

APPENDIX.

A List of the Books in the Library of the Economics Association on 31-3-17.

1. Banks of India.
2. Trade of India with Germany and Austria.
3. Agriculture in India.
4. Industrial development of Bengal.
5. Preferential Tariffs.
6. Reports of the Co-operative Credit Society.
7. Allahabad Economic Journal.
8. Catalogues of Indian Manufacture.

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES.

(BY PROFESSOR PANCHANAN MITRA, M. A.)

(Concluded from the March issue)

Concluding remarks.

Lowell has subtly observed that the genius of the English drama is historical and at least the method is always so. For often enough in the field of creation the genius of the Anglo-Saxon race would produce a Frankenstein, but given the things it would evolve a beautiful and unique constitution. So it is that in literature a Mosca or Pecksniff falls far short of a Tartuffe but the historical glamour of an Ivanhoe leaves no chance of competition for a D'Artagnan. So it fared even with Shakespeare. When the events were not only probable but had acquired an air of verity by close familiarity—when not only the story was on every schoolboy's lips but the very details were ready at hand that he produced the greatest drama, Hamlet. And we would find how his historical plays loom largely in the history of his tragedies as well as of his comedies and appear as the real training-ground of the technique of his art where the various stages of development are hard-set. In the two parts of Henry IV in his care for an attractive presentation of truth he tumbled upon the secret of historical romance and gave us the greatest comic creation as well. Heretofore in Much

Ado and the Taming of the Shrew and even in the Merchant of Venice he had been giving us, so to say, highly dramatised 'novels' to which the spirit of romance has not been properly wedded. For there the parts were heightened with so much care that we got but a string of domestic adventures and not seldom missed a harmonised whole as evinced by the sense of dissatisfaction that lingers after the 'finale,' not to be explained away solely by a dismissed Shylock, a rewarded Claudio or an over-vaunting Petruchio. Then again, if it is Portia who is responsible for the romantic breeze in the court, it is Falstaff alone who could metamorphose the court into a camp of romantic rowdyism and wildness. But though it is Falstaff and company that is drunk with the spirit of romance, the unwelcome ring of the historical setting as the inevitable encroachment of the work-a-day world, comes to remind us that the proper balance has not yet been reached. True indeed that individual characterisation has reached its summit, the essential interest of the novel for particular human beings is yet too much for the romantic conception. The man and the action has not yet become exactly proportionate—Falstaff the man occupies a far larger canvass than the actions of the fat knight. In fact, Shakespeare has not yet given us the perfect history or the perfect comedy though he is very near it and the two parts of Henry IV. lead as much to Henry V. as to the Twelfth Night and As You Like It. Both romantic and realistic, pastoral yet not conventional, the last two motley comedies of the court and the wood are perfect specimens of the Shakespearean art of harmonisation. Without an air of artificial symmetry, there is a perfect balance between the men and the women, the characters and the actions as well as the adaptations and the inventions. Orlando and Orsino, Olivia and Rosalind mix and mingle with perfect freedom with Jacques and Malvolio, Touchstone and Feste. There is no longer any jar as in the transition between Henry IV. and Falstaff.

And then the art in these comedies is discernible in the manipulation of the 'underplot.' In *Love's Labour's Lost* Armado, Moth and Jacquenetta are hardly mixed up but by a light accident. In the *Merchant of Venice*, broadly speaking, a number of under-

plots constitute the main plot. In *Henry IV.* we have seen the underplot overgrow the plot itself. In *As You Like It*, what constitutes in a sense the main story as all else follows from it—the banishment of the Duke and Orlando is only of subordinate interest to the romantic love-making in the wood, while the delightful episode of Silvius and Phoebe may be taken as a highly artistic interlude. In the *Twelfth Night*, on the other hand, the perfect proportion has been reached. While the fusion is complete, Malvolio and Maria, Toby Belch and Aguecheek never encroach upon the main interest and move in their own groove, always maintaining their slightly lower level. When we come to the 'lurid little play' of a *Measure for Measure* or an *All's Well that Ends Well* we realise the dangers of identifying the homely incidents of the novel with romance instead of keeping them apart and the difficulty of maintaining a balance between them. Thus while a *Bernardine* or a *Parolles* quite takes us in separately, or the magnificent proportions of an *Isabella* or a *Helena* excite our admiration, as a whole the plays fail to charm us away into the regions of romance on the one hand or to make us breathe freely in the streets of every-day life on the other.

The thought of these masculine women leads us to a passing consideration of Shakespeare's female creations. It is said that Dickens alone found out the female author in George Eliot and Sir Leslie Stephen has now shown every one of her female characters to be a great feminine man. And though it would be simply foolhardy to adduce anything of the same sort to Shakespeare and though the author of the *Sonnets* was too much of a woman himself to mistake the softer instincts of the sex—nevertheless it cannot be denied that some of the greatest of Shakespeare's women have shown tendencies to merge in the doublet and the hose, and *Helena* is perhaps the supreme instance of almost a 'man-woman.' *Portia* in her own house before the casket-scene is too much of a woman, so too is *Rosalind* when alone but it is as a *Daniel* come to judgment and the seemingly rude shaker of the quotidian of love that they most endear themselves to us. In fact the tender weaknesses of the softer sex seem more to be a monopoly of the tragedies of

Shakespeare and we may hazard the conclusion that the great 'reader of life' perhaps wanted to point out that the comedies of life largely arise from the arrogation of the male sphere of activities by the women while the tragedies most often from a failure to understand them.

A reactionary romantic mood resulted in the undue absence of realism in *Cymbeline* and the *Winter's Tale* where an *Autolycus* or an *Iachimo*, a *Perdita* or an *Imogen* remain as the faint rainbow reminiscences of a past glory. The *Tempest* is the last triumph of the harmoniser's art—excessive freedom and rigid restraint as well as romantic glamour and realistic probability joining hands. The mariners are drunk of the inebriating bottle as well as of the spirit of romance. Ariel is a being of the air and a psychological embodiment of the process of the brain too and under the influence of the potent wand of the Prospero of a dramatist we are fed on the magical lotus-leaves in total unconcern of the rest of the world till he himself is disposed to unloosen the spell and set us free.

THE RESULTS.

The results of the I. Sc. Examination were published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 6th June. 534 have passed in the First, 294 in the Second and 20 in the Third Division, bringing up the total to 848.

At the Intermediate Examination in Science, the College has passed 91, the largest number passed by any *Calcutta College*, just as it was the case last year. Of these 46 have been placed in the First, 41 in the Second and 4 in the Third Division.

The results of the I. A. Examination were published in the *Gazette of India* of the 16th June. 1004 have passed in the First, 1612 in the Second and 326 in the Third Division, bringing up the total to 2942.

At the Intermediate Examination in Arts, the College has passed 99, of whom 19 have been placed in the First, 57 in the Second and 23 in the Third Division.
