

men might be engaged in manufacturing the required machinery, in working the machines etc. and others in Commerce and Industry.

Sj. Purna Chandra Bhattacharyya also expressed his dissent from Mr. Sinha.

Sj. Sh'b Chandra Ganguly observed that the essayist had neither mentioned nor suggested any scheme as to the improvement of Scientific Agriculture in India.

Then the President summed up the arguments and delivered a long and learned lecture. In his instructive speech he discussed (1) the condition of agriculture in India (2) how agriculture without manufacture is not a sound policy (3) what scientific agriculture means (4) the initial difficulties towards the introduction of scientific agriculture in India (5) what Government has been doing so long for the improvement of agriculture in India and how far the steps taken by the Government are in keeping with the public requirements and (6) how we are to proceed in order to improve scientific agriculture.

The subject for the next Sitting was settled to be 'Education and Economic progress in India' and Sj. Bhagawat Swarup Mital consented to attempt it.

After some petty items of business, the meeting dispersed for the day at half-past four with a vote of thanks to the chair.

SALIL KUMAR BANERJEE,

*Honorary Secretary.*

## 'THE TEMPEST.'

A REPRESENTATIVE ELIZABETHAN PLAY.

When the Continent of Europe was suddenly awakened to exuberant vitality by the transforming touch of the magic wand of the Renaissance, the land of Albion was still enshrouded in the deep slumber of the Middle Ages. Shortly before the accession of the Virgin Queen, however, to the English throne, the joint waves of the Renaissance and Reformation dashed with all their accumulated force on the silver coast of England, and flooded every nook and corner of the country. The Attic Muse, who had taken shelter in the bosom of the 'Etrurian Athens,' flying from the barbaric Saccen sway, at last left her place of refuge after a century of repose, and carried her glorious light northward, which

illuminated the whole of Western Europe. England was the last to catch its glimpse.

This was characterised by an unrivalled artistic activity and a passionate desire of extending the bounds of human knowledge in every department. In Literature, the 'University wits' threw off their academic pride and dedicated their lives at the altar of Poetry. They drank deep at the springs of Parnassus, and were still insatiate. A whole host of master-writers gathered under the banners of Bacon and Shakespeare, the grand Napoleons of the respective realms of prose and verse and carried the Elizabethan Literature to a pitch of perfection ever to be envied by all succeeding times and climes but never to be excelled or even approached by any.\*

But the Elizabethans scorned narrowness of outlook, they scorned to confine the inexhaustible store of their intellectual energy in the domain of Letters. Indeed, no other period in history is so astir with action and yet illumined by the purple light of romance. The causes of the wonderful activity have been clearly pointed out by Sir. Sidney Lee.

"On the one hand, a distant past had been suddenly unveiled and there had come to light an ancient Literature and an ancient Philosophy, which proved the human intellect to possess capacities hitherto unimagined. On the other hand the dark curtain which had restricted man's view of the physical world to a corner of it, was torn asunder and the strange fact was revealed that that which had hitherto been regarded by men as the whole sphere of physical life and nature was in reality a mere fragment of a mighty universe of which there had been no previous conception. \* \* \* \* The new problems were swayed with eager interest and curiosity and were left to the future for complete solution. The Scientific spirit which is the light of the modern world, was conceived in the 16th Century, it came to birth, later."

Literature, specially dramatic Literature, is the main medium through which the life inherent within a nation finds its articulate expression. Every ripple of change that passes over the people, stirs its surface. A true poet is a product not only of his country but also of the age in which he lives. He catches hold of the nebulous ideas idly floating about in the air and quickens them into life by the infusion of his own spirit and vigour. He gives audible vent to the vague and inarticulate yearnings and aspirations which had hitherto been struggling for expression in every human bosom—gives them a local habitation and a name. These again find their sweetest and most adequate expression not in the

songsters and poetasters who must be chirping in the grove of Letters all day long, but rather in the full-throated masters of melody, whose lips utter strange and deep-toned bursts of harmony when touched by the earliest rays of the dawning day. The 'Sweet Swan of Avon' was this master-musician and the rays of the Renaissance touched him and inspired him. But a genius of the first water as he was, he too was not exempt from the active business of life. The Elizabethan Age was an age of many-sided activity and of immense emancipation in men's ideas and ideals. Shakespeare was the true 'Zeit-geist' of this Age, and in his 'glowing pages' is mirrored forth all this life of oceanic variety and amplitude. Let us now take the 'Tempest,' one of his maturest productions and verify our remarks therefrom.

