends of Marlowe.

Marlowe's classical' acquirements were of a kind which was then extremely common, being based for the most part on a close acquaintance with Roman mythology as revealed in Ovid's

Ariel's suffering- We are much grieved to learn how Ariel suffered for twelve long years as a result of the cruelty of the witch Sycorax. Having refused to obey her hateful commands. Ariel was imprisoned in a cloven pine where he remained for a dozen years. Ariel suffered great torments there. His groans made the wolves howl and penetrated "the breasts of ever angry beasts." From this torment, Ariel was released by the magic of Prospero.

The suffering of Alonso and Gonzalo- After the supposed shipwreck, Alonso and others find themselves on a desert island. Alonso is in a miserable condition especially because he thinks that he has lost his son, Ferdinand. Gonzalo bears the misfortune with a philosophic cheerfulness. But Alonso remains disconsolate and all words of cheer fall flat upon him. Afterwards, these shipwrecked men suddenly find a feast before them but the feast disappears as soon as they make up their minds to eat. Then follows terrible denunciation of the three evil doers namely Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian. Ariel's speech on this occassion is dreadful and devastating. Alonso is deeply affected by the threats and warnings of Ariel and he almost loses his wits. So wretched grows the condition of Alonso that Gonzalo sheds tears of pity and even the heart of Ariel is touched.

Toil of Ferdinand- There is an element of sadness in the toil of carrying logs to which Ferdinand has been subjected by Prospero. Miranda's heart is deeply grieved to see this beloved young man sweating and labouring. She offers to share his labour though he would not listen to any such proposal. He continues his labours cheerfully because he has the love of Miranda. Our heart goes out to him in sympathy especially because he is subjected to this labour when he has hardly yet recovered from his grief over the supposed death of his father, Alonso.

It must, however, be pointed out that although there are quite a number of tragic elements in this play, there is an overwhelming sense of tragedy. The tensions are resolved quickly and the whole piece ends in forgiveness, reconciliation, reunion and a general goodwill.

Dr. Faustus

Christopher Marlowe was the greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors. He may be regarded as the true founder of English drama. He was born in 1564, two months before Shakespeare, in the town of Canterbury. He was the son of a poor shoe-maker. Through the kindness of a patron, he was educated at the town Grammar School and then at the University of Cambridge. He graduated at the age of nineteen; and

and carrying logs of wood as a test of the sincerity of his love, and listening to Miranda's kind words to her lover. Ferdinand, though a Prince, would not suffer Miranda to do the work on his behalf, while he would sit idle.

Prospero in his soliloquy informs the audience that of his purpose in bringing Miranda and Ferdinand together. he is thoroughly satisfied that his plan has proved successful.

In the second soWoquy Prospero, after the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand, recalls that Ariel has informed him of the dark conspiracy hatched by Caliban and his two confederates against his life. Prospero is extremely angry and soliloquies that Caliban is a devil, a born devil, whose blood is devilish. He has inherited devilishness from his mother. Inspite of all the trouble he has taken in educating and civilising him, he remains unchanged. As he has grown older he has become uglier in body and mind.

In the third soliloquy Prospero reviews his past magical feasts and announces his decision to abjure magic for ever with the help of magic he has worked miracles. He has caused the graves to open their mouths and brought out the dead buried there. He has raised ghosts to make them walk. When through magic he will restore Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian to their senses, he will break his magic wand, bury it deep in the earth and drown his magic book in the deep, unplumbed sea. For the rest of his life he will live the life of a common man.

The Opening Scene- We have an element of tragedy in the very opening scene where a ship carrying distinguished passengers is threatened with disaster. Frantic efforts by the sailors to save the ship prove of no avail. There is confusion and a general outcry on the ship. Some of the sailors are screaming in terror and alarm. The ship seems to be sinking. Of course, there is an element of humour in this scene also; but the general effect is sad. In the subsequent scene we find Miranda expressing her grief over the supposed ship wreck. Her heart has been deeply touched by the cries of the passengers. "The direful spectacle of the wreck" has touched "The very virtue of compassion" in her.

Prospero's narration of his past history- Prospero's narration of his past history to Miranda is essentially tragic. Prospero informs Miranda how twelve years ago he and she (as a small baby) were cast out upon the sea and left to the mercy of the winds and the waves. He talks of the treachery of his brother Antonio and the deception that the latter practised upon him. This narration also touches the heart of Miranda, especially when she thinks of what hardship she as a little child must have caused to her father. Prospero's pathetic account greatly excites our pity also.

B.K. chambers observes:

"The main interest is Prospero's exercise of magic power. The storm and drifting ashore of the vessel; the frustration of the two conspiracies; the magic banquet and Masque : the betrothal and final righting of wrongs, all are brought about by Prospero":

As a short summary of events what Chambers writes is correct. But he has not suggested that the play has little action. The charm lies in music and poetry. It is a play that has no action, or the action is slight. Everything is pre-arranged. The storm brought about by Prospero's magic is not terrifying, for we all know well in advance that everything is planned, and not a soul has suffered the least harm. The characters have no independent volition of their own. They are puppets in the hands of Prospero. There is no interaction of characters.

These are defects, perhaps glaring defects. But the defects are far outnumbered by the merits, which consist in music and poetry.

Soliloquy is an integral part in a Shakespearian tragedy. A soliloquy has been defined by Matthew Arnold as "the dialogue of the mind with itself". There ar.e different types of soliloquies-soliloquy of rEr1eetion, Soliloquy of comment, Soliloquy of self-explanation, Soliloquy of resolution, and Soliloquy", says Hudson, "is the dramatist's means of taking down into the hidden recesses of a person's nature, and of revealing those springs of conduct which ordinary dialogue provides him with no adequate opportunity to disclose. He cannot himself direct them, as the novelist does. He, therefore, allows them to do the work of dissection on their account. They think aloud to themselves and we overhear what they say."

The character of a person is revealed through the soliloquies. The soliloquy also serves the purpose of the Chorus, in as much as it communicates news comments upon other characters, introduced new scenes and establishes a link between two scenes. Inspite of the remark of Gottsched that "clever people do not speak aloud when they are alone", we must accept the soliloquy as a necessary stage convention.

Though part and parcel in a tragedy, the soliloquy is there in a comedy also. the speech of Launce about the dog in The two gentlemen of Verona, MalvoLio's speech on receipt of a fake letter from Olivia, and Falstaff's mental prattle on the code of honour are all soliloquies. We have soliloquies of Prospero and Gonzalo in The Tempest. Yet it must be said that while in a comedy, the Sbliloquy is df secondary important: , and is, therefore, sparingly used, tllit ii serves a very important purpose in a trage }:

Prospero has three soliloquies: (a) At the close of Act III, S ene I; (b) Act IV; Stene I; and (c) Att V. In the first Soliloquy, Prospero stands invisittle; watching Ferdihand, entrusted with the task of cutting

in the earlier play. It is Stopford Brooke who says that the speeches of Ariel are sheer lyrics.

It may sound peradoxical that Caliban, otherwise gross and earthy, at times soars into the Empyrean heights of imagination. He is, no doubt, an earth-born Savage, but often does he speak lyrics. When Stephano and Trinculo, two human beings, no doubt, are far more prosaic than Caliban enquire about the unearthly sound that they have heard, Caliban seemed to be transported to the dreamland and exclaims:

But not afeared : the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that have delight, and hurt not
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about my ears; and sometimes voices,
That if I then wak'd after long sleep,
Will make me sleep,

What will be his dream when he is asleep? He dreams that the Cloud makes a rift and exhibits his infinite riches, which may, any time, drop upon him as blessings. If it is a dream, he likes no awakening, for the sweet dream should linger on. The songs of Ariel and the dances of the spirits exude an inaffable charm throughout the play. Prospero, despite his occasional stern exterior, is a lyric poet. We may recall the passage where Prospero speaks after he had conjured up a vision:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air :
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And like the insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

A rare poetic imagination must have been required for the conception and delineation of Ariel and Miranda and even Caliban.

Ferdinand at Naples is not at all poetical. But as soon as he comes in contact with Miranda, the Sylvan Goddess, he undergoes a sea-change, and becomes lyrical himself. Miranda is half-poetic and half-real. To her, Ferdinand is a young prince, come from a far-off land, with his magic wand to awaken the princess, lying asleep.

In virtue than in vengeance."

(V,i. 27-28).

He only demands that sinners should be repentant

"They being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further."

(V, i. 28-30)

Prospero seeks and attains a nobler revenge upon his enemies in forgiveness. Revenge leaves the wrong-doer no chance of reforming himself. The rare action is forgiveness which blesses the giver as well as the ceceiver.

Romanticism, imagination, music and lyricism are what constitute The Tempest. "The Tempest," Coleridge rightly points out, "addresses itself entirely to the imaginative faculty". It is steeped in the idyllic atmosphere of magic and wonder".The island is known as the enchanted island, which is made of the quintessence of romance. Shakespeare has given here to airy nothing a local habitation and a name. The setting of the play is exquisitely romantic. Miranda and Ariel are the characters woven in a dream. It has been rightly said that Miranda is the 'Eve of this enchanted Paradise'. Ariel is not the stormy wind, but made of the essence of refinement. Eve$_{ry}$thing about him is graceful and poetic. The Masque is, as Prospero suggests, 'the stuff as dreams on'. The love-scene of Miranda and Ferdinand is idyllic, and as Arthur Quiller-Couch says, "is the most beautiful love- scene in Shakespeare. The Tempest, by universal consort, is a pure web of fancy and imagination shot with delicate hues, "a baseless fabric of a vision", almost an unsubstantial thing. No other play has these qualities of dream.

The Tempest has not much of action. There are few, ve$_{ry}$ few, dramatic situations, nor was it intended by the playwright. Prospero is the controlling spirit, and Ariel carries out his wishes. Everything is beyond the limits of humanity. The imaginative appeal is irresistible.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the play is a long lyric. The atmosphere is full of music, heard and unheard, and unheard melodies are much sweeter than the heard ones. It is more than a lyrical drama. It is all music and lyric. At times The Tempest has been compared with A Mid-summer's Night Dream from the lyrical point of view. But the Tempest is much more lyrical and musical. True, in A midsummer Night's Dream there are the Fai$_{ry}$ King and the Fai$_{ry}$ Queen and Puck. Yet the love element of the two couples fades into in ignificance compared to that of the Tempest. The songs of Ariel have no counterpart

Against what should ensue."

(I, ii, 152-158)

Stopford Brooke writes, "His little daughter kept him human; his love for her, as she grew to womanhood, strengthened his humanity." The study and practice of magic might have made Prospero a non human-being-an impersonation of Intellect : Miranda was his salvation. On the island he studies only the upbringing and happiness of Miranda. He exercises his magic art with a wonderful foresight relating to Miranda's well-being:

"I have done nothing but in care of thee:
Of thee, my dear one : thee, my daughter."

(I, ii, 16-17)

Nothing delights his heart so much as to see Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love, and each owning the love for other :

"Pros. **So glad of this as they I cannot be,**
Who are surprised withal; but my rejoicing
At nothing can be more."

(4) **His Sense of Justice:** Prospero is represented by some as the impersonation of Justice and reason. He does not forgive his enemies as a weak man may forgive the wrong done to him. He does not exact vengeance as a weak man, if he had the power, would have thirsted for. First repentance, then forgiveness, Prospero works on this principle. The three men of sin-Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian are haunted by supernatural terrors, but these supernatural terrors are meant to symbolize the terrors of guilty conscience:

"Gon. **All three of them are desperate : their great guilt,**
Like poison give to work a great time after,
Now' gins to bite the spirits"

If it is not very clear that Antonio and Sebastian felt the effect of remorse, Alonso is susceptible to it:

"Alon. **O, it is monstrous, monstrous!**
Methought the billows spoke and told me of it,
The winds did sing it to me, and the thunder,
That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
The name of Prosper : it did bass my trespass."

