THE

English Novel

in

The Early Nineteenth Century.

A

Dissertation submitted

by

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This work covers the Age of Miss Austen and Sir Walter Scott, and I have tried to give a detailed critical study of these two great masters regarding their individual merits and their influence on the age. The minor novelists of the period are not so critically dealt with. As regards the last chapter, i.e. 'Dickens -- Thackeray group', needless to say that though Dickens and Thackeray do not belong to the age of Miss Austen and Scott, yet their personality is all pervading in the nineteenth century, and therefore whatever portion of the nineteenth century novel is chosen, it is impossible to ignore them altogether.

In writing the dissertation I have consulted the following critical works:-

1. Amisop's History of Fiction.
7. Saintsbury's French Novel Vol I.
8. Cross's Nineteenth Century English Literature.
11. Encyclopaedia Britannica.
13. Chamber's Encyclopaedia of English Literature.
17. Carlyle's Miscellaneous Essays (on Scott).
18. Ruskin's Sir Walter Scott.
19. Lockhart's Life of Scott (Abridged).
20. Stevenson's essay on Romance.
21. Scott's Introduction to his own novels.
22. Chesterton's Dickens.
23. Missing's Immortal Dickens.
24. Lilly's Four English Humorists of the Nineteenth Century.
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CHAPTER 1.

The Origin of English Novel.

The eighteenth century in English literature saw many triumphs in the different departments of prose literature, but perhaps its greatest achievement was the discovery of modern English novel. England not only ranks supreme in the number and fine qualities of her novels, but it may as well be claimed for England that this species of literature is its most original contribution to the world of letters. Matthew Arnold may say that 'by nothing is England so glorious as by her poetry', but the fact remains that the epic, the drama and the romance were first produced by other nations. England borrowed the forms of these vehicles of literary expression, moulded it to suit the insular temperament of the people of England, and then gave to the world as wrought to the highest standard of perfection. But such is not the case with the novel. The modern novel seems to have flourished on the English soil.

But before novel could reach its modern stage, it had to pass through centuries of almost imperceptible development. In the study of the development of English novel we are apt to begin from Richardson and Fielding, and fix 1740 as the date of the birth of English novel. But it is narrowing the meaning of novel, for it is equal to asserting that no work of the kind existed before 1740 and that Fielding and Richardson had to invent all at once, method and matter. As a matter of fact materials for the evolution of modern novel had been accumulating from the very beginning of the world. When everything was ready and the age was prepared to welcome it, it required only "the unconscious hand of Richardson" to introduce it to the world. Therefore, in order to study the origin
of English novel, we must take the meaning of novel in its broadest sense, that is fictitious narrative. For fiction is the fountain-head to which the epic, the romance, the drama and the novel of our own time trace their origin. As for the origin of fiction, it would be best to assume that it is the birth right of humanity, and is as old as humanity itself. Having thus linked modern novel to its fountain-head, Fiction, it only remains for us to descend a little and stop at the stage where romance begins. As for the birth of romance it would suffice to say that with the progress of time, fiction began to be encumbered with unreality; and thus, in course of time fiction freed itself from the restraint of fact and romance was born.

We have thus far been taking pains to establish legitimate relation between novel and romance but in the very beginning we have to face serious opposition from a section of critics who insist upon keeping novel and romance asunder. They would go to Marivaux and Richardson or a host to Madame De La Fayette for the origin of novel excluding Bunyan and even Defoe. But the counter-arguments are numerous. In the first place the idea of novel arising so late is unhistorical and absurd; such sudden appearance of literary innovation without parents is unknown in literature. In the second place an insistence at the separation of novel from romance involves one another great inconvenience. In studying the development of novel and romance separately for the last two or three centuries "we shall have to carry the wall of partition along the road as well as across it" which seems to be practically impossible when every student of literature knows how inseparably they are inter-connected. The separation of romance and novel — of the story of incident and the story of character and motive — is a mistake, though a very common mistake. Both in romance and in novel the story element is necessary and the difference between the two lies in the predominance of imagination in the one and of reality in the other. The crude minds of our ancient forefathers took delight in the impossible stories of giants, fairies, witches and of marvellous adventures, but with the
progress of time this element of excessive imagination and of impossible heroes was curbed by a desire to present life as it is. Imagination is controlled by intellect and our credulity is no longer taxed by impossibilities. Thus, novel is the most direct offshoot of romance. Both romance and novel rest on the same ground --- the story element but with the progress of human mind only the outward form is changed.

Having thus far laboured to prove that modern novel is the legitimate child of mediaeval romance we must now quicken our pace to deal with the mediaeval ancestors of English novel. It was Norman England that came into possession of immense body of fictitious narrative. The heroes of these tales were taken from Teutonic, Celtic, French, classic and Eastern traditions. The Celtic races of Europe early preferred to tell their traditional tales in prose. The Normans, like the Teutonic races, narrated in verse, and their stories reappeared in verse, long before they were translated into prose in the 15th century. From the time of the celebrated Layamon, translation and adaptation went on throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the establishment of the English language in about the middle of the 14th century gave a fresh impetus to the process. In this way the four principle cycles of romance dealing severally with the legends of Arthur, Charlemagne, Alexander, and Troy were made familiar to the people of England in their own language by the close of the fourteenth century. Passing through the hands of the French and Anglo Norman poets and reciters, and the legends reached England in an elaborately wrought form.

It was from French versions that Malory, Caxton, and Lord Berners gave to the Arthur and Charlemagne romances their first English prose dress. The history of the English prose fiction begins with these three illustrious names. With their coming on the stage the minstrel sinks into oblivion. The greater part of the story-telling of Chaucer's time was in the hands of the minstrels, long before Chaucer were becoming degenerate and were sinking into obscurity on account of the dazzling splendour of the new literary rivals headed by immortal Chaucer. Chaucer at once found the monotony of the minstrel's chronology
intolerable. He ridiculed the supremacy of the minstrel and the allegorical mode of narration. But he wrote in verse and prose was slow to learn from him. Although his prose writings deserve no particular mention, it is difficult to pass over Chaucer without marking the high pitch of perfection to which he brought the art of narration in verse. Being both romancer and realist, he clothed in artistic form the low intrigues, the adventure, and romance of chivalry mixed with delicate characterization, gentle humour and dramatic realism. In 'Troilus and Cressida' he moves most directly towards modern novel.

But first in importance and first in interest to him who is seeking the origin of the modern novel are the legends of King Arthur and the Round Table, the scope of which is feebly represented in Tennyson's 'Idylls of the king'. The so-called 'Celtic matter' appealed very forcibly to the imaginative minds of the French and the Anglo-Norman poets who reared a vast superstructure over it translating it into a splendid romance. Long after it a certain Sir Thomas Malory made a graceful redaction of the Arthurian legends in his 'Morte Darthur' (1485) which is the first easily accessible prose romance in English. The great merit of the writer is that he got rid of the troublesome and conventional burden of allegory, essayed an interpretation of the human heart and invented a lucid and vigorous style of narration. But his book became, as Professor Raleigh has said, "the feeder of poetry rather than of prose", and it gave no intimation of the methods of the modern novel. The same may be said of such versions of the Charlemagne, Amadis, and Palmerian Cycles of romances as "Huon of Bordeaux", published by Lord Berners, perhaps in 1535, and innumerable others.

The first half of the 16th century is dreary waste in the history of English prose fiction. Its only luminary is More's 'Utopia' written in Latin. Amid the fierce struggle of Catholicism and Protestantism for supremacy in English politics, men were too much engaged to write prose fiction. The few who found time to read stories and romances were content with those that Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, Symeon and Copland printed for
them from mediaeval manuscripts or translated for them from
French and German. But even these translators and printers me-
rit a passing glance for they at least succeeded in main-tain-
ing the direct line, worn to a slender thread, of the develop-
ment English fiction. Caxton though only a printer and a mere trans-
lator, had a genuine taste for mediaeval romance which inspire
him to devote himself largely to popularising the old romances
by printing them. Most of those he printed were his own trans-
lations from French. His contribution to the English fiction
is two-fold. In the first place, by publishing all that was best
in the earlier romances he secured to the English literature
continuity of development. The Renaissance ushered in an immense
body of new models that, but for Caxton's labours, would have
cost the old ones. In the second place, as translator and
printer he established the old romances of chivalry so firmly
in the favour of the English people that, in spite of the
overwhelming and adverse forces of the Renaissance, they con-
tinued to be reprinted for centuries, Caxton's immediate succes-
sor, Wynkyn de Worde continued the work of printing and trans-
lation begun by Caxton. One of the finest contributions to
romance literature is Lord Berner's version of the story of
"Huon of Bordeaux" which was printed at Worde's press. It is the
best English prose specimen of the Charlemagne legend as
Malory's Morte D'Arthur is the best of the Arthurian Cycle of
romance. Besides Caxton and Worde there is William Copland
who published immense versions of the mediaeval stories. Among
these three Caxton stands forth as the pioneer. But with all
these translations and adaptations, the mediaeval romances be-
came too old-fashioned to stand against the new influences of
the Renaissance. Whatever claim they had on the favour of the
English public was due to style and not to theme. Thus, with the
decadence of mediaeval romance and the coming in of new forms
of literature in a jumbled state, the direct line in the deve-
lopment of English fiction is at this point, as has already
been pointed out, reduced to a slender thread. In the reign of
Elizabeth when religious and political storm settled to a
calm breeze, creative work began anew, the main impetus coming
from Italy and Spain.

It was the 'novella' of Italy from which the English novel first faintly started. The history of prose fiction in the time of Elizabeth is the history of the triumph of the Italian novel. The Italian prose tale had begun to exercise its influence as early as Chaucer's time, but circumstances and atmosphere were then unfavourable for its active growth. Under the influence of the Renaissance everything that was Italian was sure of a warm reception from the English people. On the one hand unanimous scorn for the older romance and on the other, universal enthusiasm for all that was Italian—literature, society, ideas and costume are the marked features of the Elizabethan age. Italian literature exercised a powerful influence over the mind of English people. Between 1560 and 1580 versions of the Italian novelists became exceedingly popular in England. Painter's 'Pallace of Pleasure' (1566-7) which is a collection of tales translated from Bandello, Boccaccio, Cinthio and other Italian novelists is one of the examples of this spirit of the age. The date of the publication of Painter's book is epoch-making in the history of English fiction; for it not only served as a storehouse for material to the dramatists of the period ranging from Shakespeare to Massinger and Webster, but the appreciation and the success of these Italian stories led to the composition of the 'Euphues' of (1579) of Lyly which has been called by Sir Walter Raleigh as "the first original prose novel written in English". Notwithstanding all its defects "Euphues" has been assigned a high place in the development of English prose fiction. What is most important to note is that it marks the transition from verse to prose as the vehicle for narrative fiction. Living in an age of poetry, it was inevitable that his prose would turn to poetry for embellishment and thus produce a sort of "prose poem" serving as a kind of compromise between the dominant spirit of poetry and the feeble struggle of the rising prose.

Lyly had a host of imitators—Munday Greene, Dickenson Rich, Lodge, Nash and others. Of these 'Euphists' Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge excelled even their master in the poetic
Lodge's "Rosalind" (1590), a pastoral composition in the language of "Euphuism" is the flower of Elizabethan romances. It approaches very near our modern definition of the novel for it is of reasonable length with a kind of structure and an elaborate plot.

Sir Philip Sidney is another important figure in the Elizabethan age who may be placed by the side of Lyly as innovator in the art of prose fiction and foreshadower of later schools of romances. His 'Arcadia' (1590) is a conspicuous example of that restless spirit of adventure and the aesthetic restoration of the age of chivalry that are the distinguishing features of the age of Elizabeth. 'Arcadia' is perhaps the first novel of sentiment in English, and in this respect it is the forerunner of Richardson's analytical and sentimental novels. As the first example in English of a pastoral romance, it wielded a great influence on later writers both in England and abroad. Though the 'Arcadia' has got a good plot, it is the sentiment of the work rather than its plot that procured its popularity and influence in the 16th century. It is in fact a romance between the older romances of chivalry and the later 'heroic' romances of the seventeenth century. Perhaps for the first time we mark that action and adventures are giving way to the description of sentiment.

In direct opposition to its Arcadias Elizabethan England was making a hasty study of robbers and highwaymen; out of which under the artistic impulse of the Spanish novel "Lazarello de Tormes" were developed several rogue stories of considerable pretension, the most famous being Thomas Nash's "The unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jack Wilton (1594)". M. Jusserand has claimed for the Jack Wilton of Nash that it is the earliest example of English picaresque romance, that is to say, a romance which describes realistically the adventures and escapes of a lighthearted, witty and easy-going knave who passes through all the vicissitudes of life, and, thus, offering himself to his maker for the purpose of giving him an opportunity to satirize or describe all sorts of society. This class
of romance has hardly got any plot, the character of the hero, and the reader's interest in his fortunes give the only unity that it attains. What is important to the genealogist of the novel is its historical background. As to Nash's influence on later novelists we can confidently say that as Sidney is the precursor of Richardson, so Nash is the direct forerunner of Defoe. Nash had no immediate successor and for a good deal more than a century he remained alone in the field until long afterwards Defoe unconsciously treaded along the same path.

Lyly, Sir Philip Sidney, Lodge, Green and Nash besides many other luminaries of the Elizabethan age carried the art of English prose narrative a long way towards modern novel; but we must not forget that the genius of the Elizabethan age lay in the direction of lyrical and dramatic poetry, not of prose fiction. The novel shed its first splendour in the time of Elizabeth, but it was pre-eminent in an age of lyrical poetry and the drama, and the novelists had to shrink back of before in the dazzling splendour of Marlowe and Shakespeare. For example Greene is known to the student of literature as one of the greater dramatists of the period, but in the development of English novel he held by no means a low position. And so is the case with other prose romancers of the time. But while they lived, however, they played no insignificant part; now they are so entirely forgotten that it will be heard with surprise that their contribution to English novel is greater than their generally known contribution to the English drama.

The close of the reign of Elizabeth marks at once the zenith of the English drama and the end of the first period of the English novel. From Elizabeth to Restoration story-telling became a 'lost art' in England. A few desultory novels and pamphlets modelled on the lines of the three original masters of the Elizabethan age appeared now and then, but after all they were only wretched imitations unworthy of even a passing glance. The one remarkable romance of the period is John Barleycorn's 'Argenis' (1651). But it is a medley resembling 'Arcadia', 'Utopia', and 'Faery Queen'. But what gives it a date is its
historical background under perplexing digression. Barclay's 'Argemone' was followed by a long and line of French romances beginning about 1625 and extending through the following fifty years. It was during this period that translation after translation of the French heroic romances was offered to the English public which violently affected the English Society, manners and letters for a time. In fact the vogue of the artificial romances of chivalry had never ceased in England. Inspite of the blind hostility of the classicists to all mediaeval themes, an under-current of the by-gone romances of chivalry continued to flow even in the Elizabethan age. In the pastoral school of Sidney and D'Urfe' the influence is manifest. In the words of Sir Walter Raleigh: "nothing is harder than to kill a school of romance"; divorced from public favour it will continue to lurk around inaccessible corners. In the seventeenth century the old romances burst forth in the metamorphosed shape of French heroic romances which were imported into England from Hotel de Rambouillet, the hot-bed of this new school of romance. But these romances must be considered as one further step towards the decadence of the earlier romances of chivalry. They carry to an extravagant excess the fault inherited or developed by the pastoral romances. The almost aristocratic predominance of love as a motive in war and politics, the immense complexity of intrigues, the long soliloquies and sentimental analysis on an elaborately wrought conventional lines, and the super-human valour of the heroes—all these are re-introduced in the heroic romances and exaggerated to incredulity. Add to these—first, the introduction of the well-known classical or oriental character; and secondly the peculiar structure of this main plot.

The most popular of these romancers were Gomberville, La Capprenfée, Mademoiselle de Scuderi, and Madame de la Fayette. With the translation of Gomberville's 'Polexandra' in 1647 by Brown in English, the French heroic romances found eager translators and readers in England. The most popular of them 'Cassius', 'Le Grand Cyrus', and 'Clelie' were great favourites in England. They exercised a literary influence that carried all before it. Their influence, unlike that of the heroic plays outlasted th
century. These luminaries of the French heroic romances found translators as well as imitators in England. Earl of Orrery, John Crowne, Sir George Mackenzie and a host of others produced romances that serve to show how powerfully the heroes of the French school influenced the literary imagination and production in England. The earliest and longest of their works is 'Parthenissa' by Lord Orrery. This fruit of his leisure exhibits all the worst faults of the heroic style. Mackenzie's 'Aretina' is at least better conceived than 'Parthenissa'. It remains perhaps the best example of the original example in English of the heroic romance and on the whole the most courageous attempt to naturalize the romance in England. The hopeless construction, the chief fault of these romances, is not mitigated even in the hands of the dramatist, Crowne, whose "Pamion and Amphigenia" (1665) is disappointing. But the book serves as an example of the powerful influence exercised by Sidney's 'Arcadia' on later English romance. A greater dramatist in the person of Congreve followed Crowne's example by writing a novel, 'Incognita' in 1692. A novel he called it in which he tries to distinguish it from the then current school of romance. Its structure, development, general cast in short everything is dramatic in form. In its exuberance of humour, there is a foretaste of Fielding.

