Twentieth Century Novel

Q. 77. What are the tendencies in modern English Novel?

Ans. The modern age is essentially the age of the novel. Hugh Walpole regards the twentieth century as an age of great novels rather than novelists. In his opinion, “It has been a period, however, of novels rather than novelists.” No doubt there are great novels of perennial interest in our times which can be favourably compared with the novels of the earlier ages, but the novelists who have penned them cannot in any way be ignored. The modern age has produced great novelists like Henry James, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and great novels like The Way of All Flesh, Old Wives’ Tale, Forsyte Saga, Tono Bungay, Lord Jim, The Razor’s Edge, Point Counter Point, A Passage to India, Analysis, Pilgrimage, To the Lighthouse etc. Though the novel had made phenomenal progress during the Victorian age, yet it could not achieve that excellence which it has attained in the hands of the aforesaid novelists. The novel has gained an ascendancy over other art forms in the modern age, and from a technical point of view, the progress of the last sixty years is unequalled in all its previous history. One gets the feeling after reading a few novels of the modern age that the field covered by modern novelists is vast and variegated, and the currents and cross-currents sweeping through modern fiction are so forceful and powerful that one is likely to be swept of his feet and lost in the swirling flow of the stream. The modern novel has travelled on diverse paths leading to different directions, and some pointing to no destination at all. We are confronted by different schools of fiction, different types of novels, different techniques of plot construction and characterisation, and different angles of approaching the problems of modern life. Referring to the multitudinous changes in the subject matter, form, technique, and style in twentieth century fiction J. B. Priestley says, “If we are asked what
has been happening to the English novel during this period, we are tempted to reply, "Everything, and to let it go at that."

Before we examine the various tendencies and trends in twentieth century fiction it would be desirable to have an idea of the great novelists and the periods to which they belong. The earlier years of the twentieth century witnessed the flowering of a few great novelists like Henry James, Samuel Butler, George Gissing, John Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett, Joseph Conrad and H. G. Wells. Since the greater part of their work was done during the reign of Edward VII, they are technically known as the Edwardians. After that we have the Georgian period extending over twenty five years, and during this period we have several prominent novelists such as J. B. Priestley, Frank Swinnerton, Hugh Walpole, Somerset Maugham, Charles Morgan, Compton Mackenzie, R. H. Mottram, J. C. Powys. They are all Georgian novelists. Then came a succession of novelists who looked with eyes of disfavour on the growth of the novel under the leadership of the Edwardians and the Georgians. Among these are Aldous Huxley, James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair and Virginia Woolf. They all developed psychological trends and satirical exposure of early Edwardian materialism. From 1939—1966, came a new set of novelists with different outlook and approach on life. Graham Greene, Henry Green, F. L. Green, Joyce Cary, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Elizabeth Bowen are the prominent among post-war novelists. "Where, however, all these post-war novelists fail to live up to the standards by the great writers of the past" says Gilbert Phelps in The Novel Today, "is not in their subject matter, but in their lack of artistic detachment and control. They are too, emotionally committed to the negative values they seek to illustrate: their attitudes are ambivalent and in consequence their characters and situations are not fully realized."

The twentieth century novelists have laid great stress on heart form of the novel. They have shown great consciousness of form. The modern novelist has rejected the irrelevancies of the Victorians, their moralisings, and direct appeal to the 'dear reader' of the story. Modern novels are not loose and rambling like the novels of Dickens and Thackeray, but have a compactness
of their own. The modern novel has, “few frills, few redundancies; it is more like a well-cut garden than an opulent tropical jungle, which the novel undoubtedly was in the hands of Dickens and Thackeray.”

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the novel was mainly confined to the discussion of problems confronting us in social life. The Edwardian novel was essentially a novel of ideas, including in its scope a free discussion of all kinds of ideas: scientific, social, political, industrial and so forth. The Edwardian novelists considered it to be a sin to escape into a world of romance and psychology when the gaping wounds of social life were clamouring for reform and healthy treatment. H. G. Wells, Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett particularly concentrated their attention to the social problems of their times and made the novel an instrument of social propaganda. In their hands novel became purposive in character. It had a definite social purpose and aimed at the solution of social problems, domestic problems, and problems rising out of the stress and storm of economic life. H. G. Wells gave a fervent expression to the social character of the Edwardian novel in the following words—“A novel is in essence a discursive thing, a waxen tapestry of multifarious interest sufficiently elastic in form to take the whole of life within its compass—business, finance, and politics, till it becomes a proper medium for canvassing all social and political problems as they are.” The concentration of these novelists was mainly on the problems of middle and upper middle classes, for many of them had sprung from the middle class life.

H. G. Wells discussed the problems of modern education in *Joan and Peter* and *The History of Mr. Polly* and exposed the educational imposture of the present day society. He advocated social reform in the field of education. Wells attacked modern commercial practices and fraudulent advertisement in *Tono Bungay* and sympathetically presented the problems of the servant employed in business house in *Kipps* and *The History of Mr. Polly*. Galsworthy pointed his attention to the conflict between materialism, philistinism and cultural values in *Forsyte Saga*, and advocated a reorientation of our look for the proper appreciation of the values of life.
One result of this preoccupation with the problems of life was to give to Edwardian fiction the colour and touch of Realism, which the Victorians under the influence of Dickens and Thackeray had so very well employed in their works. H. G. Wells realistically presented the sorrows and sufferings of draper's assistants in Kipps and Mr. Polly. George Moore, the Irish novelist, made a realistic study of the poorer classes in our society in his A Modern Lover, A Mummer's Wife, Spring Days and Esther Waters. In the last novel he presented a close and realistic study of the lower and more sordid sides of life with great sympathy for the underdogs of society. George Gissing focussed his attention on the life of the poor people, and realistically presented their woes and sufferings in a pathetic vein in Thysa, The Nether World, Grub Street and the Private Papers of Henry Ryecraft. Arnold Bennett realistically portrayed the life of the Five Towns in The Old Wives' Tale and Cluyhanger. He cast aside the trappings of romance, and concentrated all his attention to the presentation of the grim, ugly, and sordid life of the industrial districts. He succeeded in realistically portraying the society, the streets, the houses of the Five Towns by heaping minute details to produce a cumulative effect. In Riceyman Steps he concentrated on the sordid life of a miser, Henry Earlforward, a bookseller, lost in the craze of money making. In the Imperial Palace, he presented all the details of hotel life. John Galsworthy in the Forsyte Saga presented Victorian materialism and lust for property. He brought out realistically the full picture of Victorian life led by an upper middle class society in all its bearings. As the social historian of the passing away of Victorianism, Galsworthy was without a serious rival. He brought out realistically their code of honour, snobbishness and distrust of passion. Forsyte Saga is a complete picture of the upper middle class society soaked in the wine of materialism and money.

Against this tendency of realism and materialism perceptible in the early years of the twentieth century with an accent on the discussion of social problems, stands the tendency for criticism of material values, and a love for romance and adventure. The note of disillusionment against modern realism in fiction and too much
engrossment with material values of life was sounded by the psychological novelists of the age such as Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf, and by a few critics of modern life like Samuel Butler, Aldous Huxley, and E. M. Forster. In their novels we notice the tendency of scoffing at material values and realistic portraiture of the sordidness of life. Samuel Butler satirised the realism of modern civilization and its insistence on machinery in Erewhon the title of which is an anagram for nowhere. Aldous Huxley exposes post war disillusionment and immorality in Yellow Crome. The London society is exposed in all its ugly and wasteful futility in this novel and Those Barren Leaves. E. M. Forster is a severe critic of this materialism, and his Howards End is a bitter attack on the business mind and the worship of business in industrialised England. Forster attacks the Wilcoxes, thorough going materialists and upholds Schlegels upholders of moral and aesthetic values in life. Virginia Woolf severely criticised the Edwardian realism and wrote with characteristic frankness, "It is because they are spirit but with the body that they have disappointed us, and left us with the feeling that the sooner English fiction turns its back upon them, as politely as may be, and marches, if only into the desert, the better for its soul."

The reaction against the realistic trend of Edwardian fiction was further perceptible in the work of the romancers, who popularised another trend in fiction, namely, a love for romance, adventure, and the exotic lands. Among these writer who popularised romance, the most significant were Conrad, Kipling, Haggard, Weyman and Maurice Hewlett. Conrad’s novels struck a new note in English fiction. He presented scenes of tropical jungles and sea-life in his The Nigger of Narcissus. The Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim, Rescue and Rover. His sea tales are thrilling and suffused in the aroma of romantic adventure, and struggle with the forces of nature. His actualities became clothed with romantic glamour and adventurous exaltation. Conrad emphasised the principle of fidelity in human relations, and laid greater stress on moral values than material values. Betrayal of trust and deception of one’s fellowmen seemed to him to be heinous sins, and all his sea-tales particularly Under Western Eye and Lord Jim, illustrate
the philosophic strength of his moral convictions. "Indeed, far from writing in any materialistic spirit" says Gerald Bullet, "Conrad wrote with the vision and spirit of a poet. He wrote of the conflict between and man and nature, and of the mysterious of the human soul, and, in his view of man the word "soul" was an inevitable word to use."

James Matthew Barrie (1860-1937) turned from realism to romance, and closely followed in the footsteps of R. L. Stevenson, the prince of romancers. Kipling was a different kind of romancer. Whereas Scott and Stevenson invoked the past and wove dreams of romantic fantasy, Kipling found romance in the present realities of life. "Kipling" says W. L. Cross, "is the romancer of the present, of the modern social order, on which shines from afar a light as resplendent as that which shone on medieval society, for it is the same light of the imagination. Kipling feels the presence of romance in shot and shell as well as bows and arrows, in the loves of Mulvaney and Dinah as in Ivanhoe and Rowena, in the huge python as in the fire-breathing dragon." His Jungle Books are replete with the romance of the forest, and his Soldiers Three with the romance of the barracks.

During the Georgian period, a new tendency began to be perceptible in English fiction, and it centred round the glorification of sex and primal human emotions and passions. The Victorian novelists and poets had frowned on the naked dance of sex in their works and exalted married love over illegal flirtation. The Victorian prudery about sex-morality was given a jolt by the Georgian novelists, and several prominent novelists got busy with the presentation of sex-relationship in their novels. In this respect the works of D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Somerset Maugham and James Joyce are worthy of special consideration. These novelists treat of the physical side of sex in a blunt, matter-of-fact manner without attempting to hide the naked facts like the Victorian-prudes.

Among the novelists who popularised the convention of sex in the modern novel stands D. H. Lawrence who clearly stated his faith in Sons and Lovers, in the following words—"My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. All I want to answer to my blood, direct,
without tribbling intervention of mind or moral or what-not. I conceive of man’s body as a kind of flame, like a candle, forever upright and yet flowing.” In his *The White Peacock*, *The Rainbow*, and *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, he concentrated on the subject of sex and wrote boldly in the preface of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*—“I want men and women to be able to think sex fully, completely, honestly, and clearly.” Lawrence’s work is saturated in sex even when it happens to be devoid of sexual incident. Aldous Huxley, in his novels, concentrates on the portrayal of sex life. In *Point Counter Point* Huxley is wholly preoccupied with sex. His happy characters are those who like Lucy Tantamount are frank sensualists and care not a fig for mental and spiritual values. Joyce’s works have been stigmatised as pornographic because of their preoccupation with sex life.

Twentieth century novel in the later part of the Georgian period began to come under the influence of psychologists, and as the years advanced, the psychological tendency became more pronounced in English fiction. A new technique was developed in the psychological fiction, and the new trend found its best exposition in the stream of consciousness, which was cultivated in all its complexity by William James, Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. In the new technique of the stream of consciousness, extreme emphasis is laid on subjectivism, and the passive states on the mind. Transitions are sudden, and progression is hampered. Past is mixed up with the present, and retrospect intrudes upon prospect. Present memories are inextricably combined and mixed up with past memories in an incoherent manner. Strict chronological development of the story is marred by rapid transitions, and an electric notation copes with time’s swift spinning. In one respect, the stream of consciousness novel bears a close similarity to Imagist poetry. Words are employed by novelists of this school not in accordance with the rules and conventions of grammar, but in a peculiar manner of their own using them in their original picturesque or imagistic sense. In their endeavour to dramatise all shades of consciousness, they allow thought and emotion to shape and formulate words which do full justice to them. There is thus lack of coherence and harmony and sometimes one is baffled by
the jargon of words.

The stream of consciousness novelists follow the expressionistic technique of presenting the characters, not by reporting their actions and sayings as observed by a recorder, "but by making the characters themselves reveal their inmost thoughts, moods and feelings, however inconsequent, fragmentary, and fleeting these may be," There is nothing fixed and steady. Everything is in a flux, moving as if in the flow of a stream, with the result that there is a 'mad chaos' in this stream of consciousness of fiction.

J. W. Beach in the Twentieth Century Novel makes the position about this stream of consciousness fiction very clear in the following words—"The stream-of-consciousness technique is almost invariably applied to persons of an extremely 'introverted type' to neurotics and those of unbalanced mind, or to occasional states of mind of normal individuals bordering on obsession or delirium: states of mind in which the consciousness is given over to the chaotic play of sensations and associations, undirected by the normal will to rational conduct."

The novels of Dorothy Richardson present the first experiment in the stream of consciousness fiction and psychological novel in the modern age. She presents the experiences of Miriam Henderson in Printed Roofs and her story is continued in a series of sequels, collectively called The Pilgrimage. The Pilgrimage books mark an epoch in the technical development of the novelist's art. Dorothy Richardson presents the moments of Miriam's consciousness fleeting from one shade of consciousness to another without any stoppage anywhere. It is Miriam's stream of consciousness going on and on. In this process we come across moments tense with vibration, moments drawn out fine almost to a snapping point. James Joyce in his Ulysses presents another psychological novel in the stream of consciousness technique. In this novel he presents the experiences of Leopold Bloom in Dublin extending over a day and covering eighteen episodes unconnected with each other. There are fleeting glimpses of the realities of life as seen by his characters and these stray reflections hardly cohere into the framework of a cogent plot.

The basic technique employed in presenting the thoughts
and reflections of Bloom and his wife is that of internal monologue. "The reader is inside Bloom's mind, in the flow of his inconsecutive and partially formulated thoughts and transient elings. Bloom's psychological process is one of expansion and contraction. An encounter, a memory, an association of ideas start his mind into extra-activity, which having reached a climax, ebbs away."

From the point of view of story telling James Joyce has proved extremely irritating and unpleasant. He also evolved a new kind of language in which normal syntax was abandoned and the sentence was no longer the basic unit of expression. "He discarded the traditional method of composition and employed a language in which words were torn from their customary associations, coined afresh and sent chasing helter skelter after the elusive shreds of meaning." Virginia Woolf achieved distinction in this type of fiction. For her the true and enduring reality resided in the ever-changing, ever fluctuating consciousness." Her novels, To the Light House, The Waves and Mrs. Dalloway are good experiments in the stream-of-consciousness fiction. "Life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end." "Is it not" she asked, "the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible." She further explains her view point about this psychological fiction in The Common Reader. She was aware that "life is a pure flame and we live by an invisible sun within us." On its complete illustration of this knowledge her work has an unfailing power.

Closely allied with the psychological trend in modern fiction is the tendency to employ science for purpose of romance. Science has considerably influenced the work of the modern novelists. Science has revealed to the modern novelist innumerable aspects of life and nature, and has opened new vistas of thought and imagination to be employed in fiction. The very texture of the novel has been modified by the novelist's scientific exactness of observation and scrupulous regard for details. The scientific romances of H. G. Wells such as Time Machine,
The Invisible Man are saturated in scientific love. The Brave New World by Aldous Huxley is a satirical exposure of the conditions brought about by science. Huxley’s The Brave New World is written under the influence of Behaviourism or Determinism under which continual repetition of the same phenomenon gives rise to a definite type of nervous reaction which then becomes stereotyped, habitual and hereditary.

Detective fiction, popularised by Arthur Conan Doyle in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, was given a further impetus in 20th century fiction by G. K. Chesterton, Edgar Wallace, Dorothy Sayers and Agatha Christie. The Father Brown stories of G. K. Chesterton are very popular and so are the detective novels of Edgar Wallace such as The Four Just Men and Sanders of the Rivers.

One prominent trend in modern fiction is the growth of regionalism, which had been set in vogue by the Wessex novels of Thomas Hardy. Arnold Bennet is the best exponent of the regional novel in his tales of the Five Towns in Old Wives’ Tale and Cluyhanger Series. Mary Webb chose Shropshire surroundings for her Precious Bone, and Sheil Kaye Smith took to Sussex in her novel The End of the House of Alard. Edin Philpott has brought the West Country in his regional fiction.

Biographical novels and novels dealing with family life have also won recognition in our times. The World of William Clissoid, The Forstye Saga and Clayhanger are representative novels in this direction.