No forgiveness without repentance : thus Prospero's sense of justice is satisfied.

(5) **His Forgiveness :** Prospero realizes that

"The rarer action is

Prospero says:

"Me, poor man, my library
Was dukedom large enough."

(I, ii. 109-110)

This he gives as the opinion, his brother, Antonio held of him. But it may be taken as a compliment to, and not a reproach, of Prospero. Indeed his library was more than his dukedom. He let his dukedom go to his brother and clung to his books. He could have little blamed his brother for replacing him. He himself confesses that:

"those being all my study,
The government I cast upon my brother
And do my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies."

(I, ii, 74-77)

It may be noted here that not his learning, but his practical experience of life-the experience of his brother's treachery (which most hurt him) and of hardship and suffering-teaches him wisdom.

(3) **His Paternal Affection :** Prospero's dukedom did not have a hold upon him. By losing his dukedom he seems to gain something immensely richer-the rediscovery of his human nature. Being cast on an uninhabited island, and left to himself, undistracted by petty and mean court intrigues, he naturally turns all his care and affection to his daughter. He may justifiably say:

"and here
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit
Than other princesses can, that have more time
For vainer hours, and tutors not so careful."

(I, ii, 171-174)

When Prospero it put into a frail boat with his daughter and turned adrift, he finds his sole comfort and strength in her. His good angel seemed to have entered the body of his daughter and inspired him with courage and fortitude:

"Pros. **O, a cherubin**
That wast that did perserve me. thou didst smile,
Infused with a fortitude from heaven,
When I have deck'd the sea with drops full salt,
Under my burthen groan'd! which raised in me
An undergoing stomach, to bear up

magic he acquired control over the forces of nature and over the world of spirits. The tempest which he raised and which wrecks the ship in the opening scene of the play is the manifestation of the power, conferred upon him by magic. He released Ariel, whom he found imprisoned in cloven pine, and got him to execute all his commands. The action of the play is, as a matter of fact, put into the hands of Ariel. Prospero designs, and Ariel executes. First, Ferdinand and Miranda are brought together, and it is Prospero's plan that they should fall in love. Secondly, the conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian against Alonso is frustrated. Thirdly, remorse is awakened in Prospero's enemies by supernatural terrors of the banquet scene. Lastly, Prospero meets his enemies and forgives them. So we can sum up the character of Prospero:

(1) **His Omnipotence and Magnanimity:** Prospero is the Providence of the play. He controls the action and fortunes of all the characters in the play. What is most remarkable is that he is never tempted to abuse the unlimited and irresponsible powers, conferred upon him by magic. He might have exacted a dire vengeance upon his enemies when he got them in his power, but he lets them of with a fair warning. In fact Prospero ever retains balance and judgement-he is never intoxicated by possession of power. Verity rightly says, "Prospero is almost a personification of wisdom." He possesses his soul in truth and peace : only on one occasion in the play he seems to lose his patience. It is when he remembers Caliban's plot against him, and suddenly dismisses the spirits who are executing a harvest dance for the delight of Ferdinand and Miranda. Ferdinand notices his temper :

"This is strange : your father's in some passion
That works him strongly."

(IV, i 143-144)

Perhaps this is the only case in which Prospero shows his human weakness.

(2) **His passion for Learning :** Prospero is a typical scholar, who is indifferent to worldly ends. But later by his experience of suffering and hardship he learns to take a detached view of himself as a scholar and recluse. So Prospero does not spare himself when he recites the past of Miranda :

"I thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
To closeness and the bettering of my mind
With that which, but by being so retired,
O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother
Awaked an evil nature;" etc.

(I, ii, 89-93)

the same nature which impels Prospero to return to Milan to fulfil his duty towards the state whose government he had so long neglected.

Caliban, on the other hand, does not know the true meaning of freedom and all service is hateful to him. He curses his master Prospero, who, he says has usurped the insland which was his by right of inheritance. He does not like to serve him and carry logs for him. He thirsts for revenge as well as freedom. When Stephano and Trinculo appear, he is possessed with a fanatical desire to have both his revenge and bis freedom, and enters into a conspiracy with them to destroy Prospero whom he hates. However, in bis case there is to be no freedom, but simply an exchange of masters. As Trinculo and Stephano quarrel over th trumpery of Prospero, Caliban realises his mistake in taking this "drunkard for a god and worshipping this dull fool." He realises that the beneficent servitude under Prospero is preferable to the freedom he is to enjoy in the proposed regime.

The dramatist has learned and he would also have us learn that "Pardon is the word to all"; we should be guided in life not by hatred and the desire for vengeance but by the beauty of forgiveness and reconciliation. The epilogue, too, "curiously falls in with this moral purport of the whole. Prospero, the pardoner implores pardon. Shakespeare was aware that no life is ever lived which does not need to receive as well as to render forgiveness (Dowden). He appeals to the audience that as he has pardoned his deceivers, let the audience now pardon him and in,their indulgence set him free. Thus the whole conduct of Prospero is a honesty on the moral truth that it is far nobler to forgive than to ta y vengtiance. The happiness of life is to be attained by noble {orgiven 1ath :efhan cu el vengeance.

The play The Tempest is thus a criticism of life. "Forgiveness and freedom; these are the keynotes of the play." Forgiveness is the rarer virtue, because-

"Wve are slich stuff

As dreams are made of; and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

The drama embodies the dramatist's criticism of life. It conveys sound moral lessons, like the Morality plays of the Middle Ages.

We do not see Prospero actually as the Duke of Milan. But from his recital of the past to Miranda we learn that he practically handed over the administration to his brother, Antonio, and devoted himself to studies. Naturally his brother took advantage of the circumstance, and at last expelled him and his daughter from Milian. Being sent adrift on sea, he reached an uninhabited island with his daughter. By his study of

his enemies. He was expelled from Milan, of which he was the Duke, as a result of a foul conspiracy hatched by his own brother, Antonio, with the active co-operation of Alonso and Sebestian. His enemies did not even feel pity for his infant daughter, Miranda. Both of them are exposed to the fury of winds and waves and it was only by a miracle that they drifted towards an island on which they landed safely. On the island, Prospero acquires marvellous supernatural powers and can do anything he likes. But when his enemies fall into his hands, he does not subject them to the punishment which they deserve. He only tries to weaken a sense of guilt in them and then soften towards them. In his own words, he believes that "rares action is in virtue than in vengeance." All that he expects from his enemies is "heart felt sorrow and a clear life ensuing", that is a feeling of repentence and remorse over past misdeeds, and a vow to lead a sinless life in the future. He tells Ariel that his enemies are repentant, "the sole drift of my purpose doth extend not a frown further." Go release them, Ariel. My charm I'll break, their senses I'll restore." and they shall be themselves", he says on learning that his enemies are in a distracted condition. To his worst enemy, his own brother, he says, "I do forgive thee, unnatural thou art." Thus Prospero's whole attitude towards his enemies is determined by a feeling of compassion and pity and his revenge does not go beyond an effort to awaken in his enemies a sense of guilt and to rouse their conscience.

The other moral which is illustrated by the play is that "true freedom of man consists in service." A number of characters in the play yearns for freedom. There is first of all Ariel. He is the spirit of air, and freedom is the very breath of his life. All restraint, however, ruled or generous, is irksome to him. He longs for freedom and constantly reminds Prospero of his promise to grant him freedom. Except for one occasion, he serves his master without grudge or grumbling and performs all his orders exactly in every detail. It is he who places Prospero's enemies within his power. It is as a reward for his services that he is at last granted the freedom which he so much desired. Ariel's story illustrates the moral that true freedom can be obtained only through service.

This very moral is emphasised by the love-story of Ferdinand and Miranda. It seems, say Brandes, as if Shakespeare's motive in introducing this love story was "to show that it is man's great and noble privilege to serve out of love". The character of Ferdinand illustrates the beauty of service, that man finds pleasure in the servitude of love, service which is rendered through love is sweet and a source of pleasure. It is out of his love for Miranda that he though a prince, becomes a "patient Logman". Miranda, too, shares his feeling and is willing to be his servant, his maid, if he will not make her his wife. It is a feeling of

Ans. The Tempest belongs to the group of Shakespeare plays known as dramatic romances. The other plays of this group are The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline and pericles. All these plays have certain well marked characteristics. They are the fruits of Shakespeare's maturity and contain an expression of his experience of life. All these plays carry some moral lessons, all of them embody the dramatist's criticism of life for they answer the question. "How to live?" Which is essentially a moral question.

The Tempest also has its own moral lessons, so much so that it has ever been called a morality play. As Dowden points out, "Forgiveness and Freedom are the key roles of the play." This moral is illustrated by the story of Prospero. Prospero, the Duke of Milan, is exiled by his younger brother Antonio and Alonso, the King of Naples. Prospero was wise, generous and popular; but absorbed in the study of books he neglected his duties as a ruler. He reposed full confidence in his younger brother and entrusted him with the administration of his Dukedom. Taking advantage of his position Antonio, in conspiracy with Alonso, the King of Naples, expelled him from Milan and usurped the Dukedom. Prospero, alongwith his infant daughter was cast adrift on the ocean in a rotten carcass of a boat. An old and faithful courtier, Gonzalo, secretly placed in the boat some food, and his books which he prized above his Dukedom. By the grace of God he escaped drowning, and reached the uninhabited island which forms the scene of action of the play.

Here he educated, his daughter, and devoted himself whole heartedly to the study of his books. The result, was that he acquired magical powers. He now controlled the spirit world, and with its help could perform wonders. When the play opens, it is with the help of Ariel, the chief of the spirits that he raises a storm in the sea and brings his enemies-Antonio. Alonso, his son Ferdinand, and others to his enchanted island. His enemies are now fully under his power, and he can easily wreck his vengeance upon them. But with knowledge he has also acquired wisdom. He has learnt that "The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance". He has learnt that forgiveness and reconciliation are sweeter than vengeance. He, therefore, forgives his younger brother, "unnatural" though he is, and is reconciled to him. He is also reconciled to Alonso, and his brother Sebestian. "Prospero's forgiveness is solemn, judicial, and has in it something abstract and impersonal." (Downden). He does not wrong his noble nature, by cherishing so unworthy a passion as the desire of vengeance. The play ends on a note of forgiveness and reconciliation. Prospero is to get back his Dukedom, and Miranda would inherit both the Dukedom of Milan and the kingdom of Napels.

The Tempest can certainly be interpreted as conveying to us the great value of forgiveness. Prospero has greatly suffered at the hands of

All we think so vital, the glory, love, and suffering of the world, the cloud-capped philosophy and the solemn temples of Law and Religion, the earth itself, and all the human struggle on it, are illusion, the flitting in a dream of the soul of the world; itself a dream, to and from through empty space; and all its actors, like the spirits in the masque, phantoms in the dream, drawn out of the visionary imagination to make a show, and vanishing into the mist, to leave not a rack behind. It was thus, some theorist might say that, Shakespeare thought of all this world he was near departure from it, and quoted the famous lines:

"These our actors,

As I foretold you, were all spirits and

Are melted into air, into thin air

And like the baseless fabric of this vision, etc."

