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(5th Semester)

ELECTIVE ENGLISH

Paper No. : ELENG-501

(Literary Criticism)

Full Marks : 70

Pass Marks : 45%

Time : 3 hours

*The figures in the margin indicate full marks
for the questions*

1. Answer the following questions briefly :
2×6=12

(a) Compare and contrast the views of Plato and Aristotle on the nature and function of poetry.

(b) Write a short note on Quintilian's theory of style.

- (c) What, according to Wordsworth, is the relationship between poetry and science?
- (d) Write a note on Wordsworth's view on function of poetry.
- (e) Comment on Arnold's opinion on 'grand style' in poetry.
- (f) Why does Arnold consider the 'personal estimate' and the 'historic estimate' as false standards of judgement?

2. Answer the following questions : $10 \times 3 = 30$

- (a) (i) Critically examine Aristotle's definition of tragedy. What, according to him, are the formative elements of a tragedy?

Or

- (ii) Give a critical estimate of Sir Philip Sidney as a critic with reference to his arguments in his *An Apology for Poetry*.

(b) Attempt a critique of Wordsworth's theory of Poetic Creation.

(c) Estimate Matthew Arnold as a critic with reference to *The Function of Criticism At The Present Time*.

3. Attempt a critical appreciation of the following poem commenting on the theme and style :

14

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden back.
Oh, I marked the first for another day!

Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

4. Attempt a critical appreciation of the following passage commenting on its content and style :

It was completely dark now. Tony and his friends had brought their game of marbles into the apron of yellow light cast by the veranda bulb. It was an eerie brightness, which projected dark shadows and extended in a half-circle around their hunkered shapes. It had a definite perimeter beyond which there was darkness. The bulb had been there as long as I could remember. Somehow it had escaped Tony's catty and never seemed to burn out. I stood immediately

above it, in shadow. Tony and his friends shifted about like sand crabs, absorbed in their game.

14 I heard voices at the compound gate, arguing with the watchman. After a few minutes there was the sound of footsteps coming along the drive, three men strode into the illuminated area below me, followed by the chaukidar, carrying his night stick helplessly. He was pleading with them. They wore plaid lungis and loose shirts with the sleeves rolled up. Tony and his friends stopped their game and moved aside. The three men walked up to the veranda door and knocked. Without waiting, they went in. The watchman followed. I heard the front door open and my mother say something. There was a gruff reply. Her voice became shrill. She was using all of the Hindi she knew, a string of abusive half-phrases. Her voice was like a high pathetic bark.

Occasionally the men's voices broke in, husky and impatient. Without seeing it, I could picture the scene perfectly. The watchman's voice rose above the others'. He was an old man, gaunt and tubercular. He told them to leave or else he would go for help. A minute later one of the three appeared, dragging him out of the house like a dead cat. He took him outside the circle of light and left him there. The old man groaned and rolled over into his face. Tony and his friends retreated into the shadow of a jasmine bush. The watchman's foot protruded awkwardly into the hemisphere of light. It looked like a stage below me. I had the feeling of being in a theatre, watching a macabre drama. On the left lay the watchman, practically obscured in darkness. Across from him, and also in the shadows, crouched my brother and his friends. The voices continued inside, my mother's brittle and sharp like broken

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glass. It wasn't fear that kept me from going downstairs to help her; it was an awful hypnosis. I felt like an actor, placed on a stage and immobile until a cue sets him into motion.