The future of the English novel cannot be ascertained with any definiteness. The modern age is dominated by politics and science, and it is just possible that the future novelists may harness these two forces of fiction in a vigorous manner. Commenting on the future of the English novel, P. H. Newby observes—

“There is no way of knowing what kind of novels are going to be written in the future, who out of the many writers now at work will realise their promise. Writing about the future of fiction, V. S. Pritchett said that whatever happens it is reasonable to say that the interest in character for its own sake has gone, and that the real subject of the best
writing now being done is that impersonal shadow, "the contemporary situation." This does not mean that we are going to have a succession of political novels—on the contrary, that unhappy phase in English writing came to an end as soon as the war was seriously engaged—but it does imply that the very long novel which ought to present the fictional biographies of a great many people is unlikely to persist. Even now, as Rose Macaulay points out, the longest contemporary novels are, on the whole, the worst.

"In the long run the quality of a work of fiction depends on the quality of thought of the times in which it is written. The great novelists of the past wrote well because they thought well; anyone writing fiction to-day who wishes to do so with effect must first make up his mind just where he stands, as a human being, at this moment of history. It is no longer possible for a Jane Austen to sit in a country personage writing novels of the wars and revolutions, for the wars and revolutions are so general that they cannot be ignored; and not the mere fact of war and revolution alone, but the deeper issues, the bewilderment, the confusion of loyalties, the search for belief and faith. Unless fiction is to become a toy it cannot escape these issues."

Q. 78. Give your estimate of the works and contribution of Henry James (1843—1916) to the modern novel.

Ans. Henry James, the American novelist, occupies a distinctive place in the history of the English novel. Though he died in 1816, yet he appears in many ways our contemporary. "In the history of the English novel James holds a position analogous to Flaubert's in the French; both strove to give the novel the aesthetic intensity of a great poem or a great painting."* Henry James was a prolific writer and during his life-time he produced novels, travel sketches, short stories, criticism and autobiographical sketches. His work as a novelist falls into three groups. In the first group we include four novels, Roderick Hudson: The American, The Europeans and The Portrait of a Lady. In these novels James studies European life from the American point of view.

novels of group are free from the complexity and involution of thought that crept into his later work. These novels are simple and straightforward. In the second group we place three novels dealing with English life and English character. The novels of this group are *The Tragic Muse*, *The Spoils of Poynton* and *The Awkward Age*. In the third group are included James's novels of maturity and perfection dealing primarily with American life. *The Wings of Dove*, *The Ambassadors*, *The Golden Bowl*, *The Bostonians*, *The Princess Casamassima* are considered by Walter Allen as, "novels of a classical perfection never before achieved in English, in which practice and theory are consummately matched." In these novels James "achieves a subtlety of character-study, a delicacy of perception, and an elaboration of artistic presentation which rank them high among modern novels."* In all these works James attempts "to explore the furthest possibilities of individual feeling, its genesis in motive, and its expression in conduct. In this attempt, he brought to the novel a slow-motion tempo, which H. G. Wells his friendly adversary, likened to the efforts of an elephant to pick up a pea."†

Besides writing these novels, James produced a number of short stories of beauty and charm dealing mostly with occult subjects. His familiar stories are *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Altar of the Dead*, *The Beast in the Jungle* and *The Birth Place*.

His autobiographical writings are *A Small Boy and Others* (1913), *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914). His critical works are *Notes on Novelists* (1914) *The Art of Fiction* (1884) and *The Note Book of Henry games* (1947). These critical writings present James's view of the novel, and its role in contemporary literature.

**Henry James As a Novelist.**

**His Theory of the Novel.**

Henry James set forth his theory of the novel in his famous critical work *The Art of Fiction* (1884). According to James the main business of the novelist was to provide his impressions of

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* E. Albert: *A History of English Literature:
† Richard Church: *The Growth of the English Novel*
life in such a manner as to create the illusion of reality in his work. In his view the novelist was an impressionist, competing with, "his brother the painter in his attempt to render the look of things, the look that conveys their meaning, the colour, the relief, the expression, the surface, the substance of the human spectacle."* James considered that a novel should not be used for preaching or imparting moral lessons to the readers nor was it to be harnessed for propaganda purposes or purposes of social reform. "To him the novel was primarily an art form to be judged solely by artistic canons, concerned, not with moral purpose, but with the objective and impartial presentation of the reality of life."**

His Subjects.

James chose two subjects for his novels. The first is what he calls "the international subject" dealing with the relationship of the Americans and the Europeans. He found a great many of his themes "in the impact of one type of society upon the product of another, in the study of the processes of adjustment and their effect upon the development of the individual character." The second subject refers to the conflict of man with his surroundings or the social milieu. He presents certain innocent people spoiled and corrupted by a set of exploiters. The innocent persons are invariably Americans, whereas the exploiters are Europeans.

Plot Construction.

Henry James paid no attention to the construction of his plots like the story tellers of the early Victorian age. He was essentially an impressionist and a psychologist and as such he did not very much care for coherence in his plot construction. There is very little action in the novels of James. "It is not customary with him to round off his plots. Whether the novel is long or short it is an episode."†

Intellectual Element in James.

James belonged to the intellectual school of novelists and he had little place for pure sentimentalism in his works. We feel the absence of elemental passions and sentimental emotions in his

** E. Albert: A History of English Literature,
† Walter Allen: The English Novel.
writings. "Mind stuff he made the controlling background of his fiction."*

As a Psychologist.

James was a psychologist, but his method was different from that of George Eliot and George Meredith, the two prominent psychological novelists of the Victorian age. "George Eliot begins with the inner states and works her way outward, sometimes never reaching the surface at all. James begins on the outside and passes a little way beneath, reading character through feature and movement of eyes, head and limb. It is the method of Richardson to which is added the trained perception that has come with science."**

His Technique and Form.

James was a great technician in fiction and "incessantly experimented with technique moving from subtlety to subtlety and from strength to strength."† He had a greater concentration on the form of fiction than its subject matter, and agreed with his pupil Mrs. Wharton that, "the fundamental difference between the amateur and the artist is in the possession of the sense of technique that is, in its broadest meaning, of the necessity of form." James cultivated the technique of psycho-analysis which was developed by James Joyce and Virginia Woolf in the latter years. He evolved the technique of presenting his story through the consciousness of a single character, discarding the ubiquity and omniscience of the traditional novelist." His novels express subtlety of feelings, and are a complex pattern of subjective impressionism. To many readers his novels appear "long-winded or affected" due to his subtle technique of presenting the impressions of his characters.

His Characters.

"The characters of Henry James belong to the brotherhood of intellectuals like himself, sensitive, refined, sophisticated, controlling impulse by reason, and endowed with a faculty of acute self-analysis. They view their own motives and reactions with a remarkable detachment and an equal degree of subtlety."‡ "His

* Diana Neil: A History of the English Novel
** W. L. Cross: Development of the English Novel,
† Gerald Bullett: Modern English Fiction.
‡ B. Albert: History of English Literature.
people” says Richard Church, “are ephemeredis hovering over a human society already showing signs of the decomposition which we see to-day in acceleration.”

His Style.

James was an artist and like Flaubert he made strenuous efforts to search for the inevitable word and the proper image. He achieved excellence in the presentation of dialogues an in *The Awkward Age*, and it is to his credit that he could describe scenes like a true impressionist in *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Golden Bowl*. But often he bores us due to his habit of indulging in long sentences and subtle expressions revealing the inner consciousness of his characters. “It is maddening to read his prose” says Church, “but one goes on reading because of the extreme range of consciousness and the microscopic approach to the niceties of human conduct and inference.

James a Novelists’ Novelist.

“In a sense, James is a novelist’s novelist. That is to say, among writers of English Fiction, he considered the problems of imaginative narration with the most unavering seriousness, the most scrupulous discrimination. No other English novelist has devoted so much high thoughtfulness to the problems of point of view and structure, of the infinitely nice adjustment of substance and form, of the exhaustive exploitation of carefully defined themes. In English fiction James’s is the supreme technique. After him there could be no further development of the well made novel.”*

Q. 79 What contribution was made by George Moore (1852–933) and George Gissing (1857—1903) to Realism in modern fiction?

Ans. George Moore and George Gissing were realists and it was their aim to present life realistically in their works. Moore was an Irishman and early in his life he came under the influence of Zola and Flaubert, who indoctrinated him in the subtle art of presenting the reality of things in an impartial and impersonal manner. In his novels *Modern Lover* (1833), *A Mummer’s

Wife (1885), Spring Days (1888) and Esther Waters (1894), he made a sympathetic study of the poor people and their miserable existence. His novels present a close and realistic study of the sordid side of human life bringing to view the misery and suffering hidden beneath the upper surface of lowly living. The sympathy of the novelist is always with those whose lot it is to suffer.

The realism of Moore was tempered by his Irish mysticism and inclination for religion and some of his works such as Evelyn Innes (1898), Sister Teresa (1901), The Brook Kerith (1916) are tinged with mysticism.

Moore was also a psychologist and his novels reveal his grasp of character and the inner working of the minds of his characters. He provides a fine analysis of the mental states of his characters.

His characters, particularly his women, are drawn with sympathy. His Esther Waters presents a fine woman character, a servant who has to suffer a lot in her life.

Moore’s style is generally simple and lucid and the manner in which he presents an impartial and detached study of life in an artistic language is pleasing to the readers. “An acute and critical mind, a keen observation of life, an urbane detachment, with its attendant incapacity to experience the deeper levels of emotion, a sharp and often malicious wit, and a delicate ear for the rhythm of language equipped him admirably for the exploitation of his chosen form.”

Gissing,

Known for his critical study of Charles Dickens, Gissing was essentially a Realist interested in the study of the poor people and their mean and squalid existence. He did not sympathise with their lot like George Moore. He simply aimed to focus the attention of social reformers to the miseries of their unhappy living. He moves us by his pictures of the sordid and seamy side of life. He exhibited a rare skill for unflinching realism, concrete detail, and a graphic description of the people whose miserable life he sought to present in his works. He could not achieve the detachment of Moore and often coloured the annals of the poor-

B. Albert — A History of English Literature.
with his own experiences of life. His main works are The Nether World (1889); Grub Street (1891) and The House of Cowebs (1906), The Private Papers of Henry Ryecraft is autobiographical in character and presents realistic studies of 'the squalid and savage people' without much sympathy for their unhappy lot.

As an artist Gissing is inferior to George Moore. "His sense of proportion is often faulty, his plots are awkwardly constructed or spun out to an unreasonable length, his themes and characters are frequently repeated with but slight variations, his dialogue is poor and his work is almost completely lacking in the poise which comes from a sense of humour."

Q. 80. Write a note on the novels of James Matthew Barrie (1866—1937) and estimate the importance of his contribution to the English Novel.

Ans. James Matthew Barrie, the prominent literary luminary of Scotland, was a novelist, journalist, dramatist and prose writer. Here we are mainly concerned with his work as a novelist.

Barrie was the main moving figure of "The Kailyard School" of fiction in Scotland. The title of this school came from one of Burns's songs:

There grows a bonnie brier bush oor Kailyard.

A Kailyard is a cabbage patch, and the phrase, 'Kailyard School' refers to the 'quainter aspects of village life.' The writers of this school of fiction sought to represent the folk-scenes of Scotland and transmuted the rural sides with the colour of their romantic imagination. The tradition had long been set by Galt in Annals of the Parish and it was the work of George Macdonald and Matthew Barrie to carry forward the line in their Scottish fiction.

Barrie's first novel was Better Dead (1887). It was a mediocre work and imitated Stevenson's Suicide Club. Later on he produced Window in Thrums (1889), Auld Licht Idylls (1888) in which he sought to catch the lives of the common Scottish peasants with all their rural surroundings. The best product of the Kailyard School is to be found in these works Barrie represented
the oddities of village characters with drollery and affection, and made his fiction realistic in character.

Barrie’s fame rests on his famous novel *The Little Minister* (1891). The theme of this novel is the love of a clergyman for a wayward gipsy girl who later no turns out to be a lady of fashion in the truly romantic fashion of the day. “Stevenson’s technique of the onlooker-narrator is ingeniously handled, the story being told by the village school master, who is concealing the secret that he is the little minister’s real father.”

Apart from the *Little Minister*, Barrie’s other works of importance are *Sentimental Tommy* (1896) and its sequel *Tommy and Grizel*. In these two novels Barrie made a desperate attempt to achieve psychological realism. The hero Tommy Sandys is gifted with a creative energy. He is a lively man of imagination and sentimentalism and fails to adjust himself with the realities of life. In the first volume Barrie deals with the boyhood days of Tommy. He brings out his insight and humour in the presentation of Tommy’s life as a boy at school. In the second volume Barrie presents “a strong contrast between Tommy’s emotional instability and the quiet fortitude of the girl who loved him. Barrie admired Meredith as warmly as Stevenson, and the evils of sentimentalism are castigated in this pair of stories with all Meredith’s vindictiveness.”* Barrie was himself a sentimentalist and the charm of the books lies in a sentimental exposure of a sentimentalist.” “The unexpected violence of the last scene, when Tommy is accidently hanged by his overcoat suggests by its ambiguous mixture of grotesque absurdity and Hardy-an ironic chance that Barrie was trying to symbolise the destructive contradictions in his own nature.”**

From the field of fiction Barrie turned to the world of drama. The success of the *Little Minister* on the stage in its dramatised from turned Barrie into a playwright, and his subsequent career was divided between plays and stories for children. In *Peter Pan* he dramatised *Sentimental Tommy* and achieved great success.

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Lionel Stevenson: *The English Novel, a Panorama.*

Ibid.
Q. 81. Give your estimate of Samuel Butler (1835—1902) as a novelist and write a note on his principal works.

Ans. "Samuel Butler was one of the most original and belligerent thinkers of the nineteenth century. He was "the literary bad boy of the Victorians, whom he scandalized almost as badly as his name sake had scandalized the Puritans, and for the same reason because he understood neither idealism nor the moral earnestness from which it sprang."* The earlier Samuel delayed printing *Hudibras* for fear of consequences to himself; the later Samuel refused to publish his work, scornfully asking, "What is the use of addressing people who will not listen?" So it happened that he was not widely known or even ‘discovered’ until the Victorian age had passed into history.** Samuel Butler was a prolific writer and wrote novels, travel tales and prose treatises. Some of his works *Life and Habit* (1877), *Evolution Old and New* (1879), *Unconscious Memory*, (1880) were inspired by the Darwinian theory of evolution and exhibit the scientific trend of his thought. His classical interests are well reflected in *The Trapanese Origin of the Odyssey*, in which he sought to prove that Homeric poems particularly Odyssey were written by a woman Nausicaa who had a poor opinion of Greek heroes, His other works are *Alps and Sanctuaries of Piedmont and the Canto Ticino* (1881), *Shakespeare’s Sonnets Reconsidered* (1899), *The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler* (1896), *Essays on Life Art and Science* (1904).

The fame of Samuel Butler rests on three works *Erewhon* (1872) and its sequel *Erewhon Revisited* and *The Way of All Flesh* (1903). In these novels Butler blazed a new trail which ran counter to the prevailing tendencies of the age. "At a time when serious novelists were accepting James’s condemnation of the omnisient author, Butler’s book (The Way of All Flesh) was dominated by his opinions and prejudices. When other novelists were attentive to form and structure, Butler’s book sprawled over several generations and suffered a major fracture half way through. When other novelists were depending upon accumulation of detail and imitation of colloquial speech to produce the illusion of reality,

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* Lionel Stevenson: The English Novel, a Panorama.
** W. J. Long: English Literature.
Butler often contented himself with bald summary of both scene and conversation."

Erewhon, the title of which is an anagram for nowhere is a satirical utopia on modern civilization, its treatment of crime, poverty and sickness. It fulminates against machinery and the dependence of man on machinery. The Erewhonians in their wisdom had banished machinery, the bane of modern civilization. In the character of the Erewhonians there were certain virtues which Butler found lacking in modern society. They had good nature and were urbane and compromising in their attitude. Butler wanted the people of his times to cultivate some of the virtues of the Erewhonians, and discard priggishness and bigotry which were considered taboos in the land of the Erewhonians.

Erewhon or Over the Range is a work of semi-fiction and "cannot be counted as a novel since plot and characterisation are subordinated to a satire upon modern civilization in the guise of a visit to an innocent Utopia in the New Zealand wilderness"**

The sequel to Erewhon is Erewhon Revisited. It is a more compact and unified work. It is largely based on the author's disbelief in the doctrine of Ascension, represented in the book by Sunchildism. The book represents the reactions of Higgs to the credulity of the Erewhonians who had grafted Sunchildism on their old religion, and started believing in the doctrine of man's ascension into heaven.

The Way of All Flesh is a work of revolt against Victorianism and though written between (1872-84) was published after the author's death in 1903 because, "it dealt so intimately and so scathingly with his own family and upbringing." "The Way of all Flesh is an example of the novel as delayed action bomb. Even so, even after 1903, it might have laid, inert for years if Bernard Shaw had not touched it off. Then it suddenly exploded and out of the debris a novel of a new kind emerged, or rather, a novel with a new subject and a new hero."

This novel is somewhat autobiographical in character, and its hero Ernest Pontifex represents the views and opinions of the author.

