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I – V



ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY
DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

B.A. English
Third Semester

**HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM CHAUCER TO
TRANSITION POETS**

UNITS : I – V

B.A. ENGLISH
Third Semester
HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM CHAUCER TO TRANSITION POETS

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SYLLABUS

Learning Objectives

By introducing the course, it is intended to

- LO1: introduce the readers to the Salient features of the different Ages and the writers
- LO2: make the students familiar with writers who shaped British Literature
- LO3: introduce the students to the social and political conditions up to the Age of Pope.
- LO4: make the students understand the literary periods
- LO5: make the students understand the transitions of the various literary movements

Course Outcomes

At the End of the Course, the Students will be able to:

- CO1: appreciate the prominent writers of the Age and their works
- CO2: comprehend the characteristics of the Neoclassicism
- CO3: appreciate the Old English and the Middle English
- CO4: interpret the Salient Features of the Ages of Study
- CO5: equip to take part in NET/SET and Competitive Examinations

Unit – I

1. An Introduction to the History of English Literature
2. The Age of Chaucer
3. The Age of Spenser

Unit – II

1. The Elizabethan Age

Unit – III

1. The Puritan Age

Unit – IV

1. The Age of Dryden
2. The Age of Pope

Unit – V

1. The Age of Johnson
2. The Transition Poets

Supplementary Reading

1. Albert, Edward. *History of English Literature*. New Delhi: OUP, 2011.

Reference Books

1. Daiches, David. *A Critical History of English Literature*. Volumes I-V, Chennai: Allied Publishers, 1995.
2. Long, William J. *English Literature: Its History and Its Significance for the Life of the English Speaking World*, New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2015.
3. Ward, Adolphs William. *The Cambridge History of English Literature*. 1-7 Volumes. London: Forgotten Books, 2018.
4. Compton-Rickett. *A History of English Literature*. New Delhi: USB Publication, 2009.
5. Carter, Ronald. *The Routledge History of Literature in English*. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2016.

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HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM CHAUCER TO TRANSITION POETS

CONTENTS

Unit No	Lesson No	Title	Page No
I	1.	An Introduction to the History of English Literature	1
		The origins of English Literature	
		Old English and Anglo-Saxon Poetry	
		Middle English: Chaucer and the Canterbury tales	
		Drama: mystery and miracle plays; morality plays	
		The development of drama	
	2.	The Age of Chaucer	7
		Fifteenth Century: Poetry - Scottish, Chaucerian, Ballads.	
		Fifteenth Century: Prose - Bemens. The Drama.	
		The Renaissance and the Reformation.	
		Early Tudor or pre-Elizabethan Literature - Poetry Prose. The Educationists Translators of the Bible	
	3.	The Age of Spenser	20
		Poetry: Spenser: The Amoretti and Epithalamion.	
The Four Hymns to Love and Beauty.			
Spenser' Contemporaries: Sidney. The Sonneteers. Other Kinds of Poetry.			
II	4.	The Elizabethan Age	30
		Prose: Lyly - Sidney - Other Writers of Fiction - The Pamphleteers - Literary Criticism - Historical Literature - Literature of Travel - Translations.	
		The Drama before Shakespeare - Medieval Drama. Moralities. Renaissance Drama. Classical influence of the Drama. The First Comedy and the First Tragedy.	
		The University Wits.	
		Shakespeare : Life - Plays - Criticism - A Survey of the Plays - Estimate of Shakespeare - Defects - Shakespeare's Philosophy - Elizabethan Stage.	
III	5.	The Puritan Age	43
		Political and Social Background: The Puritan Age.	
		Poetry (1) Spenserians - The Schools of Ben Jonson and Donne - Ben Jonson and Cavalier Lyrists - Herrick Carew - Sucking - Lovelace.	
		Donne and Metaphysical School of Poetry - The Metaphysical Poets - The Pioneers of Classicism - Cowley Denham and Waller.	
		Poetry (2) - Milton - Life - Milton's Poetry - Characteristics of Milton's Poetry.	
		Prose - the Authorised Version of the Bible - Writers of Om ate Porse and Plain Prose - Minor Writers - The Character Writers.	

Unit No	Lesson No	Title	Page No
IV	6.	The Age of Dryden	59
		Political and Social Background: The Restoration Period: Poetry – Dryden - Other Satirists - Lyrics.	
		Drama - Tragedy - Comedy	
		Prose - The Diarists.	
		The Augustan Age:	
	Queen Anne Prose: Daniel Defoe - Jonathan Swift - Richard Steele - The Tatler and Spectator - Other Prose Writers.		
	7.	The Age of Pope	76
The Age of Pope: Poetry - Pope's Place in English Poetry			
Minor poets.			
V	8.	The Age of Johnson	81
		The Age or Johnson: Poetry - James Thomson - William Shenstone – William Collins - Gray - The Revival of Medieval Literature - Goldsmith.	
		Precursors of the Romantic Period - William Cowper - George Crabbe – William Blake - Robert Burns - Minor Poets.	
		The Eighteenth Century Novel - Samuel Richardson - Henry Fielding - Tobias Smollett - Laurence Sterne - Minor Novelists.	
		The Age of Johnson: Prose (Essay) - Samuel Johnson, Boswell, Goldsmith - Minor Essayists.	
	9.	The Transition Poets	97
		The Historical background	
		James Thomson	
		Oliver Goldsmith	
Other Transitional Poets			

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

1.1 OBJECTIVES

A History of English Literature is an account of the literary works that found their rightful place in the several periods during its history. While studying the History of English Literature, it is imperative to understand the man and the work created by him. To familiarize our learners with the various ages of English literature is the prime aim of this lesson.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The history of literature is the historical development of writings in prose or poetry that attempt to provide entertainment, enlightenment, or instruction to the reader and listener as well as the development of the literary techniques used in the communication of these pieces. History and literature are the essential studies of the humanities because they interpret for us the human experience. To the extent that that teachers are knowledgeable about these subjects, they are better able to communicate with one another. Studying for an English Literature at undergraduate degree level allows the learner to develop a thorough knowledge of literary history, theory, and criticism, and enhances their understanding of a wide range of cultures and intellectual traditions. When students study Literature, they learn to appreciate words and their power. They travel to other realms and times through the texts they read. They understand about their own culture and others'. They learn to empathise with characters, to feel their joys and pain. Literature allows a person to step back in time and learn about life on Earth from the ones who walked before us. We can gather a better understanding of culture and have a greater appreciation of them. They learn through the ways history is recorded, in the forms of manuscripts and through speech itself. Literature is a portal into other people. It allows the learner to break down the doors of our culture, identity, and personal past. It brings us into close connection with others — allowing us to see all the horror, honor, and awe lurking in the human experience

The aim of the general outline course in English literature ought to be and professedly is to give the learners some knowledge of, and insight into, the great sweep of literature in English; to make them sharers in the imperishable thought of the world; to awaken them to the joy and cheer that come from companionship with the great literary artists; and to stimulate in them a love of books and a desire to read for themselves. For the course is the history of English literature. The emphasis is upon development and evolution. The attempt is to show the gradual progress of expression in prose and verse from the beginning to the present time. The period must be considered first; the author and his life second; the author's work last. Obviously the important thing for the learners is to get his historical

perspective right, to keep in mind who wrote what, to remember the dates of the birth and death of several dozen of the more important writers

1.3 CONTENT

THE ORIGINS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

A writer of exceptionally powerful personality is sure to stamp his impress upon his age; some of his contemporaries might be tempted to follow him or even imitate him. His influence will be revealed in their thought and style. In this way schools' or 'movements' are initiated which last for a while until a major change is sought to be introduced by the later writers. For example, we can think of the School of Pope, which would refer to the whole succession of poets who wrote in the particular style, namely the 'classic' movement in verse. These different schools play a significant part in the development of literature. They are as important to the student as the individual writers themselves. Even these men have their intellectual ancestry and are often deeply indebted to others for inspiration and example. We often think of Shakespeare as if he is an independent entity in the literary period of his day. But the fact is while writing the popular plays, he drew material for them from his predecessors.

So what emerges from this is that the history of literature must take it to account all these minute details governing an author's scholarship and creativity. It must establish the relation between one writer and another and one group and another group. It must trace the rise, growth and decline of these schools and 'movements'. It must give due regard to any particular writer who has exerted considerable influence in the making of literature either by following the old models or by blazing new trails. As such age has its diverse interests and peculiarities. The literature produced during that period is governed by certain prevailing tastes. As these tastes differ from period to period, they give way to new ones. Having these things in mind, we can say that the aim of the history of literature is to give a clear account of the whole transformation of literature from one age to the other and in the process to mark out the causes that produce it.

Of these causes the major one is that created or introduced by the writer himself. At the same time other considerations like the culture, ideals, mental and moral tendencies of the world in which he was born also weigh strongly in the history of literature. Very often he meets or anticipates the general taste of the public to which he turns and makes an appeal. Every writer is a product of his time and as such we have to inquire into the. Nature of the influences that shaped his thought, directed his taste and helped to give a distinctive character to his creations. Sometimes the influences can be described as purely 'literary'. In this context illustrations could be had for so many periods in English literature. In the Elizabethan period the people had a liking for the Greek and Latin classics, which had come with the Renaissance. They were also influenced by the powerful spell of Italian literature, during the same period. It was the French literature that exercised the spell during the seventeenth century. The German literature did the same a hundred years later. The reawakening from about 1750 onward reflects the taste of people for the art and literature of the middle Ages. Coleridge was one such writer to be carried away by those waves of interest. Sometimes the influences also

come from general life, politics and society. We must think of the work of authors of a certain period, who, while living in a certain period, was affected by the atmosphere and currents of that age. The Reformation, Puritanism, the French Revolution, the enormous progress of Science during the nineteenth century are all important happenings, which the student cannot overlook.

So it is clear the history of literature of any particular country has closer connection with the general history. Its main aim is to trace the progress of English literature (for our purpose here) through all its Vicissitudes from age to age and in doing so, explain the successive changes that have created an impact on its matter, form and spirit. A study of the History of English Literature will consider the influences by which these changes have been brought about and their special contribution to literature and of the forces personal or impersonal.

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND ENGLISH HISTORY

Every man has his own age and race. Though he has his own personality and mental make-up, the spirit of his age and race finds expression through him. In this sense the History of English Literature has national as well as individual literary appeals. It is not only the single greatest achievement of any particular writer, but also a great body of literature reflecting the genius of the English people as a whole. Whatever good or evil one may have out of it has also definitely found its way into the texture of literature. If history is the record of the nation's biography, literature is its autobiography. In the former we read of men, their actions and achievements. In the latter we read of its intellectual and moral development. As we read through the literature of different times in its history, we are brought into direct and living contact with the key influences and major events that have shaped the inner life of successive generations. Thereby we learn at first hand how life was at a particular time, what currents flew, what interest it stressed, what amusement, passions and standards of tastes ruled supreme and what types of character it deemed worthy enough to admire and emulate. In short the study of the History of English Literature always makes us think of the progressive revelation of the mind and spirit of the English people.

CLASSIFICATION INTO PERIODS

As a matter of convenience, it is desirable to divide the History of English Literature into so many periods.

The division has to be effected to split the large segment into smaller ones. It is also because a period running to a certain length of time has a particular kind of taste and naturally the literature of such period is marked by various common characteristics. While the individual writers differ from one to the other the characteristics of the age will nevertheless be there in them. With a change of taste, one period comes to an end and another starts its count. Yet they are not to be treated as water-tight compartments, each remaining exclusively free of another. In history we must treat these changes as continuous and not as having a beginning or end. In fact in strict chronology, a man's work may begin in one age and end in another age. So it is obvious that all divisions have something arbitrary about

them. Though Dryden was 43 when Milton died and lived for 26 more years, we consider them not as contemporaries, but as writers belonging to different periods. For practical purposes the periods have been divided and are fairly well defined. They are valuable because they help us to understand each and all important things pertaining to different periods. At bottom it is the great gradual transformation to record, which is the very purpose of history of literature.

Tabulation can be made of these different periods. It is conventional to mark each of them with fitting labels that may be derived from history or the Movement itself. Examples: the Elizabethan Age, the Age of Restoration, The Victorian Age and so on. It will be well and good to take labels from literature itself so that each period could be called by the name of its most characteristic and representative writer. Leaving out of consideration the literature during Chaucer's period and the one that went before it, we can have for our study the Age of Spenser, the Age of Dryden, the Age of Pope, the Age of Johnson, the Age of Wordsworth, the Age of Tennyson, the Age of Hardy and the Modern Period or the Twentieth Century Literature.

The following table will indicate the rough limits of these periods and their relations with the periods of general history,

PERIODS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

S.No.	Literary Periods	Approximate Dates	Historic Periods
1.	Pre-Chaucerian Period	500-1340	Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman periods.
2.	The Age of Chaucer	1340-1400	Middle Plantagenet Period
3.	The Age of Spenser	1400-1557	Later Plantagenet Period, Early Tudor Period
4.	The Age of Shakespeare	1557-1625	The Elizabethan Age, the Jacobean Age.
5.	The Age of Milton	1625-1660	The Carolian Age
6.	The Age of Dryden	1660-1700	The Age of Restoration
7.	The Age of Pope	1700-1745	The Age of Queen Anne, Early Georgian Age.
8.	The Age of Johnson	1745-1798	Middle Georgian Age
9.	The Age of Wordsworth	1798-1832	Later Georgian Age or The Age of the Revolution.
10.	The Age of Tennyson	1832-1887	The Victorian Age.
11.	The Age of Hardy	1887-1928	Late Victorian Age or Early Modern Period.
12.	The Present Age	1930-1970	The World War and its aftermath.

1.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The History of English literature is always divided into periods. This division is made, it is true, primarily as a matter of convenience, since for purposes of study it is necessary to break a large subject up into parts; but there is also a real justification for it.
2. A period in the sense which we properly attach to the term, is a certain length of time during which a particular kind of taste prevails, and the literature of which is therefore marked by various common characteristics of subject-matter, thought, tone, and style.

3. History recognizes only a continuous flow, and knows nothing of absolute endings and beginnings. Hence, in fact, age overlaps age, and in strict chronology a man's work may begin in one and end in another.
4. We can see at once that all proposed divisions have something arbitrary about them when we remember that Dryden was a man of forty-three when Milton died, and outlived him only twenty-six years, and that we yet always consider them not as contemporaries, but as representatives of different epochs.
5. Still, on the whole, the periods of literature are fairly well denned, and in practice they are of the utmost value because they help us to concentrate attention upon the things which are most important in each successive stage of that great gradual transformation which, as we have learned, it is the main business of a history of literature to record.
6. The Old English period begins in the middle of the 5th century with the coming of Germanic tribes to settle in England. The Middle English period begins with the conquest of England by Normans after their success in the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the end of this period is marked by the introduction of printing by William Caxton in 1476.
7. The early modern period begins with the 16th century and is characterized by an expansion in vocabulary by borrowing from classical languages, by the gradual conclusion of the Great Vowel Shift (see below) and by the regularization of English grammar after the demise of the language's former inflectional morphology.
8. Anglo-Saxon Poetry (or Old English Poetry) encompasses verse written during the 600-year Anglo-Saxon period of British history, from the mid-fifth century to the Norman Conquest of 1066. Almost all of the literature of this period was orally transmitted, and almost all poems were intended for oral performance.

1.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Explain the origin of English literature?
2. How many periods are there in English literature?
3. Trace the origin of modern drama.
4. Describe the English theatre in the 15th century.
5. Name the important Prose writers of the 15th century

1.6 SUMMARY

Literature is the reflection of life. It mirrors the society in which it is generated. The word literature comes from the Latin word 'litaritura' meaning "writing organized with letters". We classify literature according to language, origin, historical period, genre, and subject matter. Initially, literature was a form of entertainment for the people. Over time, it attained the purpose of reform as well. The writers stated highlighting the social issues in their writing. Thus, it became a medium to draw the audience's attention to certain matters and urge them to think about the reform. From ancient civilizations to the modern era, indeed, all the works of literature have given us insight into the issues and trends prevailing at that

time. Literature also provides escape from the 'grim realities' of life. While many people read to escape the boredom of their life. Moreover, the higher type of literature helps the reader to escape from trivial reality into significant reality.

English literature, however, emerged with the beginning of the history of English people. It refers to all the literary works (novels, short stories, poems, fiction, nonfiction, and plays) composed in English. The earliest works of English literature mirror the life lived by the people of that region at that specific period. For instance, all the changes undergone by English society from the earliest to the modern time have left their imprints on English literature. Being the literature of a nation characterized by the spirit of determination, adventure, and diligence, English literature is rich in vitality, diversity, and essence.

1.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. English Literature before the Conquest
2. Explain the Periods of English Literature.
3. The dialects of Middle English
4. The impact of Old English.
5. What are morality plays? Explain

1.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Alexander, Michael. *A history of English Literature*. London: Macmillan, 2000.
2. Brink, Bernhard Ten. *History of English Literature*. London: G.Bell, 1986.
3. Quennell, Peter. *A History of English Literature*. London: Ferndale Editions, 1981.

1.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Old English
2. Periods of English Literature.
3. The dialects of Middle English.