This heroic temper predominated the whole range of the seventeenth century English literature but it achieved the greatest triumph in the heroic romance. The essentials of these heroic romances were love and ambition. But the love, honour and all sorts of these heroic humbugs degenerated into pedantic courtly etiquette and gallantry, and character-drawing was a sheer impossibility under this convention. Thus, the heroic literature of the seventeenth century resting as it was on such unstable grounds could not be naturalized in England; it flourished in the courtly circles and polite female coteries. The most famous of these heroic societies was the one that gathered round Katherine Philip 'the matchless Orinda' and the Duchess of New Castle. But there were other women from the time of the
later Stuarts onward who wrote professionally and not like the Duchess of New Castle simply to pass away the monotony of ennui. The first and perhaps the most brilliant of these is Mrs. Aphra Behn. In her best known work "Oroonoko", Mrs. Behn appears as one of the early precursor of the romantic revival. But her contribution to English literature does not end here. At a time when the whole range of English literature was permeated with the baneful spirit of all that is called 'heroic', she deserves credit for her bold attempt to bring romance into closer relation with contemporary life. She was the first novelist to revolt against the domination of the Gallicized romance and the first novelist to write a humanitarian novel. But her attempt at realism failed for the time; and what is curious to be noticed is that this success was not achieved by professed romancers but by the essayists, the controversial writers and the satirists of the reign of Queen Anne. The English novel can never boast of pure extraction, for the chief influence of the seventeenth century on the English novel came from the direction of other forms of literature — the drama, the satire, the newspaper, the essay, and the biography.

It was outside the province of fiction proper, that there was gathering materials for the future novelists. For the seventeenth century, so poor in original prose fiction had done much to pave the way for it when it should come. Literary innovations took many new forms, the newspaper and the political and religious controversy had prepared a reading public; and then an instrument in the shape of a new prose was ready for the novelist which was first invented for the service of criticism but was easily transferable for vivid narration and realistic description. Thus, by the beginning of the eighteenth century the materials necessary for the success of novel were ready and awaited only the signal of the "Hour which hit, as it listed, on the Man". But the failure of the literary tendencies of the previous century made it certain that the new venture should be towards realism dealing with common average life and not towards the worn out Themes of old romances. There are one or two lonely
examples of men of genius who echoed the fast decaying and corrupt spirit of the dominant 17th century, but the general tendency of the 18th century, as of any other century or age is to be estimated from the writings of the lesser authors. Their works mark the rise of a new tendency in literature — a tendency of observation, of criticism, of bold analysis of feelings and of attention to detail. This is the spirit of realism on which modern novel chiefly rests. In the absence of a purer taste for artistic novel in the beginning of the 18th century the materials were appropriated by other branches of literature. But even this appropriation did not act as a drawback to the development of the English novel — they mark another step forward in the discovery of the English novel. The final supply of the materials for the English novel was brought in by the diary, the biographies and autobiographies, the imaginary letters and the character sketch. They all contributed to the final evolution of modern English novel but the last might rank as one of the ancestors of novel in the direct line. It was the most productive and widely cultivated form in England and France during the seventeenth century. But this species of literature was brought to the highest pitch of perfection by Addison and Steele in the essays of the 'Spectator and the 'Tatler' which have been described by Sir Walter Raleigh "as brilliant example prose fiction". The 'Coverley Papers' might have been called as "serial novels" of a very high order. The brilliant essays of the 'Tatler' and the 'Spectator' especially those dealing with the spectator club and Sir Roger de Coverly point out to us that they have been written from the stand-point of a great novelist. Let any essay be chosen and read from the 'Spectator' and it will be perceived that English literature lost in him a great novelist because he came a bit earlier. But the reading public of England had still to be educated and the spectator with its rising circulation and a host of imitators not only directed the taste of the public towards the novel but increased the number of that public until a man of letters could
come in the field to make use of the favourable atmosphere.

Such a man came in the person of Daniel Defoe. His greatest claim on the attention of the historian of English novel is his rigid fidelity to the semblance of reality. He is a convinced Realist. He is perhaps one of the greatest liar in the world of liars, but he had the artist's power to deceive his readers into religious belief of the absolute veracity of his stories; and herein lies the secret of Defoe's power. In the words of Dawson 'he could lie like truth.' In all his subsequent stories he is consistently faithful to his principle that, "lies are not worth a farthing if they are not calculated for the effectual deceiving of the people they are disguised to deceive". In this way he had hit upon the primary principle of fictitious writings that fiction is a kind of lie in which one must lie like truth. The "appearance of Mrs. Veal". Henceforth Defoe realized that the proper expression of his genius must be found in realistic fiction so plausibly presented as to appear as true. His best known work 'Robinson Crusoe' (1719) --- one of the few immortal books in English literature --- is the earliest novel of incidents. To such critics as charge it with homeliness and utter lack of psychological feelings it would suffice to say that he wrote in a matter-of-fact way and he never pretended to describe emotions. He doubt Defoe had many defects and there was much more to be achieved in order to reach the standard of modern novel, but all his defects and shortcomings should be set down to the inevitable result of making a beginning. It needed generations to bring modern novel to its present standard of perfection; and it would be sheer literary bigotry to judge Defoe's works according to the modern notion of a novel.

Defoe's greatest imitator was the great satirist Swift. The popularity and success of Defoe led him to borrow realism and the art of describing minute details from him for his own satire. The result was his 'Gulliver's Travels' (1726). Swift's greatest power lies in creating an unreal world and then endowing it with reality and absolute 'Mathematical consistency
The voyage to Lilliput and Gulliver's experiences in that imaginary country are humanly speaking, impossible, but he places them in such a way that every thing assumes for the time being a semblance of reality. Notwithstanding the fact that the plan of the book forbids its classification among works of fiction, we are constrained to admit that in 'Gulliver's Travels' realism achieved a great success.

To John Bunyan English novel owes a very great debt. What fiction needed in order to come near a portrayal of real life was to rid it of all the extravagances of the heroic school of romance. This is perhaps the greatest achievement of Bunyan in his 'Pilgrim's Progress' (1678-84). It is perhaps one of the greatest literary art to give reasonableness and a semblance of reality to an impossible story and Bunyan achieved it to a degree which is approached only by a few in the whole range of English fiction.

Besides the character-sketch, biography and autobiography, diary and imaginary letters are other literary forms that played no insignificant part in paving the way for the introduction of modern novel to the world of letters. It was a fashion in the society of the time to keep diaries and journals of daily family occurrences and social and political events of the time — the best of the species being Evelyn's and Pepys' diaries. The diaries suggested the novel of family life giving to fiction a form of narrative that would give it the disguise of reality. Then again men were beginning to take interest in the life of their friends, and this led to a desire of writing biographies. This quickly brought autobiography in its train. It also occurred to the literary solats to give a portrayal of London life in a series of imaginary letters. The most interesting example of this new form of literature is the Duchess of Newcastle's 'Portuguese Letters'. As a result of this new fashion, there existed in early part of the 18th century a considerable number of stories written in letter form. This weak school of fiction anticipated Richardson who wrote his novels in letter form.

The one underlying spirit that permeates all these
forms is the taste for facts or the spirit of realism. The realism of Defoe and the realistic novel in England are the direct offshoots of these ancestors.
CHAPTER 11.

Eighteenth Century Novel.

As has been pointed out in the last chapter all the requisites of a novel were to be found in the various literary forms that were evolved out of the spirit of realism in the 17th century. But even then novel was slow to appear. Literary heroes of the period were content to imitate the matterly sketches of the 'Tatler' and the 'Spectator'. But the real reason of this delay lies in the accepted principle that the introduction of a new and unaccustomed form of literature requires either the bold and unhesitating presentation by a writer, or the unconscious stumbling upon an unexplored mine of materials. It is most unlikely that a professional writer would hazard his energy and time by striking out a new path while the old one would lead to him to fame and popularity. The appearance of the novel was to be preceded by the decline and disfavour of the drama and the theatre, and this had not been fully achieved by the beginning of the eighteenth century. For, though the drama was fast declining during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, the public had been too long used to consider the theatre as the treasure-house of all that was best in literature and, therefore, it was not easy to divorce the theatrical performance from public favour. This theatrical craze of the public kept employed all the literary men of the age for catering to the public taste for the theatre. The authors considered theatrical success as the highest ambition and this they were slow to unlearn. Even literary leaders like Addison and Steele devoted their energy to the production of drama. Fielding appeared on the stage first as a dramatist and then as a novelist. But this much was realized at the beginning of the eighteenth century that the particular taste that the novel was to satisfy could not be catered for by the drama. Therefore at the
When Richardson wrote his first novel there were two conflicting elements. There was the fashion of the drama and opposed to it was the need of the novel. Thus, with the contending elements of fashion and need on the opposite sides, there could be one middle course — i.e., novel with its framework of stage directions. It was in this new form, which had all the interest of the drama but which imposed the slightest tax on the reader's attention and imagination, that the novel was ushered in by the 'unconscious hands' of Richardson.

What is curious to note is that the modern novel was not discovered by a professional author but by a silent man whose excursions into literature hitherto had been the very slightest. He first sat to write a series of "familiar letters on the useful concerns in common life", and it was in the course of preparing this that he bethought himself of the original story of 'Pamela' which suggested to him the writing of a few admonitory letters connected together by the story element. The result was the first modern English novel, 'Pamela or Virtue Rewarded' (1740). Nothing could be more unlikely than that a man like Richardson would give a new impulse and direction to English prose fiction. He was intellectually and morally a small man with very strict and narrow views of life knowing nothing of its larger aspects. Naturally the question would be, therefore, with what hidden power and virtue, this little man achieved his prodigious fame. The secret is that he is originator of the novel of sentiment. He strikes a new note. He introduces sympathy and pathos into English fiction. To an average reader he would seem as tiresome, dull and not at all brilliant. But, as Johnson has said, "If you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiments, and consider the story only as giving occasions to sentiment." His temper of homeliness and gravity and his early association with the women folk, gave him opportunities to study the feelings, the sentiments, the emotions and in short all the hidden secrets of the female heart and this apprenticeship stood Richardson the novelist in good stead.
Richardson in presenting his own portrait has said that his eye was always on the ladies. Therefore, his sympathy with the women is remarkable, and his heroines speak better and more naturally than his heroes. His dissection and psychological analysis of the female heart and feelings is the predominant theme of his novels. And it is by his power of sentimental analysis that Richardson gained immediate and immortal popularity and became the founder of the school of sentimental novel, and earned the famous encomium of Diderot who gives him a place beside Moses, Homer, and Euripides. Richardson's three novels — 'Pamela', 'Clarissa Harlowe' and 'Sir Charles Grandison' — form a triology of this school of sentimental novel. In all of them he idealizes virtue — the emotions moving at the common virtue. How far he succeeds in his purpose of moral and religious instructions it is best to leave to the individual judgment of the readers. But with all his moral earnestness, sentimental analysis and microscopic detail he is not at all interesting to read. His prolixity is unendurable. He can never be a favourite with youth. He can be a very fit companion for a man who is left all alone in a desert and with nothing else to while away his time. Only an intense study of Richardson can lead us to appreciate his analysis of human heart.

Sir Charles Grandison, that 'monster of perfection' is ideal to the verge of impossibility. In order to fully understand Richardson and his sentiment and appreciate them, the best method would be to put oneself in the situation of a contemporary reader of 'Pamela'. We have been too long accustomed to the sentimental appeals of novels to be taken by storm by the first perusal of 'Pamela'. But in 1740 a new sort of literature and a new mode of expression surprised the world by its novelty. Not only in England but on the continent and especially in France Pamela and her sister exercised a profound influence. They were translated in all the advanced languages of Europe, they were dramatized, they were imitated. All this world-wide popularity and fame is to be traced in the fact as has already been pointed out that he gave quite a new thing to the world.
To the later age he is important as the founder of modern English novel and the forerunner of the 'sensibility' novel. His influence on the later novelists up to the time of the appearance of Bronte's 'Jane Eyre' is marked and profound.

Eighteenth century was undoubtedly masculine in its taste and Richardson was a feminine writer. Just as in our own time after a long period of sentimental debauch, the public demands something more robust, more adventurous, and rough, so in the time of Richardson even while he swayed unquestioned authority there was a counter-movement aiming at the overthrow of this sentimental note in English novel. This revolt was led by Henry Fielding, (1707-54). His first novel 'Joseph Andrews' (1742) was meant as a burlesque of the false sentimentality and the conventional virtues of Richardson's 'Pamela'.

He took for his hero the alleged brother of Pamela whom he placed in the service of Lady Booky, an aunt of Richardson's Squire B. by marriage, and then subjected him to series of attacks on his alleged virtues. But as he progressed with the story, he forgot the burlesque, revealed his inner self and gave to the world the first novel of incident and adventure. Before he incidentally appeared on the stage as a novelist he had been a successful dramatist. He had already showed his humour, his vast knowledge of human life, his sincerity, his merciless condemnation of all sorts of shams and hypocrisy and the gentle satire on the vices and foibles of human life in his plays. When he turned towards novel writing, he brought the same qualities with him which expanded much more vigorously when once freed from the restraint of the stage. Thus, he differed from Richardson in every respect. Fielding had moved in a large world; he knew life at first hand; he was acquainted with the bitter aspect of human life; and therefore he could never like the mock-heroic sentimentality and impossible idealism of Richardson who had always moved in a narrower circle and knew nothing beyond it. Richardson described life as it ought to be, while Fielding presented life as it is. He had the kindness of heart and generosity of feeling to realize that amid the pitfalls and obsesse of worldly existence it is beyond the power
of man to come out without a single fall. He took life at its face-value, and had a generous sympathy for the failings of human life.

His two later novels, *Tom Jones* (1749) and *Amelia* (1754) appeared after he had been appointed Justice of the Peace for Middlesex and Westminster. *Tom Jones*, the work of "some thousands of hours", is perhaps the best from general point of view.

The dominant theme of all the great English writers of the eighteenth century is moral instruction, and Fielding is no exception. Under all his hilarity and boisterous laughs, there is a clear exposition of the virtue of morality. But his morality differs from the rigid morality of Richardson. Richardson insists upon code, conformity to the social standard, and deed done; while Fielding lays emphasis on native impulse, goodness of heart and motive. The one lays most stress on form, in the other on inspiration. Against the pedantry of the formal novelist, Fielding hurls his satire. He never tries of showing that a mean-minded man may disguise himself with formal righteousness, and how escapegrace may be good heart. Such standard of morality would naturally lead us to think that Fielding gave countenance to evil and vicious pursuits of humanity. This is doing a great injustice to the novelist. What he means to say is that we should judge the action of a man by his motive. It is just possible that a man may do a good deed dictated to him by his evil passion. Fielding is no friend of the vicious --- he is a deadly enemy of the evil and especially if that evil proceeds from meanness of heart. His whole idea of morality can be expressed in one congested sentence --- virtue is its own reward, and vice never goes unpunished. In *Tom Jones* he has laboured to show that indiscretion is responsible for all the evils with which virtue and innocence are assailed. He has got the sportsman's spirit to sympathise with such failings of human being.

It would be tedious to dwell here on the moral principles of Fielding, and what is more important in his contribution to the art of novel writing. First in importance
is the artistic conduct of the plot. Before Fielding very little had been done for a scientific set up of the plot and whatever had been achieved in this direction it was in the short stories. Congreve in his only novel had attempted to introduce dramatic conventions, but nobody had marked him. It was reserved for Fielding to place structure on a scientific basis by borrowing all that was good in classical epic. The influence of the epic is apparent in his invocations where his diction becomes imaginative poetry. But the structure of the story is itself epic. Richardson's handling of his own method is very good, but unlike Fielding he could not teach the method to others.

His second great characteristic is his realism. It is not labourous and minute, but it is natural enough to produce illusion. His experience of human life was very great and this stood him in good stead when he had to describe the common incidents of life. In short he was, in the full sense of the term, a perfect artist. But with all his realism it can never be said that he is destitute of sentiment. There are passages in 'Amelia' which affect us much more deeply than anything in Richardson because in Fielding the sentiment is masculine. He was master of style. No better novel of a powerful and vigorous style can be found than in the pages of Fielding.

Tobias Smollett (1721-71) is the immediate inheritor of Fielding's art. He apparently tried to carry on the work of Fielding but he lacked the genius of Fielding. His peculiar power lay in seizing upon some grotesque habit and making a character out of it. In this way he laid the foundation for that exaggeration in portraying human eccentricities which finds a climax in Dickens's caricatures. It is only in comparison with Fielding that Smollett's glory is dimmed, for Smollett, along with his master Fielding, is counted as one of the first forces in the development of modern English novel.

Lawrence Sterne (1713-68) is just the counterpart of Smollett. The subtle intellectual humour which Smollett
so completely lacked is the all-pervading atmosphere of the works of Sterne. There is a very curious blend of two opposite qualities in Sterne's novels for which Sterne is famous or rather infamous. His humour and pathos are so inextricably united that his novels become mock-heroic in appearance. He is a sentimentalist, but unlike Richardson whose seriousness is unquestionable Smollett seems to laugh over human misery. His sentiment is mixed with what is called ludicrous. But with all his defects, his brilliancy can never be questioned. Perhaps if he would have written more seriously he would have been placed by the side of the great masters.