* Lionel Stevenson: The English Novel.
** Ibid.
† Walter Allen: The English Novel.
The father and uncle of Ernest Pontifex believed in parental authority. They were true Victorians. They wanted Pontifex to become a clergyman much against his will. For sometime Pontifex proved weak and submissive to parental authority but later on he revolted against the tyranny of his father. He kicked up the religious life which was sought to be imposed on him and fell a prey to passion and carnal desires. He went the way of all flesh. He managed to insult a young woman whom he took for a prostitute, and was sentenced to six months imprisonment. On coming back from the prison he started flirtation with Ellen, a maid servant and fell on evil ways. He was rescued from this life of fleshliness by his aunt who left him good fortune. Later on Pontifex devoted himself to literature. There was a transformation in his life.

The hero Pontifex represents Samuel Butler and the novel is partially autobiographical. It is not a complete and truthful representation of Butler's life. There are many points of difference between Butler and Pontifex. Like Pontifex, Butler was never sent to prison nor did he ever engage himself in business as an old clothes' dealer.

The novel is evidently an attack on Darwinian determinism and advocates self-determinism. It aims to expose the shams, the parental authority, and traditional smugness of the Victorians. It is noted for its frankness and is marked with typical Butlerian wit and irony.

Butler became the leader of younger novelists who were bent upon flouting Victorian taboos and rituals. "Butler carried the assault into the citadel of entrenched respectability by insisting that the self-righteous Philistines (Victorians) were themselves cruel, greedy, stupid and hypocritical and, above all, that the most cherished stronghold of Victorian morality, the family, was a machine of sadistic tyranny that perpetuated these evils from one generation to the next. As a scientific rationalist, Butler subjected the sentimental sanctions of the home and parental love and filial duty to a chilly anthropological scrutiny, and as an evolutionist he traced the ancestry of his central character to show how the dominant patterns of conduct emerged. The demolition of domestic harmony was all the more thorough by being
reinforced by Butler’s antipathy to Christian faith in general and the church of England in particular. His revengeful sense of outrage prevented his book from being an impartial array of evidence and gave it a demonic energy that no reader could ignore.”

Q. 82. Write a note on the novels and stories of Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and assess his worth as a Novelist.

Ans. Rudyard Kipling was a prolific and versatile writer. He was a poet, a journalist, a novelist and a teller of tales.

As a novelist he is known by The Light That Failed. It was produced when Kipling was twenty four years of age. The hero of the novel is a young man who goes blind but still manages to lead a strenuous life. The blindness of the hero has some poignancy for it reveals Kipling’s own anxiety for his own waning eyesight. “The scenes of London journalistic life and of desert warfare in Africa have reportorial ‘effectiveness; but the idealizing of the army and of men of action—a compensation for the author’s frustration of being debarred from a military career—betrays a tone of immaturity that is less perceptible in his short stories, even when they convey the same values.”

Kipling’s next work in fiction is The Naulakha. It was written in collaboration with his American brother-in-law, but it could not claim much success.

Kipling achieved distinction in tales and stories. Kim presents the experiences of a boy who wandered over India in the company of a holy man. This work gives a realistic picture of Indian life and the faith of the people in supernaturalism and mysticism. This long narrative tale, “reverts to the episodic story line of the picaresque romance.”

Captains Courageous is an adventurous story for boys dealing with a boy who fell overboard from a ship and was saved by a schooner from the Gloucester fishing fleet. “In The Plain Tales From the Hills, Kipling presents the adventures of British soldiers in Simla, and the prosaic lot of the civil servants and their sense of duty. Soldiers Three brings out the story

* Lionel Stevenson—The English Novel, a Panorama.
** Ibid.
† Lionel Stevenson: The English Novel.
of Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd, "eternal types of the hard-drinking, loose-talking men in the ranks." The Phantom-Rickshaw is about Simla and the sad doings that have brought the place in disrepute. Puck of Pook's Hill and its sequel Rewards and Fairies present "a new amalgam of history with the magic transfigures and interprets." The Jungle Books deal with the life of the Indian forests with extreme realism tinged with an air of romance. Mowgli, Baloo and Bagheera are the lovable characters of the Jungle Books even though two are quadrupeds.

Kipling As A Realist and A Romancer.

Kipling was both a realist and a romancer. He gave the air of realism by his settings as well as by his characters, but real realism he lacked. In his works, there is realism without reality. He was an impressionist rather than a realist, and his pictures of realism were marked with an air of romance. He was also a romanticist, but instead of finding romance in the past and the Middle Ages, he found romance in the present realities of life. "He is the romancer of the present, of the modern social order, on which shines from afar a light as resplendent as that which shone on medieval society, for it is the same light of the imagination. Kipling feels the presence of romance in shot and shell as well as in bow and arrows and in red coats as well in buff jerkins."

Indian Life.

Kipling's tales are saturated with Indian touches. He was the first interpreter of Indian life to the West. He is to India what Maria Edgeworth was to Ireland and somewhat less than Scott was to Scotland. In Kipling's stories we come across the India of magic and superstition, the India of lions and snakes, the India of famine and pestilence. He has given pictures of life in the Punjab with its sweltering heat and the madness induced thereby. India is reflected in Kim, The Man Who Was, The Head of the District, The Phantom-Rickshaw and Jungle Books.

Imperialistic Note.

Kipling was an imperialist at heart and the note of imperialism is sounded in his works with a touch of jingoism. "His insistent proclamation of the superiority of the white races, of
Britain's undoubted mission to extend through her imperial policy the benefits of civilization to the rest of the world, his belief in progress and the value of the machine found an echo in the hearts of many of his readers."

Note of Adventure.

Kipling's tales are marked with a note of adventure, activity, self-sacrifice and loyalty. He imparted to fiction the air of vitality and invigorating salt. The adventures of his soldiers are thrilling.

Laureate of the Animal World

Kipling was the laureate of the animal world. He interpreted the conduct of wolves, bears, panthers, monkeys, serpents and sphinxes and translated their language into English.

Journalistic Note.

The entire work of Kipling is marked with a journalistic flair. "It is the journalistic flair that enables him to be Laureate of the music hall; that gives him actuality, clarity and conciseness a writer whether in prose or verse. It is the journalistic flair that leads him to be overgenerous with banjo strains and overladen some of his prose with irrelevancies."

Q. 83. Give your estimate of Arnold Bennett (1867—1931), a Novelist and write a critical note on his principal works.

Ans. Arnold Bennett was, "an all-round man of letters, a personality and a power." He was a prolific writer and wrote novels, short stories, little books of 'pocket philosophies', dramas, and critical reviews. He has to his credit more than eighty volumes, but all of them are not of equal significance. He is known for his 'The Old Wives Tale', 'Clayhanger Trilogy', 'Riceyman Steps' and 'Perial Palace'. We will now examine these works in some detail.

The Old Wives Tale (1903).

The origin of the novel 'The Old Wives' Tale' is to be traced to Arnold Bennett's experience of an old lady who entered a Paris restaurant throwing the waitress and the customers in guffaws of laughter. Bennett enjoyed the sight of this stout queer woman

who might have been once young, slim, perhaps beautiful, though now she had grown fat, old and shabby. At once, in a flash, the possibility of portraying a woman fresh in her youth and later on in her senile decay came to Bennett. "Takis Maupassant's Une Vie as a model, he determined to tell the full truth about such a woman in a heart-rending novel" and the thought that he might excel Maupassant by giving the interwoven histories of two sisters."

*The Old Wives Tale* is a long panorama of the lives of two sisters. Constance and Sophia Baines, daughters of a draper, one of the Five Towns. Constance, the prosaic young woman, leads an unromantic life in the humdrum and drab atmosphere of the Five Towns, whereas her sister Sophia, having an overdose of romance in her character, goes off to Paris with a worthless adventurer to enrich her experience of life. The two sisters do not meet for long, and when they did they were old and had lost all the charm of youth. Time had added lines to their faces and ache to their ageing limbs. At the end both the sisters die leaving behind a tragedy of heart rending pathos.

The novel has been called *The Old Wives' Tale*, because Bennett emphasised in this novel the tragedy of growing old. The book is pretty long and detailed and it succeeds 'in giving the illusion of covering half a century without undue condensation. It is not devoid of thrilling and exciting episodes such as the description of the public guillotining in Paris but the total effect is the accumulation of everyday events that make up the passage of time.' For all its drabness, the book is not depressing. The two sisters have family likeness. They are obstinate and strong willed. In their old age when they are finally reunited, "the effect is not so much the pathos of age and weakness as the triumph of the indomitable will to live."*

In the Clayhanger Trilogy—*Clayhanger, Hilda Lessway, These Twain*—the scene is that of Staffordshire, and the events centre round the affairs of Edwin Clayhanger and Hilda Lessway, who are united in *These Twain*. "Fertility of invention, integrity of vision and fine craftsmanship combine to make it a very solid..."

* Lionel Stevenson: *The English Novel.*
and satisfying of piece work.”

In *Old Wives' Tale* and *Clayhanger Trilogy* Bennett had kept close to the Five Towns and had described the industrial life of the people with their insistence on love, marriage, housekeeping, moneymaking, illness and death. In his *Riceyman Steps* (1923) he left the Five Towns for the dreary London district of Clerkenwell and instead of dealing with the lives of industrial people in the pottery districts, he now focussed attention on the relatively abnormal psychology of a miser, Henry Earlforward, a bookseller, lost in the craze of moneymaking. Materialism has its full play in the novel. The miser dies of cancer at the end. This book is dismal in character and is written about dismal people in dismal surroundings. A. C. Ward is an admirer of this novel and says—“Despite its drabness, the book is illumined by that sense of beauty which is indispensable to the creative artist.”

In *Imperial Palace*, Bennett describes a hotel, with all its fascinating and enthralling details. To obviate the boredom, the novelist introduced romantic and human interest in the book. The novel should be read by all those who intend to start hotel business in their lives. The novel has a special significance for Arnold Bennett. It has a symbolic significance. The world was for Bennett a sumptuous hotel, with marble bathrooms and a marvellous cuisine, in which he considered himself a transient guest. “To him life was a role that he played conscientiously, and with ability, but into the skin of which he could never quite go.” (S. Maugham).

The views of Somerset Maugham about these novels of Bennett are worthy of consideration. He says, “The *Old Wives' Tale* is certainly the best book he wrote. He never lost the desire to write another as good and because it was written by an effort of will he thought he could repeat it. He tried in *Clayhanger*, and for a time it looked as though he might succeed. I think he failed only because his material fizzled out. After *The Old Wives' Tale* he had not enough left to complete the vast structure he had designed. No writer can get more than a certain amount of ore out of one seam.”

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* Gerald Bullett: Modern English Fiction.
** A. C. Ward: Twentieth-Century Literature.
As a Realist.

Arnold Bennett was essentially a Realist in his art and realism is well brought out in the vivid and real pictures of the pottery districts of England or in his study of the Five Towns. The life of materialism is well portrayed in his novels. The internal economy of houses and hotels down to their plumbing, for as bought, prepared and eaten, clothes and their fashions, means of transport, indeed all the machinery equipment and paraphernalia of living claimed Bennett's absorbed interest.* Bennett became an interpreter of the society of the Five Towns which he knew well. But it is to his credit that like a true artist he maintains an air of impartiality and detachment in the presentation of realistic pictures in his novels. He did not aim at any propaganda or moral preaching through the medium of his art.

As A Romancer.

Bennett introduced romanticism centring on the theme of love to take away the impression of drabness, dullness and sordidness that might be created from the study of his realistic pictures of life.

Besides finding romance in love, Bennett like Kipling found romance in the ordinary things of life. He refused to identify romance 'with the merely picturesque or the merely extraordinary.' God had endowed him with the ability and the faculty of "evoking the beauty and romance of the ordinary lives of ordinary folk which is one of the most attractive features of his novels."**

His Characters.

The characters of Arnold Bennett belong to the middle class society and the novelist shows insight in presenting them in his works. There is not that depth and psychological penetration in his character portrayal as we find in Henry James. His heroines are better drawn than his male characters. Sophia, Constance and Hilda attract us more than their male counterparts.

His style.

"Bennett's conspicuous failing was disregard for the grace* Dr. A. S. Collins—English Literature of the 20th Century.
** Gerald Bullett—Modern English Fiction.
of style. He wrote fluently and vigorously and often achieved marvels of pictorial and nerve-shaking description. But he seemed to be insensible to the finer elegancies, and to despise that scrupulous attention to the consecrated order and dignity of the language which is the mark of the man of letters. This carelessness, however, was not a handicap when it came to writing dialogue. It is in his vivid and eminently natural conversations that Arnold Bennett’s master-strokes of style are to be found.”* “His dialogue is usually excellent, but he appears to be insensitive to the finer graces of the English language, and his prose compares unfavourably with that of Galsworthy.”**

Q. 84. Write a note on the novels of John Galsworthy (1867-1933) and his contribution to the English Novel.

Ans. John Galsworthy was one of the prominent men of letters during the 20th century. He was a man of versatile genius and achieved distinction in varied branches of literature. He was a novelist, a dramatist, a journalist, an essayist and a short story writer.

As a novelist Galsworthy began his career at the age of thirty and his first book From the Four Winds, was published under the name of John Sinjohn. It was a beginner’s work and was immature in every way. It was followed by Jocelyn (1891) and later on by Villa Rubein (1900) in which he sought to introduce the detachment and impartiality of Flaubert and Turgenev, masters in the art of novel writing. In Villa Rubein Galsworthy is a pure artist without any moral or social purposiveness. “Villa Rubein has a charm and restraint which were we speaking the language of pictorial art, might make us say that it was an admirable example of the school of Turgenev.”† In the works that followed, Galsworthy turned his gaze to social, political and economic life, and standing on the Middle line he made his observations on what he saw.

Galsworthy produced his first great successful novel The man

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* E. A. Baker—History of the English Novel
** E. Albert—A History of English Literature.
† R. A. Scott James—Fifty Years of English Literature
of Property (1906) which formed the first book of the family novel *The Forsyte Saga*. This Saga is divided into two trilogies. In the first trilogy we include *The Man of Property* (1906), *In Chancery* (1920) and *To Let* (1921). It was followed by a 'Second Trilogy of the Forste Chronicle' and contained three novels *The White Monkey* (1924), *The Silver Spoon* (1926) and *Swan-Song* (1928) which were published later on in one volume designated, as *A Modern Comedy*. There were also two interludes in this omnibus work—*The Forsyte Saga*. In this great work Galsworthy presents a vivid and clear picture of the Victorians particularly the upper middle class people, the Forsytes, who had infinite love for property, social dignity, material pelf and power. The possessive instinct of the Victorians is clearly brought out in this novel. Soames Forsyte considers his wife Irene as his property. "For Forsytes what cannot be bought does not exist; art and the things of the spirit are objects to be collected, but not for their own sake, rather as manifestations of their success in life. The life of the emotions, the holiness of the heart's affections are as closed to them as the life of pure thought. Theirs was the life of making money, reaching, keeping dogs, fighting law suits, drinking and walking."

* The life of the Victorians has a ring of truth about it and Galsworthy's handling of the subject is really admirable. "The reader becomes the privileged onlooker at a scene so varied and natural as to give the illusion of the fullness of life within the broad limits of Forste society."

The other novels of Galsworthy are social in character and reveal his interest in contemporary society. In *The Country House* he attacks, once again, the lust for property. *Fraternity* deals with class division, the distinction between the rich and the poor, and the disaster that follows in the wake of misunderstanding. It is a very unhappy book. In *The Patrician* Galsworthy throws light on the gradual liquidation of the upper middle classes and the emergence of the new social order.

"In this series novels, as in his plays, which were even more successful during the same years, Galsworthy wrote, as

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† Dr. A. S. Collias: *English Literature of the 20th Century.*
beffited his subject matter, with urbane and mildly ironic realism. But under the calm, gentlemanly surface it is easy to perceive his almost unendurable pity for the people who are caught in the trap of rigid conventions, and his hopelessness as to any solution. As he saw it, the cultivated classes of England were doomed to sterile unhappiness by their tradition-bound and materialistic principles. None of his books has a dramatically tragic ending, but all are as depressing as Gissing's in their depiction of normal emotions thwarted by social environment.”*

As A Novelist

A Novelist of social life.

Galsworthy was primarily the novelist of social life, and was interested in the presentation of the Victorian scene, particularly belonging to the upper middle class society. His Forsyte Saga is a vivid and clear picture of Victorian life representing their love for property and possession. “As the social historian of the passing away of Victorianism, Galsworthy is still without a serious rival. Their code of honour, their snobbishness, their disgust of passion find an adequate expression in his novels.” Contrasting Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy as novelists of social life Scott James nicely remarks, “Galsworthy belonged to the so-called upper classes, and was most at his ease in describing the life of the country or people of inherited wealth living in London. Bennett belonged to the humbler middle class and was most successful when writing of people who belonged to it.”

Galsworthy's Technique.

Galsworthy’s technique in presenting the picture of society was that of observing the spectacle of life from the middle of the road, keeping his balance dexterously without tilting either on this or that side. He presented “the spectacle of life and its contending forces, himself standing in the middle, like Fate, holding the balance.” He followed the method adopted by his character Cethru (see through) in the inn of Tranquility. This method of Cethru (see through) is perceptible in all his later works. “He created a new type of fiction by “balancing” as he said, the virtues and vices of his hero, Soames, against the vices and virtues of other members of the same family, a method to which

* Lionel Stevenson - The English Novel, a Panorama.
he held in his subsequent novels and plays."*

As a Novelist of Passion and Love.

