



B.A. ENGLISH – I YEAR
DJE1B : BRITISH LITERATURE
SYLLABUS

Unit I - Prose

1. E.M.Forster Does Culture Matter?
2. George Orwell The Prevention of Literature
3. Bertrand Russell Can We Afford to Keep Open Minds?
4. Bacon Of Discourse, Of Revenge, Of Ambition, Of Friendship

Unit II - Poetry I

1. John Milton Paradise Lost Book II lines (1-389)

Unit III – Poetry II

1. John Donne Ecstasy
2. Chaucer The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales
3. Wordsworth Tintern Abbey
4. Tennyson Tithonus
5. T.S. Eliot The Hollow Men
6. Dylan Thomas Light Breaks When No Sun Shines

Unit IV - Fiction

1. George Orwell Animal Farm

Unit V – Drama

1. Bernard Shaw The Apple Cart



UNIT I - PROSE

1. DOES CULTURE MATTER

- E.M. FORSTER

Forster lived through both world wars. In the modern world, culture is a much profaned or abused word. People are not sure as to what it actually means. One often takes it to mean as a superior work of intellectually. It is regarded as a social distinction. It is thus counterpart of “aristocratic” distinction under democratic condition.

Culture is actually the attitude that a civilized man takes to life and expresses the same through art, music, literature and the like. A modern writer has called our culture “Jackdaw Culture” – a collection of charming misconceptions, undigested enthusiasm of charlatanism. It is the device of an unlearned member of an upper class to plume himself with borrowed feathers.

The Greek word “Euphiua” means “a finely tempered nature”. Human nature is a complex thing which is made up of many elements. True culture implies that these elements must be properly disciplined so as to produce a balanced temperament, with all excesses subdued and angularities chiseled and straightened. The man of culture therefore is one who makes it his chief business in life to study perfection and to make it prevail in the affairs of life.

Culture means only the graces and ornaments that confer on individuals a kind of social distinction its value and influence would indeed be limited. But the modern age is tending to a gradual removal of separation between man and man, as well as between class and class. Therefore culture now has come to acquire a value and significance in social life.

German regarding them as “God’s elect” looked upon their culture as a hall mark of national superiority of the Herren Volk, entitling them to dominate the rest of the world. But this exclusiveness is the very antithesis of the view of culture that is regarded as a study of perfection.

Once the blue boded aristocracy with all the material resources at their command, tried to acquire the culture that was, in their view, a mark of social distinction. Thus whatever encourages separation, exclusiveness or feeling class superiority is antagonistic to culture in the right sense of the word.

Forster is one of the 20th century great humanists. Forster was a champion neither of popular culture nor of scholarly culture but rather of culture that connected to life that aims at the good life, that it as serious as religion and playful.



2. PREVENTION OF LITERATURE

- **GEORGE ORWELL**

George Orwell, one of the famous orators, was best known for his essays. The 'Prevention of Literature' published in Polemic in January 1946. He discusses the effect of totalitarianism on Literature. He deplors the gradual decline in independent thought and expression among writers. The essay, thus, is a very strong and thoughtful plea for the freedom of expression and press. It was written by Orwell just at the close of the Second World War. And that was a period when the freedom of press was curbed and censored.

The essay deals with the freedom of press. The meaning of the freedom of press is perfect liberty of speech. Without the liberty of press, no progress of any type is possible. Attack on intellectual liberty has been discussed by George Orwell at length in the essay. The attack comes from the Fascists, Communists and Monopolists. Many arguments are given against intellectual liberty. Freedom of thought is criticized because it leads to individualism and lack of discipline. The concept of freedom of speech has always been under attack. Fifteen years back the attack came from the conservatives. During the Second World War, intellectual liberty was attacked by Hitler and his followers.

Truth is sacrificed under Fascism. Totalitarians do not believe in truth and moral values. The enemies of thought are press lords, film magnates and bureaucrats. Literature can never flourish under totalitarianism. So far literature is concerned, poetry can progress under despotic government but prose literature can progress only under freedom of thought and speech. Real literature is bound to perish without liberty of thought and speech.

In Orwell's opinion there was nothing surprising in all these. Monopoly, bureaucracy and supporters of totalitarianism and all against intellectual liberty, and the general drift of society restrains the writer who wants to maintain his integrity. The liberty of the writer is crushed by vague economic forces and undermined by those who should be its defenders.

The writer who tries to write honestly and freely in an unbiased manner is called an egoist or individualist. Both the communists and catholic oppose such freedom of the writer. It leads to deliberate falsification on important issues. There is a suppression or distortion of historical facts and a spread of lies by newspapers. In a totalitarian society, past is altered to support the claims of the rulers and objective truth is ignored. A scientific text book may not be falsified, but an historical fact is easily falsified.



Prose literature has flourished only in the periods of democracy. It cannot exist in the age of dictatorships, which is conducive only to political writing catering to orthodox views enforced by the political leaders. In such an atmosphere of enforced orthodoxy, good writing ceases.

In Orwell's view, a type of sensational fiction may survive in a totalitarian society. He foresees a future when Imagination would be eliminated from the process of writing and books will be produced mechanically like a car on an assembly line. Writers will assemble plot, characters, etc in a pre-planned manner.

Thus in a totalitarian society scientists are privileged persons because the state needs them. But writers are persecuted if they do not express orthodox views. Orwell is of the view that literature cannot exist without freedom of thought, and imagination cannot flourish in bondage. Any writer who ignores the claims of imagination and artistic integrity and finds excuses for persecution and falsification of reality, ceases to be a writer and heads towards his own destruction.

3. CAN WE AFFORD TO KEEP OPEN MINDS

- **Bertrand Russell.**

Russell (1872 – 1970), considered by many as one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th Century, was equally famous for his interest in natural and social sciences, primary and higher education, his moral courage, belief in human reason and his companionship of liberal ideas.

Bertrand Russell in his essay "Can We Afford to Keep Open Minds?" analyzes how far open mindedness is desirable to get better results in our social life. Once Russell was taking to an officer in the Russian Army and condemned the new Russian Government for refusing to give people freedom of thought. In reply the Russian officer told him that the English have disciplined minds and so they were permitted to have freedom of thought whereas the Russian lack such trained minds and so they need control from the Government.

To Russell an open mind without any self-control is likely to be astray. He illustrates news with a parable and sound arguments. Firstly, he talks of two motorists. The first motorist is very cautious open minded finding the map very confusing. He makes enquiries regarding the road which confuses him all the more. He cannot reach the village. At last he prefers not to travel in the dark. There's another motorist with a closed mind attempting to reach the same village. He keeps on driving through the same road



without even noticing the road signs. At last he reaches edge of a cliff and jumps down meeting his death.

Open mindedness to certain degree helps a man to change his mind according to the ideas received. But it does not help him accomplish anything creditable. On the other hand if a man always keeps his mind closed, he will land only in disaster. So Russell brings out the point that it's undesirable either.

Russell employs two persons A and B to argue for and against open mindedness.

Mr. A says that open mindedness helps a man to recognize the right in the view of his opponent. An open minded man does not argue that he is right and his opponent is wrong. Mr. B says that a man should not to be influenced by the view of others. He does not wish to get equal terms with him.

The second analogy used by Russell is that the state of a ship sinking. It is not the time for finding out how best the ship could be designed to be fully-proof against sinking, instead, the emergency of the time demands the co-operative effort of all the crew in saving the ship by pumping out the water that has got in. One cannot afford to lose anytime in discussion.

Russell finally says that for an individual, for a nation, the right course is to have an open mind before taking a decision. After taking a decision one should not reconsider some new facts and change the situation.

