CHAPTER – V
THE COMIC CHARACTERS IN THE
DRAMA OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Laughter lightens the burden of our life. Those who are great artists accept life as a mingle of laughter and tears and view it with equal eagerness and curiosity. Rabindranath Tagore is such an artist who has delved deep into life and imbibed its beauty. At the same time he has swum in the current of mirth and merriment of life. This is nothing but a means for enjoying leisure and also a part of the poet’s pleasure game.

Tagore’s mind was like a fountain where from came out ceaselessly the flow of humour. The dramatist of pre-Tagore era have created humorous situation in their dramas by showing the physical deformities of the character and their rustic taste. Tagore’s use of wit and humour in his writing never evoked excessive emotions in excitement in the mind of the readers. In this content Ajit Kumar Ghosh has said:

“রবীন্দ্রনাথের বর্ণনায় অঙ্ক-প্রত্যেকের বিকৃতি, কোন গ্রাম ও হৃদপর্যালোচিত প্রসঙ্গে অবতারণা অথবা কোনো অতিশয় ও মাত্রাতিরিক্ত আক্রমণ-উদ্দেশীয় সংস্করণ হইত না। তাহা সুক্ষ্ম, শালির্ত, মার্জিত ও বৈষ্ণবমত প্রতিত্যেক। তাহা Wit-এর আলোকে সমুদ্রস্রোত এবং Humour-এর গোলযোগ হইত।”

In an essay on Koutukhasya in Panchabhut Tagore has remarked about humour:

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We get ample evidence of the poet’s sense of humour from his witly remarks. His literature display his profound philosophical thought and also an undercurrent of light humour is noticeable in his parodies. Those who want to enjoy fun merely with the help of his eyes cannot feel Tagore’s humorous writings. Only enlightened sensitive men are capable of enjoying his humour. Wit plays a major role in Tagore’s farcical writings. That is why in his works humour is found mere in witty dialogue rather than in absurdity of incidents. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has rightly remarked about his farcical writings:

It must be admitted that English literature has a profound impact on this tradition of Bengali farcical literature which delights the enlightened Bengalee people. Educated class of people of recent times have not accepted the tradition of humorous writing that existed during the age of Iswar Gupta. There was genuine want of refined
humour in those writings. Those writings highlighted the cheap buffoonery in social and personal life. Sometimes use of bad language by the character is considered as the origin of humour. Naturally we cannot call it pure humour.

Iswar Gupta tried to refine this tradition of humour but he failed to come out of it entirely. He thought derision as the only vehicle of humour. But pure humour cannot be found in it. It is at first in Bankim Chandra we find pure humour. Rabindranath has mentioned that in his *Adhunik Sahitya*⁴. He has remarked:

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“তিনিই প্রথম দুর্গেন্দ্রের দ্বারা প্রমাণ করাইয়া দেন যে এই হাস্যকৌতুকের সংস্পর্শে কেন বিষয়ের গভীরতায় চৌরঙ্গ হস্তার হয় না, কেননা তাহার দৌটন্দ্র ও রমনীয়তার বৃদ্ধি হয়, তাহার সর্বাঙ্গের সার্বিক ও পতি দেন সুস্পষ্ট রূপে লীলামান হইয়া ওঠে। যে বর্তমান বঙ্গসাহিত্যের গভীরতা হইতে অনুলভ উৎস উন্মুক্ত করিয়াছেন সেই বর্তমান আনন্দের উদয় শিখর হইতে নব জাগ্রত বঙ্গসাহিত্যের উপর হাস্যের আলোক বিক্ষিন করিয়া দিয়াছেন।”⁵
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Later Dvijendralal has shown artistic ability in the world of humour. Though, his humour was filled with deep thought. It never encouraged any doctrine or political party. He was progressive and a man of liberal thoughts. As a result, he could easily daub everybody’s body with banter.⁶ Another characteristic features of humour is found in his literature. He was able to pay due respect to humour because of his direct contact of English literature. Later Rabindranath made humour more refined in taste.

In Tagore’s literature, there is little room for satire. Any social superstition or any social event agitated his mind. In his literature of
youth there is some evidence of intolerance or arrogance. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has said:

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“আমি ব্রাহ্ম-সমাজের সম্পাদকপনে অবিচিত হইয়া তিনি ধর্মকলাহের ফুলতার মধ্যে সোৎসাহে মতিয়া গিয়াছিলেন। বীর ধর্মমতের প্রতি অনুরাপের প্রবলে তিনি গায়ীব ধারণ করিয়া মহার্ষী জীব সদৃশ বক্তমণ্ডের বিরূদ্ধে যুদ্ধে প্রবৃত্ত হইয়াছিলেন। নবাহিনীসমাজের সাহিত্য এই সময়ে আঘাত যে মনীষীর হয় তখন তাইতে সাহিত্যের শুভ পীঠস্থান শুধু কেবল কল্পিত হইয়া পড়িয়াছিল। নামু ও চামু ধর্মপ্রচার, হিংস টিং ছট ইত্যাদি কবিতায় এবং আর্থিক ও আনার্থ, একান্ততী, গুরুদাসকৃত প্রভূতি নাট্যকায় বিরুদ্ধ ধর্ম ও সমাজবাদীদের প্রতি কবির রুদ্ধ আঘাত হায়াছিলেন।”
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There was much pungency or bitterness in his parodies which there written during the prime of his youth. He lashed vehemently at the neo. Hinduism of that time quotation in poem Patra:

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“ফুলে ফুলে আর্থগুলো ঘাসের মত গজিয়ে গয়ে, ঠুললো সব জিনের ডা কটার মত গায়ে ফোটে।
তারা বলেন আমি করিব পাগার কড়ি হেনন রুঙিও।
অবতরে ভেঙে গেল যা রাজার গলি গুঁজি।
পাড়ার এখন কত আছে কত হো তার,
বশীদেশ মেলাই এন বরা অবতার।
দাতের কেনে হিদু শাব্দ তুলবে তারা পাকের থেকে।
দাত কপাটি লাগে, তাদের দাতিদিনীর ভাসি দেখে।
আগাগোড়াই মিখো কথা মিথোবদ্দীর কোলাহল,
জিব নাচিয়ে বেড়ায় যাত জিহাওয়ালা সভার দল।”
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He ridiculed the propensity of luxury and comfort in the lives of Bengalee and their aversion for struggle and composed Duranta.
Asha, Desher Unnati, Bangabir Poem in Manasee. In this regard he wrote in Duranta Asha:

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“অলস দেহ ক্ষীণ গতি,
গুহর প্রতি টান
তৈল চালা লিপ্ত অনু
নিদর্শন ভষা,
মাখায় ছোট বহরে বড়ে
বাঙালী সম্ভান।”
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Rabindranath has composed a different class of humorous poems where there is a mixture of wit and conscious sense of life. In Khapchada, Prahasine we find this class of poems. The husband who is infatuated with the beauty of his wife does not find any fault in her cooking. Giving a description of that the poet wrote:

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“খ্যাতি আছে সুদীর্ঘ বলে তার,
ভুট্টি ঘটে নুন দিতে বোলে তার,
চিনি করে পড়ে বটে পায়স,
স্বামী তবু চোখ রুজে খায় সে
যা পায় তাহাই মুখে তোলে তার,
দেখা দিতে মুখ নাহি খোলে তার।”
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During the initial stage of his youth though Rabindranath was attracted by wit and humour later he came out of this path. There is ample evidence of wit and humour is his stories novels, essays and other genre of literature. Stories of Galpaguchha offer plenty of wit and humour. We can cite the example of Icchapuran story. Tagore gave a humorous description of ludicrous situation which arose when
son tried to become father and father son in the story. Apart from that story there is lot of humour in *Rajtika, Darpaharan, Thakurda*.

Even Tagore’s essays become anite lively and interesting. Satire and sarcasm dominated the idea of essays of *Byangakoutuk*. In *Jibansmriti* there is enough ingredient of humour. In this connection discussion about humour *Panchabhut* can be mentioned.

*Chirakumar Sabha* is undoubtedly the finest satire of Tagore. Refined wit and bright humour have made it an excellent satirical piece. Ajit Kumar Ghosh, the famous critic, has made valuable comment about this play:

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“চৌরাসারক্ত সৃষ্টিধারার নায় বুদ্ধিমুখী রুচির হাসারের চিত্তভিন্ন লীলা সমন্ত গ্রহণান্তে অশেষ গীতিপদ করিয়া তুলিয়াছে। বিদ্যাজন্ম বাক্যাখ্যায়ির চমৎকারী প্রমাণে, উপমা রূপকের ঘটায়, যমক-অনুপাস-শ্রেষ্ঠ ছায়াঃ নাটকীয় কথাগুলি বিদুঃশ্বভাষায় বলম্বন করিতেছে।”
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In this connection it can be pointed out that humour can be created by creating ridiculous characters and showing their oddities through their physical gestures and dialogue. Secondly humour can be created through conversation among witty and intelligent characters.

This matter can be discussed. Tagore has created many funny characters in his novels and plays. His natural description has made those characters very much lively. We can mention Kailash, a character in the novel *Gora*. This character has an insignificant presence in this epic novel. But Tagore’s wonderful creative power has turned this insignificant character into a likely one. He draws out attention with his traits of characters even in the crowd of important characters in the novel. In the small canvas he appears to be very much bright to us:
He is short with a stout figure. He came to marry Sucharita in order to assess the house hold property of her and gravely said:

"এ বাড়িটা বুঝি তারই........ পাকা বাড়ি দেখছি !"  