Exploration and Colonisation were the two questions which arrested the serious attention of every Elizabethan. The pioneers of this chapter of human progress were the Portuguese and the Spaniards but the Englishmen were not slow in following suit. They too, fairly entered upon the path of oceanic expansion. To crown all a whole Literature of books was written on these subjects. 'That series of exploits may be said to begin with the wonderful enlightenment of More's 'Utopia' and to culminate in the achievements of Bacon and Shakespeare.'\* "A finished poet" says Carlyle 'is a symptom that his epoch itself has reached perfection and is finished.' No wonder then that these should be the principal topics of treatment in the drama.

We now proceed to point out how in the 'Tempest,' Shakespeare has dealt artistically with the environment within which he lived and also exhibited it in combinations at once effective and attractive. Before plunging right into the Action of the play, let us first begin with

I. The *Title* of the play, which is so suggestive of the dangers of the deep. The vivid picture of the bustle and stir of a storm at sea is a fit prelude to such a typical Elizabethan Play. The 'sea mounting to the welkin's cheek and dashing the fire out' of it was a picture not at all unfamiliar to the Elizabethans many of whose contemporaries lay unknelled, uncoffined and unknown within a watery grave.

II. Secondly, the *scene* of the play is not less characteristic. The 'desolate Isle,' in the bosom of an unknown sea, 'full of noises, sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not,' inhabited by the mighty

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\* It is this spirit which finds literary expression in later centuries in De-Foe's *Robinson Crusoe* and in Stevenson's 'Treasure Island.'

magician and his beautiful daughter, the Island Princess and attended upon by the Spirit of the air and the Spirit of the earth, is only a highly romantic portraiture of one of the 'haunted' Islands of Elizabethan superstition, (e. g. The Bermudas or the Isle of Devils) described in many an Elizabethan book of Travel. Gonzalo's glib talk of 'mountaineers Dewlapped like bulls' and of 'men whose heads stood in their breasts' and even Sebastian's readiness to believe in 'the Unicorn' and the 'Phoenix throne'—all this is but an echo of the marvels brought to light by Elizabethan voyagers and explorers. Next we come to

III. The *theme* of the play, an analysis whereof will show it to contain the following characteristics of the age in which it was written.

#### A. *Naval and Maritime Activity.*

The love of the sea and of voyages on unknown seas the English have inherited from their Scandinavian ancestors. This spirit which lay dormant in the English mind for a few centuries, was rejuvenated and exhilarated by the mad wave of patriotism which swept over the length and breadth of the country on account of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. This did not fail to stir the heart of Literature.

The first scene of the first Act is laid 'on board a ship' and is a striking testimony of Shakespeare's perfect knowledge of Seamanship. The successive positions of the ship in the course of the storm are drawn with a masterly hand and must have appealed strongly to an Elizabethan audience composed mostly of seamen. "This storm we do not witness as mere spectators from the land like Miranda in the next Scene—but we as it were share the danger of the ship's crew and thus our impression of the hurry and bustle of the storm is more direct and more vivid." The rough-spoken frank-natured Boatswain who had 'sworn grace overboard' but had 'not an oath on shore,' was the first vivid picture of a Jack Tar and Smollett and Captain Marryat were to follow in his wake. Gonzalo's consolation to Alonso

... • ...      ... everyday some sailor's wife  
The masters of some merchant, and the merchant  
Have just our theme of woe. ... • ... • ...

speaks volumes for the age. Throughout the play, are scattered broadcast nautical terms and metaphors drawn from the sea with wonderful ease and accuracy—[with only one exception ('three glasses'—V. I. 2)]. Lastly the play ends with the promise of 'calm seas,' 'auspicious gales'

and 'expeditious' sail in conspicuous contrast with its tempestuous beginning.

### B. Colonisation.

Some of the greatest minds of the age, members of the nobility also and men of the highest culture had interested themselves in this question of colonisation. As a result, adventurers eagerly put to the sea to plant colonies in different parts of the globe. There can be no doubt that the 'Tempest' was immediately suggested by such burning topics of the day as the disaster that befell the Virginia Colonising Company. When we go through the second scene of the first Act, the dialogue between Caliban and Prospero strikes us strangely. It was not a new thing to the age, it was the relation of native races to the white men who were then beginning to force their own rights on the native population in the Colonies. 'The Island is mine' cries out Caliban 'and by sorcery,' Prospero got that of him. At first he is 'made much of' and then subjected to enslavement, dispossession and slavery, after he has shown the white man 'all the qualities of the Isle.' Prospero on the other hand 'pitied' the 'hag-born whelp' and 'took pains' to carry the light of knowledge to his dark soul. But all 'his pains,' 'humanely taken' were all lost, quite lost. Nurture cannot stick to Caliban's nature, and the brute will remain the same for all that, 'a devil—a born devil.' What a contrast to Rousseau's 'noble savage!'