Galsworthy was interested not only in the study of social relations, but also in the depiction of passion and love in his novels. Love motif dominates his novels. He took keen interest in describing youthful passion, lawful, or unlawful and his love scenes between Bosinney and Irene, Jon and Fleur, Dinny and Wilfred, Gyp and Bryan, have something of the true passion of youth, "something fresh and holy, a breath of summer blossom, sunshine or spring rain." His novels of love end on a note of tragedy.

Galsworthy's Characters.

Galsworthy achieved signal success in portraying his characters mostly drawn from upper-middle-class society. He exhibited an unerring insight in bringing out the vices and virtues of their life. Among his male characters representing the love for Victorian property and possession are Soames Forsyte, Old Joynon, James, General Charwell, uncle Hilary and Adrian. His female characters are marked with a love for romanticism. Irene is "the spirit of universal beauty, deep, mysterious." Fleur, "the flower of Soame's life" and Dinny "the smile on the face of the country." Helen Bellew, Gyp, Holly, Ann, are his other vivacious and glamorous heroines. Galsworthy's child characters are innocent, funny and sweet. We remember Jon, Kit, and little Gyp for their innocence and simplicity.

Galsworthy's Satire and Irony.

Galsworthy was a satirist and ironically he attacked the instinct of possessiveness and material affluence found among the Victorians. He could not appreciate the heartlessness and lack of emotional understanding which characterised the smug and self-complacent Victorians. The following passage from the Forsyte Saga will reveal to the reader the ironical verve with which Galsworthy pictured their insensitiveness and lack of sympathy—"In his eyes, as in the eye of all Forsytes, the pleasure of seeing these beautiful creatures in a state of captivity far outweighed the inconvenience of imprisonment to beasts whom God had so unprovidently placed

* W. J. Long—English Literature,
** Scott-James—Fifty Years of English Literature,
in a state of freedom! It was for the animal's good, removing
them at once from the countless dangers of open air and exercise
and enabling them to exercise their functions in the guaranteed,
seclusion of a private compartment! Indeed, it was doubtful what
wild animals were made for but to be shut up in cages!"

Galsworthy's Interest in Nature and Animals.

The novels of Galsworthy reveal his interest in nature and
animals. His descriptions of the English countryside are graphic
and poetic. His love for nature is best shown in The Dark
Flower. Bosinney and Irene frequently visit the parks of
London. Sussex Down, the riverside, form the background of the
love of Fleur and Jon.

Galsworthy's Philosophy and Didacticism.

Galsworthy suggested through his novels the lesson of
sympathy and humanitarianism. He suggested patience, forbear-
ance, kindness, and generosity as the possible cure for the maladies
infecting our society.

Galsworthy's Style.

"The style of Galsworthy matches his material. It has
the best qualities of the Forsyte spirit, and something more. It is
a civilized style, quiet, reticent, and assured, without tricks or
fuss. It has a grace and dignity which never assert themselves
too much Irony and a sensitive reaction to atmosphere continually
prevent any dulling of the tranquil surface. When beauty asks
it, an almost poetic glow and pulsation inform to still normal
prose. When passion and deep feeling need expression, a close
restraint of phrasing, a quiet concentration of meaning, produce
the required effect. Without apparent striving he can move the
emotionally deeply."*

Conclusion.

"Today it is easier to see him as a whole—to recognize
that for a dozen years he was an active force in awakening Edwardian
England from intellectual lethargy: a man of letters devoted to
the conception of literature as an art, yet equally convinced that
it has a social function to fulfil; a man of great strength of purpose,
of generous impulses, modest in his thought and in his manner
to others; chivalrous in his sympathy for the weak, but with the

* Dr. A. S. Collins—English Literature of the Twentieth Century.
good sense never to confine his sympathies to a class. Before
his death he had reached the last stage of success at which a man’s
work has been so much read, and become so familiar, that it is
apt to be looked upon as ‘passé.’ It was then that he was
awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.” *

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Q. 85. Give a brief account of the main works of H G.
Wells (1866—1946).

Ans. H G. Wells was one of the most prolific writers of
the modern age. He was a novelist, journalist, pamphleteer and
a writer of serious books. Over production was the bane of his
life because he could not keep up uniformity of excellence in all
his works.

The main works of H. G. Wells fall under three divisions or
groups. In the first group which extends from 1895 to 1908, we
have novels characterised by fantasy and imagination. In the
second group are placed the novels of character and humour. In
the third group we have the novels of discussion and social
commentary. We will deal with the works of each group in
some detail.

I Group

Fantastic, scientific and imaginative novels.

H. G. Wells started his career as a novelist by writing
fantastic and scientifically imaginative novels. The works of
this period, extending from 1895 to 1908 were written under the
inspiration received by the study of the fantastic and imaginative
tales of Jules Verns, the continental writer of romances. There
was a difference in the method and practice of Jules Verns and
H. G. Wells. ‘Whereas fantastic adventurousness counted for
everything in Jules Verns, in Wells it was more than a peg upon
which to hang the speculation and social inquiry.” ** His first
book of fiction belonging to this group is Time Machine. It
describes a contrivance based on the theory that time is the
fourth dimension. Travelling on the Time Machine we go back
to the year 1802 and 1701 when the process of natural selection
had achieved perfection. At that time the human race was

* R. A. Scott-James—Fifty Years of English Literature.
** A C. Ward—Twentieth Century Literature
divided into two species, a hyper civilized type descended from the leisured class, and a beastial type, descended from the workers. These workers, lived underground and ate the elegant, ineffectual ‘Eloit’. Travelling on the Time Machine we go far into the future when we find the whole process of evolution completely reversed. Giant Crustaceans represent the highest form of life. Immediately after this book Wells produced The Wonderful Visit in which “an angel is shot down by an ornithological parson and is puzzled by “the littleness, the narrow horizons, of ordinary people’s lives.”

The next work of H. G. Wells in this group was the Island of Dr. Moreau. This is a gruesome story of a surgeon who carried on the work of operating upon dogs and pigs and transforming them into human beings Wells made a departure from this work of scientific fantasy in The Wheels of Chance in which he described the life of a draper’s assisant, recounting mostly his own experiences of life. Wells returned to the subject of science in the The Invisible Man (1897) in which he tells us of a medicine which could make man invisible. In this story of tragic pathos Wells narrates how the invisible man is smelt out by a dog and is brutally done to death by the policeman working on his trail. The War of the Worlds, “probably the most gripping of this series describes an invasion by space-ships from Mars, with a tremendous eyewitness report of the evacuation of London.” The First Man in the Moon provides an interesting study of the efforts made to inhabit the moon. Several difficulties come in the way of reaching the moon. The first difficulty in reaching the moon is conquered by the discovery of ‘Cavorite’ a substance ‘opaque to all forms of radiant energy’ and therefore to gravity by the scientist Cavor. When the Sleeper Wakes (1899) “uses the Rip Van Winkle theme for a forecast of the world to hundred years in the future, a time of mechanized efficiency and political dictatorship, when capital and labour fight a war to the death with airplanes.”

Commenting upon these early works of H. G. Wells Lionel Stevenson beautifully remarks, “These early works of Wells are in the category of Stevensonian romance. The imaginative escape into the future is equivalent to Kipling’s and
Haggard’s excursions into Asia and Africa and the historical novelist’s idealizing of the past. The intensity of suspense and the solving of scientific riddles resemble the Sherlock Holmes stories. There is an element of terror, notably in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, that harks back to the Gothic romances, recalling the Rosicrucian stories, Frankenstein, and Bulwer-Lytton’s experiments with the supernatural. Wells’s stories appealed particularly to men and boys, by the combination of exciting adventure with technological detail. Coming at a time when education was spreading rapidly and scientific research was invading the newspapers, his books had an incalculable influence by casting an imaginative glamour over the new knowledge, just as Haggard and Kipling were entralling other youths with the vision of imperialism.”*

II Group

**Novels of character and humour (1900—1910).**

The first work of this period was *Love and Mr. Lewisham*. It is a painstaking work and is rich in autobiographical references depicting Wells’s life as a teacher. *Kipps* (1905) recounts the experiences of Wells as a draper’s assistant. It is the story of a man who is almost driven to commit suicide because of certain business difficulties from which he is providentially saved. Kipps and Polly are fine characters of H. G. Wells. Polly is a richer character and is more attractive than Kipps. Through this character the author directs our attention to the shortcomings of the system of education prevailing at this time. Mr. Polly is a true comic character and the only other character who can be compared with him in comicality is Joyce’s Leopold Bloom.

*Ann Veronica* (1909) is the study of feminist movement culminating in the suffrage. “This novel incurred condemnation as immoral because it depicted an attractive girl, who after living alone and trying vainly to make a career in business, takes a mate without the formality of marriage.”

*Tono Bungay* is another significant novel of this period. “It is a satiric account of how a young man of scientific leanings becomes invalid with his unprincipled uncle Pondyvero in manufacturing a worthless patent medicine, Tono Bungay, which

* Lionel Stevenson—*The English Novels, a Panorama.*
The Discussion Novels or Commentaries (1901—1942).

The novels of this period are based on discussions of social problems. *Marriage* (1912) "repeats the situation of the Lydgate in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. A man is obliged to give up scientific research and go into business to satisfy the demands of an extravagant wife." In the second novel of this period *The Passionate Friends* (1913) "a woman tries to solve the old dilemma of love versus material advantage by marrying the prosperous suitor and then having relations with the other." *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman* (1914) admits a modicum of comedy in depicting a lady of rank and fashion who alleviates the dull conventional routine by taking part in the campaign for women's suffrage and by encouraging a susceptible author to fall in love with her.

"Alongside of these four studies of love and marriage, Wells published two on the more intractable subject of political ideas. *The New Machiavelli* is the autobiography of a politician who plays a central role in public life until his career is ruined when he deserts his wife for a mistress. The book contains satiric portraits of prominent figures of the time, including some of Wells's former associates in the Fabian Society. After this ferocious exposure of incompetence in government, he offered a constructive proposal in *The Research Magnificent*, in which an idealist undertakes to make himself into a selfless and fearless leader who will help to create a World State, but loses his life in a strike before has a chance to put his theories into practice."*

Besides these political works Wells produced many other works of political significance of which the *Elements of Reconstruction* (1916), *Salvaing of Civilization* (1921) and *Washington in the Hope of Peace* are quite significant. Throughout the thirties Wells was busy in producing books dealing with economic, political and social subjects. His main works in this direction are *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* (1931), *After Democracy* (1932), *The Anatomy of Frustration* (1936). The second

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* Lionel Stevenson — The English Novel, a panorama.
world war brought other treatises, the chief of them being *The Fate of Homo Sapiens* (1939), *The New World Order* (1940), *The Right of Man* (1940), *The Common Sense of War and Peace* (1940), *Science and the World-Mind* (1942).

This period of almost thirty years was not, however, devoted entirely to pamphleteering and in addition to his popular educational works *The Outline of History* (1920) and *A Short History of the World* (1922), novels continued to flow from his pen. Many of the novels written during the thirties approached the manner of his maturity, and include *The Autocracy of Mr. Parham* (1930), the *Bulpington of Blunt* (1933), *Brynhill* (1937), *Apropos of Dolores* (1938), *The Holy Terror* (1939).

Q. 86. Give your estimate of H. G. Wells as a novelist and as a thinker.

Ans. H. G. Wells (1866—1946) was a prolific writer and produced novels, pamphlets, histories, stories and romances with unceasing regularity.

Wells’s conception of the Novel.

Wells had his own ideas about the nature and function of fiction. He did not consider the novel as a mere matter of relaxation and entertainment. He considered the novel a powerful instrument of moral and social regeneration. In his view the novel has to be regarded as the “social mediator, the vehicle of understanding, the instrument of self-examination, the parade of morals and the exchange of manners, the factory of customs, the criticism of laws and institutions and of social dogmas and ideas. It is to be the home confessional, the initiator of knowledge, the seed of self-questioning. We are going to deal with political questions and religious questions. Before we have done we will have all life within the scope of the novel.”* Wells made the novel an instrument of social, political and educational discussion, criticism and reform.

Formlessness in Wells’s Novels.

H. G. Wells did not very much believe in giving a story

* H. G. Wells—*The Contemporary Novel* (1911).
well planned and well executed in his novels. In his Modern Utopia he stated, "I do not see why I should always pander to the vulgar appetite for stark stories." In his view a novel was "a discursive thing, a woven tapestry of multifarious interests" in which could be included all kinds of topics such as business, finance, politics etc. He conceived the novel as "a large and affair, a kind of rag-bag into which any odds and ends of observation and opinion might be stuffed haphazardly."

As a Scientific Romancer.

His novels belonging to the first group (from 1895 to 1908) such as Time Machine, The Invisible Man, The First Man in the Moon, The Food of the Gods, The Island of Dr. Moreau, deal with scientific subjects in a fantastic way. The imagination of the novelist is seen in its full play in these fantastic novels marked with imaginative insight into the possibility of things under the influence of science. In these novels he is very much like Jules Verns and R. L. Stevenson.

As a critic of social life.

H. G. Wells did not keep himself engaged in the world of scientific fantasies for long and soon drifted from that kingdom to the wilder field of social life. He became a social critic and attacked social evils with the vehemence of a reformer. In the History of Mr. Polly he exposed educational impostures and in Tono Bungay he attacked modern commercialism. His method as a social reformer was different from that of Charles Dickens, the social reformer of the nineteenth century fiction. Whereas Dickens attempted to gain his objects of social reform through persuasion, Wells adopted the attitude of a bully and a hector in achieving his ends. "When he (Wells) laughed at abuses he was a second Dickens; when he grew fretful over them, he became a second-rate edition of himself. And he was perhaps the first of that army of propagandist writers that, more particularly in the nineteen thirties, endeavoured to hector rather that to persuade and convince."

Wells’s Characters.

Wells created a rich variety of characters—men, women,

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* Gerald Bullett—Modern English Fiction.

** A. C. Ward—Twentieth Century Literature.
and children in his novels. But his chief skill lies in the presentation of odd, eccentric and humorous characters such as Uncle Ponderevo in *Tono Bungay* and Mr. Polly in the *History of Mr. Polly*. His characters have mostly been drawn from the lower middle society and constitute the "little man" of our social circle. His heroines are modern girls exhibiting "just a contemporary variation of the feminine life force, conditioned at first by her need to play up to the hero's ideals." His heroes are young, "full of strong indistinct desires and fears and a gnawing indefinable impatience." Wells's children are more natural, and they seem to be free from the pressure of his ideas. Wells has given the liveliest sketches of childhood and his pictures of children are as lively and interesting as those of George Eliot.

"With all his faults of temper and temperament, he possesses, perhaps in a higher degree than any other living Englishman the distinctive power of the novelist, that of creating people. Herein lies his incontestable claim to greatness. For sheer creative energy he has been compared, and not absurdly, with Dickens."*

**Wells's Humour.**

"The humour of Wells is unique. It is not the eccentric wit and fun of Dickens, nor the sneering, cutting satire of Thackeray or Butler. It is not the polished epigrammatic comedy of Meredith. It is nearer to the worldly, ordinary humour of Arnold Bennett, rather than to the exuberant slangy humour of P. G. Wodehouse. It ripples the corners of one's mouth but seldom makes us roar aloud as does the humour of Dickens, Jerome Barry Pain or Herbert Jenkins. Though we cannot say that he hides his tears under the garb of a smile as does Charles Lamb, yet often his humour makes serious things."

**As a Thinker.**

"Wells was concerned above all things with contemporary problems, and he ranks with Shaw as a leader of advanced thought of his day. As a socialist he was concerned first with reconstruction of modern society on a more equitable basis, and this he felt to be attainable only through the spread of education. This belief led him to produce not only his many treatises but also the

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*Gerald Bullett—Modern English Fiction*
popular educational works on science. Educational opportunities and political equality for women were among the causes he supported, and though his plans for a world order involved a large degree of socialization and subordination of the individual will to the communal good, he was a strong advocate of the importance of developing the capacity of each individual to its utmost limits. In pursuit of this ideal of self-development he opposed many of the conventional restrictions of his day. He was very much interested in sex relationship and marriage, and his advocacy of free love placed him among advanced thinkers. The problem of the adjustment of the individual to his social environment was his chief interest, and if he was the opponent of class privilege, for the proletariat *en masse* he had little respect, and he had the strongest suspicions of the methods of contemporary democracy. His sympathy lay with the individual, for whom he had the warmest affection. These views, which gave him such immense influence in his day, are most fully expounded in his eminently readable prose treatises they also underlie, not only the poorer, over didactic novels of the 1912—1920 period, but also those mature works in which he shows himself a loveliest of very considerable understanding.”* Wells was an optimist and he believed in the intelligence and disinterestedness of men promoted by education. He confidently believed that “practical applications of physical and economic science will give man a worldly habitation worthy of the possibilities of his nature.”**

Conclusion.