And he decided the cost of the house in his mind. When Harimohini was pouring water in the corner of the room, he said from his imaginary sense of possession:

"না না, সে হচ্ছে না । ছাত যে একবারে জগম হয়ে যাবে । তা বলছি, বড় ঠাকরেন, এ ঘরে তোমার জল ঢালালি চলবে না !" 

Then we come to know about his physical appearance as well as his mind. The entire character appears to be very humorous to the readers and we feel very much delighted. We cannot but laugh when we think about the breakup of marriage of this 35 years old young man willing to marry. But there is a touch of pity in this humour.

Troilokya Chakraborty in *Noukadubi* novel is such a type of character. He has said about himself:

"'আমার নাম মৈল্যাকা চক্রবর্তী | পশ্চিমে সকলেই আমাকে ‘খুড়ো’ বলিয়া জানে । ............... ভারতবর্ষে ভরত ছিলেন চক্রবর্তী রাজা, আমি তেমনি সমস্ত পশ্চিম-মুঘলের চক্রবর্তী-খুড়ো '.'" 

He has a skill in cooking *ambal* and he is very much conscious of this quality. He has said:

"'আমি অন্য যা রাখি তা আজকের মত খাইয়া বাকিটা তুলিয়া রাখিতে হইবে, মজিতে ঠিক চার দিন লাপিয়ে । তার পরে একটুখানি মুখে তুলিয়া দিলেই রুখিতে পারিবে, চক্রবর্তী-খুড়ো দেমাকও করে বটে,'
He cannot but feel astonished to see his wit. Chakraborty is a humorous person but not himself an ingredient of humour. Such characters have become comic characters as they possess comic elements. Kailash himself has supplied the ingredient of humour. We himself is a source of comic laughter. On the other hand, Chakraborty has created humour by his witty remarks. The oddity in his character is not the source of laughter. If we compare the character of Akshay or Chandrababu in *Chirakumar Sabha* the thing will be more distinct.

Chandrababu is a self-forgetful person. It is very difficult for such a person to establish in the world. They are indifferent to everything mundane. They like to do whenever they wish to do so. They are even unable to control their life. This kind of dependence on others or whimsical behavior is befitting for a child but such behavior on the part of an aged person seems to be unreasonable and odd. These type of characters draw our attention when everybody around us behave in rational way. Those who are intelligent persons treat such behavior with utter contempt and annoyance. But generous persons feel that there is an apparent simplicity and helplessness behind such odd behavior. Thus a lot of humour is created in this way.

We get a faint idea of humour in the character of Kailash while in the character of Chandrababu humour is fully revealed. Tears follow after such humour. In *Panchabhut* essay, Tagore has remarked:
So, according to Tagore, pure humour is found in tears which come from laughter and pity.

The plot of *Chirakumar Sabha* is arranged in such a way that it can evoke laughter. This satire describes those persons who practised celibacy and tried to break up that celibacy. Let us have a discussion about some character of the play.

Chandrababu is a bachelor and the president of bachelor’s association. He dreams of high ideals leading an idle life at home. He thinks that trade and commerce can eradicate poverty from India. To spread this message among the members of bachelor’s association is the essence of his philosophy. He is obsessed with his ideals and has no doubts about its implementation. But he cannot differentiate between theory and practice. He is forgetful by nature. He cannot trace out the button in the neck of his shirt. As a result, he is late in attending the meeting. When Shrisha asks him about the reason of his delay he says:

"চন্দ্রবাবু ! । .......... দেরী হবার কারণ, আমার গলার বোতামটা ।
কিছুতেই ছুঁড়ে পাচ্ছি নে ।

শ্রীশ । গলায় তো একটা বোতাম লাগানো রয়েছে দেখতে পাচ্ছি, আরো কি প্রয়োজন আছে । যদি-বা থাকে, আর ছিল পাচ্ছে কোথা ।

চন্দ্রবাবু । (গলায় হাত দিয়া) তাই তো ।.........."
While discussing he completely forgot that the button is in the neck of his shirt. He wants to know it from Nirmala. Dialogue follows:

"চন্দু। (হাতাৎ) কেনী, আমার সেই গলার বোতামটা।
নির্মল। (সলজ্জ হাসিয়া মৃদু কথা) গলার তেই আছে।
চন্দু। (গলায় হাত দিয়া) হা হা, আছে বটে।" 28

What none can we expect from a person who is so forgetful and keeps quiet in bashful smile after tracing out the button in the neck of his shirt. So we cannot but laugh when we find this character as simple as child but inspired with lofty ideals. This character is a wonderful creation of humorous literature. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has remarked about the character:

"চিরকুমার সভার সভাপতি চন্দ্রবাবুর চরিত্র করুণাসিদ্ধ হাসিয়াসের দৃষ্টান্ত। আহান্তোলা, আদর্শপ্রাপ্ত ও বাংলায়িত চরিত্রটির কথায় ও আচরণে আমরা হাসি বটে, কিন্তু তাহার একক ও অসহজ রূপটি দেখিয়া তাহার প্রতি সহানুভূতিশীল ও অনুরক্ত না হইয়া আমরা পারি না।" 29