With the publication of 'Pamela' and 'Joseph Andrews' the career of the modern novel may be said to have begun. The two schools of English novel had been established by Richardson and Fielding and then for a time imitation followed. Presently succeeding the great pioneers of the English novel, came Sarah Fielding, Dr. Johnson, and Goldsmith. Sarah Fielding's first novel 'David Simple' was published in 1744. She was an acknowledged disciple of Richardson. The contribution of Dr. Johnson to the English prose fiction is his only novel "Prince of Abyssinia". His immediate object in writing it was to defray the charges of his mother's funeral. Naturally the sorrowful mood arising out of his mother's death is predominant. The various ideals and conditions of life pass through in review and the great Doctor passes adverse judgement on them and concludes with the verdict that happiness is nowhere in the world. There are many critics who doubt whether 'Rasselas' may justly be considered as a novel at all. But much seems to be sure that had this novel been by any lesser writer, it would have passed into oblivion long before. The book owes its popularity, if it has got any popularity, to the great name of its author. It is more like an eloquent funeral sermon than a work of prose fiction. Goldsmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield' (1766) is one of the cherished possession of English literature. Its charm, its unbounded sympathy and its realism shall ever continue to endear it to its readers. All the works of Goldsmith are characterized by their sympathy for the poor, the afflicted, for com-
common humanity at large, and in his only novel the same note is struck in a deeper tone. Goldsmith's greatest merit lies in the fact that what he writes and what sentiment he expresses, he feels in his own heart — his tears and laughs are not the mock-heroic tears and joys of Sterne. To read 'Vicar of Wakefield' is to enjoy all the heavenly bliss of domestic fireside. No praise is too much for his style. In the words of the great Doctor "he has the art of saying anything he has to say in a pleasing manner". Perhaps the only marked defect of the novel is the loose construction of its plots. But its ease of charm outweighs all its defects and we never care to discover its defects at all. We love the novel too much to criticize its failings.

With Goldsmith's work the great creative period of the eighteenth century English novel may be said to close. Of course there was no diminution in the publications of novels, but they were chiefly imitations and belonged either to the school of Richardson or to that of Fielding. Therefore, they are to be studied from the view point of imitation — how far they succeeded in their imitations. But by the time the 18th century drew to a close new schools had arisen; new forces were at work, some of them visible in the pages of the earlier minor novelists. This was the force of Romantic movement. Like poetry, prose and novel had to change their respective tones. Before we pass on to the Gothic romance initiated by Walpole and perfected by Mrs Radcliff, it would be in the fitness of things to enumerate briefly the achievement of the 18th century novel and their contribution to the English prose fiction.

In the first place the eighteenth century novels, like other branches of English literature are dominated by the spirit of criticism. Criticism of life, of morality, of humour and of society — that was the end of all literature. The spirit, originating perhaps in Pope's "Essay on Criticism", becomes later on Stereotyped and Hackneyed in the hands of the lesser writers. It is one of the most important literary maxims that the works of the lesser writers are the surest index to the study of the tendencies and spirit of an
age, and perhaps it is most true in the case of the eighteenth century. The works of the lesser writers show the satirical, didactic and practical tendencies of the time in exaggerated decadent forms. Fielding in his treatment of legal abuses and Goldsmith in his appeal for goal-reform handle these tendencies with mastery, but in the weaker hands the novel became 'a mere hand-book of etiquette, a conventional pamphlet on political and social abuses, an attack on a Government, a class or a person. All these social, political and satirical tendencies led to the divorce of the natural scenery from literature. Dr. Johnson echoed the practical spirit of the age when he remarked that "a blade of grass is a blade of grass whether in one country or another". Such a tendency was the inevitable result of the industrial and civic life of the 18th century England. Man and life were bound on all sides by custom, social order and convention. Nature had no place in the existence of man. Romantic movement was a revolt against this spirit of conventionalism in society, in literature and even in politics. It came forward to strip man of his conventional habiliment, to expose humanity in its bare form and to link it with nature.

To say that the 18th century has its limitation would be, therefore, true, but to transform these limitations into defects would be literary bigotry. A more wholesome, better fictitious literature than that belonging to the age is not to be found anywhere else. Poetry suffered from the tyrannical restraint, rules and conventions of the 18th century but, for the wholesome growth of prose this was necessary and, therefore, for the first time in the history of English literature prose triumphs over poetry. Realism in style and realism in novel — that is the dominant spirit of the age. Modern novel is the child of this spirit of realism, and while it acted unfavourably on the growth of poetry, it aided the growth of a pure English prose style and fictitious narrative. With the coming in of Romantic revival poetry found its true expression, but prose and novel lost their sanity until Scott blended once more the contending elements of romance and realism.
In imaginative prose the Romantic movement took the form of supernaturalism and wonder which has been termed as Gothic Romance. This new tendency towards romance in English prose fiction began with Horace Walpole's "Castle of Otranto" (1764). What Macpherson, Chatterton, and Percy are to Romantic poetry, Walpole is to this new school of fiction. Walpole, cynical and Coxcomb as he was, had a real literary gift in spite of the fact that he detested men of letters and called the poets 'Starving birds'. But under all his foppery and cynical affectation he had a genuine taste for literature and may claim to have invented the romantic novel. His 'Otranto' abounds in absurdities, yet it is remarkable for its rude but powerful imagination. Walpole's aim seems to have been to create terror by devices which may be termed mechanical, and in this he succeeded. The most remarkable thing about Walpole's story is the spirit of mediaevalism. He was a genuine admirer of mediaevalism, and created an atmosphere around him savouring of mediaevalism. His book is a reflection of these tastes. He owes his importance to the fact that he stands at the head of a new school of fiction. He created a new taste in the public, directed the attention of the literary men from the commonplace life of the 18th century to the wonderful life of the mediaeval past, and finally anticipate the romances of Scott, the poetry of Coleridge and the New Oxford movement of Newman.

The greatest imitator of Walpole were Mrs Anne Radcliffe, Maturin and Beckford. Mrs Radcliffe, in her 'Mysteries of Udolpho' (1794) carried the art of creating terror to a degree which was never reached by Walpole. There is the same sort of machination, Mysterious vaults, pictures and trapdoor but a new element is added — the creation of mysterious persons stained with the blood of unknown crimes, who inspire fear by something supernatural and profoundly melancholy in their aspect.

The next important characteristic of Mrs Radcliffe is her singular sensitiveness to the larger aspects of nature; and her scenery, although artificial, is not glaring unreal. In short, Mrs Radcliffe towers over Walpole in that what the latter had
begun, the former perfected. Maturin pursues the same method, but he does not rely so much on violent mechanism to produce terror; he suggests terror rather than describe it. His observation of strange things in nature is singularly acute. He is the creator of that truly great figure Malmuth which fascinated the imagination of so great a writer as Balzac.

Beckford's only contribution to the romance of terror 'Vathek' is (1786) is a fiction of oriental grandeur. Notwithstanding its unrivalled absurdity, the book abounds in passages which are truly grand. Some of its descriptions are impressive, but it is doubtful to call it as "the finest oriental tale written by an Englishman". Its grotesque extravagance of Easter supernaturalism is boring. Beckford's 'Vathek' is better than Walpole's 'Otranto' but historically it is not so important, for whereas the latter is the direct forerunner of Scott, the former remained without any progeny.

Matthew Gregory Lewis, who gained notoriety at an early age by the publication of 'The Monk' (1795) is also an exponent of the school of Terror, though he deals with its another aspect. In his youth he was greatly influenced by a study of German literature. He also revivifies the spirit of feudalism and mediaevalism, but he differ from other Terror novelists in this that his horrors rest mainly on physical basis. Our incredulity is not so much taxed in it as in 'Vathek'. In this respect he approaches near Radcliffe nearer than his contemporary novelists of the same school.

The success of this new form of fiction was immense. It seemed as though the works of the earlier writers were totally forgotten. This new taste of the public led to the production of numberless romances of Terror modelled after the novels of Mrs Radcliffe and others of the same school. In these novels no attempt was made to paint the human life, character and sentiment in any aspect. The more horrible the tale, the more certain was the author of success. Yet it can not be denied that with all its absurdity incredulity and extravagances, it possessed the secret of a genuine literary impulse. In later
literature this Radcliffe school of fiction found greater masters in Hawthorne, Poe and Stevenson. Mrs. Shelley's 'Frankenstein', and Shelley's boyish romance 'Zasporzzi' belong to the same school. But on the whole the novel of terror has enjoyed a very uncertain success in English literature. Now and then a writer of genius has appeared who has been able to handle his theme with consummate skill, but as a rule their extravaganza of conception has failed. The fact is that the Romantic movement was meant for the emancipation of poetry—novels suffered rather than gained any permanent acquisition. Therefore, the best point of romanticism is to be found in poetry and not in prose.

In the meantime other influences were at work on the development of English novel. While Fielding painted life with the genuine spirit of realism and Mrs. Radcliffe created unreal romances, others discovered that fiction afforded an excellent vehicle for expounding ideas and preaching theories. The growing influence of the French Revolution began to be felt. Rousseau had instilled into the mind of Europe the revolutionary ideas of the Rights of Man, and the reconstruction of the social order. He had condemned the whole society, and pleaded a return to nature, by which he meant that man in his natural condition was a nobler being than he appeared in the artificial conditions of an elaborate social system. Rousseau utilized fiction for preaching his gospel, and thus he became the pioneer of the school of Theory. Rousseau's example was contagious; a considerable number of novels in the later part of the eighteenth century expressed the revolutionary ideas of Rousseau but the greatest exponent of these ideas was William Godwin (1756-1836). He deliberately used fiction for interpreting a new political gospel. But we are not concerned here with the theories of Godwin; what is remarkable is that the adherent supporter of these political views should have written a first-rate novel. His 'Caleb Williams' is a fine novel which has escaped oblivion more on account of its intrinsic merit as a novel than on account of its political philosophy. Novelist may consult Godwin for his pure art with advantage, for no writer of fiction—
affords a better example of how to combine serious aim with that genuine power of characterization which is a necessary requisite of the novel of purpose.
Before we pass on to Jane Austen, it would be in the fitness of things to close the 18th century novel with the name of Frances Burney and to begin the 19th century with her contemporary Miss Maria Edgeworth. It is all the more necessary when we consider that Miss Austen, Frances Burney, and Maria Edgeworth form the trio which stands at the head of the 'romance of the tea-table' and the school of Domestic Satire. Of the three worthies Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth are the two morning stars that heralded the sun, Jane Austen.

As has been pointed out in the last chapter the Romantic Movement acted unfavourably on the wholesome growth of English fiction. The logical outcome of the importation of the spirit of romanticism in the domain of English Prose fiction was that extravagance of imagination and absurdity of conception that are the distinguishing marks of the school of Terror. The whole body of fictitious literature in the last quarter of the 18th century became 'insane' as it were. For a time there was nothing but confusion in the development of the direct line of English novels; the realism of Fielding and Goldsmith received a serious check. In the meantime the tone of the English Society was rapidly changing. This change in the society was towards fantastic refinement and sentimental delicacy. The realism of Defoe was pronounced to be too coarse to be introduced in literature. Even the natural realism of Fielding, which savoured of outdoor life, was ill-qualified to please the modernized people of the closing 18th century. Society gathering, fashionable parties, cards and drawing-room conversation, became the distinguishing marks of the new society. Then again women came to the forefront. In fact women became the central figure of the new society. Their emancipation from the bondage of the authority of men, their high education...
and their equal rights with men, all combined to place them on a sure footing in the literary circle of the time. Since the days of Mrs. Aphra Behn and Mrs. Haywood novels written by women appeared in great numbers; but the thing to be noted is that they were masculine in temper, in character and in sentiment. Every thing was seen through the eyes of men. But in the modernized society women created a world of their own; they depicted the social life of the time and analysed the sentiments of female heart as seen and felt by women. Domestic life, where the woman reigned supreme, became the subject of the novelists. The first novelist who came to express all these changing tendencies of the time — the spirit of realism characterized by extreme delicacy, fashionable social gathering, the felicities of domestic life and the female predominance in the social life, was naturally a woman whose virgin name was Miss Frances Burney and who after her marriage became known as Madame D'Arblay (1752-1840). It has been admitted by Lord Macaulay and other biographers that she was never a great woman, she had nothing besides some "fine understanding," and that she was not at all a great genius; yet when her first and best novel, "Evelina" appeared 1778, it took the literary world by storm. Her novel was applauded by Johnson, her friendship was courted by Burke and Reynolds, and her name as a novelist reaching the ear of Queen Charlotte, she was introduced at court. The secret of her sudden fame lay in the fact that she was the first to describe the changing manners of the society exactly as they were and that in an interesting way. She is the first to introduce us to the fashionable places of London, the opera, the playhouse, the Hanlanagh, the Vauxhall, and the Pantheon around which the whole fashionable society of the time moved. She was gifted with a marvellous power of observation, and this quality was of advantage to her in taking the impression of, and expressing in words, the actual speech, the manner and even the characters of the men and women who moved in these circles. And again it was perhaps for the first time that she presented the society and the men and women of her time as seen
by a woman. This gave new and unknown charm to the novel.

But it is important to note that she owes her fame solely to her first novel. Intoxicated by her success of 'Evelina' and then having been introduced to a higher society, she lost her natural simplicity when she tried to strike a higher note in her subsequent novels. Her friendship with Dr. Johnson tempted her to adopt Johnsonian style which is discernible in all her subsequent productions. In 'Cecilia', the best caricature of the English society of the time the change is only, but in 'Camilla' and in 'The Wanderer' she appears as the acknowledged disciple of the great Doctor, and we are constrained to notice that this borrowed style destroys all natural simple charms that endear her 'Evelina' to its readers. Lord Macaulay in discussing this change of style in her works has selected passages from her earlier and later works and has shown the gradual transition of style from 'Evelina' to 'Cecilia' and 'Camilla' until her artificiality of style in her later works compels us to assent in the remark of Lord Macaulay that, "in an evil hour the author of 'Evelina' took the 'Rambler' for her model."

But this much must be admitted that Frances Burney was a woman of inspiring personality, and her example was followed by Miss 'Harriet Edgeworth' (1767-1849). She enjoyed considerable fame in the literary circle of her own. Sir Walter Scott declared that her novels inspired him to write his Scotti Novels. Her works should be divided into three parts: (1) short tales chiefly written for the children, (2) her society novels, and (3) her Irish studies. At an early age she took upon herself the education of her younger brothers and sisters of whom she had many. This led her to take a very serious interest in the moral welfare of the children, and the result was a series of stories with simple and direct moral. Her best known stories are the 'Moral Tales', 'Popular Tales' and 'Parent's Assistant'. Competent critics have placed these tales in the highest rank.

Her second group of novels, which may be called 'Society' novels, is the least popular. The best example of this group is 'Belinda' (1801) which is a study of the fashionable
society of the time. The main subject of these society novels is the social condition of women—their extravagance, their insincere love and their moral degradation from the viewpoint of a woman. It is in this class of novels that she directly succeeds Frances Burney (by no means an unworthy continuation); and novels are a real attempt at realistic study of manners. But her fame chiefly rests on her Irish studies comprising of 'Castle Rackrent', 'Ormond' and 'The Absence'. They are not free from the sentimentality and didactism of her short tales, but they are counter-balanced by a new element of national character. The Irish character was long a favourite theme of the comic writers of the eighteenth century and never before had it received that serious treatment which is the distinguishing mark of Miss 'Edgeworth's' Irish novels. The reader for the first time is made acquainted with the national character of the Irishman, the manners and fortunes of the landed gentry of Ireland and the peculiarities and whims of the Irish peasantry. Henceforward the attitude of the Englishman towards the Irishman was changed so far as their national character was concerned. In fact Miss 'Maria Edgeworth' did for Ireland and the Irish people what Sir Walter Scott did for Scotland and the Highlanders. Thus her claim to eminence is very great. All her works are characterized by humour, pathos, common-sense power of observations in a clear way. Her style is natural when she is allowed freedom. Her novels in general and her shorter tales in particular are loaded with morals, but they should be attributed to the untimely intrusion of her father, Richard Edgeworth and the influence of Thomas Bayly, a friend of the family. In her Irish studies she may claim to be the creator of the International novel for which she was very well-equipped by her education in England and in her stay in Ireland. Then again she might boast of having influenced Sir Walter Scott who himself avows her influence over him. As the direct successor of Frances Burney she is the popularizer of society novel. Thus, it is apparent that she essayed more than one department of novel in each of which she holds a prominent place.
But what is more important to us is that she serves as a link between Frances Burney and Miss Austen. Notwithstanding the fact that by the time Miss Edgeworth appeared on the horizon a great advance had been made in the direction of placing the English novel on a sure footing, a close study of the novels of the closing eighteenth century would reveal the fact that the novel was struggling to find out the right method and the right way. This work of rescuing the English novel from the labyrinth of confusion created chiefly by the Romantic movement was reserved for Jane Austen in the domain of purely realistic novel, and for Sir Walter Scott in the realm of nineteenth century romance. The novel of manners had been begun and essayed by Burney and Maria Edgeworth, but it needed a much more stronger hand than theirs to place it on a surer foundation. That hand was of Jane Austen who

"Welt among the untrodden ways"

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A maid whom there was none to praise",

The story of the uneventful life of Jane Austen is easily told. Born in 1775 at Steventon, a village in North Hampshire where her father was rector, she passed the first twenty one years of her secluded life at the rectory, made happy only by the strong ties of domestic love and affection. It was here that she wrote her first series of novels — 'Pride and Prejudice', 'Sense and Sensibility' and 'Northanger Abbey' 1795-98. Her first novel 'Pride and Prejudice' having been offered to a publisher and refused, went a-begging for sixteen years. 'Northanger Abbey' was sold to a publisher of Bath for the poultry some of ten counds who placed it in his drawer and forgot about it. She then went to Bath where her father died, and after a lapse of eight years she returned along with her mother and sister to live at Chawton in the vicinity of Steventon. While at Chawton she wrote her second trio of novels — 'Mansfield Park', 'Emma' and 'Persuasion'. In 1811, her 'Sense and Sensibility' found a publisher, and it moderate success induced her friends to purchase back her manuscript of 'Northanger Abbey' from the
Bath publisher for the sum of ten pounds. Her three other novels followed during the remaining years of her life, and 'Northanger Abbey' and 'Persuasion' were published posthumously. She died quietly in 1817 at Winchester and was buried in the Winchester Cathedral.