4. ABOUT FRANCIS BACON

Francis Bacon was born on January 22, 1561. He was the second child of Sir Nicholas Bacon. His mother was a women of uncurl ability, of strong character and a decided protestant. He was one of the leading figures, in natural philosophy and in the field of scientific methodology in a period of transition from the renaissance to the early modern era. He was an English Philosopher, essayist and statesman. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge and at Gray's Inn. He was a member of parliament in 1584 and his opposition to Elizabeth's tax programme retarded his political advancement. His essays cover a huge range of subjects and the writings style is quite varied. Some are philosophical, some are witty, some are deep, and some are humorous.

Bacon often takes both sides of an argument in his essays, seeming to enjoy the role of "devil's advocate" arguing against himself. Writers and speakers have quoted from his essays. There are many of his essays which include: Truth, Death, Anger, Envy, Revenge, Travel,



Marriage and Single Life, Suspicious, Riches, Ambition, Goodness and Goodness of Nature, Plantations etc. He shows an extra ordinary in right regarding the problems that men face in life.

OF DISCOURSE

Some have certain common places and themes, where in they are good and want variety. The honourablest part of talk is to give the occasion and again to moderate and pass to somewhat else, for then a man leads the dance. It is good in discourse and speech of conversation to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with opinions a jest with earnest. As for jest, there can be certain things which ought to be privileged. From it namely, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance and any case that deserves pity.

Bacon was nothing if not a practical man and he advises the ideal speaker to
*“..... Questioneth much, learn much and
content much.... and himself shall
continually gather knowledge. But let not
his questions are troublesome; for that is fit for a poser”.*

This advice gets to the heart of Bacon's understanding of what constitutes ideal discourse-one of its principal goals is to learn about other men and their beliefs. As part of that process, one should not ask questions that might bring up a “sore point” for the person being questioned.

The person guiding the discourse has a duty, according to Bacon, to “be sure to leave other men their turns to speak”, and if someone is taking up too much time, the guide should find a way to get others talking.

Bacon concludes the essay by noting that good discourse is more than just eloquence. A good speech is a blend of reason, appropriate argument, questions and one's reply to a good speech-an appropriate response, using reason and arguments and responsive questions. In Bacon's writings on rhetoric in general, he argued that how one spoke was less important than what one said, so the ideal discourse is one that is rich in content as opposed to eloquence. In other words, eloquence without substance is not proper discourse.

OF REVENGE

‘Of Revenge’ is one of the most famous essays of Bacon. It is a kind of wild justice which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought to law to weed it out. Revenge is the sort of justice which one can expect to find in the state of nature i.e. in uncivilized conditions. Revenge



is out of place in a society where the rule of law must prevail. Any tendency towards this arbitrary kind of justice should be firmly controlled.

If a man indulges in wrong doing because of vicious nature there is again no point in taking revenge. It is better to ignore the wrong because the man cannot help himself. There is no point in being angry with a man because he loves himself. In taking revenge it is generous on the part of the avenger to reveal his identity to the victim. Because the pleasure of revenge does not bring him into trouble with law, for otherwise his enemy would still have an advantage over him.

A person who takes revenge manages to settle the score with the wrong doer but he is no way superior to his enemy. If however, he refrains from taking revenge and forgives his enemy instead, he shows a moral superiority. It is a king's office to grant pardon.

Civilized society has no place for wild action like revenge. If a wrong is done to a man, he should seek redress through the law. But there are some wrongs for which there exists no possibility of legal action. The crime is outside the purview of the law. In such circumstances, Bacon says, revenge becomes allowable.

However the avenger should be clever enough to escape the law himself in his revenge. Otherwise his enemy will still have an advantage over him. If his revenge is such that the law can take action upon, he will be punished for it. Then the original wrong doer could suffer only the revenge, while the avenger would be suffering twice, once from the wrong and secondly from the punishment imposed by law for his revenge. This is practical wisdom speaking.

Public revenges are generally successful and ensure the prosperity for the avengers but this is not the case in revenges taken over personal matters. A revengeful person spends his life time contemplating and doing harm like a witch. A witch comes to an unfortunate end. They used to be burnt. A revengeful person too meets sad fate.

OF AMBITION

Ambition makes a man energetic and active if it is not checked or thwarted. But if it is checked, it can become malignant and dangerous and cause a lot of harm. Ambitious men are not dangerous but only a bit troublesome. But once they are prevented from their desire to grow stronger and higher they become secretly discontented and take delight in others suffering a setback. The ambitious men should be handled carefully and the matters arranged in such a way that they are never thwarted in their progress.



In war time a good general, must be employed even if he is very ambitious, for his usefulness will make up for all his defects. In fact a soldier would be useless at his work if he does not have any ambition. Ambitious persons can be used to form a protective screen for the king when the king wants to resort to any unpopular action. Ambitious men can be used as tools to dislodge those who have grown too powerful and pose threat to the king himself.

Ambitious men pose less danger if they are from low families rather than if they are from a noble family. Men who are rude and those who have gained promotion recently are less dangerous than those who have enjoyed a long tenure of power and authority. Ambitious men may be countered by favorites, for a favorite of a king will see to it that nobody becomes more powerful than himself. If a king cannot safely dismiss an ambitious official suddenly the best thing he can do is to award him a mixture of favors and disfavours create feelings of uncertainty in the man that will keep him out of mischief.

The ambition to excel among the able man is a laudable one as it will benefit the public but it is a difficult thing to achieve. The most dangerous ambition is the one that makes men plot to achieve a position of power among a whole lot of non-entities. People are ambitions to hold high positions because it has three advantages:

1. It affords the opportunity to do good to the people.
2. It gives easy access to kings and other important persons.
3. It gives a chance to improve one's own fortunes.

In general those who are concerned with their duty rather their promotions have a finer approach to their work and are conscientious rather than those who work with the desire to make a display.

OF FRIENDSHIP

Francis Bacon's "OF Friendship" depicts about the importance of friendship. He starts his essay with a grand statement modeled after the views of Aristotle. Finding pleasure in solicitude is contrary to human character and mind. He expresses his belief in rather strong words. Anyone, who shuns fellow human beings and retreats to isolation, is degraded to the level of a wild beast. The other possibility is that he is godly. He points that the friendship helps the man to disburden his heart and to clear the understanding. It helps a man to ventilate those secret feelings desires and frustrations which would if suppressed within the heart, cause tension and depression in a man.



Bacon, however, is not totally dismissive of people who shy away from the crowd, and head for the wilderness. Bacon realizes that remaining silent and out off from others help the mind to engage in deep contemplative thinking. Through such deep insightful dissection of mind a person rediscovers himself. The truth and wisdom that dawn on the mediator's mind through such prolonged isolation can be profoundly rewarding for the hermit. The consequence can be both questionable and desirable. In case Empimenides the Candian, Numa the Roma, Empedocles the Silian and Apollonius of Tyana, the theories they propounded were somewhat non-conformist for the commoners, but were of great philosophical value.

Spiritual men who retreat from public eye in and around places of worship have been instrumental in delivering sermons of immense. Spiritual benefit to mankind. So, voluntary abstention from society is not always a bad idea, after all. A friendship must have feeling and passion as its main strands. It should be a bond between the hearts where one shares the emotions of his friend in full measure.

Bacon then gives the examples of the monarchs and kings, and the elite who go to unusual lengths to befriend good and worthy people. The rich and the powerful with the reins of government in their hands seek out the crème of the society to give the pleasures of friendship. They found their lives incomplete without friendship. Friendship increases joy even as it lessens the intensity of grief. A man by sharing his joy with a friend feels happier. His grief is lessened if he has a friend to share it.

