

جامعة الانبار
كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية
قسم : اللغة الانكليزية
مادة : المسرح الشكسبيري
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محاضرات مادة المسرح الشكسبيري (القدر في هاملت)

Hamlet is the Sphinx of modern literature. The of opinion concerning its purport and character general as the study of the work. Persons of the of culture and ability hold the most contradictory respecting its signification; even the same persons their notions about it at different periods of life. To others, again,.it remains an unsolved mystery. Yet, curious everybody recurs to this play as if it possessed some fascination over the mind, as if it had some nourishment for the spirit of man which always drew him take repeated drafts.

A work to which intelligence must be something more than an idle riddle; in fact, lay open some of the profoundest problems of life. appreciate and comprehend such a problem when requires no ordinary degree of culture and thought. Every individual brings his own intellectual capacity to prehension of the play, and it is no wonder that people so much since they have so many different mental rods. If one man has a deeper or shallower insight other, there must be a corresponding difference of opinion. Also advancing years bring along great spiritual new views of life and broader experience must reveal phases in Hamlet, if it be that absolute work which enlightened mankind generally believe it to be. Hence we may account for the frequent occurrence of a change of opinion in the same person at the several periods of life. Indeed, a man ought perhaps to change his opinion concerning this drama once every decade during the first forty years of his existence ; it would in most cases be a good sign of increased culture and

maturer intellect. According to our own premises, therefore, we can hardly expect to satisfy all or even the majority, and to harmonize the many conflicting opinions. But we intend to grapple honestly with its difficulties, which are both many and great, and to attempt to state the thought which gives unity to its widely diversified parts.

At the very threshold of the subject stands the question of Hamlet's insanity. Was it real or feigned ? If he is insane, and so intended by the poet, let us shut the book and say no more, for certainly there is nothing more to be said. But such is not the case. Art is the expression of Reason, and that too of the Reason of a nation, of an age, of an epoch; eliminate this principle, pray, what is left ? Criticism, if it be true to its highest end, points out and, unfolds the rational element in a drama or other work of Art; but here it could only say: this poem professedly depicts the Irrational, hence the Ugly. A piece which has as its theme the Ugly, cannot well possess much beauty. Moreover, what delight or instruction can there be in the portraiture of the Irrational ? Think of the choicest spirits of this and former generations finding spiritual nourishment in the capricious oddities of a madman! In fact, this play would thus become repugnant alike to the intellectual and the moral nature of man: repugnant to his intellectual nature, for it would be stripped of all true intelligence in the dethronement of Reason; repugnant to his moral nature, for insanity destroys responsibility, and this Hamlet could in nowise be held accountable for his acts. Here lies the greatest objection to the above-mentioned view: it takes away the notion of responsibility, and thereby blasts the very germ of the play. That the poet intends no such thing is very evident. Hamlet has the profoundest sense of duty, the most sensitive moral nature; moreover, the termination of his career at the end of the piece shows how Shakespeare would have us regard the matter.