So lived and died the woman who has been counted among the first rate forces in bringing the English novel to a point which is at once the pride of England and the wonder of the world. What strikes us most in her life is her complete isolation from the world in general. She passed her whole life in Steventon and Chawton with occasional excursions to Bath and Lyme. And even this world of hers had nothing romantic about it. To quote her own words, there was only "English Verdure, English Culture, English Comfort, seen under a sun bright, without being oppressive" around the place which she inhabited. She had had no literary master to guide her. She read 'Spectator' and pronounced it coarse. Her favourites were Cowper and Crabbe, and the latter inspired her with the famous joke that "if she married at all, she could fancy herself being Mrs. Crabbe". She lived in an age when the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars had changed the whole aspect of European politics and society. England as the leading antagonist suffered most, and the literature of the period reflected this agitation but too deeply. But Jane Austen's world was calm on the sunny days of summer. The whirlwind of war and struggle passed over her little but snug and trim world as a far off thunder. So far as I have been able to detect, there is not the least reference to the Napoleonic wars in her novels except some distant and vague allusions in 'Persuasion'. To return to her isolation, she passed her days in doing little domestic duties, in visiting her few neighbours and in employing her spare hours in needlework and in writing her novels simply for her own and her sister's diversion. She wrote on her desk by the window, and when anyone entered in her room, she covered her papers and never claimed to be a writer. Surely there never was a nobler example of a cultivator of art for art's sake. And yet from this dull material she contrived to
extract stories which inspired Lord Macaulay to say that none but Jane Austen could approach Shakespeare in his masterly achievement of character-painting. One would naturally ask -- what is the secret of her fame, what hidden power was she possessed of which helped her in creating interest even in the commonest things of the world. The answer is that life and world with their innumerable varieties are never exhausted and their most trivial aspects can yield treasures if properly explored. Jane Austen was the master-mind why could detect all that are good and bad in common humanity, in common life and in the common world. For such an observing mind, one man, one common event and one moment of common existence were sufficient materials to build something interesting. The secret of Jane Austen is, nothing escaped her observation, and every thing had something interesting to unfold to her. Combined with this she had the gift to express those very interesting things whose very charms in her writing. The very narrowness of her range of vision enhanced the intensity of her observation. She saw little, she knew little, but whatever she knew and she said was perfect. Her very limitation is perhaps her success. Had she been thrown in a larger world, with a larger scope for exercising her talents, it is doubtful if she would have acheived the same success. The example of madame D'Arblay is a case in point. She wrote 'Evelina' in her natural simplicity, and that was a success; she went outside her natural circle and she could not produce anything even approaching 'Evelina'. But Jane Austen had the prudence not to be puffed up by the late but partial recognition of her merit. Then she was approached by the Librarian of Carlton House to write a historical romance illustrating the achievements of the House of Cobourg, she gave her famous reply "I could not sit down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life ........... No, I must keep to my own style, and go on in my own way; and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other". Few writers of genius could be so conscious of their own limitation as Jane Austen. Scott is like the painter who
works on a large canvas with a large brush — in his world every thing is great and the world is presented on a large scale. But unlike Scott, Miss Austen’s work is miniature-painting on ivory, "on which", to quote her own words, "I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect after much labour".

Therefore, in order to justly appreciate the art of Jane Austen, it is necessary to bear in mind her limitations as she herself did. It is foolish to expect from her works the large aspect of humanity, such as romance, highflown sentiment and the tragedy of passions. The most bitter complaint of the "Anti-Janites" is that she lives in a dull world, dead to poetry and unvisited by a single breath of romance. But we must bear in mind that is her only claim is that she painted the world she knew with fidelity and sympathy. The mightier aspects of human nature never existed in her little world and therefore, it is not her fault if romance, sentiment and large passions are not found in her pages. The genius of Jane Austen lies in her rigid simplicity. She described what she saw in her daily life. We all insist upon some exaggeration and emphasis in art. The very simplicity of a clear blue sky and smiling plain fields and the very commonality of people strikes us too commonplace to excite any interest. Therefore, it is not strange that the novels of Jane Austen which are famous for these characteristics do not interest many of the readers. But upon serious reflection, it will be found how wonderful it is to describe those very common things much more to create any interest in them. It requires as much power to fashion a grass blade as to make a flower.

To say that there is too much simplicity in Jane Austen, or that there is a touch of old fashion in external detail or again that there is entire absence of excitement in her novels are after all complaints which even the most enthusiastic lovers of Jane Austen can only justify, none can deny. But the decriers are not satisfied with these complaints; they have attempted to find out serious faults in her works. One such criticism, as has been pointed out by Professor Saintsbury, is that Miss Austen’s method is a "masculine delusion" and that
method is nothing but the bringing into literature the habit of minute and semi-satirical observation peculiar to womankind. But what was intended as a serious allegation against Miss Austen is perhaps the highest compliment yet paid to her for it must be counted as the highest literary triumph to introduce the peculiarity or rather the gift of an entire sex into literary method. The critic has in fact only echoed the conservative sentiments of Jane Austen's contemporaries who were jealously watching the growing predominance of women in English society and letters. But to speak more frankly, what is the triumph of Miss Austen in reality the triumph of women in the early nineteenth century society of England. As has pointed out somewhere in this work that the woman became the guiding star of the new English society which evolved at the close of the eighteenth century and has continued ever since. In literature also the women revolted against the unreasonable supremacy of men and established a world of their own. They no longer looked on the events of the world through the eyes of men. For the first time in the literary history of England women saw everything from the viewpoint of women. Thus, in this respect what is considered as Miss Austen's triumph or failing is in reality the conquest made by women both in society and in literature. Another important characteristic to be marked in her novels is her artistic impersonality. Enthusiastic students of Jane Austen have ransacked her novels to trace the affairs of her heart and to find out her political and religious opinions, but nothing definite could be discovered. She stands aloof never obtruding herself in the narrative. She only describes what passes actually in the world around her, never giving the events or characters the colouring of her own mind or feelings. This impersonal attitude she carries to extremity. Even Shakespeare, whose impersonality is almost proverbial, yields at times to his poetic imagination and loses his calm. And after all it requires greater power and bespeaks greater mastery to maintain rigid aloofness in narration. This is one of the
greatest achievement of Jane Austen. And yet eccentric critics have seized upon this very quality of Jane Austen and have used it against her as a weapon of offence. So consummate an artist as Jane Austen certainly did not make her character as mere mouthpiece for herself, but it is as well wrong to suppose that she never speaks out her own mind. If we go deep we will perceive that in the selection and in the treatment of her materials she spoke plainly her own opinion and ideals. Young women should marry husbands who can support them. Constancy in love brings reward in the end. Gentlemen who have nothing to do should look after their tenants. Her ideal of manhood was the heroism of the sea. For the evolution of character she gave due weight to early education, environment, wealth and poverty. Sensibility of feeling may be good for its own sake but it cannot make us happy. Sense and self-control will stand in better stead than sensibility. A critical study of Jane Austen’s novels will establish many such conclusions which may be taken as her definite opinions. But this she does not effect by revealing herself whenever opportunity occurs. She stands as aloof as ever. Characters and events develop by themselves. But she is master of delicate irony. Characters and events are brought into contrast and the reader, being in the secret, finds out for himself what is good and what is bad. Jane Austen does not pronounce her own judgment; she creates a world of her own experiences and observations, introduces us in a company into that world and then leaves us to form our own opinions. Thus, irony and satire are the very salt of her novels. Satire, if properly handled, is perhaps the best made of detecting the foibles and failings in human character. But in the unsympathetic hands of swift satire changed into savage vituperation, defeating the very end of satire as a correcting rod. Jane Austen had after all a generous and sympathetic heart. She pitied rather than censured the human weaknesses. In her hand, therefore, satire took a middle form. Her critical observation at once detected the flaws in human conduct and dealings, and in order to expose them to the view of the world in general, she adopted the satire form tempered with sympathy. Thus, thoug
she lives and moved in the world of satire, and speaks the language of satire, she does not disgust us by its hediousness. She further minimises the unwholesome effects of satire with that delicate humour which endear her to the true critics of art. If may perhaps serve as inducement to those who cannot relish the simplicity of Jane Austen that she is counted among the truest humorists and keenest wits who ever handled the English language. Can there be, in the whole range of English fiction, an absentee figure than figure than Mr. Collins in 'Pride and Prejudice' on the strength of whose character alone, to quote the words of Professor Sainsbury, "Shakespeare and Fielding were the only predecessors who could properly give as sponsors to this young lady on her introduction among the immortals."

But this is a digression here and it would be in the fitness of things to remind that her aloofness from the narrative is counterbalanced by a vivid presentation of the world by means of irony and satire combined with the truest touch of humour and sympathy. Indeed one can hardly fail to perceive that these are her very characteristics which have combined the critics to call her the supreme mistress of comedy. Inspite of the fact that she satirises the failings of humanity, she never deals with tragedy. "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery" are her own words, and to this resolution she tenaciously adheres, the only exception being the poverty-stricken Price family. She gives us pure comedy, and in the comic art she is inferior only perhaps to the greatest. The wonder is that living as she was in such a small world she could sketch the same characters in as many ways as she liked. Take, for example the clergymen of her novels. They are all taken from the same strata of society, they are all properly educated, they are all young they all get livings and they all of them have material comforts. But with all their similarity they can be as much distinguished from one another as an European from an African. To have attained to this wondrous diversity and variety from such scant materials is indeed a marvellous achievement of Jane Austen. It is in her variety and diversity of character that Lord Macaulay has
placed her only one step below Shakespeare. However cautiously some critics may take this high eulogy bestowed upon Miss Austen it cannot be denied that in the domain of character-painting her superiority is as much indisputed as that of Shakespeare. The fact is that Shakespeare is too much immortalized, otherwise there is no cause why Jane Austen should not be placed by the side of Shakespeare so far as the pure art of comedy, character painting and variety and diversity are concerned. Mr. J. Smith has said "The hand which drew Miss Bates, though it could not have drawn Lady Macbeth, could have drawn Dame Quickley, or the nurse in Romeo and Juliet" and that perhaps in no way in a lesser than Shakespeare.

We have been up till now taking a general survey of Jane Austen as a novelist, but it would be much better if we illustrate her peculiarities by analysing her novels. Though "Pride and Prejudice" and "Emma" are greater favourite in general but in point of artistic finish 'Northanger Abbey' has been placed by critics above all other novels. The accepted verdict of the critics that it is a parody satire on the school of Mrs Radcliffe is a bit misleading if not wholly untrue. What has led to this general belief is the 'Comic Undecieving' of Catherine Morland which is only part of the subject. But to give so much prominence to this incident which is only a part after all as to make all other incidents subordinate to it is doing but scant justice to the real aim of Miss Austen. That it is a satire no one can deny. But Jane Austen strikes a higher note than what is generally believed. It is not so much the burlesque on Mrs. Radcliffe's 'Mysteries of Udolpho' as a parody satire on sensibility -------- "as fostered, in this case, by a diet of the wrong sort of fiction. She assails the conception of life, the glorification of the young lady, asset forth in romance". This interpretation of Miss Austen's satire by Mr. O. Elton seems to be more plausible than to say merely that it is a comic version of the gothic Romance. The parody on the school of Terror is not the end but only the means to the another end. But whatever may have been the aim of Miss Austen's satire, the
The artistic merits of the novel remain undisputed. The character-drawing especially of the women is superb. Those who say that General Tilney is extravagant simply do not know human nature. Henry Tilney is rather colourless, and has a great deal of subdued individuality. But it was an artistic necessity, for it would not have done to make him too superior to Catherine. Other characters are all perfect, but the heroine is the greatest triumph in the novel. Catherine Morland is not at all a great figure, she is not an ideal model, and her character can never be said to be intricate. At the age of ten "she had a thin, awkward figure, a sallow skin without colour, dark, lank hair, and strong features. She never could learn or understand anything before she was taught, and sometimes not even then".

In short there was nothing about her which could induce even an ordinary novelist to choose her for a character much less to make her a protagonist. Nevertheless, she had the good fortune to be adopted as a heroine by a master mind. In Catherine the ordinary is made extraordinary. The older heroines were made ideal and extraordinary, and they could not maintain their naturalness, but Catherine is ordinary, and is extraordinary in success. Her character is indicative of Miss Jane Austen's literary principle that the ordinary can be made to yield as much interest as an extraordinary. Unlike other heroines, she has her share of goodness as well as of failings. She is one of the thousand girls with whom we daily come into contact and we never take any heed of such girl in the actual world. But in literature she is as precious as a sly ruby because she is an example of nature masterfully imitated and duplicated by art.

This art is further enhanced by the pervading irony which is the very essence of Jane Austen's novels. That Miss Austen's irony is skilfully handled in 'Northanger Abbey' can hardly be contradicted. But to pacify those who maintain that the exhibition of irony is not consummate in 'Northanger Abbey' it would be better to pass on to 'Pride and Prejudice' in which masterful handling of irony reaches its climax. No one can doubt that its ironical character is ill pervading
in every character except perhaps in Jane and her lover who serve as mere foils to Elizabeth and Darcy. But there is one thing to be marked — its irony lies not in the opposition of two embodied principles, a right and a wrong as in 'Sense and Sensibility', but in the clash of two opposing foibles which must be tempered and softened before they are brought together. Darcy is all seemed proud of his ancestry and of his own social and intellectual superiority. This naturally imbibed in him the counter-spirit of gravity, reserve and over-fastidiousness which led him to keep himself aloof from everybody and everything. Elizabeth is prejudiced against him, and her prejudice is heightened and confirmed when she overhears his remark on herself that, 'she is not handsome enough to tempt me'. In course of time, however, his better qualities are revealed and he turns out to be nobleminded and generous hearted. But this we, like Elizabeth, are slow to discover. In fact Darcy's character is changed rather than revealed in the course of the story. Thus, the main theme is the war of the two opposing foibles, the pride of Darcy and the prejudice of Elizabeth and the train of events though intricately woven are suitably adjusted to bring about the better acquaintance of Darcy and Elizabeth and ensuring their happiness. A crowd of personages is created in the second plane whose seemingly individual dealings tend to the same end — the mutual understanding of Elizabeth and Darcy. In other words they all serve as foils to the hero and the heroine. One of these, Miss Jane Bennet, the elder sister seems to be more difficult to draw than the sharp-witted Elizabeth. She is just that 'embodiment of innocence, kindness and sweetness that refuses to believe even the worst sort of villany unless it is too palpable to be otherwise. But Jane Austen knew that such character are more loveable than wise, and therefore, in the practical world Jane Bennet suffers the folly of too much sweetness. But perhaps the greatest triumph of Miss Austen in character drawing is Mr. Collins, one of the greatest comic immortals in English fiction. He reminds us of those court jesters of mediaeval monarchs whose
very absurdities endeared them each and every one. In life we often come across such people who are made prominent in society by their denseness and snobbery. Of course Mr. Collins is not coarse and hilarious like medieval court jesters, but he is as odd and absurd as any of them. Symmetry and regularity in character lessen the labour of the artist in drawing character, and any one least versed in character-sketching can work about a perfect sketch of regular character. But irregularity and oddity in character are the things which discountenance even the greatest masters. But once again Jane Austen reveals her genius and skill by the consummate handling of Mr. Collins' complex character. His pedantry, snobbery, presumptuousness, his ill-timed and authoritative remarks and the exalted idea of his own importance by virtue of being a protege of a woman like Lady Catharine combine to make him the most difficult person to be imitated in truth. But after all he is imitated by Jane Austen and imitated with perfect likeness to each and life. Above all there is in the character of Mr. Collins that palatable relish of humour which preserves the literature from the attack of time and oblivion. His patroness, Lady Catharine, and the sarcastic Mr. Bennet are other two triumphs of Miss Jane Austen in the domain of humorous character drawing. These three characters have combined the critics to pronounce that Pride and Prejudice is the most humorously written, not only most humorously written, but as well most boldly plotted out. Even those who protest against its being placed above Northanger Abbey cannot but agree that in Pride and Prejudice Miss Austen maintains a higher flight than its sister rival. It is not only longer than Northanger Abbey but has a more intricate plot, in the skilful handling and suitable adjusting of which Miss Austen shows the power of a first-rate artist. Among Jane Austen's predecessors, none except Fielding was such a perfect master in structure. Pride and Prejudice has not only the Shakespearean humour, but also its technique. The handling of the events leading first to the deepening of Elizabeth's prejudice on the one hand and to the awakening of love in Darcy's breast on the other and then to the gradual discovery of one another's real feelings,
sealed at last by the holy vows of marriage, is a master-piece. Elizabeth first meets Darcy at a village ball. She is at once prejudiced against him on account of his proud bearing towards the young women of the village, and especially on account of his remark concerning herself which she over-heard that "she is not handsome enough to tempt me" to dance with. A train of even happen to deepen the prejudice of Elizabeth and to awaken in the over-fastidious breast of Darcy the unconquerable emotions of love for Elizabeth in spite of his pride until the two contending forces meet in a climax at Nunsford Parsonage. There Darcy offers an insulting proposal of marriage to Elizabeth little knowing how much he was hated by her, and Elizabeth of course indignantly refuses to accept the marriage proposal. The contending forces of pride and prejudice having reached the climax now take a downward course, and by the most ingenious process of disillusionment Elizabeth's prejudice is changed into admiration and gratitude if not intense love, and Darcy's pride is humbled until they are united in marriage. One would look in vain for a parallel of such a consummate handling of an intricate and elaborate plot unless in the most artistic dramas of Shakespeare. To borrow the words of Professor Saintsbury ".....it is difficult to conceive any scheme and scale on which it could have been better". A more perfect harmony between character, situation, and events in such an intricate plot could not be achieved. It would not be extravagant to say that 'Pride and Prejudice' is perfect in every respect without single blemish.