"This is a thought common to the race. It seems, so common to it, to belong to the original texture of humanity. In certain circumstances, varying as temperaments vary, it is sure to slip into the mind. Most often it slips out again : Sometimes it stays ..... it is here expressed in lines of such uncommon force and beauty that it ceases to seem common : it is as if no one felt in before Prospero shaped it. And it exactly fits the temper of his mind at this instant of the play; naturally emerging from the scene and their circumstances. But Prospero-and, indeed, SDhakespeare, if we mix him up with Prospero-was too sane and too experienced a character to imagine that life was illusion, or that we we; tlw, stuff of dreams, or that sleep rounded our little life. No Offe shoul9 CW8te tqe paJse-ge as Wltexplan von of Shakespeare's theo-iY o -Jife, only as far as 'rounded witp. a sle,ep'."

-Stopford A. Brooke

N.B.- Stopford A. Brooke has the following note on the theory that Prospero is Shakespeare:-

"Many years ago, Emile Montegue elaborated this theory in a long and admirable article in, if I remember rightly, the Revue desdeux Mandes. It was so well done that it almost convinced the reader, at least for a time, it was a true theory. There can, however be no certainly in any of these theories. They are interesting as excursions into the unknowable, but they remain guesses, and no more. One may, I think, argue from the general temper of a play to the temper of the writer's mind when he wrote it, specially when the same kind of temper, though in different moods, prevails through a succession of plays, as in the great tragedies. But Shakespeare was so impersonal in his art, that such argument has not much weight."

despite all gloomy thought of death and wearied hopes of rest, straight from Shakespeare's own lips:

'Now does my project gather to a head;

My charms crack not; my spirits obey; and time

Goes upright with his carriage.'

All will soon be accomplished and Ariels' hour of deliverance is nigh. the parting of the master from his genius is not without a touch of melancholy:

'My dainty Ariel ! I shall miss thee,

But yet thou shalt have freedom'.

Prospero is determined in his heart to renounce all his magical powers:

'To the elements

Be free and fare thee well!'

He has taken leave of all his elves by name, and now utters words, whose personal application has never been approached by any character hitherto set upon the stage by Shakespeare :

'But this rough magic

I here abjure, and when I have required

Some heavenly music, etc.,

I'll break my staff, etc.'

"Solemn music is heard, and Shakespeare has bidden farewell to his art. **-George Brandis.**

N.B.- Brandis practically identifies Prospero with Shakespeare. Every detail of Prospero's speech he would fit into his idea of Shakespeare. Brandis rather lets himself be carried away by his speculation.

(2) Shakespeare is not Prospero.

"Indeed, it has been said that Shakespeare pictured himself as Prospero and said farewell in this play to that dramatic poetry in which he had wrought so many enchantments, and seen, through Ariel, his familiar spirit of imagination whom he now set free, into the secret of Nature and the hearts of men. His magic staff he buried now, and deeper than ever plummet sounded, he drowned his book. He had created a whole world, and now he would rest from creation.

The argument might be carried further. It might be said that Shakespeare, looking back on the work he had now laid aside, and on life's comedy and tragedy, expressed his judgement of it in what he said to Ferdinand and Miranda concerning the pageant he had shown them.

least self-conscious of all poets, have escaped thinking of himself as he wrote Prospero's:

'Our revels now are ended; these our actors
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air.'

And if the wonderful lines which follow only repeat with greater magnificence a thought which the poet had often expressed before, could he write them at that time without some interior and personal application? He was retiring from his life's work and accepting the fact that his best years were past. Could he fail to thinking at least a little, of himself, of the unreality and swift passing of life, not as a general truth but as personal experience as he put on his paper such words as:

'The cloud capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

-John Bailey.

N.B.- John Bailey too makes a reasoned and cautious statement, which can provoke no contradiction.

(iii) 'We are such stuff as dreams are made on'; a deep sleep from which we awaken to life, and again, a deep sleep hereafter. What a personal note is in the last scene of the play where Prospero says:

'And thence retire me to my Milan, where
Every third thought shall be my grave.'

How we feel that Stratford was the poet's Milan. Just as Ariel's linging for freedom was the yearning of the poet's genius for rest. He has had enough of the burden of work, enough for the toilsome necromancy of imagination, enough of art, enough of the life of the town. A deep sense of the vanity of all things has laid its hold upon him, he believes in no future and expects no results from the work of a lifetime.

Like Prospero, he had sacrificed his position to his art, and, like him, he had dwelt upon an enchanted island in the ocean of life. He had been its lord and master, with dominion over spirits, with the spirit of the air as his servant, and the spirit of the earth as his slave. At his will graves had opened, and by his magic art the heroes of the past had lived again. The words with which Prospero opens the fifth Act come,

Here is the dramatist's final appeal to the audience. He begs all the indulgence of the audience. He has finally given up writing plays for ever.

One school of critics identify Prospero with Shakespeare, and suppose that Shakespeare bids farewell to the stage in Prospero's speech:

"I'll break my staff,

Bury it cert in fathoms in the earth,

And deeper than did ever plummet sound

I'll drown my book-"

Another school of critics argue that as a dramatist Shakespeare's art must be 'impersonal' and that Shakespeare could not have portrayed himself in Prospero or in any other character for the matter of that. It may be generally true that Shakespeare, as the dramatic art demands, could not have projected his own character and personality in any of bis creations. Yet it is sometimes held that Shakespeare bas given more of himself in Hamlet-the most introspective character he has ever painted. The plays no doubt mirror the varying and complex moods of Shakespeare at the different periods of his life-and we may even fancy that this or that character partly represents Shakespeare. It will not, however be safe to identify Shakespeare with any character of his plays. We give the two different views below:

(1) Prospero is Shakespeare.

(i)

"The splendour of sunset in The Tempest can escape no one, and the sternest opponent of guess-work must admit the probable presence of a designed allegory in the figure of Prospero and the burying of the book, the breaking of the staff, at the close". **-Saintsbury**

N.B.-Saintsbury's contention is harmless. He does not identify Shakespeare with Prospero, but holds that Prospero's solemn abjuring of magic symbolizes Shakespeare's farewell to the stage.

(ii) "I confess that it seems to me less unlikely-I will not put it higher-that in creating Prospero Shakespeare had some at least occasional thoughts of himself. What is Prospero? He is a magician who has lived in a dream and attended by spirits, but now breaks his staff and utters too solemn farewells to the world of visions which he is forsaking for the ordinary life of men. Could Shakespeare, even if he is

seemingly natural and simple means... Here Shakespeare himself is Prospero or rather the superior Genius who comments both Prospero and Ariel. But the time was approaching when the potent sorcerer was to break his staff, and to bury it fathoms in the ocean-'deeper than did ever plummet sound'.

Coleridge observes:'The atmosphere of farewell hangs over the whole play'.

In fact, thousands of critics down the ages have voiced similar sentiments that Shakespeare has bidden farewell to the stage in The Tempest.

There is no denying the fact that Shakespeare was a magician, an enchanter, a wizard like Prospero, with this magic he enchanted the public of London and made them weep and laugh with his tragedies and comedies. He roused their patriotic feelings in his Chronicle plays.

Let us study his parting message in Act V, I.

But this rough magic
There abjure, and when I have required
Some heavenly music which even now I do,
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did plummet sound
I'll drown my book.

It is more than a veiled feeling that Shakespeare, on wearing the 'Crown of life', thinks of retiring to Stratford-upon-Avon, as Prospero proposes to go to Milan and pass the rest of his days at home. Shakespeare passed his last few years in the company of his daughters and wife.

Ariel is an airy being as Shakespeare's creative genius. Prospero set Ariel free, for he had no more necessity to utilise Ariel. Shakespeare is also intent upon writing nothing. Life's race well run; life's crown well won, now rest in peace.

In the Epilogue, addressed to the audience by Prospero himself says:

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And that strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint.

Ariel's cheerfulness- Ariel, too, is a cheerful spirit of air. Only on one occasion does he feel impatient because his master does not release him; otherwise he is cheerfulness personified and he wholeheartedly carries out the commands of his master.

Prosper⁰ As for Prospero, he has attained perfect mental tranquillity and peace. The treachery of Caliban does irritate and annoy him occassionally but otherwise he hardly loses his temper or feels sad. He is fully contended with his life on the enchanted island and when his dukedom isrestored to him, hedecides tolead a life of contented aloofness.

The pervading quality of cheerfulness-Thus we find that the majority of the characters in this play are free from any overpowering feeling of sadness or sense of tragedy. A note of cheerfulness, though it is a subdued cheerfulness, runs throughout the play. It may be noted that this cheerfulness is to be found in those characters who put their hearts into work. Wedo not see it in Caliban, who is most of the time cursing his master and becomes artificially cheerful under the effect of the wine and inthe hope of being able toget rid of his master through his conspiracy. Nor dowe see that cheerfulness in Sebastian and Antonio whose jokes have more of bitterness than merriment in them. The cheerfulness, which is one of the keynotes of the Tempest is a, second nature, and to a great extent the result of upbringing and education. "It is in fact, the visible outward indication of the true freedom of man which consists inservice."

The last four plays of Shakespeare have a close affinity and family resemblances. Yet all of them do not have the marks of farewell works. But The Tempest has usually a drama is an objective are in much the same way as a lyric is subjective. There are, however, exceptions, e.g. The Tempest. There is a general consensus of critical opinion that The Tempest is Shakespeare's last play. Emile Montegut, for example, observes: "The Tempest is clearly the last of Shakespeare's dramas and under the form of an allegory, is the dramatic last will and testament of the great poet, his adieu to the faithful public, whose applause, during the short space of five and twenty years, he has gained for five and twenty masterpieces".

Campbell says: "The Tempest has a sort of sacredness as the last work of a mighty workman. Shakespeare, as if conscious that it would be his last, and as if inspired to typify himself, has made its hero a natural, dignified and benevolent magician, who would conjure up spirits from the varity deep and command supernatural agency bythe most

backward and uncivilized areas of the earth. According to one more critic, The Tempest presents a picture of the righteous human soul over all things around it. The very fact that The Tempest yields so many meanings and interpretations is a proof of its greatness as a work of art.

The cheerfulness of the Boatswain- There is much truth in the opinion that cheerfulness in misfortune appears to be one of the keynotes of the play. In the very opening scene, when the ship seems to be on the verge of disaster, the Boatswain tries to inspire confidence in the sailors by words of encouragement. He does not lose heart and remains quite cheerful in the face of the threat of shipwreck. He calls out his men in the following words-

Heigh, my hearts cheerily, my hearts

Yare, Yare

Conzalo's cheerfulness- The quality of cheerfulness is to be found throughout the play in Gonzalo. In the opening scene, with death seeming imminent, Gonzalo talks in a jesting manner. He draws great comfort from the Boatswain whose "complexion is perfect gallows." Gonzalo says that there is no danger of shipwreck, because the Boatswain is the kind of man, who will die by hanging and not by drowning. A little later, when all hope seems lost, Gonzalo expresses a desire to die on land and is willing to give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground. "The wills above be one. But I would feign die a dry death," he says half-jokingly. Even in the midst of misfortune, this good old Lord does not lose his sense of humour. Subsequently, when Alonso is feeling heart-broken at the loss of his son, Gonzalo tries repeatedly to console and comfort him. He tells King Alonso that their misfortune in getting shipwrecked is not the worst that could have befaJlen them. To divert the King's mind, he talks half-seriously and half-mockingly of the kind of commonwealth that he would like to establish on the island.