1.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Blamires Harry, *A short History of English Literature*. London, Routledge, 2020
2. Francies Collier William, *A History of English Literature a series of Biographical Sketches*, Norderstedt Hans eBooks GmbH 2017.
3. Long, William J. *Outlines of English Literature: With Readings*. Boston: Ginn.

1.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss with your friends about the importance of the periods of English Literature.

1.12 KEY WORDS

Dialect: A particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group

Epoch: A particular period of time in history or a person's life

Manifest: Clear or obvious to the eye or mind

Manuscript: Book or document written by hand rather than typed or printed.

THE AGE OF CHAUCER

2.1 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at enhancing the knowledge of students with a proper details about the age of Spenser and the Elizabeth as age.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The years from 1400 to the Renaissance may be described as a period of destitution. In poetry it was more acute. In the inflections to the analytical modern English, the last inflections were disappearing. When the final had become entirely mute, Chaucer's line was badly read and transcribed. His successors felt that it authorized them to write verse in their own way.

In the word of Legouis and Cazamian "England suffered not only checked progress, but also retrogression. Literature resumed its course as though "The Canterbury Tales" had never been written. The decline was immediate. Its signs appeared even in those who knew Chaucer, were near him and called him master, in "Occleve and Lydgate". The fourteenth century brightly opened for industrial England but the glory was overtaken by plague, the Black Death (1348-49), as a result most of the laborers escaped death, left the country. The prestige of the Church was, in truth, beginning to decline, and, then came the birth of parliament.

The literary moment of the age clearly reflected by five famous poets, in which, Langland, voicing the social discontent, preaching the equality of men and the dignity of labor; Wyclif, giving the Gospel to the people in their own tongue; Gower criticizing the vigorous life and plainly afraid of its consequences; Mandeville romancing about the wonders to be seen abroad; and Chaucer, sharing in all the stirring life of the times, and reflecting it in literature as no other but Shakespeare had ever done. the greater part reign of Edward III and the long French wars associated with his name: the accession of his grandson Richard II (1377); and the revolution of 1399, the deposition of Richard, and the foundation of the Lancastrian dynasty. From the literary point of view, of greater importance are the social and intellectual movements of the periods: the terrible plague called the Black Death, bringing poverty, unrest, and revolt among the peasant, and the growth of the spirit of inquiry, which was strongly critical of the ways of church, and found expression in the teaching of Wyclif and the Lollards, and in the stern denunciations of England.

Chaucer's age-like most historical ages-was an age of transition. This transition implies a shift from the medieval to the modern times, the emergence of the English nation from the "dark ages" to the age of enlightenment. Though some elements associated with modernity were coming into prominence, yet mostly and essentially the age was medieval-unscientific, superstitious, chivalrous, religious-minded, and "backward" in most respects.

The period between 1337 and 1453 is marked by a long succession of skirmishes between France and England, which are collectively known as the “Hundred Years War”. Under the able and warlike guidance of King Edward III (1327-1377) England won a number of glorious victories, particularly at Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. The French might crumbled and Edward was once acknowledged even the king of France. But later, after his demise and with the succession of the incompetent Richard II, the English might waned and the French were able to secure tangible gains.

2.3 CONTENT

2.3.1. FIFTEENTH CENTURY: POETRY - SCOTTISH, CHAUCERIAN, BALLADS.

Thomas Occleve (1370-1454) is the author of ‘Letter of Cupid’. It is a translation of the ‘Epostre du Dieu d amours’ of Christine de Pisan. It recalls “The Legend of Goode woman in theme, but it substitutes reasoning of imagination, humor and life. His Didactic work ‘The Regiment of Princes’ a translation from the Latin of Aegidius Romanus) was written for Henry, Prince of Wales, the future Henry V. In his ‘La Male Regle’ the poet tells us that he had bebanched youth and that none was better known than he to the keepers of taverns and cook shops in Westminster.

John Lydgate (1373-1450) has the distinction of being the most voluminous poet of the 14th and even the 15th century. His output was enormous. This Benedictine monk of Bury St. Edmunds was chiefly an indefatigable translator and compiler His longest poems are ‘The Stories of Thebes’ and ‘Trioye-Book’. The Falls of the Princes’ adapted from Boccaccio, ‘The Temple of Glas’, an allegory of love, “The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man’ a translation and some lives of saints like St. Edmund, St. Margaret, Out Lady and Others.

A comparison of Lydgate's treatment with Chaucer's brings out Chaucer's insight into emotion and psychology as against Lydgate's method of submerging individual characterization under a codified sequence of moral generalities. Harry Blamires states thus: “He moralizes and philosophizes the human scene into a grand organized literary fabric whose sections and sub-sections exploit the techniques of the rhetorical rule-book”.

Stephen Hawes (1523) was a man of culture with a taste for travel and a remarkable memory. He wrote loyal verse to congratulate Henry VII on his accession. He had a gift for phrases which lighten *up* his prolix muse. Look at the following lines:

“Be the day weary, or be the daylong.

At length it draweth to evensqng.”

The French aspects of Chaucer's genius attracted him mostly. In all, the reader of Occleve, Lydgate and Hawes will conclude that their work has literary merit of a fitful kind, but it is sadly lacking in spontaneity, original impulses and sincerity.

John Skelton (1460-1529) had a vigorous personality. A Norfolk cleric, a remarkable scholar he was at one time tutor to Henry VIII. His more popular work was 'Boke of Philip Sparrow' celebrating the pet bird of Mistress Jean Scrope. He had a liking for brief, jerky meters "Mistress Gertrude with womanhood endued".

Skelton was a pioneer in as much as he broke up old conventions of verse, suggesting new forms and infusing life and vigor in English poetry at a time when it was needed. He has something of Butler's gift of grotesquerie and of his genius for doggerel. His work cannot be said to be without a beneficent influence on the poetry of his age.

SCOTTISH LITERATURE IN THE 15TH CENTURY

Though the country had faced internal problems in the 14th century, Scotland had accomplished one great thing. Her winning of independence had served as trumpet call to the imaginative mind of the age. John Barbour leads the way with his patriotic poem-'Bruce' (1376). It recalls the famous lines of Shelley in the 'Masque of Anarchy'. The only poem which matches 'Bruce' is 'Wallace' written about 1461 by the minstrel called Blind Harry. The fabulous element looms larger in 'Wallace' than in 'Bruce'. But the two poems tell their amasses details and his substitution of decasy Uabic couplets for Barbour's eight syllable verses only protracts the line awkwardly and increases its monotony.

The first in the line of poets from Scotland to be influenced by Chaucer is King **James I** (1394-1436). His poem 'The King's Quair' is imitative of Chaucer and of French Romance. Animated by genuine imagination and feeling, it is a work of the heart. He had read and read Chaucer's translation of the 'Romande la Rose and the love scenes in 'Troilus and Criseyde' particularly that in which the lovers first meet. Because he himself had lived partly through the traditional fictions, there is a freshness in his imitations.

Robert Henryson (1430-1506), also a faithful admirer of Chaucer, shows real first-hand observation of nature and an insight born of high accomplishment. He was a schoolmaster in Dunfermline. He wrote, 'Moral Fables' and 'Testament of Creassid'. In the 'Fables', he enlivens the situations and relationships of the animals and drives home the moral in a concluding section of tale, named 'Moralities'.

'The Testament of Cresseid' is a sequel to Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde'. It tells how Diomedes wearies of Cressid and leaves her. She returns to Calchos and to his temple. She vents her anger in reproaches against Venus and Cupid. In a vision Cupid summons the seven planets to hear of Cresseid's blasphemy. As a result, she is condemned to suffering and an incurable disease. She finds herself a leper, goes to a hospital and moans there only to be pushed out from there to turn into a beggar. The agony becomes dramatic and the passing Troilus hands her a nice sum. Cresseid is so overwhelmed that she bequeaths a ring to Troilus after her death.

William Dunbar (1460-1530) became in a way the poet laureate of Scotland. He is the Burns of the 15th *century*, with something of that poet's passion for beauty, native humor and force of expression. His work shows him as an amorist, a moralist and a satirist. In 'The Thrissil and the Rais' he symbolizes the Marriage in 1503 of James IV to Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII. In 'Golden Targo' he uses unremittingly a nine-line stanza having two rhymes. The poet is accused by Dame Beauty and defended by Reason who shields him with a golden targo or shield, so that his enemies are powerless against him. The Presence blinds Reason by casting a powder in his eyes. The poet is held a prisoner afterwards.

His Dance of the 'Sevin Deidly Synnis.' written in lyrical twelve-lined stanzas, is perhaps the most characteristic of his poems. It ends with a rough jest against the Highlanders whom Dunbar held in contempt. But the verbal swing and the giddy liveliness alliterative lines with as much success as the Chaucerian meter. There is a note of melancholy in his 'Lament for the Makaris' in which he names the poets of his country and of England who have died. He has a dexterous control of rhythm and a ready adaptability of techniques to a variety of moods and purposes.

Gavin Douglas (1475-1522) regarded by some as a child of the New Age and by some as Chaucerian, rose to preferment in the Church. Of his chief works, mention may be made of the 'Palace of Honor' and the translation of the 'Aeneid' of Virgil. The 'Palace of Honor' is an allegory of the medieval times. There is more moralizing than art. His interest in Latin writers Virgil and Ovid suggest for the moment the inspiration of the new learning. There is a pictorial quality in some of them that faintly adumbrates the rich imagination of Spenser.

THE OLD BALLADS

Many English ballads have come to us in a form that dates from the 15th *century*. Oral transmissions have left details about their authors wrapped in mystery. At the outset the form easily lapses into doggerel. The well-received ballads contain beauty and pathos. In 'Lord Thomas and Fair Annie'. Annie's lover asks her to receive the wife he is determined to take. In 'Lady Maisry' Lord William learns that Lady Maisry, his mistress is being tortured for her love.

In 'A Guest of Robyn Hode' the knight returns home to his wife after having been helped to pay his debt to the Abbot of St, Mary's. His lands are thereby saved from confiscation. The dying bride in 'The Cruel Brother' brings the murder to light only as she is forced with questions' regarding her will.

'What will you leave to your brother John?

The gallows-tree to hand him on!

'Chevy chase' is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads. In theme and sentiment it is akin to 'Roland' or Byrhtnoth. The struggle between Percy of Northumberland and the Douglas of Scotland at the beginning of the 15th century forms the subject of this ballad. The division often leads to the rhyming of the first and third sections, giving quatrains with cross-rhymes (abab). The poem wins us by

the truthfulness of its feeling, of its restrained decoration and its details. The irregularity and rudeness found in them gave a new harmony to Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' and even to his 'Christabel'!

The Nut Brown Maid is a poem of special kind of this century in which a lady seeks to free women of the reproach of inconstancy constantly leveled against them by men. While the lady plays the part of the Nut Brown maid, the other speaker takes that of the outlaw. Each stanza has lines of seven accents, divided in 2+2+3. The dramatic interest and liveliness given to the little poem of 36 lirted stanzas cause its thesis to be forgotten in its story.

The Percy Folio contains in the first place, a group of Robin Hood Ballads, which share the old customs. Secondly there are broken-up modernized but vulgarized Arthurian ballads or short romances. A still larger group contains miscellaneous romances of adventure. Another class is known as Historical Ballads. Examples are 'The Murder of the Princes, 'The Rose of England' 'Bosworth Field' etc. Lastly there are the more romantic ballads such as 'Heir of Lynne' and the 'Nut Brown Main' itself.

George Saintsbury writes thus in 'A Short History of English Literature'.

"It is only by reading and rereading such books as this edition of Percy Folio. As Mr.W.C.Hazlitt's Early Popular Poetry and as Mr. Wright's collections of political poetry for the 'Rolls series' and his 'Carols' for the Percy and Warton Societies that the general character and substance of 15th century and early 16th century poetry can be properly appreciated...."

2.3.2. FIFTEENTH CENTURY: PROSE & DRAMA.

In this period the unconscious experiments of Chaucer, Wycliff and Mandeville were expanded and multiplied by writers in the most widely diverging branches of literature. The first half of this century was a period of narrow orthodoxy in which the Lollards were reduced to silence, only in the second half did a few rare works appear.

Reginald Peacock (1395-1460), the Welshman writing in English, has taken orders and become bishop of St.Asaph and Chicester, in his "Repression of Overmuch Blaming the Clergy' he defends images pilgrimages, to temporal goods of the church. The hierarchy, the papacy, but gives reasoning argument. He puts natural law above scripture and the sacraments. His prose shows a marked advance on that of his predecessors. He had clarity the gift of choosing homely examples and a wealth of words. His vocabulary was extensive. He drew on the double sources, English and French.

Like Peacock, Sir John Fortescue based his arguments on the law of nature. He premises that there are three kinds of government - absolute and monarchical, republican, constitutional and non monarchical. Fortescue was the first to admire the constitution of his country, which he praises in his 'De Laudibus Legum-Angliae. He wrote his little treatise of forty pages on 'The Governance of England'.

John Capgrave was born in 1393 at Lynn. He was a monk and wrote voluminously in both Latin and English. His 'Chronicle of England' is his main title to admission. His prose is singularly free from archaic obscurity, suited plainly for business-like narration. Robert Fabyan represents the second half of the century as the prior of Lynn does the first.

William Caxton (1421-91), the first English printer began his work at this time. He was the introducer of Malory's immortal book 'Le Morte Darthur'. Malory himself lived through the Wars of the Roses and spent some time in prison. He is said to have lived between 1408-71. 'Le Morte Darthur' is rather a collection of tales than a single work. The early books dealing with Arthur's first battles, his marriage, and his establishments of the Round Table and the extension of his conquests in Italy are interwoven with full developed tales. The unity at the end is less apparent as one moves through the maze of adventures in which the various knights pursue their heroic quests dealing deaths to dragons and knights, encountering deception, magic and sorcery.

Malory gave a thread of connection to all the adventures. The early deeds of valour tend to the glorification of Arthur's ideals and the rise of his kingdom. After triumph's of worldly pageantry and of spiritual exaltation before the Holy Grail, there is collapse. Old loyalties are forgotten. Finally it is not so much Launcelot's love that causes the disintegration as the evil-minded spite of those who reveal it to the king.

Caxton was a Kentishman. At 20, he left England and settled in Bruges. His stay in Flanders acquainted him with the most civilised court in Western Europe. He developed his energies as translator and printer. Caxton having been initiated by the printer Colard Mansion finished an incomplete translation 'Recauil des Histoires de Troye'. It was the first printed English book in 1474. After his return to England in 1476, he established the first English printing press near Westminster Abbey. He worked there until his death in 1491.

He printed 'The Canterbury Tales' (1478) and 'Troilus and Criseyde'. He preferred prose as a medium for the translation of French Chivalrous romances. His translation of 'The Golden Legend' had the largest circulation. He admired 'The Fair language of French' which was in prose so well and compendiously set and written, which me thought I understood the sentence and substance of every matter.' He himself aimed at clarity and ease.

After Malory's work another translation from the French Froissart's 'Chronicles' was done by John Bourchier. **Lord Berners** (1467-1533) and published in 1523-25. Lord Berner's excellent prose represents a return to the 14th century and is animated, lively and highly coloured as his original. His other book 'Huon of Bordeaux' contains the story of the dwarf, Auberon. The same Lord Berners was a pioneer of the new prose and precursor of the Euphuists in his translation of 'The Golden Book of Marcus Aurclius from the Spanish of Antoni de Guevara.

THE DRAMA

The modern drama rose out of the study and imitation of classical plays in schools and universities. It arose out of the Miracles. The Miracles did pass into the Moralities. In turn the latter passed into modern dramas. The germs of the drama were in the offices of the church. It was in the form of 'tropes' or declamation in dialogues that drama made its first appearance. Then they left the church and were played in the porch. The best known example of a transitional play is 'Adam'. It comprises three parts-the fall of Adam and Eve, the death of Abel and a procession of the prophets.

The first plays in English were performed under Henry III. In his reign the great cyclical representations had their beginning. The Easter and Nativity cycles were united and were performed together on corpus Christi Day. As for staging them, some platforms were fixed in a particular place and the audience went from one to another of them. But elsewhere the pageant was mounted on wheels and movable and the spectators stayed in one spot. Each of the pageants included, beneath the stage, a room in which actors spent the intervals.

The English theatre in the 15th century was powerfully organised, the guilds took an important part in its development. Its vitality and popularity were such as were surpassed nowhere. All the cycles preserved in England are of scenes from the Bible. The religious theatre continued to flourish when the Renaissance was in full swing. The difficulty of finding a meter appropriate to drama was the great obstacle to dramatic progress. The unknown authors of the miracle plays are not poets enough to animate their awkward stanzas. Yet they are capable of pathos and fill flavored comedy in their scenes.

"Abraham and Issac" is one play which depicts the conflicting sentiments of the father who has the will to obey God, but is stayed by the love for his child and of the son divided between submission to his father and fear of death. We are no doubt moved to tears; moral emotion and physical suffering are mingled. Goodman Noah conversing with the Lord, monologuing as he builds the Ark, describing what he does as he goes along and complaining of his stiff back and the concluding ingenuous dialogue-all this makes homely, cheerful whole in which the buffoonery is not out of place. The same mingling of piety and force goes to make the nativity play.