'Sense and Sensibility' the first to appear (1811) is said to have been written about the same time as 'Pride and Prejudice' and 'Northanger Abbey'. But it is the weakest of the three, perhaps weakest of all. Its weakness is perhaps due to its independence like 'Northanger Abbey' on something else: the romantic extravagances of "Elinor" satirizes the sensibility novel just as 'Northanger Abbey' satirizes the sensibility of women. Again in 'Sense and Sensibility' Miss Austen strikes out a new path by contrasting her heroine with other characters in a way which she had not attempted in 'Northanger Abbey'. 
Indeed in point of maturity 'Sense and Sensibility' is the youngest of all her literary productions. There is no lack of power or of experience, but there is error of judgement. 'Manfield Park' is better than 'Sense and Sensibility' but not so brilliant as 'Pride and Prejudice'. It shows much maturity of power and knowledge of life than 'Sense and Sensibility' much of it is quite consummate, especially the character of Mrs. Norris.

But of the three Chawton stories, 'Emma' is the one novel that may claim to be placed by 'Northanger Abbey' and 'Pride and Prejudice'. It has not the superb structure of 'Pride and Prejudice' or the artistic finish of 'Northanger Abbey' which make 'Emma' so popular, its merit lies in the absolute triumph of that strictly ordinary and commonplace on which the fame of Jane Austen rests. The story covers three or four families living within one mile of one another. Everything happens in the narrowest limit of everyday life. There is nothing startling, no sensational incident to carry us through. The ordinary routine of life is maintained with a regularity that savours of dull punctuality. Indeed to live the life of the Woodhouse family would be to hang oneself outright. But to portray such a life in literature is a task beyond the power of ordinary masters for the reason that it is inimitable in art. "The big bowwow strain' any one can do, but 'exquisite touch which render ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting many besides Scott could not do.

In 'Emma' Jane Austen reverts to the type of heroine whom, whilst loving she systematically chastens. Emma is a such who thinks that she can see into the minds of others, but in this she is cruelly deceived in the course of her experiences. She wants to direct the course of other people's happiness and pose herself as a suitable match-maker. She takes Harriet Smith under her protection and proceeds to make her a suitable wife for some one more suitable than the farmer Martin who proposes marriage to her. But her match-making business springs humiliation to her rather than triumph, At last when she is thoroughly
brought to reason, she is united to Mr. Knightley who was her guardian-angel from her very infancy and with whom she was always at war because he was candid enough to point out to her defects. The one curiosity of the novel Miss Bates is abominably boring to the reader. But no one can deny that she must have given a lot of trouble to Miss Austen in sketching her oddities. Another humorous and kind creation of Miss Austen is the eccentric Mr. Woodhouse who would not recommend an egg boiled by any one else than his own cook. The ending of the story is thus all sunny and kind comedy.

It is only in *Persuasion* that Jane Austen comes perilously near moralizing, and thereby losing her balance and letting her mask of impersonality fall a bit. Her favouritism of Anne and hatred of others especially of the baronet who is made up of vanity and nothing but vanity are evident. Then, again, in the conversations of Anne and Captain Harville there is the deliberate vindication of the rights of women ignored by men. But, however, this moralizing is not excessive as to forfeit our regard for the impersonal note of Jane Austen.

Now there remain only two things to be considered in the study of Jane Austen with which we will close our chapter on Jane Austen. The first is her style. Though she read many masters her style is her own unless approaching a little the analytical style of her favourite Cooper. Every word is most suitably adapted with due regard to its value and force. But, as befits a woman, her style is natural and simple and in complete harmony with the world and life she moved in and painted. Unlike Fielding who was master of two style, the burlesque and the rich eloquence of the great orators, Jane Austen's style is the language of every day life. Her style is more modern than antiquated in spite of the fact that she uses some obsolete words as 'imaginist' and 'deadily'. There is nothing in her style which would sound strange, except for the beauty of the expression.

In the one word of 'realism' the whole contribution of Jane Austen to fiction may be summed up. The once more revived the spirit of realism in art and style which English novel had
had in the days of Fielding but which it had lost in the ensuing turmoil of the Romantic movement. There is nothing extraordinary, and romantic and extravagant. She simply relates the tale of the daily life of the English people whom she saw and with whom she lived herself. Thus, Jane Austen is not only an artist, but also in a sense a historian. Her picture of life and manners in the close of the 18th century is as vivid as the pictures drawn by Fielding and Defoe in the earlier part of the century. History describes the splendour of a court, the intrigues of statesmen, and the fierce contests of monarchs and nations, but the life, as lived by the average men of the period which we are more desirous to learn, are passed over. In Jane Austen's pages we have just the sort of detail which we require for reconstructing the average social life of the period. In her novels we move as if we were among the men and women of the closing eighteenth century, and we know perhaps as much about the customs and manners of their society as they knew themselves. This is the triumph of her unflinching realism. It would not be wrong to say that her realism is enhanced by the narrowness of her world and experience. She had more opportunity and less haste in observing all that happened around her until her microscopic observation discovered the hidden treasures in the most ordinary things. For her material she never went beyond her own experiences. Her characters are all taken from the upper middle of the English village society. Curious critics have discovered that she seldom goes above a baronet, and hardly ever descends to a butler.

In her lifetime she lived quite an obscure life without any literary fame or popularity. It was only one or two years before her death that some people began to recognize her worth, and it was mentioned in a review that some readers placed her by the side of Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth who enjoyed tolerable fame in their own time. Scott was the first to shower on her the famous eulogy — "that young lady has a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life which is to my most wonderful I ever met with. The big bowwow strain I can do myself
like any now going, but the exquisite touch which renders
ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting from
the touch of the description and the sentiment is denied to me.
That a pity such a gifted creature died so early". It was after
her death that her genius was slowly but surely being recogniz-
ed by the greatest masters until in our own time she ranks
among the greatest literary immortals of England.
CHAPTER IV

Sir Walter Scott and Historical Romance.

The novel of Paisley had found its mistress in Miss Jane Austen, and its rival the romance was not slow to find its own. Few women followed in the wake of Fanny Burney, Miss Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen for the simple reason that novel proper defies imitation, while romance can easily be mimicked by second-rate writers. Thus, while the cultivation of the art of novel was confined to the few, romance proper issued in shoals from the Minerva Press immediately before the appearance of 'Waverley' in 1814. The one characteristic of these romances is their worthless imitation of Mrs Radcliffe, Godwin, 'Monk' Lewis and many others of the same school. But to cut short, they had no place in literature; they are more fit to be dealt with in the history of English trade. In their own time they found ready sale by the help of thrilling and attractive titles. But they served at least one purpose. The novels thus found in them fit subjects of parody and satire as is evident in the novels of Miss Edgeworth and Jane Austen. What is important to note in this connection is that these romances were chiefly written and read by women. The predominance of women in English literature and society is the chief characteristic of the literary history of early nineteenth century. Of these innumerable women romancers Eaton Stannard, Barrett's Mirthful Burlesque, 'The Heroine' (1813) may be taken as a sign that these extravagant romances were beginning to find disfavour with the public ------ a healthy presage of the appearance of more natural romance of Scott. Thus, by the time that 'Scott came in the field there were two contending elements in the arena of fictitious literature, romance with its extravagance of conception and imagination, and novel proper with its character
drawing and realistic incident. In Scott novel proper and romance were wedded. The novels he wrote are of composite character. They are the story of adventures, the realistic sketch of manner, and the saner elements of the Gothic romance; and they all blended together and placed in a historical background.

Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh on 15th August, 1771. Both on his father's and mother's side he was descended from the Border families, distinguished more for their tribal feats than for any literary fame. Indeed his father was the first of his family to adopt a town life and a gentle profession of writer to the signet. From his mother he inherited the imagination and culture which imbued in him an early passion for gathering legends and loves of old Scottish feats. Whatever may be due to his ancestry for this bent of mind, he was helped in this by his early associations and upbringing. When he was only 18 months old, he was visited by a fever which cost him the use of one of his legs. This lameness and a general weakness of health prevented him from undergoing a systematic course of education when he grew up. In his childhood he passed much of his time with his grand-mother at Sandyknowe listening eagerly to the stories of Scottish feats told to him by his grandmother 'in whose youth the old Border depredations were matter of recent tradition'. Chance threw in his way many other persons who were eager to satisfy all the curiosities of this charming boy. Thus, left to himself in matters of education, he accumulated a vast store of ancient legends, loves, histories and ballads, chiefly concerning Scotland; and when he was strong enough to be put in Edinburgh High School in 1778, his masters 'pronounced that, though many of his school fellows understood the Latin better, Walter Scott was behind few in following and enjoying the author's meaning'.

Throughout his school days and afterwards at the university, he eagerly pursued his own studies. He read French and Italian in order to read the original works of Dante and Ariosto and the French romances. But while he lived this life of imagination and scholarship, he was far from being a cloistered student. Inspite of his lameness, he grew up into a robust
boy of genial disposition. He was never behind any of his school
friends in the school subjects and games. When he joined the bar,
he moved freely in the society, and came across all sorts of
people. This brought to him the experience necessary for paint­
ing the Scottish manners and character in all grades of society.
During his stay at the University he attended law lectures and
was called to the bar in 1792. Though he had taken to this pro-
profession by the advice and desire of his father, yet from the
beginning he had limited his ambition to only getting a
suitable post which would enable him to devote his time to
literature. In this he was not disappointed for in 1799 he ob-
tained the office of Sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire, on a salary
of £300 and in 1806 he obtained the reversion of the office of
clerk of session. Inspite of his hard duties, which he continued
to perform for 25 years, he found time to devote himself to
literary pursuits. Moreover, his professional duties enabled him
to study men and manners. Thus, his early associations inspired
him with romance and his experiences in later life taught him
realism enough to curb the extravagance of romance.

In his literary life he was first claimed by poetry
as its devoted disciple. He was first inspired by Henry
Mackenzie’s lecture on German Literature delivered in 1738. He
learnt German and while he was in the height of his enthusiasm
for the new German Romance, he heard about a translation of
Burger’s ‘Lenore’. This gave him a new ambition — he himself
translated Goethe’s drama, ‘Gotz von Berlichingen’. The perusal
of German romantic literature and his translation of Goethe,
turned his thought to the romance of his own beloved Highland.
The result of this new impulse was the ‘Minstrelsy of the
Scottish Border’ published in 1802-1805. In 1805 appeared ‘The
Lay of the Last Minstrel’, his first original work. It was
followed by ‘Harmonion’ in 1819 which at once aroused England
and Scotland to great enthusiasm, and brought great and unexpect­
ed fame to Scott. He now thought of giving up law which had
not brought him any great success. Henceforward he devoted him-
self to literature. It was at this time that he unfortunately
entered into secret partnership with the publishing and printing concern of Constable and the Ballantyne press, a mistake which brought misery on Scott in his later years and hastened his death. In 1812 he removed from Ashfield to his newly built house of Abbotsford and there established himself as a Scottish laird with its accompanying dignity of generous hospitality. He received the title of baronet in 1820. During all this time, his business partnership with Ballantyne and Co. remained a secret, and his authorship of the Waverley Novels remained unknown.

But after 1810, Scott had realized that he was not all a poetic genius and that in order to maintain his popularity he must look to some other mode. In this he was confirmed by the sudden success of Byron who 'rose one morning to find himself famous,' Scott found himself on unstable grounds, and therefore he set to seek some new El Dorado where he would be rivalled none. The story how his first novel Waverley appeared is interesting. He had written some portions of the story earlier, on account of an unfavourable opinion of a friend he discarded it. Later on while searching a fishing tackle he found the manuscript of the Waverley took it up and finished it in a few weeks.

The anonymous publication of The Waverley (1814) and his later novels is attributed by Lockhart to Scott's dislike of being called a novelist which seemed to be beneath his dignity. The success of Waverley was immediate and when it was followed within four years after the publication of Waverley Guy Mannering, The Antiquary, Black Dwarf, Old Mortality, Rob Roy, and The Heart of Midlothian, England's enthusiasm and wonder knew no bound. Not only in England but also in the continent his novels were hailed as the greatest contributions to fictitious literature. In these novels Scott gave a wonderful variety of characters and incidents illustrating the histories of France, Scotland and England. In his first nine novels, Scott limited himself to Scottish history and in giving the enthusiasm, the generosity, the hospitality, and the high loyalty to the respective clans. In 1819 he took a sudden turn in Ivanhoe.
and lighted upon the forgotten aspects of English History. The wonder is that this most popular of his work was written while he was suffering from the attacks of agonizing cramp of the stomach. In his later works, 'Kenilworth', 'Fortunes of Nigel' and 'Woodstock', the same romantic side of English History is illustrated. In 'Quentin Durward' and 'Anne of Geierstein' he turns to French history and in 'Talisman' and 'Count Robert' he gives way to his enthusiasm for the war of the Crusades.

For twenty years Scott wrote with the double purpose of giving to the world what he had in him and of making large sums of money for maintaining his Scottish dignity at Abbotsford. But at last his connection with the Ballantyne & Co brought disaster on him. He was comfortably employed in writing Woodstock in 1826, when the crash came. The company was saddled with heavy debts and it was declared with huge amount of debt to be cleared. How far Scott was responsible for this catastrophe is a discrepant controversy. The upshot was that Scott assumed full responsibility and undertook to pay every penny refusing any help from his creditors. But at this time he zealously set himself to the work of clearing the debts by the help of his pen. In four years he wrote a huge amount of works of diverse character which enabled him to pay £40000—half of the whole debt. Had he been granted a few more years of good health and life, he must have paid every penny of his huge debt, but he broke down under the strain. In 1830 he had a serious attack of paralysis from which he recovered and again set to work by dictating. But after a short time his mental faculty forsook him and at last he was prevailed by his physician and friends to try a voyage to some milder climate. The British Government placed a naval vessel at his disposal. He visited Malta, Naples and Rome. Then after his death drawing near, he returned to Abbotsford and shortly after his return he died in 1832 and was buried among his ancestors in the Old Dryburg Abbey.

