

# Cauvery College for Women (Autonomous)

Nationally Accredited (III Cycle) with 'A' Grade by NAAC

Annamalai Nagar, Tiruchirappalli-18.



**Name of the Faculty** : Ms. L. Samyuktha  
**Designation** : Asst Professor  
**Department** : English  
**Major** : II BA English  
**Batch** : 2016-2017 Onwards  
**Semester** : IV  
**Course** : History of English Literature II  
**Unit** : IV  
**Topics Covered** : Novel writers and Short Answers in the Age of Tennyson.  
**Course Code** : 16AACEN4  
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## THE VICTORIAN AGE

### Important Points

- 1) It was an age of **extension and consolidation of Empire**, England enjoying enormous authority at home and abroad;
- 2) **Introduction of Railways, Industrialisation, Urbanisation led to vertical mobility** and material prosperity, **and also social and moral evils as necessary fall-out.**
- 3) Voices like **Carlyle and Ruskin were loud against the evils of materialism, mechanisation, social and moral injustices;**
- 4) **The Pre-Raphaelite movement in art and poetry registered a strong reaction** against Victorian realism and a journey back to the medieval past and Romantic sensuousness.
- 5) Problems of the **urban middle-classes and the industrial poor figured in the novels of Dickens Mrs.Gaskell.**
- 6) **Darwin's theory of evolution bred a strong element of doubt and despair** as found in the novels of Hardy.
- 7) While the poetry of Tennyson represented **the paradoxical duality of Work and Indolence, Arnold betrayed the spirit of moral-intellectual scepticism in his poetry** of 'Victorian Unrest'.

### Historical & Literary events

- 1833 – Oxford Movement started
- 1848 – R B founded
- 1850 – In Memoriam by Tennyson
- 1859 – Idylls of The King by Tennyson
- 1855 – Men and Women by Browning
- 1842 – Dramatic lyrics by Browning
- 1847-48 – Vanity Fair - Thackeray

1859 – On The Origin of The species – Charles Darwin

1879 – A Doll’s house – Ibsen

1865,1888 – Essays in Criticism -M. Arnold

### **Rulers**

1831-1837 William IV

1837-1901 Queen Victoria

### **Authors**

1795-1818 Thomas Carlyle

1809-1892 Alfred Tennyson

1812-1889 Robert Browning

1812-1870 Charles Dickens

1819-1880 George Eliot

1822-1888 Matthew Arnold

1828-1882 D. G. Rossetti

1840-1928 Thomas Hardy

## **Novel in the Age of Tennyson**

The novel became a vehicle of ideas as a means of amusement. Different writers employed novel to embody their general criticism of life. The spread of democracy made it social and humanitarian. The spread of science made it realistic and analytical. The spirit of religious and moral unrest was criticized often. Again, in its variety of many-sided interests and conflicting elements of the Victorian age.

The novelists tried to give a fairly comprehensive picture of contemporary society. We have novels of the sea, of military life, of high class, poor class people, and criminal life and so on. The novel form has expanded on all sides and it would be impossible to give a detailed consideration of the Victorian novel.

There are three chief novelists of the period- Charles Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot.

## **CHARLES DICKENS**

Dickens occupies a unique place among the Victorian novelists. Born in a poor family, he rose to such fame as to be acknowledged as the great literary hero of England. Besides being a novelist, Dickens was a social reformer. Through his novels he presents a society, which needs a thorough cleaning in all its aspects.

Dickens has written many novels. Most of them have the first person method of narration. His masterpieces are *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Great Expectations*. He started his career as a novelist with *Pickwick Papers*, which established him as a humorist. But in the later novels he points out the evils of the society.

Dickens's *Oliver Twist* pictures the sufferings of the poor, especially the orphans in the workhouse. *Nicholas Nickleby* criticizes the charity schools; *Bleak House* points out the dangers of the law's delays. In *Little Dorrit* he condemns the injustice which persecutes the poor debtors. In *Great Expectations* he points out that even a criminal has a kind heart.

Like Shakespeare, Dickens has also created a world of characters. His characters can be classified into four types. There are innocent characters like Oliver, Joe, Paul, and David. They appeal to the child love in every human heart. There are horrible characters like Fagin or Uriel Heep. The humorous characters Mr. Pickwick and company have no equals. Dickens has also a few powerfully drawn characters like Sidney Carton in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

The special quality of Dickens is that he is able to mingle humour and pathos. Dickens is a novelist with purpose. He is the greatest social reformer of the age. His main purpose is to expose the evils of the society. With the growth of industrialization several crimes were committed by people. Poor became poorer. It is the poor society, which is treated sympathetically by Dickens. He is an outstanding novelist with zeal to reform the society. He educates as well as entertains his readers.