The earliest moralities preserved in England also belonged to the 15th century. They are a product of the allegorical period. For the characters of sacred history, they substitute abstractions, vice or virtues. It marks a considerable advance in the progress towards the modern drama. Its author is led. To analyze the human qualities and defects to stress psychological characteristics. The exact date of its birth is unknown. In the Coventry cycle there are such characters as Contemplation, Calumny, Defraction, Truth, Justice, Peace, and Death etc.

2.3.3. THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

The Reformation of the 16th century, sometimes known as “Protestant Reformation” in order to distinguish it from a Catholic “Reformation,” was a pan-European movement that called for reform of the Roman Catholic Church as well as the entirety of Christian society. For many of the reformers, however, more was at issue than mere reform; they called for a fundamental re-conceptualization of theology.

The Reformation failed in influencing the Catholic Church. Martin Luther, the early leader of the movement, was excommunicated by the Catholic Church, but defiantly pursued his understanding of the Christian faith. As a result of the Reformation new Protestant churches with distinct theological profiles emerged. Several features have characterized scholarship on the Reformation. For one, the historiography of the Reformation has traditionally tended to followed confessional lines, with Protestant scholars painting a negative picture of the state of the Catholic Church on the eve of the Reformation, and an exuberant picture of the achievements of the reformers.

Catholic scholars saw things the other way around. More recently a more judicious treatment, less confessionally oriented, of the religious turbulence of the 16th century has emerged. Also, historians of the Reformation have employed different conceptual frames of reference, particularly regarding the question of the primary factor (religion, politics, personal ambition, and economics) of the turbulence. This bibliography considers the broad outlines of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. Other entries consider the Reformation in England, France, and the German lands; the Catholic Reformation; the Radical Sects; and key Reformation individuals

The Renaissance was a cultural movement. It spanned between the 14th and 17th centuries. It is interesting to note that the Renaissance began in Florence in Italy in the Late Middle Ages. It spread to various parts of Europe later. The term Renaissance is generally used to refer to the historic era and cultural era.

The usage of the word Renaissance extends to the representation of other cultural movements too such as Carolingian Renaissance and the Renaissance of the 12th century. Renaissance was a cultural movement that began in Italy and spread across Europe while reformation was the Northern European Christian movement. Renaissance paved the way for the advancement in art and architecture, whereas Reformation paved the way for religious fragmentation. This is the key difference between renaissance and reformation.

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Another difference between Renaissance and Reformation is that the former started in Florence and ended spreading in different parts of Europe, whereas the latter spread only in northern Europe. Southern Europe remained Catholic. One of the distinguishing features of the Renaissance art was the delineation of linear perspective in its art pieces. On the other hand, the religious Reformation movement showed doctrinal differences among the reformers that led to the factions such as Puritans, the Lutheran, the Presbyterian and the Reformed.

2.3.4. EARLY TUDOR OR PRE-ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

The beginning of the Tudor dynasty coincided with the first dissemination of printed matter. William Caxton's press was established in 1476, only nine years before the beginning of Henry VII's reign. Caxton's achievement encouraged writing of all kinds and also influenced the standardization of the English language. The early Tudor period, particularly the reign of Henry VIII, was marked by a break with the Roman Catholic Church and a weakening of feudal ties, which brought about a vast increase in the power of the monarchy.

Stronger political relationships with the Continent were also developed, increasing England's exposure to Renaissance culture. Humanism became the most important force in English literary and intellectual life, both in its narrow sense—the study and imitation of the Latin classics—and in its broad sense—the affirmation of the secular, in addition to the otherworldly, concerns of people. These forces produced during the reign (1558–1603) of Elizabeth I one of the most fruitful eras in literary history.

The energy of England's writers matched that of its mariners and merchants. Accounts by men such as Richard Hakluyt, Samuel Purchas, and Sir Walter Raleigh were eagerly read. The activities and literature of the Elizabethans reflected a new nationalism, which expressed itself also in the works of chroniclers (John Stow, Raphael Holinshed, and others), historians, and translators and even in political and religious tracts. A myriad of new genres, themes, and ideas were incorporated into English literature. Italian poetic forms, especially the sonnet, became models for English poets.

Sir Thomas Wyatt was the most successful sonneteer among early Tudor poets, and was, with Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, a seminal influence. Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557) was the first and most popular of many collections of experimental poetry by different, often anonymous, hands. A common goal of these poets was to make English as flexible a poetic instrument as Italian. Among the more prominent of this group were Thomas Churchyard, George Gascoigne, and Edward de Vere, earl of Oxford. An ambitious and influential work was *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1559), a historical verse narrative by several poets that updated the medieval view of history and the morals to be drawn from it.

The poet who best synthesized the ideas and tendencies of the English Renaissance was Edmund Spenser. His unfinished epic poem *The Faerie Queen* (1596) is a treasure house of romance, allegory, adventure, Neoplatonic ideas, patriotism, and Protestant morality, all presented in a variety of literary

styles. The ideal English Renaissance man was Sir Philip Sidney—scholar, poet, critic, courtier, diplomat, and soldier—who died in battle at the age of 32. His best poetry is contained in the sonnet sequence *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) and his *Defence of Poesie* is among the most important works of literary criticism in the tradition.

Many others in a historical era when poetic talents were highly valued, were skilled poets. Important late Tudor sonneteers include Spenser and Shakespeare, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, and Fulke Greville. More versatile even than Sidney was Sir Walter Raleigh—poet, historian, courtier, explorer, and soldier—who wrote strong, spare poetry.

Early Tudor drama owed much to both medieval morality plays and classical models. *Ralph Roister Doister* (c.1545) by Nicholas Udall and Gammer Gurton's *Needle* (c.1552) are considered the first English comedies, combining elements of classical Roman comedy with native burlesque. During the late 16th and early 17th cent., drama flourished in England as never before or since. It came of age with the work of the University Wits, whose sophisticated plays set the course of Renaissance drama and paved the way for Shakespeare.

The Wits included John Lyly, famed for the highly artificial and much imitated prose work *Euphues* (1578); Robert Greene, the first to write romantic comedy; the versatile Thomas Lodge and Thomas Nashe; Thomas Kyd, who popularized neo-Senecan tragedy; and Christopher Marlowe, the greatest dramatist of the group. Focusing on heroes whose very greatness leads to their downfall, Marlowe wrote in blank verse with a rhetorical brilliance and eloquence superbly equal to the demands of high drama. William Shakespeare, of course, fulfilled the promise of the Elizabethan age. His history plays, comedies, and tragedies set a standard never again equaled, and he is universally regarded as the greatest dramatist and one of the greatest poets of all time.

2.3.5. POETRY PROSE. THE EDUCATIONISTS TRANSLATORS OF THE BIBLE

The work of translating the Bible began around 250 B.C. when a group of Jewish scholars translated the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) into Greek because many Jewish people were living in places where Greek was the everyday language. Since that first Bible translation, the words of both the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) and the New Testament have been translated into hundreds of languages. These languages include ancient languages (like Coptic, Arabic, Latin, and Syriac), as well as more recent, modern languages (like Portuguese, Russian, Navajo, Danish, Spanish, and English). The purpose behind all these Bible translations is exactly the same: to put the words of the Bible into a language that people will understand.

One of the most important Bible translators was the Englishman William Tyndale (1484-1536), often called "The Father of the English Bible." Tyndale wanted to make the Scriptures understandable to all people. But due to the political and religious tensions that existed throughout Europe during the Reformation (14th-17th centuries), he was unable to get permission to do his translation in England.

So he went to Germany, where he published his New Testament in February 1526. Though he experienced a great deal of opposition, he continued his work of translating the Old Testament from Hebrew, and he published the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis through Deuteronomy) in 1530.

Tyndale's work and influence is most readily seen in what is surely the most significant English Bible translation ever done, the King James Version of the Bible, published in 1611. The King James Version (also called the Authorized Version) was prepared at the request of King James I of England at a time when several Church-sponsored versions of the English Bible were in use. Although there was resistance to the King James Version at first (since many people felt a loyalty to their own Church's translation), it eventually won wide acceptance and became the Standard English version of the Bible in the English-speaking world for three centuries. It remains one of the most widely-used English translations of the Bible today.

2.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The period between 1343 and 1450 is known as the Age of Chaucer. It marked the first significant literary age in English literature. It heralded a new era of learning. Chaucer's age also witnessed many social, political, and religious challenges.
2. There was a strong dislike for the Papal or Church's interference, which had previously been the citadel of moral authority, social prestige but now suffered from corruption, turpitude and superstitions.
3. There were strong nationalistic passions due to the 100 Years' War between England and France.
4. There was also the charged atmosphere due to the Peasant upheavals in England.
5. The middle class also emerged as a strong social stratum.
6. The East Midland dialect became the accepted form of standardized English. The language saw great achievement and expression in the masterpieces of Chaucer.
7. French and Latin saw a waning influence on the language of the day. Chaucer's use of language to describe the man and his place is embellished with beauty, simplicity and humour.
8. The common examples from the daily life account details of blooming gardens in spring to unique human characteristics. The language glorified themes of beauty, vitality and the secular sentiment.
9. The age is known for its scathing criticism of the established order and religion. Church's control over temporal affairs of common men was challenged during this period.
10. The English prose had its beginning in this age. Due to the ripening of the language, the prose could now be experimented with. The Biblical translation of John Wycliffe is an example of it.

11. The prose writing is both original and individual. There are experimental works like that of Thomas Mallory (King Arthur) and also a desire to shed the grip of Latin as seen in demand for an English Bible.
12. The formation of allegory was refined in this period. There was a return of alliteration which had been replaced with rhymes in the middle ages.

2.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of poetry and its promoters in the 15th century?
2. What do you know about the Scottish Literature in this period?
3. What is Ballad? Why were ballads popular in the 15th century?
4. Describe the part played by Caxton for the development of prose.
5. Name the important prose writers of the 15th century.

2.6 SUMMARY

The age of Chaucer is the first significant period in the literary history of England. In every walk of life there were signs of change. The social, political, religious and literary changes were taking place. In short, it was an age of change. The age of Chaucer was a transitional age. The medievalism was departing and modernism was developing slowly. Wycliffe and his followers were sowing the seeds of Reformation. They were making attack upon the church. Individualism was being emphasized. Military events were contributing to the growth of patriotism and national consciousness. The industrial development was giving rise to the middle and working classes. It led to the end of feudal system. In this way we find that the age of Chaucer was an era of transition.

The age of Chaucer witnessed the beginning of the Hundred Years War. England was at war with Scotland and France. This war brought great victories in the battles of Crecy and Poitiers. The consciousness of national unity was strengthened. The war gave a feeling of national pride and self respect to the people of England. The national life got purified and powerful national sentiments grew.

The age of Chaucer faced natural calamities and social unrest. Plagues and pestilences came, constitutional conflicts and unorthodoxy came to the forefront. In 1348-49 the terrible Black Death. It shook the social fabric violently. A large number of people died. It reappeared in 1362, 1367 and 1370. Famine followed plague. Vagrants and thieves multiplied. Labour became scarce. Heavy taxation was imposed. The Toll Tax brought about the peasants' revolt. This revolt was a clear sign of social tension and unrest. In the age of Chaucer the church was the seat of power and prestige. It was infected with corruption.

The churchmen were fond of wealth and luxury. They indulged themselves in all sorts of vices. They lived in a Godless and worldly way. John Wycliff, the morning star of the Reformation, led an attack upon the growing corruption of the church. The age of Chaucer marked the dawn of new learning. It brought about a change in the general outlook of the age. Man's intellectual horizon expanded. He began to make efforts to liberate himself from the shackles of theological slavery. Two Italian writers Petrarch and Boccaccio were the pioneers of this great revival.

But beneath the medievalism the heaven of Renaissance was already at work. The modern world was in the process of being born.

Thus in the age of Chaucer a curious modern note began to be apparent. There was a sharper spirit of criticism. The vogue of the romance was passing. In this age there was a spirit of revolt. The church was losing her great hold upon the masses of people. Reformation was in process. The light of new learning was shining. This age was given proper voice by Chaucer.

2.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Write a short note on Malory.
2. Trace the origin of modern drama.
3. What are Miracle Plays? Give example.
4. What are Morality Plays? Explain.
5. Describe the English theatre in the 15th century.

2.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Alexander, Michael. *A history of English Literature*. London: Macmillan, 2000.
2. Brink, Bernhard Ten. *History of English Literature*. London: G.Bell, 1986.

2.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. The major events of the Age of Chaucer
2. The characteristics of Chaucer's poetry.

2.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Blamires Harry, *A short History of English Literature*. London, Routledge, 2020
2. Francies Collier William, *A History of English Literature a series of Biographical Sketches*, Norderstedt Hans eBooks GmbH 2017.
3. Long, William J. *Outlines of English Literature: With Readings*. Boston:Ginn.

2.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss on the impact of Chaucer in Elizabethan age literature.

2.12 KEY WORDS

Renaissance-revival of art as literature

Doggeral-irregular

Dexterous-clever

Reformation-Radical changes for letter in social affairs.

THE AGE OF SPENSER

3.1 OBJECTIVES

This lesson will introduce the characteristics of the age of Spenser and his poetry in the history of English literature with reference to its literary and intellectual background.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The Age of Spenser in English literature refers to the latter half of the sixteenth century, a period that coincided with the reign of the last Tudor monarch Queen Elizabeth I, who brilliantly bound the destiny of England to the cause of her own success. Thus, a primary object of sixteenth-century English Renaissance writers—whose livelihood depended heavily upon literary patronage and the Court's favor—was the creation of a national literature befitting England's emerging status as a formidable world power and the implicit, and often explicit, celebration of the Queen herself. Considered the golden age of English history, Elizabeth's reign was an era of increased religious tolerance and relative peace until the war with Spain and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

During Elizabeth's tenure treasury coffers were replenished, shipping, trade, and commerce proliferated, and new roads were built that helped unify and connect the English population. Parliament also passed many reform laws touching currency, aid to the poor, agriculture, and industry. It was only in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign that England's fortunes soured and the country was again vexed by debt and increased internal strife. Yet her rule was primarily a time of peace, national unity, and affluence. This prosperity, coupled with Elizabeth's fervent patronage of the arts, nurtured the English Renaissance which peaked during her era. Virtually all fields flourished, including music, architecture, and painting, but especially literature, where important works appeared in the genres of drama, poetry, and prose.

Edmund Spenser (1552-99) first revealed poetic beauty to his generation. The appearance of the *Shepherd's Calender* inaugurated a period of self-confidence and vast hopes. Spenser was the master of the language whose numbers flower-as fast as spring doth ryse. He calls Chaucer his reserved master "the well of English undefyled."

The *Shepherd's Calender* is modeled on the artificial pastoral, popularized by the Renaissance and inspired by Virgil and Theocritus. The poem reveals a sober, chaste and sensitive spirit; one keenly alive to sensitive beauty, but kept from the grossness and coarseness of some of his brilliant contemporaries by a mind of singular refinement. Beauty is for him the supreme most value in life. Keats, phrase "A thing of beauty is a joy ever" is entirely Spenserian in sentiment.

The poem set out to be a story with twelve knights of Elizabeth who undertake various enterprises in her honor. But the poet had, unlike Chaucer, little gift of lucidity. He never completes his initial design. The poem is merely a lovely mosaic into which is woven deeds of chivalry and pictorial fantasies and grave moralizing. In a letter to Raleigh he avows that his purpose is "to fashion a gentlemen Invirtuous and gentle discipline." Sensitive to every phase of imagination and beauty there is always a dreamy atmosphere about his verse. His genius is epic, not lyric. He is a story-teller, not singer. He has something of Homer's ancient simplicity. But the similes are primal and direct. We may enjoy the adventures of his Knight of the Cross defending his beloved Una.

3.3 CONTENT

3.3.1 THE AMORETTI

In 1591 Spenser began his suit to Elizabeth Boyle to whom are addressed the eighty-eight sonnets of 'Amoretti' and the superb. 'Epithalamion' which concludes them. The sonnet was almost the sole medium of direct confession and personal expression. It was the publication of 'Astrophel and Stella' in 1591 which really gave rise to the passion for the sonnet and which prepared the way for the 'Amoretti' and several other poems.

Spenser's sonnets are unique by their purity. They tell a story of love without sin or remorse, its varying fortunes, the lovers' sighs until the day on which he is accepted and the charm of a harmonious and pure atmosphere. In many of them the poet extols his mistress's beauty with a great wealth of detail and colour and does not conceal the ardour of his desires.

The 'Epithalamion' which is their conclusion has no equal. Its 23 stanzas merely describe enthusiastically the whole of the poet's wedding day, from the dawn of the sun to the night which left the bride in her husband's arms. The breath which fills each strophe and passes unabated through them all to the end, the clear light which floods each successive picture and the fine classical structure of the whole poem make this ode Spenser's most perfect production and the lyrical triumph of the English Renaissance.

He celebrated the marriage of another in 'Prothalamion' (1596) which is filled with smooth images and harmonious lines. Before his death he wrote two more hymns to celestial love and beauty as an antidote to the terrestrial hymns of his youth.

