AN INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATION AND AUGUSTAN LITERATURE (1660-1750)

SPECIAL ENGLISH

SECOND YEAR : SEMESTER – III.

Lesson Writers:

Dr. N. V.Subbaiah,
Modern Degree College,
Chilakaluripeta.

Dr. Inturi Kesava Rao
TRR Government College,
Kandukur.

Dr. K. Narasimha Rao,
Acharya Nagarjuna University.

Dr. G. Harold Candlin Cyril
Green Leaf College,
Hyderabad.

Lesson Writer & Editor

Prof. M.Suresh Kumar,
M.A., M.Ed., M.Phil., Ph.D., P.G.D.T.S.
Professor,
Dept. of English,
Acharya Nagarjuna University.

Director

Dr. Nagaraju Battu
MBA, MHRM, LLM, M.Sc. (Psy.), MA (Soc.), M.Ed., M.Phil. , Ph.D.
Centre for Distance Education,
Achaarya Nagarjuna University,
Nagarjuna Nagar 522 510.

Ph: 0863-2346208, 2346222
0863- 2346259 (Study Material)
Website www.anucde.info
E-mail: anucdedirector@gmail.com

BA Special English : 2nd Year –Third Semester

AN INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATION AND AUGUSTAN LITERATURE (1660-1750)

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FOREWORD

Since its establishment in 1976, Acharya Nagarjuna University has been forging ahead in the path of progress and dynamism, offering a variety of courses and research contributions. I am extremely happy that by gaining 'A' grade from the NAAC in the year 2016, Acharya Nagarjuna University is offering educational opportunities at the UG, PG levels apart from research degrees to students from over 443 affiliated colleges spread over the two districts of Guntur and Prakasam.

The University has also started the Centre for Distance Education in 2003-04 with the aim of taking higher education to the door step of all the sectors of the society. The centre will be a great help to those who cannot join in colleges, those who cannot afford the exorbitant fees as regular students, and even to housewives desirous of pursuing higher studies. Acharya Nagarjuna University has started offering B.A., and B.Com courses at the Degree level and M.A., M.Com., M.Sc., M.B.A., and L.L.M., courses at the PG level from the academic year 2003-2004 onwards.

To facilitate easier understanding by students studying through the distance mode, these self-instruction materials have been prepared by eminent and experienced teachers. The lessons have been drafted with great care and expertise in the stipulated time by these teachers. Constructive ideas and scholarly suggestions are welcome from students and teachers involved respectively. Such ideas will be incorporated for the greater efficacy of this distance mode of education. For clarification of doubts and feedback, weekly classes and contact classes will be arranged at the UG and PG levels respectively.

It is my aim that students getting higher education through the Centre for Distance Education should improve their qualification, have better employment opportunities and in turn be part of country's progress. It is my fond desire that in the years to come, the Centre for Distance Education will go from strength to strength in the form of new courses and by catering to larger number of people. My congratulations to all the Directors, Academic Coordinators, Editors and Lesson-writers of the Centre who have helped in these endeavours.

Prof. P. Raja Sekhar,
Vice-Chancellor,
Acharya Nagarjuna University.

311SEG21-An Introduction to Restoration and Augustan Literature (1660-1750)

SYLLABUS

Course Outcomes :

After going through the course, the learner will

- Identify the features of Restoration and Augustan periods
- Review the aspects of different literary genres, Forms, and Terms
- Distinguish the characteristics that evolved in Poetry, Drama, Prose and Literary Criticism
- Assess and Interpret literature of these periods critically.

Unit	Module	Topic	Marks
1	History of English Literature Genre, Literary Forms	Restoration and Augustan Periods (17th Century and 18 centuries) Literary terms related to the selected : Epic, Mock Epic, Comedy of Manners, Development of Novel, Grand Style, Periodical Essay, Satire, Heroic Couplet	14 marks
2	Drama (Romantic Comedy)	William Congreve : The Way of the world.	14 marks
3	Poetry	John Milton: Satan's first speech Paradise lost book 1 (84-124) Alexander Pope: THE Rape of the Lock (1and 2 cantos),	14 marks
4	Prose	Richard and Steele: On Judicious flattery Charless Lamb: Dream Children	14 marks
5	Literary Criticism	Samuel Johnson: Preface to Shakespeare	14 marks
		Internals: 30	Total marks : 100

311SEG21

ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

Second Year – Third Semester

Part – II : Special English

Paper – III : AN INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATION AND AUGUSTAN LITERATURE (16601750)

Time: 3 hours **Max. Marks : 70**

SECTION – A

I. Answer ALL questions. Each question carries 1 mark. (7 x 1 = 7 Marks)

1. What is the classic example of Epic in Greek Literature.
   (a) Odyssey by Homer
   (b) Dante's Comedy
   (c) Ramayan's Mahabharata
   (d) Milton Paradise Lord

2. At what time do " Sleepless lovers " awake in the poem Rape of the lock ?
   (a) Dawn (b) Noon
   (c) Tea - Time (d) Mid night

3. Which of the angels is considered a hero for arguing against satan ?
   (a) Abdiel (b) Michael
   (c) Raphael (d) Eve

4. Who popularised comedy of manners ?
   (a) Congreve (b) Milton
   (c) Pope (d) Johnsons

5. Addison and steele belongs to _____ in the curriculum.
   (a) criticism (b) prose
   (c) drama (d) poetry

6. Emergency of heroic couplet and respect for rules are commonly found in _____ age.
   (a) Neo-classical age (b) Romantic age
   (c) Restoration (d) Renaissance

7. Which of the following does celebrate a trivial theme the theft of a lock of hair from a girl's head.
   (a) Paradise lost (b) Rape of the lock
   (c) Way of the world (d) Lady's diary

II. Answer any FOUR of the following : (4 x2 = 8)

1. Satire
2. Epic
3. Couplet
4. Mock – Epic
5. Periodical essay
6. Commedy of manners
7. Grand style
8. Neo- classical age characteristics

SECTION – B

III. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 4 = 4)

1. Sketch the character of Belinda.
2. Bring out the main themes of Paradise Lost by Milton.

IV. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 4 = 4)

1. How does Milton use Satan's transformations to reveal character?
2. Describe the Rape of the Lock as Mock – Epic.

SECTION – C

V. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 4 = 4)

1. Significance of the play "The Way of the world".
2. Sketch the character of Mirabell.

VI. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 10 = 10)

1. What is the main theme of the play "The Way of the world".
2. Summarise the story "The Way of the world". by Congreve.

SECTION – D

VII. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 4 = 4)

1. Discuss in brief about the emotions of love in the lesson.
2. What features of periodical essay shows is "A Lady's Diary : Advise in Love".

VIII. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 10 = 10)

1. What is the central idea of Addison and Steele's A Lady's Diary : Advise in Love ?
2. Analyse the story "A Lady's Diary" in your own words.

SECTION – E

IX. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 4 = 4)

1. Discuss Johnson's Neo – classical temperament.
2. Why is comedy valued over tragedy in "Preface to Shakespeare" by Samuel Johnson ?

X. Answer any ONE of the following : (1 x 10 = 10)

1. What are the factors that Johnson wrote about Shakespeare in his "Preface to Shakespeare" ?
2. What is the theory of three units ? How does Johnson defend Shakespeare violation in "Preface to Shakespeare" ?

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LESSON – 1

RESTORATION AND AUGUSTAN

(17th Century and 18th Century)

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After going through the course, the learner will

- Know about the features of Restoration and Augustan periods.
- Recognise the aspects of different literary genres, forms and terms.
- Identify the characteristics in literature that reflected the changing trends in society.
- Interpret literature of these periods critically.
- Discuss the religious and political condition during the Restoration Period
- Explain the social conditions existing in the Restoration society
- Examine the salient features of the literature produced during the Restoration Period
- Make the students aware of socio-political milieu of Augustan Age.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

1.1. Characteristics of Restoration Period

1.2. The Augustan Age (1700-1750)

1.3. The Features of the Epic

1.4. The Features of the Mock Epic

1.5. Comedy of Manners in English literature

1.6. The Grand Style

1.7. The Periodical Essay in the Eighteenth century

1.8. Periodical Essay

1.9. Characteristics of Satire

1.10. The Heroic couplet

1.11. Self Assessment Questions

1.12. Suggested Readings

A. History of English Literature

1.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESTORATION PERIOD :

Introduction :

The period from 1660 to 1700 is known as the Restoration Age or the Age of Dryden because the monarchy was restored in England. In the year of 1660, Charles II was brought to the throne and the restoration of Charles II brought a new era both in life and in literature. The restoration actually replaced the power of the monarchy and puritan ethos. It brought the power of a Parliamentary system under the two parties – Whigs and Tories, and both parties encouraged social stability. Thus, the period from 1660 to 1700 has the most importance and it is called the Age of Restoration.

Characteristics of the Age :

1) Social and Political Conflict

With the comeback of Charles II, England's social, political and religious tenets have transformed. The two incidents – The great Plague of London and The Great Fire of London did much more harm to English Social life. Politically, the country was divided into two parties such as The Whigs and The Tories. Both parties were largely devoted to the Anglican Church. Later, both the parties joined together to put an end to King James II who misrule for four years. After the bloodiness revolution of 1688, which called William of Orange and Queen Mary to the throne, was simply the indication of England's healthy and sanity.

2) Opening of Theaters

All the institutions that were closed in the puritanical movement were opened during the Restoration period. Political monarchy, Parliament Episcopacy and law were all restored. The clubs and coffee houses were also established during the period. These houses become the centers of political discussions and from here only, the periodical essays were originated.

3) Rise of Neo-Classicism

The Restoration marks a complete break with the past and the Elizabethan Romanticism was almost over. With the end of the past, literature took a new spirit and outlook and a different attitude in the subject and style. Lacking of the genius in Elizabethans, the authors of the time turned to the great classical writers, particularly Latin writers, for guidance and inspiration. This habit was hardened during the Age which we called Neo – Classicism.

4) Imitation of The Ancients

The authors of the period were not endowed with exceptional talents. So, they turned to the ancient writers for guidance and inspiration. They directed their attention to the slavish imitation of rules and ignore the importance of the subject – matter. This habit was noticeable in the Age of Dryden. And it was strengthened in the Age of Pope.

5) Realism

Restoration literature is realistic. It was concerned with the life and with the fashion and manners. The early Restoration writers sought to paint realistic pictures of a corrupt court and society, and emphasized vices rather than virtues, and gave us coarse, low plays without interest or moral significance. Later, this tendency of realism becomes more wholesome.

6) New Literary Forms

The writers of the age went against the Elizabethan romantic ideals. They tried to give realistic picture of the corrupt court and society. They exposed vices rather than virtues. The most important literary forms expounded during this age are as under :

A) Satire

Restoration age was an age of political unrest, sharp wit and personal contention. For this reason, satire got a new importance. Dryden's Mac Flecknoe was written in heroic couplet. It is considered as the best satire respectively.

B) Poetry

The Restoration poets completely discarded the romanticism of Elizabethan poetry. They rejected the morals of puritan poets. Poetry presented a realistic picture of the corrupt court, society, men and manners. It appeals to intellect and reason.

C) Drama

The theatres were opened during the Restoration. They were closed long ago. The plays were written for the play – houses. It gave rise to the development of the Comedy of Manners. The plays portrayed the sophisticated life of the dominant class of society.

D) Heroic Couplet

Restoration literature adopted the heroic – couplet as a poetic medium. It contains two iambic pentameter lines which rhymed together. Waller began to use it in 1623. He is generally regarded as the father of the couplet. Later, Waller and Dryden made the couplet a literary fashion.

E) Conclusion

In a conclusion, the Restoration period is to be seen as one of transitions. The glorious Revolution of 1688 also brought about a new change in social and political life. The Restoration literature developed realism. so the whole literature was developed in a new style.

These are some of the most popular writers of the Restoration era, as well as some of their works: Aphra Behn, John Dryden, John Wilmot 2nd Earl of Rochester, Samuel Pepys, William Wycherly, Margaret Cavendish, and a few others.

John Dryden :

- The tyrranic love

- Conquest of Granada
- Aurengazebe
- Absalom and Achitophel
- Other important works are:
- Mac Flecknoe
- Dramatic Poesie
- Marriage a la Mode
- All for Love

Samuel Butler

- ✓ The Way of All Flesh
- ✓ Erewhon
- ✓ Ralpho

Abraham Cowley

- ➢ On myself
- ➢ The essays
- ➢ Davideis

John Bunyan

- ▪ Grace abounding
- ▪ The life and death of Mr. Badman
- ▪ The pilgrim's progress

William Congreve

- o Double dealer
- o Love for love
- o The way of the world

John Milton

- ✓ Paradise Lost
- ✓ Paradise Regained
- ✓ Samson Agonistes

Aphra Behn

- The Rover
- The Fair Jilt
- On the Death of the Late Earl of Rochester

William Wycherley

- The Country Wife
- The Plain Dealer
- Love in Wood
- The Gentleman Dancing Master

1.2. THE AUGUSTAN AGE (1700-1750) :

Introduction

The term ***"The Augustan Age"*** was used by the great poet ***Oliver Goldsmith*** in the early 18th century. The writers of this period tried to imitate the characteristics of Virgil, Horace, Cicero, and other writers of Augustus Caesar in Rome. This Age is also termed as ***"the Age of Pope"*** and ***"the Neo-classical age"***. Often the term ***"Classical Age"*** is also used for this period because the writers of this age were governed by set principles and rules. They adopted and regarded qualities such as restraint, simplicity, dignity, serenity, repose, and reason as something very critical in life.

Characteristics Of The Augustan Age

1. The period is termed as ***"the Classical Age"*** of English Literature as the reason was supreme and the general belief of the human mind in the advancement was well established. Also, social settlements became more significant than individual agreements.
2. This period was called ***"the Age of Pope"*** because Pope was known as the most prominent poet during this period. He had reflected the qualities of the new school in the most perfect form. He was the only writer who carried forward the new tradition at its peak.
3. The period is also called ***"the age of reason and good sense"*** as the idea of enlightenment and understanding were seen to be developed among citizens.
4. The faith in religious and philosophical thought was less in comparison to beliefs based on ***reason and proportion***. People during this age were looked out on as being ***rational***.

5. Eagerness and passion were being bottled up by the poets of this era. The motivation was gone in technical skills.

6. The literary works written in this era were mostly witty and fancy, and devoid of using sentiment, desire, and inspired energy.

7. ***'Prose'*** was seen to be a very common method of writing during this age. Meanwhile, the predominance of prose can be seen in various fields. One can even find the essence of prose in poetry.

8. The writers of the Augustan era were the imitators of the French. So, the stimulus of French literature can be seen throughout the works of this time.

9. One of the most significant features of this era was a belief, that works written in this period should contain the elements of human nature. The character portrayal of behavioral manner represented by a human was the first concern of writing.

10. Satire became an important form during this period. Satire against the female sex can be seen in the mock-heroic epic ***"The Rape of the Lock"*** by ***Alexander Pope*** is a fine example of this demonstration, not based on sin but against dullness and personal enemies.

11. The writers of this age were not a follower of a romantic theme. In the form of poetry, a ***'heroic couplet'*** was perceived as the main mode of articulation. The language of the poetry became loud, artificial, calm, rational, and intellectual.

Literary Characteristics of Augustan Age

1. This was an age of new prose forms such as periodicals, criminal biographies, travelogues, political allegories and romantic tales.
2. The predominance of satire is an important literary characteristic of this age.
3. Augustan age saw rise of the novel as a genre [literary form].
4. Novel became the most important literary expression of the bourgeoisie [rich middle class] and middle class. Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smolett were the main exponents of this form.

5. The Heroic couplet [two lines of rhymed iambic pentameter] was the most important verse form [poetry] of the age.
6. Sentimental comedy was a new dramatic form that became popular during this age. Later it was burlesqued [mocked] by writers such as Goldsmith.
7. Periodical essay, Literature of sensibility and Graveyard poetry were new literary trends of the age.

Major writers of the Augustan Age

- Alexander Pope [1688-1744]
- Dr Samuel Johnson [1709-1784]
- Thomas Gray [1716-1771]
- William Collins [1721-1759]
- Oliver Goldsmith [1730-1774]
- William Cowper [1731-1800]
- George Crabbe [1754-1832]
- Daniel Defoe (1660-1731)
- Richard Steele (1672-1729)
- Joseph Addison (1672-1719)
- Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745)
- Henry Fielding (1707-1754)

B.Literary forms and Terms.

1.3. THE FEATURES OF THE EPIC :

An Epic is a long narrative poem on a serious subject written in a grand style. The theme of the Epic is about a great hero or a nation or a tribe or a community. There are two types of Epic. The structure of the epics is usually prose or verse.

1) The Primary Epic or Folk Epic is often based on the life of a heroic figure and finds the heroic deeds.
2) The Secondary Epic or Literary Epic is based on the life of a legend and is generously embroidered with poetic imagination.

Homer's Iliad and Odyssey are primary epics and Virgil's Aeneid and Milton's Paradise Lost are secondary epics. Tragedy and epics are considered the highest literary genres by Aristotle. The writer of the literary Epic faces great challenges.

The Literary Epic follows certain conventions derived from the primary epics of Homer :

1) The Hero must be a man of exceptional greatness. Achilles in Iliad and Adam in Paradise Lost.
2) The epic hero takes a long journey. Odysseus in Odyssey wanders in the Mediterranean region and in the later books goes in the underworld.
3) The setting encompasses vast space, for example Paradise Lost is set in Heaven and Hell.
4) The supernatural element is commonly present in the epic. God and Goddesses take active part. Apollo, Zeus, Thetis and Athena are such characters in Greek Epics. Johovah, Christ and the angels play their distinct roles in Paradise Lost.
5) Epics are Comprehensive and serious.
6) The Epics begin with Invocation to Muse and Proposition in the first fewlines. The statement of the theme technically called the Proposition and the prayer the invocation.
7) The action begins in the middle of the things.
8) The Epic employs poetic devices like Homeric Epithet and Homeric simile. These poetic devices help the poet to develop a word picture.
9) The Literary Epic usually contains a list of main characters introduced with details about their achievements and temperament.
10) Other works which display the features of Epic like theme, setting and scope are also considered epics for example, Dante's Divine Comedy and Spenser's Faeries Queen.
11) Most epics include elements of myth, legend, folk tale, and history. Their tone is serious and their language is grand.
12) The Epic contains a number of thrilling episodes such as the mustering of the troops, battles, duels, wanderings, ordeals, etc.
13) The Epic is divided into books, usually twelve in number. The Iliad and the Odyssey have twenty four books each. Paradise Lost was raised to twelve books from the original ten.
14. The moral purpose is prominent in the epic. The purpose of the Milton's Paradise Lost is to "justify the ways of God to men.

1.4. THE FEATURES OF THE MOCK EPIC :

The Mock Epic

Definition :

A Mock-epic is a small narrative poem. It is employed epic conventions for trivial themes. So it becomes a parody or burlesque of the epic. It satirises the serious epic literature. Mock epic poetry deviates from the strictures of serious epic poetry. It is intended to ridicule various issues and themes. The trivial is exaggerated and glorified. In this way the epic values are reversed.

Examples :

The ancient Mock-epic *The Battle of the Frog and Mice*, are a parody of Homer's *Iliad*. Jonathan Swift's *Tale of a Tub* and *Battle of the Books*, and Alexander Pope's *Dunciad* and *The Rape of the Lock*, *Mack Flecknoe* by John Dryden are the finest examples of the Mock-epic.

The main features of Mock epic include :

(i) Mock epic is the imitation of epic so that it creates humour.

(ii) Each and every elements of epic are used in mock epic in trivial nature for comic relief.

(iii) Most mock epics, like an epic, begin with an innovation of the Muse (a poetic tradition beginning with Homer). It includes supernatural element in the plot. It includes the prolonged battle sequences, lengthy speeches, and formal or highly verbose diction following the traditional epic.

(iv) The use of "deus ex machina" or "ex-machina".

(v) The main purpose of the mock-epic to poke fun at the tendency of nobility. It makes trivial matters serious by writing about the people and events in intentionally flowery, overblown language that becomes humorous when simplified.

(vi) The distinct feature of mock-epic is the widespread use of *bathos*, or anticlimax. A traditional epic ends with an invocation to pathos after the emotional climax. A mock epic ends with a reminder to the reader that the entire substance of the poem is of little consequence.

vii) The stylistic devices of the epic exaggeration, Latinism, personification, circumlocution, etc. are used.

The features of a Mock-epic are best illustrated by Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. The theme of the Mock-epic is the rape on the locks of a butterfly of society, Belinda, committed

by her lover, Lord Peter, a gallant. *The Battle of the Books* is one of the finest and the greatest of the mock-epics in the language. The exalted epic manner and style are used effectively for a trivial subject i.e. merits and demerits of ancient and modern learning. The Dunciad (1743), and "Mack Flecknoe" are written by John Dryden.

1.5. COMEDY OF MANNERS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE :

Introduction

The genre, comedy of manners, is written and performed in the Restoration Period from 1660 A.D. to 1710 A.D. It satirizes the manners and affections of social class or a contemporary society.A manner is a method in which everyday duties are performed. The theme of a comedy deals with an illicit love affair or similarly scandalous matter. It has brittle atmosphere, witty dialogue, and pungent commentary on human foibles. This genre achieved greater distinction and shame. It was the most characteristic product of Restoration Literature. It reflects the spirit of the age more comprehensively than its prose and poetry.

Dryden was the first to write Comedy of Manners with his Wild Gallant, which was a failure. He wrote several other Comedies of Manners also which were more successful.

Comedy of Manners Characteristics

- It depends upon the dramatists' capacity to present the unemotional treatment of sex.
- It is rich with wit and satire and gives the image of the time.
- The heroine is more important and interesting than the hero in the Comedy of Manners.
- Both hero and heroine are well dressed, self-possessed and witty.
- Whereas throughout its long career, English Tragedy has always accepted foreign influences, English Comedy has been less influenced by them. But Restoration Comedy of Manners took a good deal of continental spirit.
- The manners which the Comedy of Manners shows were not the manners of all the classes of Restoration Society; they were rather the manners of the upper class only.
- This genre is characterized by realism (art), social analysis and satire. These comedies held a mirror to the finer society of their age. These comedies are thus true pictures of the noble society of the age.
- One feature of the Restoration comedy which has been often criticised and almost as often defended is its immorality.
- This genre held a mirror to the high society of the Restoration Age. The society was immortal and so was its image represented by the comedy.

- Most comedy writers liked the presentation of scenes and acts of sexual rudeness.
- The introduction of the actresses for the first time on the stage lowered the morality level. These actresses were mostly women of easy virtue.
- The writers of the Comedy of Manners gave much more importance to the wit and polish of their dialogues than to their plot-construction; which, in the views of Aristotle, "is the soul of a tragedy and a comedy too."
- The dialogue of the Comedy of Manners is witty, polished and crisp.
- *The Way of the World* by William Congreve is an example of Comedy of Manners.

1.6. THE GRAND STYLE :

The 'Grand Style', is also known as 'High Style'. It is used by the English poet and critic, 'Matthew Arnold'. Grand Style is a highly ornamented style with stylistic devices such as metaphors and similes, as well as the use of personification. This creates a sense of control by the narrator of the poem or speaker. The grand style is mostly used in speeches. It can be used to influence an audience around a particular belief or ideology. Matthew Arnold described the term 'grand style' in a series of lectures he gave 'On Translating Homer'. Longinus calls it 'sublimity'. The grand style must be three qualities:

(1) There should be a nobility of soul,

(2) Subject or action chosen must be serious.

(3) The treatment should be severe or simple.

To achieve the grand style, a person needs to be noble and good character. He should be well-educated, and well-experienced. He should possess an enlightened soul. The poet affects the reader with the grand style. The poetical gift or the 'divine faculty' is necessary for the noble nature.

The subject should be serious and grand enough to bear the weight of the grand style. The action is treated under grand style. It must have the power 'to please, to move, to elevate'. It appeals to the human affections.

There are only two forms of verse capable of achieving the grand style. The first is heroic couplet or blank verse. Heroic couplet consists of pairs of rhymed lines, while the blank verse is unrhymed. Both comprise lines ten syllables long, typically in iambic pentameter. The second form is dactylic hexameter, the form, employed by Homer and Virgil.

Greatest Practitioners of Grand Style

The ancients were the masters of grand style. Its greatest practitioners were Homer in Greek, Dante in Latin, and Milton in English. Homer, Dante and John Milton are the best model of a simple grand style. Augustine is notable for his *On Christian Doctrine*. He expanded on Cicero's partition of the three styles. The plain style is intended merely to be

understood. The middle (or temperate) style is intended to be enjoyable to listen to. The grand style is intended to also be persuasive. The grand style incorporates all three.

1.7. THE PERIODICAL ESSAY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY :

Introduction :

The 18th century is considered the great age of the periodical essay in English. The periodical essayists of the 18th century include Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Samuel Johnson, and Oliver Goldsmith. The rise of this form began with John Dunton' Athenian Gazette on 17th March 1691.

The term 'Periodical essay' was first used by George Colman The Elder and Bonnel Thornton in their magazine the Connoisseur [1754-56].It was a non fictional prose that was published in magazines, newspapers or journals at regular intervals.

Features of the periodical Essay :

1. The periodical essay deals with morals and manners.
2. It describes anything that pleased its author.
3. It covered usually not more than the two sides (in two columns) of a sheet. Normally it was shorter in nature.
4. The new genre was in perfect harmony with the spirit of the age. It combined the tastes of the different classes of readers particularly middle classes.
5. They welcomed the periodical essay as it was "light" literature.
6. The brevity of the periodical essay, its common sense approach, and its tendency to dilute morality and philosophy for popular consumption paid rich dividends.
7. The avoidance of politics also contributed towards their popularity.
8. The periodical essayists cater to the taste of women and give due consideration to the point of view of women. That won for them many women readers too.

All these factors were responsible for the universal acceptance of the periodical essay in eighteenth-century England. The periodical essay is the mirror of the Augustan age. The periodical essay was literally invented by Richard Steele on April 12, 1709, the day he launched his Tatler.

The periodical essay remained the most popular literary form. Writers such as Pope, Swift, Dr. Johnson and Goldsmith found the periodical essay an eligible medium. The periodical essay was first of all given by Steele as *The Tatler.*

Both Addison and Steele did good work each in his own way. Of the 271 periodical essays, 188 are Steele's and 42 Addison's; 36 of them were written by both jointly. All the material *of The Tatler* was purported by Steele to be based upon discussions in the four famous coffee-houses.

Steele suddenly wound up *The Tatler in* 1711. Later *The Spectator* began its memorable career of 555 numbers up to 1712. Whereas *The Tatler* had appeared only three times a week, *The Spectator* appeared daily, excepting Sundays.

The Tatler (1709-1711) and The Spectator (1711-1712) were the most successful and influential single-essay periodicals of the eighteenth century but there are other periodicals that helped shape this literary genre.

Goldsmith's essays are rich in human details, sentimentalism, and candidness of spirit. His prose style is quite attractive. He avoids bitterness, coarseness, pedantry, and stiff wit.
Thus the periodical essay presented general knowledge in common talk. The periodical includes the topics such as literature, morality and family life.