### **THACKERAY**

Among the three novelists Dickens describes the lower and the middle class society of the cities. George Eliot the rural class; but Thackeray presents the upper class society. He describes the life he found in the clubs and drawing room. Thackeray is a realist and a moralist. He gives a true picture of the society of his day.

He established his name as a writer with the publication of *The Book of Snobs*. He became popular only after the publication of *Vanity Fair*, *Pendennis*, *Henry Esmond*, and *The Newcomes* are some of his best novels. *Henry Esmond* is the most perfect novel of Thackeray. It's a historical novel with a literary fervor. It is an accurate history of Queen Anne's reign. *Vanity Fair* is 'a novel without a hero'. It revolves around two women Amelia, a meek creature and Becky Sharp, an unprincipled intriguer. The novel deals with all sorts of vanities. *Pendennis* is a continuation of his satire on society. *The Newcomes* and *The Virginians* are his last great works, which are the studies of human frailty.

Thackeray paints life as he sees it. He himself said "I describe what I see". He has an excessive sensibility for fine emotions. That is why he is offended by the follies of the society. In his novels, he criticizes snobbery, affectation and the humbugs of the society. His satires are always tempered with fine humour.

Thackeray is a moralist. The beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice are evident on every page. Poetic justice is always done. His interest is centered in character rather than in plot construction. Also he is the master of a simple delightful prose. He was greatly influenced by Swift and Fielding; but at the same time he is free from the bitterness of Swift and the coarseness of Fielding.

### **SHORT ANSWERS**

**1. Who was Christina Rossetti's brother? To which movement did he belong?**

**Ans.** Dante Gabriel Rossetti is the brother of Christina Rossetti.

He belonged to the pre-Raphaelite movement.

**2. Name the period, which starts in 1837 and ends in 1901?**

**Ans.** The period, which starts in 1837 and ends in 1901 is the Victorian period.

**3. Who were Elia and Boz?**

**Ans.** Elia is the pen name of Charles Lamb and Boz is of Charles Dickens.

**4. What important events occurred in the 1840s in England?**

**Ans.** Chimney Sweep act was actuated in 1840 in England.

**5. Name two novels by Meredith (1828-1909)?**

**Ans.** The Ordeal of Richard Feverel (1859) and The Egoist (1879) are the two novels by Meredith.

**6. Name two books published in 1859-**

**Ans.** Darwin's Origin of Species and Meredith's The Ordeal of Richard Feverel (Novel) were published in 1859.

**7. Mention two Victorian essayists dealing with social and moral themes.**

**Ans.** Thomas Carlyle is by far the richest & profoundest. His essays are critical, biographical, historical, social and political.

T. B. Macaulay (Edinburgh Review), John Ruskin Matthew Arnold, Walter Pater are other great artists.

**8. What is Oxford movement? Who was the leader of the movement?**

**Ans.** The Oxford movement was essentially a religious movement started to reform the English church, the clergy and theology. Keble's sermons and poems started the reformatory movement. However, its greatest champion was Henry Newman.

**9. Name an autobiographical novel of Charles Dickens.**

**Ans.** David Copperfield (1849).

**10. Who is the author of 'Vanity Fair'?**

**Ans.** Thackeray (1811-63): publication 1847.

**11. In which town was Thackeray born? (1811-63)**

**Ans.** Calcutta (1811).

**12. Name two Pre-Raphaelite poets.**

**Ans.** In 1848 D.G. Rossetti along with the English artists Hunt, Ford Maddox

Brown and the painter Millais formed the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood to replace the academic style of painting by a return of simplicity, truthful and the spirit of devotion and these came to be attributes of the Italian artists and painters before the time of Raphael (1483-1520).

**13. Name the poem in which Mrs. Barrett Browning expressed her ardent love for her husband?**

**Ans.** Sonnets From The Portuguese by Mrs. Browning records her ardent love for her husband, Robert Browning. The sonnet sequence was published in 1847, a year's later of her marriage.

**14. Name the major work by Carlyle other than Sartor Resartus.**

**Ans.** Carlyle's historical work The French Revolution (1837) contains a perfect pen portrait of the time and struggle. Among his translation works, Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship is popular. Farther his essays on Scott and Burns are critically appraised.