“The future generations will undoubtedly appreciate his worth both as a great pioneer and as one of the most devoted servants in our history of the high destinies of humanity.”†

Q. 87. Give a brief account of the novels of Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) and write a note on his contribution to English fiction.

Ans. Joseph Conrad was by birth a citizen of Poland, but later on he adopted England for his country. He picked up the English language with remarkable ease and wrote it with fluency

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* E. Alber—*A History of English Literature,*

** Moody-Lovett—*A History of English Literature,*

† J. B. Coats—*Leaders of Modern Thought,*
and poetic beauty. He was not concerned with the problems of social and economic life, but was principally interested in the presentation of his own rich experience of life in Malaya, Pacific islands, and exotic lands. Underlying all his novels the reader can detect a moral tone emphasising the necessity of practising the principle of fidelity in all human relationship.

His early novels An Outcast of the Islands and Almayer's Folly are rich in tropical background and are redolent of the tropical rivers and vegetation. The Nigger of the Narcissus (1897) "is a moving story of life on ship, remarkable for its powerful atmosphere, its sea description, and its character study. Donkin is one of the best of his many vividly drawn villains and is a figure in Smollett's vein." It is a gruesome novel and the tragic intensity of the death of the negro touches us deeply. In 1900 Conrad produced his best novel Lord Jim. It was for the first time in this novel that Conrad adopted the oblique and indirect method of narration through the ironical Marlow, who also figures in his later novels. The novel emphasises the principle of fidelity and faithfulness in human life. Those who betray the trust reposed in them are never at ease and receive divine punishment. It is impressionistic in character and the story is a conglomeration of loosely scattered incidents revolving round the central character, Jim, the second officer on the ship 'Patna'. Youth and Typhoon (1902-3) are tales of sea life. The Heart of Darkness and The End of Tether provide vivid descriptions of eastern lands and take us in the heart of Malaya. Nostromo (1904) takes us to Africa, and The Mirrors of the Sea recounts the personal experiences of the novelist about the sea.

The Secret Agent (1907) is the story of the underworld of London and is impressionistic in character. Under Western Eyes (1911) is a tale of Russian life dealing with the activities of the Russian revolutionaries. The character of Razumov is finely portrayed and the general atmosphere in the novel is that of fear. Chance (1914) is loose in structure though it reveals Conrad's power as an artist. An Iceland Tale (1915), Within the Tides-Tales (1915) are sea novels repeating the old experiences of the novelist about the sea. Rescue (1920) and The Rover (1922) complete the record of the stirring tales of sea life and adventurous incidents.
narrated in a colourful manner.

As A Novelist.

The Theme Of Conrad’s Novels—His Subjects.

Conrad was interested in two subjects. He chose to make his own experiences of sea-life and tropical areas as the subject matter of his novels. The background of his novels is furnished by the sea and the luxuriant forests of Malaya. Another subject which kept Conrad engaged is the principle of fidelity and faith between man and man and the distracting power of evil in human life. These two themes make Conrad a Romanticist and a Moralist and both these strains run through his works.

As a Romanticist—The Laureate of Sea-life.

Conrad was a Romanticist interested in the presentation of distant scenes in exotic lands. He was the laureate of sea life and the life of jungles. Instead of photographically presenting sea-life and the life of tropical areas with extreme realism, Conrad sought to interpret the sea-life and the life of forests, and through the colour of his imagination give the impression of that life. “He was again like Hawthorne in portraying the effect that an object makes upon him who observes it. So he became a master of impressionism which is poles apart from realism.”*

As a Moralist—His Principle of Fidelity.

As a moralist Conrad emphasised the principle of fidelity and faithfulness in human life. Betrayal of trust and deception of one’s fellowmen seemed to him to be heinous sins to be condemned and deprecated in fierce language. The principle of fidelity is fully illustrated in three novels (1) Under Western Eyes; (2) Lord Jim (3) The Secret Sharer. In the first novel Razumov betrays Haldin by handing him over to the police when he seeks shelter under his roof. Razumov violates the principle of fidelity and loyalty to Haldin and is a betrayer of trust. He deserves punishment. In Lord Jim Jim, the second officer on the ship ‘Patna’ betrays the pilgrims by jumping from the ship for his own safety at a time when the ship of which he was in charge was on the verge of sinking. It was an act of betrayal of trust and Lord Jim felt qualms of conscience for the rest of his life till he could redeem his honour in another

W. J Long: English Literature.
enterprise in 'Malaya' (ship).

Conrad's technique of narration—The indirect method.

In 'The Shadow Line' Conrad adopted the traditional method of narration and told his story in a direct manner. But he soon gave up this direct method for the indirect or oblique method of narration, in which the events happening in the story are presented by a central character in backward-forward manner building up a picture through a series of brief sense impressions, which only reveal their full significance when they finally come together in a complete whole. In Lord Jim it is Marlow who indirectly narrates the incidents happening on the Patna in a backward-forward manner. "In his indirect approach his subtlety of psychological analysis, and his high degree of intellect and artistry" says Dr. A. S. Collins, "Conrad invites comparison with the older novelist Henry James, whose friendship Conrad enjoyed and from whose example he may well have learned." For Conrad the novel was not a narration but a report.

Conrad's Pessimism.

An atmosphere of sombreness and pessimism broods over the novels of Joseph Conrad. In the battle with the mighty forces of Nature man proves feeble and at the end meets with disaster. "In the battle against Nature many fail and Conrad's interest as often with Browning, lies frequently in the failures in analysing the weakness of a man's character." Conrad presented the solitary life of his sea captains and harped upon their loneliness. The End of the Tether is the majestic epic of solitude representing the solitary life of Captain Whalley suffering the buffets of fortune and destiny all alone in a world of despair and mystery. Life in Conrad's novels is grim and gruesome, and sometimes the monstrous and uncouth works of Nature oppressing humanity appear to be extremely painful to the readers.

Conrad's Characters.

Conrad's characters are mostly drawn from the ranks of sailors, adventurers and explorers. He has also created villains like Kurtz and Donlin. His method of character portrayal is unique. He preserves objective detachment in creating his characters.
Novel From 1918 To 1966

Q. 88. Write a note on the main novels of D.H. Lawrence (1885—1930) and his contribution to the English Novel.

Ans. D. H. Lawrence was one of the most remarkable and striking figures in the literary world between the two wars. He was the novelist of sex life, physical passions, and animalism. In his *Sons and Lovers*, D. H. Lawrence enunciated his faith in physical life in the following words—"My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect." At another place Lawrence wrote, "I want men and women to be able to think sex fully, completely, honestly and cleanly." No other contemporary novelist was Lawrence’s equal in communicating the sense of living things in a vivid and clear manner. "Much that he wrote is furious with a convulsive energy and fire, though his debating style sometimes veered towards the peevish shrillness of intellectual immaturity."

Lawrence’s first novel was *The White Peacock* (1911). In this novel Lawrence presents the conflict between man and woman and sets out to prove that woman is a harpy bent upon the immascullation of man. *The Trespasser* (1912) further carries forward the attack on women. In *Sons and Lovers* (1913), which is considered an autobiographical novel, Lawrence presents with deep insight the relationship between son and mother. In *The Rainbow* (1915) the concentration is once again on sex, and the book was suppressed for sometime as it was considered obscene by the moralists of the time. The sequel to *The Rainbow* was *Women in Love*, in which he expounded with vehemence his views upon human life. In 1922 was published *Aaron’s Rod* in which the Italian atmosphere is presented with vividness. From his personal experience of life in Australia which he visited

* A. G. Ward: Twentieth Century Literature.
Lawrence made out two novels Kangaroo (1923) and The Boy in the Bush (1924). In these two novels Lawrence depicted the Australian background with striking vividness. In The Plumed Serpent (1926) Lawrence concentrated his attention on Mexican life, and presented with the same vividness and intensity as he did the Australian life in Kangaroo. Here Lawrence exalted the values of primitive life and denounced the shams and artificialities of modern civilized society. In 1926 was published the much criticised book Lady Chatterley’s Lover. It is “a novel in which sexual experience is handled with a wealth of physical detail and uninhibited language which had caused its suppression in this country. It is Lawrence’s last embittered fling at what he felt to be the purience of mind which sheltered behind the conventional notions of sex and he claimed that it was very truly moral.” (Albert).

As A Novelist.

The novelist of sex and primitive instincts.

D. H. Lawrence was essentially the novelist of sex-life, and it was the avowed object of his life to glorify sex and primitive instincts in his works. In Sons and Lovers he clearly stated—“My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect.” “Mr. Lawrence’s work” says Gerald Bulter, “is saturated in sex, even when it happens to be devoid of sexual incident.” His White Peacock, The Rainbow and Lady Chatterley’s Lover are novels of sex and two of them were suppressed for being obscene.

In Lawrence’s novels it is the woman who has been castigated and attacked. In Aaron’s Rod the views of Lawrence are clearly stated. He says:

“Women are the hottest hell once they get the start of you. There’s nothing they won’t do to you once they have got you. Nothing they won’t do to you, especially if they love you.”

Lawrence was the novelist of instinct, sense and feeling. His stress was more on feelings, passions and instinct than on intellect, wit, or reason. “Scorning the mere intellectual faculties, he placed his trust in the experience of the senses, which for him seem to gain in value as they become more violent. Man’s primitive instincts and the impulses which spring from his uncos-
scious mind are his safest guides in life."* He was, in reality, the prophet of the primitive instincts and passions.

As a critic of modern civilization.

D. H. Lawrence was a critic of modern materialism and artificial conventions of our sophisticated society. He sought escape from money-mindedness of modern civilized people and the ugliness of modern life in the beautiful and healthy instinctive life of the people of Mexico and Australia.

Novelist of un-conscious life.

Lawrence sought to bring "to light those unconscious elements in man's nature which were far more influential agents than superficial consciousness. The task that faced him was that of devising a language in which the unconscious could be expressed. The language he found in metaphor and symbol, and, although his way to success was not without adventures, he succeeded beyond any writer of his time in giving the unconscious adequate and powerful voice."**

Lawrence's technique and method of treatment.

Lawrence was not very much interested in the story and cogent plot construction. All that he attempted was to treat his theme in an impassioned manner, imparting to it all the vitality, vigour and force of which he was capable. "No other contemporary novelist was Lawrence's equal in communicating an extraordinarily vivid sense of living things and beings."

Lawrence's characters.

His finest characters are those in whom he projects his own personality and views about life. Paul Morel in Sons and Lovers, R. L. Somers in Kangaroo and Birkin in Women in Love are mouthpieces of Lawrence and it can be safely said that they are his finest characters. These characters have striking similarities with their creator. "They share his bitterness and darkness of spirit, and like him they live passionately and fully. They are creatures of strong impulse and primitive emotions, and they are studied with a remarkable depth of understanding and keenness of insight."†

* E. Albert: A History of English Literature.
† E. Albert: A History of English Literature.
His Style.

Lawrence's style is vigorous and forceful. His descriptive power is seen at its best in *The Boy in The Bush*. If we judge Lawrence, "by the standards of the meticulous artist with finely attuned ear and an eye for accuracy of detail and grammar, we shall often find him lacking." Often he wearies us by the repetition of the same thought in almost a similar language. He adopts the trick of "telling us the same thing and harping on the same words over and over again."*

Conclusion.

"Lawrence was a barbarian with a streak of genius." "Lawrence was the only novelist of his time to use the novel for the purpose of re-creating the great myths by which humanity lives, and he did it with a burning intensity and sincerity. When all is said there is greatness in him. He is something of an authentic visionary, and the future may be in a better position to interpret his dreams."**

Q. 89. Write a note on the works and contribution of J. B. Priestley (1894—), Frank Swinnerton (1884—), and Sir Hugh Walpole (1884—1941) to the modern novel.

Ans. J. B. Priestley (1884—)

J. B. Priestley, the critic who wrote a treatise on the English Novel, is himself a novelist of the second order. He shot into fame by *The Good Companion* (1929), a long story of the adventures of a touring concert party. Later on Priestley brought out *Angel Pavement* (1930), *Let the People Sing* (1939), *Daylight on Saturday* (1943), *Bright Day* (1946). In all these novels Priestley represents life realistically with fine wit and liveliness. His style is appealing to the readers. Besides being a novelist, Priestley also signalised his career as a critic and wrote fine critical studies such as *George Meredith* (1926), *The English Comic Characters* (1926), *Thomas Love Peacock* (1927), *The English Novel* (1927) and *English Humour* (1928).

Frank Swinnerton (1884—)

Swinnerton, the critic, who wrote *The Georgian Literary

* Gerald Bullett: Modern English Fiction.
** Diana Neill: A Short History of the English Novel.
Scene and George Gissing is known by his single work in fiction Nocturne. He is a realist and belongs to the school of Gissing. "The result was a solid circumstantial realism lighted up by considerable penetration but no unusual flights of imagination."

Hugh Walpole (1884—1941)

Hugh Walpole produced a number of novels during his life time, the chief of them being The Wooden Horse (1909), Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill (1911), Prelude to Adventure (1912), The Dark Forest (1916), The Cathedral (1922), The Old Ladies (1924), Portrait of a Man With Red Hair (1925) and The Herries Chronicle (1939).

Walpole believed in the principle of ‘Art for Art’s sake’, and instead of dealing with social problems in his novels like H. G. Wells and Galsworthy, he wrote for the pleasure of creation and beauty. He had a particular liking for religious life, and the life of the Cathedrals and his novels are rich in reflections about God and His power over human beings. Walpole loved Nature and his novels are remarkable for descriptions of nature’s charms. He described nature’s beauties with vividness. He had a knack of portraying characters and excelled in the creation of male characters in whom he presented his faith in religion and God. His style is marked with suspense, animation and ease.

His main defects are (1) Lack of humour (2) Over seriousness (3) Occasional lapses into loose episodes.

Q. 90. Write a note on the novels and achievements of Somerset Maugham (1874—).

Ans. Somerset Maugham is one of the prominent literary figures of the 20th century. He is a novelist, a dramatist and a writer of short stories. As a dramatist, Maugham followed the tradition of the writers of the Restoration Comedy and produced comedies scintillating with wit and humour. Lady Fredrick is one of his finest satirical comedies exposing the evils running rampant in the upper classes of society.

In the world of fiction, Maugham is known by a set of novels which have been classified under three groups. In the first group we include immature novels such as Mrs. Craddock,
The Magician, Ashenden and Catalina. In the second group we place novels like The Painted Veil, The Narrow Corner, Theatre, Christmas Holiday, Up at the Villa and Liza of Lambeth. The novels of this group are marked with a note of realism and exhibit, "a more intense and passionate awareness of life in which the accents of the novelist are already grim and dead earnest." In the third group are included his philosophical thought-provoking works such as Of Human Bondage, The Moon and Six Pens, Cakes and Ale and The Razor's Edge.

Let us briefly review these novels of Maugham. Mrs. Craddock is the story of a woman deserted by her husband in the wrinkled phase of her life. The novel is marked with a note of sadness and gloominess. The Magician is written in the style and manner of Henry Rider Haggard. In this novel magic operates fully and the dead are called back to life. An atmosphere of weirdness and uncanniness envelops the entire novel. Ashenden and Catalina are immature productions. In Ashenden he projects his own experiences of the war. Ashenden is the British agent who is after an Indian named Chandra Lal. Catalina is concerned with the miracles of Christian saints during the Middle Ages and the scene of this rambling tale is mediaeval Spain. The author emphasises that "the best way to serve God is not fasting and penance nor fighting for the holy cause in foreign lands, but to do one's duty in one's humble sphere of life." The Painted Veil is a Chinese tale representing the amorous intrigues of a doctor's wife with a colonial officer. The Narrow Corner is a study of the Southern seas and exotic scenes where people are governed by wild passions and fierce emotions. Theatre represents the life of an actress who keeps up the fire of youth even in her senile decay. Christmas Holiday is the story of a Parisian prostitute Lydia who renounces all her pleasures and wealth in order to save the life of her husband undergoing life sentence on the charge of murder. Up at the Villa is a crude, melodramatic tale replete with passion and wild adventure set in Florence. Liza of Lambeth is a realistic novel depicting the life of Liza, a factory girl, who meets her tragic death tossed about on the waves of passion. The novel is marked with a note of sadness and the death of Liza seems to be arbitrarily imposed. "The novel
is written with a brutal, harsh realism and the various scenes with which the novel teems are convincing and over brimming with verisimilitude." *Of Human Bondage* has been considered the best work of Maugham. Theodore Dreiser regards it "as a novel of the utmost importance." In the opinion of Charles Hanson Towne, "*Of Human Bondage* is one of the classics of our time. A monumental novel. A deep, rich, penetrating book packed with beauty." In the view of Godfrey Winn this novel is "not only Maugham's best work but also one of the few books written during the present century to the epithet great can be truly applied." In this novel the novelist represents the life of Philip Carey, the isolated man with his club-foot. The novel sets out to give a full account of Carey's childhood, upbringing, education and love. The loneliness of his life is hinted from the start when Philip's mother dies. The total effect of the novel is depressing. Such words as the following uttered by Carey seem to be cynical—

"Life had no meaning. It was immaterial whether he was born or not born, whether he lived or ceased to live. Life was insignificant and death without consequence."