1.8 PERIODICAL ESSAY :

The Tatler [1709-1711], The Spectator [1711-12], The Rambler [1750-51] were the most successful and influential single essay periodicals of the 18th century.
Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, Thomas Tickell, Alexander Pope, Ambrose Philips were some great contributors to this form.

Important periodicals of the age :

Name of the Periodical	Year	Founder	Published
The Tatler	[1709-1711]	Richard Steele	Three times a week [Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday]
The Spectator	[1711-12]	Joseph Addison and Richard Steele	Daily publication
The Guardian	12 March 1713 to 01 October 1713	Richard Steele	--
The Rambler	[1750-52]	Samuel Johnson	Tuesdays and Saturdays
The Idler	[1758-60]	Samuel Johnson	Weekly

1.9. CHARACTERISTICS OF SATIRE :

Satire is in both poetry and prose. It has no set literary form. A verse satire is written as an ode, an elegy, a Ballad, or anything else. A novel may be written more as a satire than a

story. **I**t seeks to point out human vice and foolishness by using humor. It takes a very serious issue. It pokes fun at it to ridicule the contemporary society.

Satire has the following characteristics in common :

- Satire relies on humor to bring about social change or personal grievances.
- Our vices are made humorous. It will encourage us to change.
- It is an attack on a person or group of persons on a social evil or follies.
- It is a light literature. It is intended to ridicule, not to abuse, though it may often be bitter.
- Generally it hates the sin and not the sinner. It is more playful than hurtful.
- Satire is most often implied. The reader has to pick up on the humour. He/she will miss the satirical nature of the writing.
- Satire, most often, does not go over individual people.
- Instead, satire is directed at society as a whole, or types of people in society-the politician, the adulterer, the prideful, etc.
- The wit and irony of the satire are exaggerated. It is in the exaggeration that people are made aware of their foolishness.
- Pope often erred in much of his works. Dryden hits hardest .Dryden and Pope used it with amazing skill and Byron handled it vigorously.
- The satirist' trade is to censure. The holds the mirrors up to nature. It lashes out at contemporary follies and foibles. The satirists lived and reflected faithfully in their age.

Satire relies on the following literary elements :

Humor, Irony, Comic Juxtaposition, Understatement and Diminution, Inflation, Grotesque, parody, etc.

Examples of Irony :

Gulliver's Travels, by Jonathan Swift

"A Modest Proposal," by Jonathan Swift

Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain

The Daily Show

Animal Farm, George Orwell

1.10. THE HEROIC COUPLET :

Heroic couplet is a pair of rhymed lines with iambic pentameter. This form of poetry

was popularized and highly developed by the neo-classical poets, especially Alexander Pope. Chaucer was the first literary figure to compose verse using heroic couplets, but the use of Heroic couplets did not become widespread until the seventeenth century. A heroic couplet is a form of poetry commonly used in epics and narrative poems. A heroic couplet is a set of two lines that rhyme and that is written in iambic pentameter. This means that the lines contain ten syllables each. The two lines may stand by themselves and will most likely contain a statement.

The features of heroic couplet :

1. There is a pause at the end of the first line. It is indicated by a comma. It signifies the partial sense.
2. There is a pause at the end of the couplet. It is indicated by a full stop. It signifies the full completion of the sense.
3. The couplet is closed to complete its meaning.
4. The rhyme is single. It is the single syllables.
5. The number of syllables is ten.
6. They are divided into pairs of two; each of these is known as a metrical "foot." Within the foot, one of the syllables is unstressed, and the second is stressed.
7. Iambic pentameter is the most commonly metrical pattern used throughout English verse.

Virgil's *Aeneid* is a very famous example of an epic poem. It contains heroic couplets. It was written between 29 BC and 19 BC and told the story of Aeneas, a Trojan who made it out of the city of Troy as the city was destroyed by the Greeks. He, along with the remaining Trojans, travels to Italy.

Heroic couplets were famously used by Geoffrey Chaucer in *The Legend of a Good Women* and *The Canterbury Tales.* The latter is often cited as the best example of the form at the time. This incredibly famous poem is a collection of twenty-four stories, written in verse, that were written between 1387 and 1400. The poem contains over 17,000 lines. Throughout this piece, readers can find examples of heroic couplets.

The use of the Heroic Couplet has varied from time to time and from author to author. It was practised most correctly by Pope. As the years progressed, the form was used by Alexander Pope and John Dryden during the Restoration Age of poetry. Most commonly, the couplet form is used when the poet wants to make a confined statement.

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poetry was popularized and highly developed by the neo-classical poets, especially Alexander Pope. Chaucer was the first literary figure to compose verse using heroic couplets, but the use of Heroic couplets did not become widespread until the seventeenth century.

1.11. SELF ASSESSEMENT QUESTIONS :

1. What are the features of Restoration Age?
2. Write briefly on salient traits of Augustan Age.
3. Describe the elements Of the Epic
4. What are key qualities Of the Mock Epic?
5. Explain the genre, Comedy of Manners, in English literature
6. What are the aspects of the grand style?
7. Define tenets of The Periodical Essay in the Eighteenth century
8. What are Characteristics of Satire?
9. Discuss the literary form of The Heroic couplet

1.12. SUGGESTED READINGS :

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4. Styan, J.L. 1986. *Restoration Comedy in Performance*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
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6. Rogers, Pat *The Augustan Vision* (London: Methuen, 1974) Price, Martin (ed.)
7. *The Oxford Anthology of English Literature: Restoration and Eighteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973)
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Dr. Inturi Kesava Rao

LESSON – 2

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOVEL

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- Trace the origin and development of the novel.
- Differentiate between kinds of novels realize the contribution of different novelists to English literature.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Kinds of Novels

2.3 Characteristics of a novel

2.4 Origin and Development of the novel

2.5 Summary

2.6 Self Assessment Questions

2.7 Suggested Readings

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

A novel is a prose narrative on a large scale. Like the short story the novel defies accurate definition both because of the essential but unfixable element of length and because it includes so many different types and possibilities. In fact, even the insistence on prose is arbitrary: not only is Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (1385) essentially a novel in verse, but a number of works describing themselves as "novels in verse" have been published.

This problem of definition makes it extremely difficult to give any real history of the novel because we cannot be sure just what works are a part of its history. Extended narratives in prose have been known almost since the dawn of literature. The ancient Egyptians had them, though the surviving works would indicate that they did not go much beyond the scope of the novelette. We are on surer ground with the Satyricon of Petronius (A.D. 50) and The Golden Ass of Apuleius (A.D.150), as well as the whole school of Greek romances of about the 3rd century A.D. These romances are sometimes discounted on the ground that they are merely strung together series of episodes, for the general theme is that of the course of true love upset by pirates, shipwreck, kidnappings, etc. But if we exclude them for this reason we shall have to exclude also the novels of Cooper, and many other works which, whatever else we may think of them, are unquestionably novels.

The first full-fledged novel, by modern standards, was written outside the western world and was unknown to it until comparatively recently. Lady Murasaki's Tale of Fenji

(1000) is not approached in its type until Madame de Lafayette's La Princesse de Cleves (1978), which is also a novel of sentiment. When Lady Murasaki was writing, Europe was just beginning to exploit the narrative in verse, in the Chansons de geste and the later medieval romance. Prose narrative returned with the Italian collections of tales of which Boccaccio's Decameron (1348-53) is the most famous example. The word novel is derived from the Italian name for such a tale, 'novella' (phural, novelle). Most other European languages derive their word for "novel" (French and German roman, for example) from the name of the medieval romance and thus the names of the form recall its two principal forerunners.

One indispensable condition for the flourishing of the novel is the existence of a large public able to read with some fluency. This condition began to be met during the Renaissance when printing brought mass production to books, with a consequent lowering of price and a more uniform product. For the first time, it became both possible and desirable for everyone to learn to read. During the 17th century the novel began to establish itself as a standard literary type and by the early 18th century it was well on its way to triumph as the dominant literary form.

The novel is unquestionably the dominant literary form both in quantity and in quality. In quantity its only rival is the magazine short story. Millions of people who would not think of reading any other form of literature regularly read a considerable quantity of novels and short stories. This demand results in a tremendous amount of commercial writing of no literary interest. But qualitatively too, the novel is in the lead. When one thinks of present-day writers who are likely to be future "classics", it is almost invariably novelists like Mann and Faulkner who come to mind. If the last hundred years had to have a special designation they might well be called the Age of the Novel.

2.2 KINDS OF NOVELS :

A basic division of novels into love stories, adventure stories and fantastic stories has been suggested. This classification seems particularly valid because these types seldom combine. The woman if any in an adventure story is a stereotyped and colourless figure and the first great novel of adventure, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719), has no female interest whatsoever. Whatever adventure there may be in a love story is not there for its own sake, but usually merely to help characterize the hero. W.H. Hudson's Green Mansions is probably the most successful effort to combine the love and adventure interests. The fantastic story stands apart from both love and adventure in that it is deliberately unreal and uses a fantastic plot and setting as a vehicle for ideas. Gargantua and Pantagnuel, Don Quixote, Gulliver's Travels and Candide fall into this category.

Though the basic separation into fantasy, love, and adventure holds up reasonably well, the variety of the modern novel is astonishing. We speak of epistolary, picaresque, Gothic and Utopian novels of Western detective and science-fiction novels – of psychological, stream of consciousness and even psychoanalytical novels – of religious, sociological and escape novels of romantic, sentimental, realistic, naturalistic and surrealistic novels. It is this variety which makes real definition impossible. Some critics say that a

novel must describe a course of events, but a minor French novelist boasted that he had written the perfect naturalistic novel in which nothing whatsoever happened. (Henry Ceard, Une belle journee, 1881). Others say that it must have only one real character. The one requirement of which we can be certain is imagination which is clearly required in the composition of even the most documentary or reportorial novel. We can therefore agree on the vague definition that a novel is a book-length piece of imaginative fiction.

Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (about 1380) has sometimes been called the first English novel. It is in fact a long story poem of some 8,000 lines. Apart from its verse form it has features of a typical novel: lengthy conversational passages, a fairly complex plot and psychological truth. If Chaucer had not chosen to write in verse he might well be thought of as a great novelist rather than a great poet. Another early book which in many ways resembles a novel is Sir Thomas Malory's Morte d' Arthur, finished about 1470. It gives the impression of being an earlier, medieval work. It is a great collection of stories connected with the half-legendary King Arthur and his knights – stories which have for centuries fascinated the writers and artists of western Europe. It is certainly one of the most important works of English prose, and it contains themes and material for a hundred novels.

By the time of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) two very different kinds of prose fiction were being written in England. Both kinds took their place in the later history of the novel, though the first of them never became very important. This was the 'romance' – a story like Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia (1590) or John Lyly's Euphues (1578) or Robert Greene's Menaphon (1589). The romance was written in a highly artificial kind of prose, set against a classical or pastoral background and peopled with heroes and heroines bearing Greek or Latin names. Their adventures were very far from real life. Such books are intended for educated readers. They did not ask for realism. Not only the romances but also stories of a very different type became popular at about the same time. They were written in ordinary language for ordinary readers. Thomas Deloney (about 1543-1600) wrote stories with middle class tradesmen, weavers and shoemakers as heroes. Thomas Dekker (1579-1632) wrote stories about London people and their suffering during the plague of 1603. It was their contemporary, Thomas Nashe (1567-1601), who wrote what might fairly be called the first English novel – The Unfortunate Traveller or The Life of Jack Wilton.

The Unfortunate Traveller is one of the best examples in English of the 'picaresque' novel. The history of the picaresque novel extends from the Golden Ass of Apuleius (about A.D. 150) to Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim 1953. The word 'picaresque' probably comes from the Spanish word picaro, meaning a thief or a rogue. It was applied to any long story in which a number of separate events, sometimes comic and sometimes violent, were joined together only by the fact that they happened to the chief character. In English the chief character in a book is called a hero but in a picaresque story the hero is generally a rogue, a picaro. Lately the phrase anti-hero has come into use. In Europe the best known early picaresque tales are Till Eulenspiegel from Germany, Lazarillo de Tormes from Spain and Gil Blas from France. The most famous of all picaresque tales is Cervantes's Don Quixote (1605). Among the great English novelists of the eighteenth century both Fielding (1707-54) and Smolett (1721-71) worked in the picaresque style. The central figures in Fieldings's

Tom Jones and Smollett's Roderick Random are picaresque anti-heroes like Nashe's Jack Wilton.

The historical novel has been popular in England since the time of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). During the twentieth century it has attracted more writers and more readers than ever before. Historical novels range from those like Kathleen Winsor's Forever Amber to careful reconstructions of people and events based on serious research. Some of the best historical novelists, like Mary Renault and Alfred Duggan purposely choose to write about times of which little is known; the former has generally chosen Mediterranean pre-history and the latter British history of the Dark Ages.

Besides being a scholar, a historian and a writer of clear and strong English prose, Robert Graves has the ability to get inside the minds of his central characters. Henry Treece (1911-66) wrote a number of historical novels, serious, thoroughly researched and dealing with several different periods. One of the most important events in the history of the English novel was the appearance of James Joyce's Ulysses in 1922. Nothing like it had been written before, and almost every serious novelist since has been influenced by it.

Another type of novel which has attracted English writers in modern times may be described as 'visionary' 'apocalyptic' 'allegorical' or 'fanciful'. Such books are not intended to reflect life as it actually is, but as it might be. They range from science fiction to moral baffles like Golding's Lord of the Flies. It is interesting to remember that the word 'utopia', which in modern English means an ideal country where all is perfect, was first used by Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) as the title of his book in which such a country is described. In the same tradition are the two utopian romances of William Morris (1834-96), News from Nowhere and The Dream of John Ball.

H.G. Wells (1866-1946) is one of the outstanding figures in modern English literature, not only because of his realistic novels like Mr. Polly and Kipps, but also because he was the first great writer of Science fiction. Stories like The Time Machine, The Invisible Man and The First Men on the Moon are little more than amusing fancies, but in The Sleeper Awakes and A Modern Utopia Wells took a serious look into the future.

These are some of the different varieties of novels, ranging their heroes from rich, cultured men to common and ordinary people.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF A NOVEL :

A novel is more formally defined as a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people. It is the loosest form of literary art. But its very freedom from all limitations allows it to give a fuller representation of real life and character than anything else can provide. It is a very effective medium of portrayal of human thought and action.

A novel like a play has a plot and to a great extent its characters reveal themselves and their intentions in dialogue. The novelist can tell us what is happening, explain it and also give us his own comments on it. The novel need not be symmetrical in exposition, precise in denouement. It may begin with a crisis and the rest of the book may be devoted to depict how that crisis arose or it also may work patiently up to a climax in its very last pages.

The novel in fact has no rigid framework and so the English authors have taken full advantage of the freedom this offers them. Yet it lacks one important element – a sense of proportion, for the novelist is eager to represent us in its fullness and his creating urge may overwhelm his sense of artistic unity and balance in narration, description, characterization and dialogue.

The novel deals with events and actions, with things which are suffered and done; and these constitute what we call plot. Such things happen to people and are suffered or done by people and the men and women who thus carry on the action form its *dramatis personae*, or characters. The conversation of these characters introduces a third element that of dialogue often so closely connected with characterization as to be an integral part of it. The action must take place and the characters must do and suffer, somewhere and at some time and thus we have a scene and a time of action. The element of style is another important thing for a novel. Every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and some of the problems of life. It must exhibit incidents, characters, passions, motives as to reveal more or less distinctly the way in which the author looks out upon the world and his general attitude towards it.

In dealing with plot structure we may distinguish between two kinds of novel – the novel of loose plot and the novel of organic plot. In the former case the story is composed of a number of detached incidents, having little or logical connection among themselves. The plot of a novel may be simple or compound. In the evolution of plot out of character, the motives which prompt the persons of the story to act as they do must impress us as both in keeping with their natures and adequate to the resulting incidents.

Beyond having the organic connection with the action, dialogue should be natural, appropriate and dramatic; it should match with the personality of the speakers, suitable to the situation in which it occurs and easy, fresh vivid and elementary conditions of good dialogue. A novelist should maintain the required dramatic rapidity and power, and leave the reader with a satisfying general sense of naturalness and reality. Every novel is a microcosm of which the author is the creator and the plot the providential scheme. Merely by selection and organization of material, emphasis, presentation of character and development of story, the novelist shows us in a general way what he thinks about life.

In a novel scene and time are important elements. The novel can have its setting or background in any part of the world and at any time, past, present or future. In presenting all these elements together, the novelist displays a particular style. Personality is another element in a novel. The novelist's personality is revealed in the novel he presents. This is also known as the novelist's criticism, interpretation or philosophy of life. Every serious novel is sure to reveal the author's own view of life and its problems, though this may be quite unintentional. Any lesson a novelist wishes to teach us is all the more impressive if it emerges from the story itself and the fortunes of its characters. Of all types of imaginative literature, the novel undoubtedly commands the most powerful and widespread popular influence. It has firmly established itself as the most effective medium for social criticism and diagnosis. It began as an entertainment and grew into a powerful social force.

2.4 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOVEL :

The word 'novel' is derived from the Italian word 'novelle' which meant 'fresh story'. It has come to be known as a story in prose. F. Morion Crawford called it a 'pocket theatre'. The novel is 'a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people'. It is a summary of actual life. Until the seventeenth century the word 'novel' meant a short story of the kind written and collected by Boccaccio (1313-75) in his Decameron. By about 1700 it had got something like its present meaning. In other words a novel, is a story longer, more realistic and more complicated than the Italian *novella* as written by Boccaccio and other writers of his time. The novel is now the most widely read of all kinds of literature. By about 1770 the reading of novels became a fashion, almost a mania, with 'upper class' women. The novel had become what the cinema became in the 1920s and 1930s – a gateway into the world of pleasant dreams. The supply of sentimental and romantic novels grew to meet the demand. A man called Mudie set up a chain of 'circulating libraries'.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were many people who felt that the novel was not respectable. Serious literature ought to improve the mind. Plato (427-348 B.C.) believed that almost all imaginative literature is harmful. In his Republic he argued that such literature leads people to believe in lies, shows both men and gods in a bad light and is useless, if not dangerous to the state. Unfortunately Plato has been one of the greatest influences on Western thought. Simply because of its newness the novel was thought of as not quite respectable.

Added to this was the fact that (in England at least) some of the greatest novelists like Richardson and Dickens, were men of poor education, they had not been to universities and they had not been taught Greek or Latin. They were neither scholars nor gentlemen and this made it difficult for society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to treat them seriously. The novel is branded as a second-class kind of literature. In England alone something like two thousand works of fiction are published every year. Many of them are detective stories, sentimental love stories or tales of the wild West. A growing number are simply sadistic or pornographic. Very few are serious novels and even fewer are 'good' novels. Authors and publishers have to earn money and it can easily be done by producing books which are morally and culturally worthless. Most of the world's great literature deals in one way or another with the love between man and woman. In London in 1960 it was decided, after a much publicized law case, that D.H. Lawrence's novel Lady Chatterley's Lover was not obscene in the eyes of English law.

The early seventeenth century is not without its contribution to the history of fiction. Sentiment, character and theme were elevated and idealized in a prose imitation of the Greek heroic poetry and the Greek romances. The second half of the seventeenth century had more numerous developments. John Bunyan's (1628-88) earliest work is his moving spiritual autobiography Grace Abounding (1666). The first part of The Pilgrim's Progress, was published in 1678 and a second part followed in 1684. He was unique and his work is permanent. A beginning is made with an enthralling and mysterious figure Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), to whom the English public, with all its taste for biography, has never taken kindly. He is remembered for his great work Robinson Crusoe (1719). Next comes Samuel

Richardson (1689-1761). He published three long works on which his reputation rests Pamela (1740-1) Clarissa (1747-8) and Sir Charles Grandison (1753-4).

Henry Fielding (1707-54) in 1742 published Joseph Andrews, to ridicule Richardson's Pamela. Tobias Smollett (1721-71) was Fielding's contemporary. Sir Lancelot Greaves (1762) is an eighteenth century English version of Don Quixote by Smollett. In Humphrey Clinker (1771) he modifies Richardson's epistolary manner and writes in a more humorous manner. Of the eighteenth century novelists the strangest and the most variously judged is Laurence Sterne (1713-68). His Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent (1759-67) is a novel without predecessors, and the product of an original mind and immediately popular.

After the work of these masters, the stream of fiction broadens continually. Samuel Johnson's Rasselas (1759), employs the story only for the philosophical argument. Its contemporary is Candide of Voltaire. Oliver Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield (1766) does not belong to any one school. The next direct English successor to Richardson was Fanny Burney (1752-1840). Evelina was her first and best novel. Her Diary and Letters show her skill in reporting the events. The novel of 'terror' or the 'Gothic' novel, leads into the underworld of fiction in the later eighteenth century. 'Terror' tales attracted strong minds. Horace Walpole (1719-97) originated this type of fiction. The most able and popular writer of terror tales was Mrs. Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823). Her best novels are The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and The Italian (1797). Mathew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818) followed the stream of terror. The nineteenth century produced fiction of far greater significance than the 'terror' tales. Jane Austen's (1775-1817) work is transfused with the spirit of Classicism in its highest form. To the 'terror' tale she presented the assault direct in Northanger Abbey and she combined with her satire of the 'Gothic' school a deeply studied picture of imaginary horror working in the human mind. Sir Walter Scott (1772-1832) invented a background for his scene, with landscape and nature descriptions and all the picturesque details of past ages. Ivanhoe (1819) and The Talisman (1825), a history of the crusades, were among the most popular of his novels. Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866) was a friend of Shelley, but a satirist of romanticism. He invented a novel which could contain irony and conversation and a mockery of romantic excesses. His Headlong Hall (1816), Nightmare Abbey (1818) encouraged writers as different as George Meredith and Aldous Huxley to try new ways in fiction.

In the nineteenth century novel Charles Dickens (1812-70) is pre-eminent. He published the supreme comic novel Pickwick Papers (1836-7). In Oliver Twist pathos is beginning to intrude on humour and Dickens, appalled by the cruelty of his time, felt that he must convey a message through fiction to his hard-hearted generation. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63) and Dickens were near contemporaries. Thackeray's Vanity Fair (1847-8) showed him at his best, in a clear-sighted realism, a deep detestation of insincerity and a broad and powerful development of narrative. Charles Reade (1814-84) continued the social attack through the novel. Emily Bronte (1818-48) in her single novel Wuthering Heights (1847) created somehow out of her own imagination a stark, passionate world, reminiscent at times of the storm scenes in King Lear. The talent of Charlotte Bronte (1816-

55) was maintained through a number of novels: Jane Eyre (1847), Shirley (1849), Villette (1853). Her work is grounded in realism. Of all the women novelists of the nineteenth century George Eliot (1809-80) was the most learned and in her creative achievement the most adult. In Middlemarch (1871-2) she coordinated her powers to construct one of the great novels of the century.

If Henry James saw England as a stranger, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) saw it as an Englishman born in Dorchester. In all his novels Fate functions in men's lives, corrupting their possibilities of happiness and beckoning them towards tragedy. His novels The Return of the Native (1878), The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886) Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891) have appealed to successive generations of readers. R.L. Stevenson (1850-94) led the novel back towards story telling and to the romance.

Rudyard Kipling (1856-1936) gained great popularity because his art naturally expressed much that a wide audience in England wished to hear. H.G. Wells (1866-1946) in his novel The Time Machine (1895) invented a new form of scientific romance. Apart from the social novelists, fiction in the early twentieth century showed great variety. Joseph Conrad helped to give a cosmopolitan variety to the novel and much of the enterprise in twentieth-century fiction has come from an interest in foreign models. In the modern period fiction is derived from both English and American sources. Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner are the famous American novelists of this period. From the twenties to the fifties there had been a high level of performance in the novel, yet its importance in society as a whole was declining. It is difficult to summarize the work of these decades when so much fiction was produced. A more original writer to whom popularity did not come easily was E.M. Forster (1879-1970). Forster showed not the romance of the East, but actual people and the difficulty they have in mutual understanding. Among original writers a high place is given to D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930) whose tormented life is well recorded in his Letters. The boldness of expression which D.H. Lawrence had brought to the novel was found also in his younger contemporary Aldous Huxley (1884-1963). His early novels were comic and satiric. James Joyce (1882-1941) was the most original novelist of the century. He had Dublin and the Catholic church as his back-ground. Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) may be one of the most original women writers of fiction in the twentieth century. Many practiced the novel with intelligence and skill without adding substantially to its form.

Among writers born in the first decade of the twentieth century George Orwell (1903-50) had an impressive and individual talent. Out of the Second World War came a new tradition of realistic fiction attempting to place on the current scene the scientist, the psychologist and the new men of bureaucratic power. A number of younger writers have extended the boundaries of fiction and have departed from the well-trodden path of the social realists. There has been a new form of speculative fiction during the last few decades which might prove a renaissance in the novel as a fictional form. These are some of the phases in the development of the novel. New experiments are being made in form and language in recent times also.

2.5 SUMMARY :

A novel is a prose narrative on a large scale. It includes so many different types and possibilities. The word is derived from the Italian word 'novella'. During the 17th century the novel began to establish itself as a standard literary type and by the 18th century it was on its way to triumph as the dominant literary form. It is dominant both in quantity and in quality. In quantity its only rival is the magazine short story. The novel is usually classified into love stories, adventure stories and fantastic stories. This classification seems particularly valid because these types seldom combine. The fantastic story stands apart from both love and adventure stories. It is deliberately unreal and uses a fantastic plot and setting as a vehicle for ideas. Imagination is clearly required in the composition of even the most documentary or reportorial novel. We can therefore agree on the vague definition that a novel is a book length piece of imaginative fiction.

By the time of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) two very different kinds of prose fiction were being written in England. Both kinds took their place in the later history of the novel. 'Romance' the first of the two became very important. The romance was written in a highly artificial prose. The historical novel has been popular in England since the time of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). One of the most important events in the history of the English novel was the appearance of James Joyce's Ulysses in 1922. Nothing like it had been written before. Another type of novel which has attracted English writers in modern times may be described as "visionary" 'allegorical" or "fanciful". Such books are not intended to reflect life as it actually is, but as it might be. They range from science fiction to moral fables.

The novel has some special characteristics. A novel like a play has a plot and to a great extent its characters reveal themselves and their intentions in dialogue. The novel need not be symmetrical in exposition, precise in denouement. It may begin with a crisis and the rest of the book may be devoted to depicting how that crisis arose. The novel has no rigid framework. The novel deals with events and actions, with things which are suffered and done and these constitute what we call plot. Such things happen to people and the men and women who thus carry on the action form its *dramatis personae* or characters. The conversation of the characters introduces a third element – that of dialogue. Every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and some of the problems of life.

The plot of the novel may be simple or compound. Every novel is a microcosm of which the author is the creator and the plot the providential scheme. In a novel scene and time are important elements. Of all types of imaginative literature, the novel undoubtedly commands the most powerful and widespread popular influence. It began as an entertainment and grew into a powerful social force.

2.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Write an essay on the development of the novel.
2. Discuss the important elements of a novel.
3. Write an essay on different kinds of novels.

2.7 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. Walter Allen. 1954. The English Novel: From *The Pilgrim's Progress* to *Sons and Lovers*. Penguin Books.

