**History Of English Literature II**

**The Age of Tennyson**

**THE NOVEL**

**1.CHARLES DICKENS(1812-70)**

Dickens occupies a unique place in the field of Victorian Novelists. He became suddenly popular for Publication of the novel, ***PICKWICK PAPERS*(1837)**. At the age of twenty-five, he found himself the most popular of English Novelists-a position which he still holds to-day.

Dickens was a social reformer too, He wanted to correct the society by exposing the corruptions and evil found in England of his times, which needs purification in all aspects.

**Admirer of Smollett**:

Dickens has started to follow the traditions of Smollett. He may be regarded his master in his early Novels Like *Pickwick Papers* and *Nicholas Nickleby*, Those two Novels reflected the adventures of Smollett.

In his *Martin Chuzzlewit (1843), Domby and son (1846-48)* and *David Copperfield(1849-50),* he made some efforts towards unification, but here the plots are loose . The novel opens his second period is Bleak House(1852-53), a great attempt to gather the threads of story in a systematic and coherent plot.

His Later Novels- *Dorrit(1855-57), A Tale of Two Cities(1859), Our Mutual Friens(1864-65)* and the unfinished *Edwin Drood*- were planned.

**Dickens Novels as the mirror of Victorian Age**:

***i)Pickwick Papers***: written for entertainment purpose and also projects clear picture of false and corrupted Victorian society.

***ii)Oliver Twist***: a criticism of the corruption in the parish houses of 19th century England.

***iii)Nicholas Nickleby***: As Dickens had no belief in the educational system of Victorian period, he reflects the horror of school life in Victorian England.

***iv) Hard Times***: A novel criticizes the Victorian industrialism.

**Characterization in his Novels:**

He can be compared with Shakespeare in creating the characters for his Novels. There are great varieties like innocent, child love in every human heart, horrible characters and some characters which have no rivals.

**His sense of Humour:**

The most delightful characteristics of his novel is irresistible humour and descriptive power mark. He mingled the elements of humour and pathos.

**Humanitarian outlook:**

The most important product in the novels of Dickens is the humanitarian movement of the Victorian era. He was the novelist with a purpose. Humanitarian was the keynote to his work. Dickens may be rightly regarded as one of the foremost reformers of his age.

**His Defects**:

* Plot construction
* Depend on too much coincidence
* Style is too detailed
* Exaggerations, repetitions and strained coincidences.

**2.WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY(1811-63)**

Thackeray was born in 1811 in Calcutta to Richmond and Anne. But his mother returned to England with Thackeray after his father’s demise. He had his education at Charter house school in 1829. He continued his higher education at Cambridge university but left without taking a degree. Then, he moved to Germany and France , where he studied with the idea of becoming an artist. But he was disappointed by his failures and he hated anything in his life.

His literary career began by writing Satires on Society for Fraser’s magazine. After the publication of *Vanity fair*(1847-48), He borrowed the title from John Bunyan and it dealt with the man’s sinful attachments to all the things. He began to recognized as one of the great novelists of his day. The people of England called him second Charles Dickens. After the success of Vanity Fair, He wrote three novels- *Pendennis* in 1850, *Henry Esmond* in 1852, and the *Newcomes* in 1855. He died in1863.

**His works:**

***i)Pendennis***- an autobiography.

***ii)Henry Esmond***- a marvelous historical novel ever written. He had projected the true picture of Queen Anne period.

***iii)Catherine***- a satire on the school of crime fiction.

***iv)A Shabby Genteel story****(incomplete work)*

***v)The Luck of Barry Lyndon*** – serial appeared in Fraser in 1844.

***vi) The Virginians***- sequel of Esmond, deals with the third quarter of 18th century. He made George Washington to appear and it takes place in America.

**Characterization in His Novels**:

Thackeray presents the upper class society in his Novels- of the clubs, the drawing room and the well to-do. He just projected what he had seen in a society- a true picture of his day. He attacked high society, marriage and hypocrisy. He was a social satirist and a realist. He brings out the manners and morals of the aristocracy of the age. He is also a moralist, he created a moral impression in his Novels.

As a satirist, his satire was handled by him with more tender and sympathetic tone rather than ferocious manner. He had created living characters and stands apart as a supreme Novelist among the other English Novelists.

In all his novels, Thackeray presented life in a most realistic manner. There lies the greatness of Thackeray as a novelist.

**3.GEORGE ELIOT(1819-80)**

Mary Ann or Marian Evans, always known by her pen-name of George Eliot. She used male pseudonym in order to escape from the critics of her age. She was born in 1819 at South Farm, England. Her parents were Robert and Christiana. She has chosen to write about old fashioned provincial life. The village of Warwickshire provided most of the themes for her novels.