The case of Ferdinand- Ferdinand is sad at bis father's supposed death by drowning. But he soon cheers up on seeing Miranda. He does not feel depressed by hard labour that Miranda's father has imposed upon him. For the sake of Miranda he willingly undergoes that drudgery and becomes a patient log-man. Miranda possesses an instinctive cheerfulness. Even when she was an infant, she had a smiling face. Though the sight of shipwreck did sadden her, her father's assurance that no damage has been done immediately comfort her. With a pontaneous cheerfulness and in natural innocence, she offers to become Ferdinand's wife.

see whom crowds would readily pay an admission fee. The drama is full of grace and grandeur. The human and imaginary characters, the dramatic and the grotesque, are blended together with the greatest art. The stately magician, Prospero, his daughter Miranda worthy of that name, the princely Ferdinand, the delicate Ariel, the savage Caliban, the drunken Stephano and Trinculo-all these are integral to the play and can hardly be removed from the places they fill. Prospero, Caliban and Ariel are, indeed, among Shakespeare's master creations-a mixture of romantic and classical elements. The supernatural powers by Prospero and the fairies, goblins and spirits carrying out his commands belong to the domain of the Arabian Nights. The non-human Ariel, the masque of Juno, and the beautiful love-scene between Ferdinand and Miranda, give the play a romantic character. But the play is also classical in its severe beauty, its majestic simplicity, its intermingling of the lyrical and the ethical, and its observance of the three Unities of time, place and action.

Adventurous spirits of the Elizabethan Age- There are in this play echoes of the wonderful adventures of the Elizabethan seamen and of the discoveries and plantations with which the expansion of England had then commenced. The allusion to "travellers tales" reminds the English reader of Raleigh's exploration of Guiana, of Drake's journey around the world and of Davis' voyages in search of the North-West passage. No other play of Shakespeare reflects so vividly this stirring aspect of Elizabethan life.

The use of the supernatural- The tempest carries us to poetic wonderlands accessible only to our imagination. We are taken to an enchanted island where Prospero, the great magician, can raise storms, control lightning, make the graves open, and command the fairies and spirits. And yet this island is given a concrete reality as if it were marked on a geographical map of the southern seas. It is to be noted that Shakespeare exercises a wise economy in the use of supernatural effects by restricting them to a limited time and area.

The allegorical significance of the play- The story of the tempest has been interpreted by critics in several ways. According to one critic, forgiveness and freedom are the keynote of the play. According to another, The Tempest teaches the lesson of cheerfulness in misfortune. According to another view, Prospero represents Shakespeare himself. Prospero's giving up of his magic powers represents Shakespeare's retirement from the theatre and his need for rest. Another view of the play is that Prospero represents a man of genius or a great artist, who attains the height of powers after many hardships. Prospero is accompanied with the marvellous child Miranda, who represents Art in its infancy. Caliban stands for the lower passions and appetites of mankind. According to still another interpretation, The Tempest contains Shakespeare's answer to the great question of the Elizabethan Age, namely, the Justification of European usurpation of the

in obedience to a human will, and not of their own free will as in Macbeth.

The dramatic purpose of the supernatural- The supreme magic of Prospero greatly diminishes the elements of suspense in the play. Knowing that Prospero can do what be likes, we do not experience that feeling of uncertainty, which is so essential in drama. Still, it must be pointed out, the controlling influence of supernatural machinery does not rob the human characters of their wills and their individualities. For instance, Ferdinand and Miranda do not fall in love with each other under the influence of Prospero's magic. Prospero's magic only brings them together. Their falling in love is spontaneous. Likewise, it is not Prospero's magic but the inherent wickedness of Antonio and Sebastian which makes these two men conspire against Alonso's life. Thus the human characters behave in accordance with their natural inclinations and of their own accord. Even the repentance of Alonso is brought about by magic; it results naturally from the course of events and from Alonso's own realization of his guilt. In short, the use of the supernatural in this play does not convert the human characters into mere puppets.

Its supernatural renders the play unstageworthy- In conclusion, it may be pointed out that the abundance of spirits and of supernatural machinery in this play renders it almost incapable If being satisfactorily represented on the stage. How can human actors, composed of flesh and blood, create on the minds of the audience the illusion of the presence of spirits? What kind of actor can, for instance, play the role of Ariel? How can we be convinced by a human representation of Ariel, who is "but air"? Spirits and fairies cannot be represented on the stage; they can only be believed. Nor is it possible for the producer of this play to transport the audience to Prospero's enchanted island by the use of artificial scenery presented on the stage.

Its popularity- The Tempest has always enjoyed a great popularity ever since the time of its first production. This is something remarkable in view of the following facts-its plot is thin; the element of suspense in it is very little; the variety of human character in it is not as great as in many other plays of Shakespeare; it does not show Shakespeare's comic genius at its best; and its love element is very limited. In spite of these deficiencies. The Tempest ranks fairly high among Shakespeare's dramas.

Its variety of interest- The tempest is a miracle of poetry and romance. It is at once a police story, a love story, and a story of royal rivalry and intrigue; and it is a spectacle of loveliness and ugline s, shipwreck and murder, magicians and fairies, all seen on an island set somewhere in unknown seas, whose only native is a sort of monster to

the play. It is certainly very useful as a source of comedy; but it is not essential. The comedy of this under-plot becomes all the greater when we realize that

Cob's jealousy is a parody of Kitely's jealousy. The Brainworm-Fonnal under-plot, a very brief one, is necessary enough because Brainworm requires Fonnal's cloak in order to disguise himself as Justice Oement's clerk; but even this under-plot is something additional and merely contributes to the comedy of the play without being integral to the structure. The Kitely story stands by itself, as does the father-son-friend-servant story. There is only a loose link between these two main stories in the play. As for Bobadill, the two gulls, and Downright, they are not at all essential to the two major stories. It may be argued that Kitely's suspicions about his wife are based upon the visits of Wellbred's friends to Kitely's house, and that therefore the relationship between the Kitely story and this group of characters is very close. But Wellbred's friends were certainly not really needed to serve as a basis for Kitely's jealousy. Kitely's jealousy could have been depicted even without Wellbred's friends. In any case, Bobadill, Matthew, Stephen, and even Downright are not integral either to the Kitely story or the father-son story. Of course, Bobadill, Matthew, Stephen are absolutely essential to the play to contribute to the comedy of the play and to enrich and enhance that comedy. But, although these characters are absolutely indispensable from the point of view of the comedy, they are not indispensable from the structural point of view. In short, the inter-weaving of the various stories including the under-plots in Every Man in His Humour is not as close as it is in a play like Shakespeare's, The Merchant of Venice.

including the under-plots. One is Brainworm, who is closely connected with the father-son story. Brainworm keeps old Knowell out of the way when Edward goes to the Tower in order to get married to Bridget. In fact, Brainworm sends old Knowell to Cob's house, where Kitely suspects the old man of being Dame Kitely's paramour. It is Brainworm who gives to Kitely a false message that Justice Clement would like to meet Kitely. It is Brainworm who befools Bobadill, Matthew, Stephen, and Downright, and manages to obtain money or articles from them in return for the services which he would render to them. It is Brainworm who gets Roger Formal drunk, and then robs him of his official cloak by wearing which Brainworm can disguise himself as a court clerk. It is only Cob and Tib who are not brought into any direct or close contact with Brainworm. Otherwise, Brainworm's role in the action of the play is pivotal. Indeed, he is one character who unifies the various threads in the play. The other such character is Clement. Clement pronounces a judgment which resolves all the complications and which satisfies all the complainants. Thus Clement also serves to unify the plot, because all the characters are present before him in the final Act.

The Inter-Relationships Between Characters and Between Stories- The Kitely story is brought into a relationship with the Knowell Edward story when Kitely calls Knowell a goat and a lascivious old man, because Kitely thinks that Knowell is Dame Kitely's paramour. Knowell is brought into a relationship with other stories also. For instance, he intervenes on behalf of Cob when Justice Clement threatens to send Cob to jail for having condemned tobacco. Later, Knowell intervenes on behalf of Tib when Cob foolishly begins to beat her. Edward is brought into relationship with the Kitely story because he falls in love with Kitely's sister Bridget and, through the help of Wellbred, gets married to her. Edward has also become a member of the group of Wellbred's companions visiting Kitely's house and making merry there. Cob is connected with Kitely because he works as a water-carrier in the Kitely household. It is Cob who is sent by Cash with a message to Kitely that Wellbred and his friends have assembled at Kitely's house in Kitely's absence. Wellbred it is who sends both Dame Kitely and Kitely to Cob's house on a false pretext; and it is by thus sending them away from their house that he then manages to take Bridget away with him to the Tower where she gets married to Edward.

No Real Inter-Weaving of the Various Stories-The inter-relationships between the various stories including the under plots are thus close enough, and yet the impression of a singleness of design is not produced by these inter-relationships. Each story seems to stand separate, on its own legs. The Cob- Tib story could, for instance, be completely eliminated from the play without any damage to the design of the play. The Cob-Tib under-plot is merely something additional in

There is a comic scene between Cob and Tib; and, later, Cob suspects his wife of having turned his house into a brothel. Cob gives a beating to Tib and says that he would take her to Justice Clement. In the meantime, Kitely and Dame Kitely encounter each other at Cob's house and accuse one another of infidelity and immorality. Kitely thereupon decides to take his wife to Justice Clement for the needful action. Another development is that Downright, feeling deeply annoyed with Bobadill and Matthew, gives Bobadill a beating, while Matthew runs away. Brainworm has not been inactive all this time. He has befooled Justice Clement's clerk Roger Formal and robbed him of his official cloak. Disguised as Justice Oement's clerk, Brainworm now throws dust into the eyes of Bobadill and Matthew who are seeking a warrant from Justice Clement against Downright. It is the beating which Bobadill has received from Downright which makes him seek a warrant against the aggresor. Brainworm promises to procure a warrant from his boss, Justice Clement and, in the process, relieves Matthew of a jewel and Bobadill of his silk stockings. Later, Brainworm disguises himself as a city sergeant and returns to Bobadill and Matthew, saying that he has obtained a warrant against Downright. Brainworm then takes Downright into custody and, under Downright's pressure, takes Stephen also into custody because Stephen has taken possession of a cloak which actually belongs to DownrighL Brainworm then marches both Downright and Stephen to Justice Clement's house, although Brainworm now realizes that he would be exposed and that he might have to face punishment for the disguises that he has been assuming in the course of the day.

The Complications Resolved- In the final Act, Justice Clement proves to be the most important character. After hearing all the complaints and grievances, he gives his judgement which resolves all the complications. Justice Clement orders Matthew's verses to he burnt because these verses are not original but stolen. He welcomes the marriage of Edward and Bridget, and says that he would hold the marriage-feast in honour of them at his own house. Having formed a poor opinion about both Bobadill and Matthew, he orders them to spend the night fasting in a repentant state. He orders Cob and his wife to get reconciled with each other, and he directs Stephen to see to it that the reconciliation is a lasting one. He calls upon old Knowell to shed his anxieties about his son; he directs Downright to shed his anger; and he calls upon Kitely and Kitely's wife to shed their jealousy. Thus the various characters are supposed to have been purged of their respective humours. Justice Clement pays a rich tribute to Brainworm for his wit and ingenuity. Instead of punishing Brainworm for the latter's fraudulent activities, Justice Oement says that he would treat Brainworm as his mistress for the evening. Thus Justice Clement glorifies Brainworm as a kind of hero whose disguise and adventures he regards as being worthy of the highest praise.

and begin to talk. A little later Brainworm privately reveals his identity to Edward and Wellbred. and informs them that old Knowell is also in London in accordance with his plan to spy upon the activities of the two young men. Then, in another scene, we witness the development of the Kitely story. Kitely would like to confide his suspicions about his wife to his servant Cash, but he feels that he should not trust Cash to such an extent In another scene, we find Cob complaining to Cash about the fasting days which are very troublesome to him. In the following scene, we find Bobadill feeling annoyed with Cob who has condemned the habit of tobacco-smoking, and in his annoyance beating the water-carrier. In the meantime, Cash sends a message to Kitely that Wellbred and his friends have assembled at Kitely's house. The message greatly upsets Kitely who thinks that Wellbred's friends must be making the best of Kitely's absence from the house and must be making love to Dame Kitely. Kitely hurries back to his house, while Cob now. goes to Justice Clement's house in order to complain against the beating which Bobadill has given him. Justice Clement, however, rebukes Cob for having spoken against tobacco, though Clement does grant him a warrant against Bobadill, calling upon Bobadill to keep the peace. Thus the various stories are moving forward in a parallel manner, even though some of the characters in the various stories are coming into a close contact with one another. Knowell, being a friend of Justice Clement, has come to Clement's house and informed him of his anxieties about his son, though Justice Clement tells Knowell that there is no real ground or basis for Knowell's anxieties.