THE FAERIE QUEENE

The towering bulk and the substantive interest of the 'Faerie Queene' give it the necessary supremacy among its smaller peers. The Prothalamion for Lady Elizabeth and Lady Katherine Somerset is a delightful poem, but it lacks the personal passion of 'Amoretti' and the 'Epithalamion,' The former is considered to be the best early sonnets in final couplet form next to Shakespeare. The latter is regarded by common consent as unsurpassed in its own kind as are the 'Four Hymns' in theirs.

'The Faerie Queene' is essentially a picture gallery. Fortune made him a painter in verse. In a dedicatory letter to Raleigh, Spenser explains that his book is a continued allegory or dark conceit. He has chosen King Arthur as his epic hero. The heroes of the first three books, the Red Cross Knight, Sir Guyon and the Lady Brito represent holiness, temperance and chastity respectively. The Faerie Queene keeps her annual twelve-day feast and on each day an adventurous cause would present itself. The real beginning of the action is when a clownish young man arrives at the royal fest and desires a boon which the queen cannot refuse.

A lady in mourning arrives, falls before the queen, and tells how her parents are besieged by a huge dragon. They sally forth and arrive at the beginning of Book 1. That the Faerie Queen should be Gloriana, Queen Elizabeth, is Queen consistent with her spiritual significance. Book II is really a little epic in itself. Sir Guyon, the Knight of Temperance comes upon the dying Amaria whose personality was destroyed by Acresia, the enchantress I her sexual and corrupting Bower of Bliss. Sir Guyon's quest is to destroy humanity's corruptor. Acresia and tear her bower to pieces.

Spenser the Spenserian stanza of nine lines, eight of them iambic pentameters and the ninth and Alexandrine. The stanza rhymes ababbab cc. The stanza proves a perfect vehicle for sustained use in a poem in which steadiness and discipline have to coexist with the maximum of flexibility for narrative, descriptive and reflective passages. The Faerie Queene' may be said to have fixed in a descriptive poem the mosques of the English Renaissance.

3.3.2 THE FOUR HYMNS TO LOVE AND BEAUTY

The essence of Spenser's philosophy is expressed in his hymns to love and beauty, composed in the greener times of his youth. He saw earthly beauty which inspires love as the reflection and token of divine beauty, virtue rendered visible the beam from one lodged in a body and fashioning its fleshly habitation into a marvelous palace. He taught to reconcile his senses and his conscience by Howing Plato who identified supreme beauty with good. He found that this reconciliation of his dream had been effected even well than in 'Phaedrus' and 'The Banquet' by the Italian Marsilio Ficino. Spenser put into magnificent verse the sublime dreams of the Greek philosopher as interpreted by his modern disciple. By virtue of his faith, he enabled all his loves gave his brush full leave to paint in fullest detail the bodily charms of his heroines and sawall stirrings of his own passion as impulses heavenwards.

Spenser's pastoral elegy 'Astrophel' shows how immediate was the impact of the sonnet sequence on Sidney's acquaintances. This poem is an Arcadian elegy on Sir Philip Sidney's death in 1596. We shall never forget that he is, as Milton called him 'our sage and serious Spenser'. We also regard him first of all as the poet and prophet of Beauty - the beauty of heaven and of earth alike. No poet in any age or clime had archer and fuller sense of sensuous loveliness than he.

The Fowre Hymns are (i) A Hymn in Honour of Love (ii) A Hymn in Honour of Beautie, (iii) A Hymn of Heavenly Love, and (iv) A Hymn of heavenly Beautie. The hymns about earthly love and beauty, according to Spenser, were written by him "in the greener times" of his youth, and since they "too much pleased those of the like age and disposition, "feeding their strong passions, he was moved to add the hymns of "Celestial" love and beauty "by way of Retraction." The two later hymns are designed to gain strength and meaning from the two former ones. The method is complex system of parallels and contrasts. Each hymn begins with an invocation and ends with a paradisal vision.

The two hymns of love are linked by their common concern with motive; the hymns of beauty by their common concern with the goal toward which that motive drives. But between earth and heaven there lies a great gulf. Both hymns of love invoke the God, but the home of earthly love is Venus's lap while that of heavenly love is "heavens height." The search for true beauty discloses similar contrast.

The movement of the earthly hymns is down, whereas of the heavenly hymns is up. In Elizabethan period, love is the expected theme. Its apotheosis is reached in Spenser's 'Hymn in Honour of Love'. He has described wonderful tasks likely to be performed by men and women for the sake of love in the 'Hymn in the Honour of Love'. Spenser quotes the example of Achilles and Orpheus. The vulgar lover loves the inconstant body, so he is inconstant in his love. He does not love the soul. When the bloom of youth is over, his love takes wings and flies away in spite of all his words and promises. The base love as described by Spenser is concerned with the body.

The noble love of mind is both constant and steadfast. Spenser portrayed love and beauty in two forms - sensuous and divine (noble). He believed that earthly beauty and love find their consummation in divine beauty. Beauty was not only an image of the divine mind but an information power of the soul. Spenser embodied this idea in his 'Hymne to Beautie and Love.' Spenser remained in the influence of Plato's philosophy of love and beauty for a long time and he used his ideas of divinity in his creations.

According to Plato, the lover of beauty passes through six definite stages. Spenser has used this idea in the 'Hymn in the Honour of heavenly Beautie' and 'Heavenly Love'. He simply says that, the lover admires a reflection of heavenly beauty in the beloved as a mirror. This was the commonest of Neoplatonic notions, not foreign either to the Christian idea that God is seen in his creatures as in a glass. In the 'Hymn of Heavenly Love', however, he does not continue the platonic ascent, but breaks away to set down the central tenets of Christianity.

For literary reasons, Spenser was trying to follow out the movement of the Hymns of Love and Beauty. In the Platonic scheme, the process is simple and logical: beauty is the cause of love. Heavenly love is the reaction of the soul to heavenly beauty, which is indeed proved to exist by the mystical experience which is termed Heavenly Love. But in the 'Hymn of Heavenly Love' Spenser's treatment of

a conception of Love was quite out with the platonic process, in it he has reached his climax, the highest of his faith, and yet, his literary parallel demanded a fourth Hymn which by no logical process could follow from his third.

3.3.3 SPENSER'S CONTEMPORARIES

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554-86)

Of very high birth a grandson of Duke of Northumberland and the nephew of the Earl of Leicester Sidney adopted the virtues of chivalry to the needs of a new age. He as a politician and a diplomat. He had a passion for letters and art. He knew the ancients well and was conversant with modern languages. His 'Arcadia' was written about 1580. It is a romance in which he gives vein to his fantastic invention and lets his pen trace the strongest arabesques. In this work Sidney mingles the pastoral and the chivalrous. He brings together all the fantasies belonging to these two genres. Its prose is interspersed with verse and the prose itself is highly contrived abounding in conceits and rhetorical devices.

Sidney's great work as a pure poet is the sonnet sequence 'Astrophel and Stella'. He first met Penelope (Stella) when she was twelve. She was married a Lord Rich very much against her will. The composition of sonnets continued after her marriage and even after his own. 'Astrophel and Stella' contains poems very varied in mood and tone. It is a series of meditations on life and love. On the serious side, a conflict between love and virtue is represented with acuteness as in Sonnet IV:

“So while thy beauty draws the heart to love,
As fast thy virtue bends that love to good;
But ah, Desire still cries, give me some food.”

Astrophel lifts upto Stella a love cry in which amorous Nature has apart. In answer she declares in a voice that her passion is equal to his. It will be seen that the author of 'Arcadia' and 'Astrophel' was also the champion of poetry and the first of the literary critics of his time.

CONTEMPORARIES

The contemporaries of Spenser include such names as Harvey. Dyer, Thomas Watson, Greville, William Warner, Richard Bornefield Southwell count as significant. Harvey is one of those unimportant persons who by accident have acquired a very considerable place in literary history. He deserves much thanks for having managed to put Spenser in the way of preferment. He believed in the hexameter craze and executed it in many of his poems.

Dyer had a great reputation in his time as a poet. His output is small and only one of them has obtained fame. Watson produced an English verse book of great mark 'Passionate Century of Sonnets'. After his death, another sequence the 'Tears of Fancy' made its appearance.

Some of Greville's poems appeared in 1633, his Life of Sidney in 1652 and more poems in 1670. He was a practitioner in poetry, prose and drama. Warner

translated the 'Menaechmi' and wrote 'Albion's England' and 'Syrinx', 'Albion's England', divided into eights and sixes, anticipates Drayton and Daniel. Richard Bornefield is remembered for his 'The Affectionate Shepherd', an amatory poem of classical inspiration. Southwell, a Jesuit priest left one splendid poem 'The Burning Bane' and other religious pieces.

THE SONNETEERS

Around Spenser are a number of verse writers who have yet sufficient creative power of their own to make us realize the richness of the poetic wealth. There is Giles Fletcher, graceful and fantastic. The many-sided Thomas Lodge is reputed for his madrigals which are unexcelled for dainty sweetness. William Perry's scholarly sight might be added and his work is suggestive of contemporary French and Italian influences.

Five noteworthy names here are Daniel, Drayton, Lodge, Hall and Donne. Samuel Daniel's composition (1562-1619) is skilled and pleasing, occasionally touching great heights. Round about his chief work 'The Civil Wars' are grouped a number of miscellaneous poems, sonnets to Delia, epistles, dedications, panegyrics, funeral eulogies and pastoral songs. There is real feeling in his letter from Octavia to Antony, and even more in 'Complaint of Rosamond'. His talent is happily displayed in a didactic poem in his form of a dialogue 'Musophilus'. Southey is struck by his discreet use of the pathetic and says that he writes always in a strain of tender feeling.

Michael Drayton is one of the most astonishing writers of his time. His versatility was amazing. His literary life started in 1591 with 'The Harmony of the Church'. In 1593 he wrote 'Shepherd's Garland'. Then came 'The Barons' War' and 'England's Heroical Epistles'. In later life the colossal 'Polyolbion' inspired by patriotic sentiment appeared. He may be rewarded as the Scott of his age and his 'Ballad of Agincourt' is a specimen of its kind. Quite in another key the quaint and fantastic 'Nymphidia'. His satirical gift is well illustrated in short poems like 'The Owl' and the 'The man in the Moon'.

Lodge's satires are not equal to his romantic work. But Hall is a better artist in the domain of satire. Donne is too much more than a satirist and his writings have so many striking points of interest. William Byrd's verse is characterized by its quaint moralizing rather than by fancy. Lighter in texture are the songs of John Dowland, famed for his heavenly touch upon the lute. Champion distinguished himself in three capacities. He wrote musques displaying his nimble wit and scholarship. He discussed in prose form the values of music and poetry.

3.3. 4 OTHER KINDS OF POETRY

There were in the Elizabethan Age dramatic authors who wrote a little verse as secondary to their plays. Certain genres were particularly in favour and their characteristics will repay us better than what each individual will do. Nicholas Breton's engaging pastoral vein was never better displayed than in the Helton and Richard Bornefield's charming little odes appeared in 'The Passionate Pilgrim'.

The author of *Tamburlaine* and *Dr. Faustus* sang the shepherd's call to the shepherdess, 'come live with me and be my love'. Raleigh answered for the girl with a refusal 'If all the world and love were young'. In the collection of Nicholas Yonge *Musica Transalpina* the Italian note sounds clearly. Some of Campion's most graceful songs occur, in his masques. Many pleasing songs occur in Lyly and Peele's dramatic works.

The use of songs persisted on the stage in the plays of Shakespeare, Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster and Shirley. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* deserves mention here. In it Hero is the virgin suddenly awakened to love, Leander the adolescent is overcome by his first passion. He wanted to give rein to satire and irony. The tragic end prevented him from doing so.

Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* appeared during this period. The former was dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, the classical legend being the inspiring force. Venus falls in love with young Adonis who cares only for hunting and rejects her. In spite of her he goes back to his sport and is killed by the wild boar. He is then metamorphosed into an anemone. Having painted the attempt of an amorous woman to seduce a youth, Shakespeare proceeded to represent the rape of a chaste wife by a wretched debauchee in *Rape of Lucrece*.

John Marston, the most cynical of the Elizabethan authors, wrote satire collected in *The Scourge of Villanie*. John Donne also along with Hall and Marston, composed his satires during this period. George Wither, William Browne, the two brothers Giles and Phineas Fletcher and Drummond of Hawthornden, or successors to Spenser, flourished under James. The spirit of the pastoral or the allegory or the refinement of the sonneteers dominates their work. Lastly, Ben Jonson's output consists of short pieces, which appeared in three collections – *Epigrammes* and *The Forest* published in 1616, and *Underwoods* published in 1641 after his death. The spirit of satire looms large in them. The reformed gamester taught wisdom by a beating. Jonson's *Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville* inveighs effectively against patrons who grant favours proudly, generally to the under serving. His blunt frankness expresses itself in harsh versification. His style inclines to the abstract and lacks imagery. He was a central poet, king of the taverns, frequented by poets.

3.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The Age of Spenser which gives expression to the more sensitive and more capricious moods of the Elizabethans. The lyric was already a literary force in Italy and France.
2. From 1580 it began to impress itself upon the English imagination. The persistent study of foreign poetry, especially the growing popularity of music brought about the turning point in the poetry of this period.
3. In 1591 Spenser began his suit to Elizabeth Boyle to whom are addressed the eighty-eight sonnets of *Amoretti* and the superb. *Epithalamion* which

concludes them. The sonnet was almost the sole medium of direct confession and personal expression.

4. It was the publication of 'Astrophel and Stella' in 1591 which really gave rise to the passion for the sonnet and which prepared the way for the 'Amoretti' and several other poems.
5. Spenser's sonnets are unique by their purity. They tell a story of love without sin or remorse, its varying fortunes, the lovers' sighs until the day on which he is accepted and the charm of a harmonious and pure atmosphere. In many of them the poet extols his mistress's beauty with a great wealth of detail and colour and does not conceal the ardour of his desires.
6. 'The Epithalamion' which is their conclusion has no equal. Its 23 stanzas merely describe enthusiastically the whole of the poet's wedding day, from the dawn of the sun to the night which left the bride in her husband's arms.
7. The breath which fills each strophe and passes unabated through them all to the end, the clear light which floods each successive picture and the fine classical structure of the whole poem make this ode Spenser's most perfect production and the lyrical triumph of the English Renaissance.
8. He celebrated the marriage of another in 'Prothalamion' (1596) which is filled with smooth images and harmonious lines. Before his death he wrote two more hymns to celestial love and beauty as an antidote to the terrestrial hymns of his youth.
9. Around Spenser are a number of verse writers who have yet sufficient creative power of their own to make us realize the richness of the poetic wealth. There is Giles Fletcher, graceful and fantastic. The many - sided Thomas Lodge is reputed for his madrigals which are unexcelled for dainty sweetness. William Perry's scholarly sight might be added and his work is suggestive of contemporary French and Italian influences.

3.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Why the Elizabethan Age is ranked as one of the greatest in the annals of the world's literature?
2. What are the special features in 'Shepherd's Calender'?
3. How do 'Epithalamion' and 'Prothalamion' reflect the triumph of the English Renaissance?
4. Write an essay on Spenser's 'The Faerie Queen'.
5. What are the minor poems of Spenser?

3.6 SUMMARY

Spenser's sonnets are unique by their purity. They tell a story of love without sin or remorse, its varying fortunes, the lovers' sighs until the day on which he is accepted and the charm of a harmonious and pure atmosphere. In many of them the poet extols his mistress's beauty with a great wealth of detail and colour and does not conceal the ardour of his desires.

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3.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. What is Sir Philip Sidney's contribution to Elizabethan poetry?
2. Name the sonneteers of the Elizabethan Age. Give an account of their poetry
3. What is the part played by the song writers of the Elizabethan Age?
4. Write an essay on the contemporaries of Spenser.
5. What are the other kinds of Poetry written in the Elizabethan Age?

3.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Fulk, R.D. and Christopher M. Cain. A History of Old English Literature. Malden et al.: Blackwell, 2003.
2. Godden, Malcolm and Michael Lapidge (eds.). The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature. Cambridge, 1986.
3. Greenfield, Stanley B. and Daniel G. Calder. A New Critical History of Old English Literature. New York: NYU Press, 1986.
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6. Cazamian, Louis and Raymond Las Vergnas. History of English Literature. Macmillan. 1981.

3.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. The four hymns to love and beauty.
2. Contemporary poets to Spenser.

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Fulk, R.D. and Christopher M. Cain. A History of Old English Literature. Malden et al.: Blackwell, 2003.

2. Godden, Malcolm and Michael Lapidge (eds.). The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature. Cambridge, 1986.
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3.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Let us discuss about the connection between Elizabethan Age and Spenser.

3.12 KEY WORDS

Ecclesiasticism – affairs of Christian church.

Anatagorim – Active opposition

Symmetrical – having exactly similar hearts

Sonorous – making a deep impression.

Ercaltation – State of spiritual delight,

Hymn – Song of praise to god,

Dictus – formal expression of opinion,

Terrestrial – representing the earth.