2. William Henry Hudson. 1979. An Introduction to the Study of Literature. New Delhi. Kalyani Publishers.

Dr. N.V. Subbaiah

LESSON – 3

WILLIAM CONGREVE : THE WAY OF THE WORLD

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- To know Congreve as a dramatist
- To learn the comedy of manners
- To examine characterisation and style of the way of the world
- To know the restoration period

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

3.1 Introduction: Writer's life and works

3.2 The meaning of the title and Characters

3.3 Glossary

3.4 Act wise Summary

3.5 Summary

3.6 Important themes of the play

3.7 The Way of the World as a play of Comedy of Manners

3.8 Conclusion

3.9 Self Assessment Questions

3.10 Suggested Readings

3.1 INTRODUCTION : WRITER'S LIFE AND WORKS

William Congreve (1670-1739), considered to be the greatest dramatist of the Restoration, was born in Yorkshire, England. As his father was an officer in the army and the commander of a garrison near Cork in Ireland, Congreve was educated at Kilkenny and then at Trinity College, Dublin, where he was a slightly younger college-mate of Jonathan Swift. In 1691, he was admitted to the Middle Temple in London to study law. It is likely that, like Young Witwoud in ***The Way of the World,*** his interest in law was only a means to take him to London, the centre of all excitement.

By 1693, Congreve was already a recognized member of the literary world. His first play, ***The Old Bachelor,*** was first acted in January 1693, before he was twenty-three years old, and was triumphantly successful. His other plays, ***The Double-Dealer, Love for Love, The Mourning Bride,*** **and** ***The Way of the World,*** all followed at short intervals. The last of them was presented in March 1700.

For the rest of his life, Congreve wrote no plays. *The Way of the World* was not successful on the stage, and this disappointment may have had something to do with his decision. He engaged in controversy with Jeremy Collier on the morality of the stage, a frustrating experience. He suffered from gout and bad sight. He became an elder statesman of letters at the age of thirty, honoured by the nobility, highly respected by younger writers.

In his later years, Congreve conducted an ambiguous romance with Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough. When he died, she erected a tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey. She also ordered a life-size figure of him and had it seated in his regular place at her table. The feet were swathed in bandages and a doctor "treated" Congreve for gout daily. This rather surprising memento casts its own odd light on the Duchess, perhaps on Congreve, and certainly on the status of the medical profession at the time.

3.2 THE MEANING OF THE TITLE AND CHARACTERS :

"The way of the world" is a flippant expression meaning the way people behave. However, in the Restoration times, the expression "the way of the world" connoted adultery, which was a common behaviour in society and especially in theatrical Restoration Comedies.

1. **Mirabell:** A young man-about-town, in love with Millamant.
2. **Millamant:** A young, very charming lady, in love with, and loved by, Mirabell. She is the ward of Lady Wishfort because she is the niece of Lady Wishfort's long-dead husband. She is a first cousin of Mrs. Fainall.
3. **Fainall:** A man-about-town. He and Mirabell know each other well, as people do who move in the same circles. However, they do not really like each other. Fainall married his wife for her money.
4. **Mrs. Fainall:** Wife of Fainall and daughter of Lady Wishfort. She was a wealthy young widow when she married Fainall. She is Millamant's cousin and was Mirabell's mistress, presumably after her first husband died.
5. **Mrs. Marwood:** Fainall's mistress. It does appear, however, that she was, and perhaps still is, in love with Mirabell. This love is not returned.
6. **Young Witwoud:** A fop. He came to London from the country to study law but apparently found the life of the fashionable man-about-town more pleasant. He has pretensions to being a wit. He courts Millamant, but not seriously; she is merely the fashionable belle of the moment.
7. **Petulant:** A young fop, a friend of Witwoud's. His name is indicative of his character.
8. **Lady Wishfort:** A vain woman, fifty-five years old, who still has pretensions to beauty. She is the mother of Mrs. Fainall and the guardian of Millamant. She is herself in love with Mirabell, although she is now spiteful because he offended her vanity.

9. **Sir Wilfull Witwoud:** The elder brother of Young Witwoud, he is forty years old and is planning the grand tour of Europe that was usually made by young men to complete their education. He is Lady Wishfort's nephew, a distant, non-blood relative of Millamant's, and Lady Wishfort's choice as a suitor for Millamant's hand.
10. **Waitwell:** Mirabell's valet. At the beginning of the play, he has just been married to Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid. He masquerades as Sir Rowland, Mirabell's nonexistent uncle, and woos Lady Wishfort.
11. **Foible:** Lady Wishfort's maid, married to Waitwell.
12. **Mincing:**Millamant's maid.
13. **Peg:** A maid in Lady Wishfort's house.

3.3 GLOSSARY :

- Detestation : Extreme hatred /intense dislike.
- Lampoon : Publicly criticize (someone or something) by using ridicule, irony, or sarcasm.
- Debauch : To destroy or corrupt someone's morals.
- Contemptible : Deserving contempt; despicable.
- Insolence : Showing a rude and arrogant lack of respect.
- Construe : Interpret (a word or action) in a particular way.
- Compliance : The action or fact of complying with a wish or command.
- Moiety : Each of two parts into which a thing is or can be divided.
- Fidelity : Faithfulness to a person, cause, or belief, demonstrated continuing loyalty and support.

3.4 ACT – WISE SUMMARY :

ACT – I

The curtain rises as Mirabell is defeated by Fainall in a desultory card game at the chocolate-house. The conversation reveals that Mirabell is in love with Millamant but is intensely disliked by Millamant's guardian. Lady Wishfort's dislike seems to have some justification: Mirabell at one time pretended to court her in order to conceal his love for her niece. She is fifty-five years old, and her vanity was offended when she discovered that Mirabell did not love her.

When Fainall leaves for a moment, a servant enters and informs Mirabell that his valet married that day. Mirabell is pleased because his marriage is a necessary prelude to some secret scheme — which is not revealed. Witwoud and Petulant then enter, and we gain

the additional information that Witwoud's elder brother is coming to town to court Millamant. Witwoud and Petulant are also both courting Millamant but only because she is the currently reigning belle. There is further talk of an uncle of Mirabell's who is coming to court Lady Wishfort. The men leave for a walk in the park.

ACT – II

In St. James' Park, Mrs. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood discuss their favorite subjects, men and how to manipulate them. Beneath their apparent friendliness, they are wary of each other as they talk of Mirabell. Mrs. Fainall suspects, quite correctly, that Mrs. Marwood is in love with him.

After Fainall and Mirabell enter, Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall stroll off and leave Fainall and Mrs. Marwood alone on the stage. We now discover that Mrs. Marwood is Fainall's mistress and that he only married his wife for her fortune so as to finance his amour. However, their love includes neither faith nor trust. Fainall is sensitive to the fact that Mrs. Marwood's seeming enmity of Mirabell covers her attraction for him. The scene ends with mutual recrimination and a reconciliation as they leave the stage when Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall return.

The conversation of Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall supplies new revelations. Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall were lovers; she married Fainall as a cover for her affair with Mirabell. Mirabell, during their stroll, has told her of his scheme to trick Lady Wishfort and marry Millamant. As he does not trust Waitwell, he arranged for a marriage between Waitwell and Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid. (The news of this marriage arrived in the first act.) After all, having wooed and won Lady Wishfort, Waitwell might plan on actually marrying her.
Millamant now makes her first entrance, accompanied by Witwoud and her maid, Mincing. She is thoroughly aware of her own charm and her power over Mirabell, and toys with Mirabell's love at the same time that she returns it. She is apparently quite prepared to go along with Mirabell's plot, which Foible has revealed to her, a clear indication that in the end she intends to have Mirabell.

After her exit, Waitwell and Foible appear. Waitwell will woo Lady Wishfort in the guise of Sir Rowland, Mirabell's imaginary uncle. As Sir Rowland, he would be a fine match; in addition, the marriage would serve Lady Wishfort as a way to be revenged on Mirabell for his earlier slight, for presumably Mirabell would be disinherited when Sir Rowland married. All exit, with Waitwell making wry, typically Restoration comments.

ACT – III

At her home, Lady Wishfort is trying to hide the signs of age with cosmetics applied externally and brandy internally. Mrs. Marwood enters and tells her that Foible was talking to Mirabell in the park. While Mrs. Marwood hides in a closet, Lady Wishfort taxes Foible with disloyalty. However, Foible takes advantage of this opportunity to forward Mirabell's plot; she says he stopped her only to insult Lady Wishfort, who therefore determines to accept Sir Rowland, due to arrive that day.

Unfortunately, after Lady Wishfort leaves, Mrs. Fainall enters, and she and Foible discuss Mirabell's scheme; Mrs. Marwood, still hidden, overhears their conversation. They also mention that Mrs. Fainall was Mirabell's mistress at one time, and that Mrs. Marwood is in love with Mirabell, but he finds her unattractive. Mrs. Marwood's anger is reinforced in the next scene when Millamant also accuses her of loving Mirabell and makes biting remarks about her age.

When the guests arrive for dinner, Petulant and young Witwoud, and then Sir Wilfull Witwoud, the elder brother and Millamant's suitor, appear. In a scene that perhaps comes closer to farce than any other in this play, Sir Wilfull does not recognize his foppish brother, and young Witwoud refuses to recognize his country-bumpkin elder brother. Afterward, Mrs. Marwood, left alone with Fainall, describes Mirabell's plot. He is certain now that he has been a cuckold and wants revenge.

Mrs. Marwood then outlines a plan for Fainall. Since Lady Wishfort has control of Millamant's fortune, and since she is very fond of her daughter, Mrs. Fainall, he can insist that Millamant's money be made over to him on threat of making public his wife's transgressions.

ACT – IV

After Lady Wishfort is seen preparing for the visit of Sir Rowland, Millamant and Sir Wilfull are onstage together. Sir Wilfull, somewhat drunk but very shy, is too bashful actually to complete his proposal to Millamant. Overawed by the aloof lady, he is eager to get away and grateful when she dismisses him. It is obvious that he will not succeed, but he is likable in his embarrassment.

Immediately after occurs the scene between Millamant and Mirabell that is often called the proviso scene. They discuss the conditions under which he is prepared to marry her and under which she is prepared to accept him. At the end of the scene, when Mrs. Fainall enters, Millamant admits that she does love him violently. As Mirabell leaves, the company — Sir Wilfull, young Witwoud, and Petulant — come in from dinner. They are all drunk — Sir Wilfull the drunkest of the three. Now the spurious Sir Rowland arrives to woo Lady Wishfort, and his wooing bids fair to be successful when a letter is brought from Mrs. Marwood in which she tells Lady Wishfort of the plot. However, Waitwell and Foible between them manage to convince Lady Wishfort that the letter is actually sent by Mirabell and is designed as a plot against Sir Rowland. Apparently Lady Wishfort is convinced, at least for the moment.

ACT – V

The scene, as before, is Lady Wishfort's house. Lady Wishfort has discovered Mirabell's plot. Foible tries unsuccessfully to make excuses for herself.

Fainall now makes his demands. As Millamant's fortune of 6,000 pounds was presumably forfeit when she refused to marry a suitor selected for her by Lady Wishfort, he wants the money as his price for not blackening his wife's reputation. He also wants the remainder of Mrs. Fainall's fortune turned over to his sole control. And he insists on Lady

Wishfort's not marrying again so that he be sole heir. These terms are very harsh, and Lady Wishfort might not be prepared to go along with them except that Mrs. Marwood, standing by, goads her on by harping on the public disgrace of her daughter, Mrs. Fainall.

When the two maids now reveal that Fainall, in his turn, has been unfaithful to his wife, he refuses to be deterred; he is willing to be the subject of scandal himself, but he will still make public his wife's shame. When Millamant states that she is prepared to marry Sir Wilfull, thus meeting the wishes of her aunt and saving her 6,000 pounds, Fainall suspects a trick, but he can still demand control of the balance of his wife's estate, and now also the control of Lady Wishfort's. At this point, Mirabell presents the evidence which will protect Mrs. Fainall. At the time of her marriage, they had judged Fainall's character correctly, and Mrs. Fainall secretly signed over her fortune to Mirabell's control. There is, therefore, no money which Fainall can successfully obtain.

In great anger, Fainall and Mrs. Marwood leave the stage, vowing dire vengeance. Lady Wishfort, having discovered that Fainall was a villain and that Mrs. Marwood, her friend, was not a true friend, is now prepared to forgive Mirabell; Millamant can now marry him with her aunt's consent. It is on this happy but somewhat indeterminate note that the plays ends.

3.5 SUMMARY :

Mirabell, a young man-about-town, apparently not a man of great wealth, has had an affair with Mrs. Fainall, the widowed daughter of Lady Wishfort. To protect her from scandal in the event of pregnancy, he has helped engineer her marriage to Mr. Fainall, a man whom he feels to be of sufficiently good reputation to constitute a respectable match, but not a man of such virtue that tricking him would be unfair. Fainall, for his part, married the young widow because he coveted her fortune to support his amour with Mrs. Marwood. In time, the liaison between Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall ended (although this is not explicitly stated), and Mirabell found himself in love with Millamant, the niece and ward of Lady Wish-fort, and the cousin of his former mistress.

There are, however, financial complications. Half of Millamant's fortune was under her own control, but the other half, 6,000 pounds, was controlled by Lady Wishfort, to be turned over to Millamant if she married a suitor approved by her aunt. Unfortunately, Mirabell had earlier offended Lady Wishfort; she had misinterpreted his flattery as love.
Mirabell, therefore, has contrived an elaborate scheme. He has arranged for a pretended uncle (his valet, Waitwell) to woo and win Lady Wishfort. Then Mirabell intends to reveal the actual status of the successful wooer and obtain her consent to his marriage to Millamant by rescuing her from this misalliance. Waitwell was to marry Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid, before the masquerade so that he might not decide to hold Lady Wishfort to her contract; Mirabell is too much a man of his time to trust anyone in matters of money or love. Millamant is aware of the plot, probably through Foible.

When the play opens, Mirabell is impatiently waiting to hear that Waitwell is married to Foible. During Mirabell's card game with Fainall, it becomes clear that the relations between the two men are strained. There are hints at the fact that Fainall has been twice

duped by Mirabell: Mrs. Fainall is Mirabell's former mistress, and Mrs. Marwood, Fainall's mistress, is in love with Mirabell. In the meantime, although Millamant quite clearly intends to have Mirabell, she enjoys teasing him in his state of uncertainty.

Mirabell bids fair to succeed until, unfortunately, Mrs. Marwood overhears Mrs. Fainall and Foible discussing the scheme, as well as Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall's earlier love affair. Since Mrs. Marwood also overhears insulting comments about herself, she is vengeful and informs Fainall of the plot and the fact, which he suspected before, that his wife was once Mirabell's mistress. The two conspirators now have both motive and means for revenge. In the same afternoon, Millamant accepts Mirabell's proposal and rejects Sir Wilfull Witwoud, Lady Wishfort's candidate for her hand.

Fainall now dominates the action. He unmasks Sir Rowland, the false uncle, and blackmails Lady Wishfort with the threat of her daughter's disgrace. He demands that the balance of Millamant's fortune, now forfeit, be turned over to his sole control, as well as the unspent balance of Mrs. Fainall's fortune. In addition, he wants assurance that Lady Wishfort will not marry so that Mrs. Fainall is certain to be the heir.

This move of Fainall's is now countered; Millamant says that she will marry Sir Wilfull to save her own fortune. Fainall insists that he wants control of the rest of his wife's money and immediate management of Lady Wishfort's fortune. When Mirabell brings two servants to prove that Fainall and Mrs. Marwood were themselves guilty of adultery, Fainall ignores the accusation and points out that he will still create a scandal which would blacken the name of Mrs. Fainall unless he gets the money.

At this point, Mirabell triumphantly reveals his most successful ploy. Before Mrs. Fainall married Fainall, she and Mirabell had suspected the man's character, and she had appointed her lover trustee of her fortune. Fainall is left with no claim to make because Mrs. Fainall does not control her own money. He and Mrs. Marwood leave in great anger. Sir Wilfull steps aside as Millamant's suitor; Lady Wishfort forgives the servants and consents to the match of Mirabell and Millamant.

3.6 IMPORTANT THEMES OF THE PLAY :

The precise statement of the theme of a work of art is always a little unsatisfactory. The pithy sentence must omit a great deal; it always does violence to the whole work. Nevertheless, it is worth making the effort to determine a theme, or themes, in a play as a guide to study or analysis.

As a point of departure, it is valid to say that the theme of this play is given us by Congreve in the title, *The Way of the World.* All the events and characters of the play can be related to this central theme. The obvious criticism is that the same "theme" can be ascribed to unlimited numbers of other, and quite different, novels and plays. Further, Congreve does not, in this play, seem to take a consistent position. Sometimes he is direct, sometimes ironic; sometimes he deplores, sometimes he approves; at times he is amused; and most of the time his position is a compound of all of these attitudes.

To get a more satisfactory statement we might use a different approach that would give a better sense of the texture of the play. Most Restoration playwrights supplied their plays with alternate titles, or subtitles. Since Congreve did not, we might seek for the different subtitles that are appropriate. Each one would suggest a theme, although not *the* theme. These may put flesh on the bare bones the title gives us.

Love a la Mode

Certainly, the play can be seen as a dramatic presentation of varieties of love in the England of the year 1700. Central is the delicate handling of the love game as played by Mirabell and Millamant. They represent the ideal of the Restoration attitude, intense yet balanced, their love based on mutual esteem with no surrender of individuality. Contrasted with it are Mirabell's earlier and quite ambiguous love affair with Mrs. Fainall; the illicit love of Fainall and Mrs. Marwood, presumably passionate, but wholly without mutual trust; the spurious court young Witwoud pays to Millamant; the direct and somewhat coarse approach of Sir Wilfull; and, at the opposite extreme completely, the aging and undignified longings of Lady Wishfort, vain, unrealistic, over-eager, desperate, and a little pathetic.

Love and Money

Such an approach is closely related to that of *love a la mode,* although they are not identical. In the world whose way is presented here, love and money are values to be taken into account at all times. The sincerity of Mirabell's love does not make him lose sight of the importance of Millamant's fortune. Fainall marries for money to support an illicit love; apparently the thought of marrying Mrs. Marwood without adequate money (however "adequate" might be defined) is unthinkable. Money is Lady Wishfort's sole hold over her child and her ward. Even the marriage of the servants is built on a promise of a handsome sum of money. This is the world's way. Love without money is an impossible sentimental dream, although money often corrupts what love there is.

A Gallery of Portraits

Congreve's statements in the dedication, the prologue, and the epilogue suggest that this might be a valid subtitle. Since it is the way of the world to put a premium on youth, Mirabell and Millamant stand at the center, representing all that is to be commended. Mirabell is the beau ideal: polished, poised, rational and balanced, witty and perspicacious without being what we might today call over-intellectual. Millamant is the belle: feminine, beautiful, witty, not prudish, but with a sense of her own worth. She has avoided the messiness and humiliation of sexual intrigue. Opposed to Mirabell are would-be wits, worthy but graceless boors, and deep intriguers. Opposed to Millamant are women who engaged in adultery and an old dowager without decorum. Every character reveals himself in action, and together they produce a gallery of self-portraits.

Jungle of High Intrigue

This subtitle would focus attention on some of the values of London society. Everyone is engaged in intrigue: Mirabell intrigues to gain consent to his marriage from Lady Wishfort, and this involves intrigue within intrigue, for he does not trust Waitwell. Fainall intrigues in turn. Everyone is involved in one or the other of these schemes — Mrs. Fainall, Mrs. Marwood, and the servants. Even Lady Wishfort in her willingness to marry Sir

Rowland has a devious purpose — revenge on Mirabell. When Mrs. Fainall married her husband, that was part of an intrigue, as was his marriage to her. And as we see in the play, victory goes to Mirabell, not because of his virtue, but simply because he is the most successful intriguer.

Certainly, all these possible subtitles, rather than any one, add up to the ironic commentary on society that is in the title, *The Way of the World.*

3.7 THE WAY OF THE WORLD AS A PLAY OF COMEDY OF MANNERS :

The Way of The World is considered to be one of the most remarkable work of Comedy of Manners. These Comedies of Manners were quite in vogue during the Restoration period. Sheridan and Oscar Wilde also this genre in their writings. Some of the distinguished personalities of the Comedy of Manners were Wycherley, Etherege, Congreve and Vanbrugh. Special Characteristics of Comedy of Manners Although Comedy of Manners became very popular because of its technical presentation, the chief speciality of this form was related to its technical aspects.

The main target of the writers of the Comedy of Manners was the social follies prevalent in their time. Comedy of Manners is primarily satirical in its approach. The Way of The World contains satirical elements, including the elements of love, marriage, treacherous persons romantic dialogues, wit and humour ; which are essential ingredients of a Restoration Comedy.

The Way of The World is most suitable example of Comedy of Manners. Actually, this comedy contains almost all the qualities of a Restoration Comedy. It presents a vast vista of contemporary social morality and principles. This play maintains a satirical tone from the beginning to the end. It gives us valuable informations about the sophisticated class of society in England at that time. Hoe they were involved in their lifestyle; and how women of that period were crazy about fashion and love-affairs, such short of things have been brilliantly depicted in The Way of The World. It is very clear after the study of The Comedy of Manners the Restoration period was devoid of moral values.

When we go through The Way of The World, we get a clear idea about the moral backwardness of the so. The characters of Mrs Fainall, Mirabell, Mrs Marwood, and Mr Fainall give a clear picture of moral Improvisedment of their contemporary society. It looks very funny when Mirabell suggest Mrs. Fainall to marry Mr. Fainall in order to conceal her pregnancy, because she had an illicit love affair with him. It is very surprising to note that Fainall in spite of his awareness of Mrs. Fainall's extramarital love affair does not take it very seriously. Although when he speaks to Mrs. Marwood he reacts to his wife’s behavior and calls himself a cuckold.

When we minutely observe the play The Way of The World, we notice that Mr. Fainall ignores the treachery of his wife because he is no way better than her. He has an extra-marital affair with Mrs. Marwood. But , when this immoral affair is exposed he faces it without any feeling of shame and puts his arguments in order to defend himself. We can judge the moral degradation of Mrs. Marwood that in spite of maintaining a love affair with

Mr.Fainall she is also involved with Mirabell. Here we can Lough at Mr. Fainall's condition, because he thinks himself an over-intelligent fellow and fabricates intrigues for others but he is himself being deceived by his wife and Mrs. Marwood. The Way of The World depicts a wonderful picture of the affections of the people particularly women, in fashionable society.

The author is very clear minded when he portraits the inclination of women for fashion. He ridiculous them for their obsession for fashion. We get a clear picture when we read the "Provisio-scene". Mirabell presents a broad analysis about women's habits which were in vogue in fashionable circle of that society. Apart from this, when Millamant puts some conditions before Mirabell for their marriage, one observes that she talks about her habits of sleeping late in the morning, receiving letters from her well-wishers, writing them replies even after her marriage, entertaining her visitor and she tells Mirabell that she doesn't want any interference in the upper class of society.

Further we see that wearing tight dresses was very much in fashion in that period. So Mirabell warns Millamant that she can't wear such type of dress during the time of pregnancy because it might cause harm to the forthcoming child. Congreve was very successful when he describes the fashionable society of that period. He tells us about cabal nights, when women of the upper social assemble and gossip about various scandalous affairs. Anyone can imagine the craze for fashion in the Restoration Period when Lady Wishfort appears on the scene. In spite of being an old lady of fifty-five, she is very serious about her makeup and chides her attendant because of inefficiency in the art of makeup.

The affectation for fashion was so acute in Restoration Period that everybody was under its grip , there was no age-factor for this obsession. Even an old lady like Lady Wishfort tries to keep herself maintained like a young girl. Further the feeling of Vanity and jealousy was very much prevalent among the woman of Restoration society. In course of the study of the play we notice that Mrs. Marwood is very jealous of Millamant although it is justified, because she has a deep inclination for Mirabell. However, it has been mentioned as an inevitable fact of Restoration Comedy but truly speaking, it has been a weakness of women in every age. So, an overall study of the play shows that as a Comedy of Manners, The Way of The World presents a vast-vista of contemporary Restoration society.

It satirises the follies of the people of upper class of society. In a nutshell, it can be maintained that Congreve has proved his capability and presented a true picture of his contemporary society in The Way of The World.

3.8 CONCLUSION :

The Way of the World summary revolves around marriage, infidelity as well as inheritance. It explores the human mind and willingness to get what they want through whatever means.

3.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. What does the title "The way of the world" mean and how does the title foreshadow the action of the play?

2. Discuss the significance of the title the way of the world.
3. What is the main theme of "The way of the world"?
4. The way of the world as comedy of manners. Explain.
5. How does Mirabell win Millamant?
6. Trace how Mirabell deals with Lady Wishfort.
7. How does Fainall's strategy misfire?

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. Congreve, William (3000). *The Way of the World*. London, England: A & C Black Limited.
2. Congreve, William(1700). *The Way of the World*. London, Courier corporation: Bloomberg.
3. Daiches, David. A Critical History of English Literature, Vol. II, New Delhi: Supernova Publishers, 3014.

Dr. K. Narasimha Rao

LESSON – 4

JOHN MILTON : EXTRACT FROM "PARADISE LOST" (BOOK I, 84-124 LINES)

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After the study of the lesson the student will have an idea about

- John Milton as a writer of an Epic
- 'Paradise lost as an - epic poem.
- The character sketch of Satan and qualities of a leader

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

4.1 Introduction

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4.1 INTRODUCTION :

The Life of Milton

Milton's life falls into three well – marked divisions (i) the period of his education and apprenticeship to the art of poetry, (ii) the period of active participation in political and religious controversy in England and (iii) the last and glorious period of great poetical achievement.

Born on December 9, 1608, the son of an enlightened and cultivated scrivener, young Milton went to school at St. Paul's and, in due course, when he was just seventeen, to Christ's College, Cambridge. Of this period of his education, Milton says, 'My father directed me as a child to literature and learning, which I applied myself to so eagerly that, from twelve years of age, I hardly ever retired to bed from my studies before midnight'. He was twelve when he joined St. Paul's and that 'labour and intent study' which he took 'to be his portion in life', and which he hoped would help him to 'leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die,' ,began from this date. A truly strenuous apprentice ship to learning and more especially to poetry, begun thus, with unexampled earnestness and a lively consciousness of *os magna soniturum*, of unique gifts, divinely bestowed, was calculated to yield and did indeed yield works which, each in its kind, are

universally esteemed classics of the world's great literature. When he left the university in 1632, after taking his M.A. Degree, he had acquired a magnificent proficiency in the literatures of most of the great European languages, apart from an unequalled mastery of the literature of Greece and Rome. In music, he inherited something of the gifts of his own father who was, besides being an accomplished musician, a composer, especially of madrigals which were deservedly esteemed as among the best that had ever been composed in this kind. In addition, as was perhaps inevitable at Cambridge, Milton acquired a considerable mastery of mathematics.

Milton had earlier cherished the hope that he might enter the service of this Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, by formally taking orders. But on coming to 'some maturity of years', he found the atmosphere in the English church forbidding and gave up the idea of entering the Church. Instead, on quitting Cambridge, he returned to the comfort and graces of his father's country house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, and for five years, devoted himself to reading, day and night. He seems to have read nearly everything that had been written and published, in Greek, Latin English and Italian. His unequalled mastery of the Holy Bible was also probably one of the major achievements of this period. This period of strenuous preparation for a predestined great task, from 1632 to 1638, was devoted, as he said every aspirant to the immortal garlands of poesy should, to making himself 'a true poem! At the invitation of a noble family nearby, in 1634, he wrote *Comus*. In 1637, he wrote *Lycidas,* as his tribute to a follow Cambridge scholar, Edward King, who lost his life in the Irish seas, and mode Milton sharply aware of the ' abhorr'd shears' of Destiny which could make nonsense of earnestly cherished plans for the future. It was also in this period that Milton gave, in *II Penseroso*, *L'Allegro,* significant evidence of the steady ripening of a poetic genius which was to make its mark indelibly in the world's intellectual history.