Akshay is another funny comic character. He himself is a humorist. Like Chandr babu he does not possess any absurdity in his character. He cuts jokes with others and draws out that flow of humour outside. This is known as repartee in English language. Akshay is equally adept at repartee. He has the ability in composing songs or poems orally. As a result, he can outwit others by taking advantage of others weakness. He has a sharp eye and thus can easily notice the moral weakness of Mrityunjoy or Darukeshwar. He has raised storm of laughter by lashing at the weakness of those half-witted persons. Darukeshwar and Mrityunjoy are both stupid persons. Darukeshwar overestimates himself as a clever man. So he got
entangled in the mesh of Akshay’s humorous game. At the
provocation of Akshay when he wanted to prove his wit and his
modern outlook desperately we cannot but feel amused. When he
starts singing provoked by Akshay song :

“অভয় দাও তো বলি আমার wish কী -
একটি ছটাক সোডার জলে পাকি তিন পোয়া হইকি।”

And Song :

“কত কাল রবে বলো ভারত রে
শুধু ডাল ভাত জল পথ্য করে।
দেশে আরজলের হল বোর অ্যাটন,
ধরো হইকি সোডা আর মূর্তি-মাটন।
যাও ঠাকুর চৈতন চুটকি নিয়া,
এসো দাড়ি নাড়ি কলমদি মিঞা।”

Then though Akshay sits melancholy like and innocent man, we
cannot but laugh.

One thing ought to be noted here. The manner in which Akshay
has harassed these two characters like dolls of the game, humorous
situation is created there. But these two characters do not occupy lofty
position in the realm of humour. We cannot but laugh when we watch
the insane behaviour of these two marriage crazy characters. If
Tagore tries to create humour by exposing their apparent hypocrisy
behind the mask of their innocence, then satire would be the
predominating matter. When these two characters being provoked by
Akshay expose their hollowness and that is being highlighted in the
play. As a result, pure humour is created. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has remarked about Akshay:

"রবিবীনন্দনঃ বাঙালী সংসারের আশ্রয় - সমস্তের মধ্যে যেখানে হাস্য -
পরিহাসের সুমধুর অবকাশ আছে সেখানে মনের আনন্দে যথেষ্ট বিহার
করিয়াছেন। অক্ষয়ের গান ও রসিকের সংস্কৃত শ্লোক পুষ্পিত মধুরনের
সুমধুর কুঠুরির মতই হাস্য পরিহাসের রমণীয় জগৎকে আরও রমণীয়
করিয়া তুলিয়াছে।"\(^{32}\)

Akshay's conversation shows his artistic dexterity. The verbal duel among Akshay and Shailabala, Nirabala, Nipabala has created a lot of humorous situations. This humour can be defined as wit and in wit intellect is manifested. It is purely cerebral. Though this displays dazzle of intellect, it has an appeal to the heart and it touches our heart.

We find a similarity between Akshay Chowdhury and Akshay. In his Jeevansmriti the poet has mentioned that. He has written in Jeevansmriti:

"সেদে সেদে তাল রাজাইবার সমস্তে অস্ত্রে বহিরে তাহার কোন কোনকার
বাং ছিল না। টেবিল হেডফ, হাই হেডফ, বৈধ অবৈধ যাহা কিছু হাতের
কাছে পাইয়া তাহাকে অজ্ঞা টপাটপ শব্দ ধনীত করিয়া আসে গরম
করিয়া তুলিয়ান। .............. গান এবং খড়কায় লিখিতেও ইহার
ফ্রেটতা অসামান্য ছিল। অথচ নিজের এই সকল রচনা সমস্তে
লেখকের মমতা ছিল না।
কত ছিল কত রাজার কত পেন্সিলে লেখা ছড়াছড়ি যাইত সেদিকে
খোলাও করিয়ান। রচনা সমস্তে তাহার ক্ষমতায় যেন পার্শ্বে নেমনি উদযাদীন ছিল।"\(^{33}\)
Akshay in *Chirakumar Sabha* had the ability to compose songs orally but he never completed it, but Akshay’s character is tinged with the poet’s imagination.  

