

2021

ENGLISH — HONOURS

Sixth Paper

Full Marks : 100

The figures in the margin indicate full marks.

*Candidates are required to give their answers in their own words
as far as practicable.*

Group - A

[Write your answer in 800 words]

1. (a) Critically comment on the female characters in Dickens' *Great Expectations*. 20
Or,
(b) Discuss the role of Pip as both a character and a narrator in Dickens' *Great Expectations*. 20
Or,
(c) Write a note on the role of the rustic characters in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. 20
Or,
(d) "Happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain." – How far does the theme of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* reflect this observation? 20

Group - B

[Write your answer in 800 words]

2. (a) Attempt a critical review of a film which deals with social issues. 20
Or,
(b) You attended the Kolkata Literary Meet in January, 2021. Write a report on that. 20

Group - C

3. Write an essay on *any one* of the following topics : 40×1
(a) Bernard Shaw as a modern playwright
(b) Teaching literature in the Virtual World
(c) Magic realism in fiction
(d) War and peace in British poetry
(e) Social media and cybercrimes.

Please Turn Over

Group - D

4. Give the summary of **any one** of the following passages and add a critical note : 12+8

(i) In Kipling's 'The Judgement of Dungara', the Priest of Dungara donates pure white shirts woven of nettles to a Christian mission. This gift of itch-inducing garments has the effect of sabotaging the efforts of the 'civilisers' as well as the Christian symbolism they hold dear. In fact, Kipling at times showed a keen awareness of the insecurities which dogged colonial rule. To maintain their dominance over worlds that were difficult to rule, Europeans relied on images of threat, and they did that for their own security. If observed minutely, their attitude makes for an extremely important as well as interesting colonial discourse: it was far from being merely a one-way process of imposing symbolic readings. Colonialist attitudes were formed in response to the culture and the struggles of the colonised. Anglo-Indian imagery of the unbridgeable divide between the East and the West grew out of the terror of the 1857 Mutiny. From the early years of the Raj, the British had adopted the Hindu idea of the present time as an era of decline (the 'Kaliyuga'), and inscribed it in their own histories. Instead of the European power being all-determining, or the white man being the chief arbiter of representations, as is sometimes assumed, colonisation in many cases involved a transaction between cultures. Moreover, colonial ceremonies of state and administrative procedures incorporated what the coloniser believed as indigenous customs. As the Subaltern School of historians in India has suggested, native cultures did not give way to the colonialist metaphor. Colonial transactions had this telling subtext which became more and more apparent as days went by.

(ii) Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under a piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.