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

4.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit learner shall study the literary and intellectual background of poetry during the age of Elizabethan.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

The prose of Queen Elizabeth's period is an interesting division. The period of more tentative experiment in prose ceased and a fairly normal style had been attained. It was perfectly clear, very fairly advanced in balance and cadence well-proportioned, logical and sane. But it was in danger of becoming dull and stereotyped. Lyly, Sidney, Hooker and the translators who followed carried this tradition. The prose of such romances as 'Euphues' and 'Arcadia' is entirely poetic.

The drama before Shakespeare's time conformed to the classical models. The miracle Plays ceased to be acted about 1600. July that time, the regular drama was established. The common people had already a national tradition so strong that the native genius began to assert itself in these. The Moralities with their allegorical characters led to greater attention being paid to the plot. They were adapted to the audience.

By now a new school had arisen by name. The University Wits', a professional set of literary men. Of this little constellation, Marlowe is the central sun and round him revolved the minor stars such as Lyly, Greene, Peele, Lodge and Nash. Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays are classed as tragedies, comedies and histories. To study each one of these on a scale proportionate to its value and importance would be impossible for our purposes. But a few points about his drama could be mentioned.

The three points singled for 'criticism are his outlook on life, his power to portray character and his outlook on society. The artist has his place in the scheme of things quite as much as the philosopher. Shakespeare's women have the primal qualities of womanhood common to every eye. While with unerring insight Shakespeare differentiates such vital rogues as Falstaff, the tavern-haunter and Autolycus, the vagabond of the fields, sociological critics condemn him for his poor, ready-made morality and snobbery.

The theatres clustered round the swampy ground beside the Thomas. Around these 'playhouses the narrow, tortuous streets were so crowded by a noisy, frivolous concourse that business suffered in the shops. These theatres had their own features peculiar to the age and the scenes were performed mostly by men to suit the occasion the scene demands. A great deal was left to the imagination of the spectator.

The Age also witnessed critical authors of paramount importance. Not how the thing is said, but what kind of thing is said does matter. Roger Ascham, Gascoigne,

Gosson, Sidney, Puttenham and Daniel contributed richly to critical interpretations. They all modeled their defense on classical rules and compositions. A wide knowledge of European literature was evident in all their writings. The abuses of poetry do not nullify its use; they may be corrected. Spenser pays his tribute to such kind of criticism for it makes things clear to the confused hearts. It reveals its hold upon the stage and encourages its high note of laudation. The criticism of this age gives to the ear an echo of a delightful kind and to the memory a deeper impression of what is delivered.

4.3 CONTENT

4.3.1. PROSE

John Lyly (1554-1606) was born of a family of grammarians. In 1579 he published his famous 'Euphues' or 'The Anatomy of Wit'. Its first part opens at Naples and treats of the courtship of the heroine Lucilla by the two friends. Euphues and Philantus and by a third sailor, named Curio. A very important dialogue entitled 'Euphues and his Ephebus' is based on Plutarch's treatise of education and contains a great part of the real gift of the book.

The second part 'Euphues and his England' appeared next year. It shows off the national virtues. The heroines are models of constancy and virtue. Philantus is the chief act. He pays his addresses to Lady Camilla and is by the favour of another Lady Flavia, permitted a platonic friendship with her niece. Euphues is reduced to a spectator whose business is to express his admiration for England and the English.

Lyly is the first novelist, story-teller who painted society unromantically. There are two distinct elements in euphuism. A principle of a counterpoise and symmetry in sentences forms the first. The alliterations used by Lyly to emphasize balance had been employed by other writers e.g. 'the hot liver of a heedless lover.' Though it suffers from excesses, its innovation was of service. The second element is the decoration of his style by images and similes. The discord between form and substance is more striking because he poses as a moralist. The word 'euphuism' lost its exact meaning. It was stretched to include the various artifices of Sidney, Shakespeare and Donne.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554-86)

Sidney had adapted the virtues of chivalry to the needs of a new age. He was a politician and a diplomat who dreamt of grouping the Protestant nations against the Pope and the King of Spain. He had a passion for letters and art. His gifts and accomplishments enriched a nature that was serious and intense.

His book 'Arcadia' written in 1580 had as its aim the pleasing of his sister, the countess of Pembroke. It is a romance in which he gives rein to the fantastic invention. Its action takes place in the ideal Arcadia, where King Basileus has retired and where he brings up his daughters as shepherdesses. Passion is introduced by two strange princes, Musidorus and Pyrocles. They court the virtuous Pamela and radiant Philoclea respectively. The king is smitten with Pyrocles

whose woman's guise deceives him and the queen is consumed with guilty love for the same price. Amphialus keeps the maidens captive. His mother whispers cynical counsels. Love and virtue save the persecuted demsels. When Amphialus is slain, the beautiful loves of Musidorus and Pamela and of Pyrocles and Philoclea end in a double marriage.

It is by his attempts at character study that Sidney marks a progress. He contrasts his various with his vicious characters. The author enriched the descriptive art of his time by his search for detail in his portraits. A learned embroidery enriches the slightest details. Lyly's images are like the flowers and birds on painted papers. But Sidney's are woven into the very web of his fabric. It is the most poetic prose imaginable. Sidney lets his pen run into sentences almost as interminable as those of Thomas More.

Robert Greene was a writer of great simplicity. His first novel is poor and imitative. In 'Pandosto' he showed his real originality. His pamphlets especially his 'Life and Death of Ned Browne' anticipate the life sciences of Defoe and Smollett.

Another writer of fiction is Thomas Lodge. He travelled much in the earlier years of his life. He wrote several romances like 'Rosalynde'. This work inspired Shakespeare's "As you like it". His other works are 'Robert the Devil', 'Euphues shadow'. The 'Margarite of America', 'The Wounds of Civil War'. 'A Looking Glass for London and England', etc.

Next important name in the fiction of the time is Thomas Nash. His friend Lodge called him ingenuous, fluent, facetious Nash. He has a rich fund of humour that partakes somewhat of Rabelais' uproarious quality. Like Greene, then took the rogue in hand and painted with skill the needy adventurer of the time. 'The Unfortunate Traveller or the Life of Jack Wilton'. The chief feature about him is his comic attitude to life.

Dekker, through a dramatist, attempted writing fiction. He showed shrewdness of observation in the picaresque stories. With the close of the Elizabethan period, the first period of the English novel came to an end.

THE PAMPHLETEERS - LITERARY CRITICISM

The pamphlet literature fills the last twenty years of Elizabeth and extends into those of James and even Charles. It marked a change that converted the romance into the modern novel. The pamphlets were devoted to the controversies of the Reformation. They were romances in verse, prose, jests, etc., the religious pamphlet was famous. The political one was little cultivated. Puritanism was as much the foe of literature as of loyalty and order. Lyly, Nash, and the Harveys had a share in it and their lampoons display the revel and riot of words.

Some novels, personal reminiscences, disquisitions, sketches of manners and literary criticism constituted the stuff of the pamphlets. Robert Greene's stories helped to foster in readers a taste for imaginative fiction. His personal sketches are

among the earliest of literary autobiographies. Nash achieved fame through 'Jack Wilton'.

He wrote repentant and pious pamphlets. Lodge engaged in literary controversies. The puritan attacks on plays and poetry were the most important of them. William Webbe published his 'Discourse of English Poetrie' in 1586. It contains the enthusiastic praise of Spenser. George Puttenham's volume 'Art of English Poesie' is divided into three books/the first of Poets and Poesie, the second of Proportion and the third of Ornament. It is an orderly treatise on Poetics and Rhetoric.

HISTORICAL LITERATURE OF TRAVEL - TRANSLATIONS

Criticism of literature was of mediocre value in the prose of the Elizabethan Age. It did not have a direct bearing with English works. Criticism had a double aim; glorifying literature and proclaiming its laws. The critics followed Aristotle's 'Poetics' and Horace's 'Ars Poetica' as their models. They went to Plato and sought his guidance. Scaliger represents Aristotelian criticism. Minturno stands for Platonic criticism. In 1568 Ascham's 'Schole-master' dealt with the moral issues.

Stephen Gosson's 'School of Abuse' (1579) is directed against all secular literature. He considers poetry bad in essence. Thomas Lodge replied to it with his "Defence of Poetry". Of far greater importance is Sir Philip Sidney's 'Apologie for Poetrie'. He says all the great authors were really poets. The Romans called the poet 'Vates'. The Greek term 'Poesy' signifies he is a maker, in fact a creator. In his words, "it is not rhyming and versing that makes a poet." The abuses of poetry do not nullify its use, since they may be corrected. Sidney's work represents the dominant feeling of the Elizabethans. In 'Arcadia' Sidney makes fun of euphuism, proposes Demosthenes and Cicero as models and protests against the abuse of literary ornaments.

Though Ben Johnson's criticism is after Horace in practice he treats the theory he professes as cavalierly as his rivals. He prosecutes a series of historical scenes in his 'Sejanus' and 'Catiline'. 'The Rules to be observed in Scottish Poetry' by James the First is not of much importance. But William Webbe's 'Discourse' of English Poesie' (1586) is notable. His value lies in his argumentative disquisition. Another volume 'The Art of English Poesie' is from George Puttenham.

The next is the volume 'Observations in the Art of English Poetry' by Thomas Campion. Daniel's 'Defense' came about five years later. He takes the position that the verse of a language is such as best harmonises with the matter of that language Rhyme "gives to the ear an echo of a delightful right."

HISTORICAL LITERATURE

The historical writings of this age opened up new horizons to the understanding of the fellow-countrymen who broke with the Middle Ages and made a bold step forward into modern times. Bacon ranks among English prose writers. His 'Essays, Advancement of Learning. History of Henry the Seventh, New Atlantis' and various treatises and pamphlets serve to highlight his mastery. Bacon deduces

the general maxims only from the observations he is able to make. The construction is stiff and formal. Like a good lawyer, Bacon with an air of complete impartiality balances opposing arguments before coming to the conclusion.

'The History of Henry the Seventh' is more remarkable. It was written to please James I. Bacon's sagacity was to show itself more clearly in the portraits of Henry VIII and Elizabeth.

One other intellectual author of the period was Robert Burton. Though full of pedantry, his prose 'The Anatomy of Melancholy' is full of the pervading humour. His reflections on his own country are curious. He first praises its prosperity and its learned King James I. He declares idleness to be the scourge of England. Burton follows more and anticipates La Bruyere and Swift.

LITERATURE OF TRAVEL

One of the earliest names is that of Richard Eden who published a book on 'The Art of Navigation' John Hawkins wrote an account of his experiences in a brisk and forcible style. George Gascoigne wrote a preface to a 'Discourse of a Discoverie'. Richard Hackluyt translated and published an account by Laudonere of voyages in Florida. Then he published 'The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation' Samuel Purchas is less simple and direct than Hakluyt. He is known by his three compilations, 'Purchase His Pilgrimage', 'Purchase His Pilgrim' and 'Hakluyt Posthumous'.

TRANSLATIONS

Among the translations of this period, a few could be termed as significant. Thomas Dekker translated 'Grobianus' a work of the German Dedekind. Swift later made admirable use of it. Gascoigne translated from Ariosto's 'Gli Suppositi' his comedy 'Supposes', The Authorised Version of 1611 was the work of forty-seven scholars. It was adopted later by the puritans. The Latin translation of Bacon's Essays remained universal with great reputation. His capital work 'Instauratio Magna' was written in Latin, as were the numerous scientific and philosophical pamphlets appended to it. Bacon's practical and utilitarian spirit led to the foundation of the Royal Society

4.3.2. THE DRAMA BEFORE SHAKESPEARE

In the years between 1570 and 1590 the early chronicle plays and others which Shakespeare honoured by selecting themes as the canvases saw the light. The cradle of the drama in Europe and more so in England rested on the altar. In very early times the Gospel stories were illustrated by a series of living pictures. The history of the English drama is rooted in lay and religious history. It is convenient here to trace the early plays, which merged gradually into Elizabethan drama.

MEDIEVAL DRAMA

The most important entertainments of the middle Ages were supplied by the pageants and the May Games and by the Mysteries and Miracles of the Church. Langland tells us how gaily the drama flourished, though the serious-minded wished to restrain them. The jester lived by his wits in a very literal manner. Such

debates as 'The Owl and the Nightingale' influenced the development of the drama. The juggling and clowning heralded the coming of Farce and Comedy. The pageants anticipated the Historical Drama. In the May Games we have the foretaste of the Masques and Pastoral Plays.

MORALITIES

The Mass itself was a factor in dramatic development. The seasons of the year suggested the subject matter of plays: Christmas, Easter, stories from the Bible called mysteries, stories from the lives of the saints called Miracle Plays. The first stage is marked by the performance of these stories in the church. The second stage is reached when the play emerges from the church into the market place. The play of Noah gives us some insight into the nature of these plays.

The third stage is reached when the Mystery and Miracle Play gives place to the Morality and Interlude. In the former the serious and the comic elements were interwoven. In the latter they part. The morality presents the serious and the interlude the light side of things. The former was frankly didactic and the latter aimed merely at amusement. The famous examples of both types of play are found in 'Everyman' and 'Four Ps' of Heywood, Moralities continued to flourish upto the end of the 16th century.

RENAISSANCE DRAMA

The fourth stage sees the beginning of English tragedy. Tragedy preceded Comedy in England as in Greece, Seneca's tragedies attracted the writers of the day 'Gorboduc' the first English tragedy was the result. This was written by Sackville and Norton and played before Elizabeth at Whitehall in 1562. Its intrinsic merits are slight. It was frankly imitative and its verse is stiff and lifeless. But the classical model served to give some formal coherence.

Of more importance at this period was the development of English comedy as seen in the first comedy, 'Ralph Roister Doister; (1566) It shows a keen sense of dramatic movement. The play is usually attributed to Nicholas Udall. He sketches characters from life. The classical form has absorbed elements belonging both to morality and interlude. Like 'Ralph Roister Doister' 'Gammer Gurton's Needle is modelled on Latin comedy, but the matter and characterisation are native.

4.3.3. THE UNIVERSITY WITS

This is a school of professional set of literary men. Of this little map Marlowe is the central figure and round him come Lyly, Greene Peele, Lodge and Nash.

John Lyly was born in 1554 was averse to logic and philosophy and bent to the pleasant paths of poetry. His best known dramas include 'Alexander and Compaspe', 'Sapho and Phao'. 'Endymion' and 'Midas', In character the were mythological or pastoral. They were written in prose intermingled with verse, His dialogue is really admirable at times, happy in clear-cut phrases and allusiveness.

George Peele was born about 1558 and was educated at Christ's Hospital. He formed with others one of that band of dissolute young men trying to lead life by

literary work. "The Arrangement" contains an elaborate tribute to the Queen. 'David and Bathsheba' is a great beauty full of blank verse with that musical quality which was later seen Shakespeare's plays.

Thomas Kyd, born in 1558, was notable for his popular play, 'The Spanish Tragedy' Johnson called him 'Sporting Kyd' for he popularized the blood and thunder element. Violent and extravagant, he helped to drive away the monotony of "Gorboduc".

Robert Greene born about 1560 wrote his first work "Mamillia". His other plays are 'Orlando, Furioso, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Alphonsus King or Aragan Etc. 'Pandsto' gave Shakespeare the plot for his 'The Winter's Tale', Through these plays he manages to hold the reader's attention.

Christopher Marlowe, born in 1564, produced his first play "Tamburlaine", Its impetuous force, splendid blank verse and sensitiveness to beauty attracted the reader. In the "Tragical History of Doctor Faustus' he gives an old medieval legend a glowing Renaissance setting, the story of the alchemist who sells his soul to the devil that never lost its fascination. "The Jew of Malta' lacks the grip and imaginative appeal. 'Edward II' shows rare skill of construction while the characterization is admirable.

Thomas Lodge, born in 1557, wrote his famous "Rosalynde". His other works are 'Robert the Devil', 'Euphues Shadow, 'The Wounds of Civil War' and 'A Looking glass for London and England.' 'Rosalynde' paved the way for Shakespeare's "As you like it".

4.3.4. SHAKESPEARE: LIFE

Queen Elizabeth had been reigning nearly six years when Shakespeare was born. Throughout Shakespeare's plays there breathes a sturdy, self-reliance and sense of human responsibility. After the self-expression and sterility of the middle Ages, the Elizabethan exulted in their new-found freedom. In literature and life alike they, were impatient of rule and convention. They cared to give expression to their own special characteristics. The people who loved the crude delights of the cock-fight, delighted also in the self-questioning of a Hamlet and the sentimental refinements of a Faerie Queene.

Life was a glorious adventure. Knowledge itself happened to be a fantastic game. "Men are fools that wish to die" was the burden of an Elizabethan song. To suck the marrow out of life, to find out all that was worth knowing; to realize all that was worth the feeling-such was the ideal of Shakespeare's Age. The same find their due places in his plays. William Shakespeare was the son of a tradesman living in Stratford. He was educated at Stratford Grammar school.

At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, a young woman of 26. They had three children one of whom died in childhood. Later Shakespeare joined the Lord Chamberlain's theatrical company. In 1599 he and others of this company built the Globe and made it famous. As he became affluent, he bought a house in Stratford.

One more theatre Blackfriars was acquired in 1608. After his stint in play acting, play writing etc. he retired to Stratford in 1611, where he died five years later.

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

The period of Shakespeare's literary activity extends over 24 years (1588-1612) It may be divided into four sub-periods.