Rasik is nothing but a prototype of Akshay. This character has been created for dramatic purpose. Purna, Shrisha and Bipin – all of them are ideal young men of *chirakumar sabha*, three young girls created a sensation in the mind of these three young men. He encouraged these three young men to break celibacy. Rashik is not a ridiculous character but laughter provoking. He has raised a wave of laughter by his witty dialogue. We can understand that clearly when we follow their short dialogue. Then dialogue becomes highly comic when we see Neerabala disguising as a male one tries to twist moustache of Shaila. Dialogue follows:

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“শীতলালা । আঁ, কি করছিস, আমার গোফ পড়ে যাবে ।

রসিক । কাজ কী, এ দিকে আয়-না ভাই, এ গোফ কিছুতেই পড়বে না ।

নীরাবালা । আবার ! ফের ! সেজেন্দির হাতে সংস্ত দিলো কি করতে। আমার রসিকদাসা, তোমার মাখার দুটি-একটি চুল কাঁচা আছে, কিন্তু গোফ অগাগাড়া পাকালে কি করে ।

রসিক । কারও কারও মাখা পাকালে আগে মুক্তা পাকে ।”
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and his dialogue with Akshay is quite interesting. When Akshay introduces him (Rashik) to chandrababu that becomes quite hilarious. Dialogue follows:

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“অভ্যয় । ।।।।। এই নবীন সভাটিকে আপনাদের হাতে সমর্পণ করে
দিয়েই আমি চলে যাচ্ছি ।
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The way Rashik explains his name becomes very much interesting.

Ajit Kumar Ghosh has remarked about Akshay and Rashik:

"'প্রহসনের কৌতুকসব উৎসাহিত হইয়াছে প্রধানত অক্ষয় ও রাশিকের দ্বারা। ইহারা সুখী, সংবাজিক, বৃদ্ধিশীল চরিত্র; অন্যান্য চরিত্রের অষ্টতম ও অপরতম নয়। ইহারা হাসপাতাল উদ্ধ্রেক করিয়াছে। বাঙালী সমাজে ঠকুড়ানাত্মক, এবং শালা-ভূগোলিত-সম্পর্ক বিশেষ সুবিধাজনক এবং রসাল; রাশিক ও অক্ষয় এই সম্পর্কের সুখোপেক্ষা অনেক ঠাকুর-তামাশা করিয়া পারিয়াছে।"纽带

There are some characters in the play who are complementary to each other. If one is white then another is black. The playwright has created humour in the play by delineating these two types of characters side by side. There are three pair of such characters in the play. They are Mrityunjoy and Darukeshwar, Shrish and Bipin, Nipabala and Nirabala. In the first scene of the first act, Mrityunjoy and Darukeshwar enter. The playwright has given description of their nature, mentality, dress and physical appearance in such a lively manner that it evokes laughter:
This disparity in the description of their physical appearance is quite evident in their characters. But humour that is created by the description of these two characters is a below standard.

Finally it can be said that the real aim of bachelor’s association is celibacy. But Tagore has never shown any respect for renunciation and monasticism. According to Prabhat Kumar Mukhopadhyay, the biographer of Tagore, the poet has composed this satirical play by ridiculing the monastic group of people of Swami Vivekananda. He has remarked:

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This co-existence of wit and humour and dramatic beauty has provided a strong founding to the humour of the play. The characters in the play offer a permanent picture of individual traits. This quality has imparted superior sense of humour to the play.
Baikunther Khata is a short satire consisting of only three scenes. Though small in dimension it is rich in satire. The playwright has created humour through delineation of its characters. Baikuntha like Chandrababu is also a forgetful person who is completely indifferent to material happiness and comfort. He cannot understand satire and ridicule. He has to suffer a huge loss in business by being trapped by others. But he lacks the ability to understand the trickery. He prefers to collect old books. Taking advantage of this the clever Kedar sells a book on Chinese music which is actually a ledger book of Chinese cobbler. A person named Bipinbabu tries to evict him and he cases everything for the conspiracy of other, yet he remains indifferent and never lodges any complaint against anybody. He has a flair for writing but he is shy to express that. He is reluctant to express if even to his servant Ishan. Yet he is very much eager to read his composition and make others listen to that. Kedar and Tinkari are very much scared of his big khata of composition. His oddity creates a lot of laughter in the play. Baikunthababu has written a book based on the history of sangeet and swaralipi, which title is vast in size. That is : “নামটা ফ্রাশ ও পঞ্চাতা প্রাচীন ও প্রটিলিত সংগীতশাস্ত্রের আলিম
উৎপত্তি ও ইতিহাস এবং নূতন সার্বভৌমিক সরলার্থের সংক্ষিপ্ত ও সরল আদর্শ
প্রক্রিয়া।” The vastness of the name of the book cannot but evoke laughter. Kedarbabu wants to know :

“কেদার এদিনের নামটা তোমাকে কিছু বলে হয়ে পড়েছে।”

Then Baikunthababu’s clear reply is :

“বৈকুণ্ঠ এই বলে হোক, কিছু বিষয়টা বেশ পরিক্রম বোঝা যাচ্ছে।”