In 1638, Milton set out to make the customary Grand Tour of Europe, which was part of the education of the young English gentlemen. Milton was, however, not interested in playing the English gentlemen –he was far too serious-minded to dream of doing anything like it. He travelled widely in Italy, absorbing as he went, something of the intellectual culture of that land, and developing close and fruitful contacts with scholars and scientists and in particular with 'the grat Tuscan artist', Galileo. He wrote, during this period, some verse in Latin and some in Italian. But news of far reaching developments in the political and religious spheres, back home in England, made him end his stay in Italy and return to England at the end of the summer of 1639.

This date, 1639, makes the beginning of the second period in Milton's life. Although shortly after his return, he wrote *Epitaphium Damonis*, a Latin elegy on his friend Charles Diodati, the onrush of strong political and religious passion somewhat silenced the poet in him. He was a teacher for a time, in London, and wrote the notable *Tractate on Education*, addressed to his friend, Samuel Hartlib, in which he discoursed thoughtfully and purposefully on the problem of educational which would fit a person to discharge ' justly all the offices of peace and war'. His first prose work in the field of contemporary controversy was his treatise entitled of *Re-formation Touching Church Discipline in England (1641) setting forth,* in

militant language, the Puritan point of view. This was followed by a succession of vigorously written pamphlets on the same and related issues concerning Church Government.

The language of these pamphlets has little of the grace, the high-wrought elegance and the serene majesty of his verse. Instead, we have in them, a Milton moved by the most ferocious eagerness to score points in controversy. There is a roughness, a rudeness, a fierce outburst of controversial energy, a near frenzied readiness to hit well below the belt. These prose performances mark out, doubtless, the passionate strength of conviction of the man Milton, but give little evidence of the other, the more estimable Milton, who in his university had been hailed as 'the lady of Cirist's' and who had sought to be, in himself 'a pattern of the best and honourablest things' .

It was however during this period, that he entered on what has been called the thrice-unfortunate adventure of marriage. Perhaps the ideal wife for Milton would have been a person combining the cultured liveliness of an Aspasia, the beauty of a Cleopatra and the stoic patience of a Griselda. Mary Powell was none of these. She was born of Cavalier parents and when in 1643, Milton married her, he showed little evidence of sound judgment in so crucial a personal matter. While marriage is always something of a gamble, Milton's venturesome linking of his life with a person of unmistakable Cavalier sympathies was a needless risk. Mary left him within six weeks of the marriage! And, securely lodged with her patents, she declined to return to Milton! This left Milton in a state of acute embarrassment, rendered the more unendurable by reason of his passionate espousal of the teachings of Scripture on marriage. The domestic crisis however forced on Milton a radicalism of thought on this matter intimately linked with religion as it was. But radicalism was, to a champion of regicide, not so very alien. Milton pleaded passionately for a far-reaching reconstruction, a radical review of contemporary doctrine regarding the institution of marriage and its inviolable sanctity, even in the face of proved unhappiness to both partners to it. This pamphlet, entitled *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* and others in reply to the protests which this pamphlet evoked including the memorable Areopagitica, published in 1644. Showed the deep intensity of Milton's feeling on the subject and the sheer intellectual vigour with which he dealt with major public issues. When Mary retuned to him in 1645 in a mood of deep penitence, Milton's affections had become engaged to another person but he married this person only after May had borne him three daughters and died in 1652! This second wife died in childbirth and Milton married again in 1663, by which time his eyes, suffering under truly terrific overstrain, had become totally blind. On top of so agonizing a physical disability, there was the decisive defeat of the Puritan cause Milton had so enthusiastically espoused and championed, as Latin Secretary to the Cromvellian Council of State, in a pamphleteering campaign of unusual vehemence and violence of language. With the return of Charles II in 1660, Milton's personal position was badly jeopardized and he was in custody for some time until friends interceded on his behalf and secured his release. Milton was now free to devote himself to achieving his long cherished ambitions in the field of poetry.

The subject of the Fall of Man was not the first that came to his mind when he set his hand again to the writing of poetry. He had considered writing on the Arthurian theme – and

he had also drawn up, about the year 1646, the plan of a play to be called *Adam Unparadised*, on the lines of Greek tragic drama. But Milton abandoned the idea of a play and set to work to give this theme the shape of an epic poem. 'Wars, hitherto the only argument heroic deem'd seemed to him utterly unworthy of epic treatment. He intended to soar higher and 'above the Aonian mount' pursuing things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme. And he meant his poem to be deeply, profoundly theological, nothing less than a justification of the ways of God to men. Thus it was that *Paradise Lost* came to be written. In itself it was a feat of truly heroic dimensions – a long poem in twelve books, devoted to the highest of themes-composed amid the most trying physical disabilities, amid pain of body and anguish of mind, amid political isolation and personal humiliation. The poem was at last published lished in 1667 – and at once recognized as a transcendently great feat of poetic genius. And it had a sequel, *Paradise Regained* in 1667 in four books, telling the story envisaged in Book I *of Paradise Lost* of 'one greater man restoring us to the blissful seat'. In the same year, a veritable Samson in years, if not in physical strength, Milton fulfilled another of his literary ambitions and published *Samson Agonistes*, in the form of a Sophoclean tragedy. Milton had thus handled with the ease and self-confidence of authentic genius all the poetic kinds that had established themselves in the world's great literature – lyric, elegy, epic and tragedy. Milton is neither 'an idle singer of an empty day' nor an 'inheritor of unfulfilled renown'. He is amoung the world's greatest poets, with works of the highest quality in the world-renowned poetic kinds, to his credit an immortal among the world's greatest immortals.

He passed away in 1674 as a result of complications arising from gout.

Critics on John Milton and his Paradise Lost :

At a time when even a poet can say that 'malt can do more than Milton can to justify the ways of God to man', and be indifferent 'whatever brute or blackguard made the world', the study of *Paradise Lost* is apt to suffer from handicaps additional to those from which a poem of its kind is apt to suffer.

Paradise Lost is not merely the story of the Fall of Man but a profoundly earnest essay in vindication of God's ways towards man. It is quite deliberately, quite seriously, a theological poem. But it is a poem and a poem in the heroic kind. It seeks to be and is an English rival and equal to the great epics of Greece and Rome which are part of the heritage of mankind. And it uses verse and diction of classical dignity, of classical majesty and self-restraint. One may even say that the style is consciously controlled, shaped and evolved to recall, especially to those learned in the classical languages, the tone and tenor of a Homer and a Virgil. The amazing perfection of this transformation of English into a language close akin to Greek and Latin, in terms of its use in this poem has led to the twentieth century attack on Milton as one who had damaged the English language. That there is an awesome grandeur, that there is the simplicity and severity, the austere self-restraint which mark, in Arnold's words, the grand style, is true. If one does not like it, one need not bother about it. That the morning sun's blazing light is unendurably, bright shows only that one's eyes have little capacity to withstand such radiance, Mr. Middleton Murry thought Milton 'a bad man', thought he admitted him to be' a poet so evidently great in some valid sense of the word'. Professor Oliver Elton thought that the central myth of *Paradise Lost* did not embody, as

handled by Milton, some enduring truth that speaks to the imagination. Mr. T.S. Eliot was claimed to have 'destroyed Milton in a parenthesis', though this much admired pontiff of twentieth century letters would seem to have noted only two weaknesses in him, an auditory rather than a visual imagination and a crucial role in a damnable ' dissociation of sensibility'.

Dr. F.R. Leavis felt satisfied that the dethronement of Milton from the ranks of great poets had been accomplished without any noticeable fuss. The whirligig of taste doth bring in its revenges, its radical changes but it is gratifying to note that the major modern assailant of Milton, T.S Eliot went through the process of a public recantation and apology, before the most distinguished academic audience of the British Academy, by making Milton the theme of the Master Mind Lecture of the Academy under the Henry Hertz Endowment. The rise and fall and resurgence of Milton may be regarded as one of those features of the world of letters which make for life in letters, if not for law in taste. Dr. Johnson lamented, long, long ago, the want of human interest in *Paradise Lost*. And he allowed his Tory prejudice against a regicide to go so far as to say 'No one wishes *Paradise Lost* longer than it is!, True, but Dr. Johnson himself admitted that there was an authentic, a gigantic loftiness about the work! Matthew Arnold hailed Milton as the greatest English master of the grand style in literature. Wordsworth, deeply troubled by the discontents of his time said 'Milton, thou shouldn't be living at this hour'. And to this day, Milton is read, and read with tireless concentration and devotion.

4.2 TEXT :

Paradise lost book – 1 Lines 84 to 124.

Satan expresses to Beelzebub his determination to renew the contest some time later.

" If thou best he-but Oh how fallen! How changed

From him! – who, in the happy realms of light, kingdom

Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine

Myriads, though bright- if he whom mutual league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the glorious enterprise,

Joined with me once, now misery hath joined

In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest

From what highth fallen: so much the stronger proved

He with his thunder: and till then who knew

The force of those structure arms? Yet not for those,

Nor what the potent victor in his rage

Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,

Though changed in outward Iustre, that fixed mind,

And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring.
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
Om dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost-the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That glory never shall his wrath anger or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace attractiveness
With suppliant knee, and deify his power bended
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late?
Doubted his empire-that was low indeed:
That was an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall: since, by fate, the strength of Gods,
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

4.3 GLOSSARY :

1.81 **Beelzebub :** The name means 'Lord of the flies'. Later he became the sun-god of the Philistines.

1.82 **Satan :** Adversary; so called after his defeat in the war in Heaven. His earlier name was Lucifer (BK. VII.131).

1.84 **Beest : 'art'** : present indicative form of 'be',

1.85 **How fall'n! how chandg'd :**

Cf. Isaiah 14.12 'How art thou fallen from Heaven, O! Lucifer! Son of the morning' of Cf. also Aeneid II 275-6 where the blood – stained ghost of Hector appears before Aeneas. Professor Douglas Bush notes the awesome effectiveness of the double allusion in conveying a sense of supernatural grandeur and remoteness. Aeneas greets Hector thus 'blackened with bloody dust… how much changed from that Hector that came back arrayed in the spoils of Achilles'.

1.86 **didst outshine :** in imitation of Homer's description in od. Vi 110 of Diana as outshining all her nymphs in beauty although all are beautiful!

1.87 **if he :** if thou art he himself (i.e.) Beelzebub. The sentence is not complete. The figure of speech here is called *anacoluthon,* used by Milton to signify the troubled mind of the speaker. Cf. Bk V 676 where Satan speaks to Beelzebub. Thou to me thy thoughts,Was won't I mine to these was wont to impart Both waking we were one!

1.91-2 **into what pit… fallen :** the distance is a measure of the strength which vanquish the fallen angels.

94 **dire :** destructive.

97 **lustre :** the brightness of ethereal spirits. Fixed : constant.

98 **injured merit :** offended dignity.

99 **raised :** roused, incited.

1.93 **his thunder :** an example of Milton 's appropriation of the classical attributes of Zeus to the Christian God.

1.94 ff.In these lines Milton portrays a Satan of heroic dimensions, physically vanquished but unrelenting in his hatred of God the enemy. Cf. Aeschylus's portrait of Prometheus: 'none of these (the blows of Zeus) shall bend me' Prometheus Bound 987-96.

1.98 **high disdain :** a common phrase with Elizabethan poets like Spenser (Faerie Queene I. 1.19.)**Sense of injur'd merit:** Satan felt hurt by what he referred to as an act of unjust supersession of himself, by God's elevation of His Son to primacy in Heaven (Bk. V. 772 ff.)

1.104 **dubious battle :** this is Satan's distorted account of the course of the three-day war in Heaven (Bk. VI. 179-866).

1.105 **and shook his throne :**

Satan anticipates the general tenor of modern war propaganda which seeks to sustain group or national morale by deliberately selective use of favorable facts and event and concealment of adverse facts. He flatters his own self-esteem and sustains the faith of his followers in his leadership by suggesting that only the first round of the battle has been lost and that it is by no means the end of the story. 'Omnipotence was challenged for the first time and though not subdued was shaken': this is the thesis of Satan. But Milton in Bk. VI. 833-4 shows that God's throne remained utterly unshaken while the enemy hosts lay stupefied, dropping 'their idle weapons!'**the field:** the battle, cf. Tasso's *Jerusalemme* 'We lost the field yet lost we not our heart'. (Fairfax's translation) **study :** the relentless concentration on revenge.

1.108 – 9 **and courage… :** Matthew Arnold cites these lines as a 'touchstone' in his essay on the '*Study of Poetry'.*

1.110 **That glory :** 'the glory of victory over Satan will never be God's – This is the another exercise in self – gratulatory oratory.

Deify : consider as worthy of worship.

1.113 **this arm :** Satan's fantastic notion that his personal strength played a special, crucial role in the struggle! **So late:** not so very long ago.

1.114 **Doubted his empire :** felt his authority gravely challenged and feared for his future lordship of the universe.

1.115 **ignominy :** originally spelt and perhaps pronounced 'ignomy'.

1.116 **by fate :** the fallen angels who later discuss this problem think of it as a power other than an independent of God. (Bk.II.555-61)

1.117 **empyreal :** literally, made of fire, the empyreal sub-stance: Cf. Raphael's 'intelligential substance' (Bk.V.408).Since destiny dictates it and the substance of which angles are made is indestructible and cannot 'fail', the prospect of waging endless war with God is still there. They know now something of the strength and resources of the other side, have treater foresight and have not suffered any serious loss of strength; they can resume battle within a far better hope of ultimate victory.

Successful hope : hope of success, not an 'Indianism'; but Cf. Shakespeare's sterile curse', 'insane root'.

By force or guile : the decisive defeat of force throws Satan on to trying guile. Milton is alluding to the seductive ways of evil as essentially the continuous war of Satan on goodness and God.

In the' excess of joy : in a spirit of elation over a temporary victory.

1.124 **Tyranny :** perhaps in the Greek sense of monarchical status illegitimately seized in violation of the democratic structure of Heaven.

1.126 **Vaunting aloud :** bragging in despair. Empson in Milton's God points out that the despair of Satan is the feeling of a general smarting under defeat and not that of a religious person losing all hope. Milton does all he can to show Satan's unheroic moods and stances but the Satanists ignore these evidences as they do not fit in with their thesis about Satan being the hero of *Paradise Lost.*

1.128 **O Prince :** Democrat Satan seems not to disdain rank!

1.128 **Throned Powers :** each of these is the head of a group of angels of high rank.

1.129 **The embattled seraphim :**

those of the angels who had thrown in their lot with Satan in the war. 'Seraphim' is the plural form of 'seraph'. Milton's account of the hierarchy among the angels seems to be of Dionysian origin Conduct leadership. Cf. duce: leader. In dreadful … fearless: fearless in doing what might cause one to fear.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT :

Milton's God may have few friends or admirers. Romantic poets may have permitted themselves to hail Satan as the hero of *Paradise Lost* and even thought of Milton as of the Devil's party without knowing it. F.R Leavis followers, (Leavisites) may seek, in their iconoclastic zeal, to replace Milton by Donne and Lewisites may continue to burn incense at the altar of Milton. Of the variety of tastes, of the inevitable variety of literary experience, there is no doubt, and there is no dispute. What matters is that Milton has not been shoved away into limbo. Assessments of what is still 'living' in Milton continue to be made Milton's Grand style-despite Keats' exclamation 'there is death in it' – has been effectively defended. Books continue to be written about him, of his Lofty Rhyme, of his Heroic Argument, of his choice of Some Graver subject than he had essayed when younger. But Milton is no subject for weak intellectual digestions. Even those who lament his mistaking, as they viewed it, a scheme of life for life itself, look upon an appreciation of *Paradise Lost* as the last, the ultimate reward of consummated classical scholarship. The English twentieth century has been through heart-ravaging, harrowing experiences and poets of this age and critics too, drifting rudderless on what seemed to them to be wide, wide, uncharted and perilous seas, have often, like Milton's night foundered ammiral', deemed some beast stretching out on the sea an island, a haven of rest and refreshment. They are like mariners who have prematurely abandoned the security of their unsinkable ocean-going vessel and trusted themselves to tiny life-boats in a storm –tossed sea. Bearing as *Paradise Lost* does the impress of two tremendous intellectual and social movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, it gives as well rich evidence of the equally impalpable but profound influence of the classics of Greece and Rome, of the Bible, of English literature and Italian poetry. The poem is wrought out of the Bible – as few poems have been. Echoes of Homer and Virgil, of Spenser and Shakespeare, of Dante, Petrarch, Tasso and Ariosto, ring through the poem. Milton's vast

and Voracious reading makes the task of tracing the measureless allusions in the poem, a stimulating challenge, not easily and alas, not always successfully faced. Its central theme, the Fall of Man, is awe-inspiring in its huge, imponderable vastness – not of scale alone but of significance. Of a trifle, seemingly as light as air, such as the eating of a fruit by Adam and Eve it may be easy to work out a mock-heroic poem of a few lines. But what Milton has wrought out of it is truly awesome in its superb grandeur, its sheer, towering majesty. Compassing all life and all time Heaven and Hell war, love and religion, *Paradise Lost* is unique in its intrinsic greatness and in the reverent homage it has evoked among all true lovers of poetry.

The central action of the poem, for all its seeming simplicity is charged with universal, cosmic significance. Adam's heroism may not be of the kind that resounds through the pages of history alongside Hector, Achilles and Ulysses and other 'active' heroes of life and letters. But the intensity' of the passive suffering, as 'with wandering steps and slowly. Adam and Eve through Eden took their solitary way', is invested with a heroic dimension which only those who have known tragedy in their lives and endured it, can assess aright. Not seldom in one's life does one surrender to Passion, abandoning Reason. Out of such fateful surrenders is tragedy wrought. Paradise Lost is not just a narrative poem. It is high-wrought tragedy. An epic is by convention, a poem wrought out of national history. *Paradise Lost* truly soars beyond this time – honoured convention to tell the story of the greatest of all tragedies, the awesome tragedy of the Fall of Man.

4.5 CRITICAL EVALUATION :

The figure of Satan is magnificently conceived. He is like the tallest pine tree hewn on Norwegian hills. He is huge in bulk. He lies floating many a rood. He is like the Titanian or like the sea-beast Levia than, whom the pilot of a ship deems to be an Island. Even Beelzebub and Moloch cannot risk offending their great sultan.

Satan is wholly committed to evil. He is the embodiment of Machiavellian ideal of unscrupulousness. For him end justifies the means. He wants to take revenge upon God by baser means of low craft and false hood. He seduces Eve and Adam who have never wronged him. He has unbending resolution and iron determination. The undaunted struggle which Satan makes against the adverse forces attracts the deep sympathy of the readers Satan's character is treated with such sympathy and described with so much dramatic power that Carlyle came to the conclusion that Milton, in the person of Satan has revealed to the world his own proud spirit of independence and superiority to the blows of fortune.

Satan may not be the hero of Paradise Lost, but he is certainly the key figure, the most important character in the poem. All other characters are dwarfed before him. Adam looked like a pedagogue. Eve is charming, yet she is a poor, helpless women. It is only Satan's dynamic personality which adds colour and passion to the poem. Without Satan, Paradise Lost would be no more than a theological thesis composed in verse. Without Satan's rebellion, man would possibly not have been created and would certainly not have fallen and no justification of the ways of God to man would have been necessary or possible.

Satan is an intellectual giant. He carefully conceives his plans and makes the fallen angels accept them. He exhorts "Awake, arise or be forever fallen". He makes it clear that war is inevitable direct or concealed, lest they should set aside the very aspect of war. He has unconquerable will and endurance. He has courage never to submit or yield. He finds consolation even in Hell. The mind is in its own place and can make a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell.

Pride is the dominant feature of Satan. It is his pride that causes the downfall. He is the embodiment of freedom as Adam is the embodiment of righteousness. Adam represents the puritan aspect of Milton, while Satan represents the Renaissance element of the poet. Satan is ordained to rule and not to serve. He prefers to rule in Hell to serving in Heaven. He is ready and eager to assume the duties, responsibilities and dangers of leadership. He volunteers for the perilous journey to Earth. He accepts hazard and honour.

Satan is thus the most exalted and most depraved being. He is like a mighty tempest. It is really Satan who provides the chief interest to Paradise Lost. It is really he who dominated the narrative.

Epic Similes : Milton followed his predecessors Homer, Virgil and Spenser in the usage of epic similes, but did not imitate them. His similes are simple observation of nature, myth, legend, history, travel and science. Milton's similes are called Homeric long-tailed similes. The function of the epic simile is to compare and illustrate. But Miltonic similes go far beyond the limits of comparison and call up pictures of large dimensions. He does not stop with a single elaborate comparison, but proceeds from one to another. While describing the huge bulk of Satan's body Milton compares him to that sea –beast Leviathan, whom:

Haply slumbering on the Norway foam

The pilot of some small night foundered skiff

Deeming some island oft as seamen tell,

With fixed anchor in his scaly rind

Moors by his side under the lee, while night

Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.

The point of comparison is the hugeness of size, but the poet goes on telling us the story of the pilot of some night foundered ship. He does not confine himself to the point of comparison but goes on to describe the pictures of large dimensions. The critics complain that the similes are expanded beyond the point of comparison, beyond the dimension which the occasion requires. They are beautiful diversion not integral to the theme of the poem.
The similes of Paradise Lost are the work of imagination. The images are used to portray the scenes and characters and events that compose the poem. Special mention must be made of the first long simile in Book I of Paradise Lost, when Satan is lying out-stretched on the burning lake :

Thus Satan taking to his nearest Mate

With head up lift above the wave and eyes

That sparkling blazed his other parts besides

Prone on the flood, extended long and large

Lay floating many a roof, in bulk as huge

As when the Fables name of monstrous size

Titanic or Earth –born, that warred on Jove

Briairos or Typhon whom the Den

By accident Tarus held, or that Sea beast

Leviathan, which God of all his works

Created hugest that swim the Ocean Stream.

Mere reference to a huge creature is not enough. Milton has to create a vision of immensity and terror. The similes become an organic part of the imaginative picture. They have a continuing effect on the course of the narrative.

From Morn
To noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
A Summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropped from the Zenith like a falling star
On Lemnos the Acgean Isle.

It is narrated in mythology how Mulciber fell down from Heaven thrown by angry Jove from the parapets of Heaven, made of crystal. He fell from the height of heaven. Like a shooting star on Lemnos, the Aegean Isle.

Another passage from Book I, illustrates the function of the simile.

He could simply have said that the hosts were as thick as autumn leaves or floating sedge. But the remaining illnesses add richness. He compares them to the bees in spring time.

The similes bring about human touch. There I fusion of the classical and the Christian in his similes. The similes bring about imaginative power and they bring relief to the imagination. His similes are subtly relevant. The transposed descriptions are necessary for giving a clear picture of the object compared. He thus bring with in the compass of the poem a still wider range of experience.

Ans. Milton is one of the greatest artists that the world literature has produced. In sublimity of thought and majesty of expression, he has no superior and no rival in English literature. His words are words of enchantment, bailey remarks "To live with Milton is necessarily to learn that the art of poetry is no triviality, no mere amusement, but a high and grave thing a thing of the choicest discipline of phrase, the finest crafts manship of structure, the most nobly ordered music of sound. "The style of Milton is perfect and flawless. He is never carless or slip-shod. There is not even a single line in his poetry which is superfluous. He deliberately chooses his thoughts, images, expression, and its musical effect in the sure and

flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction, he is as admirable as virgil or Dante. For one end of Paradise Lost to the other, he is a great artist in his diction and rhythm and usage of blank verse.

Milton is a conscientious artist. He chooses and weighs every word before he uses it. He strives hard to say the finest things in the world. He adorns and dignifies his subject to the utmost. He surrounds it with every possible association of beauty or grandeur, whether moral, intellectual or physical. He is not superfluous in his style. There is matchless density, conciseness and economy in his lines. No man ever spoke more neatly, more precisely and more weightily.

There is inversion of the natural order of words and phrases on his poetry. Sometimes Milton places a noun between adjectives and verb between nouns – "Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm". Suspension is used as a trait of style and such suspensions recur at frequent intervals:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit

Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste

Brought death into the world, and all our woe

With loss of Eden, till one grater man

Restore us and regain the blissful sear.

Sing heavenly muse.

Again in the opening of Satan's address to Beelzebub, this suspension is present:

If thow beest he ; but O how falle'n how changed.

From him, who in the happy realms of light.

Sometimes Milton omits words not necessary to the sence

……. Extended wide

In circuit, undermined square or round

Sometimes we find parenthesis and apposition

Of Abbana and Phasphar, lucid streams and

Their song was partial, but the harmony

What could it less when spirits immortal sing?

Sometimes he uses one part of speech for another-verb used as a noun and adjective used as the noun. Milton is not satisfied with one meaning. He uses pun and Latinism. His poetry is suggestive. He says less and means more. Much is left for the imagination of the reader. Satan's huge figure is described with a few suggestive strokes-head uplift above the wave", "eyes that sparkling blazed". The whole treasury of poetry and the entire store house of learning are at his command. He makes use of several classical and Biblical Allusions. A

striking feature of Milton's style is his use of epic simile. His grand style is majestic and sonorous. He uses unusual, exalted and arresting words, coinages, words used in new meanings, play on words, the shifting of parts of speech and the use of Latin derivatives which heighten the dignity energy and intensity of his style.

4.6 SUMMARY :

Milton was an egoist. Literature is an expression of personality and a product of its own time. He was not only justifying God's ways to men; he was justifying his own ways to his countrymen. He wrote an epic in which he had enough scope to reveal himself. He is in every line of his poetry. He projects himself, his feeling, knowledge and aspiration into the characters of his epic, both the human creatures and the super human beings whether celestial or infernal. In every one of his poems, Milton is seen. His Satan, his Adam, almost his Eve-all are John Milton –and it is a sense of this intense egotism that provides the greatest pleasure in reading Milton's works. He reveals himself in his early poetry as well as in his later poetry. His poem "Oh his blindness" is a revelation of his plight. He reveals himself through his sonnets, masques or elegies. It is in Paradise Lost that he reveals himself most.

Milton is as much as child of Renaissance as of Reformation. Renaissance means, rebirth or revival of learning. Renaissance is the name given to that part of the civilization which gradually displaced in the minds of the people the medieval conceptions of art, nature and society. The Renaissance was the movement which awakened an interest in the old writings of the Greeks and the Romans. It stands for a broader outlook on life and culture. Reformation is the spirit that took place in the church in the form of Puritanism. It is the evolution of a noble but stern and hard type of character.

Milton harmonises in his poetry both the elements of Renaissance and Puritanism. He was a deeply religious man. He chose the Biblical story of the fall of man as his subject. Even at an early age he could write.

All is if I have grace to use it so

As ever in my great task master's eye

In his middle life, in a sonnel on his blindness he resigned himself to the afflictions bestowed on him by God and wrote.