The first period (1588-94) was dominated by the historical plays. He continued the world of Marlowe. 'Romeo and Juliet' (1592) was strong in lyric beauty, though it lacked the grandeur and breadth of the later tragedies. The Merchant of Venice' (1594) was an example of tragic irony, relieved by a golden thread of romance. The social extravagance could be noticed in 'Love Labour's Lost (1591), rollicking force in 'The Comedy of Errors' (1592) sentimental romance in. 'Two Gentleman of Verona' (1591) and fantastic romance in 'A Midsumqler Night's Dream' (1594-95). Marlowe inspired 'Richard III and 'Richard II'. 'King John' being the first of the historical plays, shows an emergence from Marlow's domination.

To this period belongs also his earlier verse. 'Lucrece' and 'Venus and Adonis' were the notable compositions.

In the second period (1594-1600) there are three historical plays-the two plays of Henry V (1598). The comedies 'The Taming of the Shrew' (1595) and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' (1598) - are cast in a farcical vein. The three supreme comedies 'Much Ado About Nothing' (1599) 'As you like it' (1600) and 'Twelfth Night' (1600) also belong to this period. A majority of the sonnets were written around 1594.

In the third period 1600-1608 tragedy predominates. The romances of the period 'All's well that Ends Well' (1595) 'Measure for Measure' (1604) and 'Troilus and Cressida' (1603) are essential tragedies. Starting with 'Julius Caesar' (1601) he raises to greater heights of drama and reflective poetry, in 'Hamlet' (1602). In 'Othello' (1604) 'King Lear' (1605) and 'MacBeth' (1606), the imaginative subtlety and passionate intensity are brought out superbly.

The fourth period (1608-12) opens with tragedy 'Antony and Cleopatra' (1608). It is fully ripe in characterization 'Coriolonus' (1609) 'Timon of Athens' (1608) 'Henry VIII (1612) and 'Pericles' (16080 are great. Towards the close of his career Shakespeare turned to writing Romances-'Cymbeline'(1610), 'The Tempest' (1611) and 'The Winter's Tale'(1611).

SHAKESPEARE'S CRITICISM

Shakespeare is the supreme poet in an age of great poetry. He touches every mood graceful sentiment in comedies, delicate foolery in the fairy plays, philosophy meditation in the tragedies, and poignant passion in late tragedies. When we think of Lear in his desolation Othello in his last anguish, Mac Beth in his soul agony and the despair of Cleopatra, we think of English literature at its very best.

The following critics have paid him rich tribute 'Ben Johnson'. Dr.Johnson, Hazlitt, Lamb, Coleridge, Shelley, Arnold, Rossetti, Swinburne, Victor Hugo Lessing, Schelegal, Goethe and Heine. The three point's is outlook on life, his power to

portray character and his outlook on society are singled out for criticism. The essayists like Carlyle, Ruskin, novelists like George Eliot and George Meredith, poets like Wordsworth, Shelley and Browning charged him with inadequacy in the matter of projecting life.

Psychological critics point out that the verse drama blurs the presentment of character. Many scenes from the plays convince us regarding their suitability. Besides Shakespeare's women, even the women of Dickens and Thackeray seem old fashioned. The sociological critics condemn the dramatist for his poor, readymade morality. The ethical criticism is inspired by the modern tendency to look at him as a potential teacher, while some others have accused him of snobbery. But it was not peculiar to Shakespeare's time he had his weaknesses both as a man and artist. But the marvel is that he transcends his time as to speak to us with greater compelling powers.

A SURVEY OF THE PLAYS

Shakespeare's work shows a gradual development of his genius. Beginning with farce. He passes to fantastic romance. After the chronicle plays he turns to the higher comedy note of 'The Merchant of Venice' and the mellower romanticism of 'As You Like It'. In his earlier work 'Romeo and Juliet' we find a young man's tragedy beautiful in its lyric poignancy. His plays show a passing mood of bitterness and misanthropy. There is fine poetry in 'Troilus and Cressida' and 'All's Well that Ends Well'. They are succeeded by the tragedies. These tragedies stir the spring of pity and terror within us. Finally after the storm comes the calm of the first period. Once again romance and comedy join hands. There is a deeper and fuller interpretation of the possibilities of human life.

Scholars like Dowden, Bradley, Brandes, Swinburne, Dover Wilson, Wilson Knight and Kenneth Muir have done much to give us a true insight into the fundamental greatness of the writer. The reader cannot easily underrate this universal dramatist, for his work belongs to the great utterances of literature. We have come to look on it as a portion of our intellectual and spiritual heritage.

SHAKESPEARE'S PHILOSOPHY

The collection of the scattered fragments of Shakespeare's thought would constitute a body of doctrine, which would yield an answer to the riddles of life. Each of the characters, from the kings to the clowns has a philosophy. Each judges life in his own way. The scattered reflections derive strength from the appropriateness. They are not maxims gathering to produce a total result. They reveal the playwright's marvellous versatility. He enunciates principles akin to the proper and popular sayings, which contradict with each other. Hamlet discouraged by something rotten in the state of Denmark has cause to hesitate.

The deduction that the writer's thought rarely went beyond earthly life is granted. He admits that human reason is limited and surrounded by a great mystery.

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy”

MacBeth thinks, "Life's but a walking shadow a poor player.

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage. “In the words of Jaques “All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players.” Pro spero voices the writer's mature opinion thus. “We are such stuff as dreams are made on and our little life is rounded with a sleep.”

ELIZABETHAN STAGE

The first public theatre was built 'on the outskirts of London in 1576. By the end of the century there were eight of them. The drama took place in the afternoons in buildings which were oval or hexagonal. A courtyard, open to the sky, was the pit. Around this were two or three tiers of covered galleries. A large projecting platform in front of the pit formed the stage. Two pillars in the middle of the platform upheld the ceiling. At the back, between two doors used by the actors one could see the exits and entrances. Another scene was overlooked by a balcony with windows. Before the back stage there was a movable curtain.

Many scenes in Elizabethan plays pass in a vague, indeterminate place in a street or public square. A placard announced the place of action. The actor's costume was rich as the stage was poor. His declamation emphasized the value of the numerous monologues. Women's parts were played by boys. Some of the actors had a share in the ownerships of their theatre.

The king's company played at the Bull's Inn, the Theatre, the Curtain, the Rose and the Globe. The Black-friars was a covered theatre, used in winter. The passion for the theatre was such that the capitalists bought plays from authors and sold them to actors. Philip Henslowe built the Rose the Fortune and the Hope theatres, Under Elizabeth he directed the Admirals and Lord Worcester's companies. Under James. I the surviving companies were under the patronage of members of the royal family.

4.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The drama before Shakespeare's time conformed to the classical models. The miracle Plays ceased to be acted about 1600. July that time, the regular drama was established. The common people had already a' national tradition so strong that the native genius began to assert itself in these. The Moralities with their allegorical characters led to greater attention being paid to the plot. They were adapted to the audience.
2. By now a new school had arisen by name. The University Wits', a professional set of literary men. Of this little constellation, Marlowe is the central sun and round him revolved the minor stars such as Lyly, Greene, Peele, Lodge and Nash.
3. Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays are classed as tragedies, comedies and histories. To study each one of these on a scale proportionate to its value

- and importance would be impossible for our purposes. But a few points about his drama could be mentioned.
4. The three points singled for 'criticism are his outlook on life, his power to portray character and his outlook on society. The artist has his place in the scheme of things quite as much as the philosopher.
 5. Shakespeare's women have the primal qualities of womanhood common to every eye. While with unerring insight Shakespeare differentiates such vital rogues as Flagstaff, the tavern-haunter and Autolycus, the vagabond of the fields, sociological critics condemn him for his poor, ready-made morality and snobbery.
 6. The theatres clustered round the swampy ground beside the Thomas. Around these 'playhouses the narrow, tortuous streets were so crowded by a noisy, frivolous concourse that business suffered in the shops. These theatres had their own features peculiar to the age and the scenes were performed mostly by men to suit the occasion the scene demands. A great deal was left to the imagination of the spectator.
 7. The Age also witnessed critical authors of paramount importance. Not how the thing is said, but what kind of thing is said does matter. Roger Ascham, Gascoigne, Gosson, Sidney, Puttenham and Daniel contributed richly to critical interpretations. They all modeled their defense on classical rules and compositions.
 8. A wide knowledge of European literature wafs evident in all their writings. The abuses of poetry do not nullify its use; they may be corrected. Spenser pays his tribute to such kind of criticism for it makes things clear to the confused hearts.
 9. It reveals its hold upon the stage and encourages its high note of laudation. The criticism of this age gives to the ear an echo of a delightful kind and to the memory a deeper impression of what is delivered.

4.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on Elizabethan Prose writers
2. Give an account of the part played by the pamphleteers in the Elizabethan Age.
3. Discuss the important critical works of the age.
4. Write briefly on the Historical Literature of the period.
5. Describe the philosophy behind some of Shakespeare's plays.
6. Write an essay on the Elizabethan stage.

4.6 SUMMARY

'The History of Henry the Seventh' is more remarkable. It was written to please James I. Bacon's sagacity was to show itself more clearly in the portraits of Henry VIII and Elizabeth.

One other intellectual author of the period was Robert Burton. Though full of pedantry, his prose "The Anatomy of Melancholy" is full of the pervading humour. His reflections on his own country are curious. He first praises its prosperity and

its learned King James I. He declares idleness to be the scourge of England. Burton follows more and anticipates La Bruyere and Swift.

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The historical writings of this age opened up new horizons to the understanding of the fellow-countrymen who broke with the middle Ages and made a bold step forward into modern times. Bacon ranks among English prose writers. His 'Essays, Advancement of Learning. History of Henry the Seventh, New Atlantis' and various treatises and pamphlets serve to highlight his mastery. Bacon deduces the general maxims only from the observations he is able to make. The construction is stiff and formal. Like a good lawyer, Bacon with an air of complete impartiality balances opposing arguments before coming to the conclusion.

4.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. How the Age of Elizabeth is best remembered when it comes to free play and adventure?
2. Write a note on the medieval drama.
3. What are the important characteristics of the Morality Plays?
4. Describe the part played by the University Wits in the Age of Elizabeth.
5. Give an account of Shakespeare's plays.
6. What is the modern opinion about Shakespeare and his plays?
7. Give an estimate of Shakespeare's plays.

4.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Fulk, R.D. and Christopher M. Cain. A History of Old English Literature. Malden et al.: Blackwell, 2003.
2. Godden, Malcolm and Michael Lapidge (eds.). The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature. Cambridge, 1986.
3. Greenfield, Stanley B. and Daniel G. Calder. A New Critical History of Old English Literature. New York: NYU Press, 1986.
4. Sisam, Kenneth. Studies in the history of Old English literature. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
5. Wrenn, Charles L. A Study of Old English Literature. London: Harrap, 1967.
6. Cazamian, Louis and Raymond Las Vergnas. History of English Literature. Macmillan. 1981

4.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Estimate of Shakespeare
2. Defects of Shakespeare
3. Shakespeare's philosophy
4. Elizabethan stage.

4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Who Wrote Shakespeare? - James Shapiro
2. A year in the life of William Shakespeare - James Shapiro
3. The Women in Shakespeare's life - Ivor Brown
4. The complete works - William Shakespeare
5. Arthur Compton Rickett - History of English Literature

4.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Form a group and discuss about Shakespeare Heroines and Heroes.

4.12 KEY WORDS

Dessolation – being in a neglected of state

Heritage – that which has been inherital

Chowns – a person acting like a fool

Maxims – Quick firing machine-gun.

THE PURITAN AGE

5.1 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at teaching the works of the Puritan age and the Augustan age with a detailed manner and try to help the students to know about the writers of the 17th century England.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

Puritanism began with Ben Johnson, though it found its greatest exponent in Milton, and its greatest prose exponent in Bunyan. Two influences contributed especially to the molding of the England now under consideration. The first is the influence of the great dramatists and poets of Elizabeth's reign. The drama that we are to study here has many claims upon our admiration. But it lacks the grip hold of national conscience. The second influence is that of the Bible. The Puritan critic cites it against his enemies.

With Donne, it may be said that Elizabethan poetry has ended, and the Caroline poetry has started. There is a great sobriety about the bigger minds such as Donne. But the mood varies from the quietly pensive to the inquisitively fantastic. The influence of Shakespeare and of Spenser is clear enough in certain directions.

5.3. CONTENT**5.3.1 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND: THE PURITAN AGE.**

Puritanism was nourished in the very bosom of the Renaissance. The fanatic who had so long denounced the drama found an uneasy listener in Milton and his contemporaries. Johnson saw the marks of moral determination about him. So he satirized life. The term 'Puritan' calls up the picture of an austere figure, garbed in black with lank hair and no sympathy for rule-breakers. Anyone who wished to purify the sages of the church was called a puritan. The artist owes Puritanism a guide for the ruthless destruction of so much that was beautiful. Milton wrote masques, Colonel Hutchinson was an expert dancer and Cromwell delighted in music. This only showed that the extremist is to be blamed for destruction of art. Milton succeeded because of his fiery sincerity and high imagination. Cromwell was noted for his genuine kindness of heart. He held his destinies of his country in his hand. His zeal and kindness attracted the poorer classes to him.

There was something titanic about his resolution. To be well hated and misunderstood is both the privilege and tragedy of the strong man. He insisted on liberty of thought in the teeth of the extremities of the day. Puritanism had proved itself unfit to be the sole inspiration of national statecraft. In conclusion we may add that it was greater in its fall than ever it had been in its days of power.

5.3.2 POETRY

Poetry under James I must be understood as a device to assist the chronology of literary history. This division marks an evolution which caused the first two

decades of the 17th century to differ from the last two of the 16th century. The poet now adventures into new paths and delights with his own creations. He is intoxicated with the novelty of his meters and the freshness of his vocabulary, pessimism exists for him only momentarily, a cloudy sky through which the sun is about to break.

Poetry had grown self-conscious. Poets became moral and didactic. Poetry was already under the shadow of the approaching" great civil conflict. Even the Spenserians of this period had lost the freshness of invention. George Wither William Browne, the two brothers Giles and Phineas Fletcher and Drummond Hawthornden may be called as Spenserians. The spirit of the pastoral or the allegory or the refinement of the sonneteers dominates their work.

a) **George Wither**; this puritan satirist lived to see the Restoration, but all his verses were published in 1622. He satirized the court in his 'Abuses Stript, and Whipt' One of his charming poems. The Shepherd's Hunting was published in 1615. It is a sort of pastoral, in the form of a dialogue. 'Fidelia' an elegy of love. 'The Steadfast Shepherd' is a Christmas song. With its refrain 'And let us be merry; it exhales the mirth of pagan festivities.

b) **William Browne** (1591-1643): 'Britannic's Pastorals' has made Browne the classical representative of pastoral poetry. It is inspired by Spenser's Shepherd's Calender'. Many stories fill the poem, which is half allegory and half mythology. His poem is written in couplets, the lines marching two by two and having a proverbial turn. Browne was capable of seeing nature as she is and sometimes painted her successfully.

c) **Phineas Fletcher** (1582-1650): The influence of Spenser on this Norfolk poet was more marked. His 'Piscatorie Eclogs' are original in bringing fishermen in place of the shepherds. His reputation rests on 'The Purple Island' a long allegory. In the moral part he is the disciple of Spenser, who showed the Castle of Alma attacked by the vices and sins. His images are drawn from nature. There is a ring in the stanzas which describe the joys of the church.

d) **Giles Fletcher** (1588 - 1623): The poetry of Giles is marked by religious Javor and bears witness to the renewal of faith and mysticism. His chief poem is 'Christ's Victorie' and Triumph. It forms a link between Spenser and Milton. In his style there is Spenser's harmony and redundancy together with an overweight of flowers and epithets. There is greatness in the opening stanzas, the debate between Justice' and Mercy who in turn plead before God. The creator is finally moved in Mercy and the triumph of Christ is, signified.

e) **Drummond of Hawthornden** (1585-1648): This Scot has a place among Spenser's successors. His poetry is marked by slightly melancholy tone. His wrote a long panegyric on James VI entitled 'The River of Forth feasting; 'The poet's talent is best revealed in his sonnets. His sincere love for nature is apparent in them.

THE SCHOOL OF BEN JOHNSON

This school had produced lyrics, complimentary verses as well as satirical quatrains. Ben Johnson has a master in this group which had Beaumont and Herrick and other Cavalier lyricists.

- a) **Ben Johnson** (1573-1637): As a dramatist of the Shakespearean era, he counted much. His poetic work also is considerable. The short pieces appeared in 'Epigrammes' and 'The Forrest'. 'Underwoods' was another collection that came after his death. 'The spirit of satire looms large in them. His 'Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville' inveighs effectively against patrons who grant their favors arrogantly.

He was the first Englishman to write Pindaric odes with strophe, antistrophe and epode, Johnson was made successful in the imitation of Greek Anthology. He also translated some works. The Latin muse appealed to his robust genius. It was principally through his means that neo-classicism was introduced into English poetry. He was a glorious egoist. His pride, contempt for ignorance, hypocrisy, love of features and loyalty, the manly affection—all these were manifest in his verses.