So Baikunthababu has no objection in giving a big title to the book if it can clearly explain the subject matter. This logic of Baikunthababu,
arouses light humour in the mind of the readers. These oddities in his character cause humour in the play but this character draws our sympathy and love. His absurdities have caused laughter for all but when we see him uttering:

````বৈকুণ্ঠ। আমার লেখা। সে আবার একটা জিনিস। সবই হাসে, আমি কি তা জানি নে ইশ্চেনা। ও সব রহেল পড়ে। সংসারে লেখায় কারও কোনো দরকার নেই।````

Then we cannot but feel pity for him. Then before leaving the house, he utters:

````বৈকুণ্ঠ। ভেবেছিলুম, খাতাপত্তগুলো আর সঙ্গে নেব না - স্তনে নীরু মা কাদে লাগল, ভাবলে বুড়ো বাসের খেলাগুলো বাবা কোথায় ফেলে যাছে।````

Then our mind is filled with compassion. An old man like him feels hurt by the complexities of family life. He can endure everything but when his brother ignores him, he feels terribly hurt. So when Ishan is trying to prove that Abinash is the saviour of the distressed, then a painful scream comes out from the core of his heart. He says:

````বৈকুণ্ঠ। ............লক্ষ্মীছাড়া পাঁজি, তোর কথা শুনলে বুক ফেটে যায়।````

Here humour finds its fullest expression. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has remarked about Baikuntha:

````উদার, আত্ম-ভোলা বৈকুণ্ঠ আমাদের হাস্যরস উদ্দেশ করিলেও হাস্যরসের তরঙ্গাতে যেন আমাদের চিত্ত-অট্ট ব্যহ এবং সহানুভূতির পলিমাট্ট জমা হইতে থাকে। সেই বৈকুণ্ঠকে শেষের দিকে সকলের অবজ্ঞ, উপেক্ষিত।````
Tinkari is another important character in this play. He played a very significant role to expose the hypocrisy of Kedar. Tinkari is the constant companion of Kedar. Yet he has lashed at the shameless hypocrisy of Kedar through his dialogue. He has remarked about their unique friendship:

“তিনকড়ি। উনি যদি হন পোরু আমি হই ওর লেজ। যখন চরে
খান আমি পিঠের মাছি তাড়াই, আবার যখন চায়ের হাতে লাঞ্জনা খেতে
হয় তখন মলাটা আমার উপর দিয়েই যায়।”

Though said in a humorous vein, there is a touch of pity. Here we also find a touch of self-criticism. Here in lies the salient features of Tinkari’s character. Like Kedar he is not a selfish and hypocrite. Though he is a partner of Kedar’s all activities. He has many bright sides in his character. On hearing from motherless Niru, he says:

“তিনকড়ি। মা নেই! ঠিক আমারই মতে।”

Then he remarks about himself:

“তিনকড়ি। ভাই, তিনকড়ির ভাগ্যে বিশ্ব চরে আছে বরাবর দেখে
আসছি। জুনাবামাতে দুঃখ খাবার জন্যে কলা ধরলাম, তার ঠিক পুরেই
মা দেল মরে।”

we get an idea of pitiful humour from all his utterances. At last Tinkari has remarked about Kedar:

“তিনকড়ি। ........... বেকুঠকে যদি তুই কার দিস তাহলে অমর
হবে।”

According to Ajit Kumar Ghosh:
In the character Abinash we get plenty of humorous elements. The dramatist has ridiculed Abinash’s change of mind and his obsession for Manorama. When we find him being too much crazy after coming to know about his marriage we cannot but laugh. His obsession for *karatal* and *padatal* and whether the word *pranayupahar* does adjust to Goddess, we cannot but laugh. Even Kedar gets impatient to see his crazy nature. Kedar in utter grief says to Ishan:

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“কেদার । ............. তোমার বড়োবাবু খুব বিস্মৃতি করে লিখে থাকেন
আর তোমার ছোটবাবু কি বলে, অত্যন্ত সংকেতপেই লেখেন, কিন্তু
আমার কপালকম্রে দুইই সমান হয়ে ওঠে। .............”
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The character of Ishan is a wonderful creation of the playwright. He is serious by nature. He defies his mastery. But he cannot bear slightest harm caused to his master. He treats his master as his relative. Though serious by nature he has a childlike simplicity behind this seriousness. Though he himself does that laugh, his dialogue creates light humour.
In *Sheshraksha*\(^{54}\) Tagore has not emphasized on the creation of characters but stressed on events of the play. The entire satire is based upon blunder. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has said:

“…………… চরিত্রজীবনে শেষরক্ষায় উল্লেখযোগ্য না হইলেও নিপুণ অটনব্যুরী সরস সংস্থাপনে ইহা শ্রেষ্ঠ প্রহসন রূপে হীরক্ত হওয়া উচিত।”\(^{55}\)