They also serve who only stand and wait

And at the height of his poetic career he wrote Paradise Lost to :

Assert eternal providence

And justify the ways of God to men

He blended both the elements into harmony perfectly.

Milton's greatest work "Paradise Lost" harmonises the two different elements of the Renaissance and the Reformation. It would not have been one of the supreme achievements of poetic imagination, if it had not been fired by its author's intense and exalted religious

faith.Though the theme of Paradise Lost is religious, its treatment is entirely classical. In telling the story of the Fall of Man, Milton fully expresses the spirit of Renaissance. It is the influence of the Renaissance with its spirit of humanism and classicism that gives to the poem its epic form and its imaginative grandeur, while its subject matter and its moral earnestness are due to the influence of the Reformation.

So the Renaissance and Reformation go to form the great Paradise Lost. There is unmistakable impress of classical scholarship in the style of Paradise Lost. His use of similes, his use of history and geography, his knowledge of the ancient and modern literature, his love of art and music, his culture and refinement all point to influence of the Renaissance. Paradise Lost is a great work of art because of the blending of Puritanism and Humanism.

The chief rebel angels after having escaped from Hell began to roam on earth and dared to have their temples erected next to the temple of God. They often had their hateful temples built within the inner most chamber of the temple of Jehovah. They polluted the holy ceremonies.

Moloch was a horrible king besmeared with blood of human sacrifices and the parents used to shed tears for their children who were sacrificed for him. The Ammonites worshipped him in Rabba and its plains and to the farthest limit of the river Arnon . Moloch on the Mount of Olives right against the temple of God and had the pleasant valley of Hinnom Turned into his garden.

Chemos, the lustful God was worshipped in fear by the people of Moab from Aroar to Nebo, Beyond the Vine-clad valley of Sibma upto the Dead sea. His other name was Peor when he seduced the Israelites in Sittim on their march from Nile river. The Israelites offered him lustful worship which brought ruin and plague on them. Thus lust (Chemos) was placed side by side with murder (Moloch).

There were other fallen angels by the names of Baalim and Ashtaroth, Baalim being male and Ashtaroth, being female. They can assume either sex or both the sexes. They can assume any shape they like, big or small, bright or dark. They can fly in the air to execute their purposes and can have either enmity or love. With these in troop came Ashtaroth whom the Phoenicians called Astrate, the queen of Heaven. The Sidoniam Virgins paid their vows and sang every night by moonlight. Her temple was built by Solomon, who was excessively fond of his wives, who seduced him to build it.

The next fallen angel was Thammuz. The Syrian maidens mourned him in love songs throughout the summer day, supposing that he died every year of the mortal wound he received from a boar while the river. adonis ran purple from its native rock, Supposed to be stained with the with the blood of Thammuz, Every year. This love-tale also corrupted the women of Jerusalem with the same passion for Thammuz.

The next fallen angel was Dagon whose mourning was genuine when the captive ark disfigured his idol which fell broken across the threshold in his own temple and his head and hands were lopped off this caused a great humiliation to his worshippers. He was a sea

monster and he was upward man and downward fish. He had a grand temple in Azotus and was worshipped with fear throughout the coast of Palestine and in Gath and Ascalon and in the frontiers of Gaza.

The next fallen angel was Rimmon, whose pleasant seat of worship was the fair cit of Damascus, Situated on the bank of two lucid streams, Abbana and Pharphar, he also seduced the Israelites to worship him instead of God. Aleper named Naaman once worshiped him. But he lost that worshipper, who on the advice of Elisha took seven dips in the river Jordan and was cured. Though he lost the leper, he gained the King Ahaz as his worshipper. Aled upon to insult the true God's temple and replace it with an altar to Rimmon and to burn his hateful offerings for him. Thus he foolishly worshipped the gods whom he had conquered.

The last fallen angel was Belial. No angel was more corrupt and loved more vice for its own sake No temple was built for him. There was no altar dedicated to him. Still none had a greater influence in temples and altars when the priest became atheist as did Eli's sons who corrupted the temple of God by Violence and lust by corrupting the maidens who came for worship. Belial reigned supreme in courts and palaces and in luxurious cities where the noise of riotous, corrupt and out rageous activities rose above the loftiest towers. The worshippers of Belial; flown with insolence and wine wander forth to commit mischief. Th streets of Sodom bear witness to it. At Gibeath, one night, a married woman (Levitie's wife) was surrendered by the host to the revelers to avoid worse rape. Thus Milton describes the host of fallen angels.

Conclusion :

The story of the Fall of Man is the story of Milton's own soul. It gave enough scope to Milton to express his religious sentiment and Renaissance culture. It is Milton speaking, when Satan says :
What though the field be lost?
All is not lost : the unconquerable will
And study of revenge, immortal hate.

Though Milton expressed himself through almost all his characters, it is into Satan that he has put most of himself, his pride and his temperament. Just as Milton opposed the authority of King Charles I and became a stern republican, so Satan denied the authority of God and rebelled against Him. The defeat to Satan could not damp his unconquerable spirit of defiance. To Milton, the England of the Restoration was like Hell. Like Satan, he says:

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The mind is in its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of Hell or a Hell of Heaven.

Milton, like Satan is a lover of freedom. To him, it is better to rule in Hell than to serve in Heaven:

To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

It is Milton's heroism that speaks in the republicanism of Satan. In Satan's speeches, Milton's love of liberty is expressed. Another part of Milton's self is expressed through Adam, who is like Milton, pious, God fearing and grave. Milton made Adam the mouthpiece of his theology and Puritanism. Milton refers to his own blindness in the following lines:

Thus with the year
Seasons return : but not to me returns
Day or the sweet approach of even or morn.

However it is in the general tone and tenor of Paradise Lost that the personality of Milton is reflected. In every character in it, as indeed in all his poems, Milton's intense individuality appears and it provides immense pleasure to readers.

4.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Examine Satan as a Hero in Paradise lost book 1?
2. Write an essay on the epic similes in Paradise Lost with special reference to Book I.
3. Write an essay on Milton's style with special reference to Book I of Paradise Lost.
4. Write an essay on the list of Fallen Angles as stated by Milton in Book I of Paradise Lost.
5. "Milton is as much a child of the Renaissance as of Reformation". Discuss with reference to Book I of Paradise Lost.
6. Write an assessment of Paradise Lost as the greatest poem.
7. Write an essay on the personal or autobiographical element in the poetry of Milton with special reference to Book I of Paradise Lost.

4.8 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. P.Ramanathan: Paradise lost book 1 Rao brothers, Guntur1955
2. F.R.Leavis: Milton and Paradise Lost, Macmilan, London,1964.

Prof. M. Suresh Kumar

LESSON – 5

POPE : EXTRACT FROM "THE RAPE OF THE LOCK" (CANTOS I &II)

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After the study of the lesson the student will have an idea about

a) Alexander Pope, the poet

b) 'The Rape of the Lock' as a mock - epic poem.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Text : The Rape of the Lock

5.3 Glossary

5.4 Analysis of the Text

5.5 Critical evaluation

5.6 Summary

5.7 Self Assessment Questions

5.8 Suggested Reading

5.1 INTRODUCTION :

Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688 in London. His father, a prosperous linen-draper, was a Roman Catholic. On account of his religion Pope was excluded from the public schools and universities. Pope was a sickly and delicate child. He found his only delight in books. He picked up most of his knowledge in a haphazard way. He read books "like a boy gathering flowers in the fields just as they fell in his way".

His religion also made it impossible for him to enter any of the professions. He lived with his parents in a small estate on the borders of Windsor Forest and then at Chiswick, till the completion of his translation of Homer. His financial success enabled him to buy a home at Twickenham. He spent his remaining life there and died there in 1744.

Pope's poetic career is generally divided into three parts, corresponding roughly to the early, middle and later periods of his life.

1. The Early Period : The first period lasts from 1704-1713. The more important works of this period are : The Pastorals; Windsor Forest; Essay on Criticism; The Rape of the Lock; Some minor poems – 'The Temple of Fame', 'The Messaiah' etc.,

This period is largely a period of experiment. 'The Pastorals' were written when Pope was between 16 and 17. These are four artificial poems on the seasons in imitation of

Virgil. 'Windsor Forest' is a descriptive poem combining pastoral descriptions with historical and political passages. 'The Essay on Criticism' contains principles of literary taste and style according to the classical rules of Aristotle and others. 'The Rape of the Lock' is a mock-heroic poem.

2. The Middle Period : The second period is the period of the great Homer translations like 'Illiad' and 'Odyssey'. The two translations were a great success and brought Pope immense wealth and popularity. Pope also created some original poetry during this middle period.

3. The Last Period : In the last and greatest period Pope wrote his masterly satires. The masterpieces of this great period are: 'The Dunciad'; 'Moral Essays'; 'The Imitations of Horace'; and 'The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot'.

5.2 THE TEXT : 'THE RAPE OF THE LOCK'

Canto – I

What dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs,
What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things,
I sing – This Verse to *CARYLL*, Muse! is due:
This, ev'n *Belinda* may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,
If She inspire, and He approve my Lays.

Say what strange Motive, Goddess ! cou'd compel
A well-bred Lord t' assault a gentle belle?
Oh say what stranger Cause, yet unexplor'd,
Cou'd make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold, can Little Men engage,
And in soft Bosoms dwells such mighty Rage?

Sol thro' white Curtains shot a tim'rous Ray,
And op'd those Eyes that must eclipse the Day:
Now Lap-dogs give themselves the rowaing Shake,
And sleepless Lovers, just at Twelve awake:
Thrice rung the Bell, the Slipper knock'd the Ground
And the press'd Watch return'd a silver Sound
Belinda still her downy Pillow prest,
Her Guardian *Sylph* prolong'd the balmy Rest.
'T was he had summon'd to her silent Bed
The Morning Dream that hover'd o'er her Head?
A Youth more glitt'ring than a *Birth-night Beau*,
(That ev'n in Slumber caus'd her Cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay,
And thus in Whispers said, or seem'd to say.

'Fairest of Mortals, thou distinguish'd Care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant Thought,
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught;
Of airy Elves by Moonlight Shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled Green,
Or Virgins visited by Angel-Powers,
With Golden Crowns and Wreaths of heav'nly Flowers;
Hear and believe! thy own Importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to Things below.
Some secret Truths, from Learned Pride conceal'd,
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:
What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give?
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe,
Know then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,
The light *Militia* of the lower Sky:
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the Wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an Equipage thou hast in Air,
And view with scorn *Two Pages* and a Chair.
As now your own, our Beings were of old,
And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous Mold;
Thence, by a soft Transition, we repair
From earthly Vehicles to these of Air.
Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,
That all her Vanities at once are dead:
Succeeding Vanities she still regards,
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.
Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
And love of Ombre, after Death survive.
For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,
To their first Elements their Souls retire:
The Sprights of fiery Termagants in Flame
Mount up, and take a *Salamander's* Name.
Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,
And sip, with *Nymphs*, their Elemental Tea.
The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of mischief still on Earth to roam.
The light Coquettes in *Sylphs* aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air.

Know farther yet; Whoever fair and chaste
Rejects Mankind, is by some *Sylph* embrac'd:
For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease

Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please.
What guards the Purity of melting Maids,
In Courtly Balls, and Midnight Masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous Friend, the daring Spark,
The Glance by Day, the Whisper in the Dark,
When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,
When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires?
'Tis but their *Sylph*, the wise Celestials know,
Tho' *Honour* is the Word with Men below.

Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their Face,
For Life predestin'd to the *Gnomes'* Embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their Pride,
When Offers are disdain'd, and Love deny'd.
Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant Brain,
While Peers, and Dukes, and all their sweeping Train,
And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,
And in soft Sounds, '*Your Grace'* salutes their Ear.
'Tis these that early taint the Female Soul,
Instruct the Eyes of young *Coquettes* to roll,
Teach Infant Cheeks a bidden Blush to know,
And little Hearts to flutter at a Beau.

'Oft when the World imagine Women stray,
The Sylphs thro' mystick Mazes guide their Way,
Thro' all the giddy Circle they pursue,
And old Impertinence expel by new.
What tender Maid but must a Victim fall
To one Man's Treat, but for another's Ball?
When *Florio* speaks, what Virgin could withstand,
If gentle *Damon* did not squeeze her Hand?
With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,
They shift the moving Toy shop of their Heart;
Where Wigs with Wigs, with Sword-knots Sword-knots strive,
Beaus banish Beaus, and Coaches Coaches drive.
This erring, Mortals! Levity may call,

Oh, blind to Truth ! the *Sylphs* contrive it all.
Of these am I, who thy Protection claim,
A watchful Sprite, and *Ariel* is my Name.
Late, as I rang'd the Crystal Wilds of Air,
In the clear Mirror of thy ruling Star
I saw, alas! some dread Event impend,
Ere to the Main this Morning Sun descend.

But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:
Warn'd by thy *Sylph*, oh Pious Maid, beware !
This to disclose is all thy guardian can.
BEWARE of all, but most beware of man!

He said; when *Shock*, who thought she slept too long,
Leapt up, and wak'd his Mistress with his Tongue.
'Twas then, *Belinda!*, if Report say true,
Thy Eyes first open'd on a *Billet-doux*;
Wounds, charms and ardors, were No sooner read,
But all the Vision vanish'd from thy Head.
And now, unveil'd, the Toilet stands display'd,
Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.
First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores,
With Head uncover'd, the *Cosmetic* Pow'rs.
A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her Eye she rears;
Th' inferior Priestess, at her Altar's side,
Trembling, begins the sacred Rites of Pride.
Unnumber'd Treasures ope at once, and here
The various Off'rings of the World appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring. Spoil.
This Casket *India's* glowing Gems unlocks,
And all *Arabia* breathes from yonder Box.
The Tortoise here and Elephant unite;
Transform'd to *Combs*, the speckled and the white.
Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,
Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.
Now awful Beauty puts on all its Arms;
The Fair each moment rises in her Charms,
Repairs her Smiles, awakens ev'ry Grace,
And calls forth all the Wonders of her Face:
Sees by Degrees a purer Blush arise,
And keener Lightning's quicken in her Eyes.
The busy sylphs surround their darling Care,
These set the Head, and those divide the Hair,
Some fold the Sleeve, while others plait the Gown;
And *Betty's* prais'd for Labours not her own.

Canto II

Not with more Glories, in th' Etherial Plain,
The Sun first rises o'er the purpled Main,
Than issuing forth, the Rival of his Beams

Lanch'd on the Bosom of the Silver *Thames*.
Fair Nymphs and well-drest Youths around her shone,
But ev'ry Eye was fix'd on her alone
On her white Breast a sparkling *Cross* she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.
Her lively Looks a sprightly Mind disclose,
Quick as her Eyes, and as unfix'd as those:
Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends,
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,
And, like the Sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful Ease and Sweetness void of Pride,
Might hide her Faults, if Belles had Faults to hide:
If to her share some Female Errors fall,
Look on her Face, and you'll forget 'em all.

This Nymph, to the Destruction of Mankind
Nourish'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal Curls, and well conspir'd to deck
With shining Ringlets the smooth Iv'ry Neck.
Love in these Labyrinths his Slaves detains,
And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.
With hairy sprindges we the Birds betray,
Slight Lines of Hair surprise the Finny Prey,
Fair Tresses Man's Imperial Race insnare,
And Beauty draws us with a single Hair.

Th' adventurous *Baron* the bright Locks admir'd;
He saw, he wish'd and to the Prize aspir'd:
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By Force to ravish, or by Fraud betray;
For when Success a Lover's Toils attends,
Few ask, if Fraud or Force attain'd his Ends.

For this, ere *Phoebus* rose, he had implor'd
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd,
But chiefly *Love* – to *Love* an Altar built,
Of twelve vast *French* Romances, neatly gilt
There lay three Garters, half a Pair of Gloves;
And all the Trophies of his former Loves
With tender *Billet-doux* he lights the Pyre,
And breathes three am'rous Sighs to raise the Fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent Eyes
Soon to obtain, and long Possess the Prize:

The Pow'rs gave Ear, and granted half his Pray'r,
The rest, the Winds dispers'd in empty Air.

But now secure the painted Vessel glides,
The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,
While melting Musick steals upon the Sky,
And soften'd Sounds along the Waters die.
Smooth flow the Waves, the Zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smil'd, *and* all the *World* was gay.
All but the *sylph* With careful Thoughts opprest,
Th' impending we sate heavy on his Breast.
He summons Strait his Denizens of Air;
The lucid squadrons round the Sails repair:
Soft o'er the Shrouds Aerial Whispers breathe,
That seem'd but *Zephyrs* to the Train beneath.
Some to the Sun their Insect-Wings unfold
Waft on the Breeze, or sink in Clouds of Gold,
Transparent Forms, too fine for mortal Sight,
Their fluid Bodies half dissolved in Light.
Loose to the *Wind* their airy Garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring Textures of the filmy Dew,
Dipt in the richest Tincture of the Skies,
Where Light disports in ever-mingling Dies,
While ev'ry Beam new transient Colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their Wings.
Amid the Circle on the gilded Mast,
Superior by the Head, was *Ariel* plac'd;
His Purple Pinions opening to the Sun,
He rais'd his Azure Wand, and thus begun.

'Ye *Sylphs* and *Sylphids*, to your Chief give Ear,
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and *Daemons hear*!
Ye know the Spheres, and various Tasks assign'd,
By Laws Eternal to th' Aerial Kind.
Some in the Fields of purest Aether play,
And bask and whiten in the Blaze of Day,
Some guide the Course of wand'ring Orbs on high,
Or roll the Planets thro' the boundless Sky.
Some less refin'd beneath the Moon's pale Light
Pursue the Stars that shoot athwart the Night,
Or suck the Mists in grosser Air below.
Or dip their Pinions in the painted Bow,
Or brew fierce Tempests on the wintry Main,
Or o'er the Glebe distil the kindly Rain.

Others on Earth o'er human Race preside,
Watch all their Ways, and all their Actions guide:
Of these the Chief the Care of Nations own,
And guard with Arms Divine *the British Throne*.

'Our humbler Province is to tend the Fair,
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious Care.
To save the Powder from too rude a Gale,
Nor let th' imprison'd Essences exhale
To draw fresh Colours from the vernal Flow'rs,
To steal from Rainbows, ere they drop in Show'rs,
A brighter Wash; to curl their waving Hairs,
Assist their Blushes, and inspire their Airs;
Nay, oft, in Dreams, Invention we bestow,
To change a *Flounce*, or add a *Furbelo*.

'This Day, black Omens threat the brightest Fair
That e'er deserv'd a watchful Spirit's Care;
Some dire Disaster, or by Force, or Flight,
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in Night.
Whether the Nymph shall break *Diana's Law*;
Or some frail *China*-Jar receive a Flaw,
Or stain her Honour or her new Brocade,
Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade,
Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that *Shock* must fall.
Haste then ye Spirits! to your Charge repair:
The flutt'ring Fan be *Zephyretta's* Care;
The Drops to thee, *Brillante*, we consign;
And, *Momentilla*, let the Watch be thine;
Do thou, *Crispissa*, tend her fav'rite Lock;
Ariel himself shall be the Guard of *Shock*.

'To fifty chosen *Sylphs*, of special Note,
We trust th' important Charge, the *Petticoat*:
Oft have we known that sev'n-fold Fence to fail,
Tho' stiff with Hoops, and arm'd with Ribs of Whale.
Form a strong Line about the Silver Bound,
And guard the wide Circumference around.

Whatever Spirit, careless of his Charge,
His Post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,
Shall feel sharp Vengeance soon o'ertake his Sins,
Be stopt in *Vials*, or transfixt with Pins;
Or plung'd in Lakes of bitter *Washes* lie,

Or wedg'd whole Ages in a Bodkin's Eye:
Gums and *Pomatums* shall his Flight restrain,
While clog'd he beats his silken Wings in vain;
Or Alom-Stypticks with contracting Power
Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd Flower:
Or as *Ixion* fix'd, the Wretch shall feel
The giddy Motion of the whirling Mill,
In Fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the Sea that froaths below!,

He spoke; the Sprits from the Sails descend;
Some, Orb in Orb, around the Nymph, extend;
Some third the mazy Ringlets of her Hair;
Some hang upon the Pendants of her Ear;
With beating Hearts the dire Event they wait,
Anxious and trembling for the Birth of Fate.

5.3 GLOSSARY :

Canto I

dire offence	:	serious mischief
amorous causes	:	love affairs
Belle	:	beautiful lady, Belinda
to assault	:	to attack violently
yet unexplored	:	still unknown
Sol	:	Latin word meaning 'Sun'
timorous	:	timid
oped	:	opened
eclipse	:	darken
lap dogs	:	small pet dogs
birth-night beau	:	young lords in best attire on Royal birth days
vision	:	something seen in one's imagination
touched	:	impressed
infant thought	:	the mind of a child
airy elves	:	fairies living in the air
the silver token, the circled green	:	gifts and games of fairies
the box	:	the box at the theatre
equipage	:	escort
soft transition	:	gentle, smooth and painless change
we	:	the sylphs
repair	:	go
earthly vehicles	:	earthly living places
transient breath	:	brief existence

vanities	:	follies
succeeding vanities	:	follies of the next generation of women
gilded	:	golden, splendid
chariots	:	carriages
Ombre	:	a card game
first elements	:	Earth, Air, Fire and Water
termagants	:	angry and arguing women
Salamander	:	Lizard like animal supposed to live in fire
melting maids	:	maidens who are likely to yield to the advances of men
courtly balls	:	dance parties arranged at royal courts
masquerades	:	masked dances
treacherous friend	:	a man who appears to be friendly but who has an evil design on a lady
daring spark	:	a bold, gallant young man
a glance by day	:	love glances during day time
the whisper in the dark:		words of love whispered into a lady's ears in the dark hours
kind occasion	:	favourable opportunity
some nymphs there are		:there are some maidens
		too conscious of their
face	:	too keenly aware of their beauty
peers	:	noblemen
Dukes	:	aristocrats possessing the highest titles in the kingdom
garters	:	the highest decoration in England
stars	:	medals
coronets	:	small crowns worn by noblemen
coquette	:	a woman who practises various arts to conquer the hearts of men
bidden blush	:	a blush not natural and spontaneous
stray	:	follow a wrong path
sylphs	:	spirits of the air
mystic mazes	:	mysterious and confusing paths
giddy circles	:	pleasures and entertainments which turn their heads
impertinence	:	spending over luxuries
one man's treat	:	entertainment arranged by one admirer
but for	:	except for
another's ball	:	a dance party arranged by another admirer
Florio, Damon	:	names of two imaginary lovers
wig	:	a mass of false hair worn on the head
sword-knot	:	silk thread tied to the sword-hilt
erring mortals	:	mistaken human beings
levity	:	fickleness
contrive	:	manage

a watchful sprit	:	a vigilant spirit
late	:	recently
ranged	:	roamed about
impend	:	about to happen
thy guardian	:	Ariel, Belinda's guardian sylph.
Shock	:	the name of Belinda's pet-dog
Billet-doux	:	love letter
wounds	:	the wounds made by the arrows of Cupid in the heart of a lover
charms	:	the magic spell exercised on a lover by a beautiful woman
ardours	:	burning passions of love
nymph	:	Belinda
nicely culls	:	selects carefully
the fair	:	the fair lady Belinda
Betty	:	maid servant

Canto II

ethereal plain	:	the sky
purpled main	:	the ocean which looks red
issuing forth	:	emerging
the rival	:	the beautiful Belinda
launched	:	set afloat in a boat
fair nymphs	:	beautiful young ladies
lively looks	:	animated glances
sprightly	:	cheerful
disclose	:	reveal
void of	:	free from
belles	:	beautiful and fashionable young ladies
this nymph	:	Belinda
nourish two locks	:	maintained two locks
labyrinths	:	bewildering paths and passages
slender chains	:	delicate chains
hairy springs	:	snares made of horse-hair
the finny prey	:	fish
Phoebus	:	sun
implored	:	pleaded with
Propitious heaven	:	the gods who were entreated by the Baron to show favour to him
twelve romances	:	a reference to contemporary French writers of romances
trophies	:	a trophy is a symbol of victory
pyre	:	funeral pyre

prostrate falls	:	falls flat on his face
the prize	:	a lock of Belinda's hair
secure	:	free from care
the painted vessel	:	the brightly-painted boat in which Belinda was sailing on the river Thames.
glides	:	sails with a smooth movement
floating tides	:	gently moving waves
melting music	:	soft melodies
steals upon the sky	:	rises gently upwards
softened sounds	:	the gentle sounds of music
Zephyrs	:	breezes
the impending woe	:	the misfortune that was about to occur
denizens	:	inhabitants
lucid squadrons	:	groups of bright sprits of the air
repair	:	go
shrouds	:	sails of the boat
train	:	attendants and companions of Belinda
insect wings	:	thin and light wings
unfold	:	spread
waft on the breeze	:	float gently on the breeze
fluid bodies	:	airy shapes
filmy dew	:	thin like the web of spiders
tincture	:	colour
disports	:	moves about playfully
pinions	:	wings
sylphids	:	sylphs of the female sex Fays, fairies, genii,
Elves and demons	:	supernatural beings of different kinds.
painted bow	:	the rainbow
brew	:	prepare
wintry main	:	the ocean in winter
over the glebe	:	over the land which has been ploughed
humbler province	:	less important sphere of duty
too rude a gale	:	too harsh a gust of wind
imprisoned essences	:	perfumes kept in bottles
exhale	:	evaporate
vernal flowers	:	flowers of the spring
flounce, furbelow	:	an ornamental border for a woman's petticoat
Diana's law	:	the law of chastity
masquerade	:	masked dance
at a ball	:	at a dance
Zephyrette	:	gentle wind
Momentilla	:	a particle
crispissa	:	curled
drops	:	ear-rings

seven-fold fence	:	petticoat
the silver bound	:	the silver border of the petticoat
at large	:	defenceless
bodkin	:	a blunt-edged needle
pomatums	:	a sweet-smelling ointment for hair
styptics	:	medicines that stops bleeding
rivell'd	:	shrunken
whirling wheel	:	the chocolate mill
extend	:	fan out
third	:	pass through

5.4 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT :

Alexander Pope wrote "The Rape of the Lock" on the request of his friend, John Caryll, to bring about a reconciliation between two families quarrelling over a trivial incident. One Lord Peter had cut off a lock of hair of Miss Arabella Fermor, which resulted in a bitter feeling between the two families. Hence Pope attempted this mock-heroic poem in which he described how the peer cut off the lock of hair of Miss Fermor while drinking coffee at Hampton.

In the opening lines Pope states the theme that love affairs may lead to serious offences and unimportant and ordinary things may cause great conflicts. Pope informs the Muse of Poetry that Caryll suggested this poem and that Belinda (Miss Arabella Fermor) inspired it.

Pope asks the Muse to tell him what strange motive could compel a well-bred lord to attack a gentle lady. He also asks the muse what stranger cause could make a gentle lady to reject the offer of a lord. Why should such little men engage in so bold tasks and why should soft-hearted ladies fly into such a mighty rage.

It was already mid-day. Belinda opened her eyes. It was the time the lap-dogs get up from their sleep. And it was also the time when lovers, who were not able to get sound sleep throughout the night, get up from bed. Belinda again fell asleep. Belinda's guardian sylph, Ariel, told her in a dream that numerous bright spirits were flying around her all the time and wherever she went.