*The Moon and Six Pence* is the life story of Gauguin, a French painter, who runs away from human society and civilization to find relief and refuge in a tropical island. The novel represents the renunciation of the material values of life for peace and perfection of the soul. *Cakes and Ale* is an interesting, witty and satirical novel representing the life of Mr. Driffield, the novelist and his Bohemian and luxurious wife Rosie who is a full-blooded woman intent upon making the most of life. "As a witty, malicious, satirical comedy it is bound to survive as a most entertaining footnote to twentieth century literary history."* The Razor's Edge* is a philosophic novel representing Maugham's attitude towards life and his faith in renunciation. Larry is the hero of this novel. He comes to India and meets with Indian sadhus and philosophers from whom he imbibes the lesson of renunciation.

Maugham belongs to the group of the second grade novelists of our time. He is considerably influenced by the French

novelists. He is a cosmopolitan author interested not only in his own country but also in Italy, France, India and South seas. He represents fine scenes of nature and human society in these countries.

Maugham is interested in three problems—the problem of renunciation and materialistic craze for possession, the problem of love and the problem of the futility and meaninglessness of human life. In his view renunciation of the world is the ultimate solution of all our materialistic worries of life. In Love, Maugham seeks to present the tragedy of love. Love does not come out in shining and successful form in his novels. Everywhere we come across the tragedy of love. Life seems to Maugham 'as a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing.' Of Human Bondage is his final judgment on the meaninglessness and loneliness of human life.

Turning to the technical side of his art, it may be pointed out that his novels are narratives recounting experiences in detail in a rambling manner. He tells his stories in a "chatty, informal and intimate tone. His narrative is often loose and disjointed. It meanders up and down in a leisurely fashion."

The characters of Maugham fail to exercise a permanent hold on us. They are drawn with insight but there is the lack of fervour and vigour in their portrayal. We hardly remember his Liza, Carey, Larry, Gaugin and Rosie, as we remember Micawber, Mr. Pickwick, Beckysharp, Tess, Henchard and Soames Forsyte.

The style of Maugham is cold, matter-of-fact and realistic. It is all skin and bone. His descriptive vein adds to the charm of his style. The dialogue is supple and dramatic. He does not bother about the finer delicacies of style and in A Writer's Notebook he makes the frank confession—"It proves that if you can tell stories, create character, devise incidents, and if you have sincerity and passion, it does not matter at all how you write."

Maugham has one great virtue. He makes us think about Life and Love. He gives jerks to our self complacent ideologies, and forces us to view life in a philosophic way. He convinces us that, "art, unless it leads to right action is no more than the
opium of the intelligentsia.”

Q. 91. Give a brief account of the main works of Aldous Huxley (1894—1963) and bring out the chief features of his art as a Novelist.

Ans. Aldous Huxley, the grandson of Thomas Huxley, the scientist of the Darwinian School, is one of the most subtle and intellectual of modern writers. He was an author of repute and his works present satirically the disillusionment in social life. He died on 23rd November 1963. His main works are the following.

*Crome Yellow* (1921), the first novel of Huxley “is something of a youthful fire-work display.” It is concerned with the Wimbush family, and its young hero Dennis is another Hamlet in whom reflection mars his capacity for action. It is light-hearted in its raillery. *Antic Hay* (1923) is sombre in outlook and has little of the raillery of *Crome Yellow*. It is a critical study of post-war disillusionment and immorality. Through the character of Gumbril the novelist brings out the ugliness and tenuity of the intellectual society of London after the first world war. *Those Barren Leaves* (1925) is set in Italy and studies the acquisitive nature of women through the character of Mrs. Aldwinkle. This novel is marked with diffuseness and is sprawling in character. *Point Counter Point* (1928) is a serious novel representing the conflict between passion and reason, and the foolishness of sticking to only one point of view with dogged tenacity without ever caring to look at the other side of the medal. Rampion provides the solution by pointing out to different protagonists of sense, intellect and reason that, “civilisation is harmony and completeness — reason, feeling and instinct.” This novel adopts a special technique described as “the musicalization of fiction.” It is rich in witty and satirical epigrams. In *The Brave New World* (1932) Huxley satirises a scientific utopia in which everything is controlled by science, and even mind, body, poetry, art and literature are all conditioned by the steamroller of scientific uniformity. The severe critic of this controlled world is the savage John who pleads for greater freedom of the individual and spiritual life, though he fails to persuade the inhabitants of this scientific world to live up to his ideal of free spiritual life.
The new-found respect for the spirit is best represented in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936). It is a work of mysticism and spirituality. The hero of the novel is Antony Beavis. In the early years of his life, he is intelligent, witty, pagan, flippant and a satirist of vigour and verve. He is responsible for the death of his friend whose sincere and emotional nature is not understood by him. But gradually as time passes on, Antony Beavis realises his mistakes. He drifts more and more towards spiritual life. He experiences the kind of conversion which Huxley has experienced in the latter years of his life.

Two non-fictional works, *Ends and Means* (1938) and *Grey Eminence* (1941) are philosophic and political in outlook. In *Ends and Means* we have essays on a number of political, educational and religious subjects. Huxley stands out as a pacifist standing against militarism and armament. In *Grey Eminence*, he makes a brilliant study of the relationship between religion and politics. Friar Josef, the counsellor of Cardinal Richelieu, seeks to spread religion through political agencies. He keeps spies in his service. He proves a false teacher. Huxley wishes to draw the conclusion that right religious ends cannot be secured through the machinery of political power.

In two recent novels *After Many a Summer* (1939), *Time Must Have a Stop*, Huxley mocks at the corrupting influence of wealth in the new world. *The Perennial Philosophy* (1946) is a philosophical work inspired by the message of Bhagwat Gita. Failure to persuade humanity to follow him along the path of non-attachment and unity provoked Huxley to write *Ape and Essence* (1949), “a bitter novel in which he predicts the bestial degradation of the human species after a third world war.”*

As a novelist Huxley has employed the medium of the novel for purposes of discussion and propagation of his views. It is not the story or the plot that is important in Huxley. His plots are formless, sprawling and diffused. What is significant in his works is the treatment of his subject in a brilliant manner.

Huxley’s novels are satirical in tone. They are marked with force and vigour. His best work in this direction is *The Brave New World* in which he satirises the mechanical and controlled

life brought about by science.

Huxley has a philosophical message to impart through the medium of his novel. In *Point-Counter-Point* the novelist lays emphasis on synthesis and harmony between sense and reason. In *Eyeless in Gaza* we have the message of non-attachment carried forward in his *Perennial Philosophy*.

Huxley does not mortify the flesh. He lays emphasis on the determination of the spirit by the body. He says, "Sooner or later every soul is stifled by the sick body, sooner or later there are no more thoughts but only pain and vomiting and stupor. The spirit has no significance, there is only the body."

Huxley's style in his novels is witty and polished. He is an intellectual writer and naturally his prose is marked with intellectual qualities like reason, analysis and searching inquiry.

Huxley will go down as a thought provoking and stirring writer of our times.

Q. 92. Write a note on E. M. Forster's novels and his contribution to English fiction.

Ans. E. M. Forster (1879—) is one of the prominent novelists of the 20th century. "As a novelist Forster is rather difficult to understand him partly because of the symbolism that works its way through his work, and partly because of the manner in which he seeks to impart his message. As a novelist he is often delightful and always baffling and ambiguous and he has always stood apart from his contemporaries."*

Forster began his career as a novelist at the early age of twenty-five and produced his first novel *Where Angels Fear To Tread* (1905). This novel is satirical in character and the author satirises the conventional morality and snobbery of the upper middle class people typified in the character of Mrs. Herriton. This aristocratic lady fails to understand the overpowering force of emotion and love, and strives to break the love of her widowed daughter-in-law Lilia with the vulgar Italian Gino,

with no success. The novelist ridicules the insular ideas and provincial morality of the Sawstons represented by Mrs. Herrition. Fools like Mrs. Herriton and Harriets rush in 'Where angels fear to tread' This is the underlying irony of the novel.

The Longest Journey was published in 1907. Here again there is the conflict between convention and nature. Rickie Elliot is the Shelleyan idealist. He is oppo-ed to convention. Unfortunately he is wedded to Agnes Pembroke, who represents the world of sordid values. A conflict grows between Rickie and Agnes. He is rescued from his despair by Stephen, his half brother. Just before the novel reaches the end of the long journey Rickie knows for certain that 'conventions are not majestic, and that they will not claim us in the end.'

A Room with a View (1908) has its setting in Italy and is marked with an exhilarating comic tone. "In scale and in tone it is smaller and lighter than Where Angles Fear to Tread. Its manner is airier. It takes more colour from the outdoors and more charm from human absurdity, and the quality of its comedy is more romantic. The comedy is also shot through with a sense of melodramatic evil which, though not so violently expressed as that of the first Italian comedy, is more frightening in its gratuitousness and its restraint."

Howard's End (1910) presents the conflict between two classes of people, one representing the hard boiled realists and materialists represented by the Wilcoxes and the other deeply rooted in moral and aesthetic values represented by Schlegels. Forster seeks to save the Wilcoxes by their marriage with the Schlegels. A truly balanced view is possible when there is the marriage of a Wilcox with a Schlegel. This is the symbolic meaning of the marriage between Margaret Schlegel and the senior Wilcox. Through this marriage Margaret will gain the "Howard's End," the house, which symbolises the heart of England and which mystically holds the secret of true personal relationship.

A Passage to India (1924) is considered the finest and best work of Forster. It is "unrivalled in English fiction in its presentation of the complex problems which were to be found in the relationships between English and the native people in India, and

* Trilling: B. M. Forster.
in its portrayal of the Indian scene in all its magic and all its wretchedness.”* The novel seeks to portray the relations of the British with the Indians round about the year 1924. Forster seeks to bring about a reconciliation between the East and the West, but fails at the end.

The novel is mystical as well as symbolic in character. “In A Passage to India Forster's intent is to present not only Western civilization in collision with eastern, imperial with colonial, the human heart in conflict with the machinery of government, class, and race, but also a mystical and highly symbolic view of life, death and human relationship. That he does not succeed entirely is not surprising in view of the great expanse of the canvas.”**

The novel is divided in three parts—“Mosques”, “Caves” & “Temple”. This three folds division of the book is symbolic in character. They are related respectively to the seasons of spring, summer and the wet monsoon autumn of India, and man’s emotional nature, his intellect and his capacity for love. The characters of this novel seek to represent these three attitudes towards life. Dr. Aziz stands for emotion; Fielding and Adela Quested stand for intellect, and the Hindu Professor Godbole is the symbol of love. Mrs. Moore is the embodiment of all these three aspects of life. With her impulse towards emotion and her involvement in things of the intellect, she seems equally at home in mosques, caves or temples. Forster represents through these characters the three ways of leading life. It is the novelist’s aim to weld these diverse paths together through delicate use of symbolic motifs so that they form a total satisfying, if mystifying pattern of life and art.

“America hailed the novel as an indictment of British rule, while in England the witty satire at the expense of the English official class in India ensured that the book would be popular with the intelligentsia. Forster was, incidentally, to show an almost prophetic insight into the future in the scene with which

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* E. Albert—A History of English Literature.
** Fredrick Karl & Marvin Magalener—A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century English Novels.
As A Novelist.

Walter Allen is of the opinion that "Forster is a novelist difficult to assess: he can be as easily overestimated as underestimated", and we thoroughly agree with this view. To some readers, Forster appeals intensely, while others are bored by his representation of life.

Plot Construction.

The plots of Forster are intricate and difficult to follow. He "disregards conventional plot construction and frequently introduces starting, unexpected incidents."**

Characterisation.

The characters of Forster are types rather than individuals. They are the embodiment of certain values of life. His characters can be divided into two groups, the 'Crustaceans' and the 'Vitalists.' The former are followers of conventions while the latter are men of feeling and deep devotion. To the class of Crustaceans belong Ronnie Heaslop, Charlotte Eliot, Major Callender and the Turtons. The Vitalists are Fielding, Mrs. Moore and George Emerson. The Wilcoxes of *Howard's End* belong to the class of Crustaceans while the Schlegels have their affinity with the Vitalists.

In Forster's characters whether male or female there is "a lack of passion and sexual fulfilment. A religiosity colours Forster's major characters. Phillip Herriton's vision makes of Caroline Abbot a goddess. Phillip's worship of her in (Where Angels Fear to Tread) is more a self-denying asceticism reminding us of the Celibate's love of the virgin Mother."†

There is a detachment in the character portrayal of Forster. The novelist paints his characters with impartiality keeping himself as a bystander. "He does not identify himself exclusively with any one character, but stands a little aloof, a sympathetic spectator who from time to time leans forward to get a more intimate view of that."‡‡

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* Daina Neill—*A Short History of the English Novel.*
** E. Albert—*A History of English Literature.*
† James Miconkey—*The Novels of E. M. Forster.*
‡‡ Gerald Bullett—*Modern English Fiction.*
As a Realist—His attack on Realism.

Forster has been considered by some critics as a Realist, but the fact is that he takes greater delight in attacking realism than in applauding it. "The surface manner of Forster's novels may appear to be realistic and comic but his impatience with realism is apparent in the manner he infused sudden act of violence and accidents in his plots and in his wilful juxtaposition of a romantic figure in a realistic environment as in The Longest Journey or a realistic figure in a romantic environment as in A Room With a View."* His Passage to India though presenting realistically the Anglo-Indian relations is more philosophical and symbolical than a realistic representation of the racial antagonism between "two great races with different heritage and history; neither desiring to understand the other, and one of them in the wrong place."

As a Moralist.

As a moralist, Forster is opposed to convention, money worship, hypocrisy, snobbery and prim affected manners. He is against all shams, cants and falsehood. He pleads fervently for the adoption of sincerity, and truthfulness in human relations. In the Howard's End his sympathies are with the Shelegels rather than with the Wilcoxes, and in Where Angels Fear to Tread, he is evidently with Gino rather than with the affected Mrs. Herriton and Miss Harriet. Forster is basically a moralist upholding the cause of culture, tolerance and civilization in a world open to the attacks of barbarism, materialism and provincialism.

As a Critic of Contemporary Civilization.

D. H. Lawrence and E. M. Forster are critics of modern civilization reared on material values of life. Forster attacks materialism in The Longest Journey and Howard's End. "Not only did Forster and Lawrence share this general reaction against contemporary civilization, but they had a common positive theme, for the novels of both are really exercises on the motif of right personal relationships, a favourite phrase of Forster's."** Forster relied on heart and culture as an antidote against modern materialism, while Lawrence "relied primarily on the passion of

** Dr A. S. Collins : English Literature of the 20th Century.
the blood and was preoccupied with sexuality, a theme almost alien to Forster.”

As a Symbolist.

E. M. Forster is a symbolist, and what could not be expressed adequately through words is suggested by Forster through symbols. In *The Longest Journey*, Forster employs the symbol of the Train. Rickie, the hero is struck by a train in his attempt to save the drunken Stephen. The death of Rickie by the train is symbolic, for it stands for the salvation of Stephen. Then comes another train in which Herbert Pembroke is seen to be moving about but fading out of sight. This presents the passing away of evil figures like Herbert Pembroke from our life. In *Howard’s End* motor car is the symbol of the rush and recklessness of modern fast moving civilization. The motor car becomes for Forster a symbolic indictment of our civilization of rattle and bustle. In *A Passage to India*, the symbolism is represented in the very title. “Passage” is symbolic of ‘link’ or ‘conception’, and by giving the title *A Passage to India* the author advocates for link or conception between the Anglo-Indians and the natives of India. The threefold division of the book ‘Mosque’, ‘Caves’ and ‘Temple’ is symbolic. It stands for the seasons of spring, summer and wet autumn monsoon of India. Referring to man’s nature, the division is symbolically significant. Mosque stands for man’s emotional nature, caves for his intellect and temple for his devotion and love. Dr. Aziz is the symbol of emotion, Fielding and Adela Quested stand for the symbol of intellect and professor Godbole is the symbol of love and devotion. Glen O, Allen finds in the threefold division of the novel three attitudes towards life: the path of activity (Dr. Aziz), the path of knowledge (Fielding) and the path of devotion (Godbole). The echo which Mrs. Moore hears in one of the Marabar caves suggests the empty absolute.

As a Comedian—His art.

Forster’s novels, in spite of their tragic ending, leave the impression that their author is a comedian using the comic spirit of Meredith in the service of his art. He judges and criticises with an ironical verve, and lashes like Meredith the snobbery and
hypocrisy of the age—all the time mocking at them like a true comedian.

Lyrical Sensibility.

"Not that there is any question of Forster being only a comedian. Blended with his comic vein, and equally characteristic of him, is his poetry. He has an acute lyrical sensibility"

(Cecil).

Forster's Style.

Like all the best styles, Forster's style is an exact mirror of his mind and temperament. We may not call his style grand for it lacks eloquence and burning passion, but "it is infinitely sensitive, infinitely dexterous, infinitely graceful." The reader will come across many luminous and sensitive passages in his novels.