All the Plots and Under-Plots, Developed Further in Act IV- Act IV is the longest in the play, consisting of as many as eleven scenes. Here Kitely's suspicions about his wife having been seduced are strengthened. In fact, Kitely at one point even imagines that he has been poisoned by his wife. Actually, it is Wellbred who creates the suspicion about poison in Kitely's mind.-Wellbred also creates a suspicion in Dame Kitely's mind that her husband is in the habit of visiting Cob's house in order to make love to Cob's wife. Dame Kitely immediately rushes to Cob's house to catch her husband in the process of making love to Cob's wife. Wellbred then informs Kitely that his wife has gone to Cob's house, thus creating another suspicion in Kitely's mind about the immoral activities of his wife. Kitely too rushes to Cob's house in order to catch his wife in the process of making love to some paramour. As for the father-son story, Edward now becomes interested in Kitely's sister Bridget; and Wellbred gives a promise to Edward that he would definitely bring about Edward's marriage with Bridget With Dame Kitely out of the way, Wellbred prevails upon Bridget to accompany him in order to meet Edward who is waiting for them at the Tower. Bridget goes with Wellbred to the Tower and agrees to marry her suitor, Edward. In the meantime, the other under-plots are also developed in this Act

the young man's activities. Brainworm, the witty and roguish servant of Knowell, informs Edward that Edward's father has already gone through the letter. We are also introduced in this opening Act to Stephen, who is a country gull. The under-plot dealing with Bobadill and Matthew also commences in this same Act Matthew becomes acquainted with Bobadill, and thereafter the two of them are always seen together. Matthew has a grievance against Wellbred's brother Downright; and Bobadill promises to help Matthew against that man. By the end of Act I, the characters of all these persons become established in our minds to a great extent Knowell appears as an over-solicitous father. The son Edward is a light-hearted young man out to enjoy fun. The servant Brainworm is a mischievous fellow. A water-carrier by the name of Cob provides much mirth to us by his funny talk. Stephen and Matthew are obviously the gulls; while Bobadill speaks boastfully of his swordsmanship."

The Commencement of Another Major Story in Act II-With Act II, a new story begins, with an entirely new group of characters. We now meet Kitely, the merchant who is talking to Wellbred's brother Downright. Kitely tells Downright the past history of his servant, Thomas Cash; and then Kitely complains to Downright about the conduct of Wellbred who, according to Kitely, brings a number of his friends to Kitely's house where they all create a lot of disturbance and rowdyism. Thereafter, Bobadill and Matthew encounter Downright, and a fight between them is averted by the intervention of Kitely. Then, in another scene, we learnt that Kitely is feeling suspicious about the conduct of his wife. He thinks that Wellbred's dissolute friends would try to seduce his wife. In fact, Kitely imagines that his wife may already have been seduced by Wellbred's friends, and that the cuckold's horns may already be growing upon his forehead. Now, Kitely's suspicions about his wife and the measures that he proposes to take to prevent the seduction of his wife constitute an altogether different story which commences only in Act II, there having been no reference to it at all in Act I. In Act II, we witness also the development of the father-son story when Brainworm, disguised as an ex-soldier in straitened circumstances, befools Edward and Stephen, and then dupes Knowell who, unable to see through Brainworm's disguise, hires him as a domestic servant

The Parallel Development of the Stories in Act III-It is only in Act III that we are actually introduced to Wellbred, about whom we have heard a lot earlier. He is the young man who had written a letter to Edward, who has become a cause of anxiety to his brother-in-law Kitely, and who has a special liking for Bobadill and Matthew because he can enjoy much fun at their cost Edward now arrives to meet Wellbred in response to Wellbred's letter. There is plenty of fun for us when Wellbred, Edward, Stephen, Matthew, and Bobadill get together

stand point Then there is the scene between Kitely and Cash, which is too long drawn-out. Otherwise also the plot of the playas a whole seems to be diffuse because the various threads in it have not been closely inter-woven to produce a unified impression. A critic rightly points out that the structure of this play is loose, though another critic is of the opinion that Jonson has in this play ingeniously welded together the various threads in order to provide the unity of action.

Two Major Stories, and Three Under-Plots in the Play-Every Man in His Humour contains two major stories, and as may as three under-plots. The two major stories are: (1) the story of Knowell and his son, Edward, involving several other characters (Brainworm, Wellbred, Kitely, Bridget, and Stephen); and (2) the story of Kitely and his wife, involving several other characters (Wellbred, Downright, and Wellbred's boon companions). The three under-plots are: (1) the adventures of Brainworm, involving Bobadill, the two gulls (Stephen and Matthew), Downright, etc.; (2) the Cob-Tib under-plot; and (3) the Brainworm-Formal under-plot One character, namely Justice Clement, is common to all the constituents of the plots and sub-plots of the play. He presides over the proceedings in the final Act, and it is he who brings about the resolution of the play. The flaw in the structure of the play is that it is not compact and close-knit, and that the various events and happenings have been put together rather loosely. All the characters have certainly been brought into a close contact with one another, and the various stories in the play have also been brought into a close relationship with one another, and yet the play fails to produce a unified impression. We cannot claim that the play has a singleness of design. The author's emphasis is. on delineating the characters so as to illustrate the respective humours which they represent The characters of the various persons of the play do become fully established in our minds; but the unity of action has not fully been achieved. So far as this, the earliest, play of Jonson is concerned, it certainly shows him as a great delineator of character; but it does not show him to be an accomplished craftsman.

The Commencement of a Major Plot and an Under-Plot in Act I- A hurried look at the way the plot develops would enable us to show that the unity of action or structure has eluded the author. The father-son story begins in the very opening Act Knowell goes/through a letter which is actually intended for his son, Edward. The letter has been written by Edward's close friend, Wellbred; and through this letter Wellbred has invited Edward to meet him at "The Windmill Tavern." Knowell's reaction to the letter is most unfavourable. On the basis of this letter he begins to suspect that his son Edward is leading a loose and immoral life in the company of Wellbred. Knowell then decides to follow his son to "The Windmill Tavern" secretly in order to spy upon

Brainworm to blue-waiters, showing that servants of the time customarily wore blue coats. There is a reference to silk and woollen stockings, and to large puffed-out breeches (which Bobadill is in the habit of wearing). Bobadill is described by the author as a Paul's man. *This* is a reference to the aisles of St Paul's Cathedral in London, which were the favourite haunts of loafers and loiterers. Then there is an allusion to the quarrels which often took place between the porters and the carters in Thames Street near London harbour. Kitely makes a reference to the three-piled caps which were worn by ladies of the time, and which attracted much attention. Another noteworthy allusion is the one to Drake's ship, 'The Golden Hind," in which Sir Francis Drake had made a voyage round the world, and which was later kept for permanent exhibition at a naval dockyard, south of London. Then there are allusions to Mile-end, where London citizens used to gather for military training. Brainworm makes several references to certain historical battles and sieges which also remind us that we are reading a play pertaining to the Elizabethan Age.

Conclusion-Thus Jonson succeeds in bringing before our minds and eyes the daily life of the London of the later years of the reign of Elizabeth and the early reign of James I. This is true of Jonson's other comedies as well, of Bartholomew Fair, of The Silent Woman, and of The Alchemist.

The Unity of Action, Not Fully Achieved- Jonson was a believer in the ancient classical principles of writing dramas. These principles included an observance of the three unities-the unity of time, the unity of place, and the unity of action. Jonson, in the writing of his dramas, endeavoured to observe these three unities scrupulously. Every Man in His Humour shows a strict adherence to the unities of time and place. The action of the play covers not more than twelve hours; while the various events of the play occur either in London proper or, in the case of a few scenes at the very outset, in the countryside quite near London. However, so far as the unity of action is concerned, Every Man in His Humour does not come up to our expectations. The unity of action demands that the structure of a play should be so closely knit that no part of it can be removed without causing damage to the whole. Every Man in His Humour does not strictly fulfil this condition. Some of the scenes in this play are not essential to the total structure. One such scene occurs between Cob and his wife. Such scenes, however de irable they

his house to indicate that the services of a water-carrier can be hired at this place. The word "turn" which Cob uses in connection with his water-carrying meant one trip to and from the conduit Kitely is one of those who make use of Cob's services in this connection.

The Tower- The Tower is the name of a famous historical fortress in London. For a long time it was used as a prison for-those eminent persons who were convicted of having worked against the king or the Crown; but it served as a prison for common offenders also. There was an implicit understanding that the laws governing marriages in London were not applicable within the precincts of the Tower. That is why Well bred takes Bridget to the Tower in order to have her married to Edward. Wellbred knows that Kitely would not agree to Bridget's marrying Edward because Edward belongs to the group of Wellbred's friends, while Kitely has formed a very low opinion about all Wellbred's friends. Thus it is at the Tower that Bridget gets married to Edward.

The Popularity of Taverns- Taverns in London were as popular and as well-frequented as restaurants are nowadays. "The Windmill" is repeatedly mentioned in the course of the play. That is the tavern where Wellbred awaits Edward. That is also the tavern where Formal takes Brainworm for a drink. That again is the tavern where Edward and Bridget propose to hold their wedding-supper, though the venue is subsequently changed. "The Star" is another tavern which finds mention in the play. Matthew, for instance, claims that he had written his verses that very morning at "The Star."

Other Allusions to the Life of the People in London-Several localities find mention in the course of the play to remind us that the setting of the story is London. There is a reference to Colman Street where Justice Clement lives. There is a mention of the old Jewry where Wellbred lives. There is a reference to Hoxton where Stephen lives. There is a reference to Finsbury and to Islington ponds, situated near London. There is a reference to Fleet Street in London. Bobadill mentions several localities in London where he claims to have lived at various times. He mentions Turnbull Street, WhiteChapel, and Shoreditch. All these localities were notorious because they were inhabited by prostitutes, drunkards, and thieves, though Bobadill does not realize that he is mentioning disreputable places. The Exchange in London is mentioned several times; and there is a reference to Christ's Hospital where Cash had been brought up. There is also a reference to an organization known as the Honourable Artillery Company which actually existed in London, having been incorporated in 1507. Then we have a reference by Downright to "Counters" which was the name of a debtors' prison which also existed actually. We have a reference to the silver coin known as three-farthing which was so thin that it easily cracked; and there are references to a gold coin known as the angel. The Dutch coin "guilder" also finds a mention. There is a reference by

various characters have assembled at Cob's house which is regarded by some of them as a kind of brothel. The word "brothel" itself was very common in those days. When old Knowell has gone through Wellbred's letter, addressed to Edward, he feels that this letter could have come from some brothel or from a locality where prostitutes ply their trade.

