

# Discuss Pygmalion as a problem play.

## Introduction:-

A problem play is basically a drama of idea in which a problem is analysed. In all its different issues. In this very play all the characters, situations and circumstances are so planned as to provide a scope for discussion of the problems from several points of view. It is a historical fact that the tradition of writing plays discussing several social, economic, political and domestic problems was first begun by a Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen. His play entitled Doll's House published in 1879 consisted of his revolutionary ideas about a domestic problem and aroused a great sensation in the literary occidental circles. Although several critics opposed a drama of ideas, yet Shaw strongly supported Ibsen and started writing plays to display that the plays discuss problems could succeed on the stage.

The Problem play was fundamentally different from the traditional dramas of William Shakespeare, his contemporaries and successors. The emphasis was laid on the creation of living characters and the plots were based on the fundamental human emotions like anger, pride, love, Jealousy, greed e.t.c. In problem play conflicts are aroused

by Clash involved by violent, physical actions or excessive emotional disturbances. In the modern drama of ideas characters are introduced to represent different points of views regarding the particular problem. The Hero of it is generally the mouthpiece of the dramatist himself. The subject of each it is some latest problem and the conflict of it is purely mental. The readers happen to see a clash of conflicting ideas and believes and of opposing standards of value show held revolutionary views on the problems of love, marriage, sex, prostitution, Capitalism, religion, evolution and war. He used the stage as a platform from which to deliver his sermons.

Problems in Pygmalion:-

We find two types of major problems in pygmalion. The problems of Education and the problem of English pronounciations. According to A.C. Ward, the problem of Education in the world Education widens the horizon of a student and gives him intellectual, moral and spiritual enlightenment. He is taken to a higher standard of thinking and feelings and then the teacher abandons him free to cover the journey of life himself. He feels puzzled and lost and his old ways of life and remain happy and peacefully. He develops desires and ambitions which can't be fulfilled the result is frustration and discontentment.

It is seen in pygmalion that this is just what happens to Eliza Doolittle. Prof. Henry Higgins teaches her how to speak English correctly and fluently and Colonel Pickering guides her to move and behave in a refined way. The result is that her mind develops and her taste becomes unique. After her course of phonetics for six months is over, the teacher tells her that now she is free to adopt her path of life herself. She feels bewildered and unhappy. She can't go back to her old way of life and she isn't accepted in the higher society. For which her teachers have trained her. She asks Higgins, "What have you made me fit for? you never thought of the trouble. It would make for me to this Higgins replies, "would the world ever have been made if its maker had been afraid of making trouble. This problem is particular faced by teachers who teach student from lower strata of society.

The second problem that arises in pygmalion is that of the sounds of the English language. It's true that Shakespeare had great love and respect for English. The mother tongue of Shakespeare and Milton. He was extremely disgusted with the harsh manner in which many English men spoke the language. The uneducated people of England mispronounce all the

English words even Eliza speaks the cockney dialect. Many people mispronounce English words because of the defective English alphabets in which the letters don't stand for specific sound. The letter produces different sounds in different words and the English spelling are also very tedious and confusing. It's result is that only men and women belonging to the higher classes and educated in good schools and universities are able to speak and write correct English. If a person speaks a word as it is written he often commits a mistake for instance. If a person tries to speak, 'but' and 'put' in the same he would commit a blunder.

It is a general conception of the English that if a person speaks English with the correct accent and standard pronunciation he is considered high class. Thus Shaw found and observed that a person is supposed to belong to the higher classes not because of any merit or worth only because of his accent and pronunciation. Eliza is considered low class because she is adept in speaking cockney dialect when she has been trained to speak phonetically, this low class girl is regarded as a duchess. If the problem of language is solve, the basic differences between different classes will vanish away.

Conclusion :-

Thus the two problems presented in pygmalion are well knit. Shaw's dialogue is witty and humorous, epigrammatic and paradoxical.