When a man talks over things with a friend, his ideas take better shape and everything becomes clearer and arranged to order. Whereas before, his thought were confused and vague. A friend helps a man to improve his conduct and avoid folly and mistakes of friendly advice are unbiased and are thus reliable and at the same time it is pleasant.

A man cannot be more than one place at the same time, but if he has friend he can get things done through him instead of doing them by him. If a man dies without fulfilling some desire, a friend can continue to make efforts to achieve that desire. A friend working on his behalf is free of such personal considerations.



UNIT II – POETRY I

PARADISE LOST- II

- JOHN MILTON

Paradise Lost is an epic poem in blank verse by the 17th century English poet John Milton (1608 – 1674). In 1656 when he started to write the epic poem Paradise Lost Milton was blind. He began to recite verse each morning to one of his two daughters, who wrote his poem down for him. In 1667 his great work Paradise Lost was published in ten cantoes. Milton soon returned to revise his epic, redividing it into twelve books as the classical epics were divided, and published it in 1671.

The Paradise Lost is a great epic poetry. The poem concerns the Biblical story of the Fall of Man: the temptation of Adam and Eve by the fallen angel Satan and their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, also called Paradise. In this poem, Paradise Lost book II divides into two large sections. The first is the debate among the devils concerning the proper course of actions. The second section deals with Satan's voyage out of Hell with Sin and Death.

Paradise Lost book II opens with Satan as a king, sitting on in his magnificent golden throne addressing the assembled devils. Satan opens the debate in Pandemonium by claiming that Heaven is not yet lost from them and that the fallen angels might rise up stronger in another battle if they work together. He then asks whether they should fight God openly or with "covert guile". The devils Moloch, Belial, Mammon and Beelzebub offers a different attitude concerning a solution for their Hellish predicament.

The first speaker is Moloch. He was one of the fiercest fighters in the war in Heave and he argues for open war, this time armed with the weapons of Hell. He reasons that nothing even their destruction could be worse than the devils' current state in Hell, so they have nothing to lose by fighting "The Torturer" (God) trying the weapons of Hell against him. At the very least they might disturb the peace of Heaven and wound God on his throne and so have revenge "if not victory".

The next speaker is Belial, who was always beautiful and eloquent but whose words rang hollow even in Heaven. He contradicts Moloch's advice and suggests that God can always punish them in a worse way if they attack him again. After all they are no longer chained to fiery lake, which was their previous and worse punishment. Belial suggests that if they do not attack, God might eventually abate his anger and so lessen the devil's suffering. Belial defends his own



hatred of Heaven, but overall advocated that they should take no action so as to avoid further pain.

Mammon speaks up next and refused to bow ever down to God again. He describes how futile it would be to submit to God and try to return to Heaven. He prefers to peacefully advance their freedom and asks the devils to be industrious in Hell. Mammon also proposes that the devils peacefully expand their own freedom in their new realm of Hell. Through hard work the devils can make Hell their own kingdom to mimic Heaven. When Mammon finished speaking all the devils applause clearly favoring his argument above the rest.

Silence falls upon the crowd, Beelzebub stands to speak and the crowd falls respectfully silent. He also prefers freedom to servitude under God, but he warns that they are not free there. He says Satan's rumors that God planned to create a new world, to be filled with a race called Man whom God will favour more than angels – Beelzebub suggests that the devils find this new world and either corrupt or destroy it, thus having revenge on God by ruining his joy and making him "Abolish his own works". The devils agree to Beelzebub's proposal and vote for it unanimously. Beelzebub speaks again, describing how they might find a better home in this new world of Man and heal themselves of the pains of Hell. Then he asks for a volunteer, finally Satan grandiosely volunteers himself promising to undergo all the hardships of the journey and earn his place as ruler of Hell.

The Council is dismissed and the devils exit Pandemonium. Satan files of towards the gates of Hell. When he approaches he sees that there are actually nine gates – three of brass, three of iron, and three of adamantine. In front of the gates two strange shapes stand and guard it. One has the upper body of a woman, but her lower half is a serpent with a pack of howling dogs around her waist. The other is just a dark shape. Satan chooses to confront the shape demanding passage through the gates. They are mocks Satan's defeat in Heaven and commands him to return to his punishment. They are about to do battle when the woman beast cries out. She explains to Satan who she and her companion are and how they came to be. She is Satan's daughter – in Heaven, when Satan was still an angel, she had sprung forth from his head when he first conceived of rebelling against God. She was called 'Sin' and she was beautiful so Satan incestuously impregnated her in secret. Then the war had broken out in Heaven, and Sin was cast into Hell with the other rebel angels, but before she fell she was given a key to Hell's gates and instructed to keep them shut forever. After she arrived in Hell, Sin gave birth to the dark figure,



which is called 'Death'. Death immediately pursued Sin and raped her, and she then gave birth to the hounds that now torture her gnawing constantly at her insides. Now she and Death sit guarding the gates together, hating each other but bound together by fate.

Satan who seems to have forgotten those events. Now he speaks violently to them and explains his plan against God. He promises to bring Sin and Death with him once he has made it ready. Sin and Death both seem pleased at this and they are more eager to help him. Sin unlocks the great gates which open into the vast dark abyss of night. The gates open and remain open, as Sin does not have the power to close them again. On the other side is a dark abyss of Chaos and Night. Satan flies out but then begins to fall until a cloud of fire catches and carries him. He approaches the noise and sees Chaos himself, along with his consort Night and others like Chance, confusion and Discord. Satan speaks respectfully to them asking for directions to Earth and promising to return it to its original state of disorder, thus bringing it back under Chaos's power. Chaos recognizes Satan and tells him where the universe of Man is hoping that Satan will create "havoc and spoil and ruin" there. Satan moves onwards, Sin and Death follows him. In order to build a bridge from Hell to Earth on which devils can enter earth and tempt mortals and so that mortals will easily be cured down to Hell.

Milton's belief that death is not simply a biological fact of life but rather a punishment for Sin and disobedience and from that nobody escapes. Hence Milton argues that political and religious organizations have the potential to do evil things in the name of order and union.



UNIT III – POETRY II

1. ECSTASY

– JOHN DONNE

John Donne, the leading English poet of the Metaphysical school is considered the greatest love poet in the English language. He is also noted for his religious verse and treatises. Donne's ecstasy describes how the souls of two lovers leave their bodies during their physical union and mix together before returning to their original bodies. This experience purifies each of the lovers and grants them spiritual fulfillment.

The poet and his beloved lay on a swollen bank which looked like a pillow on a bed. This poem 'Extasie' expresses his unique and unconventional ideas about love. It expresses the theme that pure, spiritual or real love can exist only in the bond of souls established by the bodies. Donne compares bodies to planets and souls to the angels. Body and souls are inseparable but they are independent. According to the medieval conception ecstasy means a trans-like state in which the soul leaves the body comes out and holds communion with divine. The poem is an expression of Donne's philosophy of love. Donne agrees with Plato that true love is spiritual. The poem 'Ecstasy' has five sections.

- The first section establishes the setting for meditation. It emphasizes the passage of time.
- The second section begins with the meditation. The poet now realizes that these 'beauteous' forms have always with him. The poet studies nature with open eyes and imaginative mind.
- The third section contains a kind of doubt; the poet is probably reflecting in the poem about the pure love.
- The fourth section consists of the courage and the spirit which are enough for him to stand there with a sense of delight and pleasure.
- The fifth section and last section continues with the same meditation from where the poet addresses his younger sister Dorothy, whom he blesses and give advice about what he has learnt.

