

H2 Paper 2

9748/02

Section A

1.

Either (a) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) relating its concerns to features of the period.

Cities and Thrones and Powers

Cities and Thrones and Powers,
 Stand in Time's eye,
 Almost as long as flowers,
 Which daily die:
 But, as new buds put forth
 To glad new men, 5
 Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth,
 The Cities rise again.

This season's Daffodil,
 She never hears,
 What change, what chance, what chill 10
 Cut down last year's;
 But with bold countenance,
 And knowledge small,
 Esteems her seven days' continuance,
 To be perpetual. 15

So Time that is o'er-kind,
 To all that be,
 Ordains us e'en as blind,
 As bold as she:
 That in our very death, 20
 And burial sure,
 Shadow to shadow, well persuaded, saith,
 "See how our works endure!"

Note: a daffodil: a brilliant yellow flower that appears in early spring

Or (b) The following passage is from the novel *Vanity Fair* by William Thackeray, published in 1847. Write a critical appreciation of it, relating its characteristics in both style and content to features of the period.

The observant reader, who has marked our young Lieutenant's previous behaviour, and has preserved our report of the brief conversation which he has just had with Captain Dobbin, has possibly come to certain conclusions regarding the character of Mr. Osborne. Some cynical Frenchman has said that there are two parties to a love-transaction: the one who loves and the other who condescends to be so treated. Perhaps the love is occasionally on the man's side; perhaps on the lady's. Perhaps some infatuated swain has ere this mistaken insensibility for modesty, dullness for maiden reserve, mere vacuity for sweet bashfulness, and a goose, in a word, for a swan. Perhaps some beloved female subscriber has arrayed an ass in the splendour and glory of her imagination; admired his dullness as manly simplicity; worshipped his selfishness as manly superiority; treated his stupidity as majestic gravity, and used him as the brilliant fairy Titania did a certain weaver at Athens. I think I have seen such comedies of errors going on in the world. But this is certain, that Amelia believed her lover to be one of the most gallant and brilliant men in the empire: and it is possible Lieutenant Osborne thought so too.

He was a little wild: how many young men are; and don't girls like a rake better than a milksop? He hadn't sown his wild oats as yet, but he would soon: and quit the army now that peace was proclaimed; the Corsican monster locked up at Elba; promotion by consequence over; and no chance left for the display of his undoubted military talents and valour: and his allowance, with Amelia's settlement, would enable them to take a snug place in the country somewhere, in a good sporting neighbourhood; and he would hunt a little, and farm a little; and they would be very happy. As for remaining in the army as a married man, that was impossible. Fancy Mrs. George Osborne in lodgings in a county town; or, worse still, in the East or West Indies, with a society of officers, and patronized by Mrs. Major O'Dowd! Amelia died with laughing at Osborne's stories about Mrs. Major O'Dowd. He loved her much too fondly to subject her to that horrid woman and her vulgarities, and the rough treatment of a soldier's wife. He didn't care for himself—not he; but his dear little girl should take the place in society to which, as his wife, she was entitled: and to these proposals you may be sure she acceded, as she would to any other from the same author.

Holding this kind of conversation, and building numberless castles in the air (which Amelia adorned with all sorts of flower-gardens, rustic walks, country churches, Sunday schools, and the like; while George had his mind's eye directed to the stables, the kennel, and the cellar), this young pair passed away a couple of hours very pleasantly; and as the Lieutenant had only that single day in town, and a great deal of most important business to transact, it was proposed that Miss Amelia should dine with her future sisters-in-law. This invitation was accepted joyfully. He conducted her to his sisters; where he left her talking and prattling in a way that astonished those ladies, who thought that George might make something of her; and he then went off to transact his business.

In a word, he went out and ate ices at a pastry-cook's shop in Charing Cross; tried a new coat in Pall Mall; dropped in at the Old Slaughters', and called for Captain Cannon; played eleven games at billiards with the Captain, of which he won eight, and returned to Russell Square half an hour late for dinner, but in very good humour.

[Turn over

It was not so with old Mr. Osborne. When that gentleman came from the City, and was welcomed in the drawing-room by his daughters and the elegant Miss Wirt, they saw at once by his face—which was puffy, solemn, and yellow at the best of times—and by the scowl and twitching of his black eyebrows, that the heart within his large white waistcoat was disturbed and uneasy. When Amelia stepped forward to salute him, which she always did with great trembling and timidity, he gave a surly grunt of recognition, and dropped the little hand out of his great hirsute paw without any attempt to hold it there. He looked round gloomily at his eldest daughter; who, comprehending the meaning of his look, which asked unmistakably, "Why the devil is she here?" said at once:

"George is in town, Papa; and has gone to the Horse Guards, and will be back to dinner."

"O he is, is he? I won't have the dinner kept waiting for him, Jane"; with which this worthy man lapsed into his particular chair, and then the utter silence in his genteel, well-furnished drawing-room was only interrupted by the alarmed ticking of the great French clock.

When that chronometer, which was surmounted by a cheerful brass group of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, tolled five in a heavy cathedral tone, Mr. Osborne pulled the bell at his right hand—violently, and the butler rushed up.

"Dinner!" roared Mr. Osborne.

"Mr. George isn't come in, sir," interposed the man.

"Damn Mr. George, sir. Am I master of the house? DINNER!" Mr. Osborne scowled. Amelia trembled. A telegraphic communication of eyes passed between the other three ladies. The obedient bell in the lower regions began ringing the announcement of the meal. The tolling over, the head of the family thrust his hands into the great tail-pockets of his great blue coat with brass buttons, and without waiting for a further announcement strode downstairs alone, scowling over his shoulder at the four females.

[Turn over

Section B

Answer one question from this section, using TWO of the texts that you have studied.

THE TEXTS USED IN THIS SECTION CANNOT BE USED IN SECTION C.

2

Either (a) By comparing the work of two writers of the Victorian period that you have studied, discuss the extent to which the authors stray into what we might consider sentimentality.

Or (b) Compare the roles of patriarchy in two of the Victorian texts that you have studied.

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Section C

Answer ONE question from this section, using ONE text that you have studied.

The text used here cannot be used in Section B.

George Eliot: *Silas Marner*

3.

Either (a) Discuss the use Eliot makes in the novel of the relationship between the individual and the community.

Or (b) Discuss the use of the natural world and of nature imagery in the novel.

Thomas Hardy: *Far from the Madding Crowd*

4

Either (a) On the basis of your reading of the novel, is it reasonable to consider Hardy a didactic writer?

Or (b) It is claimed that Hardy's novels mourn the passing of a rural way of life threatened by the advent of industrialisation. What evidence of this can you find in *Far from the Madding Crowd* ?

G.B. Shaw: *Mrs Warren's Profession*

5

Either (a) "Now that the position of women has, in most advanced societies, improved immeasurably since 1895, the play has little of interest to offer." How sympathetic are you to this view?

Or (b) What elements in the play contributed to its banning ?

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