

SUBJECT : ENGLISH

B.A.(HONS.) PART-II, PAPER-III

TOPIC- TWELFTH NIGHT

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EXPLANATIONS

Explain with reference to the context the lines given below:

Q. 4. “Too old, by heaven. Let still the woman take.

An elder than herself, so wears she to him,

So sways she level in her husband’s heart:

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,

Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,

More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn.

Than women’s are.”

Ans. These lines are spoken by Duke Orsino to Viola disguised as male in Act II Scene IV of the play , “Twelfth Night” written by Shakespeare.

 The Duke suggests Viola that a woman must marry a man older than herself, only then she can adapt herself to his life. Once she does so she can rule over his heart forever. He further says that no matter how much men may praise their consistency in love, their fancies are such that they make them more changeable than women. He contends that men are full of whimsical longings and fancies. It is due to this that their consistency in love gets worn out faster than that of woman.

 In these lines some critics see elements of Shakespeare’s personal life. Shakespeare’s wife, Anne Hathaway was eight years senior to him.

 Shakespeare, however we can say that, suggests here that a woman withers more rapidly than a man and is thus soon mentally equal in age to an older husband, and also that, the

younger wife has a greater chance of retaining her husband's love.