This poem is an indeed a complex work of art. It has been interpreted differently. The poem is a union of the ancient the medieval and the modern. Donne agrees with Plato that true love is spiritual. But unlike Plato he does not ignore the claims of the body. In accepting the



claims of the body he is a modern. It is the body which brings the lovers together. Donne says that souls contain various things of which one is not fully aware; love mingles two souls and make them one. Donne describes the scenery in erotic terms. The river bank like a “Pillow of bed”. It is a spring time and the violets are in bloom. To a renaissance reader, the image of violets symbolizes faithful love and truth. It has pastoral settings where the lovers are sitting together, holding each other’s hands and looking intently into each other’s eyes. The lover’s souls leave their bodies which become mere lifeless figures. Finally they are united into a single soul. Donne tries to convey the readers that the foundation of spiritual love is the physical attachment; the eyes serve as a gateway to the soul. Thus in this poem, the poet has reconciled such opposites as the medieval and the modern the spiritual and physical the scientific or secular and the religious, the abstract and the concrete and the ordinary and the metaphysical.

2. THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES

- Geoffrey Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English Literature, was born in London in the year 1340. Chaucer was not a professional writer, but a courtier and civil servant who successfully served three kings in a long and varied career. He died in 1400 and he was buried in Westminster Abbey, later this place came to be called the Poet’s Corner. The framework of the Canterbury Tales is based on that of Boccaccio’s Decameron. Both are collections of Tales. This poem represents a cross-section of the England of Chaucer’s time. It has bestowed on the poet the twin titles, “The Father of English Poetry” and “The Father of the English Novel”.

The Canterbury Tales is a collection of 24 stories that runs to over 17,000 lines. The tales are presented as part of a story-telling contest by a group of pilgrims as they travel together on a journey from London to Canterbury in order to visit the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. The Canterbury Tales is unanimously seen as Chaucer’s magnum opus. He uses the tales and the descriptions of this character to paint an ironic and critical portrait of English society at the time, and particularly of the church. Chaucer portraits characters like Noble Knight, the Honorable Clerk, the Rich Landowner, the Worldly and Crude Wife, Vulgar Miller and Carpenter and the Corrupt Pardoner. Although these characters are fictional, they still offer a variety of insights into the customs and practices of the times.



THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES

The Canterbury Tales begins with a prologue in which Chaucer sketches the various men and women who are grouped together and going on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. The narrator opens the prologue with a description of the return of spring. He describes the April rains, burgeoning flowers and leaves, and the chirping birds. Around this time of year, the narrator says, people begin to feel the desire to go on a pilgrimage. Many devotee English Pilgrims set off to visit shrines in distant holy lands, but even more choose to travel to Canterbury to visit the relics of Saint Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral, where they thank the martyr for having helped them when they were in need.

The narrator says that as he was prepared to go on such a pilgrimage, staying at a tavern in Southwark called the Tabard Inn, when a company of twenty-nine people descend on the inn, preparing to go on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. After talking to them, he agrees to join them on their pilgrimage. Yet before the narrator goes any further in the tale, he describes the circumstances and the social rank of each pilgrim. He describes each one in turn starting with the highest status individuals.

The narrator begins by describing with the Knight. The Knight is a noble man. He loves truth, honour, freedom and courtesy. The Knight has fought in many battles for his country and religion and always been honoured for his worthiness and courtesy-wherever he went, he has been praised for his valor. In addition to being worthy and brave, says the narrator, the Knight is modest and meek as a maid. He never speak ill of anyone. The Knight is dressed in a 'fustian' tunic, made of coarse cloth, which is stained by the rust from his coat of chainmail, because he has come straight from a battle-field to join the pilgrimage.

The narrator next describes the Knight's son, a Squire, who is a lively and a lusty bachelor. He is a young man of twenty, like his father, the Squire also participated in many battles. He is in love with a girl and always sings and dances or plays on the flute. He dresses fashionably. His short gown has long sleeves and is embroidered with floral designs. The Squire is so passionately in love that he sleeps no more than a nightingale. This shows his restlessness. The Squire is a bit vain; he does always act in accordance with his social position.

The only servant the Knight has with him is the Yeoman, who wears a green hood and coat. The Yeoman takes great care of his bow and sharp, keen peacock arrows. He has closely



cropped hair and tanned skin. On his arm he wears a bright arm guard and carried a sword as well as a dagger. The Yeoman also wears a badge of St. Christopher.

The Prioress, a nun named Madame Eglentyne is the next. She sings sweetly the religious services. She speaks French elegantly, though in an English accent and has excellent table manners. The Prioress is so charitable and compassionate; the narrator says that, whenever she sees a mouse caught and bleeding in a trap, she weeps. She keeps small dogs with her. The Prioress wears a wimple draped to show off her well-formed nose, grey eyes, and small red mouth. She wears a coral rosary with green beads with the inscription ‘Amor Vincit Omnia’ (Love conquers all).

The narrator notes that a Second Nun rides with the Prioress as well as a Chaplain and three priests.

The Monk is next, an extremely fine and handsome man. The Monk is contrary to the Prioress. He loves to hunt instead of studying in cloisters. He is a good horseman and rides along with a pack of swift greyhounds. His head is bald and his face glows as if he had been rubbed with oil. He is a plump, lively man whose eyes gleam like fire under a cauldron. In short, he is an epicurean.

The Friar is expected by the Franciscan order to which he belongs to support himself by begging. He is licensed to begin a certain district. He is a limiter, that is, the area within which only he is authorized by the authorities to beg is limited. He is also expected to nurse beggars and lepers. But he has thrown these religious duties to the winds. He moves only with rich men and women and, listening to their insincere confessions, absolved them because he is paid by them. He marries off young women who were formerly his mistresses. He cannot weep for his sins: instead of tears and prayers, he gave silver to poor friars.

The Merchant wears a forked beard. He is dressed in a multicolor cloak, fur hat, and boots. He speaks slowly, weighing the profit of expressing his opinions. He does excellent business as a merchant, and never being in debt.

The Clerk follows the merchant. He is an Oxford University student. He would rather have twenty books by Aristotle than rich clothes or musical instruments and dressed in threadbare clothes. Though he is a philosopher, he has not found the philosopher’s stone. He only has a little money, which he tends to spend on books and learning. He takes his studies very seriously, and whenever he speaks, his speech is full of moral virtue.



The Man of Law is referred as 'A Sergeant of the Law'. He shares some of the good qualities of the Clerk of Oxford. He is an excellent buyer of land. The Man of Law is extremely busy and pretends to be even busier than he is. No one could ever find a flaw in his legal documents. He has much knowledge. But he misuses his knowledge, acquiring property through crooked methods and cheating his clients and extorting money from them.

The Franklin is a free tenant of the Crown, holding his land without having to render any military service or pay any rent. He travels with the Man of Law. He is a white-bearded, cheerful landowner whose main goal in life is pleasure and delight. He is fond of drinking and eating. His house is always full of meat pie, fish and meat. The food changes with the seasons, but it is always abundant.

A Haberdasher and a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer and a Tapestry – Maker are next described. These five pilgrims are dressed well like a guildmen with brightly polished belts and knives. None of these pilgrims, in the end, actually tell a tale.

The guildmen hired a cook for the journey. The cook, Roger de Ware, is very skillful. But, to offset all his skills, there is an ugly gangrene on his chin.