- b) **Robert Herrick** (1501-1674): This poet was the most gifted and the most exquisite of all the cavalier lyricists. His only collection of poems 'The Hebrides', published in 1648, contains his works both human and divine. Helped by his recollections of his pastorals, he acquired a taste for the rich countryside. He adopts sweet disorder as an aesthetic principle. He mingles the coarsest epigrams with poetry that is winged and delicate. He alternates the pretty with the ugly, the fragrant with, the evil-smelling. His rustic pieces like 'The Hock Hart' have spirit and savor.

Herrick's truest imprint is on his multitude of tiny poems. The light joy of frivolous heart, a fancy pleased by beauty, the tenuous melancholy of a reveller—these are his moods. His simplicity is seasoned with strangeness. His meters, fluid as water and his delicate stanzas are surprising. He was the perfect artist in slight verse.

- c) **Thomas Care** (1598-1639): The poet first affected by the combined influence of Johnson and Donne was Carew. He was a courtly and polished love poet. He can isolate a thought, follow it up faithfully and balance its several parts. His masterpiece 'The Rapture' is an invitation to Celia to float the 'Giant Honour' and enjoy forbidden pleasures without scruple. 'His attack on honour recalls Sidney's Astrophel and Donne's Elegies.

Care writes persuasions to love madrigals, complaints and reproaches. In the Song 'Ask me no more' he finds all the beauties of nature united in his mistress. His style and versification are so polished that Waller and Denham could hardly improve on them.

- d) **Sir John Suckling** (1609-42): This poet typifies the cavaliers, their loyalty, morality and wit. He recalls Donne when he rallies woman on her capriciousness, He neatly composed songs, irony hiding the madrigal, as in 'Out upon it'. In the Bolle Upon a Wedding a farmer describes a wedding at which he has been present. Suckling puts new life and freshness into

the conventional epothalemium. Congreves Millaniant calls him natural, easy Suckling. In the treatise An Account of Religion by Reason by Reason he combats the heresies of the day.

- e) **Richard Lovelace** (16128-58): He was the most handsome Cavalier. In his Lucasta, his sense of humour is a manly alliance with his love. The cold, hyperbolic compliments of the degenerate sonneteers occurs side by side with Donne's obscure extravagance. He shares the cavalier ideals with Montrose the noble Scottish champion of Charles I. There are charming passage in The Grasshopper.
- f) **John Cleveland** (1613-58), a Royalist, a satrisdt, enjoyed popularity with his vigour and wit. He was one of Donne's successful imitators. He blazed the track of political satire for Dryden. His love poetry has a touch of real nature that varies from time to time. He wrote some curious lyrical essays. He was the first poet to realize the value of the anapaest.

5.3.3 DONNE AND METAPHYSICAL SCHOOL OF POETRY

The term 'metaphysical' was conferred on Donne and his school of metaphysical poets. It was taken from a phrase of Dryden's on Donne himself. Wordsworth calls Donne's style as decadent and one reactive from that of men who were younger than himself. Between 1630 and 1660 this metaphysical tendency was employed in all poetry except that of Milton. Butler is a metaphysical humorist, Chamberlayne a metaphysical romance-writer, Herbert and Vaughan metaphysical in spiritual poetry, Herrick and Carew metaphysical amorists of the decorative kind.

Donne (1572-1631) himself is metaphysical in the wider sense. His thoughts and conceits are never far-fetched because his immense and brooding imagination reaches to them all. His poems put us into immediate contact not just with sensitively feeling heart, but with a vigorously active mind. In the 'Sunne Rising' the voice of the lover, weakened by the morning sun is alive with the joy and pride of possession as he pours scorn on the monarch of the sky. The beloved is the epitome of all kingdoms, himself the epitome of all kingship 'She's all states, and all Princes. I Nothing else is'

Even more extensive in scale are the two 'Anniversaries' written in memory of Elizabeth Drury. In the 'Holky Sonnets' Donne calls upon God to show the full force of his love by taking him from the grip of his riva I, the Devil. As an illustration of his satires may be instanced his fourth satire detailing the character of a Bore. These were framed in rhyming couplets on the Latin model and influenced both Dryden and Pope. T.S.Eliot found in his work a blend of emotional and intellectual quality.

George Herbert (1593-1633): is the most popular of the metaphysicals. His poems 'The Temple' is famous. His verses are the expression of his piety as a man and a priest. He says that a man should dedicate all his gifts to God's service. His profound sincerity showed itself in the poems. He liked simple, homely, racy language. He expresses everything by imagery and tries to be concrete. Such short poems as 'The Pulley' and 'The Collar' are moving in their strangeness.

Richard Crashaw (1612-49) began by writing the verses of an amorist and humanist. His earliest poem 'Wishes to his supposed Mistress' is rhythmically unique. 'The weeper' is a litany in praise of Magdalan's tears. Crashaw scattered the conceits everywhere. He had more warmth, colour, and harmony. His lyric flights have been equaled only by Shelley. His poetry is not without strangeness and obscurity and lack of precision in style.

Henry Vaughan (1622-95) is more melodious than Herbert. His mysticism is more fluid and less argumentative. His imagination is mellower. His own picturesque country has inspired him with love for nature. His versification is far less skilful and varied than Herbert's. His meditations of life and death are graced by new images. His 'Retreat' anticipates Wordsworth's famous 'Immortality Ode'.

Andrew Marvell (1621-78) wrote many verses which witness to the sincerity of his faith. He indulged far more fully in the happy contemplation of natural scenery. In 'Upon Appleton House' he shows that he is familiar with the aspects of the country, its trees and birds. Marvell's 'Garden' foreshadows Keats by its sensuousness and Wordsworth by its serene, meditative mood. He also returns to the pastoral and give it a new emphasis of truth, even of realism. His lines 'To His Coy Mistress' have Donne's strength and passion without his obscurity or bad taste. His 'Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland' and other poems exhibit his patriotism. His lyrical work is written almost entirely in rhymed eight syllable couplets

THE PIONEERS OF CLASSICISM

A few of the poets of the middle seventeenth century possessed a link between the past and the present. Their interest is mainly historical. They afford new intellectual and literary tendencies.

Abraham Cowley (1618-67) was the most famous of them all. He enjoyed a greater reputation than even Milton. Dryden said of him, "though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer". Cowley headed the moderns. He was the last of the metaphysical poets. In many respects he foreshadowed the English classicists. His knowledge of the Ancients entitles him to be considered a humanist. With all his poetry, fantasy, conceits, Pindarism, Cowley is an intellectual. His love verses are called 'The Mistress' in the ballad called 'The Chronicle' he jestingly enumerates the mistresses who have ruled his heart.

Cowley anticipated Milton in going to Homer and ever more to Virgil for a mould in which was cast his biblical master. His Lucifer is still a medieval monster, howling and brandishing his tail. The realism destitute of any local color is obtained by modernizing and vulgarizing scriptural indications. He lacked grandeur of imagination, but not ingenuity. His best work is obtained in his 'Miscellanies'. After the Restoration he addressed an ode 'To the Royal Society' which is an eloquent tribute to Bacon.

John Denham (1615-67) is another pioneer of classicism. His half-descriptive and half-didactic 'Cooper's Hill' appeared in 1642. It is a meditation inspired by a place near the Thames, Windsor Forest, and Pope modeled it for his poem later. He has a taste for metrical literary criticism. His antithetical style throws his ideas into

relief. He uses the decasyllabic couplet to mark his meaning. His elegy on Cowley uses the same pattern. As he praises his friend, he defines his own taste.

Edmund Waller (1606-87) wrote only occasional verse. His panegyrics, eulogies, patriotic poems, love poems, jesting verses and pious verses show a smoothness. Elegance, correctness, grace, something cold and stilted belongs to them all. The wit of the metaphysical poets recurs in Waller. He is, much less ingenious than Cowley. His madrigals recall Carew's more decent verses. His well-known poems. "The Bud" 'Go lovely Rose' and 'On a Girdle' are models in this genre. Waller had the qualities to meet the tastes and needs of a new age.

5.3.4. POETRY

JOHN MILTON AND HIS LIFE

Milton was born on December 9, 1608 at Black-spread Eagle court in Bread Street. His father a money-scrivener resembled his son in combining puritan sympathies in religion with literary and artistic tastes. His younger brother Christopher became a judge. Milton entered St.Paul's school in 1620 and later Christ College, Cambridge. He got his M.A. in 1632. He produced his early verse in Horton. Then he spent two years in Italy. After his return, he acted as schoolmaster or tutor to his nephews and others.

He married in 1643. His wife Mary Powell hardly remained with him and went to her parents. She returned in 1645 and died in 1652, leaving him three daughters. He became secretary of the commonwealth at which time he lost his eyesight. He married second time and this woman also died soon. Again he married in 1663 and led life comfortably. The publication of his great epics followed. After his death in November, 1674, he was buried at St. Giles's churchyard.

HIS EARLY POEMS

The period of his writing can be divided into three parts. The first includes all the early poems upto 'Lycidas'. The second, fertile in prose, yields no poetry, except that of the sonnets; the third is marked by 'Paradise Lost' in 12 books, 'Paradise Regained' and 'Samson Agonistes'.

Milton wrote in 1629 his first masterpiece, the 'Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity'. It depicts the straightening of Satan's kingdom at the Nativity and an incomparable series of stanzas celebrated the end of Paganism. Proper names are marvelous in themselves. The imagery is restrained and has an unequalled power of suggestion. His work in the years which, he spent at Horton shows deep feeling for nature 'L Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso' are partly descriptive and partly poems of feeling. They reveal a landscape less than the poet's state of mind. He represents the two aspects in which pleasure appears to him at different times, the alternation of his mirth and melancholy.

Arcades; the fragment of a masque this is a fine compliment in verse to the Dowager Countess of Derby. It shows the genius of the woods at his work of protecting the trees and plants. Milton wrote another masque 'Comus' for which Henry Lawes supplied the music. The descriptions are little fitted to be heard on the

stage, but they charm when they are read, mingling realistic touches and subtle classical reminiscences. The complete purity and versification, and crystalline music of syllables in the Song to Echo, the appeal to the nymph Sabrina and her reply "By the rushy-fringed bank" are unequalled.

Milton related the conflict in his own heart in the elegy called 'Lycidas' (1637). It is occasional verse in the conventional pastoral form, Lycidas or King had been wont to scorn delights and laborious days devoting himself whole-heartedly to the muse without ambition of worldly success. Nowhere else has he so poetically uttered the haunting thought

"Alas! What boots it with incessant care.

To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade."

Lycidas, remains the poem of a refined humanist, an example of supreme perfection of style, imagery and versification.

THE SONNETS

Until the restoration silenced him as a polemist, Milton wrote no verse beyond some dozen occasional sonnets. Of them four of five are the most memorable in the language. Wordsworth says "in his hand the thing became a trumpet". Some of his sonnets are personal effusions, others allude to his polemical writings or they are fragments of the great living epic, addressed to Fairfax, Cromwell and Sir Harry Vape.

When in 1602 he had gone blind, he mourned the extinction of his one talent before he had time to serve his Maker as he would feel thus. "They also serve who only stand and wait". There is powerful pathos in the sonnet he wrote to his second wife who died in childbed for him 'came vested all in white, pure as her mind". The most striking feature of the sonnet is the rhymes on ones, old day, and the long ago. These fourteen lines are at once the explosion of a wrath of genuine and a deep and an inexhaustible lesson on art.

THE LARGER POEMS

In 1660 the Restoration forced Milton to return to private life. He was able to return to the poetic projects of youth. 'Paradise Lost' was published in 1667, and 'Paradise Ragained' and 'Samson Agonistes' in 1671. He sang the creation, the fall of the angels, the fall of man and Christ's reconquest of paradise. He told of the sacrifice of Samson who died willingly because his death entailed that of the enemies of his country.

The moral thesis of Genesis is submission to the Almighty. The pride and indomitable courage of the revolted angel rekindled the emotion of the interest hours of his life. He saw God as the King of England, surrounded by submissive and docile angels. He intended to "justify the ways of God to man". The Graco-Roman form of the epic, replete with Hebraic matter is derived from ancient models; its aspect, divisions and style are those of the 'Aeneid' or the 'Iliad'. In brief, 'Paradise Lost' is more full of meaning denser, more artistic and more constantly lifted above the level of prose than any other in English poetry.

'Paradise Regained' comments and answers 'Paradise Lost'. Its theme is taken from the first verses of the fourth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel—Christ withstanding Satan's temptations after 40 days of fasting in the wilderness. Paradise was lost by Eve when she yielded to Satan's temptation, regained by Christ when he got the better of the same tempter and so ended the reign of Satan upon earth.

'Samson Agonistes' is as personal as 'Paradise Regained' and is more beautiful. In form it is a regular tragedy after Sophocles. It has choruses made of lines of unequal length. The action takes place on a single day. The play is almost entirely retrospective. It fails to arouse curiosity and uneasiness about the future. The scenes are pathetic, sufficient for a poem. This drama was a noble conclusion to Milton's poetic career.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MILTON'S POETRY

It was left for Milton to restore the quality of greatness to English poetry. He is the last word in the English Renaissance. At a time when its splendor had been fading away, in Milton it flows up into a glorious sunset. The serious and meditative spirits of the time turned Milton into an epic genius.

Milton's devotion to form and coherence separate him from the great Romantics and gives to the beauty of his verse a delicacy and gravity. Like Johnson, he favoured the classical conventions. He never allowed his scholarship to chill his creative imagination. This quality of beauty is better seen in his early poems, in 'L' Allegro, II Penseroso, Comus and Lycidas. They have all the freshness and charm of youth; they exhibit the lighter and more fanciful side of Milton's genius.

With this sense of beauty is combined a stateliness of manner which gives high dignity to Milton's poetry. In his great epic Milton is extraordinarily feasible in the methods he adopts to avoid monotony. He strengthens blank verse without cramping it. He rounds off with finished care the single line without ever sacrificing the organic unity of the entire poem. He is like a great organist who adorns it with every conceivable variation which serves to exhibit the freshness and sweetness of the simple theme the modern reader may regard with great interest the celestial pageant, that Milton unrolls before him in his lengthy epics. The merits of 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained' depend upon the stark grandeur of many descriptive passages and the passionate love of nature. It meets us first in the fresh sweetness of 'L', 'Allegro' and 'II Penseroso', later it gains strength in 'Lycidas' e.g. 'while the still mom went out with sandals grey'. In blank verse we have few things that can approach the picture of pandemonium and its inhabitants, the scene with Sin and Death, the journey through chaos, the address to light at the beginning of Book III, Satan's vision of the Sin, the description of Paradise, the Temptation, the riot of names etc.

Milton was a poet with an exquisite ear and extraordinary sense of form. He managed at once the sharp couplet and the wandering, labyrinthine stanza. Every line of his can be scanned with perfect strictness as an iambic of five feet. He

practically put English prosody on the footing, which it has maintained ever since he riched English vocabulary in his later poems. After Chaucer, Spenser, Shakesphere, he represents the fourth great influence in English prosody.

5.3.5. PROSE

The period which extends from 1625 to 1660 is filled with the political and religious strike of the reign of Charles I and the triumph of Puritanism. The Puritanism which closed the theatres did indeed give a character of strictness to the new age. The individual had the right to interpret the Bible according to the light that was in him. Anglicanism acquired new life from the struggle. Literary production at this time was much more various than it seems to be, yet the religious revival gave this generation its general character and distinguished it from the preceding one. Rich humanity, unlimited curiosity, the sense of the comic mingling with the tragic-all gave place to a passionate controversy on the forms of the Christian religion and a search for the way of salvation.

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE

The Authorized Version of the Bible, brought out in 1611, is based almost entirely on that of Tyndale and Coverdale. This prose is free from medieval cumbrousness. There is something in the temper, its exaltation, its high seriousness that put in spiritual touch with the Hebrew writers. The translators possessed versions of natural literary excellences. They found to their hand a native prose just ready for the shaping faculty that should make full use of the stark and simple grace of the Saxon tongue.

Bacon owed little to the Bible. But Milton's debt is a considerable one. The historians, Clarendon and Fuller, catch some measure of the stately rhetoric of the Old Testament. Sir Thomas Browne in "Religio Medici" Robert Burton in "Anatomy of Melancholy" and Jeremy Taylor in 'Varying ways' testify to its influence. Both Old and New are seen in John Bunyan, where style owes more to the Bible. The simple, flowing narrative of the Evangelist meets us in almost every page of 'The Pilgrim's Progress Addison's conversational essay. Swift's prose, the stormy vigour of Carlyle, Ruskin's ironic eloquence are all due to the Bible.

Finally the naked power of Wordsworth, the subtle suggestiveness of Coleridge, the fine restraint of Keats's best work find their ultimate inspiration in the homely diction and elevated mobility of the Authorized Version.

THE WRITERS OF ORNATE PROSE

There are a number of writers in the earlier years of the seventeenth century who exemplify in their work the transitional influence of the period. Some like the ingenious Robert Burton, retain the ornate prolixity of the Elizabethan in style.

Robert Burton's most popular work 'The Anatomy of Melancholy' was published in 1621. The book is a wilderness of varied learning, a masterpiece of ingenious discursiveness, often amazingly involved in style, yet with none of that windy vagueness belonging to many of his matter. He is as terse and pithy as

Bacon himself, as succinct and lucid as Johnson or as rhetorical as Sir Thomas Browne.