Though Gadai and Indra are attracted to each other but by turns of events they know each other as Lalit Chatterjee and Kadambini. So Indu is busy in quest of Lalitbabu. On the other hand Gadai Chandra pays the amount of stocking and by placing that staking upon his bosom tries to cool his afflicted heart. Then both of them amend their mistakes by putting an end to their misunderstanding. This offers another picture of comedy of errors. Here twist of events has created humour in the play and Gadai himself has created a lot of humour. His folly in love with Kadambini and his subsequent actions are quite amusing. One can simply understand by studying this character how a man behaves in an eccentric fashion when he falls in love. The infatuated lover Gadai says:

“গদাই। আজ বোধ হয় একটা দুর্দশা করব। কবিতা লিখে ফেলব।
বুঝি পরিস্কার থাকলে কবিতার ব্যাকটারিয়া জন্মাতেই পারে না। চিন্তের অবস্থাটা খুব অস্থায়ী হওয়া চাহিএ। আজ আমার মসজের ভিতরে ঐ
কীটপালিকা কেবলই চোদ অক্ষর খুঁজে কিসান করে বেড়াচ্ছে।”\(^{56}\)

And finally we find Gadai’s desperate attempt. When Gadai says:

“কাদামিনী নেমনি আমায় প্রথম দেখিলে,
কেমন করে ভূত্য বলে তখনি চিনিলে।”\(^{57}\)
One can easily understand his mental disorder. Then hopeless Gadai wonders aimlessly being a victim of God’s conspiracy, he has called the maid-servant of Kadambini and has bought hot-fried *begun* too his mistress and pressing seven pair of stockings upon his bosom has composed poems:

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“আমার শুন্তা হালদার মতো, ওগো শুন্তা মোজা,
অনুপস্থিত কোন দুটি চরণ
সদাই করিতেছে পোজা।
বিনা পায়েই পাণের ভিতরে
চলে গিয়েছে সোজা।”
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Then its inner sense of humour penetrates in to our heart. Then he draws a similarity between *Moza* and *Roza*, has uttered by controlling himself. Dialogue follows:

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“গদাই। অর তা মিল দেখিছি ছে, এক আছে ‘মুসলমানের
রোজা’—মোজাকে বললে দোষ নেই যে ঈদের দিনে প্রতিপদের চাহ।
না না, ঋতে আমার লেখার করিকাল চোষটা চলে যাবে। তা ছাড়া
দিন খারাপ, হয়তো সামান্য মোজার জন্যে শান্তিবোধ হতেও পারে- ওটা
থাক।”
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when he makes a vain attempt to compose poems, we cannot but laugh. When he is caught red-handed by his father playing truant from college and wandering aimlessly in the streets of Bagbazaar carrying stocking, the conversation between Gadai and his father becomes quite hilarious.

There is ample humour in the plays of Tagore. In his plays during the first stage of his literary career though passion of the heart
gets upper hand his last plays preach theoretical ideas. But in both plays sense of humour has made the story both witty and interesting. *Raja O Rani*, *Visarjan* belong to tragic plays. Pity and deep humour form the basic philosophy of these plays. But humorous elements have brought some relief for spectators from the dramatic tension. Common people characters act as comic relief in the play through their dialogue and gestures. In *Raja O Rani, Visarjan* when common people appear, then the dramatic environment discards its serious tone and steps into the mundane world. All these characters of the drama are as simple as clay. They have neither education nor rationality; strength or courage. They silently bear all oppression. Tagore has given us some light moments by showing their errors, cowardice and oddities. We also feel pity for them and our mind becomes heavy. All these characters occupy a little space in the dramas. But they occupy a permanent place in our hearts. We can never forget characters like Kunja, Kinu in *Raja O Rani*, or Haru, Ganesh in *Visarjan*.

Ordinary characters in symbolic dramas arouse humour in our mind. Shonpangshu and Darvakgan in *Achalayatan*, *Uttarkut* in *Muktadhara*, citizens of Shivtarai and labours of Jakshapuri in *Raktakarabee* have imparted a humorous character to the play by their humorous elements. In these some characters are found to be comic ones. As for example the jealous Chandra of *Raktakarabee*, the self-seeking headman are a few of them who can be mentioned.

Tagore has drawn some characters with a clear motive of creating humour. In this content we can mention Devdutta in *Raja O Rani*. Devdutta is of the same age of the king. His main task is to entertain others. But Devdutta is not an ordinary *Bidushak*. He has a philanthropic soul behind this mask. In his apparently funny remarks
lie his sharp and witty attacks. Tagore has never accepted the bitter relation between the ruler and the ruled. He has vehemently ridiculed this. He has made Devdutta speak in *Raja O Rani*:

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This remark cannot be the simple utterance of an ordinary Bidushak.

Tagore has vehemently protested against all kind of narrowness in social life and hypocrisy. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has said:

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He has also protested against soulless education. He has made a sarcastic protest through the character of Panchak in *Achalaytan* and Adhyapak in *Raktakarabbe*.