Ariel explains the nature of different categories of spirits to her. He tells her that the vanities of a woman would not die with her death. Her pleasures and interests would remain with her even after her death. When the beautiful women died their spirits returned to the elements like earth, air, fire and water. The spirits of violent women became fire-spirits. The spirits of gentle women became nymphs of the water. The spirits of solemn prudes became gnomes or earth-spirits. The spirits of light-hearted coquettes became sylphs or spirits of the air. The purity of the maidens was protected by their guardian-sylphs. These maidens had to be saved from the amorous advances of their wicked lovers. Some maidens developed excessive ambition and even refused suitable offers of marriage.

The sylphs were the protectors of maidens and virgins. When a maiden was about to fall a victim to a man who gave an entertainment in her honor, her guardian sylph would make her be attracted to another suiter.

When different young men tried to appeal to the vanities of a young girl, she would shift her heart from one gallant to another like a moving toy shop. The sylphs caused the fickleness of girls in order to protect their maidenly virtue. Ariel warned Belinda that a terrible misfortune was likely to befall upon her and she must remain careful throughout the day.

At that point, Belinda's pet dog, Shock, woke her up. When she opened her eyes, Belinda saw a love-letter waiting for her. As the letter mentioned 'wounds of love', 'charms of love' and 'the ardour of love', Belinda got ready for her toilet.

While wearing a white dress, Belinda first addressed a prayer to the 'cosmetic power'. Betty, her maid-servant stood by her side to assist her. Large number of caskets on the dressing table revealed their precious contents brought from different countries of the world. Betty skilfully selected different articles to decorate her goddess, Belinda. There were brillant pearls and diamonds of India, perfumes of Arabia, combs made of tortoise shells and milk white combs of ivory, pins, puffs, powders, pitches, Bibles and love-letters, these cosmetic and ornaments enhanced Belinda's beauty.

Canto II

The beautiful Belinda came out of her house and her arrival was compared to the rising of the sun. She took a journey over the river Thames along with beautiful ladies and well-dressed young lords. Everyone's eyes were fixed on her. She smiled at everybody but did not show special favors to anyone. Pope then makes a reference to two beautiful locks of hair hanging behind the ivory neck of Belinda. Lord Peter had great admiration for those locks and wanted to possess this treasure.

In order to fulfil his desire he prayed to the god of love to help him. For this he raised an altar consisting of twelve huge French Romance books. He placed before the altar many of his trophies he had won in previous love-affairs. He lit a fire with the love letters he had received in the past.

Belinda and all her friends were in a merry mood. Ariel, who was accompanying Belinda invisibly, was worried about the approaching misfortune. Ariel called for all his fellow-spirits to take all the necessary precautions. He told them that it was their duty to look after the welfare of beautiful ladies. They had to save the powder on the cheeks of the beautiful ladies from being blown away by wind, to save the perfumes from evaporating, to curl the wavy hair of the ladies, to help the ladies to blush more effectively and so on. He also informed them that they should protect Belinda on that day from a serious misfourtune. The misfortune was not known but it might be anything. She might allow her chastity to be violated, or some delicate China jar in her home would crack, or she would lose some gallant, or she would lose a necklace at a ball, or her pet dog would meet a tragic end.

To fifty selected sylphs he assigned the duty of protecting Belinda's petticoat. He warned them that any negligence would be severely punished. To follow Ariel's instructions all the sylphs surrounded the beautiful Belinda to form an effective body-guard for her.

5.5 CRITICAL EVALUATION :

Pope has called the poem "heroic-comical". It is a brilliant mock-heroic poem. An epic or a heroic poem is one which tells the story of a hero whose achievements have national significance. It is generally a long, narrative poem written in a grand style. Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are the best known models of epic poem. The epic hero is often a great national figure. "Paradise Lost" is Milton's great epic poem, which is the one and only in English literature. In it Adam is the hero and the father of the entire human race. The epic hero is not an ordinary human being for gods and goddesses are concerned with his fate and the fate of his nation. Heaven interferes in his affairs by means of minor gods or angels, who are called the epic machinery. The style of the epic is elevated to suit its high theme.

At the outset the epic poet states the theme of the poem, invokes the heavenly muse to assist him in his task and then plunges into the middle of his narrative. The beginning of the action is told in retrospect and its conclusion is foretold at the end of the poem.

In a 'mock-epic' the poet uses the epic structure but on a miniature scale and with a subject that is mean or trivial. It's purpose is satirical. 'The Rape of the Lock' is a brilliant example of the 'mock epic' form. The theme of the poem is the theft of a lock of hair of a beautiful lady and the quarrel that arose between two families. All the main features of epic surround this incident. The style is elevated, there is the supernatural machinery like sylphs, a visit to the underworld and battles, though only at cards. Pope handles the trival happenings with all dignity and seriousness which properly belongs to the epic. J.J. Cunningham points out that, Pope in this mock epic "yokes together the ancient and the contemporary" and gives "a modern, comparatively trivial, subject elevated treatment, simply by forcing ancient and modern into uncomfortable proximity".

'The Rape of the Lock' starts with the invocation to the Muse. There are the supernatural creatures, the ensuing calamities though trivial – all in the imitation of an epic poem. The epic poem is generally a long poem covering years. but 'The Rape of the Lock' is a short poem covering only hours. The gods of the epic are heroic beings where as Pope's sylphs are tiny. As Pope himself puts it "the use of the grand style on little subjects is not only ludicrous, but a sort of transgression against the rules of proportion and mechanics. 'It is using a vast force to lift a feather". An outstanding mock-heroic element in the poem is the comparison between the arming of an epic hero and Belinda's dressing and using cosmetics in order to kill.

"The Rape of the Lock" is also a social satire. In a satire the poet uses such weapons as humour, wit, irony, mockery and ridicule. A satiric poem exposes human weaknesses, shortcomings, follies and absurdities. In 'The Rape of Lock' Pope satirises not only the follies of the fair sex, but also the artificial social life of 18th century London as a whole. In

the opening lines of the poem Pope mocks at the later rising of the aristocratic ladies and gentlemen of the time. Belinda opens her eyes at twelve but again falls asleep.

The high ambition of the ladies of the time to marry peers and dukes is also mocked at. The women's excessive devotion to self-decoration is mocked at while describing Belinda's toilet. She regards her toilet as a religious ceremony. She is also described as a warrior getting ready for a battle – a battle to kill young gallants with her charms and attraction.

5.6 SUMMARY :

'The Rape of the Lock' may be called Pope's masterpiece. This was founded upon an incident which occurred in the Roman Catholic society in which he had many friends. A certain Lord Peter cut a lock of hair from the head of a young beauty named Arabella Fermor (the Belinda of the poem). This practical joke led to a quarrel between the two families, and Pope was appealed to by a common friend, John Carryl, to throw oil on troubled waters by turning the whole thing into jest. 'The Rape of the Lock" was the result. In this poem the trivial occurrences are handled with all the dignity and seriousness which properly belong to the epic. Hence it is called a mock-heroic poem.

5.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Write an essay on 'The Rape of the Lock' as a mock epic poem.
2. What is a mock-heroic poem? Illustrate fully the mock-heroic quality of 'The Rape of the Lock'
3. Consider 'The Rape of the Lock' as a social satire.
4. Examine the style of Alexander pope in the poem" 'The Rape of the Lock'.

5.8 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. Jeffrey Tillotson, The Rape of the Lock.
2. Roger P. McCutcheon, 18th Century English Literature.

Dr. N. V. Subbaiah

LESSON – 6

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESSAY: KINDS OF ESSAYS

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to.

- Trace the origin and development of the new literary form i.e. the essay.
- Know about different kinds of essays.
- Appreciate know the contribution of great essayists to English literature.
- Note the essayist's role in correcting the evils of the society.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Kinds of Essays

6.3 Characteristics of an Essay

6.4 Form and Structure of the Essay

6.5 History and Development of the Essay

6.6 Summary

6.7 Self Assessment Questions

6.8 Suggested Readings

6.1 INTRODUCTION :

The Elizabethan Age is the most creative period in English literature. The foreign wars were mostly over, and the Englishmen had for the first time the leisure to devote their energies to other interests than war upon their neighbours. Fortunately, just at this time, the great wave of the Renaissance, the new birth of letters, having spent itself in Italy and crossing over France and Spain, reached the shores of England. There it was eagerly welcomed by men, who if they had not the poise and mental reach of the Italians of the Renaissance, or the gaiety and sense of form of their French contemporaries, had yet more daring and more intellectual curiosity. Most of the new literary forms were first made known to the Elizabethans by translations from Italian and French. It was thus, that the tales of Boccaccio and of Queen Marguerite and the wisdom of Machiavelli were made available to the English readers. Sir Thomas Wyatt and William Panter rendered valuable service to the English poetry and prose. Sir Philip Sidney, an Italianated Englishman of the noblest type, inaugurated English criticism in The Apologie for Poetry.

With Francis Bacon begins philosophical reflections upon life, in the style of Plutarch's Morals and the Essays of Montague. Bacon's mind is catholic in its range like

Plutarch's, but the subjects of moral thought that interest him are comparatively few and generalized. His treatment of a moral subject is more scientific also than that of the classical writer. In the Essays, the method of Bacon is to reduce reflection to the lowest terms, to try to discover the fundamental principles of conduct, the influence, the actions of men. Again, Bacon has nothing of the attractive personality of Montaigne, a man of the world who made a point of finding out what the world was like from all sorts and conditions of man, from the king on his throne to the groom on his riding horse. Montaigne writes on every subject in breezy discursiveness, like a man on horseback traversing an interesting country. Bacon's Essays reflect his experience of life, but they tell us little or nothing of his personal likes and dislikes. They are austere, brief to the point of crudeness. The most obvious division of the Essays is that which time has made. Certain essays do "come home to men's business and bosoms" in a universal way. They appeal to men at all times. Another type of Essay is distinctly limited partly by Bacon's own character and partly by the social characteristics of his time. Essayists of Bacon's mental characteristics will still write on love and marriage, but their treatment of these themes must inevitably be broader and deeper because it has been spiritualized. It is just, because it recognizes the mutual obligations of men and women.

The essay fills so large a place in modern literature and is so attractive a form of composition, that attention must necessarily be given to it in any course of literary study. At the same time, its outlines are so uncertain, and it varies so much in matter purpose, and style, that systematic treatment of it is impossible. When we compare a number of representative essays by different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. An essay by Bacon consists of a few pages of concentrated wisdom, with little elaboration of the ideas expressed. An essay by Montaigue is a medley of reflections, quotations and anecdotes; in an essay by Addison the thought is thin and diluted and the tendency is now towards light didacticism and now towards personal gossip. The essays of Macaulay and Herbert Spencer are really small books. From these cases, it is evident that we have to do with totally different conceptions of what the essay is and what it should aim to accomplish. According to Johnson, an essay is "a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular and orderly composition." Murray's Dictionary speaks of the essay as "a composition of moderate length on any particular subject or branch of a subject," and adds "originally implying want of finish, but now said of a composition more or less elaborate in style, though limited in range."

Commonly accepted cannon is that the method of the essay is marked by considerable freedom and informality. In the early stages of its evolution, irregularity and "want of finish" were fundamental for an essay. In fact, the essay arose because men had come to feel the need of a vehicle of expression in which they could enjoy something of the freedom of conversation. Thus Bacon's essays are, as he himself tells us, "brief notes set down rather significantly than anxiously", while Montaigne's discursiveness and habit of going about his subject is a series of "hops, and skips, and jumps," are notorious. The essay is relatively unmethodical as well as relatively short. The well-marked tendency among modern essayists is towards greater logical consistency and regularity of structure. It is only one among many signs of the transformation of the essay into something different from the original and

genuine type. The central fact of the true essay is the direct play of the author's mind and character upon the matter of his discourse.

In our study of the essay there are several things which have to be kept in view. In the first place we have to consider the writer's personality and standpoint, his attitude immediately towards his subject and incidentally towards the life at large. While thus disengaging the personal qualities of his work, we have also to follow the evolution of his thought, marking what aspect of his subject he has selected for treatment, how he introduces his ideas, how he handles and enforces them and how he brings them to a conclusion. An historical study of the essay will include a consideration of its growth and transformation, and of the way in which it has influenced and been influenced by other forms of literature.

Essay (French: "attempt"): a short piece of expository prose which "attempts" to shed some light on a restricted subject of discussion. Beyond this brief definition it is impossible to limit or classify essays. A convenient division, however groups essays according to content and mood as "familiar" (also called "informal" or "personal") and "formal." The familiar essay was more or less created by Montaigne (who gave the essay its name). It plays up the personality of the author, draws openly on his prejudices, recognizes that its conclusions are incomplete and tentative, develops the ideas in a loose structure, has a sprightly conversational style which uses description, narration and humor to make its point. It is often, however, highly informative, full of ripe wisdom and insight into universal human ideals and motivations. Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Robert Louis Stevenson, Oliver Wendell and E.B. White are notable for this style.

"Formal" essays were introduced in England by Bacon who adopted Montaigne's term. Here the style is objective, compressed, aphoristic, and wholly serious. During the 18^{th} century in the mild-mannered social criticism of the periodical essays of Addison and Steele, Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith, a compromise was achieved between the whimsical personal essay and the hard, compact formal type. In modern times, the formal essay has become more diversified in subject matter, style and length until it is better known by such names as article, dissertation, or thesis; and factual presentation rather than style or literary effect has become the basic aim.

6.2 KINDS OF ESSAYS :

On the basis of its chief or dominant characteristics the essay may be of the following kinds.

(1) The Aphoristic Essay :

Bacon is the chief exponent of this kind of essay. He gave an objective or impersonal term. His writings do not portray personal term, though they sometimes declare his own preferences as in "Of Gardens."

(2) The Personal Essay :

In this type of essay, the personal element predominates. Like the lyric, it is mood-dictated. Charles Lamb is the greatest of the personal essayists in the English language.

(3) The Character Essay :

This type of essay was popular during the first half of the 14th century. The essayist sketched some particular human types of men and women – the hypocrite, the milkmaid, the affectate traveller – in each of the essays.

(4) The Critical Essay :

During the restoration period Dryden introduced a new variety called the critical essay. This kind of essay is an attempt at literary criticism.

(5) The Social or Periodical essay :

This kind of essay was employed to serve a distinctly social purpose and it was first published in the periodical press. The early part of the 18th century was the heyday of this type of essay. Addison and Steele were pioneers in this field.

6.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ESSAY :

The chief characteristics of the literary essay are :

1. It is a prose composition, short or of moderate length. This brevity or shortness of the essay does not arise from the superficiality or lack of knowledge of its author. Rather it results from the fact that he has full command over his subject and so can express himself in a pithy and condensed language.
2. The essay is incomplete: It is not exhaustive. The essayist does not say all that is to be said on the subject. His aim is simply to convey his views on the subject.
3. It is personal in nature: From the second characteristic of the essay, it follows that the literary essay is more or less a personal affair. It is mood - dictated.
4. It is formal and unsystematic: It lacks finish. It was this characteristic of the essay which Dr. Johnson emphasized when he called it an undigested piece and loose sally of the mind. There is no formal or logical development of thought in an essay. The various points or arguments are not systematically arranged, but follow each other in a haphazard manner.
5. A good essay, as Bacon emphasized must have a grain of salt within it. In other words, it should be attractive and charming, so that it may be easily retained in the mind. It should have a touch of humour.

6.4 FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE ESSAY :

An essay must be personal. Any subject is good enough for it. But it must be the expression of the personality of the writer – his way of looking at persons and things, his own reaction to all that he experiences in life. Whatever he writes about, he must convey his personal impression. There will be a lighter note. The essay cannot be anything abstract, erudite, philosophical. It is the writer's free play of intelligence, fancy, humour and it is again pleasure of communicating his own sensations, which make the best charm of an essay. The essay therefore, cannot conform to any rigid type.

Montaigne is rightly called the father of the essay. His essays are varied in form – containing autobiographical, speculative and ethical elements. Some think that Cicero and Plato might have been his models. The real technique of the essay was invented by Montaigne. We must draw a distinction between Plato's dialogues with their dramatic setting and Montaigne's essays. Cicero's De Serectute comes nearer to the essay, because he deals with the ethical content in a lighter vein. Montaigne has always the lighter touch – and the gift of style which makes more than half of the charm of his essays. He has a disarming and refreshing frankness. As the essay has so much to do with the personality of the writer, it has taken varied forms in England. Sir Thomas Browne's essays, Religio Medici and Urn Burial are rich in gorgeous rhetoric, have a dreamy splendour, sometimes of speculative interest.

Addison deals with the commonplace problems of life and morality, relieved with genial humour. Charles Lamb is the most exquisite and sometimes fantastic essayist, weaving tender pathos and graceful sentiment into the humdrum realities of life. He is essentially a romantic in the days of the Romantic movement. De Quincey evolved impassioned and condensed prose out of his varied personal experiences. Pater wrote mostly on art subjects and expressed his fine sensibilities in delicately moulded sentences.

The essay has some analogy to the lyric art, differing from it by admitting of humour and by having a larger range. The rigid classification of literary types breaks down when we consider the different shapes that the essay takes. Benson says, "What lies behind all art is the principle of wonder and of arrested attention". This may as well hold good of the essay. It may be a romantic view of literature. And the essay has a romantic core in it. The essayist must be a spectator of life. His experience must be a part of the common experience of mankind. He must make this experience a reality to himself and then he can convey it in fitting words, images and emotions to his readers. He is more concerned with the appearances of things than with the fundamentals. It is his own impressions and sensibilities, his personal reaction that must get into his essays. This will become easy to him if he cultivates largeness of view and tolerance of spirits. Then the essay will be the reflection of a good humoured, gracious and reasonable personality. Mood and temper are important factors with an essayist.

An essayist should meet his readers half-way, anticipate the very sensations and thoughts of his readers. He can do this by his larger absorption and integration of common human instincts and pleasures. He should possess more of the human elements than those for whom he writes and when he adds to these a sweet reasonableness, he is a good essayist. He himself must have a zest for life and infect his readers with it. An essayist must be said to be a lesser kind of poet, working in simpler and humbler materials. He should be a realist rather than a romancer. He should have always his feet planted on earth. He should always keep his eyes and ears open. An essayist is also a critic and interpreter of life, in a limited sense. He does not sound the depths of life, but he is interested in revealing to us its joy and beauty.

6.5 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESSAY :

Johnson defines the essay as "A loose sally of the mind: an irregular, indigested piece; not a regular and orderly composition." Johnson must have in mind the typical eighteenth

century essay. But the term, Essay is extended to more ambitious compositions. The term has been applied to an elaborately finished treatise with reference to brief general treatment of any topic to a short, discursive article on a literary, philosophical or social subject when viewed from a personal standpoint. English essayists generally have been more interested in varying phases of contemporary manners and customs and the periodical essay of the eighteenth century seems to concentrate on this subject. An essayist should possess experience of and insight into character, a critical taste free from pedantry and an easy literary style.

The development of the essay of contemporary manners followed immediately upon the artificial comedy of manners. It began when the stage seemed to have come to a sorry pass with the attack made by Jeremy Collier on its immoralities. By the time drama revived with Goldsmith coming into the field, a vast change had taken place in social life, people having become more sober after the orgies of the Restoration. Queen Anne society was certainly very decorous and quite intent on eliminating the licence of the Restoration days. The essay came into existence to satisfy the changed tastes and outlook of the new generation. In the Elizabethan age there might have been fore-runners of the essay. Bacon's essays might have offered suggestion to later writers. As Bacon describes them, they are "but certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously; not vulgar; but of a kind where of men shall find much in experience and little in books." The Tatler and The Spectator made the real beginnings of the essay and they owe little even to Dryden, Cowley and Temple. Dryden's Prefaces may be reckoned among essays when we keep in mind that Addison has some critical papers in the Spectator and it is to be noted that Dryden's simple and colloquial style, intended to appeal not to a small circle of critics but to a wider and more popular audience, brings him closer to Addison. Johnson mentions the works of Casa, Castiglione and La Bruyere as having influenced the development of the essay in England. Casa's Galateo, whose subject is polite behaviour, has its counterpart in Chesterfield's Letters to His Son, but has nothing to do with the origin of the essay in the eighteenth century. The Courtier of Castiglione was a very popular book in its day, but here again the ideal courtier of Urbino has left no trace upon the English essay. The characters of La Bruyers might have some suggestive value to Steele and Addison.

The essays of Montaigne supply the pattern which seems to have been worked upon, varied and developed. Bacon owes nothing to him. Montaigne is certainly the inventor of the essay. His English successors managed to give a certain unity of design to the essay and cut out a little of its irrelevancy and egotism. The development of English prose on the one hand and the growth of the newspaper press on the other, had distinct bearings on the essay. Defoe's Review started in 1704; he lacked the knack of writing a typical essay. He lacked humour and urbanity.

We cannot overlook some important factors that gave a distinct turn to the essay. The clubs and coffee- houses became the centre of social life in the days of Queen Anne. They were "a sort of happy compromise between Restoration profligacy and Puritan domesticity", and the essay too played a part in restoring sanity to society. During the first half of the eighteenth century we see a reformation in morals and manners. The Tatler, started by Steele

in 1709, launched the essay on its carrier. Marking as it does the transition from journalism to essay writing, it stands midway between Defoe's Review and Addison's The Spectator. Steele mixed freely in every kind of society, and could sympathize with every side of character. He was the true spectator, and it were his impressions of men and things, which might have been elaborated by Addison. It was Steele who invented the dramatis personae of the essays. Addison was good in his own way, when handling mental abstractions of his own creation and critical and allegorical matter. Addison's cold temperament and dignified aloofness and superior contempt rather disqualified him for a good essayist. Steele writes in The Tatler, "I must confess it has been a most exquisite pleasure to me to frame characters of domestic life." Here was the starting-point for Richardson and Fielding.

Swift was a great writer but lacked the lighter graces that go to the making of an essayist. He was up against cant, humbug and quackery and used his wit not to enliven morality as Addison did but to slash at erring, offending and floundering humanity. He did not have the neutral temperament of an essayist. By the time Defoe had produced Robinson Crusoe (1719), the essay form had been firmly established and its spirit and character changed later. Even the periodical wiring of Swift was no small contribution to the development of the essay. Johnson continued the tradition of The Spectator in The Rambler (1750). It represents the second epoch of the essay. The pomposity of his style was little calculated to win much popular favour of his undertaking. Goldsmith was better fitted by virtue of a pure and faultless style to play a very important role, and his admirable gift of essay-writing is displayed in his Chinese Letters later republished as The Citizen of the World. His style and felicity of expression made him a popular essayist. The Tatler, The Rambler and The Citizen of the World mark three different stages in the development of the essay. Then the essay seemed to have been eclipsed for a while by the novel.

In the nineteenth century the Romantic Movement changed the character of the essay. Leigh Hunt resumed the tradition of the periodical essay. But he just followed the lines of Addison and Goldsmith. After Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt and Lamb came to the limelight as essayists and critics. Hazlitt turned the essay to the literary purpose and it exceeded the periodical essay in length. He is distinctly modern. He stands midway between the old essayists and the new. Next comes Lamb, who holds a unique place in the development of the essay. He seemed to be more interested in the past than in the present. He added colour and romantic spirit of the age to everything he wrote. With Hazlitt, Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt, a change came over the spirit of the essay. It added to them, qualities that belong to the newer age, the age of French Revolution in politics and the Romantic Movement in literature. In the previous and early essays life was shown as a comedy of manners. But now it came to be regarded as a romantic drama, consisting of both comedy and tragedy. Lamb fulfilled his literary destiny, as a commentator upon life. His approach to the subject was a personal one. Another new feature in Lamb's essays is his urban spirit. Coupled with this is Lamb's all-embracing sense of humour. His humour is made up of an attentive playfulness of the expert handling of all the shades of sentiment. His art exhausts and reconciles the aromas of very different flowering in literature.

Judging from all these points we come to the conclusion that Lamb was in a way a pioneer in writing the critical essay. In any discussion of English essayists the name of

William Hazlitt (1778-1830) is certain to be joined with that of Lamb. Hazlitt's life contained as much poverty, sorrow and tragedy as Lamb's – but instead of accepting quietly he sometimes wrote in a spirit of angry protest. There are many great essayists after Hazlitt. Macaulay (1800-59), Mathew Arnold, Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), and G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) contributed a lot to English essay. E.V. Lucas (1868-1938), Max Beerbohm (1872-1956), Robert Lynd (1879-1949) have treated the essay as pure entertainment rather than a form for the expression of serious ideas. G.B. Shaw was also a brilliant essayist. The essays of Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) although less important than her novels have had much influence in shaping English literary taste. Aldous Huxley was another great essayist. His essays show the extraordinary range of Huxley's interests, as well as his deep concern for human values and social justice. George Orwell's essays show his patriotism towards his country. His sympathy and admiration for working people is well seen in 'Down the Mine'. He was a man who had taken an active and practical part in the events of his time. Like this the field of the essay has seen a number of essayists with different styles and manners.

6.6 SUMMARY :

The essay fills a large place in modern literature. It is an attractive form of composition. It varies in matter, purpose and style. A systematic treatment of an essay is impossible. When we compare essays of different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. The method of the essay is marked by considerable freedom and informality. In its early stages irregularity and want of finish were fundamental for an essay. The essay is relatively unmethodical as well as relatively short. Modern essayists strove towards greater logical consistency and regularity of structure. There is a transformation of the original essay into something different. Writer's personality and standpoint has to be taken into consideration.

It is impossible to limit or classify essays. It is often however highly informative, full of ripe wisdom and insight into universal human ideals and motivations. Formal essays were introduced in English by Bacon. In modern times the formal essay has become more diversified in subject matter, style and length until it is better known by such names as article, dissertation and factual presentation. An essay must be personal. Any subject is good enough for it. Whatever he writes about, he must convey his personal impression. The essay cannot be anything abstract. It cannot conform to any rigid type. The essay has some analogy to the lyric art. It may be a romantic view of literature. It has a romantic core in it. The essayist must be a spectator of life. The development of English prose on the one hand and the growth of the newspaper press on the other, had distinct influence on the essay. In the previous and early essays life was shown as a comedy of manners. Charles Lamb was an expert in handling all the shades of sentiment. The field of essay has seen a number of essayists with different styles and manners.

6.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Write an essay on the important elements of an essay.
2. Discuss the form and structure of the essay.
3. What are the different kinds of essays? Explain.

4. Examine the difference between subjective Essay and Objective essay.

6.8 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. Ifor Evans. 1940. A Short History of English Literature. Penguin Books.
2. William Henry Hudson.1979. An Introduction to the Study of Literature. New Delhi. Kalyani Publishers.

Dr. G. Harold Candlin Cyril

LESSON – 7

RICHARD STEELE : ON JUDICIOUS FLATTERY

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- know the contribution of great essayists to English literature
- know that an essay serves the social purpose
- Notice the keen observation of Steele of men and their manners.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

7.1 Introduction to the Writer and Text

7.2 Text

7.3 Glossary

7.4 Analysis of the text

7.5 Critical Evaluation

7.6 Summary

7.7 Lines for Explanation

7.8 Self assessment questions

7.9 Reference Books

7.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE WRITER AND THE TEXT :

Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729) was born in Dublin and educated at the Charterhouse and Merton College, Oxford. He was a survivor of the dashing cavalier type, with the addition of a tender conscience. His adventurous spirit carried him from Oxford into the life Guards, and afterwards founded "The Tatler" (1709), and created the Spectator Club. His chivalrous morality produced "The Christian Hero" (1701), and several comedies in which he broke with the Restoration tradition by ranging wit on the side of virtue. His essays in "The Tatler" and "The Spectator" (1711) show the same preoccupation with "the reformation of the world" by means of good-humoured raillery and satire on all departures from good sense and toleration.