Though we are concerned here only with his novels, it would not be perhaps of any great use to distinguish them from
his early poems, for whether in poetry or in novel, there is the same Walter Scott surrounded with the romantic past. Both in his poetry and in his novels, the same spirit is the same, the difference lies in the mode of expression. It was only an accident that he first chose poetry to express his romantic feelings. The same passion for mediævalism, the same sense of grandeur and the same feelings of youth that are the distinguishing marks of 'The Lady of the Lake' or of 'Ivanhoe' come to full play in 'Waverley' and in 'Guy Mannering'. He has been pored out in his life, his ancestral connection with the romantic Border. Scott and his early associations and up bringing inveted in him that passion for romantic that became part of his life. The name of Sir Walter Scott is inseparable from romance, and this genuine feeling he sought to express in diverse ways. The building of Abbotsford, and his maintenance of Highland grandeur and hospitality are but another expressions of his romantic feeling. He was infected with the same enthusiasm for mediævalism that was the distinguishing mark of Walpole's character. Combined with this enthusiasm for mediævalism he had Rousseau's passion for rural life which is evident in his novels. When he went to writing romance, the same feelings of mediævalism and passion for natural scenery and rural life came out from his pen. Mediævalism and nature are the two notes that Scott strikes in his novels with the greatest force. Thus, though he lived in an age of industrialism marked by the growing sense of democracy, he had no enthusiasm for democracy. His imagination conjured up a past with all its glamour of mediævalism, romance and pageantry. He created such a world in and around Abbotsford. He was too much in love with the past ---- its life and society to see it pulled down by the rough hands of modern democracy. The past he wanted to play in life was that of a chieftain surrounded by many followers and traditions of a genuine sense of service and loyalty. Abbotsford was an attempt to revive the patriarchal dignity of the past. In writing his novels he had the same ideal before his mind. It was natural, therefore, that when he would begin writing he would choose the historic novel in which the pageantry of the mediæval age would play the
greatest part. But unlike other writers of historical novel Scott's historical fictions are the genuine expression of his own feeling and ideal. From his very childhood he had been drinking deep at the fountain of old border poetry and romance. There was not a tower, not a ruined castle with whose history and legend he was not acquainted. Thus, his novels are the real expression of his own nature, not the laboured effort to chronicle the past. This point is to be insisted on, for therein lies the fundamental difference between Scott's historical fictions and the historical novels of other English writers. There are many writers of historical novels who have produced fine historical novels comparable with, and at times even better than Scott's novels. Charles Reade's 'Cloister and Hearth' and Thackeray's 'Henry Esmond' can lay claim to equal place with any of Scott's novels. Taken on their own merit they can be ranked with the best of Scotty; and there are many who without any prejudice would say that none of Scott's novels would approach these masterpieces in point of accuracy and truth. But there is this difference between them that whereas Henry Esmond' and 'Cloister and the Hearth' are the laboured studies of the past without any corresponding appreciation in the heart of the authors themselves, Scott's 'Ivanhoe' or 'Kenilworth' are the real and legitimate expression of his throbbing heart. 'Esmond' and 'Cloister and the Hearth' never express the real bent of the author's genius. The real Thackeray is revealed not in 'Esmond', but in 'Vanity Fair', and the same is true of Reade. They serve to show that a man of genius, with the help of labour and sedition, can write anything he likes and that in a much better way than the man who has a real the particular mode of writing a speciality. But Scott writes the historical novel because he could not write any other sort of novel. If he had not the sedition and learning and the sense of recreating the dead past that are denied to other writers of historical novel and are the undisputed possession of Scott by virtue of his immersion into the very spirit of the age. If Scott fails in historical accuracy, that
failure is counter-balanced by romantic interest. To sum up, Thackeray and Reade let us know all about the past, while Scott makes us move and live in the glorious past.

The distinguishing mark of Scott is his imagination which has wrought all this wonder. And the very nature of his work demand that he should write extempore and with haste. For imagination books, no restriction, knows no bondage. If is at its best when it is given full play — fast and extempore. It is a common truism about Scott that he wrote as fast as his pen could move never looking again at his own writing unless in the proof. This is at once the triumph and the failure of Scott. This haste deprived him of that concentration of mind which is necessary for systematic presentation of a story. But the truth is, as Scott himself has admitted that when he began to write he was forsaken by every thing but imagination — and the greater the imagination, the greater the haste and the greater the success. Had he attempted to work like Jane Austen in "little piece of every with so fine a brush as to produce little effect after much labour" he would have probably failed. Such method was quite foreign to his nature and was ill-qualified to pull on with the robust imagination of Scott. This is not true of any one novel but of all his novels together. They are all the work of appreciative knowledge of the past combined with the intense imagination of the author. Therefore, to assume that any of his novels is written with labour and perseverance would be erroneous. Mr. Carlyle in praising 'Waverley' above his other novels has said "On the whole, contrasting 'Waverley', which was carefully written with most of its followers which were written extempore, one may regret the extempore method". But this is a sad mistake, as has been pointed out by Mr. Hutton, unwarranted by facts. There is no evidence, but to the contrary, that any of the novels was written with the least labour. Scott's method was always the same — to begin and then to hurry it on to its end without any regard to the truth of historical facts or to the system. And the rate of progress seems to have increased with the corresponding heightening of imagination. Indeed a more detailed study of his life
and his writings would reveal the fact that his best stories are those which were most rapidly written, for they were the works of his intensest imagination. But to take advantage of this acknowledge haste of Scott in order to expose his incompetency or ignorance would be nothing short of foolishness. He wrote carelessly because he wrote in haste, but never ignorantly. His knowledge of antiquity was profound. He knew not only the general features of an age, but also the minute details which are evident in all his novels. His passion for details is the one boring element in almost all his novels. He is always inclined to over-load his narrative with details that are of more interest and use to the antiquarian than to the general reader. The first few chapters of his novels are dull and tedious merely because he is at pains to picture the condition of the period which the story is cast. But this much must be said that this passion for minute detail gives that solidity of workmanship to his novels which few historical novels possess.

In his own time his fertility in production amazed the public. But in this respect he has been surpassed by many. To take one, immediately after him came Bulwer who surpasses Scott in the fertility of production combined with a certain evenness of merit. But what distinguishes Scott from the other extempore writers of fiction is the ease and truth with which he paints the life not only of his own country and time or of the age just preceding his, but the days for advanced in the oblivion of bygone past and often too of scenes far away from his own country. In 'Old Mortality', the most powerful of his novels, the story is cast in the period more than century and a quarter before he wrote. Other stories, like 'Nigel' and 'Kenilworth', go back to Tudor period, that is two centuries and a half before himself. Others like 'Talisman' and 'Ivanhoe' paint the society and life of Richard's time and present the scenes of the burning deserts of Palestine (in 'Talisman'). The world of the new class of extempore writers seems to have been limited to their own times of which they had personal
experience. But judging by the ease with which he described
bygone ages Scott seems to have lived in the life of a centenaire
r with a bit of personal experience of a few centuries . No one can pretend that Scott paints the life of the
Tudor period with the same ease and truth as Jane Austen
describes the country clergymen and the squires of her own
time. It is nevertheless the work of a great imagination to
make us more familiarly amidst the political and religious
controversies of two or three centuries ago and to make us
actual witnesses, as it were, of Elizabeth's balancing game,
of Leicester's crafty intrigues, and of noble dealings of
Charles Bradlaugh.

Though most of his novels are justly called romantic,
the other side which he formed unromantic is aspowerfully drawn
as the romantic side. To this he could not do in his poems.
But in the novels, the business of life finds as much place as
the sentiments. Mr. Bagehot very well puts it——"If he had
given us the English side of the race to Derby, he would have
described the Bank of England paying in six pences, and also the
loves of the cashier." A cursory glance at his novels would
establish this assertion. Take for example the dealings and the
very character of MacIvor. His arrangements for receiving
blackmail and his business-like motive in proposing marriage with
Rose Bradforde are as carefully recorded as the high and noble
feelings of his sister, Miss MacIvor. So too the monetary deal-
ings of the Jew in 'Ivanhoe' are as vividly presented as the
struggle of love in the heart of his lovely daughter, 'gentle'
Rebecca. It seems as if Scott enjoyed this contrast between the
high sentiments of life and its dull and almost ludicrous detail.
Yet it is in the delineation of this unromantic side of life
and world that Scott fails. The minute details which are at once
the weakness and strength of Scott is closely related with the
unromantic delineation, and even the most zealous admirers of
Scott cannot fail of remarking him for this dullness and prolix-
ity. It is the imagination of Scott which creates the abiding
interest in his novels that make him and his work famous. His
imagination, as any body else's imagination, can not be kindled to flame by the weak fuel of dull details. It needs the excitement of picturesque scenes, and romantic feeling. It is characteristic of Scott's genius that he is at his best when he has to deal with splendid scenes, and great characters. Give him a truly grand scene, such as the revels of Kenilworth, or the tournament at Asby in 'Ivanhoe', or again the reception of Richard by Saladin, and Scott will reveal his masterhand. Not even in Shakespeare's historical dramas can we come across such splendid array of figures and characters all throbbing with life. Vitality. Quentin Durward may be unimpressive and Nigel may be a dull hero, but how vital are the truly great figures of Louis XI and James I. The passage in 'Fortunes of Nigel' found him on his unexpected introduction to the king's chamber has been truly described as 'masterpiece of characterization'. Again the scene in 'Kenilworth' which describes the approach of Elizabeth, the shouts and greetings of the common people and the splendid sound of trumpets that announces the approach of the virgin Queen, indeed the whole of the proceeding at Kenilworth Castle are masterpieces of description. There are not one or two such passages and scenes in his novels but innumerable, for these are the real productions of his genius and romantic imagination. These are not mere details of the events of a bygone age, they are the real pictures in which we move and mix as one of the actors of the drama.

It is in scenes like these that Scott bears kinship with Shakespeare. Carlyle's criticism on this claim that, "Shakespeare works from the heart outwards, Scott works from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of men" is well known and to a certain degree undeniable. But it is unjust when we compare the scenes in the historical dramas of Shakespeare with those of the historical scenes in Scott's novels. Carlyle's criticism is true when we compare Ophelia with Jeannie Deans or Julie with Margaret Ramsay, but place Scott's Charles Edward with Shakespeare's Wolsey; Scott's King James I with Shakespeare's King Henry VIII or, again, Scott's Queen Elizabeth with Shakespeare's
Shakespeare's Queen Katharine, and Scott is in no way inferior to Shakespeare. Shakespeare handled two different forms of art — in the one giving life and substance to the entirely bodiless creatures of his own mind and imagination, and in the other attempting a vivid presentation of characters already known by the part they played in history. Any comparison between Shakespeare and Scott must be confined to their common use of the latter form of art. The work of each is the delineation of a character already known in history. And for the vivid presentation of these historical characters, it is not invention which is needed, but the creative imagination working on ascertained materials. No body can deny that Scott was never wanting in that creative imagination which makes history live.

Therefore, the greatest triumph of Scott is his depiction of historical characters and scenes. But it must not be forgotten that he had a firm grasp upon life and world as a whole. His imagination had the supreme power of giving life to the past, but he had also sympathy enough to observe and depict the humblest forms of life. Mr. Bagehot has pointed out that Scott was singularly successful in the delineation of the poor people —— their humour, their eccentricities, their narrow outlook and their quaint manners. He had a passion for romantic literature which fed his imagination but he was also interested in the ordinary life of the poor people of his own time, and this gave him power to observe the weaker as well as the stronger side of the character of the ordinary labourer and the peasant. But what is important to note in this connection is his life like-presentation of the poor folk. Dickens has vulgarized the poor people, making them "poor talkers, poor livers, and in all ways poor people to read about". On the other hand sentimental novelists have placed the poor people in Arcadia, as it were, with all its glamour and ideal happiness. Scott gets clear of these errors and presents them with all that are good and bad in them. I can not do better here than quote Mr. Bagehot's just criticism on Scott's presentation of poor people —— "His poor people are never coarse..."
and never vulgar; their lineament have the rude traits which a life of conflict will inevitably leave on the minds and manners of those who are to lead it; their notions have the narrowness which is inseparable from a contracted experience; their knowledge is not more extended than the restricted means of attaining it would render possible. Almost alone among novelists Scott has given a thorough, minute, lifelike description of poor people, which is at the same time genial and pleasing. There can be no doubt that in achieving these results, Scott was greatly helped by the fact that he belonged to Scotland, where people of different societies are joined together by strong feudal ties. At the time when Scott lived, the Scotch people were in theory anti-democrats on account of their tenacious respect for rank. But the pernicious effects of feudalism were counter-balanced by that genuine self-respect which is the most remarkable part of Scotch character. Those who belong to the higher society while preserving the dignity of their rank have nevertheless appreciable sympathy for all those who are denominated by the common term of poor people. And Scott was no exception to this general rule of Scottish feudalism. In spite of his high Tory principles, he had that genuine sympathy and love for the common people which endeared him to each and every one. His theory of democracy and of feudalism he speaks out through the mouth of Baron Bradwardine in 'Waverley'. The Baron would not see any diminution in the authority and rank of the landed aristocracy, but in his dealings with the poor and with his tenants and peasants, he should have showed the depth of his love and sympathy for them. In this respect we can identify Scott with the Baron. It was characteristic of Scott which gave with him privilege to move and mix the lower order of Scottish Society. Mr. Bagehot in another essay (perhaps in his essay on 'Shakespeare ---- the Man') has related that whenever Scott had occasion to drive he would always prefer to sit in the coachman's box and chat to him familiarly for hours together. He would make friends with all men, and with the help of his geniality, good sense and shrewd observation he entered
into the very hearts of the people marking all that was heroic or less appreciative in their character.

Perhaps the most noteworthy characteristic of Scott's romances are that they cover a very wide range of action and are, therefore, more public than private in interest. Of course it does not mean that individuals have got no place in Scott's pages, but he gives us the picture of the individuals only as they are affected by public strife. With the notable exceptions of 'The Anti-quary', 'St Roman's Well' and 'Twyffemering' that have more or less private interest, his individuals appear on the stage in order to show the effect or the consequences of political movements or historical events, the depiction of which is the primary object of Scott. For example in 'Ivanhoe', Scott's aim is to give the picture of the political condition of England after the conquest — the inamissible relations between the vanquished Saxons and the conqueror Normans, the growing hatred and disaffection among the few Saxon landed magnates, and the political chaos of England resulting from the misadministration of John and the absence of King Richard. Ivanhoe, Cedric, the Templars, and Robin Hood's 'Merry' band are all actors to produce the general effect. To borrow the words of Mr. Hutton, "we become more of a public man" after reading Scott's novels which abound in such narration of political issues. The vitalization of these events was the result of that largeness of conception in which Scott has few equals. The very nature of his robust imagination demanded that he should paint on a large canvas with a large brush. But this power of Scott fails to attain success in another branch of artistic delineation. Scott, with his largeness of conception, and the power of giving a rough description of obvious life was but poorly equipped for the delineation of the soul. In fact Scott was hopelessly deficient in this penetrating power which has made Shakespeare the king of immortals. He could paint the grand preparations made for the tourney at Ashby, or give the life-like picture of the battle of Preston, but give him to depict the tragic feelings of Rebecca on her bidding farewell for ever to Ivanhoe and his happy bride, Lady Rowena, and
he will reveal his weakness. In his pages "We have mind, manner
animation, but it is the stir of this world. We miss the conse­
crating power and we miss it not only in its own peculiar sphere
which, from the difficulty of introducing the deepest elements
into a novel, would have been scarcely matter for a harsh cri­
ticism, but in the place in which a novelist might most be
expected to delineate it. There are perhaps such things as the
love-affairs of the immortal beings, but no one would learn it
from Scott. Scott can very well sketch the visible outlines
of a character, but he cannot unfold the delicate feelings of
the heart. His characters live, but they do not live like those
of Shakespeare's. Jeanie Deans lives, but not as Ophelia lives.
We know James I, but not as we know Romeo.

The same limitation of Scott's genius is visible in
another portion of art —— in the delineation of his heroines.
And perhaps the most severe test of a novelist's art is the power
of creating a female character, for it requires a rare degree
of psychological insight. His imagination can describe the
outward features, the dress and the manners of a woman, but he
cannot unlock the mysteries of her heart. Mr. Woodhouse ascribes
this deficiency to one other reason also. He had that 'romantic-
tinge' which refuses to go deep into anything. His ro­
mantic feelings idealized the women. His romantic sentiment
for them kept him back from studying them critically in order to
discover the weakness and intricacies of their character. To
Scott woman was more an object of homage than anything to be
criticized. The only appreciable success that Scott could achieve
in this direction was where he had to deal with abnormal and
grotesque women of the lower society towards whom he had no
romantic feeling, or where he had to delineate the character
of women of 'masculine mood'. He approaches this highest form of
art in Madge Wildfire and Queen Elizabeth —— the former being
an example of grotesqueness and the latter of manliness. But
in general Scott is denied this psychological insight.

And the same may be said of his heroes. They succeed
where their masculine mood is to be depicted. Their strength,
their feats of valour and their manly dealings are nicely presented, but we know nothing of their inner life. Some of them are in love, but we know nothing of their individual sentiments dictated by the finer feelings of love. The real character of man is unfolded when he is under the influence of love. But the lovers of Scott's novels have nothing dramatic to unfold. But it would not be reasonable to expect such things from Scott, for they were out of his way. In practical life, Scott was not at all inclined to such seeking and anxious inquiry into the hearts of others which were the special acquisitions of Shakespeare.

There is one more characteristic feature of Scott's novels. Perhaps Scott was the first novelist to make the scene an important element in the action. His own romantic country imbued in him a passion for natural scenery. The same passion is evident in his novels. His imaginative faculty helped him in preserving the artistic harmony between action and scene. He chooses his place so very well, that the action seems to be the result of the natural environment. The most striking example of this harmony is to be found in the opening chapter of 'Talisman' where East and West meet in the person of incognito Saladin and the knight of the Sleeping Leopard, who fight in the scorching desert of Palestine and then retire to rest and eat together in the cool shades of an oasis. A second illustration is to be found in 'Guy Mannering' where Miss Mannering's lost lover approaches her window on a boat in the stillness of night and plays an Indian note upon his harp. A third example is to be found in that splendid scene where Ivanhoe lies wounded within the castle with Rebecca by his side to describe to him the onslaught of the invaders upon the walls of the Castle. There are many such examples in his novels which go to show that he was sensible of the artistic effect of maintaining perfect harmony between scene and action.