Fasting Days- Cob complains about having to observe fasting days. He condemns the practice of observing Ember Weeks. Cob condemns fasting days because during these days a man was not allowed to eat mutton and had to resort to fish. In this connection, we may note that during the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth, a number of laws had been passed, declaring certain days in the week as fasting days when no meat could be eaten. The motive behind the passing of these laws was to help and promote the fishing industry because, if people did not eat meat, they would have to turn to fish as a substitute. The observance of fasting days provides Cob with an occasion to display his wit and his sense of humour.

The Prevalent Humours- Certain tendencies, which could be described as "humours", were very much in fashion in those days. Melancholy was one such humour. Early in the play, Stephen gives a promise to Edward that he would now try to look "more proud and melancholy and gentleman-like" than he has looked in the past. Later, Stephen tells Matthew that he is "mightily given to melancholy," whereupon Matthew acknowledges the value of melancholy, saying that he himself sometimes feels melancholy. Matthew describes melancholy as a fine humour, saying that true melancholy breeds a perfectly fine wit When Matthew invites Stephen to come and make use of his study, Stephen asks if Matthew has got a stool in his study to be melancholy upon.

All this is most absurd and ridiculous. Matthew has his own homour which is the writing of verses, even though actually he steals verses from the works of other poets. Literary pretensions were another humour or affectation in those days. Matthew carries a copy of Thomas Kyd's play The Spanish Tragedy when he goes to meet Bobadill; and Bobadill offers his comments on this play, praising it highly to show that he is a competent critic though he does not realize that this play has its absurd features like the bombastic style in which it is written. Bobadill's humour is to boast, not only of his literary pretensions, but also of his swordsmanship and his past exploits (which he has invented, of course). In a brief dialogue, Cash tells Cob that humour is "bred, in the special gallantry of our time, by affectation; and fed by folly."

Water-Carriers and Conduits- Cob is a water-carrier who has to fetch water from the conduit to people's homes. There was, in those days, a system of conduits and pipes from which water-carriers used to obtain water and bring it by tankards to the homes of people who hired the services of these fellows. Cob has the sign of a water-tankard outside

course of the play, Bobadill and Downright draw swords to fight, after Downright has rebuked Wellbred and Wellbred's friends for creating disorder in Kitely's house. However, an actual fight is averted by the intervention of the others. In this context, we may recall that Jonson had himself fought a duel with a fellow-actor by the name of Gabriel Harvey. In fact, Jonson had killed Harvey, and had been arrested on a charge of murder, though he escaped hanging by submitting a plea that he belonged to the family of a clergyman.

Tobacco-Smoking-Tobacco-smoking also seems to have been in fashion in those days. Bobadill, who is in the habit of smoking tobacco, grows eloquent in praise of it. Bobadill says that tobacco provides nourishment to the human system and that a man can live without food merely by smoking tobacco for several days. According to him, tobacco cures many ailments and diseases; and he describes it as the most sovereign and precious weed that ever the earth has offered for the use of man. When Cob describes tobacco-smoking as a filthy habit, Bobadill gives him a thrashing. Justice Clement is himself a great champion of tobacco. Clement administers a severe rebuke to Cob for having condemned tobacco-smo1dng, and says that the merits of tobacco are freely admitted in the courts of princes, in the chambers of nobles, in the bowers of sweet ladies, and in the cabins of soldiers.

Indecency and Obscenity- Moral standards in those days seem to have been rather loose and lax. After reading Wellbred's letter, old Knowell says that this letter could have been written from a brothel, or from a locality where prostitutes ply their trade, or from a hospital where patients suffering from venereal diseases are treated. Later, old Knowell deplores the fact that the parents of the time brought up their children without showing the least regard for moral values. In fact, parents taught their little children, obscene jokes and bawdy songs. Fathers even took their sons to prostitutes in order to train them in the art of making love to their mistresses. Similarly, parents taught their sons the evil habit of gluttony and tried to make epicures of them. They also took pains to make their sons money-minded and instructed them to make money by any means whatsoever. Wellbred and his friends indulge in all kinds of rowdyism and misbehaviour at Kitely's house and they indulge in indecent jokes too. For instance, Wellbred himself at one point, in the course of the conversation, uses the word "tricks" in an obscene sense in the very presence of his sister, Dame Kitely, and his sister-in-law, Bridget. Downright is cast in a different mould, and he takes offence at Wellbred's use of the word "tricks" in that sense, but the others enjoy the joke. The word cuckold is used many times in the course of the play. Cob and Tib freely ose words which would be regarded as objectionable in good society. Tib calls Cob a "cuckold" without any inhibition, while Cob shamelessly calls his wife a "whore". Words like whore, strumpet, and harlot were very common in those days, as becomes clear when the

imitation of the life of their own day. But the neo-classical comedy as represented by Jonson deals with real life, even though it exaggerates various aspects of that life in order to ridicule them. Even before Jonson, comedy of this type had been written, as is evident from Nicholas Udall's Ralph Roister Doister. Jonson's play Every Man in His Humour definitely holds up a mirror to the life of the, times, representing various aspects of it, and satirizing it to bring out its. absurdities. This play, like Bartholomew Fair and The Alchemist, follows the classical example of being a satirical representation of contemporary life.

The Habit of Swearing- The habit of the people of that time to swear oaths, even when there was no need to do so, is clearly depicted in the play. Almost every character, even Justice Clement, swears oaths indiscriminately. Some characters in the play swear oaths to support every statement which they make. In fact, these characters swear as a matter of routine, and they do so in a mechanical way. All sorts of oaths seem to have been prevalent in those days. Some of the oaths which occur in the course of the play are: by St. George; the body of Caesar; by the foot of Pharaoh; 'Slud (meaning by God's blood); 'Slid (meaning by God's eyelid); 'Sdeath (meaning by God's death). Bobadill's oaths are original and picturesque. Cob feels much impressed by these oaths, while Stephen takes extra pains to copy Bobadill's oaths.

Hawking and Hunting-The gallants of the time were greatly interested in hawking and hunting. Early in the play we find Stephen telling his uncle that hawking and hunting are being studied more earnestly than the Greek and the Latin languages. According to Stephen, nobody is fit to move in the company of the gallants without cultivating an interest in these sports. He goes on to say that he is not interested in archery or in duck-shooting, because hawking and hunting are the true fashions of the time. Stephen is now looking for a book on the subject of hawking and hunting in order to be able to attain proficiency in these sports. And, in fact, books on these sports did exist in large numbers, the most famous of them being The Gentleman's Academy.

Duelling- Duels too seem to have been very common in Jonson's time. Bobadill makes a reference to the great Caranza who had written a book on the subject of duelling, a book which contained all the rules and the guide-lines according to which duels were to be fought. Bobadill tells Matthew that Down right's threat to cudgel him is sufficient ground for Matthew to challenge Downright to a duel. Bobadill himself claims to be an excellent swordsman, and he promises to teach Matthew various thrusts by which. Matthew can fight a duel with Downright. Bobadill then picks up a bed-staff and gives a demonstration of how various kinds of thrusts can be made with a sword to attack the enemy and to defend oneself. Even Brainworm seems to know something about duels. Brainworm tricks Stephen into believing that the sword which he (Brainworm) wants to sell is a "most pure Toledo." At one point in the

The Prologue. Another remarkable feature of the play is The Prologue which was added to the revised edition. It has been called the manifesto of Jonson's critical creed, of his comic aims and objectives. The learned Ben attacks contemporary drama for its may absurdities and improbabilities, as well as tells his readers and audience that his drama would be of a different type. It would be realistic, and its aim would be corrective and reformative. In the play, he breaks new ground and goes against the tradition of popular, romantic comedy.

Style and Versification. Every Man is His Humour is written partly in prose, partly in blank verse, and in using this double medium Jonson was following what was already a common practice on the Elizabethan stage. In his use of prose and verse he also conforms to the regular and natural usage, the verse being reserved for those movement in the play when the tone becomes more serious and the sentiments more weighty. For example, Old Kno'well and Kitley speak in blank verse practically throughout the play. Old Kno'well's moral maxims, filled with phrasing and ideas borrowed from the classics and Kitely's vivid expression of his jealous fear fall fittingly into the loftier verse form. On such occasions, Jonson makes use of vivid imagery to drive bis point home.

The blank verse in its quality is excellently suited to the everyday tone of the play and to the rather prosaic character of the speakers. It is essentially a dramatic verse, well adapted for tage-speakers, clear and with a sinuous strength.

A Satirical Representation of Contemporary Life- Like ancient classical comedy, written by authors like Plautus and Terence, Every Man in His Humour reflects contemporary life. Jonson defined comedy as an imitation of life, as a mirror of the times, and as an image of truth. In this respect, Jonson's, comedy is different from the romantic comedy of the time. The romantic dramatists did not mirror nature or life; they told impossible stories; they dealt with remote places; they idealized persons; they depicted marvellous adventures, and so on. The romantic satires did not attempt an orderly analysis of history or a rationalized

A Pure Comedy. Every Man in His Humour is assuredly not Jonson's greatest comedy. Nor is it that which bears the strongest and clearest stamp of his mind. But it is, in an intelligible sense, his best. For the other plays, all those which might compete with it for this distinction, violate, in one way or another, purely comic standards. The Alchemist and Volpone are sinister to the verge of tragedy. Even Epicone, the most laughable of Jonson's plays, and in Dryden's judgement the first of all English comedies, has a hard core of tragedy which comes in the way of the comic. This is not the case with the present play. The unity of Tone is violated neither by the tragic nor by moral indignation.

Rich Abundance and Variety. Himself a true Elizabethan, he drew together the popular and the academic tradition of comedy, as Kyd and Marlowe a decade before had done in tragedy, and into a not less vital and enduring fusion. In the play, Jonson, once for all, showed how the rich abundance and variety of incident and character, which the Elizabethans, like every other populace, demanded, could be secured under the conditions of an art, which excluded all aid from legend and romance, from the prodigal use of space and time, from mimicry of grandiose events and marvellous spectacle which dealt merely with the familiar types; the hundrum incidents, the characteristic foibles, delusions, snobberies, of bourgeois London" (Herford and Simpson) Above all, he showed how the zest of comedy could be had, without any stirring or sensational plot, by the mere collision of different kinds of warped or opinionated human nature, when these were observed by an eye and through a temperament at once so patiently acute, so drily voracious as Jonson's and bodied forth by a pen so incisive and so clear.

This rich abundance and variety is seen is characterisation as well as in the plot. It is a realistic humour comedy in the classical tradition, and as such its characters are contemporary types drawn from the lower ranks of society. But within these limits, we get in the play a memorable gallery of portrains drawn vividly. These are the three, "gulls", each well differentiated from the other in has folly and affectation. There is Bobadill, a military braggart, with a difference. There are the elderly people, Kitely and 'Kno' well. But above all there is Brainworm, the intriguing servant, the chief contriver of comic harms, who exposes the various humour types.

The plot of the play is remarkable for its originality and skilful construction. There are three threads, and have been woven into a single whole with consummate art. The unities of Time and Place have been fully observed, and the unity of Action Jonson has observed by imposing unity over diversity. There is no violation of the unity of Tone, as Jonson's indignation and zeal for reform does not yet come in the way of the comic.

that he has ever been acclaimed as a dramatist of substance. Whether his comedies are ever again revived on the stage, we do not know, but they are likely to continue long to encourage in fiction a frank and searching presentation of foible and folly.

Its Publication: The lwo Editions. Every Man in His Humour was first printed in Quarto in 1601, having been entered in the Stationers' Register on August 4, 1600. It was not again printed until 1616, when after an elaborate revision, it was placed first in the Folio edition of Jonson's Works.