The intimacy which appeared in Restoration prose lives on in the days of Queen Anne, the most sociable period of English literature. Much of the prose of the age went into the novel, but some of the fiction writers were talented in other ways Daniel Defoe, who is often remembered only for Robinson Crusoe, did much to establish English journalism, and in his paper The Review, set the eighteenth century upon the genial task of composing the periodical paper. This employment developed with Sir Richard Steele and Joseph Addison. Addison's real fame derived from his association with Steele in The Tatler between 1709 and

1711. Together they joined in the production of The Spectator. Both Steele and Addison came to understand precisely what was required. They wrote for their audience, determined not to give offence.

One important feature in the social history of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was the appearance of the London Coffee-houses, of which the most famous were Button's and Will's. By that time the passion for coffee-drinking had spread all over Europe, and coffee houses (like hotel bars in the modern world) had become popular places for the exchange of news and opinions. It was in London coffee-houses that the most famous of the early 'periodicals' were born, namely The Tatler and The Spectator.

The Tatler, which first appeared in 1709 was produced by Sir Richard Steele and his friend Joseph Addison. Manners, fashions, literature, stories, moral reflections – all took a turn as themes in brief papers, which were addressed consciously to a middle-class audience. The periodical essay was the eighteenth-century equivalent of the broadcast talk, and Addison found that a group of recognizable characters made his task easier. The Tatler consisted of essays and articles on all sorts of subjects, many of them pretending to be written by an imaginary character known as Isaac Bickerstaff and his equally imaginary sister, Jenny Distaff, who gave the necessary 'feminine interest'. The articles were written as though from well-known coffee-houses-poetry from Will's, news from St. Jame's and so on. In 1711 The Tatler was replaced by a new paper called The Spectator, published every weekday, and still chiefly written by Steele and Addison, though there were now other contributors, including Pope.

The Spectator, which lasted only for about eighteen months, included some of the most famous of all English essays, namely those concerned with the Spectator Club. The Club was a group of typical upper-class and middle-class people of the time, all of them imaginary. It included Captain Sentry the military man, Sir Andrew Freeport the rich businessman, Will Honeycombe the sophisticated and fashionable young man of the town, and Will Wimble. Most famous of all was the old-fashioned English country gentleman, Sir Roger de Coverley. Sir Roger and his friends became immensely popular with the reading public, taking the same sort of place in their minds as television celebrities (real or imaginary) in the minds of the modern public. The essays of Steele and Addison, even more than those of Cowley a generation earlier, were to influence the style and form of the English essay for the next two centuries: henceforth, following the examples in The Spectator, it was generally to be witty, light and agreeable in tone, resembling the ordinary conversation of educated men and women.

7.2 TEXT :

An old acquaintance, who met me this morning, seemed overjoyed to see me, and told me I looked as well as he had known me do these, forty years: " but," continued he "not quite the man you were, when we visited together at Lady Brightly's. Oh! Isaac, those days are over. Do you think there are any such fine creatures now living, as we then conversed with ?" He went on with a thousand incoherent circumstances, which, in his imagination, must needs please me; but they had quite the contrary effect. The flattery with which he began, in telling

me how well I wore, was not disagreeable; but his indiscreet mention of a set of acquaintance we had outlived, recalled ten thousand things to my memory, which made me reflect upon my present condition with regret. Had he indeed been so kind as, after a long absence, to felicitate me upon an indolent and easy old age; and mentioned how much he and I had to thank for, who at our time of day could walk firmly, eat heartily, and converse cheerfully, he had kept up my pleasure in myself. But of all mankind, there are none so shocking as these injudicious civil people. They ordinarily begin upon something that they know must be a satisfaction; but then, for fear of the imputation of flattery, they follow it with the last thing in the world of which you would be reminded. It is this that perplexes civil persons. The reason that there is such a general outcry among us against flatterers is, that there are so very few good ones. It is the nicest art in this life, and is a part of eloquence which does not want the preparation that is necessary to all other parts of it, that your audience should be your well-wishers; for praise from an enemy is the most pleasing of all commendations.

It is generally to be observed, that the person most agreeable to a man for a constancy is he that has no shining qualities, but is a certain degree above great imperfections; whom he can live with as his inferior, and who will either overlook, or not observe his little defects. Such an easy companion as this either now and then throws out a little flattery, or lets a man silently flatter himself in his superiority to him. If you take notice, there is hardly a rich man in the world, who has not led such a friend of small consideration, who is a darling for his insignificancy. It is a great ease to have one in our own shape a species below us, and who, without being listed in our service, is by nature of our retinue. These dependants are of excellent use on a rainy day, or when a man has not a mind to dress; or to exclude solitude, when one has neither a mind to that or to company. There are of this good-natured order, who are so kind as to divide themselves, and do these good offices to many. Five or six of them visit a whole quarter of the town, and exclude the spleen, without fees, from the families they frequent. If they do not prescribe physic, they can be company when you take it. Very great benefactors to the rich, or those whom they call people at their ease, are your persons of no consequence. I have known some of them, by the help of a little cunning, make delicious flatterers. They know the course of the town, and the general characters of persons; by this means they will sometimes tell the most agreeable falsehoods imaginable. They will-acquaint you, that such a one of a quite contrary party said, “That though you were engaged in different interests, yet he had the greatest respect for your good sense and address.” When one of these has a little cunning, he passes his time in the utmost satisfaction to himself and his friends; for his position is never to report or speak a displeasing thing .to his friend. As for letting him go on in an error, he knows advice against them is the office of persons of greater talents and less discretion.

The Latin word for a flatterer, *assentator,* implies no more than a person that barely consents; and indeed such a one, if a man were able to purchase or maintain him, cannot be bought too dear. Such a one never contradicts you; but gains upon *you,* not by a fulsome way of commending you in broad terms, but liking whatever you propose or utter; at the same time, is ready to beg your pardon, and gainsay you, if you chance to speak ill of yourself. An old lady is very seldom without such a companion as this, who can recite the names of all her lovers, and the matches refused by her in the days when she minded such vanities, as she is

pleased to call them, though she so much approves the mention of them. It is to be noted that a woman's flatterer is generally older than herself; her years serving at once to recommend her patroness's age, and to add weight to her complaisance in all other particulars.

We gentlemen of small fortunes are extremely necessitous in this particular. I have indeed one who smokes with me often; but his parts are so low, that all the incense he does me is to fill his pipe with me, and to be out at just as many whiffs as I take. This is all the praise or assent that he is capable of; yet there are more hours when I would rather be in his company than in that of the brightest man I know. It would be a hard matter to give an account of this inclination to be flattered; but if we go to the bottom of it; we shall find, that the pleasure in it is something like that of receiving money which we layout. Every man thinks he has an estate of reputation, and is glad to see one that will bring any of it home to him. It is no matter how dirty a bag it is conveyed to him in, or by how clownish a messenger, so the money be good. All that we want, to be pleased with flattery, is to believe that the man is sincere who gives it us. It is by this one accident, that absurd creatures often outrun the most skilful in this art. Their want of ability is here an advantage; and their bluntness, as it is the seeming effect of sincerity, is the best cover to artifice.

Terence introduces a flatterer talking to a coxcomb, whom he cheats out of a livelihood; and a third person on the stage makes on him this pleasant remark, " This fellow has an art of making fools mad- men." The love of flattery is, indeed, sometimes the weakness of a great mind; but you see it also in persons, who otherwise discover no manner of relish of anything above mere sensuality. These latter it sometimes improves; but always debases the former. A fool is in himself the object of pity, until he is flattered. By' the force of that, his stupidity is raised into affectation, and he becomes of dignity enough to be ridiculous. I remember a droll, that upon one's saying, "The times are so ticklish, that there must great care be taken what one says in conversation"; answered with an air of surliness and honesty, "If people will be free, let them be so in the manner that I am, who never abuse a man but to his face." He had no reputation for saying dangerous truths; therefore when it was repeated, "You abuse a man but to his face?" "Yes," says he, "I flatter him."

It is indeed the greatest of injuries to flatter any but the unhappy, or such as displeased with themselves for some infirmity. In this latter case we have a member of our club, who, when Sir Jeffrey falls asleep, wakens him with snoring. This makes Sir Jeffrey hold up for some moments the longer, to see there are men younger than himself among us, who are more lethargic than he is.

When flattery is practised upon any other consideration, it is the most abject thing in nature; nay, I cannot think of any character below the flatterer, except he that envies him. You meet with fellows prepared to be as mean as possible in their condescensions and expressions; but they want persons and talents to rise up to such baseness. As a coxcomb is a fool of parts, so is a flatterer a knave of parts.

The best of this order, that I know, is one who disguises it under a spirit of' contradiction or reproof. He told an arrant driveller the other day, that he did not care for being in company with him, because he heard he turned his absent friends into ridicule. And

upon Lady Autumn's disputing with him about some- thing that happened at the Revolution, he replied with a very angry tone, “Pray, madam, give me leave to know more of a thing in which I was actually concerned, than you who were then in your nurse’s arms.”

7.3 GLOSSARY :

judicious	:	careful and sensible, showing good judgment
flattery	:	praise that is excessive or insincere
acquaintance	:	a person that you know but who is not a close friend
conversed	:	an informal talk
incoherent	:	not clear and hard to understand
circumstances	:	conditions and facts that are connected with and affect a situation
indiscreet	:	too open in what one says or does
regret	:	to feel sad, sorry or disappointed about
felicitate	:	words of congratulation
indolent	:	lazy and inactive
cheerfully	:	happily
injudicious	:	not well judged
imputation	:	to say often unfairly
perplexes	:	feel confused, to worry
commendations	:	praise
constancy	:	the quality of being firm and not changing
imperfection	:	not perfect
retinue	:	a group of people accompanying an important person
rainy day	:	to save money for a time when one may need it.
spleen	:	an attack of melancholy or bad temper
benefactors	:	person who gives money or other help
falsehood	:	a statement that is not true
discretion	:	good judgment
contradict	:	to give opposite information
patroness	:	a person who gives money or support to a person
fulsome	:	excessive

gainsay	:	deny ; contradict
artifice	:	the action or a means of deceiving or tricking
outrun	:	to develop faster than
Terence	:	the great Latin comic writer, 195-150 B.C.
Coxcomb	:	foolish person who gives attention to clothes
relish	:	enjoy, liking
debases	:	make lower
affectation	:	unnatural
ridiculous	:	absurd
of parts	:	accomplished, clever
droll	:	amusing
ticklish	:	embarrassing
surliness	:	bad tempered and rude
infirmity	:	weakness
abject	:	miserable, without pride or dignity
condescension	:	to behave in a kind or polite way, but so as to show that one feels one is better than other people.
baseness	:	dishonourability
knave	:	deceitful, dishonest
reproof	:	blame or disapproval
arrant	:	(of a bad person or a thing) to the greatest extent or complete
driveller	:	one who talks nonsense or talks childishly
ridicule	:	make fun of
disputing	:	disagreement

7.4 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT :

In this essay Richard Steele portrays the pictures of different kinds of flatterers. There is one injudicious flatterer. He gives all the tiniest details of the person he met without maintaining any decency. Steele regards him as an injudicious flatterer. The essayist skilfully draws out the evils of men who always flatter others. Flatterers sometimes perplex the civil persons with their injudicious flattery. It is the nicest art in this life. It is a part of eloquence which does not want the preparation that is necessary to all other arts. Praise from an enemy is the most pleasing of all praises. An agreeable flatterer is one who has no shining

qualities but must be above great imperfections. Some flatterers know the course of the town and general characters of persons; by this means they tell the most agreeable falsehoods. They use a little cunning to become delicious flatterers.

One who is a little cunning passes his time in satisfaction. He never speaks a displeasing thing to his friend. Some flatterers never contradict but gain the persons who they flatter. Generally women's flatterers are found to be older than the women they praise. Flattery gives pleasure. It is like receiving money which we lay out. All that men need is to be pleased with flattery. Among all the flatterers the best one is he who disguises flattery under a spirit of contradiction or reproof. The love of flattery is the weakness of great people. It is not good to flatter the unhappy or the people displeased with their infirmity. As a coxcomb is a fool of parts, so is a flatterer a knave of parts.

Richard Steele's skill lies in bringing out the follies and laughing at his contemporaries out of their follies. There is realism in his portrayal. The writer clearly expressed his thoughts in simple language. Though the essay has a loose pattern it makes everyone think over the follies of people and derive pleasure.

7.5 CRITICAL EVALUATION :

Richard Steele was successful in presenting the contemporary situation of his times. The essay "On Judicious Flattery" does not convey any moral but the real nature of people is presented skilfully by the essayist. Steele was a keen observer of men and their manners. His primary duty was reviving the society through his essays. The essayist very cleverly talks about the injudicious flatterer. Flatterers are of different types. Each one has his own way of flattering others and gains satisfaction and pleasure. There is a spirit of spontaneity in this essay.

7.6 SUMMARY :

In the essay "On Judicious Flattery" Richard Steele deals with different kinds of flatterers. He mentions about an injudicious flatterer. He praises others by mentioning each and every detail. He even speaks about the dress and praises that it is a very nice one. Steele considers him an injudicious civilian. Steele observes people and picks up certain aspects of men. He gives imaginary portraits by stressing the evils of men who always flatter others. Flattery is the nicest art in this life. It is a part of eloquence. It does not need any preparation. The patient listeners of flatterers are their well wishers. Praise from an enemy is the most pleasing of all praises.

A flatterer should be inferior to the man whom he flatters. He should be an easy companion and should throw a little flattery or allow him silently to flatter himself in his superiority to him. We see such flatterers very often in our day to day life. He becomes a sort of dependent and these are of excellent use on a rainy day or when a man is not inclined to go out or to remain alone. Such flatterers are the great benefactors of the rich. Some good flatterers never contradict the listeners but gain their hearts. They do not praise the listeners in broad terms but likes whatever is proposed or uttered by their listeners. Sometimes they beg pardon when the listener speaks ill of himself.

Generally most of the people like to be flattered by others. To be praised by others gives pleasure. It is something like that of receiving money which we lay out. Every man thinks that he has an estate of reputation. He will be happy if any one brings it home. All that people want is to be pleased with flattery. Among all the flatterers the best one is he who disguises flattery under a spirit of contradiction or reproof. The love of flattery is sometimes the weakness of a great mind. Sometimes flattery improves the person but mostly debases. Great care is to be taken for what one says in conversation. Steele is successful in portraying different kinds of flatterers. The essay is of loose pattern and it is satirical nature but worth reading.

7.7 LINES FOR EXPLANATION :

(1) Do you thinks there are any such fine creatures now living as we then conversed with. These lines are found in the essay "On Judicious Flattery" written by Richard Steele. Here the author speaks of a flatterer whom he met. That person praises others starting from the age of the person. This type of flatterer is an injudicious flatterer. He mentions about his dress and says that it is a very nice one. Praising the person by giving all the details sometimes embarrasses the person. But the flatterer never notices it. The man who flattered the author stands as an injudicious civilian.

(2) It is the nicest art in this life, and it is a part of eloquence which does not want the preparation that is necessary to all other parts of it. This passage is found in the essay "On Judicious Flattery" written by Richard Steele.
Here Steele speaks about the art of Flattery. Flattery makes everyone happy. It is considered the nicest art. It does not need any preparation that is necessary to all other arts. The flatterer and the listener also feel happy by this art.

(3) Every man thinks he has an estate of reputation and is glad to see one that will bring any of it house to him.

This passage is found in the essay "On Judicious Flattery" written by Richard Steele.

Steele speaks about different kinds of flatterers in this essay. Most of the people are inclined to be flattered by others. It is an ingrained quality in man. The pleasure of flattery is something like receiving money which is laid out. Every man thinks that he has an estate of reputation. He will be glad if any one brings it home. Flattery has its own way of gaining people and making them happy.

7.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Write a note on Steele's satire.
2. Do you agree that flattery is the food of fools?
3. Write an essay on the contribution of Richard Steele to English literature.
4. Examine the literary style of Steele with reference to the essay " On Judicious Flattery".

7.9 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. Ifor Evans. 1940. A Short History of English Literature. Penguin Books.
2. Hudson: Short History of English literature, kalian publishers.

Dr. G. Harold Candlin Cyril

LESSON – 8

CHARLES LAMB : DREAM CHILDREN

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- Assess Charles Lamb's contribution to literature.
- Understand the salient features of the essays of Lamb.
- Portray Lamb as a consummate storyteller.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

8.1 Introduction to the Writer and the Text

8.2 Text : Dream Children

8.3 Glossary

8.4 Analysis of the Text

8.5 Brief critical Evaluation

8.6 Summary

8.7 Lines for Explanation

8.8 Self Assessment Questions

8.9 Suggested Readings

8.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE WRITER AND THE TEXT :

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) was born in London in 1775. His father was a confidential clerk to Samuel Salt, one of the benchers of the Inner Temple. He had his school education in the neighbourhood. Later he was sent to Christ's Hospital where he remained from 1782-1789. There he formed a life-long friendship with Coleridge. He was a nervous and timid child. He is a good scholar but his stammering prevented his entering the church. In 1792 he was appointed to a clerkship in the India Office, Leaden Hall Street, which he held for thirty-three years. His real works were to be found on the shelves of the East Indian company. There was a taint of insanity in his family and his sister, Mary Lamb, had stabbed her mother in a fit of maniacal frenzy. Charles devoted his life to her; broke off his marriage and gave pledges to the Government that he would take her under his care so long as he lived. They lived together in a garret. Mary Lamb's malady broke out at intervals. The dread of it hung always over them. "The history of the long association between brother and sister, broken from time to time by a fresh attack of the fatal malady, is one of the most touching things in fact or fiction," as observed by a critic.

His first book was The Tale of Rosamond Gray – one of the most pathetic stories in English literature. In 1801 he wrote a tragedy John Woodvil, which proved a failure as a

drama. In 1807 he published Tales from Shakespeare written by Mary Lamb and himself. In 1808 appeared his Specimen of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare; and this book gave an impetus to the study of the Elizabethan dramatists. The best book which places him in the highest rank as a writer of prose is the Essays of Elia which appeared in the London Magazine in 1823. In 1823 Lamb had left London and taken a cottage at Islington. He adopted Emma Isola, a young orphan, whose presence brightened the lives of brother and sister until her marriage in 1933 to E. Moxon, the publisher. In 1825 Lamb retired with a pension. His health was impaired and his sister's attacks were more frequent and of longer duration. During one of his walks he fell slightly hurting his face. He died on 24th December 1834, deeply afflicted by Coleridge's death.

Lamb's essays began to appear in the London Magazine under the name of Elia. The pseudonym Elia was borrowed by Lamb from an Italian clerk in the South Sea House named Elia. Lamb never claimed for his Elia any strong quality of authorship. He never treated the phantom figure of Elia seriously. Lamb had to rescue the essay from the morass into which it had sunk. With Montaigne in the background of his mind and imagination what he mainly did was to give the essay the character of personal talk and more freedom of movement and grace and ease. Lamb caught his tone and method from all the essayists who had gone before. He saw life actually, and in vision too and gave free play to his humour, his intelligence, his detached observation, his sensibility, his nostalgia, his sense of pathos and tragedy in life. Lamb with such a temperament and liveliness of fancy could not have followed the beaten track. He also changed the technique of the essay. Lamb's essays, limited in number, exhibit infinite variety: "Here is God's plenty". There are some immortal figures like Elia in his essays. Lamb is a writer, entirely given to self-expression, but he does not stand between the reader and the world he portrays.

Lamb's outlook on life in general and particularly the political life of his times, can be grasped from his letters written to his friends. He used his own impressions and recollections as subject matter, for his works. But he wrote without a trace of egotism or self-assertion. In various essays whenever he had chance, he did not hesitate to satirise the nobles. Bacon may have massive wisdom and Browne may reach the lofty heights of eloquence in his musical prose. But there is not an essayist so charming as Lamb. The secret of this power to charm is the incomparable sweetness of disposition which Lamb not only possessed but had a unique gift of communicating to his writings. Lamb was all the while defending the poor with his broad spirit of toleration and Catholic sympathy. Lamb's personality is unique. His biography can be written from the essays. His subject was humanity at large. His personality did not project itself and he reflected the ordinary life of the world, with added light and colour. Lamb is not a moralist nor a psychologist; his object is not research, and he is above all an artist.

Wisdom is the greatest quality of Lamb. Hazlitt called him the most sensible man as well as the wittiest. In pure wisdom only Coleridge equals him. But he had what Coleridge did not fully possess, the genius of commonsense. Wisdom demands not only the ability to understand others and sympathise with them, but the possession of self-knowledge. Lamb had it in abundance. Lamb was one of the wisest men of his time. Lamb has been more

highly esteemed by some as a critic than as an essayist. He does indeed hold a high place as a penetrating critic of Shakespeare and the earlier dramatists. New light seemed to have dawned on the critics of the Romantic ages. Lamb made as much important a contribution to the literary criticism of the day as Hunt, Hazlitt, Coleridge, De Quincey. Lamb has the romantic perception and sensibility, even if he stood somewhat aloof from the movement and looked back to the past. This looking back to the past was itself a part of romanticism. Lamb's criticism involves evocation, metaphor and personal reference. He discovered for us the great Elizabethans, particularly Webster and Browne. Lamb was a master of applied criticism. In order to analyse the "obliquity of Lamb's genius" we must see the firm root of his creative imagination. He was endowed with the gift of constructing comedy out of the meanest stuff of human nature. Lamb's gift for analysis takes him into a different field from that of the poet. Whether he is talking of life or of art, his prose becomes the instrument of an emotion. It never outstrips the accompanying brainwork.

In all his essays Lamb described his own personal life, his mistakes, his defects and merits. He communicates with his readers about his friends, relatives, joys and sorrows, likes and dislikes. Again it gave him a chance to expose the defects and mistakes of people around him. In the essay "Dream Children" he saw life as it was happening in London. "There is perhaps in the whole of Charles Lamb's writings, nothing so entirely beautiful, nothing so unmistakable the product of genius as this masterpiece of imaginative prose. It is the wail of a deeply sympathetic, keenly loving soul for whom fate has apportioned solitariness."

8.2 TEXT : DREAM CHILDREN

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones, crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene – so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country – of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts; till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining country; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a short while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.s tawdry gilt drawing-room..

Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show 'their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer – here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted – the best dancer, I was saying, in the country, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, bacause she was so good and religious. Than I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said, "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she – and yet I never saw the infants.

Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the busts of the twelve Caesars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn out hangings, fluttering tapestry and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out–sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me – and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, – and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at – or in lying about upon the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me – or, basking in the orangery till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that graceful warmth – or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging mid- way down the water in silent state; as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of' peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then, in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L —, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and king to the rest of us; and instead of moping about in solirary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over country in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out – and yet he loved the old

great house and garden too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries – and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used, to carry me upon his back when I was a lame footed boy – for he was a good bit older than me – many a mile when I could not walk for pain; — and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame footed; and how when he died; though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than, not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb – Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W–n ; and as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty and denial, meant in maidens – when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children grew gradually fainter to my view, receding and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name" – and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm chair, where I had fallen asleep with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side – but John L. (or James Elia) was gone forever.

8.3 GLOSSARY :

When they were children	:	When their elders were children
Stretch their imagination	:	imagine the existence of their legendary grand uncle, and grand mother.
great grand-mother Field	:	Lamb's grand-mother Sarah Field.
Which had been the scene	:	where it had occurred
Children in the wood	:	the familiar ballad in Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry.

Chimney piece	:	structure of wood above and around fire place
Committed	:	entrusted
gilt	:	yellow like gold
concourse	:	crowd
tawdry	:	showy but worthless
psaltery	:	psalter, the Book of Psalms
testament	:	either of the two main parts of the Bible, the Old or the New Testament
spread her hands	:	to show the vast extent of her great grand-mother's learning
involunatary movement	:	an unconscious action
upon my looking	:	Lamb looked grave to show his disapproval of Alice's misbehaviors
cancer	:	malignant tumour eating the part it has affected
apparition	:	appearance of a supernatural being
gliding	:	moving smoothly
Here John	:	John spread out his eyes in fear
Look courageous	:	he controlled himself by putting on the airs of courageous fellow.
Twelve Caesars	:	the Roman Emperors from Caesar Augustus to Antoninus Pins.
turned into marble	:	be absorbed in gazing at them
hangings	:	drapery with which tapestry is hung on walls
Fluttering tapestry	:	flapping textile fabric used for covering walls furniture
panels	:	flat surfaces with raised margins or with surrounding frame
gilding	:	golden tinge
gardening man	:	servant employed to tend a garden
Nectarines	:	a kind of peach
peaches	:	large fruit, usually round, flavoured with sweet pulp and rough stone
yew tress	:	a kind of slow-growing dark-leaved ever-green tree.
basking	:	lying in warmth and light especially in sunshine.

Orangery	:	orange house
grateful	:	pleasant
dace	:	small fresh-water fish
sulky	:	silent, as if from resentment
Pike	:	large voracious fresh-water fish.
impertinent frisking	:	playful capers
baits	:	temptations
John L	:	John Lamb. He was Lamb's brother who died in November 1821.
moping	:	being in depressed, spiritless mood
mettlesome	:	spirited
imp	:	a mischievous child
pent up	:	confined within
make allowances	:	show consideration
take it to heart	:	be deeply grieved by it
mourning	:	black clothes worn in sign of bereavement or sorrow
coyness	:	slowness in responding to amorous advances.
representment	:	reproduction
mournful features	:	sad faces
Lethe	:	river in Hades producing forgetfulness of the past.

8.4 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT :

Lamb fulfilled his literary destiny, as a commentator upon life. This commentary of his was that of a gentle egoist, without a trace of vanity or self-assertion. His approach to the subject was a personal one and it is this intimate quality, suggesting the author's odd and lovable personality, which constitutes the new feature of Lamb's Essays of Elia. He was remarkable in choosing his subject-matter. In 'Dream Children' we find him talking with two children conjured up from nothingness. It is a pleasant and deeply affecting essay. What Lamb tells us is an enduring reality. Nostalgic reverie is found in 'Dream children'. His personality, his sense of form and his interest in details transmuted any theme into a familiar essay and a work of art, all life was material for his essays. Through this essay runs warm and wide human sympathy, delicate whimsey and tenderness and beneath the blithe surface something of the pathos which made up Lamb's life and personality.

8.5 BRIEF CRITICAL EVALUATION :

'Dream Children' is noted for the autobiographical element. Lamb's memory takes

us back to those good old days of great grand-mother Field. We, with the children John and Alice, are thrilled with the story of that wonderful mansion. As we read, we can see little Lamb roaming about the large lonely rooms gazing at the marble statues The remarkable story telling power of Lamb has been fully revealed in this essay. The essay has also a light tinge of soft melancholy. After a long imaginary revel in telling stories, surrounded by happy children, Lamb suddenly finds himself seated in his bachelor arm-chair. Nothing can be more pathetic.

