

49

Code—24

ENGLISH AND ENGLISH ESSAY

Time : 3 Hours

Maximum Marks : 100

Note : Attempt all questions. The marks carried by each question is indicated at the end of the question. The parts of the same question must be answered together and must not be interposed between answers to other questions.

1. Make a precis of the following passage reducing it to one-third of its length : 20
Almost all of you have heard of the word Maya. Generally it is used, though incorrectly, to denote illusion, or delusion, or some such thing. But the theory of Maya forms one of the pillars upon which the

P.T.O.

Vedanta rests; it is, therefore, necessary that it should be properly understood. I ask a little patience of you, for there is a great danger of its being misunderstood. The oldest idea of Maya that we find in Vedic literature is the sense of delusion; but then the real theory had not been reached. We find such passages as, "Indra through his Maya assumed various forms." Here it is true that the word Maya means something like magic, and we find various other passages, always taking the same meaning. The word Maya then dropped out of sight altogether. But in the meantime the idea was developing. Later, the question was raised : "Why can't we know the secret of this universe ?" And answer given was very significant : "Because we talk in vain, and because we are satisfied with the things of the senses, and because we are running after desires; therefore, we, as it were, cover the reality with a mist." Here the word Maya is

50

not used at all, but we get an idea that the cause of our ignorance is a kind of mist that has come between us and the Truth. Much later on, in one of the latest Upanishads, we find the word Maya reappearing, but this time a transformation has taken place in it, and a mass of new meaning has attached itself to the word. Theories had been propounded and repeated, others had been taken up, until at last idea of Maya became fixed. We read in the Shvetashvatara Upanishad, "Know nature to be Maya and Ruler of this Maya is the Lord Himself". Coming to our philosophers, we find that the word Maya has been manipulated in various fashions, until we come to the great Shankaracharya. The theory of Maya was manipulated a little by the Buddhists too, but in the hands of the Buddhists it became very much like what is called Idealism, and that is the meaning that is now generally given to the word Maya.

When the Hindu says that the world is Maya, at once people get the idea that world is an illusion. This interpretation has some basis, as coming through the Buddhistic philosophers, because there was one section of philosophers who did not believe in the external world at all. But the Maya of the Vedanta, in its last developed form, is neither Idealism nor Realism, nor is it a theory. It is a simple statement of facts—what we are and what we see around us.

2. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow it in your own words : (20)

To avoid the various foolish opinions to which mankind is prone, no superhuman brain is required. A few simple rules will keep you not from all error, but from silly error.

If the matter is one that can be settled by observation, make the observation yourself.

Aristotle could have avoided the mistake of thinking that women have fewer teeth than men, by the simple device of asking Mrs Aristotle to keep her mouth open while he counted. Thinking that you know when in fact you do not is a bad mistake, to which we are all prone. I believe myself that hedgehogs eat black beetles, because I have been told that they do; but if I was writing a book on the habits of hedgehogs, I should not commit myself until I had seen one enjoying their diet. Aristotle, however, was less cautious. Ancient and medieval writers knew all about unicorns and salamanders; not one of them thought it necessary to avoid dogmatic statements about them because he had never seen one of them.

Many matters, however, are less easily brought to the test of experience. If, like most of mankind, you have strong convictions on many such matters, there are ways in which you can learn of your own bias. If an opinion contrary to your own makes you angry, that

is a sign that you are subconsciously aware of having no good reason for thinking as you do. If someone says that two and two are five, or that Iceland is on the equator, you feel pity rather than anger, unless you know so little of arithmetic or geography that his opinion shakes your own contrary conviction. The most savage controversies are those about the kind of opinion as to which there is no good evidence either way. Persecution is used in theology, not in arithmetic, because in arithmetic there is knowledge, but in theology there is only opinion. So whenever you find yourself getting angry about a difference of opinion, be on the alert; you will probably find, on examination, that your belief is going beyond what the evidence warrants.

A good way of ridding yourself of certain kinds of dogmatism is to become aware of opinions held in social circles different from your own. When I was young, I lived much

outside my own country—in France, Germany, Italy, and the United States. I found this very profitable in reducing the intensity of my insular prejudices. If you cannot travel, talk to people with whom you disagree and read a newspaper belonging to a party that is not yours. If the people and the newspaper seem mad, stupid and wicked, remind yourself that you seem so to them. In this opinion both parties may be right, but they cannot both be wrong. This thought should generate a certain caution.

(Bertrand Russell, Unpopular Essays)

Questions :

- (a) What is the bad mistake to which we are all prone ?
- (b) Mention some matters that cannot be brought to the test of experience.
- (c) Why persecution is used in theology, not in arithmetic ?
- (d) How can one reduce one's intensity of insular prejudices ?

3. Write an essay in about 300 words on any one of the following : 30
- (a) Cricket as an instrument of national unity and a channel for diplomacy.
 - (b) The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.
 - (c) Reading makes a full man; speaking, a ready man; writing, an exact man.
 - (d) What can I do against corruption ?
4. Fill in the blanks with suitable forms of the words chosen from the list given below : 5
(torrent, groom, global, relation, eloquence)
- (a) One of Nehru's most.....speeches was made after Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated.
 - (b) Richard is being.....to take over the company after his father retires.
 - (c) Traffic was disrupted by.....rains.
 - (d)is a blessing in disguise.
 - (e) The concept of morality is.....

5. Rewrite the following sentences as directed : (5)

- (a) Do not be a borrower. Do not be a lender. (Make a compound sentence)
- (b) Industrious people are always successful. (Convert into a complex sentence)
- (c) Have you completed your assignment ? (Change the voice)
- (d) You need to come earlier. (Add a suitable question tag)
- (e) He said to me, "Come here". (Change the mode of narration)

6. Suggest one word substitute for the following : (5)

- (a) The study of beauty and its appreciation.
- (b) A system of extreme right-wing dictatorship.
- (c) Deliberate extermination of a race of people.
- (d) The doctrine that God is in everything.
- (e) The policy of non-interference, esp. in politics or economics.

9

7. Use the following idioms in your own sentences bringing out the meaning : (5)
- (a) by hook or crook
 - (b) once in a blue moon
 - (c) be your bread and butter
 - (d) catch someone red handed
 - (e) tighten your belt.
8. Correct the following sentences : (10)
- (a) I shall spare no pain to make it a grand success.
 - (b) There is no space in the hall.
 - (c) I saw the picture with my family members.
 - (d) I could not avail your help.
 - (e) I have reconciled to my fate.
 - (f) None of them are known to me.
 - (g) She is ill since last night.
 - (h) He has not sold his car till yesterday.
 - (i) He bade me to go.
 - (j) Distribute these pamphlets to the students.