There remain now but two things to be considered in the study of Scott —— his manipulation of history, and his deficiency as a story teller. Every one knows that Scott
made free use of history for the sake of his romance. Of course the Waverley novels are not to be put to any severe historical test, though some of his works, as for example the 'Fortune of Nigel' might come out successful in such a test. But, as Mr. Cross says, "They (Waverley novels) are primarily not history but literature". In handling the historical event and characters it was natural that Scott should follow Shakespeare who was the first to vivify history. Shakespeare thought himself justified in meddling with history for the sake of dramatic ends. He condensed events, changed their order and even introduced events which never happened. Scott, in taking him as his master, did the like thing. But he was not so skilled in manipulating history as was Shakespeare. Whatever changes Shakespeare made, they appeared to be reasonable and just in as much as they enhanced the dramatic force without taxing our sense of historical propriety. Perhaps only in one instance --- in that of making the murder of Any Robarts contemporary with the revels at Kenilworth in 1575, though it occurred fifteen years earlier, Scott approaches the art of Shakespeare by increasing the pathos and tragedy of the rejoicings at Kenilworth. But then in the same novel Scott makes Shakespeare the author of 'Venus and Adonis', though he lays the scene in the eighteenth year of Elizabeth's reign when Shakespeare was hardly eleven years old, and then, again, implies in 'Woodstock' that Shakespeare died twenty years earlier than he actually died, we cannot see our way to believe that Scott invented these lies to give any dramatic force. Mr. Cross ascribes these historical discrepancies to Scott's purposely introducing them for some end as well as to his carelessness and ignorance. But, to be more just, they should be attributed to his carelessness and in a lesser degree to his childish desire of introducing the name of living Shakespeare.

But perhaps the weakest point of Scott is his deficiency as a story-teller. It would seem strange to charge 'the king of the romancers' with anything like incapacity to tell a story well, but one has only to examine
critically any of his novels, and he will acquiesce in the remark. When he descends down from the high pinnacle of imagination in order to describe the ordinary un-romantic world, his dullness and prolixity are unbearable. The dulness of the first few chapters in almost all his novels is almost proverbial. Then, again, the absence of plot is evident in all his novels in a marked degree. When he begins to write it seems as if he has no idea of the path he means to take. Scott is frank enough to confess this in the Introductory Epistle to "The Fortunes of Nigel":

"I have repeatedly laid down my future work to scale, divided it into volumes and chapters, and endeavoured to construct a story which I meant should evolve itself gradually and strikingly, maintain suspense, and stimulate curiosity; and which, finally, should terminate in a striking catastrophe. But I think there is a demon who seats himself on the feather of my pen when I begin to write, and leads it astray from the purpose. Characters expand under my hand; incidents are multiplied; the story lingers, while my materials increase; my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly, and the work is closed long before I have attained the purpose I proposed".

There can not be a truer criticism of Scott's defects as this. To me 'Anti-query' seems to be the epitome of these two defects --- dullness and prolixity and absence of systematic plot. To this absence of plot may be ascribed the fact that the real interest in Scott's novels very often centre round the subsidiary characters and events. In 'Waverley' the love-story of Captain Taverley is forgotten and the condition of the Highlanders and the Scottish rebellion are given prominence to. In 'Guy Mannering' the heroine, Miss Julia Mannering is over-shadowed by Meg Merriles. In 'Ivanhoe' king Richard, Cedric, Merry Robin Hood and Gentle Rebecca are assigned greater part and, therefore, great greater interest than.
Wilfrid and Lady Rowena. While in 'Anti-quary' it is difficult to find who is the hero and who is the heroine. The apparent purpose of the 'The Heart of Midlothian' seems to be to present a living picture of Fertous Ricta, but the real story of the novel settles round Deanie Jeans. There is one more defect illustrated in 'The Heart of Midlothian' --- its undramatic ending. After Deanie Jeans procures the royal pardon for her sister, the real interest ceases. But Scott drags on until Deanie Jeans sees her children well provided for in life. The fact that 'Bride of Lammermoor' has a very good plot and that in 'Kenilworth' the dramatic interest is maintained up to the end show that Scott had the power to get rid of all these defects. It is his carelessness and unreasonable haste that are responsible for all these defects. Not only this --- his haste leads him to use bad grammar. All that can be said in defence of Scott is that the very nature of his intense imagination demanded all this haste and careless ness. His imagination could not brook the restrictions of rules and system necessary for constructing a systematic plot. In words of Stevenson "he was a great day-dreamer a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly a great artist; hardly, in the manful sense, an artist at all".
CHAPTER V

The English Novellists between Scott & Thackeray.

We have discussed at length the individual merits of Miss Austen and Sir Walter Scott as the pioneer of two different schools of English novel. Before the advent of these two masters the achievements of English novel were by no means of small degree, but this much must be admitted that there was too much confusion and insanity in the domain of novel literature before Jane Austen and Scott. Apart from the great achievements of Miss Austen and Scott, their importance lies in the fact that the one purified the purely artistic novel while the other humanized the Gothic romances. From Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott the many streamlets were united and made to flow, as it were, in two mighty rivers covering a much more wider field than before. Naturally one would expect that with Jane Austen and Scott the era of confusion ends and a long period of peaceful development along the lines of the two great writers would follow. But as soon as we step out to study the development of English novel after Jane Austen and Scott, the old literary principle that Art, unlike Science, defies all attempts, whether reasonable or unreasonable, to direct it to any definite channel is once more proved. Imitations at least of Scott followed, but the book of pure romance was closed with the death of Scott. What followed Scott was more or less a cross between novel of manners and historical romance or rather, to be more precise a medley of novel of manners, historical romance, political novels, farce, satire, Gothic romance, occasional attempts at realism and what not. In short the same confusion which was the characteristic of the closing eighteenth century novel literature, followed after Miss Austen and Scott had disappeared when Dickens and Thackeray gave new forms to the English novel.

Between Scott on the one side and Dickens and
Thackray on the other, there appeared a large number of novels and novelists, some of whom rank high in second class. It was impossible that the towering fame of Scott should not draw the greater as well as the lesser writers to follow in his wake. Sir Walter Scott is the greatest force that has yet appeared in the history of English novel and this was realized during his lifetime. His immortal fame of Scott attracted many of the younger generation, and a host of imitators set to work after the model of the 'Waverley' novels. To name only a few — Mrs. Gray, Horace Smith, James, Ainsworth, John Satt, Bulwer-Lytton and Charles Kingsley, though they essayed other forms of novels as well, are counted first as the disciples of Scott. How far they succeeded in their attempt to compete with Scott may be best expressed in the words of Scott himself — "they had gotten his fiddle, but not his rosin".

Miss Austen's immediate influence in the direction of pure novel was almost nil. The reason as has been pointed out before is that her novels were the work of pure art, and, therefore, imitable. Again Miss Austen's claim to greatness and fame was not immediately recognized, and the study of her novels was confined to the highest literary societies only. And perhaps after we have read her novels we are inclined to say that it was best that her art was not imitated, for anything short of her masterly would have given us a ludicrous set of domestic novels. Thus, not till the appearance of 'Vanity Fair' did the novel of pure real life advance its standard once more, while the historical novel-romance of a new kind was revived with Thackeray's 'Henry Esmond' and Charles Kingsley's 'Westward Ho'.

Therefore, in order to have an idea of the lines of development as well as of the chief novelists of this transition period it would best serve our purpose to have short discussions of hook, Bulwer-Lytton, Disraeli, Ainsworth, James, Henty and Peacock.

Theodore Hook (1785-1844) who has been dubbed as 'a punster and a matchless improvisatore' is a curious figure among them. The popularity of his 'sayings and doings' never
survived him, nor is it likely that it would be revived. The
faults inherent in the works of an improvisatore he was ---
i.e., flimsy construction, little or no plot (like Smollett),
thin representation, and (in Hook's case) mixing together of
conventional and artificial with rude realism are the marked
characteristics of his novels. Yet, for all this, Hook is in more
than one way important to the critical historian of English
novel. In the first place his influence both on Dickens and
Thackeray was direct and great. Not only this, but that if there
is any connection between the novelists of the early nineteenth
century and the Victorian novelists, Hook is the one writer who
serves as the link between the two. Then, again, he strikingly
out a new path, creates new interest and incidents and gets rid of
the tendency to 'conventional lingo' in English novel. In a
sense he modernized English novel.

Ainsworth (1805-82) and James (1801-60) must be
considered together for they are 'the unconscious followers of
Scott himself'? Both of them were extremely prolific --- James
writing history as well as novels and Ainsworth writing only
novel. Of the two James had the greater scholarship and the
better command of English; his historical knowledge was wide
and accurate and he had a tinge of romance in him. He had a tal­
ent for ready and picturesque writing and of using history in
a way as to hold the interest especially of young people. But
the sameness of situation (the 'two horsemen' with whom most
of his novels open become common joke) and the conventional
mode of his handling are points at which he is most attacked. On
the other hand, Ainsworth showed some dramatic power in the in­
terest and rapidity of his adventures, but he had little ori-
ginality and little or no humour. There are flashes of brilli­
ant descriptions in his pages, but his moral tendency is open
to criticism. Taken together James and Ainsworth go to show
the dangers to which the historical romance would be placed
when it is handled by anything short of Scott's genius. Both of
them were destitute of Scott's poetry, knowledge of life, reed
reading grasp of character and command of dialogue and description. Then, again, like Dumas, they fell into the mistake of thrusting pure history in order to give the historical effect to their novels.

With Bulwer-Lytton (1803-73) and Disraeli (1804-81) for the first time after Jane Austen and Scott we step into a different sphere of novel literature. The most marked characteristic of these two writers is their versatility. Bulwer-Lytton essayed perhaps all forms of novel and romance then known and practised. Both lived the life of politics and yet found time to serve the Muse. In the case of Disraeli, novel-writing was always a 'by-work' chiefly for the sake of relaxation. The most marked characteristic of his novels are sincerity and ironical note. His contribution to English letters is almost wholly in the kind of novel-writing, from 'Vivian Grey' (1826) to 'Endymion' (1880). Yet it may be doubted whether, except in some curious by-product, he ever produced real novel work of the highest kind. In the satiric-fantastic tale -- in which he appears as the acknowledged disciple of Voltaire -- like 'Ixion' he has no equal. As a pure love novel 'Harrietta Temple' is good, and as cross between the historical, biographical, and the romantic, 'Venetia' is also pretty. Yet all the rest, mostly political and fantastic can not be liked in general. His novels bespeak cleverness, and when everything has been spoken in favour of Disraeli it must be admitted that his novels have great faults. To mention only a few -- showy imagery and phrases, ironical note and unreality are marked. Taken as a whole they are lifeless. Most of these defects may be ascribed to the fact that Disraeli's novels have some purpose, mostly political, behind them.

Disraeli was Bulwer's master in politics, but in literature Bulwer had to bow before the greater genius of Lytton. The comparative relation of the two to politics and letters may be expressed in the following words:

Disraeli was a born politician who was a considerable man of letters; Bulwer was a born man of letters and was no
means an inconsiderable politician. The most marked characteristic of Bulwer is his versatility --- reminds us of the greatest masters of the Elizabethan period. His literary ability was extraordinarily diversified. He wrote novels which if put together would fill more than sixty volumes; he was a dramatist of not inconsiderable ability, he was critic, he was a journalist and he was a verse-writer. In the department of novel only he attempted many or rather all the forms that he could catch hold of, in many of which he very nearly approached to mastery. Thus, he wrote 'Pelham', a novel of society; 'Eugene Aram', a novel of crime; 'Ernestmaltravers', a novel of passion; the 'Last Days of Pompeii', a historical romance, and 'The Caxton's', a domestic novel after the fashion of Jane Austen.

Such a mass, such a length and such a variety of production with so many stamps of merit and brilliance we would not find in the works of any other novelist. And yet it is said that 'with the critics Bulwer is dead'. Few, except his most enthusiastic admirers would call him a great novelist at all. The fact that in his own time he was hailed as a genius and, again, that elsewhere seems to be a serious controversy regarding his greatness would be sufficient perhaps for some to place him just below Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen. The faults which have combined the critics to pull him down from the high position to which he had been raised by his contemporaries may be enumerated thus: his singular and almost ridiculous grandiloquence, and the loathsome sentimentality which too often mar his earlier novels, and it cannot but be admitted that these faults are apparent and marked, but to do justice to him it ought to be pointed out that he got rid of these two faults, at least the second one almost completely in his later works. His real faults are such as may be ascribed to 'want of consummateness'. He could be romantic, but his romance had the touch of immensity. He could be fairly true to the ordinary life, but he proceeded to remove the commonplace touch by fantasy and sensationalism. Yet after all these defects have been pointed out, it still remains to be said that he certainly possessed merit in bulk, and often in detail. And perhaps one may be permitted
to pronounce Bulwer one of the greatest of English novelists among those who are just approaching the very greatest.

To Harryant, (1792-1848) whose works are numerous, the best being 'Mr Midshipman' and 'Peter Simple' — the credit of being perhaps the first naval and chief military novelist of the period. Much of his work is not worth counting at all but his sea novels belong to a standard which can not be passed over. The chief merit of his sea novels consists in the fact that they are written from the viewpoint of a craftsman, as distinguished from an amateur or a chance-intruder. He had seen much service abroad and was familiar with all the humor of the soldier's and the sailor's life. In this he was more like Smollett than any one else. Like Smollett he also he had a certain ferocity, and an over-fondness for practical jokes; and added to these, Harryant was rather a careless and incorrect writer, and was at times liable to fits of extravagance and dullness. But the spirit and humour of the best of his books throughout are unmistakable and unsurpassed.

The eccentric would best serve our purpose of introducing the last of the group — Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866). Though he was a good poet, he is more known to students of English literature as the author of 'Headlong Hall' and 'Nightmare Abbey' — two of his best satiric novels. He passed a studious youth and an idle manhood, but at about thirty he produced after some verse, the curious satirical romance, 'Headlong Hall'. This was followed by 'Melincourt', 'Nightmare Abbey', 'Maid Marian', 'The Misfortunes of Elphin' and 'Crotchet Castle', and then after a long interval, 'Cryil Grange'. In all of these he showed that he was essentially a scholar and essentially a humorist of 'Lucianic' tradition. His novels have a peculiar relish and are written in an attractive style. They all belong perhaps to those satiric-fantastic order which was first instigated by Anthony Hamilton. Social, political and economic crazes are humorously satirized; but the satire is combined with realistic character-study with actual modern manners to match. Peacock's satire is always
very sharp, and in his earlier books a little rough as well; but later his satire and humour become much more wholesome. These novels have no plot —— there is the same uniform assembly of guests at a country house consisting of many not commonplace characters. It is in the selection and management of these characters that Peacock's greatness lies. The attraction of these books is further enhanced by occasional interludes of verse in which Peacock was as much master as in prose.

Besides these individual names, who may be called the moons in comparison with Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott, had a host of stars around them who did homage to the great as well as to the lesser masters. Thus, Galt and Haur carried on the Scotch novel of Scott. Baring, Barham, Croker and others followed Miss Edgeworth. Glassock, Chamier, and Howard came forward as the disciples of Maryat. The didactic side of Maria Edgeworth was carried on by Harriet Martineau. Mrs. Shelley's 'Frankenstein' and her husband's 'Zastozzi', which have already been mentioned somewhere belong to the school of Terror. Many women encouraged by the examples of Fanny Burney, Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen, attempted novels of the most various kinds, mostly of the domestic kind, but they were too feeble to attain to any success in this difficult species of novel-writing. On the other hand Samuel Warren's 'Ten Thousand a Year' blended Bulwer and Dickens in a manner which is a wonder up to this time.

Thus, between Jane Austen and Scott on the one hand, and Dickens and Thackeray on the other there were a host of novelists, many of whom achieved considerable fame. But after all they may be roughly designated as imitators. All that we can say is that one creative period must be followed by a period of imitation in order to let the next creative period gather strength and pick up all for a purer work of art. And in the latest thirties and forties there arose two writers and of genius who were to give a new tone to English novel.
With Dickens and Thackeray the second creative period of the nineteenth century novel begins. With the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837, English literature entered upon a new era of development. The earlier revolutionary and romantic tendencies of the nineteenth century died away with the realization of new political and social ideals in English politics and society. Literature was not slow to reflect these new tendencies. The romantic revival had done its work, and England entered upon a new free period, in which every form of literature struggled for expression. Though the Victorian Age produced many poets—the two of whom, Tennyson and Browning, rank among the greatest, it is emphatically an age of prose of newspaper and of novel. The cause of this predominance of prose literature and especially of novel lies in the fact that the tendencies of the age—a growing spirit of democracy, of social unrest, of moral earnestness, and above all of realism—could not be so well expressed in poetry as in novel. Thus, perhaps the most important literary phenomenon of the Victorian Age is the 'Nationalization' of the novel. Dickens with his humanitarian novels, and Thackeray with his fierce satire on English society and manners represent the same predominant spirit of the age. But of the two perhaps Dickens' novels interpret this spirit of the age in a much truer way than Thackeray's, for Dickens' theme is the amelioration of the condition of the masses who now became the backbone of the new English democracy, while Thackeray takes for his subject the manners of the upper class. It would be but dishonouring the merits of giving only a general survey of these two great novelists and their respective contribution to the English novel, as I propose.
to do in this chapter, but a detailed critical study of these
great novelists is rather on the farthest extremity of the
scope of this work, and, therefore, they are only glanced at,
by a sort of anticipation, as it were.