After reading one of his packed, live, iridescent pages, the work of most other authors seems obvious and monotonous. Every inch of surface is continuously animated by the play of mind. Hardly a sentence but gives us a little shock of surprise and interest. Each novel delights, for all the diverse elements are fused together in charming harmony by Forster's use of language.

His Place in Modern Fiction.

Arnold Kettle is of the view that "E. M. Forster is not a writer of the stature of D. H. Lawrence or James Joyce, but he is a fine and enduring artist and the only living British novelist who can be discussed without fatuity, against the highest and the broadest standards." Forster will rank high among 20th century novelists.

Q. 93. Give a brief account of the main works of James Joyce (1882—1941) and assess the value of his contribution to the English Novel.

Ans. James Joyce is one of the prominent literary figures of the 20th century. He was the main exponent of the psychological novel based on the representation of the stream of consciousness, and his *Ulysses* is the finest example of the subjective method in modern fiction. In Joyce, "the twentieth century
passion for experiment in literary form reached its climax."* 

Joyce's early experiment in literary production was in the direction of writing short stories published in a volume called *Dubliners* (1914). The stories of this volume bring to light the life of the slum dwellers of this city. The stories are objective and realistic in character and are couched in a simple and direct style. Another important work of Joyce is *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916). It is an autobiographical work and the artist Dedalus is the representative of the novelist in whom there was a conflict between the forces of asceticism and aestheticism. "As a revelation of Joyce's power to explore the psychology of his own nature with detachment and scientific curiosity, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, is unparalleled in a period rich in self-analysis. Pride and sensuality struggle for the possession of the soul of Stephen Dedalus, who, having rejected the help of religion, seeks to escape into tranquillity through the impersonality of art."**

*Ulysses* (1922) is considered the best work in psychological fiction of the 20th century and the stream-of-consciousness theory finds its best exposition in this novel. The novel is set in Dublin and seeks to represent Dublin life in all its gruesome realism. The novel sets forth in a rambling manner the wanderings of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus through the city of Dublin on one particular day. The novel is extremely formless, loose and incoherent outdoing the work of Smollett and Sterne of the eighteenth century. Bullett considers it as "the *reductio ad absurdum* of the extreme subjective method." Diana Neill says rightly that "the book is unintelligible and its formal complexities have left readers baffled and confused." The style of this book is marked with ingenuity, witicism and satirical flashes.

Joyce's only other work of importance is *Finnegan's Wake* (1939) where "subtlety and complexity produce incomprehensibility. It is a study of the history of the human race from its earliest beginnings, as seen in the incoherent dreams of a certain Mr. Earwicker. The use of an inconsecutive narrative and of a

* Diana Neill : A Short History of the English Novel.
** Ibid.
private vocabulary adds to the confusion, but it cannot conceal the poetic fervour, the power and brilliant verbal skill of the work.”**

** As a Novelist.**

James Joyce belongs to the group of psychological-cum-realistc novelists of the 20th century. His *Ulysses* is the perfect example of the impressionistic method which had earlier been tried by Sterne in *Ristram Shandy*. His novels are formless, incoherent and rambling in character and provide fleeting glimpses of the life of Dublin which he knew so intimately. In *Ulysses*, his love for psychology and realism comes to the forefront. The study of the novel brings the complete picture of Dublin life on a particular day. “Acutely aware of the pettiness and meanness of modern society, and of the evils which spring from it, he is unsurpassed in his knowledge of the seamy side of life, which he presents with startling frankness.”

“Joyce” says Albert, “is a serious novelist, whose concern is chiefly with human relationships—man in relation to himself, to society and to the whole human race.”

Joyce is a comedy writer and his novels are rich in scenes of playful comedy. The scene in which Leopold Bloom is with the medical students in *Ulysses* is a fine comic scene. On the whole, “his genius is for the comic rather than the tragic view of life, and his work is full of wit, puns, and startling conceits. His humour varies from broad comedy to intellectual wit, but is mainly sardonic in tone.” Walter Allen, in the *English Novel* significantly points out, “The first thing that needs stressing, it seems to me, is that, whatever he is not, Joyce is a great comic writer, a comic writer of the quality of Rabelais and Sterne. In *Ulysses* Joyce, more than Fielding ever did, is writing the comic epic.”

As a technician in the realism of fiction, Joyce will hold a place as great as enjoyed by Henry James. “He was a ceaseless experimenter, ever anxious to explore the potentialities of a method once it was evolved and in his use of the stream of consciousness technique, and in his handling of the internal monologue, he went further and deeper than any other novelist.”**

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* E. Albert—*A History of English Literature.*
** Ibid.*
Joyce's style is marked with directness and simplicity in *Dubliners*. In his later works his style undergoes a change and drifts to the side of complexity, subtlety and allusiveness. A new vocabulary is invented by breaking up one word and joining it to other words similarly split. Roots of words coming from many languages are employed in the service of his style. In short, Joyce's mastery of language, his range of vocabulary, his power to create words and to use them to render the impact of sensation on the nerves, and above all his unique virtuosity are everywhere manifested.”*

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Q. 94. Write a note on the main Women Novelist of the 20th Century.

**Ans.** Round about the year 1930 women novelists dominated the literary scene. They followed in the footsteps of Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen and George Eliot. They represented the feminine point of view in their works. The prominent women novelists of the 20th century are Henry Handel Richardson, Dorothy Richardson, Miss Humphrey Ward, Sarah Grand, Rose Macaulay, Elizabeth Bowen, Ivy Compton Burnett, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf. Let us briefly examine the works of these novelists.

**Henry Handel Richardson.**

Like George Eliot, Henrietta Richardson brought out her novels under the pseudonym of Henry Handel Richard. She is interested in Australian life and her works are marked with a note of masculinity and vigour surprising in a woman writer. Her main works are *Maurice Guest* (1908), *Young Cosima* (1939) and *The Fortunes of Richard Mobony* (1917—1929), a trilogy representing the study of the misadventures of the physician hero in Australia.

**Dorothy Richardson.**

She belongs to the school of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. She has made experiments in the fields of psychological analysis and has achieved success in her work.

**Her main works** are *Pointed Roofs* (1915) and **Pilgrimage**

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* Diana Neill: *A Short History of the English Novel.*
(1917). In these works she presents the feminine point of view, and no woman has succeeded so well in presenting feminine psychology as does Miss Richardson, in her two works.

Miss Humphrey Ward.

She is an intellectual novelist, and her work is marked with a note of seriousness and earnestness. There is a streak of religious and philosophical wisdom in her famous work, The History of David Grieve. Her Robert Elsmere and Marcella are saturated with religious and philosophical thought. It is difficult to think of any other serious novelist since George Eliot.

Sarah Grand.

She is a great advocate of the ‘women movement,’ and has consistently worked for the emancipation of women in her novels. Her two chief novels are Idela and The Woman Who Did. In the art of narration and in the faculty of presenting a large number of characters in interaction with each other, Sarah Grand has given her best in Adam’s Orchard. She is a novelist of strong intellectual force, and her characters have been vividly drawn. She is immensely appreciated by women readers.

Elizabeth Bowen and Ivy Compton-Burnett.

Their works have been discussed in the next question.

Rose Macaulay.

Rose Macaulay is a vigorous satirist and in The Orphan Island she presents a satirical portrait of Victorian society. Her two novels Dangerous Ages and Told by an Idiot are in the same style exposing the foibles of the Victorian age. To them Rose added her significant work Potterism which is written against Victorian philistinism.

They Were Defeated is a historical novel and recreates the life of the seventeenth century society with fidelity. The World My Wilderness (1950) is inspired by the war. “The characters of Barbary and Raove are drawn with sympathy and understanding, and the wilderness of the bomb desolated area around St. Paul’s Cathedral is so accurately and vividly projected that future social historians may well find in this novel something more than a word-portrait of the city in ruins.”*

* A. C. Ward : Twentieth Century Literature.
Mrs. Clifford.

She is the novelist of the heart and indulges in sentimentality quite in the style of Richardson and Steele. Her well known work is *Aunt Anne*. In this novel she portrays the life of a foolish lady who had been duped by a young man, who, while professing to be her ardent and sincere lover, was befuddling her all her life in the hope that after marriage he would become the master of her wealth.

Katherine Mansfield (1888—1923).

Katherine Mansfield is a writer of short stories and during her lifetime five volumes of her stories were published. As a writer of stories, she followed in the footsteps of the Russian novelist and short story writer Chekhov, whose work she admired inordinately. She was an impressionist in her art and sought to portray with objectivity “the significant moment in human relationship, the curious and subtle spiritual adventure and the poignant ironies of contrasting human emotions.” Unlike Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf, who are exclusively autobiographical, Katherine Mansfield studied life objectively and understood characters widely divergent from herself in both temperaments and accidentals. Some of her stories have the setting of New Zealand life, while in others she presents the weariness and frustrations of her English life. Her stories are marked with a note of sombreness and are characterised with a haunting sense of pathos. One should turn to *Prelude, To the Bay, The Fly, The Garden Party* to have glimpses of the subtle psychological art of Katherine Mansfield. Commenting on her work as a story writer Moody-Lovett observes, “From the first, she exhibited an astonishing assurance in technique and in control of her subject matter. Her touch was unerring. By the suppression of non-essentials and the unfaltering selection or telling details, she built up to the intensification of a single emotion, mood or psychological situation. Her growth was in the direction not of a more perfectly expressive technique, but of intensity of feeling and maturity of vision. She progressed from a rather jaundiced and smug view of people to one of pity and piercing sympathy. From a rather broad and sometimes crude satirist, she developed into a master of irony. Her depth of feeling and subtlety of insight,
together with her delicately sensitive prose, imparted a poetic lyrism to subjects that otherwise might have seemed sentimental or mawkish. She always wielded the gleaming blade of irony. She was at her best in the delineation of young children, adolescent girls and old women, perhaps because the experiences and observations of her own adult life were too close to her to view in perspective."

Virginia Woolf (1882—1941).

Virginia Woolf was the daughter of the eminent Victorian critic and scholar Sir Leslie Stephen, and was one of the great women writers of the 20th century.

She occupies a position of importance in 20th century fiction for she gave to the stream of consciousness novel a new twist which James Joyce had not been able to impart to it. Before we deal with the contribution of Virginia Woolf to fiction, let us briefly examine her works.

The first novel of significance published by Virginia Woolf was The Voyage Out (1915) followed by Night and Day (1919). In these works she made a subtle study of the inner lives of men and women. These first fruits of her genius are remarkable for the mysterious intensity with which she brought out the souls of her characters like Rachel Vinrace and Katherine Hilbery. Jacob's Room (1922) exhibits a fuller advance into maturity. "It is the first novel in which her personal vision of the flowing nature of all experience is given full and complete expression." The novel sets forth the impression of Jacob Flanders about his own life as a student at Cambridge, as a young man in love and as a soldier in war. Though the flowing nature of consciousness and the reality of the life of the spirit are nicely brought out in Jacob's Room, yet the novel suffers from lack of unity and cogency of impression. Mrs. Dalloway (1925) exhibits a further advance in her art of suggesting impressions in a loose and scattered manner. There is no attempt at organized story-telling in this novel. All that we have is "a most carefully selected and fully harmonized picture of life in London on one summer's day in 1919." The impressions of Mrs. Dalloway are represented lyrically in this novel though in her musings there is a streak of sadness. The book opens with Mrs. Dalloway going out to buy flowers for a
party and closes with a description of the party, but within these limits a most complex and fascinating pattern of human experience is woven. It is composed of the day dreams, memories, and immediate impressions of this central character, enriched by transitions into the consciousness of other characters who are connected with Mrs. Dalloway in some emotional or even merely passing relationship."

Mrs. Dalloway was followed by *To the Light House* which is considered as the best novel of the celebrated artist. This novel is divided into three parts. Part I "The Windows" Part II "Time Passes" Part III "The Light House." The experiences of Professor Ramsay and his wife on a holiday are presented graphically. "Mrs Ramsay is seen not merely as the selfless centre of her own existence, but as the focus of concentric series of existences or less intimately involved with her." *The Waves* (1931) represents the technique of the flow of consciousness and inner thought in a heightened tone and is a high water mark of Mrs. Woolf's experimentation. "Concerned from the beginning with the nature of personality and convinced of its fluid formlessness, she suggested here that personality has no existence apart from the society in which it develops, that the so called individual existence is really no more than a facet of the existence of a group. She illustrated this conception of personality in *The Waves* by presenting the lives of a closely knit group of seven characters in a series of poetically stylized dialogues or interior monologues. The basic unity under the appearance of diversity is emphasized by the fact that all the characters express themselves in the same style, a highly imagistic, deeply rhythmical utterance that is constantly on the verge of becoming poetry. The least easily approached of Mrs. Woolf's novels, it is also her most brilliant and original creation." *The Years* (1937) shows a return to the style and method of Mrs. Dalloway and *To the Light House*. *Orlando* takes us to the Elizabethan days and stretches time to include almost eternity.

A. C. Ward describes the books of Virginia Woolf as "exasperatingly shapeless." He regards her books as "snippets cut from a number of cinematograph films and indiscriminately joined up." But as compared to the works of James Joyce, the
novels of Virginia Woolf have a form and a shape of their own. They are lucid and luminous though they may be disjointed in their impressionistic presentation of life.

As a Novelist.


Virginia Woolf rejected the conventional conception of the novel as a realistic portraiture of life from the objective point of view and attacked the work of Bennett and Galsworthy with characteristic frankness. She once wrote with directness against the work of these masters of fiction. "It is because they are spirit but with the body that they have disappointed us, and left us with the feeling that the sooner English fiction turns its back upon them, as politely as may be, and matches, if only into the desert, the better for the soul." Virginia Woolf adopted the method which James Joyce and Dorothy Richardson had practised in their novels. She adopted the method of psychological truth and aimed at expressing in her novels the reality of the life of the spirit. She laid emphasis not on incident, external description and straightforward narration but on the presentation of character through the 'stream of consciousness' method. In her novels we can trace without difficulty the evolution of her vision of life and feel at every stage her concentration on the life of the mind and the spirit. She takes us to the subconscious and unconscious regions and seeks to convey "the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its message through the brain."

Virginia Woolf has followed the technique of the internal monologue and the stream of consciousness, yet her work is free from the vices and taints of her other fellow workers. There is no trace of filthiness or dirt in her novels. She does not wallow in the mire of filthiness and is always clean and fresh. We seem to breathe in a rarefied atmosphere as we go through her work. There is a poetic quality and a love of lyricism in her writings. "Her work has a lyric rather than an epic quality, but it has a greater sense of order about it, also of cleanliness and purity."

Her Characters.

The range of her characters is small. She could not paint characters who did not share her own unusual qualities. But
when her characters are of her view and to her liking, she portrays them with conviction and faith. Her characters, "belong not only to a certain class, the upper middle-class intelligentsia, but also to a certain temperament. They tend to think and feel and express their thoughts and feelings, in fact, exactly as Virginia Woolf herself does in such non-fiction work as Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Brown and A Room of One's Own. They are distinguished by a discriminating intelligence and an acute self-consciousness which weave a close sieve through which the greater part of the common experience of life will not pass."

As an Aesthete and Poetic Novelist.

Virginia Woolf was a great lover of beauty, and her novels exhibit her aesthetic delight in the lovely aspects of life. As presented by her, the aesthetic life is as vigorous and satisfying as any other kind of life. In order to concentrate her attention on the aesthetic aspects of life, she has to exclude other aspects. She cannot present the ugliness of life like Proust and Joyce. Her pictures are exquisitely beautiful and charming. The impressionistic method adopted by her gives impression of what appears charming to her view. She brings out the poetry of life and eschews drabness and sordidness of writers like Joyce. "If Mrs. Woolf had lived in, say, the sixteenth century, she would have written poetry, for poetry was then the common form. As she found herself in a prose age she used prose for what was in truth, poetic material. Her prose is excellent, but it is rather like a beautiful dress on a spiritual form which has existence but no substance."

Her Conception of Reality.

Virginia Woolf presents real life in her work but her conception of reality was different from that of Arnold Bennett and John Galsworthy. "She was persuaded that reality, as distinct from realism, is an inward subjective awareness, and that to communicate a sense of it the novelist must abandon the attempt to construct an external world brick by brick and devote himself to the building up of character through the complexity of consciousness." Reality, she construed, as a complex of sensations, feelings, emotions, and ideas, and she presented this conglomeration of feelings, sensations and emotions in her pictures of life to create the sense
of being alive. Her pictures pulsate with life but the panorama
unfolded in her works is not of a succession in a straight way
happening, but glimpses of life, and very truly do they appear, as
A. C. Ward remarks, “snippets cut form a number of cinematog-
graph films and indiscriminately joined up.”

Her Style.

Virginia Woolf is a prose writer of a high order, and her
prose sparkles with flashes of poetic beauty and charm. She is a
word painter providing snapshots like a photographer. She
employs words “with a keen sense of their rhythmic potentiali-
ties.” She works as a conscious and meticulous artist, and
the choice of words shows that she is a cultured woman and a
conscious artist.