She had successfully written fine Novels like:

***1.Adam Bede(1859)***

***2.Mill on the Floss (1860)***

***3.Silas marner(1861)***

***4.The Middlemarch(1872)***

***5.Danial deronda(1876)***

In one novel, Romolo, She makes an excursion into the past. Her characterization and choosing of themes were based on the things she loved and she had experienced. She had carefully chosen the themes and construct the plot. The theme is always of much importance and interesting too.

She is notable for the characteristic of applying realism and psychology in her novels. It made her popular. She is a great thinker and her philosophy is present action determines future. She has started her career late in her life. Yet, holds a important place in literature. She has also taught moral values to the society and stresses the importance of love and the power of unity. Her special gifts are humour of rich and delicate pathos. Her novels are great essay of life.

Her central theme- the conflict between duty and inclination is beautifully worked out. The characters in her novels move from weakness to strength and strength to weakness. Another important feature is her characters of the novels are depressing. It focuses on gloomy part of life, rather than smiles and laughter. What she found in life, she described in her novels. Yet, she holds a certain place in English Literature as a novelists.

***Other Novelists of the period***:

**1.Captain Frederick Marryat(1782-1848)**- amusing novelist of the sea(e.g. *Peter simple, Mr.Midshipman*)

His First novel *Frank Mildmay* was not published till 1829.

**2.Edward Bulwer Lytton(afterwards Lord Lytton(1803-73)** – caused a sensation with Pelham and also wrote some melodramatic tales of the society and crime( e.g. *Paul Clifford, Ernest Maltravers, Eugene Aram*); historical romance (e.g. *The Last days of Pompeii, Harold, The Last of Barons*); tales of the supernatural (*Zanoni*); stories of social purpose (*The Caxtons*).

**3.Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield(1804-81)**- popular statesman, studied law and became prime minister of England. *Sybil*(1845)-needs a special mention, a powerful exposure of abuses connected with the relations of capital and labour.

**4.George Barrow(1803-81)**- an eccentric man of talent, travelled much and shared his experiences he gathered from his wanderings.(e.g. *The Bible in Spain, The Gypsies in Spain*) ; two autobiographical novels, *Lavengro and Romany Rye.*

**5.Charles Lever(1806-72)** wrote many volumes, chiefly remembered for two books of rollicking Irish fun and Military adventure, *Harry Lorrequer* and *Charles O’Malley.*

**6.Charles Reade(1814-84)** Social purpose is generally dominant in his works like *Foul Play, Put Yourself in His place, Harsh card*. And his vigorous and exciting historical romance, *The Cloister and the Hearth*.

**7.Mrs.Gaskell(1810-65),** humanitarian novelist.

*Mary Barton*- a pathetic story of factory life.

*Cranford*- a charming village idyll.

**8.Anthony Trollope(1815-82)** voluminous writer, was a realist of the realists, presents the detailed picture of early Victorian provincial life (e.g. *Barchester Towers, Dr.Thorne*)

*The Warden* and *Framley Parsonage* deal with clerical life.

**9. The Bronte Sisters:**

**i) Charlotte Bronte(1816-55)**, *Jane Eyre(1847*) – her first and most successful book.

**ii)Emily Bronte(1818-48)** her chief work, *Wuthering Heights*, her masterpiece.

I **ii) Anne Bronte(1820-49)** , her chief novels are *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall.*

**10. Charles Kinsley(1819-75),** disciple of Carlyle and an ardent social reformer. His novels, *Alton locke* and *Yeast* deal with the social problems of the day. His finest Novels are *Westward Ho*! And *Hypatia.*

`**11.William Wilkie Collins (1824-89),** great master of sensation and plot. (e.g. *The Woman in White, The Moonstone*)

**12.Richard Doddrigde Blackmore (1825-1900)** wrote at least one book, his spirited Exmoor romance, *Lorna Doom*.

**13.Sir Walter Beasant (1836-1901)** , belong to the school of Dickens in the virtue of strong Humanitarian and direct social purpose.

His popular Novels:

*1.All Sorts and conditions of Men*

*2.Children of Gibeon*

*3.The chaplain of the Fleet.*

**14.George Meredith(1829-1909)** wrote first novel of importance The Ordeal of Richard Feverel made him popular.

*Evan Harrington* is an autobiographical Novel.

*The Egoist* taken rank among the classics.

**15. Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94),** one of the most delightful personalities and stylists. He had led the way from realism to romance.

*Treasure Island*, story about pirates.

*Dr.Jekyll and Mr.Hyde, Kidnapped, The Black Arrow* are some of the most popular Novels.