The real aim of *Hasyakoutuk* is to evoke humour and satirical humour. All the writings of *Hasyakoutuk* are small sized humorous plays. The writer himself has said about this type of plays:

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There are fifteen dramas in number. Though there is element of satire but all these plays were written for creating pure fun.

*Chatrer Pariksha, Petey O Pithey, Roger Chikitsha* - all these plays were written for tender aged boys or girls. In *Chatrer Pariksha* the way the student Madhusudan has harassed his tutor is quite amusing. The student feels termented by the physical punishment of his tutor. He wants to take revenge of that. He puts his tutor into an embarrassing situation by giving incorrect answers in presence of his guardians. His answers are very much witty. For example:

"অভিভাবকে। আচ্ছা, উড়িদু কাকে বলে বলল দেখি।

মধুসূদন। যা মাটি ফুড়ে ওঠে।

অভিভাবক। একটা উদাহরণ দে

মধুসূদন। কেঁচো!"  

A teacher is an object of our admiration. We cannot accept the humiliation of a teacher. If anyone tries to harass him consciously and even if that becomes unjust we cannot but feel amused. The play becomes quite interesting when we see the embarrassment of the tutor after hearing the incorrect answers of his student.

In our society we sometimes think physical punishment is the only way to rectify a student. But we can never imagine that it may have dangerous consequences. In this play the student has deliberately given incorrect answer only to sack the tutor. The play is
actually a fierce satire on the cruel education system and its method of examination.

In *Petey O Pithey* play Tinkari swallows sweets by deceiving a little boy named Banamali. He is glutton and greedy by nature. But his end is quite laughter-provoking. He swallows bun one after another in the house of Banamali and his life is at stake. And even there is no room for taking medicines in his stomach. At the end of the play we cannot but laugh at the remarks of Tinkari. He says:

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‘তিনকড়ি। আজ আর-একটা শেখাব। কথাটা মনে রেখো - ‘পিঠে খেলে পেটে সয় না’।’
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There is no element of satire in the play but humour has the dominant role.

In *Abhyarthana* play Chaturbhuj babu has obtained his M.A degree from Calcutta and returned to his village. He thought he would get a rousing reception in his village. His prestige will be enhanced. But his expectation was not fulfilled. Nilratan, Zamindarbabu, Saatkhuro of the village and even his mother did not value his degree. Everybody is busy with his pet cat. But he wants to be appreciated by all as an educated person. When nobody gave him any importance and his vanity got shattered we cannot but laugh. In fact, you cannot win honour by force. It comes in due time. Chaturbhuj babu has made himself a laughing stock by displaying his vanity. Tagore has ridiculed his way of parading knowledge.

In *Chintasheel* play Narahari is immersed in thought. The dramatist has satirized his meaningless habit of thinking too much. Every social being has to think. But when to indulge in meaningless
thinking becomes a habit; then it creates laughter. As for example his mother has served his food but Narahari has no attention on it:

“মা। ........ ভাবনা তো তোর চিয়কাল থাকবে, ভাত যে শুকিয়া
। লম্বী আমার, একবার ওঠ।

নরহরি। (চমকিয়া) কী বললে মা লম্বী কী আশ্চর্য। এক কালে
লম্বী বলতে দেবী-বিশেষকে বেয়াড়। পরে লম্বীর গোণ অনুসারে
মুখীনা স্ত্রীলোককে লম্বী বলত, কালক্রমে দেখে পুরুষের প্রতিতিনিধি
শের পরোয়া হচ্ছ। একবার ভেবে দেখো মা, আত্ম আত্ম ভায়র
কেমন পরিতন হয়। ভাবলে আশ্চর্য হতে হবে।”

The way he talks with all the members of his family and makes others burdened with thoughts is really very funny.

In Rogir Bandhu, Ashram Peera, Sukh Bichar, Khyatir Birambana, Antesti Satkar there is ample humour. In Rogir Bandhu play humour has revolved round the character of Vaidyanath. In the play Vaidyanath is unnecessarily afraid of death phobia. As a result, tension is created and we feel amused. Rabindranath has ridiculed the stupidity of Vaidyanath.

In Khyatir Birambana Dukari babu is a pleader. He dislikes songs but a person named Kangali makes a propaganda in the newspaper that Dukori babu has donated five thousand rupees in ‘গণনীয়বিবাহিতা’ association. But Dukori has no knowledge of it. He thinks that this will enhance his fame. As a result, his trade will prosper. But the result was opposite, when people started coming from different places and tried to harass him for donation, we cannot but laugh. Ajit Kumar Ghosh has said about the play:
Finally it can be said that in Tagore’s play and farce humour has flown like a river in full tide through different comic characters. But in Tagore’s literature, there is little room for satire. Wit plays the important role. In the plays of pre-Tagore era, satire has the most important place. But in Tagore’s play we see a beautiful blending of wit and humour. As a result, his comic characters have become more lively and won our hearts.
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71. Ibid, p.166
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