Conclusion

“The work of Virginia Woolf has been both highly praised
and strongly criticized. Its weaknesses are clear. The world
she chose to describe is a limited one in which the characters as a
French critic has remarked, ‘live in a luminous mist.’ It is a
world in which there is deep sadness, regret and certain coldness,
for the mind and spirit of man reign here. In her depiction, how-
ever, of this mind and spirit, in her sense of the passing of time
and in the delicacy, grace and order of her prose, Virginia Woolf
is outstanding. She was aware, as Sir Thomas Browne was long
before her that, life is a pure flame and we live by an invisible
sun within us. In its complete illustration of this knowledge her
work has an unfailing power” (Cazamian).

Q. 95. What do you know about the development of the novel
from 1939 to 1966?

Ans. “We have been reminded with alarming frequency
that the English novel of the last thirty years has diminished in
scale: that no writer has the moral urgency of a Conrad, the
verbal gifts and wit of a Joyce, the vitality and all consuming
obsession of a Lawrence; further, that the novel has forsaken
its traditional role of delineating manners and morals, and,
finally, that the novel is in a decline from which rescue is virtu-
ally impossible. Granted that these claims do have partial subs-
tance, nevertheless one must insist that the novel of the last
three decades or so—the post *Ulysses* novel—contains the vitality and vigour worthy of a major genre. Granted also that recent years have not turned up another Joyce, Lawrence, or Conrad; they have, however, seen distinguished work by established writers like Graham Greene, Elizabeth Bowen, C.P. Snow, Ivy Compton-Burnett, and Evelyn Waugh, as well as promising novels by their younger contemporaries, Lawrence Durrell, Iris Murdoch, William Golding, Doris Lessing, Angus Wilson, and Philip Toynbee, among several others.*

**Graham Greene (1904—**

Graham Greene, a convert to the Roman Catholic Church, lacks the missionary zeal. He is ruthless, and aloof in his detached rearrangement of life. At its worst he evokes pity and the extremity of terror, and dares to re-interpret Scripture in terms of its Original Charity. His reputation as an outstanding novelist among the younger group of novelists is firmly established with the publication of his novel ‘The Power and the Glory’ (1940). The reason for his success is not so much his versatility, as the way in which he unifies his various and wide interests under a single outlook, and expresses them in a prose style that is almost startling in its starkness. “His sentences cut like broken glass. They have a splintered sharpness, like the stark beams of light that cut obliquely across the pictures of El Greco. He may also be compared to the great painter in his odd distortion of vision. He sees his characters, and the scene in which they make their penance, with an eye that elongates them, draws them into thwart gestures made in a garish light. He delights to expose the raw nerves of evils, showing it as a positive force in the world, a skeleton-like figure working visible mischief in the ordinary, everyday affairs of men and women and children.” He satirises the evils of twentieth-century urban civilization but he does not preach.

Graham Greene wrote a number of novels and they show his popularity. He wrote the following novels: *The Man Within* (1929); *The Name of Action* (1930); *Rumour at Nightfall* (1931); *Stambout Train* (1932); *It’s a Battlefield* (1934); *England Made*

Me (1935); A Gun for Sale (1936); Brighton Rock (1938); The Confidential Agent (1939); The Power and the Glory (1940); The Ministry of Fear (1943); The Heart of the Matter (1948); The Third Man (1950); The Fallen Idol (1951); The End of the Affair (1951); Loser Takes All 1955; The Quiet American (1956); Our Man in Havana (1958); A Burnt-out Case (1961). Outstanding among these novels is The Power and the Glory. It is a political religious novel in the manner of The Brothers Karamazov and The Magic Mountain.

The scene is laid in a communist state in Mexico. The book almost deals with the seamy side of life, the painful and the squalid, the poverty and the vice. The two main characters of the novel are the Communist Lieutenant and the 'Whiskey Priest' the father of an illegitimate child.

Joyce Cary (1888 – 1957)

"He is a versatile, unpredictable, but always interesting writer," says R. A. Scott James. Cary is the most original novelist of his generation and he is the only novelist among his contemporaries who had carried forward the main stream of English fiction. He is a moralist, a traditionalist, a conservative who cannot think of the irrational dominating the rational. He published fifteen novels in all but the following six of them are enjoyable: Herself Surprised (1941); To Be a Pilgrim (1942); The Horse's Mouth (1944); Prisoner of Grace (1952); Except the Lord (1953) and Not Honour More (1955).

Evelyn Waugh (1903 – )

He is both a humorous and a serous novelist whose fame chiefly rests on the following six novels: Decline and Fall (1928), Black Mischief (1932), A Handful of Dust (1934), Scoop (1937), Put out More Flags (1942), and The Loved One (1948). His very strength as a humorist lies in his freedom to attack in every direction. As a humorist he avoids the moral purpose intrinsic to Meredith's and Molier's view. All the objects of the world are the target of his farce. Nothing is sacred to him. But he was not a fierce satirist as supposed by so many critics. Frederick R. Karl says, "Waugh has often been called a satirist, but satire presupposes belief, doctrine, dogma. Clearly, in his early and
most effective work, Waugh is defending no one and nothing possibly the only belief that comes through plainly is his defence of the sanctity of the individual, as in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* (1957)."

"Larger issues rarely count in early Waugh, and not until his later work does the reader become aware of the impingement of the world. In the thirties, he was interested in people whose social attitudes mark them as egotists, eccentrics, expedients. In describing their special kind of behaviour, he revels in the fact that insanity is the norm and sanity the anomaly. Later, when sanity, or the search for it, becomes his norm, he appears dull." When he becomes serious in his manner, readers find his grave reflections an inadequate compensation for the loss of his light bantering and carefree humour.

C. P. Snow (1905—).

After the Second World War, C. P. Snow is emerging a major literary figure. He is an author of a number of novels: *Strangers and Brothers* (1940), *The Light and the Dark* (1947), *Time of Hope* (1950), *The Musters* (1951), *The New Men* (1954), *Homecoming* (1956), *The Conscience of the Rich* (1958), *The Affair* (1960), *Corriders of Power* (1964).* "No iconoclast or protestant, Snow is primarily concerned with the inner workings of traditional institutions and the ways that these elements of society are perpetuated; thus, his interest in lawyers, scientists, academicians, and administrators: all the groups who have assumed power in the twentieth century and make the decisions necessary for civilized life."

"The fiction that Snow writes is akin, in technique and manner, to the average Victorian novel of Thackeray, George Eliot, or John Galsworthy, although it is less complicated in narrative structure and character development than the work of the former two and more closely reasoned than that of the latter. Snow eschews the impressionism and symbolism of Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Lawrence, and Conrad, and in so doing

*It is written with commendable professional competence. The real deficiency is that the competence, like the characters seem contrived."

—*(The Sunday Statesman January 10, 1965)*
returns the novel to a direct representation of moral, social and political issues. His novelistic world is not distorted or exaggerated: his art rests on artistic re-creation than on faithful reproduction, careful arrangement, and common sensical development of character and situation."

George Orwell (1903-1950)

George Orwell, as V. S. Pritchett says, was the conscience of his generation. His fame as a novelist rests on his three novels: *Down and out in Paris and London* (1933), *Burmese Days* (1934) and *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949). The world of the first novel is an economic nightmare to the individual, the world of the last novel is the political nightmare to the hero. There is no denying that these nightmares are true, but Orwell usefully failed in making these personal nightmares the experience of all of us. "His nightmare works out in social and economic terms not psychologically. The novelist cannot successfully convey a twentieth century nightmare solely in nineteenth century terms."

Having accepted Naturalism as the mode for his type of novel, Orwell reports impressionistically and does not attempt false objectivity. "He reports as he sees, but he reorganizes that what he sees is tinged by what he is and by what he chooses to look at. Yet despite the subjectivity of much of Orwell's reporting, we are struck by the compelling clarity of his vision and the sharpness of his images."

"It is one of the paradoxes of literature that someone like Orwell, a spokesman for liberalism and a destroyer of cant, was unable to provide satisfactory fiction although mind saw clearly a world full of conflicts. Perhaps the very clarity of the vision made impossible the 'confusion' and fumbling which his less politically liberal contemporaries bring to bear upon the novel. Perhaps the very directness of his attack upon the body politic precluded the large novel that Orwell should have written. Once again the specter of Naturalism rises up, and Orwell is ensnared in a literary trap, precisely as his characters are caught in the trap of life."*

Elizabeth Bowen (1899— )

Miss Bowen is an intensely feminine novelist and shows her affinity to novelists as different as Jane Austen, George Eliot, Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield. Like Jane Austen, she weighs her morality carefully and concocts a curious kind of moral universe; but unlike Jane Austen, Miss Bowen’s good people are not always rewarded nor are the bad ridiculed. As an artist she is also influenced by the example of Jane Austen. “She believes in clarity of detail, precision of phrase, and irony of expression, in exploiting the humorous while eliminating the sentimental, in destroying the hypocritical and the vain, in maintaining the traditions of the past against the incursions of the present. Yet she cannot be certain of what is right, as was Jane Austen, and when her doubts do appear, she finds herself close to the assumptions of the twentieth century novelist: unsure of what success entails, doubtful of what love is, afraid that romance can be easily maimed or destroyed, aware that relationships hang precariously on unknown threads whose clues are mysterious. In brief, she finds herself in the world of Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield.”

In all Miss Bowen wrote eight novels: The Hotel (1927), The Last September (1929), Friends and Relations (1931), To the North (1932) The House in Paris (1936), The Death of the Heart (1939), The Heat of the Day (1949), A World of Love (1955). The range of her novels is a limited one. She scores a grand success in presenting young girls, but she lacks the ability in presenting emotionally and mentally developed adults. Her women can be safely placed in the category of ‘flat’ characters, as they remain static, incapable of development and finally immature in their quivering sensitivity. “Nevertheless, the discerning reader is struck by the limitation of range, the fluttery concern with a miniature world, the exclusion of much that makes life exciting and significant, the complacency with which the novelist repeats both characters and themes. That this charge was once wrongly brought against Jane Austen does not vitiate its application to Elizabeth Bowen—the earlier
novelist’s irony and wit often make all the difference.”

Ivy Compton Burnett (1892—)

“If expert contemporary judgments were faultless, the supreme place among women novelists of the second quarter of the century would be given to Ivy Compton Burnett” (A. C. Ward). She wrote a number of novels: Dolores (1911), Pastors and Masters (1925), Brothers and Sisters (1929), Men and Wives (1931), More women Than Men (1933), A House and its Head (1935), Daughters and Sons (1937), A Family and a Fortune (1939), Parents and Children (1941), Elders and Betters (1944), Manservant and Maidservant (1947), Two Worlds and Their Ways (1949), Darkness and Day (1951), The Present and the Past (1953), Mother and Son (1955), A Father and His Fate (1957), A Heritage and its History (1959). The construction in her novels is essentially the same from her first novel—Dolores (1911), to A Heritage and its History (1959). “The departures from a common structure are fewer than the adherences: Miss Compton Burnett has marked her originality not only in the conversational idiom but in the form of her novels.” She wrote domestic novels and her characters are developed round the tightness of family structure. “One achieves something, or is destroyed, not because of the world but because of the family; and a son or daughter reels from family to family seeking a haven. The rebel does not run off to London to find solace in material success, such things do not exist. The family is his all: it dominates, circumvents, encloses, frustrates and provides one with mates.”

Like Jane Austen, the range of Ivy Compton Burnett’s novels is a limited one. She deals almost exclusively with upper-middle class society of the Edwardian era. Even then she is a popular novelist in the post-war world, because most of the human passions dealt by her does not exclusively belong to one era and in presenting them she is in fact doing so in full awareness of the modern world. She writes about Edwardians; but she would have written quite differently if she had been living among them.

“Like Jane Austen she has no illusions about human

nature and makes no concessions to complacency or wishful thinking; like her she is distrustful of moral generalizations. But a sympathy and understanding for the victims of human wickedness—the evil-doers emerge unmistakably from the drift and texture of the conventionalized dialogues and in the tensions they generate.”*

Lawrence Durrell (1912—)

Lawrence Durrell, an astonishing all-round man of letters, was one of the probable winners of Nobel Prize for Literature in 1960. He has written the Alexandria Quartet of novels—Justine (1957), Balthazar (1958), Mountolive (1959), Clea (1960)—described as ‘an investigation of modern love.’ This exciting sequence of novels immediately bears superficial comparison with Joyce’s Ulysses. “Like Joyce’s Dublin, Durrell’s Alexandria defines the actions of the characters and in major part makes them what they are. The nationalism of the Dubliner is transformed into the sensuality of the Alexandrian; the narrowness of the Irishman into the flexibility, the sinister softness of the Egyptian. In both novels, the sense of place dominates.”†

The novels of Lawrence Durrell “are unlike anything else in modern fiction, and they are worth reading for the author’s vivid evocation of Alexandria and the strange and sometimes sinister sub-tropical characters who abound there. There are hints that this much-praised quartet of stories was hurriedly composed and the women in them, with one exception, are never more than sketches. On the credit side there is some fine, vehement descriptive prose.”‡

Angus Wilson (1913—).

He is a very promising force and he is perhaps the only genuine English living satirist, “taking the word satire in its true meaning as a criticism of society related to positive moral standards.” He is a naturalist and provides very realistic and vivid pictures of the post-war society. He is quite capable of handling complicated plots and he has something of the zeal and enthusiasm of Dickens. His best known novels are Hemlock...

† F. R. Karl—Contemporary English Novel.
‡ W. J. Entwistle and E. Gillett—The Literature of England.
and After (1952), Anglo-Saxon Attitudes (1956) and The Middle Age of Mrs. Eliot (1958). In these novels Angus Wilson has attempted the 'big novel', the broad canvas. "He cuts across social classes and includes a wide variety of characters who are solidly rooted in English life; unlike many of his contemporaries, he does not restrict himself to one kind of person and one kind of reality."

V. S. Pritchett (1900— ).

"He was producing promising work twenty years ago, and has now an assured place among established writers of novels and short stories. He is at home with almost Dickensian humour among working-class types, but there is a subtlety and a poetic background to his work, economy and precision in his style, and a detachment in approach to his subjects which are the reverse of Dickensian." His most famous novel is Mr. Beluncle (1951). Pritchett projects Mr. Beluncle's superstitions and shows him as a typically confused modern man who has no command over his mind.

Anthony West (1914— )

In all, West wrote four novels but two of his novels The Vintage and Heritage are famous among them. In his first novel, he attempted a Faust for our times, but he failed for several reasons. "The episode themselves, the substance of the numerous flashbacks, are too commonplace to bear the weight of such a large design. The imaginative projection of the material is often admirable, but the imagination must itself be rooted in the real before it can soar, and the real here is not sufficient to allow significant thrust."

Henry Green (1905— )

"Henry Green has a style and atmosphere which he has made his own. He wrote his first book, Blindness (1926), when he was still in his teens; attracted attention with Living (1929), and has since produced 'Party Going' (1939), 'Pack My Bag' (1940), 'Caught' (1943), 'Loving' (1945), and 'Concluding' (1948). He shines as a writer of realistic dialogue, but is in essence a poet, with singular skill in leaving us with a sense of the symbolic significance of the life he has described."

* P. R. Karl: Contemporary English Novel.
Christopher Isherwood (1904— )

"Perhaps no novelist of the last thirty years seemed better equipped than Christopher Isherwood to catch the peculiar tone of his times; he had verbal facility, inventive ability and a sense of form and moment." He is an author of the following novels: *All the Conspirators, Goodbye to Berlin, The Last of Mr. Norris, The Memorial, Prater Violet*, and *The World in the Evening*.

Robert Graves (1895— )

He described his war experiences in the novel—'Goodbye to All That' (1929); perhaps his best novel is 'Claudius' (1934).

Rex Warner (1905— )

He wrote a number of allegorical novels, chief among them are: *The Professor* (1939), *The Wild Goose Chase* (1938) and *The Aerodrome* (1941).

**Future of the English Novel.**

A question may generally arise whether English novel has exhausted itself or it has enough scope which can be enlarged by the post-war novelists Gilbert Phelps says, "It remains true that the achievement since the war does not equal that of the earlier years of the century, but there is at least evidence that the English novel is by no means a spent force."* The same optimistic view is expressed by Dr. David Daiches, "One can only express the hope that with the radio serial and various kinds of television programme taking over the more superficial functions of fiction as entertainment, the novelist may find a clever field for the further development of the novel as a real art form." Indeed, the novelist must guard himself against his natural desire to withdraw from the large world into a selective range, because fiction needs weight as well as intelligence, size as well as manner, and breadth as well as nuance. It is gratifying that a merging of Symbolism and Naturalism, as in the work of William Golding, Samuel Beckett, Lawrence Durrell, Graham Greene, Angus Wilson and Irish Murdoch, would perhaps indicate a tentative direction. "Such a combination would allow the inclusion of the pressing events of the day, but at the same time it would not hold the novel to

the level of journalism. The infusion of a symbolic tradition into Naturalism would help transform minor or isolated items into major significance, and yet would not cut the writer off from immediacies like local politics, class structure, personal goals, the nature of ambition, and all the other pressing details of daily existence. If the function of the novel is to do what no other art form can: the definition of man in his society, then the novelist must not detract from the pressures of the great world in favour of exclusive emphasis upon those of the small. Only then can the novel hope to fulfil itself."