**15. What is the source of Keats' poem Lamia?**

**Ans.** Keats' Lamia (1819) is an allegorical poem. The story line is taken from Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy depicting a beautiful enchanter. Here is Keatsian pictorial richness but the allegory is quite confused. It is also a nature of a fable as Dryden uses and the heroic couplet is mastery here.

**16. Who succeeded Wordsworth as poet laureate?**

**Ans.** Alfred Tennyson (1850-1892).

**17. Which sovereign of England ruled the country for more than sixty years?**

**Ans.** The reign of Queen Victoria (1830-1901), commonly known as Victorian age produced intellectual horizons, noble Endeavour and bright aspiration in England. The age is recognized for its miscellaneous activities.

**18. What is an epistolary novel? Give two examples.**

**Ans.** The word ‘epistle’ means letters. Thus, the epistolary novel is the novel of which the plot develops through the medium of letters written by the various characters. These letters express their thought and views. Hardly, in this novel any face to face dialogue.

Richardson wrote Pamela and Clarisa Harlowe in this style.

**19. Name the epoch-making book written by Charles Darwin and give the year of its publication.**

**Ans.** On the Origin of Species (1859) is the epoch-making work by Charles Darwin. It is the discussion on the theory of evolution and foothold of modern biological science.

**20. In which year was the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood formed? Name at least two members of the group?**

**Ans.** A group of painter-poets led by D.G. Rossetti founded the Pre Raphaelite School of poetry. Other poets of this school were Christina Rossetti, Swinburne, and William Morris. They wrote highly sensuous, pictorial and symbolical poems, which could be painted with equal effort and effect.

**21. When did the Oxford movement take place? Name a leader of the movement?**

**Ans.** Despite the scientific progress in Victorian period, it is seen the revival of the old Roman Catholic religion. The Oxford movement represents this revival. The leaders of this movement attack Puritanism and the Church of England. Notable leaders are Newman, Keble, and Morris etc. This movement is also known as Tractarianism.

**22. At least mention three literary movements in the Victorian period?**

**Ans.** The Victorian period is rich in literary outputs. The three movements –



Oxford movement, Aesthetic movement and Pre Raphaelite movement affected the literature of this period a great deal.

### **Objectives**

The Oxford movement – the revival of Roman Catholicism.

(Leaders – Henry John Newman)

Aesthetic movement – glorification of art and artistic values in prose and criticism.

(Leaders – Walter Horatio Pater, Ruskin & Oscar Wilde)

Pre-Raphaelite movement – glorification of art and artistic values in poetry.

(Leaders – D.G. Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne)

### **23. What do you mean by PRB?**

**Ans.** The initial PRB stands for pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. At first the brotherhood exhibited together anonymously, signing all their paintings with the monogram P.R.B. when their identity and youth were discovered in 1850, their works were harshly criticized for its disregard of academic ideals of beauty but also for its apparent irreverence in treating religious themes with an uncompromising realism. Nevertheless, the leading art critic John Ruskin defended them and their art.

### **24. Name a novel written by Charles Dickens in the background of the French Revolution. In addition, name an industrial novel written by the same author.**

**Ans.** Dickens' A Tale of Two cities is written in the background of French Revolution. His Hard Times is an industrial novel depicting mechanical, insipid and materialistic society.

### **25. Give a name of Pre-Raphaelite magazine.**

**Ans.** The Germ, a periodical edited by W.M. Rossetti of which the first issue

appeared on Jan 1.1850. The Germ was the representative of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood but survived only four issues, the last appearing on April 30, 1850. The last two issues of the journal were renamed Art and Poetry. The Germ published the poems of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood and is believed to have inspired William Morris's Oxford and Cambridge Magazine (1856), which continued the Pre Raphaelite movements.

**26. What is the source of Fra lippo Lippi or Andrea del Satro.**

**Ans.** These two poems by Robert Browning are based on the actual artists of Italy, Filippo di Tomasso Lippi (1406-1469) and Andrea del Satro. Browning adopted his characters from Giorgio Vasari's book The Lives of The Most excellent Italian Architects, Painter and Sculptors.

| <b>Novels (Dickens)</b> | <b>Theme</b>             |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Oliver Twist            | Boarding School          |
| Nicholas Nickleby       | Work houses              |
| Hard Times              | New manufacturing system |
| Black House             | Court of Chancery        |
| A Tale of two cities    | War                      |

**27. What is the full name of Oscar Wilde? Give any name of his novel.**

**Ans.** The full name of Oscar Wilde is Oscar Fingal O' Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854-1900). This Irish born author wrote a celebrated novel The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891).