To begin with Dickens, we are surprised to notice that
Dickens owes his fame as a novelist more to his unbounded
popularity than to any great artistic merit of his novels.
When he lived he was too much loved to be seriously criticized
but after he had passed away, men began to discover the many
faults of his novels which even the greatest admirers of
Dickens could not deny. Indeed, if one sets to analysing the
characteristics of Dickens, his faults as an artist would be
much more numerous than his achievements. This we are constrain­
ed to remark in spite of the fact that Dickens continues to
fascinate the minds of a very large section of English people.
Naturally the question would be to what does Dickens owe his
fame, his popularity, his greatness, his 'immortality' and
his claim to be counted as one of the greatest novelists
of England? The answer would be that Dickens is a democratic
novelist. He was a man of the people and wrote for the people.
In his literary career he was attracted by many forms, but the
driving force of his genius was throughout a passionate
sympathy for democracy. He is the spokesman of the masses, and
lives by their praise. He may, in short claim to be the ori­
ginator of the democratic novel.

Needless to say that this sympathy for the poor,
the weak, the infirm and for the suffering Dickens learnt from
the miserable experiences of his own early life. The wonder
is that through all this misery and suffering Dickens never
lost his geniality, and once when he came out of the life of
corruption and degradation this geniality developed into that
cheerful optimism that is the most cherished mark of Dickens's
novels. Beneath all his heart-rending pictures of suffering
humanity, there is cheerful courage, hope and love. That a
curious paradox that the world, upon his charity he was so
cruelly thrown away in his innocent childhood, he should consider
as the best and happiest world to live in. The fact is that he loved the world, but found that some evils had crept into it which can be rooted out by justice, sympathy and love. He had unbounded confidence in the native goodness of the world which was bound to return if only men exerted themselves a little. His message to his countrymen, may to the general humanity was ---- 'This is the best world. Only some evils have found their way in. The remove them and there is nothing but bliss and joy in our world'.

One can not help going on writing about Dickens' optimism, for that is the most lovable characteristic of Dickens. In his admirable book, 'Charles Dickens' Mr. Chesterton has showed that the chief cause of the slow progress of our time lies somewhere in the dominant note of pessimism which is the chief characteristic of the present day literature. He asks us to seek refuge in the cheering message of Dickens. In the time of Dickens most of the evils that are no longer now, existed in all their hollowness. All the literary and social leaders of the time devoted their energy and time to the removal of these evils. But what is curious to note is that Thackeray with his violent denunciations could not achieve so much as Dickens did with his optimistic outlook. In discussing the optimism of Dickens, one would be naturally led to the discussions of the so-called 'vulgar optimism' of Dickens which has been so admirably dealt with by Mr. Chesterton. And indeed I would be only re-echoing the opinion of Mr. Chesterton when I say that this charge of vulgar optimism --- i.e., a disposition to make his characters happy and 'comfortable' at all cost without any regard to their merits or demerits, as in the case of Mr. Micawber, is true to a certain degree. None can deny it, we can only defend it. Again, that a paradox that this same Dickens, this dreamer with his vulgar optimism and sentimentality did help to pull down the Marshalsea, and the obnoxious elements in the work-houses and left his impress on parochialism, on public male schools, on the 'circumlocution offices', on nursing and on funerals. Could
Thackeray and Carlyle do anything of the sort by their violent denunciation of the existing society and manners and prophesying that the world was no longer a fit place to live in? If Dickens was an optimist, he was the most practical optimist who took a cheerful view of life and set to remove the obnoxious elements in the existing society of the time with a cheerful heart. Dickens once for all proved that 'revolutions are made with rose-water'.

Optimism is very closely allied to humour at least in the case of Dickens. Indeed one can hardly fail to notice in the early life of Dickens that humour kept the castaway child from despondency; and added to this gift of humour was an extraordinary power of intense observation which provided him with interest even in his darkest days. In later life when he moved along the ways of fame, it is more than probable that he would have remembered with bitterness his early disadvantages; but it is probable that even as a miserable boy in the blacking factory he was kept employed in observing the curious life around him. One can hardly fail to notice that it was the presence of this humour in Dickens which made him an optimist.

Unlike Thackeray, Dickens never went to any university for education; even his school education was imperfect, and Dickens learnt there practically nothing. That accounts for the narrowness of Dickens's vision. But it is doubtful whether a course of education in the school and at the university would have given us the same admirable which we possess. The ways of providence are mysterious. Who could have thought that Dickens leading such a miserable and neglected life was getting the best education possible to suit his peculiar power of imagination and observation. As a child, poor and lonely, he laid the foundation for those heart-rending pictures of childhood like those of Oliver Twist and Little Nell, which have moved many to tears. With the help of the same observing faculty, he learnt in his youth an entirely different side of human life — the enemies and the victims of society. As a newspaper reporter, he came into contact with different grades of society.
the knowledge of which stood him in such a good stead when he began writing. Above all, being born actor, he seized upon every peculiarity of voice and gesture in the people whom he met, and reproduced these things in his novels, exaggerating them in the way which most pleased the public.

This much about his outward training and now we turn to his inner disposition. Among the books which delighted his childhood were the imaginative works of Smollett, Fielding, and Goldsmith, 'Don Quixote', 'Gil Blas', 'The Arabian Nights' and etc. That bespeaks an intense imagination in Dickens. This excessive imagination which helped him extract stories and characters out of incidents and persons that ordinarily passed un-noticed with a wealth of detail and of romantic suggestions that makes many of his descriptions like pieces of beautiful poems is the most marked characteristic of Dickens. The second element is his extreme sensibility which breaks alternately in tears and in laughter. When the outward training and the inward natural disposition were combined it was natural that in his novels, Dickens would be sentimental, especially over children and outcasts; he would excuse the individuals in view of the fault of the society, and that his sensibility would keep him close to the public.

Of the many characteristics of Dickens, two —— his imagination and an eager taste for melodrama, stand out more prominently not only because to them we owe gratitude for all that is good and wholesome in Dickens's pages, but also because the chief faults of Dickens flow out of them. His imagination catches hold of something grotesque in the character of a man and develops it into magnitude which overshadows every thing else. Thus, even his immortal characters like Sam Weller and Mrs Gamp are more like caricatures than anything else. His eager taste for melodrama is responsible for all this grotesqueness and exaggeration. Therefore, we must confess that his novels, while they contain many realistic descriptions, hardly give us an impression of reality. There are lively and extraordinary creatures, some beautiful,
some grotesque, but all far away from the life that we know in daily experience. The fact that some of his characters are true to life while others are not, are probably due to the fact that Dickens uses both the method of plain fanciful romance. In such studies as the Floresties and Joe Gargery all is veracious, but can we say the same thing about such characters as Little Nell or Oliver Twist or, again, Emily. Of course no one can doubt the existence of Oliver Twist in actual life, but we can not believe that he remained so innocent amid the scenes of infancy in which his lot was cast.

I have only pointed out a few of the defects of Dickens, while many others remain untouged. But the fact is that belonging as we are the enthusiastic set of youthful admirers with whom Dickens is a special favourite, we can not find our way criticising the author of immortal 'Pickwick Papers'. But perhaps the greatest achievement of Dickens is the enormous range of his creative genius. When criticism has spoken its last word about his caricature, his force, his grotesqueness, his exaggeration and sentimentality, the greatest of all remains to be spoken — his characters live. People say that Dickens depends for his force on characters and institutions that have passed away. All coaches have ceased to run; their drivers are gone; the Fleet prison and Marshalsea are no longer. Then how is it possible that the succeeding generations would be interested in them? But the fact is that a great part of Dickens's books depend not so much on the permanence of the institutions and characters he describes as on the extraordinary sympathy with which he describes them and on the abiding interest with which he endows them. In other words Dickens's greatest triumph is his creative genius. Needless to add that it is a great creative artist that Dickens takes his place among the immortals.

Being the most prominent novelists of their day, it is natural that one would like to compare Dickens and Thackeray with respect to their life and work, and their attitude towards the world and life in general. But a perusal of these points would lead us to acquiesce in the remark of Professor F. Sainte-
Saintsburg—that "it is a parallel almost entirely composed of differences! To begin with, Dickens 'came and took his place calmly' as Tackeray himself said about him; while Tackeray took sixteen years to establish himself in the favour of the public. We are not here to discuss the reason. It would suffice to say that Dickens appealed to the masses and gained immediate popularity; while Thackeray introduced himself to society, and therefore found difficulty in the immediate recognition of his genius. But how much the difference between the greatness of Dickens and Thackeray—the foundation of Dickens's greatness rests on the favour of the public, and, therefore, a bit precarious, while Thackeray has been raised to the pedestal of greatness by the unanimous verdict of the critics.

To enumerate the other points of difference between Dickens and Thackeray—Dickens after a hard struggle with life in his childhood and youth enters upon life with joy and happiness, and never loses his geniality; Thackeray, with money and friends, gets the best education possible in the public school and at the university, but enters life timidly and distrustfully, disliking his pen which was to make him famous, finds fault everywhere in the world. He is gracious and lovable with a kind and sympathetic heart and with a sprightly temper revering all that is pure and good in life, yet he is something like a cynic towards the world which uses him so well, and finds shams, deception, and vanities everywhere. This much regarding the temperament of the two. As novelists, Dickens is romantic and emotional and interprets the world largely through his imagination; Thackeray is a realist and above all a moralist, who judges by observation and reflection. His aim is to give the true picture of the society of his time and as he finds it pervaded by Snobbery and intrigues, he mercilessly satirizes the world and life. In his novels he is influenced by Swift and Fielding, the latter of whom he acknowledged as his master, without the ferocity of the one and the coarseness of the other and it is curious to note that with all his pessimism and denunciation, his satire is tempered with tenderness.
In this comparison between Dickens and Thackeray, perhaps all the points about Thackeray, which ought to be noticed in a general survey, have been brought forward, but it would be much better to touch upon each of them lightly.

Thackeray is first of all a great realist. He is essentially 'a child of the cities' and a cosmopolitan. He was educated in the proud traditions of the middle class English gentry, and, therefore, he was essentially the man of a club and of the society. Being thus a man of the world, it was inevitable that the method and matter of his novel would be realistic. He points life as he sees it. As he says himself, 'I have got no brains above my eyes; I describe what I see'. His pictures of certain type, especially of the weak and the vicious, for example of Becky Sharp are true to life. His realism is closely related with what may be termed as modern spirit. Even his historical novel like 'Esmond' which is a study of the eighteenth century life is penetrated by modern spirit. He writes of past but always with the pen of the man who lives in the present time. Fielding was the pioneer of this spirit of realism in fiction and it was later on carried on by Miss Austen. But since then it was being handled but discreditably. Thackeray not only carried on the work triumphantly, but introduced quite a new sort of realism.

Lilly in his lecture on Thackeray has dubbed him with the title of 'Humorist as the philosopher'. In fact Thackeray is above all a philosopher and a moralist. His aim is not only to tell a tale, but to expound a definite philosophy. Unlike his predecessors who were content with occasional reflections and moralizations, Thackeray is dominated from beginning to end with certain views of life. He holds certain views regarding our conduct in life, and no matter whatever he is writing or describing, he is constantly dominated by his philosophy. This is quite a new spirit in English fiction, and he may claim to be the founder of philosophic fiction. He is always aiming at producing a moral impression. So much does he revere goodness, and denounce all that is vicious that he is determined that his
Pendennis or his Becky Sharp shall be judged at their true value. The result is that he is always emphasizing the moral significance of his work. At every turn of the story, Thackeray intrudes himself and speaks about his philosophy and his morality. Naturally, his novels are very markedly dominated by personal element which is another important characteristic of Thackeray. He is always speaking his own mind. Indeed, his novels are, so to say one prolonged confession. Behind all the characters, there is Thackeray with the staff of the office of moral censor in his hand.

In order to understand the tragic pathos in the temperament of Thackeray which bursts out on every page of his novel, we must turn to Thackeray himself. There was in Thackeray an extreme sensitiveness which, combined with his natural pessimism, took delight in all that is tragic. Many instances of his extreme sensitiveness of Thackeray to the tragic elements of human life are to be found in his pages. This sensitiveness in the character of Thackeray is responsible for his another characteristic — the spirit of irony. On account of excessive sensibility or the capacity for fine feelings and emotions, he is easily offended by the sham of society. But he has got that tenderness in his heart which prevents him from denouncing and avowing terrible vengeance like Carlyle. On the other hand, he has too much of prudence and show of self-command to burst forth in tears and laughter like Dickens. But the emotion must find an outlet, and the door of irony is at last opened to it. Having taken to satire more on account of necessity than any willful choice, it was natural that his satire and irony world he refined and properly softened by tenderness and sympathy. That is the marked characteristic of Thackeray’s satire, and therein he differs from Swift and Fielding.

It is this spirit of irony in Thackeray which have led the critics to pronounce that Thackeray is a cynic, and most of us would agree that it is correct to a certain degree. We are not here to discuss at length how far this charge against Thackeray is wrong. Suffice to say that his attitude towards world and
life in general is such that even an ordinary reader is con­strained to acquiesce in the remark that Thackeray is a cynic if not a great cynic.

Only a few words remain to be said about his humour and style. The greatest characteristic of Dickens in his humour, but his imagination and an eager desire for melodrama changed his humour into farce — vulgar force. But Thackeray belonged to the higher grade of society, and he was a great observer of decency. Unlike Dickens, Thackeray's humour is not farce. He can see the oddities of human character, but in rendering them he avoids the temperament to the grotesque. Dickens's humorous creations are great achievements, but they are only caricatures, and, therefore, unreal. But there is not a single person in 'Vanity Fair' who is not perfectly normal type — the majority are commonplace.

Critics may differ as to the merit of Thackeray's irony or his philosophy, but all are unanimous in the verdict that Thackeray is one of the greatest masters of style in English literature. The greatness of his style consists in its simplicity, ease, and its unaffected eloquence. Thackeray wrote hastily, but he never wrote carelessly. Every page in his novel is perfect in all the technicalities of language. His writing belongs to the rarest kind. He never contorted his language in order to achieve brilliance. It is perfect because it is natural. Therefore, the last thing that can be said is that Thackeray is not only a great novelist but a great writer — a rare achievement.

With Dickens and Thackeray this work may be properly closed. In these two great masters English novel found its greatest exponents. Leaving Dickens to the popularity of the generations, Thackeray ranks supreme not only in the Victorian Age but perhaps in the whole range of nineteenth century novel. Both Miss Austen and Sir Walter Scott treaded along definite paths. But in Thackeray both Miss Austen and Scott met with all their grandeur and brilliance. Thackeray was a realistic novelist and perfected the art of Miss Austen, but a rare achievement of his genius is required to prove his greatness as an artist.
than that he essayed the historical novel after the fashion of Scott in 'Esmond' and gave us perhaps the best historical novel yet written. Indeed the English novel achieved its greatest triumph in him. The uncertainty which had been clinging to it ever since its final evolution was not wholly removed even by the consummate hands of Miss Austen and Scott. That work was perhaps reserved for Thackeray and in his hands it reached the highest pinnacle of glory beyond which there is nothing but the void of the vast firmament.

We have now reached our journey’s end and like weary bands of travellers we pause to remember what message we have brought from the great masters of the earlier nineteenth century to hand over to the next succeeding generations —— perhaps to our own. Setting aside the pessimism of Thackeray for a while, the one great lesson that we learn from the novels of Jane Austen, Scott and Dickens —— to mention only the leaders, is unbounded confidence in the world we live in. Our life is inseparably bound with the rise and fall of the world’s fortune, and, therefore, like so many members of a family, we must consider the world as our own beloved home. If there is something wrong with the world, it is because some evils have crept into it which we must set to remove in good time by gentle means and not by violent denunciations. Jane Austen with her delicate irony, Scott with his attempt to re-create the past and above all Dickens with his unbounded enthusiasm for all the human institutions have the same message to unfold. They all discover the many weaknesses and failings of human life, but they do not discover them to denounce humanity, but to sympathise with it and to set to remove the ominous elements in human existence for the uplift of their fellow-creatures. This is the triumph of the nineteenth century optimism which towers over everything else. And how much do we feel the need of this cheerful optimism at the present moment when the baneful effects of pessimism is eating into
the very vitality of our existence already made miserable by the effects of the Great War. The one cry of the modern world is for the practical solution of the political and social unrest that are fast enveloping the world and its inhabitants. But we have only to turn round a little, peep into the last century and there find in the predominant spirit of optimism our 'long-lost Angelina' who is to make again our life happy and contented.