The Shipman is an expert navigator with a thorough knowledge of currents, storms and the other dangers that he has to face in his job. When he was on his ship, he stole wine from the merchant, whose goods he was transporting, while the merchant slept. When he wins a naval battle, he throws into the ocean those prisoners who are a burden to him.

A doctor of Physique is the next pilgrim described, clad in red and blue, and no-one in the world can match him speaking about medicine and surgery. He knows the cause of every malady based on the four humors: hot, cold, moist and dry. But he knows very little about the Bible. The narrator says the doctor saved much of what he earned: gold is the best medicine. So the Physician loves gold best.

The Wife of Bath is one of the much-discussed women characters of Chaucer. She was slightly deaf. If anyone brings alms before her, she becomes extremely angry. On the way to Sunday mass, she wraps her head in scarves that the narrator says must weigh ten pounds. She is proud and quick tempered. The Wife of Bath has been married five times and has gone on three pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Rome and Boulogne. She is gap-toothed. The Wife of Bath speaks from the voice of authority, and although she is no longer young and beautiful, she has a wealth



of worldly knowledge. She is probably a widow, because only women who have been widowed would have the money and power to travel as widely and freely as she does.

A Parson from a small town is also among the company. He is poor in wealth but rich in holy thoughts and deeds. This Parson practices what he preaches. He is a learned man, who truly preaches Christ's gospel, and devoutly teaches his parishioners. Neither rain nor thunder nor sickness prevents him from visiting his parishioners: he picks up his staff and walk to all corners of his parish. He is a shepherd, not a mercenary. The Parson wants to draw people closer to God through graciousness and kindness.

The Parson's brother, the Plowman, is next described, who, although poor in goods, is rich in holy thoughts and work. He is a faithful worker who worships God and loves his neighbour as he loves himself. He pays his tithe regularly. He wears a loose workman's tunic and rides on a mare.

A miller comes next. He is a burly workman who always wins prizes at wrestling. He has a head and beard of thick red hair and his nostrils and mouth are enormous. The Miller is a buffoon who told dirty stories and played the bagpipes; he steals corn, yet has a 'thombe of gold' – through his character Chaucer implies, there are no honest Millers.

A Manciple is the next pilgrim to be described. He is a business agent, purchaser of religious provisions and a savvy financial operator. He is always ahead in his dealings! Even though he is uneducated, he is cleverer than the lawyers he serves and is able to deceive them all.

A Reeve is a man attached to a manor. The Reeve is a slender, coleric man with a closely cropped beard and stick-thin leg. No auditor can ever catch him. He knows the accounts of his lord's estate extremely well, and all the farm-managers, herdsmen and servants fear him. The miserly Reeve has hoarded so much money that he is wealthier than his lord. He is talented carpenter and he always rides last among the company.

The Summoner is next and he has a disease that makes his face bright red and pimpled, gives him scaly skin and makes his beard fall out. No medicine or ointment can treat the pustules. He loves onions and garlic, and when he drinks; he speaks only in Latin – at least, the few Latin phrases he knows. He also knows how to swindle (trick) people.

Pardoner is Summoner's friend and his companion. His voice is as high as a goat's. He is the last pilgrim – teller to be described. He carries a wallet full of pardons come from Rome. He is sexually ambiguous. He has a thin, boyish voice.



After providing descriptions of all the pilgrims who have assembled at the tavern in Southwark, the narrator begs the reader's forgiveness for anything unseemly in the tales, as the narrator is simply trying to report the pilgrims' words and characters as plainly and truthfully as he can. Whoever tells a tale about a man, he says, must repeat it word for word so that he does not tell falsehoods or make up words.

The narrator returns to the story of the first night he spent with the pilgrims. The Host is the last member of the company described, an excellent master of ceremonies and a cheerful man. He is a large man with bright, large eyes and an extremely fair man. The Host welcomes everyone to the inn, and announces the pilgrimage to Canterbury and he proposes that each pilgrim must tell two stories on the way to Canterbury and two more tales during the return journey. Whoever tells the tale most meaningfully they shall have supper at the cost of all of the other pilgrims, back at the Inn, once the pilgrimage returns from Canterbury. All the pilgrims agree to the Host's suggestions, and agree to accord to the Host's judgment as master of the tale-telling game. Next day morning, the Host awakes, raises everyone up and gathers them together. After they ride a mile or two, the Host reminds them of the agreements of the night before. The Host says that they must draw lots to see who will tell the first tale. He gives the privilege of drawing the first straw to the Knight, in deference to his rank. The Knight draws the short straw and nobly accepts the challenge.

In the description of the most prominent of his pilgrims Chaucer's powers are shown at their very highest, and The Prologue is a masterpiece of insight, sureness to touch, fine discrimination and subtle humour. The Prologue is a picture gallery, the first and finest specimen we have in English literature of the literature of characters. His descriptive power enables him to present characters that are at once typical, universal and individual. The most remarkable feature of The Prologue is the assembly of the portraits of the pilgrims. The portraits highlight Chaucer's finished art of character-drawing, his realism and his sense of humour.

3. TINTERN ABBEY

- William Wordsworth

William Wordsworth was born in 1770, in Cambria. The English poet was known as the pioneer of romantic poems. . In 1798 Wordsworth published the famous 'Lyrical Ballads' with Taylor Coleridge. Wordsworth's magnum opus is generally considered to be 'The Prelude', a semi autobiographical poem of his early years. Wordsworth was Britain's Poet Laureate from



1843 until his death in 1850. In this poem, 'Tintern Abbey', the poet has expressed his tender feeling towards nature. He has specially recollected his poetic idea of Tintern Abbey where he had gone first time in 1793.

The full title of this poem is "Lines composed a few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the Banks of the Wye, during a Tour, July, 1798." Often the poem is simply called "Tintern Abbey". There is Wordsworth's realization of God in nature. He got sensuous delight in it and it is all in all to him. Tintern Abbey impressed him most when he had first visited this place. He has again come to the same place where there are lofty cliffs, the poet of cottage ground, orchards groves and copses.

This poem is in five sections. The first section describes the setting for the meditation. Wordsworth begins his poem by telling the reader that it has been five years since he has been to this place a few miles from the Abbey. It emphasizes the passage of time: five years have passed, five summers, five long winters. But when the poet is back to this place of natural beauty and serenity, it is still essentially the same. The images in this poem evoke not only pure nature as one might respect, they evoke a life of the common people in harmony with the nature.

In the second section, Wordsworth tells his readers that his first visit to this place gave him "sensations sweet" when he was in the "lonely rooms" of the city. This section poet realizes that these "beauteous" forms have always been with him, deep-seated in his mind, wherever he went. Wordsworth goes on to suggest his spiritual relationship with nature, which he believes will be a part of him until he dies. The poet studies nature with open eyes and imaginative mind. He has been the lover of nature from the core of his heart, and with purer mind. He feels a sensation of love for nature in his blood. He feels high pleasure and deep power of joy in natural objects. He reminded of the pictures of the past visit and ponders over his future years. On his first visit to this place he bounded over the mountains by the sides of the deep rivers and the lovely streams. In the past the soundings haunted him like a passion. But that time is gone now. In nature he finds the sad music of humanity.

In the third section, he begins to consider what it would mean if his belief in his connection to nature were misguided, but stops short. Seeming not to care whether the connection is valid or not, he describes the many benefits that his memories nature give him. This section contains a kind of doubt. The poet is probably reflecting the reader's possible doubts so that he can go on to justify how he is right and what he means. He doubts, for just a



movement, whether this thought about the influence of the nature is vain, but he can't go on. At the end of the section he addresses the Wyle River for the everlasting influence it has imprinted on his mind and spirit has often turned to this river for inspiration what he was losing the peace of mind or the path and meaning of life. The river here becomes the symbol of spirituality.

