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B.A. Part I (English Honours)

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Shakespeare the Artist

That Shakespeare is an artist hardly needs asserting in the present day. It is true that his art was probably far less self-conscious than that of Milton or of Tennyson, that it was probably more intuitive than aforethought. The distinction, however, is probably not so important as it seems. A great artist does not need rules or conscious analysis to tell him what is good and what is evil. Any analysis that may be necessary may be done sub-consciously.

As an artist Shakespeare is concerned almost wholly with the artistic worth of humanity. He is never preoccupied with that beauty of 'nature' which haunts so insistently the minds of modern poets. He uses it sometimes with the hand of a master, but his thought is centred on humanity and he passes on. He rarely takes pains to emphasize the picturesque aspect

his father and malaprop and is compelled to divulge his real identity with Beverley but Lydia is not prepared to leave her dreams of romance. She feels frustrated in her romantic plan of elopement. A highly amusing situation is created by the foolish squire Bob Acres who thinks to win Lydia by his fine dresses even after his dismissal by Mrs. Malaprop.

Thus the play is full of a series of cleverly devised situations and intrigues. All the complications arising out of these situations continue to develop the theme.

The end -

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