Revisions : The Alterations. Between 1601 and 1616, the play under-went very thorough revision. The following are the principal alterations:

1. The scene of action was changed to London. In the Quarto edition the scene was laid in Florence, and all the characters had Italian names. Old Kno'well was Lorenzo Senior, Edward Kno'well was Lorenzo Junior, Kitley was Thorello, Bobadil was Bobadilla, and each of the others was likewise Italianized.

2. Certain minor structural alterations were made towards the end of the play, mainly for the purpose of tightening up the last Act and emphasizing the comedy ending. A visit by the Justice to Kitely's house was cut cout. A lengthy explanation by Brainworm of his trickeries was curtailed and Clement's admiration for Brainworm which in the Quarto too the extravagant form of making that rogue don the Justice's robe and preside at the supper table, was toned down. The punishment meted out to Bobadil and Mathew was brought more into conformity with the good humoured ending.

3. The language of the play was here and there altered, words and phrases being changed or added.

4. The famous Prologue first appears in the edition of 1616.

These changes certainly add to the force and vivacity of the play. The discarding of the Italian setting by the change of scene naturally gives the dramatist an opportunity to present realistic pictures of London life and manners. The play, in its final shape, thus belongs to two periods of Jonson's artistic development, ten or more years apart. To the first it owes the entire dramatic substance or plot, character and dialogue; to the second an infinity of heightening strokes of style and traits of characterisation. The invention and personnel reflect the mn approaching forty. But the ideal of comedy formulated in the Prologue was already, in substance, pursued in the play of 1598, though as yet imperfectly grasped and incompletely executed.

all felt themselves attacked. The follies of a tyrannous father or a jealous husband, are all put before us; the ruling eccentricities of the age are mocked out of court. Thus Ben Jonson is seen to flog his victims with his satiric wand. First he made his targets some individuals, like Catline, Sejanus, Marston and Dekker. But subsequently switched on to satirise types and classes as was done by Plautus and Terence.

Jonson typifies the definance to romantic playwrights. "Romance adapted to the stage by Marlowe's predecessors, by Marlowe himself, and by Shakespeare, now in the morning of his glory, neglected classical rules of art. To time and space the romantic muse had proved herself indifferent". Romantic poets calmly ignored the unities of Aristotelian tradition. For them, a story translated into action was the main point and the conditions of the English theatres, devoid of scenery, dependent upon vivid movement in the players for effect, and on keen imaginative sympathies in the audience for approval, assisted them to such a point that the magnificent artistic licences of Pericles and A Winter's Tale were rendered possible. Against all this, Jonson, the West-minster scholar, the bluff rebellious personage who had killed his two men in single combat, and who felt pugnaciously inclined to challenge all the world, rebelled. He declared himself for unity of action, unity of time, unity of place, and unity of subject. He produced a masterpiece which preserved these decencies of art, and which borrowed something from the Latin classics. At the same time he took pains to prove that the follies of the town might be acutely seized and vividly presented in accordance with the stricter rules of drama, and that comedy might be made to serve a moral purpose by delineating foibles common to humanity". (John Addignton Symonds)

Jonson's influence was no less notable. It was commanding in his own day and has continued down to the present. His comedies were imitated as soon as they appeared. Every Man in His Humour is a fine example. Beaumont's The Woman Hater testifies to it. Marston, Middleton and Chapman - all were influenced by Jonson. Of later dramatists, Field, Randolph, Cartwright, Nabbes and may imitated Jonson's method. In fact, all realistic comedy owned the influence of Jonson's comedy of humours. The reminiscences of its most effective scenes and types of character found their way into every kind of drama. After the Restoration his reputation increased all the more. Dryden's praise was by Dennis and others who were eager to see neo-classical rules and models prevail in the theatres. And finally, his influence has been felt in the novel as well. Absurdities of character and incongruities of manners in the realm of novel owe much to Ben Jonson. Fielding and Smolett were conscious of their incentive, and Dickens, who knew them well and himself acted as Bobadil, must to no inconsiderable extent, have been indebted to their suggestion. Bartholomew Fair was a source of Dicken's inspiration. As for Jonson's influence it may be stated

and demanded a heightened portrayal of these sentiments in the dramas, it was a rare courage in 'rare Ben Jonson' to stand up for classicism, for the ancients; and while eager for the good opinion of the Judicious, to scorn the approbation of the public.

Jonson made a notable contribution to the drama of 'humours'. He was not an inventor, but, 'humour' in his plays, is a simplified and somewhat distorted individual with a typical mania. The word 'humour' is a medical term signifying a propensity or affectation. According to Jonson, humour was something which was dependent upon the physical constitution of the individual which provokes a habit, constitutes a ruling foible, and diverts the action, of its subject into courses which move mirth. Ben Jonson based his plays on 'humours'. In each one of his characters, he points out a particular oddity, some one of the four elements known as 'humours'. The dominance of any 'humour' is the ruling foible. In seizing these ruling foibles by observation of the motley crowd of London, Ben Jonson was eminently happy. Lust, hunger for gold, jealousy, brutal egotism, vulgar ambition sway the multiform kaleidoscope of minor aberrations brought before our notice in bewildering profusion. In this way, Jonson established the vogue of a new type of comedy, distinctive in method, scope and purpose. His approach of 'humours' is a break away from the romantic tradition in drama.

To Ben Jonson belongs the credit of infusing into his 'humour' drama a richer and deeper note. True to his realistic ideal, Jonson presents the life of his time, but especially the life of Elizabethan London, with a hard, dry literalism. Jonson's power of observation was very keen and minute, his familiarity with contemporary London very great; and his 'humours' or individualisation of certain traits are based on London society and life. This mirroring of contemporary life is, of course, found in earlier drama also, but never before the earlier dramatists had made it an essential part of their dramatic art. No more genuine sketches of London character are to be found in the drama. They are drawn not from books but from observation, and as an observer, Jonson had no equal among his contemporaries." In all his plays from Every Man in His Humour to Bartholomew Fair Jonson gives the picture of the customs and habits of the London of his time. This note of realism is a notable contribution of Jonson to English drama.

Jonson's satiric bent of mind also contributed much to the development of realistic comedy in England. He called upon to last and the vices of his age ad he boasted that he took Horace for his model. Yet he had neither the irony nor the urbanity of the Augustan poet. His blows fell as hard upon the backs of people he chastised, as his translations from smooth Latin verse fall harsh upon our modern ears. His comedies roused society against him. Whole classes like the courtiers, the playgoers, the actors, bad poets and fashionable fribblers,

and fancy smouldered in the man without emerging into luminosity. He struggled under the weight of his encumbered memory: and haughtily submitted to the fetters of a self-prescribed rule. Yet it was this central heat of a naturally poetic temperament which gave warmth and glow to his best work, even when we recognise it to be clumsy, and feel bound to acknowledge that it bears the aspect of constructive ability, than of inspiration."

Ben Jonson appeared on the literary scene when the University wits and Shakespeare wee establishing upon the stage the romantic comedy and flamboyant tragedy. Jonson was a profound classical scholar. Therefore, he took up an attitude of protest against the formlessness of most of the romantic Elizabethan plays. He scorned these plays for their lack of proportion and restraint, their ridiculous absurdities and their creaking mechanisms. To Ben Jonson goes the credit of recalling comedy from these romantic entanglements and restoring it to its ancient province. His main purpose was to alter his own practices, and to reform the stage. He represented the critical tendencies already existing; first, a reaction from the absurdities of current forms; secondly, a recourse to classical standards as a cure for lawlessness; and lastly, the establishment of a realistic and satirical comedy on national plan. What Jonson did was to develop these tendencies and give them a concrete form. Thus, he became a leader in a movement which gave to realistic and satirical comedy a new importance, of the early representative plays of this class. Every Man in His Humour was the masterpiece. Jonson's combativeness, the independence of his deliberate design to bring innovation in Elizabethan dramas are manifest in the famous Prologue to this play:

"..... you will be pleased to see
One such to-day, as other plays should be;
Where neither chorus wafts you o'er the seas,
Nor creaking throne comes down, the boys to please;
Nor nimble squib is seen, to make afeard
The gentlewomen; nor rolled bullet heard
To say, it thunders; nor tempestuous drum
Rumbles, to tell you when the storm doth come;
But deeds, and language, such as men do use;
And persons, such as comedy would choose,
When she would show an image of times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes."

This was indeed an original contribution by Jonson to English drama. In an age when people stirred for romantic emotions and ideas,

will be m;;ide cuckold as soon as he is out of his house. Before going oμt for only two hours be hesitates a lot for long time and almost decides against it. It is oiffkult to underst&nd Kitley imagining that his wife and sister must have welcomed Welbred and his friends warmly and their lips were sea.led with kisses. His voices drowned in flood of joy. Again his belief that he bas been made cuckold by Cash and Cob in league with his wife is not easily understandable.

Stephen is a village pumpkin, but he should not trust so easily on Brainworm in buying a fake sword. He has not even the accomplishment to be expected of the country bred. He buys a hawk but dose p.ot know how to use it without a book. His wearing Downright's gown and being mistaken for the letter are hardly understan{lable. Again bis eagerly trying to memorise the oaths uttered by Bobadill is greatly exaggerated and ridiculous. Mathew is also an exaggerated chg.racter, His pose of a poet and a lower can hardly deceive anyone, Bobadill is a big boast. He is a better pretender to accomplishment and braverly, but his character is also exaggerated. His ca,tching of Mathew in facing with the lady's broomstick and his sound beating by Downright are two of the several points of exaggeration in his character. His beating of Cob for criticising tobacco is a also a bit beyond understanding,

Justice Clement's behaviour is completely ludicrous. He is described as a merry , mad judge, and he is a actually so. He does not have the gravity and bearing of a judge. His imprisoning of Com for critici ing tobacco is hardly believable. In this way we notice that almost all the principles and main characters in the play are exposed and ridiculed through the device of exaggeration and caricature.

Ben Jonson occupies a distinct and illustrious place among the literary figures of England. When we review his position among the poets of his age, the first thing which strikes us is the length of his career as a man of letters. He achieved fame in 1598 when Queen Elizabeth was yet alive and Shakespeare had but recently begun to reap his laurels. Jonson lived through the reign of James I, Contributing more than any other poet to form the literary tone of that king's period.

Among his contemporaries Jonson stood forth with singular distinctness, He manifested his individuality in So many ways. He was the master of unquestioned genius. As J.A. Symonds also observes, "If I were bound to offer in one sentence a definition of Ben Jonson's genius, I should be inclined to call him a poet of the understanding and of Judgement in whom vast erudition was combined with rarely acute facilities for studying and reproducing the distinctive marks of personal character, and who had overlaid a lively imaginative faculty with deliberately conceived ideals of the literary art. Fire of the imagination

their breed. Such inwardly hollow but outwatdly swollefl people are found in every society at all time. They dtJ flbt change any of the improving methods. The seen fool itt the very beginning and come as same in the end also.

Justice Clement represents the type of judiciary England had in the times of Jonson. He has no identity of his bwn and behaves like a typically moody and eccentric judge. .Br!iiflwortn is a typical servant who would assist the young master in drd t tb deceive the old one. He is also a typical mischief monger who always heeds ari outlet for his tricks and schemes. His master stroke, which lie uses to offset other's plans and intrigues, shows that a tnatt is btJrfl with brains, and he can not borrow or buy them.

Bobadill is made vividly tb express the Elizabethan species of the class, with his up to date oaths, his interest and knowledge of tobacco art and the latests sword strokes, But what is more about him is that unlike other characters he is endtJwed with an individuality, which makes him the greatest of Jonson's creations. He is thus an exception to the rule comparable to Falstaff.