In the fourth section, Wordsworth begins by explaining the pleasure he feels at being back in the place that has given him so much joy over the years. He is also glad because he knows that this new memory will give him future happiness. He goes on to explain how differently he experienced nature five years ago, when he first came to explore the area. Though the poet has become serious in the fourth section the nature gives him courage and spirit enough to stand there with a sense of delight and pleasure. Wordsworth quickly sets his current self apart from the way he was five years ago. Over the past five years, he has developed a new approach to nature. As a more sophisticated and wiser person with a better understanding of the sad disconnection of humanity, Wordsworth feels a deeper and more intelligent relationship with nature.

In the fifth and last section continues with the meditation, Wordsworth addresses his sister Dorothy, calling her both "sister" and "dear friend". Though her eyes, Wordsworth can see the wild vitality he had when he first visited this place, and this image of himself gives him new life. It is apparent at this point in the poem that Wordsworth has been speaking to his sister throughout. Dorothy serves the same role as nature, reminding Wordsworth of what he once was; then he shares his deepest hope, that in the future, the power of nature and the memories of him will stay with Dorothy. He is implying that he will die before she does, and hopes that in her memory he will be kept alive. Even as Wordsworth thinks about dying, he is given new strength and vitality at the thought that his sister will remind him.

At the end of the poem, Wordsworth combines their current setting with his sister's future memory of the moment. He is satisfied knowing that she will also carry the place, the moment, and the memory with her. The poet has expressed his honest and natural feelings to Nature's Superiority. This is the beauty of Wordsworth's language.



4. TITHONUS

- Alfred Tennyson

Tithonus was written in 1833, the year when Ulysses was also written. The poet may have sought an opportunity to explore the meaning of two basic symbols: those of love between man and woman and the frustration of love “by age”.

In this poem “Tithonus” speaks to his beloved, the goddess ‘EOS’. He was once a man, he says, feeling “glorious in his beauty” and in being chosen by this goddess. He asked for immortality, and she got it for him, yet he still aged and aged. Meanwhile she is eternally young, so their existence is “immortal age beside immortal youth. The boon had become a curse. The king of Troy, is sick of immortality. He feels gloomy and disappointed. He finds that everything in nature changes but he has lost his lustre. His youth is gone and with the fading of his youth his personal charms are also gone. He has fallen into grief and untold sufferings. His present form is a mockery of his youth; when Aurora loved him and granted him the boon of immortality. But now he wants to be free. He requests her to take back the gift she had given him and let him go back to earth. He does not like to be an exception to the role of mortality. He wants to die and not to live and suffer the pains throughout the passage of time for ever.

Tithonus used to see the dark clouds changing into bright circles. He changed with Aurora’s mysterious change in shape and colour and he felt that his blood glowed with the sunny brilliance that reddened her entire presence and her gates, while he remained with her with his mouth, forehead, eyebrows, all moist and warm with her kisses softer than the half opened buds of April. Tithonus remembers the time when he used to enjoy the youthful company of Aurora, the goddess of dawn. His youthful vigour is gone. The pathos of Tithonus’s life is rendered with touching pity and tenderness. Thus the poem conveys that painful eternity is worse than blissful morality. Tithonus, like Ulysses in a dramatic monologue based on a classical theme of immortality.

5. THE HOLLOW MEN

- T.S. ELIOT

T.S Eliot was a British essayist, publisher, playwright, literary and social critic, and one of the 20th century’s major poets. The Hollow Men is a poem by T.S. Eliot. Its themes are, like many of Eliot’s poems, overlapping and fragmentary, but it is recognized to be concerned most with post-World War I Europe under the Treaty of Versailles, the difficulty of hope and religious



conversation, and as some critics argue, Eliot's own failed marriage. The poem is divided into five parts and consists of 98 lines of which the last four are 'probably the most quoted lines of any 20th century poetry writing in English'. Eliot titled his poem "The Hollow Men" by combining the titles of the romance "The Hollow Land" by William Morris with the poem "The Broke Men" by Rudyard Kipling.

The poem of emptiness, "The Hollow Men" opens with a double epigraph, one from the novelist Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and one from the traditional children's request for a penny on Guy Fawkes Day, November 7. The former seems intended to draw the reader to Conrad's short masterpiece and to the announcement of the death of Mr. Kurtz - perhaps the ultimate hollow man - to Charlie Marlow, the first narrator of that work. The latter epigraph also involves light and darkness, as it recalls the 1605 Gunpowder Plot, an alleged Roman Catholic attempt to blow up the English monarch and the houses of parliament. The guy is a stuffed effigy of Guy Fawkes; the pennies collected by children are to purchase materials and fireworks to celebrate the ritual evening burning of the effigy. Both epigraphs allude to an emptiness, one spiritual and one physical.

Divided into five parts, the poem begins in a choric proclamation of emptiness, as if a chorus of stuffed men were appearing before the reader in a frozen tableau vivant that will quicken to a dance round in part 5, followed by an antiphonal and concluding with another dance round. The English Gunpowder Plot of 1605, Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness*, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and Dante's *Divine Comedy* are the main source texts for "The Hollow Men". Before the poem begins, the reader encounters two allusions. The epigraph, or quotation set at the beginning comes from *Heart of Darkness*. It reads,

'Mistah Kurtz - he dead'.

The speaker of the cryptic sentence is about Kurtz, an ivory dealer in Africa whose sole concern is making money, no matter what it takes. His death is a signal that no matter how much wealth a person accumulates, the same fate awaits us all.

The first stanza of "The Hollow Men" preceded by another epigraph:

'A penny for the Old Guy'.

This is an allusion to Guy Fawkes, whose botched attempt at bombing parliament during the failed Gunpowder Plot gave rise to the holiday known as Guy Fawkes Day. The phrase is traditionally uttered by children begging money for fireworks to celebrate the occasion.



The poem then begins:

‘We are the hollow men/ we are the stuffed men.’

This is also a reference to Guy Fawkes, whose effigy is burned on the celebration bearing his name. Eliot’s point is that conspiracies to overthrow traditional authorities are little more than empty gestures. In the first section of the poem, a bunch of Hollow Men are leaning together like scarecrows. Everything about them is as dry as the Sahara Desert, including their voices and their bodies. Everything they say and do is meaningless. They exist in a state like Hell, except they were too timid and cowardly to commit the violent acts that would have gained them access to Hell. They have not crossed over the River Styx to make it to either Heaven or Hell. The people who have crossed over remember these guys as "hollow men."

Just consider the assassination of Julius Caesar, the subject of Shakespeare’s famous play, whose death threw Rome into disorder. Even when successful, conspiratorial plots leave nothing in place to satisfy our basic need for rule and order, leading to a state of Chaos. The rest of this opening stanza paints a picture of the desolation brought in the aftermath of anarchy, through frightful images of ‘headpieces filled with straw’, ‘dried voices’, ‘wind in dry grass’ and ‘rats’ feet over broken glass’. Everything is dried and hollowed out, as in a war-stricken town or the scene of a terrorist attack.

The second stanza takes this theme. In Dante’s Divine Comedy, the speaker, who is led through the three kingdoms of the afterlife in an attempt to cleanse his soul, cannot meet his lover Beatrice’s eyes in heaven, or ‘death’s dream kingdom’. He is not worthy, having spent the majority of his life working toward fruitless endeavors and temporary ends. And neither, in Eliot’s eyes, are modern people. We wear ‘deliberate disguises’ but are unable to see life for how it is, because we avert our eyes from what is truly important. One hollow man is afraid to look at people who made it to "death's dream kingdom" – either Heaven or Hell. The Hollow Men live in a world of broken symbols and images.