Lamb's tenderness of sentiment is exquisitely displayed in passages which recall his early life and the "old familiar faces" which have vanished from his ken. Reminiscence had for him a great charm. The prevailing note of such passages of reminiscence is their pathos; they deal with events and emotions which are gone. The sadness of their passing remained with him, but he could think of them without the bitterness of ever-present grief. These sorrows took their proper place in relation to the common lot of humanity. Pathos was best achieved in 'Dream Children', the essay suggested by the death of his brother. It was written from Lamb's heart.

8.6 SUMMARY :

One day the author was sitting in his bachelor's chair by the fire side. He was enjoying a colourful day-dream, describing some of the dearest people in his life. The death of his relatives made him sorrowful. In this imagination he appears like widower with two children, John and Alice. These two children are no other than himself and his sister Mary Lamb. He is telling the children the stories of the elders of the family. The first great person was grand-mother Mrs. Field, an old gentle lady with religious devotion. She was working as storekeeper for a rich family. A serious disease made her tall and strong body very weak and short. She invited the children into the house to play and enjoy in the garden. The eldest son of the lady loved the children very much. He was a good horse rider and a perfect gentleman. He loved and respected the author. The author was a weak boy with a lame foot. He carried the author on his back for many miles. But when John died, Lamb came to miss him very much and remembered his kindness and his crossness and wished him to be alive again.

Then they demanded that Lamb should tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then Lamb began to narrate to them how for seven years he patiently courted the fair Alice Winterton. He suddenly felt that the eyes of that old Alice were gazing from the face of the little Alice, sitting before him. As he stood gazing, both the children grew gradually fainter and receding from him. At last just two mournful features were left out of them. They told him that they were not children at all. They were merely dreams. At this point, Lamb woke up and found himself sitting in his bachelor arm-chair, where he had fallen asleep.

8.7 LINES FOR EXPLANATION :

(1) Certain it is that the whole story …. Modern invention in its stead with no story upon it.

These lines are found in Lamb's wonderful essay 'Dream Children'. Lamb was telling the story of their great-grandmother to John and Alice. Lamb's grandmother Sarah

Field was house-keeper for fifty years to the Plumers of Blakes ware, Hertfordshire. She lived in a great house in Norfolk. The most interesting fact about this house was that the whole story of the children in the wood, was carved in wood upon the chimney piece of the great hall. But this was replaced by a marble chimney piece by a rich person afterwards.

'Children in the Wood' is the familiar ballad in Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry. The story of this ballad is about two children who were left a vast property by their father. They were kept under the charge of their uncle who plans to grab the property by killing the children. He hires two ruffians to kill them in a wood. But one of them, being tender-hearted killed the other and left the children in the wood. The children perish and the Robin Red-breast covers them with leaves. The wrath of God falls upon the wicked uncle who loses his sons and his property and dies in jail. The surviving ruffian is arrested of robbery, condemned to death and confesses his guilt.

(2) Here John …. for the present as irrelevant.
These lines are found in Lamb's essay 'Dream Children'.

We find here a very interesting humorous description of John, one of the young listeners, who was seriously affected by Lamb's story of his childhood. John took a bunch of grapes and he wanted to share with his sister Alice. Lamb told them about his childhood days and how he roamed in the garden but had no interest in the sweet flavours of peaches and oranges. This affected John and he put back the bunch of grapes. This description is faithful to nature. Children are influenced by the behaviour of their elders. John thought it better to leave the grapes for the present.

(3) I could not walk for pain ….. I did not cry or take it to heart.
These lines are found in Lamb's Wonderful essay 'Dream Children'.

Lamb tells us of his brother's death. When he died it appeared as if he had passed away long ago, though he had been dead for not even an hour. Lamb wants to point out the vast difference between life and death. Death robs one of even a single trace of life. The important fact is that he has passed away from this earth.

(4) We are not Alice …. existence and a name.
These lines are found in Lamb's 'Dream Children'.

Lamb in his fanciful vision, learns some words uttered by the two 'mournful features.' The words tell him that the two children are not the children of Alice and Lamb. They are only imaginary children. They would be real children if Lamb and Alice had got married. But now they must wait on the shores of Lethe for millions of ages, before they can take their birth on this earth. This imagination is very pleasing. We must note that the whole idea of waiting on the shores of Lethe for rebirth and incarnation is Platonic.

8.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Describe the autobiographical element in Lamb's essay.
2. Write an essay on the greatness of Lamb as an essayist.
3. Which fable was part of the love of Norfolk?

4. Examine the literary style of Charles Lamb with reference to this essay.
5. Critically evaluate the contribution of Charles Lamb to the genre of Essay.
6. Write a creative essay based on your personal experiences with your children

8.9 SUGGESTED READINGS :

1. William Henry Hudson. 2000. An Introduction to the Study of English Literature 2nd Edition (reset). Delhi. AITBS Publishers.
2. R.J. Rees. 1973. English Literature: An Introduction for Foreign Readers. Madras. Macmillan India press.

Dr. G. Harold Candlin Cyril

LESSON – 9

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON : PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- To discuss Samuel Johnson's contribution to the criticism
- To know Samuel Johnson's Iconic literary critical style
- To analyse the "merits" and "demerits" of the works of Shakespeare.
- To know the Samuel Johnson's ability and his style

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON :

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Analysis of the text

9.3 Critical Evaluation

9.4 Summary

9.5 Self Assessment Questions

9.6 Suggested Readings

9.1 INTRODUCTION :

Samuel Johnson is an esteemed English writer who became a prominent literary figure in England in the 18th century. He is known for writing profound poetry, fiction, moralizing essays, and political pieces.

Samuel Johnson, LL.D. (September 7, 1709 – December 13, 1784), often referred to simply as Dr. Johnson, is an English poet, essayist, lexicographer, biographer, and iconic literary critic. He wrote only one novel, one play, and only a small volume of poems. His intellectual breadth and contributions as a public man of letters were so imposing that the late eighteenth century is often termed the Age of Johnson.

Johnson, more than any other author in English up to his time, became a public figure of tremendous fame and influence; he was perhaps the first author-celebrity in the English-speaking world. His influence on the opinions not only of his fellow writers but on every intellectual in England and the colonies was perhaps only equalled a century later by Coleridge. Johnson's hatred of slavery and the abuses of colonialism, his moral framework and notable acts of private charity, influenced later ethical novelists such as Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and George Eliot. Scholar H. W. Donner has said that no critic since Aristotle "carried more weight" than Johnson; and Christian thinker and novelist C. S. Lewis included Johnson with Jesus and Socrates as the three most authoritative voices in the history of Western moral culture. The *Life of Johnson* was published by his friend and

biographer, James Boswell, in 1791. Johnson was the author of the early and authoritative *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), which adopted the novel approach of documenting the changing usage of words. Compiled over nine years of nearly single-handed work, the dictionary provided definitions of more than 40,000 terms and included some 114,000 quotations of usage drawn from countless scholarly sources. The dictionary remained the definitive reference on the English language until the appearance of the first edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary,* published in instalments from 1884 to 1928.

The son of a poor bookseller, Johnson was born in Lichfield, Staffordshire. He attended Lichfield Grammar School. A few weeks after he turned nineteen, on October 31, 1728, he entered Pembroke College, Oxford; he was to remain there for 13 months. Though he was a formidable student, poverty forced him to leave Oxford without taking a degree. He attempted to work as a teacher and schoolmaster; initially turned down by Reverend Samuel Lea (headmaster of Adams' Grammar School), Johnson found work at a school in Stourbridge, but these ventures were not successful. At the age of 25, he married Elizabeth "Tetty" Porter, a widow 21 years his senior.

In 1737, Johnson, penniless, left for London together with his former pupil, David Garrick. Johnson found employment with Edward Cave, writing for *The Gentleman's Magazine.* For the next three decades, Johnson wrote biographies, poetry, essays, pamphlets, parliamentary reports and even prepared a catalogue for the sale of the Harleian Library. Johnson lived in poverty for much of this time. Important works of this period include the poem, "London" (1738), and the *Life of Savage* (1745), a biography of Johnson's friend and fellow writer Richard Savage, who had shared in Johnson's poverty and died in 1744.

Johnson began on one of his most important works, *A Dictionary of the English Language,* in 1747. It was not completed until 1755. Although it was widely praised and enormously influential, Johnson did not profit from it much financially since he had to bear the expenses of its long composition. At the same time, he was working on his dictionary, Johnson was also writing a series of semi-weekly essays under the title *The Rambler.* These essays, often on moral and religious topics, tended to be graver than the title of the series would suggest. *The Rambler* ran until 1752. Although not originally popular, they found a large audience once they were collected in volume form. Johnson's wife died shortly after the final number appeared.

Johnson began another essay series, *The Idler,* in 1758. It ran weekly for two years. The *Idler* essays were published in a weekly news journal, rather than as an independent publication, like *The Rambler.* They were shorter and lighter than the *Rambler* essays. In 1759, Johnson published his satirical novel *Rasselas,* said to have been written in two weeks to pay for his mother's funeral.

In 1762, Johnson was awarded a government pension of three hundred pounds per year, largely through the efforts of influential friends. Johnson met James Boswell, his future biographer, in 1763. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* would in some ways become the most influential work to come out of Johnson's life, even though Johnson himself did not write it. Typical of Boswell's anecdotal approach is Johnson's famous refutation of Bishop

Berkeley's Idealism. During a conversation with Boswell, Johnson became infuriated at the suggestion that Berkeley's immaterialism, however counterintuitive to experience, could not be logically refuted. In his anger, Johnson powerfully kicked a nearby stone and proclaimed of Berkeley's theory, "I refute it thus!" Boswell's biography, by serving as a compendium of all of Johnson's various thoughts and opinions, would eventually become the most cohesive testament to Johnson's talent and genius, and is inseparable from the academic study of Johnson today.

Around the same time that he met Boswell, Johnson formed "The Club," a social group that included his friends Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, David Garrick and Oliver Goldsmith. By now, Johnson was a celebrated figure. He received an honorary doctorate from Trinity College, Dublin in 1765, and one from Oxford ten years later. In 1765, he met Henry Thrale, a wealthy brewer and Member of Parliament, and his wife Hester Thrale. They quickly became friends, and soon Johnson became a member of the family. He stayed with the Thrales for 15 years until Henry's death in 1781. Hester's reminiscences of Johnson, together with her diaries and correspondence, are second only to Boswell's as a source of biographical information on Johnson.

In 1773, ten years after he met Boswell, the two set out on *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,* and two years later Johnson's account of their travels was published under that title (Boswell's *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* was published in 1786). Their visit to the Scottish Highlands and Hebrides took place when pacification after the Jacobite Risings was crushing the Scottish Clan system and Gaelic culture that was increasingly being romanticized.

Johnson spent considerable time in Edinburgh in the 1770s, where he was a close friend of Boswell and of Lord Monboddo; this triumvirate conducted extensive correspondence and mutual literary reviews. Johnson's final major work was perhaps his most monumental achievement, the comprehensive *Lives of the English Poets,* a project commissioned by a consortium of London booksellers. The *Lives,* which were critical as well as biographical studies, appeared as prefaces to selections of each poet's work that Johnson addressed. Johnson died in 1784 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Johnson was a compassionate man, supporting a number of poor friends under his own roof. He was a devout, conservative Anglican as well as a staunch Tory. Nonetheless, Johnson was a fiercely independent and original thinker, as much a unique thinker-for-himself as Milton or Blake, which may explain his deep affinity for Milton despite the latter's intensely radical—and, for Johnson, intolerable—political and religious outlook. Thus, although perhaps not as radical or inventive as the two poets, Johnson struck a sort of middle-ground, whereby his satires and criticism could utilize his poetic genius while at the same time steering clear of Blake and Milton's more overtly rebellious (and thus problematic) tendencies.

Although not as singularly revolutionary as some of the other great poets of his times (such as Blake), nor as gifted technically as a writer to be particularly unique, Johnson nevertheless acts as a sort of gateway. Almost all the literature prior to him is filtered, by way

of his numerous writings, reviews, and publications, and thus passed on to the subsequent generations that would become the Romantics. Hence, if one is to understand the history of English literature and the currents of English intellectual discourse, one must inevitably arrive at Johnson who stands right between the two major periods of English literature and is a critical link to both.

Biography, criticism, lexicography, prose

- *Life of Richard Savage* (1745)
- *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755)
- *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759)
- *The Plays of William Shakespeare* (1765)
- *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775)
- *Lives of the English Poets* (1781)

Essays, pamphlets, periodicals

- "Plan for a Dictionary of the English Language" (1747)
- *The Rambler* (1750-1752)
- *The Idler* (1758-1760)
- "The False Alarm" (1770)
- "The Patriot" (1774)

Poetry

- *London* (1738)
- "Prologue at the Opening of the Theatre in Drury Lane" (1747)
- *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749)
- *Irene, a Tragedy* (1749)

9.2 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT :

Shakespeare is great writer because in his work there is a just representation of general human nature. His characters are the faithful representations of humanity. His characters are universal but they are individual also. They are also true to the age, sex or profession to which they belong. They are also true to type.

His works are a storehouse of practical axioms and domestic wisdom. From them can be formulated a philosophy of life of great practical value in real life. That his plays are a just representation of human nature is also seen in the fact the love is not all. Love is only one of the many passions and as his plays mirror life, they represent other passions as well. Undue importance is not attached to any one passion. His characters are not exaggerated. He has no heroes, but only human beings. Thus his plays increase our knowledge of human nature.

Shakespeare has been criticized for mixing comedy and tragedy. But Johnson defends him as follows: In the use of tragic-comedy, Shakespeare is true to nature. In real life also there is a mingling of the good and evil, joys and sorrows, tears and smiles and so in mixing tragedy and comedy Shakespeare merely holds a mirror to nature. Tragi-comedy is nearer to life than either tragedy or comedy, and so it combines within itself the pleasure as well as the instruction of both. The interchange of the serious and the gay, of the comic and tragic, does not interrupt the progress of the passions, i.e. it does not result in any weakening of effect. Moreover, it should be remembered that all pleasure consists in variety. Tragi comedy can satisfy a greater variety of tastes.

Comedy came natural to him, and not tragedy. In tragedy he writes with great appearance of toil and study what is written at last with little felicity; but in comic scenes he seems to produce without labour what no labour can improve. His comic scenes are natural and, therefore, durable. The language of his comic scenes is the language of real life.

Shakespeare has serious faults, serious enough to obscure his many excellences :

1. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct.
2. His plots are loosely formed. There are many faults of chronology and many anachronisms in his plays.
3. Often his jokes are gross and licentious.
4. In his narration there is much pomp of diction and circumlocution.
5. What he does best, he soon ceases to do.
6. He is too fond of puns and quibbles. For a pun he sacrifices reason, propriety and truth.

Johnson defended Shakespeare and the Three unities. His histories being neither comedies nor tragedies are not subject to the ‘classic’ rules of criticism which were devised for tragedies and comedies. The only Unity they need is consistency and naturalness in character, and this Shakespeare has imparted to them. In his other works, he has well maintained the Unity of Action. He is the poet of nature, and his plots have the complexity and variety of nature. But his plots have a beginning, a middle, and an end, one event is logically connected with another.

He shows no regard for the Unities of Time and Place, and in the opinion of Johnson, these Unities have given more trouble to the poet than pleasure to the auditor. When a spectator can imagine the stage to be Alexandria and the actors to be Antony and Cleopatra, he can surely imagine much more. Drama is a delusion and delusion has no limits. The spectators know the stage is a stage, and the actors are actors. There is no absurdity in showing different actions at different places. The Unity of Time also has no validity. A drama imitates successive actions, and just as they may be represented at successive places, so also they may be represented at different period, separated by several years. The only condition is that the events so represented should be connected with each

other with nothing but time intervening between them. In short the unities are not essential to drama. Their violation often results in variety and instruction. The rules may be against Johnson but he justifies Shakespeare on grounds of nearness to life and nature.

9.3 CRITICAL EVALUATION :

Johnson's *Preface to Shakespeare* is one of the most significant achievements in the field of English literary criticism. It is significant not merely as a sound and well reasoned critique of Shakespeare's dramas, but also as a valuable embodiment of critical theory. There are three different critical approaches in the *Preface*. The first is that of a disciple of neo-classic critical tenets. Johnson seems to adopt this approach merely because of the insistence of the age in which he lived; in some matters, as that of the role of moralizing in drama, Johnson becomes a sturdy neoclassic. But in the matter of mixing the genres and violating the unities of time and place, Johnson is a rebel against neo-classicism. The second approach consists of Johnson's personal whims and odds. The third approach is that of a free attitude which is based either on Johnson's own impressions and instincts or on aesthetic and psychological principles which are perennial and have a universal validity.

Johnson the Disciple of Neo-classicism. Assuming to be the most faithful followers of the real classicism, the 'classicists' of Johnson's period held that a literary work should, necessarily, deal with the universal aspects of life and not its particular or singular aspects. They brought this 'universality' of a work under the head namely, nature'. Following this principle, Johnson casts his attention primarily on the universality of Shakespeare's plays. At the outset, he lauds Shakespeare as the greatest poet of nature; at least among modern writers and perhaps also among the ancient ones. He approves of Shakespeare's characters for being true to the essential aspects of life, though they might violate particular conditions which belong to the accidents of age and country. Shakespeare is praised for depicting men, not as heroes, but as men—as the genuine progeny of common humanity, speaking and acting as all of us do. Johnson is particularly fascinated by Shakespeare's discrimination of one character from another and he also remarks that in the plays of other dramatist a character is often an individual, in Shakespeare it is commonly a species. "To Johnson, as to the whole century, just representations of general nature was the essential characteristic of the classical ideal, and Shakespeare appealed to all as a great poet of nature, who held upto his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. Neither his greatness as a poet nor his delightful situations came first to the minds of the critics who regarded Dryden and Pope the supreme expression of the poetic spirit. They turned rather by preference to what they deemed his interpretation of human nature in terms of universal experience. Johnson whose mind was stocked with principles depending on nature and truth as formulated by classical critics, and whose temper was essentially reasonable, found these sentiments too congenial for him to adopt any other approach to this poet."

Departure from Neo-classicism. Johnson defends and establishes Shakespeare's supremacy on the ground of neo-classical principle of nature and universality, but where he finds these very neoclassical maxims standing in the way of a just and proper appreciation of Shakespeare, he attacks them relentlessly. Here, however, Johnson sounds rational and sensible. The fundamental fallacy of the neo-classical adherence to the unities of time and

place is clearly argued out and the mingling of tragedy and comedy is defended as being not only permissible but in fact an advantage over pure drama. The supposedly everlasting validity of rules of criticism is denied and it is held that from criticism there is always an appeal to nature. The narrow and pedantic objections of Voltaire are branded as insignificant or paltry. Johnson does not find anything awkward in Shakespeare's portrayal of the Roman senator as a buffoon, or the king as a drunkard because what matters is the human element in them and not superficial designations or positions.

Dr. Johnson's eccentric views. Some of the views expressed by Dr. Johnson can not find our full-hearted support; they are baseless, and up-to a measure, eccentric. One such view emerges from his evaluation of Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies. Johnson seems to have an excessive personal preference for the comedies but we find no justification in his derogation of Shakespeare's tragedies: Johnson labels the tragedies as wanting in spontaneity, as the •work of labour which often makes the final product less impressive and as something that does not show the real genius of Shakespeare. According to Johnson Shakespeare's natural inclination was towards comedy. From this he gathers that the presence of comic elements in Shakespeare's tragedies is due to the fact that he does not feel at home in tragedy, and is always in search of an occasions to break into comedy. But this view is inconsistent with his justification of Shakespeare's mixing of tragedy and comedy in which case he realizes that Shakespeare's practice in all his plays is to alternate serious scenes with scenes of merriment.

Another instance of whimsical criticism is where Johnson attacks Shakespeare's craze for word play. Modern critics view these puns and quibbles as a general or characteristic feature of Elizabethan drama. Though these may be boring and monotonous, they do not stir in us the violent reaction which it evoked in Johnson, who maintains that the irresistible pull of an equivocation, however base and tedious it may be, draws Shakespeare away from his path just as a will-o'-the wisp misleads a traveller.

Literature's function. With regard to his views on the functions of literature, including drama, he is almost a Horatian. He holds that the end of all writing is to give pleasure, and, especially, that of literature is to instruct and please. At one point Johnson argues that Shakespeare is more interested in pleasing than instructing and hence his plays want moral purpose at its end. But on another occasion he praises Shakespeare as having embodied in his plays a whole system of civil and domestic wisdom. We may frankly support his view that one who thinks rationally thinks morally.

Conclusion. Johnson is not merely a renowned editor of Shakespeare, he is also scholar in Shakespearean criticism. Johnson's work is all the more memorable for its liberal approach towards its subject. Another creditworthy aspect of Johnson's *Preface* is that he preserved the famous Prefaces of the previous editors and included much their notes and Prefaces in his own editions. His approach as an emendator is purely objective, cautious and reasonable. He deplores the eagerness of some critics to indulge in conjectural criticism even when where is no justification for doing so. He considers the older copies as more reliable and worthy of being followed except at some points where the reading is doubtful. For Johnson, editing Shakespeare is serious task, but not, as it was to Pope, a 'dull duty'. Johnson's approach

towards Shakespeare has found a good deal of appreciation from the modern Shakespearean critics. Indeed, the historical or comparative method of criticism which he makes use of is part of modern critical approach, as is the systematic analysis of a body of work.

9.4 SUMMARY :

Samuel Johnson's "Preface to Shakespeare" was published in 1765 and it is an important contribution to English literary criticism. Although Johnson is a neo-classical critic and writer, he is completely unbiased when he assesses Shakespeare.

Johnson eulogizes as well as specifies Shakespeare's flaws or weaknesses. According to Harold Bloom, Johnson invariably within Shakespeare's plays to examine them as if he is examining human life without considering the fact that Shakespeare's main purpose is to bring life to mind.

Shakespeare's Merits :

Johnson on Shakespeare's Characters in the Preface to Shakespeare :

"Nothing can please many and please long, but just the representation of general nature" ({7} Preface to Shakespeare by Johnson).

For Johnson, the fundamental necessity of artistic greatness is truthfulness to the details of nature. This guides Johnson to make a number of unforgettable assertions about Shakespeare's grandeur. For instance, the characters of Shakespeare are the "genuine progeny of common humanity" and they speak in the language of everyday life and convey feelings and emotions which resonate in every soul. Johnson states that Shakespeare's characters are not affected by the practices of certain places or by the incidents of short-lived trends or transient beliefs. "His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated and the whole system of life is continued in motion." ({8} Preface to Shakespeare by Johnson).

Johnson was brave enough to vary from neo-classical critics' assessments about Shakespeare's delineation of his characters. For example, Dennis and Rhymer did not favour Shakespeare's portrayal of Menenius, a representative of Rome, like a fool, and Voltaire did not favour Claudius as a drunkard. Johnson supports Shakespeare by stating that Shakespeare always gives more importance to nature than accident. Shakespeare's plays may demand a Roman Senator or a monarch but he imagines completely as regards men and not specific characters living in a certain age or place. And no doubt, for no reason to presume that a man cannot be a fool since he is a king or a Senator.

Johnson on Mingled drama in the Preface to Shakespeare:

Shakespeare has blended tragedy and comedy in most of his plays and Johnson defends this blending of tragic and comic ingredients on the grounds of the neoclassical theory itself. For the neoclassicist, art is a realistic portrayal of mankind. On this ground, one can defend Shakespeare's exercise of blending comic and tragic elements, for such a blending shows real human life which partakes good and bad, delight and sadness. Through his

plays, Shakespeare presents a world where all human efforts and activities have similar significance. In Shakespeare's plays, all types of men and women are fairly presented.

Johnson and the unities in the Preface to Shakespeare :

Johnson supports Shakespeare's negligence of the unities of time, place, and action. The neo-classical persistence on the three unities denotes that a drama should consist of those episodes and incidents which cover a restricted time span of twelve or twenty-four hours and take place in a single area. Supporting Shakespeare Johnson states that the action of his dramas is dependent on some conventions which the spectator takes gladly. For example, if the audience can accept that the person standing on the stage is Julius Caesar or Antony, then the spectators can also approve of moving scenes from one place to another or the span of an extended time period. Johnson says that the unities of time and place are used to make the drama more credible. But the fact is that the audience already knows that it is a stage and not Athens or Sicily and the person who is performing on the stage is a performer and not Julies Caesar or Antonio or Hamlet.

Demerits in the Preface to Shakespeare :

Virtue is not distributed wisely :

Johnson says that Shakespeare's biggest defect is that he abandons virtue to pleasure. According to Johnson, Shakespeare didn't write his plays because he wanted to convey any moral purpose. Instead, he wanted to convey delight and pleasure through his plays. Johnson also states that Shakespeare did not pay much attention to 'poetic justice'; he develops his characters regardless of their right and wrong actions and at the end expels them casually. Johnson states that it is the job of the writer to make the world peaceful and that is why he emphasizes poetic justice.

A defect on Shakespeare's Plot :

The second defect that Johnson points out about Shakespeare's plays is the plot. Johnson's complaint is that Shakespeare's plots are loosely knit and if he had paid a little more attention and time, he could have improved. Johnson also implies that the end part of Shakespeare's plays is promptly rounded off. And for this reason, the end parts of his plays do not seem as artistically ordered as their earlier sections. Johnson explains the reason by saying that Shakespeare used to reduce his hard work at the end of the plays because he was in a hurry to take the profit.

Anachronism in Shakespeare's Plays :

Another defect that Johnson points out about Shakespeare's plays is an anachronism. Johnson says that in Shakespeare's plays the conventions, ideas, and manners of one age or country are used randomly for another age or country. This creates a sense of implausibility and impossibility within a play. For example, on one occasion in Shakespeare's play, Hector quotes the words of Aristotle, which is unrealistic on a historical basis.

Dialogues in Shakespeare's Comedy:

Another defect that Johnson points out about Shakespeare's plays is his dialogues. Johnson claims that the banter in which the comic characters indulge is generally gross and immoral. Because most of his characters are guilty of this, it often becomes hard to differentiate between refined characters and low characters. Johnson thinks that Shakespeare should have been judicious in his choice of modes of merriment.

Shakespeare's use of word-play and conceit:

Johnson turns critical about Shakespeare's propensity to employ conceits as well as obscure word-play. Johnson states that Shakespeare's love for conceit and puns ruins many paragraphs which are otherwise sorrowful and warm, or could have aroused pity or fear. Shakespeare's unrestrained love for quibbles and puns guides him to produce meaningless just as **will-o-the-ship deceive a traveller.**

9.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS :

1. Why is Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare a landmark in Shakespearian criticism?
2. What is the theory of three unities? How does Shakespeare violate the three unites and how does Johnson defend him?
3. Dr. Johnson is a biased critic of Shakespeare. Do you agree? Please give a reference from Johnson's "Preface to Shakespeare."
4. How does Johnson evaluate Shakespeare as an artist in his *A Preface to Shakespeare*?
5. How did Shakespeare violate the Greek ideal of the unity of time in his plays, according to Dryden?
6. How might one analyse Dr.Samuel Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare?

9.6 SUGGESTED READINGS :

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Dr. K. Narasimha Rao