Thus the characters in the play are plain and simple. They are a mechnical group of hutnour characters. Really they are more robots than robust human beings, They are rigid and static.

Going through 'Every Man In His Humour', we find the characters introduced in the play are the characters of humour. They represent certain follies' and vices, defects and drawbacks. They are found showing imperfections, ecentricities, abnormalities and absurdities of human nature. Jonson is seen developing the device of exaggeration and caricature in order to make them appear ridiculous. His purpose is to ridicule their humours. The humours are given a homeopathic treatment. They are followed free play to run to excess, and in this way they spend themselves out. At the end of the play the characters are out of their humours.

In the play we read about old Kno'well who is highly exaggerated. No father can get so totally lost in his anxiety for his son's welfare that he will forget everything else. Old Kno'well is seen having a keen interest about the activities of his son, young Kno'well. He devotes his entire time and energy to chasing his son from pilla· ı >post. In the process of chasing he is made a fool of by his own servant. Kitley's sense of jealousy is also blown out of all proportions. It is quite clear that not a single husband in his own plight will treat as he does himself. True he has a beautiful wife and an unmarried sister, but that does not mean he

is all proved that his creative genius he constructed his own plots and created his own characters.

As we see the characters of Shakespeare in his plays, they are individuals but not original. They develop and grow, change and modify. Therefore they are quite able to express themselves in the course of the play. Contrary to it Jonson's characters are original having simple types. Besides this they do not develop and grow. They are found remain in the end what they were in the beginning of the play. The characters are quite puppets who have no their own tongue to say or action to have activities. It is also proved that they have no their own life in action. In portraying a character he takes into account only one of its aspects and neglects the inner reality. He simply puts together illustrations of that single predominant trait called humour and fails to exhibit fine shades of character. Only that which appears outwardly such as an oddity or abnormality is closely and carefully observed resulting in a satiric portrayal.

One of the critics has catches each of his person as a moment when they appear most expressive for his purpose. They are found remain salient. They do not grow up or change and perhaps they do not degenerate. They never explain themselves as Shakesperes' men and women do, and although some variety is effected in their presentation by a device which Jonson made his own. They rarely permit the action to wrest from them anything of which they do not stand confessed at their entrance. Thus Jonson's characters are fixed and simple and not self sustained that is to say, they are not capable of exiting apart from their own setting. He makes his fixed humourists explain themselves by placing them in various situations, In this manner, they are given life and we are made to believe that the character represented is a real gull or a boast, a real boast.

When we go through the characters in the play we notice that almost all the characters in the play as we see in other plays are manifestations of different humours. They may have been taken from real life of London of the time, but they are types and not individuals. The have no individuality of thier own. The two elderly old men Kno'well and Kitley behave like any men of their age and in their situations. Old Kno'well has the characteristic weakness of elderly people. His humour is that he considers himself always in the right and his son in the wrong. His advice to Stephen can be any oldman's advice to a youngester. Kitley is jealous and suspicious because he has a young beautiful wife and an unmarried sister, Inspite of it his house is frequented by dissolute young gallants. Any body else in his place would have behaved similarly. He represents suspicious and jealous husbands, He is nothing if not jealous.

On the other hand we find two gulls there in the play namely Stephen and Mathew. They are nothing other than pretenders to the fashion pervalent in those times. They are nameless representatives of

within the limits of London at that time. The scene shifts from one part .of the city to another part aero ss the moorfields.

It is well tried when unity of action has been observed in typical Jonsonian manner. The plot is composed of several actions which are deftly linked together. It is complex and loose because the dramatist who is also the satirist, seek 'to exhibit every man suffering the effect of his 'humours'. Comparatively speaking, Volpone, 'the Alchemist' can boast of having more tightly knit plots. Certain minor actions have been made integral part of the *main* action. On the whole, unity of action is also more or less observed as 'the unity does not consist in simplicity 'but in the oneness of many parts."

Unity of tone was aimed at but not completely attained by the playwright. Though Johnson treats abnormality or imperfection in character sarcastically rather than sympathetically, as in the case of 'Volpone' which has the ferocity of the fox. Yet 'Every Man In His Humour' maintains a comictone throughout its course. Thus unity of tone has been seriously kept; the serious not mixed with the comic. lh.Ie to life both in character and incident. Renaiscence criticism emphasised that both action and character must be in like the people of their class in real life. That is to say, comedy must be 'an imitation of the common errors of life,' exciting instructive laughter.

As in other plays Johnson's characters in Every Man In His Humour are and remain simplified characters. Old Kno'well like any old man is anxious about his son's well being, and young Kno'well like any young man is interested more in fun and frolic than books, though he makes a show of studying seriously in order to hoodwink his father. Kitley bas every reason to be jealous and suspicious as any other person in his place would behave similarly. However, they are not mere types, but drawn from Johnson's personal observation.

In short, Every Man In His Humour' is a classical comedy in every sense of the term and as distinct from the romantic comedy of William Shakespeare. Its classical character is quite evident in its faithful observance of the three Unities of Time, Place and Action, the unity of tone and in its emphasis on being true to life.

It is well examplified that Ben Jonson had an intensive knowledge and experience of human nature and human life. The way of his observing of human nature and aspects of life was very keen and exact He was entirely familiar to the internal and contemporary life of London and its social affairs. So because of his intense knowledge about all these facts, he had familiarised himself with various kinds of humours and affections. Thus it

extant play, The Case is Altered, did he borrow his plot and even there, as if English Plautus must be more full-bodied than the Roman stage had required, he fulsed the Aulularia and Captiviti." (EML)

This, in short, is Jonson's conception of Comedy. How far his comedies confirm to his concepts is quite a different story.

'Every Man In His Humour' conforms to the classical principles of composition. Ben Johnson's individual talents have been displayed in this comedy. The unity of time is closely observed. The action covers twelve hours. The action begins in the morning at Kno'well's house and ends at Clement's house, the unity of place has also been observed. *All* scenes are taken in London. The unity of action has been maintained typically. The plot contains many actions. The plot is complex and loose and lacks coherence. Some minor actions also form an integral part of the whole action. The unity consists in the oneness of many parts. The unity of tone has been maintained to some extent. There is found pure comedy, fun and humour in this comedy. Thus the classical element is observed:

(1) By the unities of time, place, action and tone,

(2) Stress on truth of life,

(3) satirical spirit.

In his 'Apology for Poetry' Sidney expounded the principles and techniques of classical comedy. Johnson based his classicism or neo classical theory of comedy on these principles. However, he was a mighty man of letters and did not wholly depend on them. In fact he gae them his individual colour and interpretation, as he was a man and writer of original bent of mind. In short, he followed the classical precepts in the spirit and not in the letter. Hence his plays are different from other plays of the same genre. 'Every Man In his Humour' may be considered his best play in as much as it conforms more closely to the classical principles of play of writing than any of his other plays. Nevertheless, it is in this play that Johnson's individuality is most strangely felt. Let us now see to what extent 'Every Man In His Humour' conforms to the canons of classical comedy.

Unity of time has been most strictly observed. The entire action which is spread over five acts and a large number of scenes, covers about twelve hours. It is very closely to see that Ben Johnson had an eye at the clock while writing the play. It brings us to note that it is morning at Kno'well's house when the play begins and supper time at Justice Clement's house when the play ends. Thus the action takes less than a single day's time. Unity of place ha been minutely observed and all the scenes fall

It is this humour, this peculiar quality of a man that Jonson underlines in every comedy of his.

According to Jonson, the aim of comedy as that of a tragredy, is to delight and teach, "The parts of a comedy are the same with a tragedy and the end is partly the same. For they both delight and teach." Teaching, correcting the vices through delight, not through thoughtless laughter, is what comedy should aim at. Just as tragedy brings purgation through pity and fear, comedy attains its aim by ridiculing the "follies" of a man. So laughter, for Jonson' was only the path that led to delight the man. He also warned the playwrights that too much ludicrous laughter may lead to farce, the worst kind of comedy.

Satire was the next ingridient of Jonson's Comedy. At several places he called his comedies as "Comical satires". As he laid emphasis on morality it was but natural that he laughed at their vices and weaknesses. He had to use satire as the best weapon. Wherever he may place his scene, his eye was always on London. He has ranged over the whole of its society from courtier to water- carrier and has set vividly before us a motley of its fashions and ruthlessly anatonized its reigning follies. It would be hard to find elsewhere in English drama such a teeming gallery of satiric pictures of the vanities and shams to which men are liable and while this satire may be labelled at the absurdities of his own day, much of its has lasting point". (R.S. Knox). He lashed his own contemporaries, even one time friends of his.

Apart from Humour of a character Jonson's next concern was plot. it was a clear reaction to the romantic dramatists who neglected it too much. Jonson might say with Aristotle "Plot is the thing." "What Jonson appears to have had in mind" writes Gregory Smith "is shown towards the end of his Discoveries when..he lays down two principles. The first deals with the 'bound' or 'extent' of a play. It should not exceed the compass of one day, but there should be place left for digression and art. The second is concerned with the complexity of the plot. It should be one and entire. One is considerble two ways: either as it is only separate and by itself or as being composed of many parts, it begins to be one, as those parts grow or are wrought together." No matter if there happen to be sub-plots they should be connected with the piot and with one another that the whole play seems to be an organic whole. Jonson allows sub-plot as a relief to his first and for its enchantment, but as a rule there must be a dominant action as there is generally a dominant humour. "The complexity of the plot", warns G.G. Smith, "is not in itself a fault, but its handling is difficult, and Jonson however convincingly he framed his theory, found it convenient in practice not to venture beyond the simplest of actions." Besides, Jonson laid more emphasis in the comedy, on the originality of the plot. Like Romantic comedians, he playgiarised from no one. The plot should be the direct result of writer's own observation. As for himself "only once, in his first

For *general* public and the playwright as well comedy meant simply ridiculous laughter having improbable, unnatural and quite non-serious scenes culled from some imaginary world. Funny laughter and low grade entertainment was the order of the day. With Every Man in His Humour (1599) Jonson came with quite a new road of comedy. And then followed one after the other some fourteen important comedies proving beyond doubt that here was a dramatist who could translate his theory of comedy into practice. He disliked romantic comedies of his times that had quite unnatural and indfaciplined plots. In the Prologue which he added to the Folio Text of the above comedy, he attacked comedy, tragedy, history of his days. He had studied Greek Theory of drama hence deplored non-observance of the unity rules. Here was a dramatist who advocated for the three Unities and other classical tenets of the play. Most of his comedies have plots, the incidents of whihch are not of more than twenty four hours, taking place at one place, may be different localities (as in the Volpone). Romantic play had a tendency to translate or borrow plots at the most from latin and Greek without the least regard of their being fit or otherwise to the English stage. Making a fun of the romantic comedy Jonson writes, "of a duke to be in love with a countess and that countess to be in love with the duke's son and the son to love the lady's waiting maid; some such croswooing with a clown to their serving man." He adored antiquity.

And this love of classical led Jonson to realism. From imaginary world of 'airy nothing' he brought comedy in the 'real life' which is another name of using language daily used by man, placing mirror before the times and pointing out towards some human follies-

Deeds and language, such as men do use,
And persons such as comedy would choose,
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not their crimes.

'Humour' has become a synonym of Jonson. Prior to him this term was used for some whim. The medical scientists believed that the human body was composed of four humours-Choler, Melancholy, Phlegm and Blood, The character of a man was determined by the proportion in which they were mixed in a man's b dy. In. t e Introduction to Every man Out of His Humour he gave It a definite meaning-

Some one peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man that its doth draw
All his effects, his spirits and his power
In their confluctions, all to runne one way.
This may be truly said to be a humour.