The third section of the poem describes the setting as barren and filled with cacti and stones. When the Hollow Men feel a desire to kiss someone, they are unable to. Instead, they say prayers to broken stones.

In the fourth section, the hollow man from Section 2 continues to describe his vacant, desolate surroundings, in which are no "eyes." The Hollow Men are afraid to look at people or to be looked at.



The fifth and final section begins with a nursery rhyme modelled on the song "Here we go 'round the mulberry bush," except instead of a mulberry bush the kiddies are circling a prickly pear cactus. The speaker describes how a "shadow" has paralyzed all of their activities, so they are unable to act, create, respond, or even exist. He tries quoting expressions that begin "Life is very long" and "For Thine is the Kingdom," but these, too, break off into fragments. In the final lines, the "Mulberry Bush" song turns into a song about the end of the world. You might expect the world to end with a huge, bright explosion, but for the Hollow Men, the world ends with a sad and quiet "whimper."

6. LIGHT BREAKS WHEN NO SUN SHINES

- DYLAN THOMAS

Dylan Thomas was an English Poet and writer who had written some brilliant poems in his life time. He had written some poems which had made him a star in the world of literature. The poem "Light Breaks Where No Sun Shines" was his first published poem which caught an eye in the literary world, and established him as a poet.

Through the poem the poet is trying to say that the light breaks only in those places which are surrounded by darkness. The water is pushed only in those places where there is no sea, which means, that the water can fill a land which is dry. In other words, poet uses "light" and "water" as a metaphor to hope and faith. The poet explains that hope dawns only when a person has lost all his hope. Thus the poet says that "light" breaks in only where there is no light, that is no hope in the heart of people. Water is pushed in their tides, which means, it helps the person keep going only when he has given up. The sentence, "And, broken ghosts with glow-worms in their heads," means that in the difficult times, when the mind of a person is filled with worries, a small ray of hope and goodness flickers in them. Hope and faith have the potential to fill life in someone, when the person has lost hope from life and living.

The poet describes how life of a man proceeds through time. He uses candle as a metaphor for life and ageing. "A candle in the thighs, Warms youth and seed and burns the seeds of age" means that time passes by and ages us; we reach our youth, and get older with time, and bring up our next generation. The "seeds" is symbolic of his fate that he reaps by his deeds in present. The fate of a man is already written in the stars, which unfolds with time. The candle burns with time, and this candle has hair instead of wax, which grows silver as it keeps burning.



The poet is trying to express that difficult times are inevitable in life, and are very limited when compared to the happy and joyful times we lead in our life. When eyes turn tired of looking for a single ray of hope through darkness, the “light” rejuvenates your body, and brings warmth in emotions. This hope is like heat of sun in a cold winter. Hope comes as a life-saver which brings joy in our heart and helps keep moving forward. When a ray of hope breaks in the mind of a person, it brings the entire body to life, and gushes blood in the entire body. And the person experiences a smile which comes with tears, and brings a sense of divinity and thankfulness in the man. This divinity cannot be stopped by anything in the world or any powers in the sky.

When God shows mercy, there is no logic that works to help us understand how it happened and why it has happened. Hope comes to us in secrecy, where a person can understand only when he is experiencing it. And when he experiences it, it is no similar to any other feeling in the world.



UNIT IV - FICTION

ANIMAL FARM

- GEORGE ORWELL

Consider “Animal Farm” as political satire:

INTRODUCTION:

George Orwell’s Animal Farm is not only a story of mere animals but one in which animals and human beings are symbol representations. The subject is communism. The entire novel covered the period of Stalin Regime in Russia between 1924 and 1953. As a symbolic novel, Animal Farm suggested the very idea that every revolution has the will of freedom and every revolution aims at the removal of tyranny of the government but after success, the revolutionaries became tyrants themselves and they imitate the same which one they felt was tyrannical of needed to be changed.

This idea was exemplified by the animal fable, by making Napoleon, the pig revolt against Mr. Jones the owner of the farm and became a tyrant himself of his own race, after defeating Mr. Jones. An old boar named Major was satiric protract of Karl Marx, who paved a way for October Revolution in Russia. It represented Lenin too. Major, the prize boar of manor farm, encouraged the other animals of the farm to rebel against the cruel drunkard; Mr. Jones the only man in the farm, of Major, the boar was the opinion that man was responsible for the miseries of animals. He asked the animals to fight for the freedom. After the death of old Major, his thoughts were formulated into seven commandments’ of the farm. All the animals vowed not to violate the commandments. In story, all animals stay united before the revolution took place but after revolution one can see groupism. The first commandment reads “whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy” stands for the general principle of Marx that capitalists are the enemies of communism. The second commandment, “whatever goes on four legs or has wings is a friend” symbolized the fact that all down trodden and economically suppressed and oppressed ones were to be united under communism or socialism.

The next three commandments were Animals are not asked to wear clothes, not to sleep in bed, and not to drink alcohol like humans were their enemies. These symbolize the denial of luxurious life of commoners. The last two commandments represent equality and fraternity when Mr. Jones forgot to feed the animals, they started to revolt against him.



They soon got success in driving our Mr. Jones with his men from the farm. They changed the name of the farm from “Manor Farm” to “Animal Farm”. They wrote on the wall of the farm the seven commandments of Animalism which forbade animals to associate with human beings.

After the revolutions, the two pigs, Napoleon and snowball who were the wisest among the animals became the leaders of the animal farm. Someday after there was conflict between snowball and Napoleon, Snowball wanted to spread the revolt to the neighboring farms. He wanted to establish a wind mill. This was opposed by Napoleon snow was chased by Napoleon from the farm by his body guard of dogs later, snowball disappeared from the farm. Napoleon declared that snowball was a traitor. He ordered the other animals to follow his leadership.

Napoleon became an almost legendary god like figure with the uninteresting work in the wind mill and the increasing appetites of the non productive pigs and dogs the living condition of other animals worsened the pigs as they belonged to the ruling class were provided with special food. They began to sleep and have wine all the time. This was the violation of the fifth commandment – “No animal would drink alcohol”. When the wind mill was destroyed by a storm, Napoleon declared that it was destroyed by snowball when few animals revolted against him. They were attacked by dogs. It resulted in many deaths in the farm. Napoleon did not care.

Boxer who was very strong in morals as well as in physique started to reconstruct the wind mill when Boxer was injured, Napoleon send it to a butcher’s house. But he lied that boxer was sending to the hospital. Then pigs were established good relations with human beings. The animals that were participated in the revolution against Mr. Jones began to die one after another. The young ones did not know the fact of revolution. In the mean time, the leader Napoleon became fat and began to walk on two legs like human beings. He became another Mr. Jones, the farmer the manor farm. All the animals’ becomes slaves to Napoleon and the pigs.

Animal farm was the story of the decline and developments of Russian policies. The period, in which the novelist aimed in his novel was the period of Stalin, the Stalin claimed that he had been a democratic ruler, but people suffered under his tyranny just as the other animals suffered under the rule of Napoleon. Thus Animal Farm was a political satire based on historical and political details.



