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FOR B.A. PART - I (English - Hons)

THOMAS HARDY as an Interpreter of Character:-

Thomas Hardy is one of the greatest novelists of the Victorian period. He should be regarded more as a pessimist than a realist. He believes in the presence of an immanent spirit in the universe which is hostile to man and against which man has to struggle vainly. His style is simple and direct & that is what has made him a popular novelist. He made Wessex a popular place in his novels.

In his love in knowledge of the earth, we have the key to the kingdom of Hardy possessing it & we may see more clearly into the character of the dramatic persons. His figures are elemental forces on a background of vast elemental force, they are the natural expression of sleepy woodland places, gaunt, dusty hills, purring stream, lonely open spaces. Admirable as many of his male characters are the yield both in clarity and intensity of interest of his women & since woman is more elemental than man, swayed far more by the instinctive life, their superiority is another illustration of Hardy's peculiar skill in dealing with the primal type.

The characters who are outstanding in

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Hardy's fiction are incalculable if we like but that does not make them subtle. subtle characters, it is true he did essay at times and he was too fine a psychologist to fail entirely in portraying them but they are vastly interior to his simple & more primal type.

Hardy's humour usually takes the form of irony, he is too much of a realist to take pleasure in caricature, too little of the moralist to make effective use of satire and his natural reserve tends to make him, even when dealing with tragic issues grimly ironical. His books abound in the irony of circumstance e.g. the double pledging under the tree in "A pair of Blue Eyes" the proposal scene in "The Hand of Ethelberta" with lovers in different rooms. The power behind things were always a mocking smile to Hardy.

We find ^{him} as a story teller he allies rich inventive ~~power~~ power with sense of symmetrical development Scott, Dickens, Thackeray so productively fertile in invention, show often little perspective on their constructive side. He never loses sight of harmonious. But on the whole it is an admirable style, instinct with a simple dignity & compelling sincerity.

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