Thus Shakespeare shows the two sides of the question and reserves his judgement in order to enable his contemporaries to judge it for what it is worth. Thus we see, contact with a higher civilisation cannot enlighten the rude aborigines in the least. On the other hand, association with the dregs of European civilisation can much lower the primitive savage down, so much so as to burst forth in his own confession

... .. What a thrice-double ass  
Was I to take this drunkard for a god  
And worship this dull fool!

Gonzalo's description of the 'Imaginary Commonwealth'—his longing to have the 'plantation of the Isle, is but a comic counterpart of the Colonisation Question. Already as early as the times of Henry VII. More had interested himself in this very question of an ideal Commonwealth in his 'Utopia'—earnest minds were speculating on the question of perfection in law and government, another product of the Renaissance and Reformation which held before these thinkers, the ideals of Plato's 'Republic.'

C. *The Supernatural Element.*

Belief in magic and supernatural appearances, in witches and wizards, in spirits and fairies actively intervening in human affairs, was almost universal in the age in which Shakespeare lived and was shared by learned and unlearned alike. Shakespeare utilised the credulity of his contemporaries by introducing the supernatural in many of his plays e. g. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar* etc. Here is however an originality which shows the boldest stroke of his mature power. In the earlier Elizabethan plays—even in his own plays above-mentioned, it is the supernatural that controls the fate of man. But here we find in the places of the witches and hob-goblins of the earlier plays, Shakespeare creates spirits of the earth and the air—the freckled hag-born whelp Caliban and the Petulant Ariel. The one 'is the creature of the earth, earthy,' the other 'lives in the air—from air he derives his being, in air he acts and all his colours and properties seem to have been derived from the rainbow and the skies.' Both of them are subdued to the purpose of man who is thus made the master of his fate and the world.

(i) *Magic.* The Elizabethans believed in two orders of magic—black and white. Sycorax typifies the first and Prospero the second in this play. Magicians of repute like the celebrated Dr. Dee were familiar in that age. Shakespeare's Prospero has nothing of the vulgar magician about him. He has not the malice, the wickedness, the ambition for power that belongs to the typical magician, like Dr. Faustus in Marlowe's *Tragedy*.

Magic is the chief means by which the plot is made possible—though through it the play loses one main source of dramatic interest viz. the struggle between man and circumstance. The whole play is fraught with magic. The mighty magician, by his 'patent art,' can make the 'bold waves' of the 'most mighty Neptune' tremble, can rift 'Jove's stout oaks with his own bolt'—can perform the work of years in the twinkling of an eye. It is by means of this art, he makes the two youthful lovers meet and fall in each other's power. With this he rouses the repentance of his former wrong-doers and punishes the conspirers against him. Up to the very end 'his charms crack not' and it is only when he has attained all his heart's desire and has taken his noble revenge, that he abjures his 'rough magic,' buries his staff certain fathoms in the ocean and appeals to the audience to be relieved from his bonds by their prayer and indulgence; for his 'charms' then were all overthrown.

(ii) *Astrology*: A passage in the *Tempest* illustrates the Elizabethan belief in the 'influence' of the stars upon the fortune of men. Cf.:

'I find my zenith doth depend upon  
A most auspicious star, whose influence  
If now I court not but on it, my fortunes  
Will ever after drop.'

#### D. *Love of Freedom vs. Delight in Labour.*

The Elizabethan Age was marked by an intense growth of individualism. This we find depicted in the *Tempest* in a pre-eminent degree—we find many of the minor characters are impatient of a superior sway. In Act I Sc. ii, Ariel the ærial spirit, demands his 'liberty' in the very face of his indignant master. He hates most the jarring fetters of service and eagerly looks forward to the time when he will gain his 'last and only reward—simple and eternal liberty.' He longs to fly after summer merrily and never misses an opportunity of reminding his master of his promise and Prospero's last words to him are

... .. to the elements  
Be free and fare thou well!—.....

His very antithesis Caliban, the 'Earth-born spirit' just halting on the confines of humanity has the very same feeling. He cannot distinguish between service and slavery. He obeys Prospero indeed but he obeys under compulsion with curses loud and deep. And when he is joined by Stephano and Trinculo, he is possessed by a sudden fanaticism for liberty and cries out—"Freedom, hey-day! hey-day freedom!" even though his 'freedom' is but another and a worse kind of slavery. And his new master too, in the 'glorious' condition of drunkenness sings out the 'Marseillaise' of liberty "Flout'em and Scout'em, Thought is free."