UNIT V – DRAMA

THE APPLE CART

G.B. SHAW

INTRODUCTION:

George Bernard Shaw was the greatest British dramatist, next to Shakespeare. He was an Irishman, born in Dublin on 26th July 1856. He was the youngest son of the three children of George Carr Shaw and Lucinda Elizabeth. Shaw started writing stories and other articles very early in his life period (1879 – 83). Shaw wrote his first play, “Widowers’ Houses” in 1892, and his last play “The Apple Cart” in 1929. He wrote nearly fifty plays. He was awarded ‘Nobel Prize’ in 1925 for Literature. He died on November 2, 1950 at the age of ninety five. ‘The Apple Cart’ was Shaw’s last major play. It is G.B. Shaw’s most brilliant political play which states his opposition against Plutocracy. The play is set in the palace of King Magnus in the last quarter of the 20th Century. The title of the play is figurative. Shaw described his ‘The Apple Cart’ as a Political Extravaganza.

SUMMARY OF THE PLAY:

The play begins with a conversation between Sempronius and Pamphilius, both were private secretaries of the King Magnus. There was a meeting expected to be conducted on the court of King Magnus with Boanerges, who describes himself as a plain – speaking man. But he quite frankly informs his views about the way in which England is to be governed. He then says that the country has to be governed not by King Magnus but by the King’s ministers. He further says that the King Magnus is only a constitutional monarch and remained as a kind of rubber-stamp. It was opposed by Boanerges. He says that, if England becomes a republic, he will sure to become the President. But King Magnus doesn’t agree with this point. King Magnus is very sure about his secure position if even England becomes republic. During their conversation the Prime Minister along with several other ministers arrives there. King Magnus leaves the court in order to attend his daughter Alice’s needs. There went a series of discussion about King’s last speech in the public, during the absence of king. Later King arrived there with the accompaniment of Amanda, the post mistress General and Lysistrata, power mistress General. Proteus informed about the Ultimatum which he has brought it to get the signature of King Magnus. And Proteus also warned the King that he must not expect to exercise that veto at any time or on any occasion and added that he must remain as a dumb kind of king. The king tries



to convince the prime minister and ministers by telling them that he is aiming to help them in governing the country. But all the King's eloquence and logic fail to influence the Prime Minister. So the king asks for a few hours time to think over the matter and to take a decision on the Ultimatum. A few hours later the cabinet reassembles. King Magnus says that he doesn't want to remain a dumb king and so he decided to abdicate the kingship and let his son Robert to succeed him on the throne. Hearing his speech, the Ministers are satisfied. The king continues, after abdicating he would become a normal citizen and he would fight the election in order to become a member of the parliament and after becoming the Member of Parliament he would organize the political party and become leaders of the majority party. This news shocked Proteus and everyone who assembled at there, because if King Magnus come to political field he will surely defeat Proteus. Proteus feels very nervous and so he withdraws the Ultimatum and no Ultimatum and no abdication of king and also no general election and that thing will go on as before.

CONCLUSION:

Though Prime Minister Proteus is an intelligent, King Magnus wins him by his wisdom. He declares that he has a winning card and knows how and when to play it. Thus the play ends without any particular result, except the resolution of the political crisis between the king and the cabinet. Through this play, Shaw says that the conflict in this play is not really between royalty and democracy, but both these on one side and Plutocracy on the other.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE:

The idiom "to upset the apple cart" means "to upset somebody's plan". At the end of the play, Nicobar asks the king not to upset the applecart and it means that he should not upset the cabinet's plan. The title 'The Apple Cart' signifies the condition of the government under a certain leader or rather a strong man. The 'Apple Cart' consists of a driver and lots of apples being carried on the cart. The cabinet of Ministers functions the same role of the Apple Cart. It is to decide who will drive the Apple Cart-King Magnus or the Prime Minister Proteus. Both of them are stronger in their position. King Magnus is rather wise and clever than Prime Minister Proteus. It is true that if two men are on the same horse riding, only one is allowed to sit on the front. But the question arises who will sit on the front, in case of resignation from any of them, it may upset the cart.



Boanerges, a newly appointed cabinet minister meets the king and tells him in clear term that the country has got to be governed, not by the king but by the king's ministers. He also added that the king must be a kind of rubber-stamp, and has to put his signatures to whatever decision taken by the cabinet and whatever bills have been passed by the parliament. The cabinet led by Proteus starts with the crisis that the king should not mention his veto powers and should not try to influence the press.

Magnus argues in favour of his powers of Veto, saying that it is only he who can protect the country against the encroachments of big business and against the danger of the country falling completely under the influence of the business and industrial magnates. However Proteus is determined to assert the authority of the elected ministers, and to reduce the king to a cipher. Proteus asks the king to sign the Ultimatum and act according to that Ultimatum. The terms of the Ultimatum are that the king should not make any public speeches, and he would not try to influence the Press of the country, and that the king would never again mention his powers of veto. After hearing this, the king asks for a few hours time to think over the matter.

A few hours later the cabinet reassembles King Magnus says that he doesn't want to be a dumb king so he decided to abdicate the kingship and let his son Robert to succeed him on the throne. He tells that after abdicating the throne, he would become a normal citizen; he would fight in the election in order to become a member of the parliament. The king adds that after becoming the member of the parliament he would organize the political party and become leader of the majority party. This shocked everyone and also Proteus, because if King Magnus comes to political field he will sure defeat him. Proteus feels very nervous so he withdraws the Ultimatum. He decides that the things would continue as before and that the crisis in the relations between the king and the cabinet should be regarded as having ended without any tangible or positive result. And by this decision the government would continue to function as before, and that the constitutional king would have in reserve certain powers which he might exercise in case he finds parliament or the cabinet going against the genuine interest of the country. The meeting between the king and the cabinet having ended on a note of reconciliation, Magnus says: "So I have not upset the apple cart after all, Mr. Nicobar".

The apple cart thus has not been upset, though it was on the point of being upset. If Magnus had actually abdicated, the apple cart would have been upset because all the calculations



of Proteus and his ministers would have been upset. In any case one can say that the play has an appropriate title.

THE THEME OF THE PLAY:

The main theme of the play is Shaw's opposition against the Plutocracy. Shaw says that his play is not a condemnation of democracy at all, and that the conflict in the play is not between the kingship and democracy but both on one hand and Plutocracy on the other hand. Shaw was not opposing the principle of democracy to be swamped by the rich business class seeking to enrich itself. Shaw in this play upholds the principle of democracy or representative government though he would not like the elected cabinet to fall a prey to the manipulation of the business and industrial magnets. In other words Shaw wants a balance of power between the elected parliament or cabinet and a monarch who always has in reserve the power of veto, even though he may never make use of it. The main things Shaw wants to tell is

- 1) The very important requirement is that a country should not only industrialize itself or expand its industries but should take care to see that the essential and indispensable are not neglected.
- 2) Shaw makes it clear that a minister should not become a puppet or a rubber stamp in the hands of the officials of the civil service. The bureaucracy should not be allowed to become more powerful.
- 3) Shaw doesn't want the private enterprise to become powerful. Private enterprise is certainly important but it should not be permitted to usurp the powers which the public ministers should exercise and private enterprises should allow growing to rich as to buy the ministers.

In the preface to "The Apple Cart", Shaw makes it clear that he is not an anti-democrat and that he didn't intend this play to be a condemnation of democracy. Shaw is not a royalist and that he is certainly not an advocate of absolute Kingship. He accepts the position of the King of England should be a constitutional monarch, though he would not like the king to be a puppet. Politically Shaw wants the country to be ruled by the elected representatives of the people though at the same time he wants that these elected representatives should function in consultation with the constitutional King, and in a manner which benefits the country. He further wants the constitutional King should keep a healthy check upon the elected



representatives. And, from the economic point of view, he wants an equitable distribution of wealth among the people.

Prepared by
Mrs. N. RENUKA
HOD of English
Sri Sarada College for Women, Tirunelveli.