But these are only *minor* characters. What do we find in the main characters—the types of Shakespeare's exalted manhood and womanhood—Ferdinand and Miranda? we find them entering into bonds—bonds of affection, of duty in which they find their truest emancipation. Ferdinand lays down his head at the feet of Miranda to make it the slave of her; and Miranda in her turn resolves to die 'his maid' if he 'denies' her to be his 'fellow.' They contend in the task of bearing the burden, which Prospero had imposed upon the prince, and while thus engaged, Miranda brings out the Philosophy of labour, as it were when she says

... .. I shall do it  
 With much more ease, for my good will is to it  
 And, 'twere it is against.....

Indeed labour, when it is forced and reluctant, is as heavy as it is odious, but when 'the good will is to it,' it is a veritable pleasure, a 'labour of love.'

#### F. *The Masque.*

Among many of the deep debts owed by the Literature of England to the Renaissance and the noble land of Tasso and Sannazarro, the introduction of the Masque was a principal one. In the time of Shakespeare, the Court and aristocracy had been 'masque-mad.' Hence if the Masque in the Fourth Act of the *Tempest* be not an interpolation as has been suspected by some critics and not without some grounds, it adds an additional charm to an Elizabethan Play. And the many accurate and appropriate classical allusions employed in the Masque, point to us clearly what a deep impression the Renaissance had made upon the Elizabethan mind, considering that all these came from the pen of one, who had but 'small Latin and less Greek.'

These are the main characteristics to be noticed in the body of the book. Besides these, many other minor touches and the so-called 'topical allusions' with which the play abounds, claim it to be an essentially Elizabethan production. We shall now conclude after dealing summarily with a selected few of these minor points.

**IV. The Dramatis Personæ,** whose characters reveal one or other trait of the same age.

"'Nam ipsa Scientia potestas est'—may be described as the watchword of the intellectual history of England in the 16th Century," and Prospero whose 'library was dukedom large enough' stands for the Fanstus-like men of the age who gave themselves up solely to the 'bettering' of their minds and dreaming away their years in the 'arms of studious retirement to the total neglect of their 'worldly ends.' Yet again, the development of Prospero's character through the discipline of his past experience as that of a Philosopher-king is the realised ideal of a just combination of the Man of Action and the Man of Contemplation, 'a conjunction like unto that of the two highest planets, Saturn the planet of rest, and Jupiter the planet of action' In the quaint words of the great Bacon whose own life however erring it might be, was modelled on this scheme, and Bacon was one of the highest manifestations, of the Renaissance spirit working on English soil.



The beautiful love-story of Ferdinand and Miranda is steeped in the very spirit of Renaissance Poetry and Romance.

Antonio and Sebastian, the two villains of the play, speak for the bold bad men who made their sovereigns lie in constant dread of their lives as if a Damocles' sword hung over them, by constantly hatching up conspiracies against them and every student of History knows that the Elizabethan atmosphere was thick with these plottings and designs in favour of Mary, Queen of Scots for instance when she was held in duress in England.

The 'drunken butler' Stephano and 'the pied ninny' Trinculo 'reeling ripe' with wine, represent the very numerous Elizabethan mass, who frequented the taverns and the ordinaries, engaged in drinking brawls and large swearings and who drank their life to the very lees.

And all these elements blended into a harmonious whole by a stupendous genius, have made the '*Tempest*' one of the most representative productions of that Age, of which the history of the world can hardly afford a parallel.

SUKUMAR BHATTACHARJEE,

*Fourth Year (B. A.) Class.*

## THE ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION. (*Later*)

The third sitting of the Association came off on Saturday the 23rd March at 3-15 P. M. with Professor Debendra Nath Mukherjee M. A. in the chair. The meeting began with the reading of the proceedings of the last sitting by the Secretary, which were duly confirmed. Then S. J. Bhagawat Swarup Mital read a paper on 'Education and Economic Progress in India.' The essayist treated the subject satisfactorily. He proposed the introduction of free and compulsory elementary education and the establishment of Technical, Commercial and Industrial Schools throughout the country. He said that from the economic point of view the existing system of education required a thorough over-hauling. His observations on the improvement of Female education in the country were note-worthy. It would have been better if he had included in his paper statistical tables and compared them with those of the civilised countries of the west.