Of Sir Thomas Browne's writings 'Religio Medici' 'Urn Burial', and 'The Garden of Cyrus' have been each in its way claims upon the attention of the literary student.

'Religio Medici' is an excellent prose companion to the metaphysical verse of the age. Browne mirrors most of the characteristics of his time. We have here an ardent fancy, a tinge of melancholy, a quaint pietism and a tangled growth of erudition. It is as a stylist of modulated, harmonious English prose that we admire him.

'Urn Burial' gives us the meditative melancholy of the man and is written in a loftier and more practical style. It is a wonderful prose piece on Death and Decay.

'The Garden of Cyrus' is an antiquarian fantasy remoter in its appeal than 'Urn Burial' but is rich in quaint conceits and rhetorical effects.

WRITERS OF PLAIN PROSE

George Herbert (1593-1633) known for his poem, 'The Temple' gives the picture of a country clergyman. In 'The Country Parson' he tells what should be the life, the character and education of a country clergyman. Jeremy Taylor, the most eloquent of theologians 'Propheying' in 1646. His other great works are 'Holy Living' (1650) and 'Holy Dying' (1651).

The Puritans were no less active than the Anglicans. The numerous pamphlets in English that Milton composed in his middle age from 1641 to 1660 form the most extraordinary monument of the prose of the middle seventeenth century. They contain his numerous self-revelations, scraps of information about his life and ideas and also some magnificently eloquent passages.

Among his works "Treatise on Education" in 1644, 'History of England' in 1660 and 'Areopagitica' (1644) are very important.

John Selden's biggest English work is 'Titles of Honour'. Another work, 'Table Talk' was published in 1689. These abound in aphorisms, foreshadowing the later Essay. His gnomic wisdom is notable.

Thomas Fuller (1608-61) wrote 'The Holy State and the Profane State' and 'The Worthies of England'. Thanks to him many significant anecdotes have been preserved he shares a critical understanding of documents which inspires confidence.

MINOR WRITERS

Lord Herbert of Cherbury wrote a 'History of Henry VIII'. The 'Memoirs' of Sir Kenelm Digby have a resemblance to a novel. Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion' is famous for its portraits. One of the strongest replies to Hobbes's 'Leviathan' was from the pen of the Puritan James Harrington who in his 'Oceana' proposed a republican Utopia. The most celebrated Cambridge Platonist. Henry More wrote a series of works which bear the imprint of a dreamy mysticism.

The two great diarists of the age were John Evelyn (1620-1701) and Samuel Pepys (1633-1703). Evelyn's record covers such a vast area of public and private experience, Pepys's diary is much more a work of art both in its fine, sustained descriptions of events like the coronation of Charles II, the plague and the Fire of London.

THE CHARACTER WRITERS

Sir Thomas North published his translation of Plutarch's 'Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans' in 1579. His phrases so appealed to Shakespeare that they were transmitted into rich blank verse. Richard Hakluyt published 'Principal Navigations, Volages, Discoveries of the English Nation' in 1589. The Voyages of Cabots, Drake, Frobisher and Sir John Hawkins are included in this vast record.

Donne's best religious prose lends itself much more readily to immediate appreciation. His arguments are contained in "Devotions upon Emergent Occasions". He can sustain the rhythm of uninterrupted thought as he mounds though clause and while he dwells on human wickedness.

John Bunyan (1628-88) wrote 'The Pilgrim's Progress', an allegorical story tracing Christian's arduous pilgrimage from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. Biblical echoes and homiletic fervor enrich the colloquial sturdiness. They add dignity to a style that is vital and urgent in both narrative and dialogue. Bunyan's other works are 'Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners', 'an autobiographical record and 'The Life and Death of Mr. Bradman', a dialogue.

Two deeply influential philosophers stand out in this age. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) combined a career of scholarship and writing with a career in public life. His philosophical treatise 'The Advancement of Learning' examines the -current state of knowledge and the means of advancing it. The 'New Atlantis' is an unfinished fable recounting a visit to an imaginary island, Bensalem. But the 'Essays' are of chief concern to the student of literature. They are polished set pieces dealing with personal and public themes. He draws on wide reading for his illustrations. The essays display sharpness of mind and a gift for aphoristic expression. The essay on Delays begins thus:

"Fortune is like the market, where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall".

The fruits of perceptive reflection are often memorably capsulated.

"Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man".

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) worked as Bacon's secretary. His book 'Leviathan' is a forceful attack on the notion of divine and derived sovereignty and builds a theory of society ordered by contractual limitation of liberty and authority. The influence of his work was immense. .

The 'Lives' which Isaac Walton (1593-1683) wrote are more edifying, but they contain descriptive and anecdotal material that brings their subjects warmly to life.

Better known is his guide for fishermen, 'The Complete Angler or, the Contemplative Man's Recreation'. He illustrates the points by reference to Pliny or Bacon.

5.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The term 'Puritan' calls up the picture of an austere figure, garbed in black with lank hair and no sympathy for rule-breakers. Anyone who wished to purify the sages of the church was called a puritan.
2. The artist owes Puritanism a guide for the ruthless destruction of so much that was beautiful. Milton wrote masques, Colonel Hutchinson was an expert dancer and Cromwell delighted in music. This only showed that the extremist is to be blamed for destruction of art.
3. Milton succeeded because of his fiery sincerity and high imagination. Cromwell was noted for his genuine kindness of heart. He held his destinies of his country in his hand. His zeal and kindness attracted the poorer classes to him.
4. There was something titanic about his resolution. To be well hated and misunderstood is both the privilege and tragedy of the strong man. He insisted on liberty of thought in the teeth of the extremities of the day.
5. Puritanism had proved itself unfit to be the sole inspiration of national statecraft. In conclusion we may add that it was greater in its fall than ever it had been in its days of power.
6. The period which extends from 1625 to 1660 is filled with the political and religious strife of the reign of Charles I and the triumph of Puritanism.
7. The Puritanism which closed the theatres did indeed give a character of strictness to the new age. The individual had the right to interpret the Bible according to the light that was in him.
8. Anglicanism acquired new life from the struggle. Literary production at this time was much more various than it seems to be, yet the religious revival gave this generation its general character and distinguished it from the preceding one. Rich humanity, unlimited curiosity, the sense of the comic mingling with the tragic-all gave place to a passionate controversy on the forms of the Christian religion and a search for the way of salvation.
9. In 1660 the Restoration forced Milton to return to private life. He was able to return to the poetic projects of youth. 'Paradise Lost' was published in 1667, and 'Paradise Regained' and 'Samson Agonistes' in 1671. He sang the creation, the fall of the angels, the fall of man and Christ's reconquest of paradise. He told of the sacrifice of Samson who died willingly because his death entailed that of the enemies of his country.
10. The moral thesis of Genesis is submission to the Almighty. The pride and indomitable courage of the revolted angel rekindled the emotion of the interest hours of his life. He saw God as the King of England, surrounded by

submissive and docile angels. He intended to "justify the ways of God to man".

11. The Graco-Roman form of the epic, replete with Hebraic matter is derived from ancient models; its aspect, divisions and style are those of the Aeneid or the Iliad. In brief, 'Paradise Lost' is fuller of meaning denser, more artistic and more constantly lifted above the level of prose than any other in English poetry.

5.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Milton's 'Lycidas' as a pastoral elegy.
2. Given an account of Milton's longer poems.
3. Write an essay on Milton as a poet of the Puritan Age.
4. What are the characteristics of the prose of the Puritan Age?
5. Write a note on the writers of Ornate Prose.
6. What is the contribution of Bacon to English Literature?
7. Name the important Character Writers of the period and comment on their works

5.6 SUMMARY

The seventeenth century upto 1660 was dominated by Puritanism and it may be called puritan Age or the Age of Milton, who was the noblest representative of the puritan spirit. The puritan movement in literature may be considered as the second and greater Renaissance marked by the rebirth of the moral nature of man. However in the Age of Renaissance despotism was still the order of the day and there was fanaticism in politics and religion. The puritan movement stood for liberty of the people from the shackles of the despot ruler as well as the introduction of morality and high ideals in politics. Thus it had two objects personal righteousness, civil and religious liberty. In other words it aimed of making men honest and free.

In the literature of the puritan Age we find the same confusion as we find in religion and politics. As there were no fixed literary standards, imitations of older poets and exaggeration of the poets replaced the original, dignified and highly imaginative compositions of the Elizabethan writers. The literature produced during this period so called gloomy age, as not of a higher order, however this age has the honour of producing one great master of verse whose work would shed lustre on any age or people. John Milton, who was the noblest and indomitable representative of the puritan spirit to which he gave a most lofty and enduring expression.

The puritan poetry can be divided into three parts (1) poetry of School of Spenser (2) poetry of the Metaphysical school, (3) poetry of the Cavalier poet.

The spenserians were the follower of Spenser. In spite of the changing conditions and revolt against Italian poetry which Spenser and Sidney had made

fashionable during the sixteenth century the preferred to follow Spencer and considered him as their master.

Phines Fletcher (1582-1648) and Giles Fletcher (1583-1623) are the most important poets of this school. They were both priests and fellows of Cambridge University. Phineas Fletcher wrote a number of Spencerian pastorals and allegories. His most important work is the poem "The purple Island". It is an allegorical poem and follows the allegorical pattern of the Faerie Queen. Giles Fletcher was more lyrical and super natural than his brother. He also choosed his subjects for his poetry from Spencer subjects. His Christ's Victorie and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death (1610), which is an allegorical poem is a link between the religious poetry of spancer and Milton. Other writers who wrote under the influence of Spencer were William Browne, George Wither and William Drummond.

The name "Metaphysical" was first used by Dr.Johnson in his essay on Abraham Cowley in his "Lives of the poets" Dr.Johnson gave his name in derisions because of the fantastic form of Donne's poetry. Jon Donne and George Herbert are the two major poets of this school. Abraham Cowely. Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell and Edmund Waller are the minor poets of this school. John Donne and Herbert are in different ways, a type of revoult against earlier forms and standards of poetry. In feeling and imagery both are poets of a high order, but in style and expression they are the leaders of the fantastic school whose influence largely dominated poetry during the half century of the puritan period. The metaphysical poets were honest, original thinkers. They tried to analyse their feelings and experience of love. They were also aware of the life, and were concerned with death, burial descent into hell etc. Though hoped for immorality, they were obsessed by the Consciousness of morality which was often expressed in a mood of mawkish disgust...

The term Cavalier or Caroline (adjective from Charles) is used for a group of mid 17th century poets who sided with King Charles I against the parliament. These Cavalier or Caroline poets were the followers of Ben Johnson, and may properly be called the 'Sons of Ben', though some of them also display the influence of John Donne.

The cavalier poets sympathized the king. Some of them went into exile with the king and the other stayed home in England. Some of them wrote elegant verse, more light than serious, so that the term 'cavalier poetry' came to refer to a kind of light lyric, often advocating a Carpe diem (seize the day) attitude. To "seize the day" means to disregard the future so that one might expect the poets of this theme to ignore religion. But life is not so simple. Some cavalier poets were also men of strong religious faith, who neither wrote religious epics nor holy sonnets. The most important poets of this school are Herrik, Carew, Lovelace, Suckling and Walter Denham. The 17th century poet, Andrew Marvell managed a blend of metaphysical and cavalier attitudes and techniques so neat and elegant that he has been classified under both headings.

The Caroline lyric is the result of conscious effort. It is artificial. It is a work of art characterized by finish, polish and elegance of language, but lacking the spontaneity and absence of effort which characterized the Elizabethan lyric. It has a formal finish and perfection, but is wanting in natural care and warmth of emotion.

It mirrors the mood and temper of the age. It is often coarse, licentious and indecent, thus reflecting the coarseness and indecency of the courtly circles to which most of the poets of this school belonged. The poets of this school again and again find the various beauties of nature united in their beauty of their respective beloved.

The cavalier poets are great lovers of nature. They observe nature minutely and describe it with feelings. Concrete, visual images drawn from the homelier and simpler objects and forces of nature abound in their lyrics. The lyric is charming, but there is something trivial and unsubstantial about it. In this respect again, it reflects the triviality and frivolity of the life of the times.

5.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Give an account of the political and social background in the age of the Puritans.
2. What are the distinctive features of the Jacobean poetry?
3. Write an essay on the poets of the School of Ben Jonson.
4. Explain the term 'metaphysical'. How do Donne and his followers bring out the metaphysical features in their poetry?
5. What is the role played by the pioneers of classicism in the middle of the 7th century?

5.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

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2. Morgan, Edmund. *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1958.
3. Spurr, John. *English Puritanism, 1603–1689*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1998.

5.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Social Background of the Puritan Age.
2. The Schools of Ben Jonson
3. The Metaphysical
4. The Authorised Version of the Bible.

5.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Luxon, Thomas. *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
2. Keeble, N.H. "Puritanism and Literature." *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*. Ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 309-326.

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4. Coffey, John and Paul C. H. Lim. "Introduction." *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*. Ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 1-18.
5. Hendrix, Scott. "Luther." *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*. Ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 39-56.
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5.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss about Metaphysical poetry and analyse how they are different from Elizabethan poets.

5.12 KEY WORDS

Sphoristic – wise saying

Quaint – Pleasing because unfamiliar

Labourious – need great effort

Prosody – science of verse rhythms

Obscurity – state of being not clear.

Eptone – Short summary of a book

Pensive – Seriously thoughtful

Puritanism – Practices and beliefs of puritans

THE AGE OF DRYDEN

6.1 OBJECTIVES

This unit will introduce the Age of Dryden also called the Restoration Period (the history of English literature the period dating from 1660 to 1700). It also explains the change in political and social as well as in literary fields. In politics the period saw the reign of three rulers, two dynasties and a revolution

6.2 INTRODUCTION

From 1600 to 1660 there is a gradual change in the tone of the literature as well as in the temperament of writers. The last works of Shakespeare, the subtle imaginative analyses of Bacon the poems of Donne had all revealed the secret working of the mind of the age. The Restoration of King Charles II which followed marks the decisive birth of the new world. The influence upon England was marked for court reasons. Much of Charles's exile has been spent in France. He had been attracted towards its literature and did his best to enforce the ideals he saw there. Psychologically the new spirit involved the substitution of the critical for the imaginative spirit.

The creative imagination moves on the plane of primal human qualities. It is concerned with the interpretation of human nature. The new spirit brings the intellect rather than the poetic imagination into play. The literature of the day aimed at clearness, conciseness and concentrated force. Poetry had to fall 'back on epigram, but the 'good sense' ideal, formulated by Boileau was an admirable one for prose. The object of the prose writers of the day is to be simple in style and natural in manner. The drama had come to be a courtier's game. Here for the sake of amusement, lucidity and directness are made subsidiary to brilliance of wits and scholars.

The aspects of the changes noticed during the age may be summarized thus: (1) the academic aspect-the substitution of Classicism for Romanticism (2) the political aspect due (a) to the general influence of France at the time and (b) the particular influence through the medium of the king and his court (3) the psychological aspect that underlay these, signifying surely more than a change of fashion, a change of attitude while influencing all of them was the general drift of the age, towards matters of civil and national interest.

6.3 CONTENT**6.3.1. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND**

The new set-up at the political level saw the benefit of a reconstituted hierarchy. Around the king, the aristocracy of birth resumed itself. The court, preferment's and positions were reactivated. All those who wanted to have a stable order of things now joyfully hailed the reestablishment of that order. The nobles were able to recover their prestige, the middle class, a calm so indispensable to its business concerns. Utilitarianism became the more conscious guide of individual

actions. The memory of all the lies and vain pretensions, so long endured, sharpened into an ironical mode.

The horrors of the plague darkened the careless gaiety of Restoration London. The Great Fire led to the transformation of its architecture under Wren. Both Evelyn and Wren set to work upon plans for the rebuilding of a new London. The founding of the Royal Society was a sign. It corresponded with a widespread desire for knowledge. The new-found liberty developed at once into licentiousness. Public festivals were reestablished, popular entertainments authorized and the theatres reopened. Manners allowed slipping into the toleration of vice and almost its encouragement. The atmosphere of violent and often coarse voluptuousness was intimately in accord with the lucid outlook of the mental life of the day.

The coffee houses and later the clubs were centers around which radiated the thoughtful and intelligent. Politicians, lawyers, clergymen and literary men met at these places and discussed the problems of the hour. The famous Will's in Covent Garden was patronized by Pepys and Dryden; the Tory 'October Club' met in a tavern at Westminster; the Whig 'Kitcat club' in a Strand tavern. Until the end of the 17th century, certain categories of writers enjoyed facilities. The complicity of public opinion, the tone of the court life, the character of the king and his superficial regard for the activities of the mind tended to encourage them.

AUGUSTAN LITERATURE

The term 'Augustan' connects itself well with Johnson's famous comparison of Dryden's dealings with the English language and literature to those of Augustus with the city of Rome. Dryden was the supreme literary exponent of this period. The kind of literature then produced received its greatest polish and came nearest to its own ideal. The Augustan period in the mildest sense is the period of Dryden, Pope and their times.

In a deeper plane, the initial stages of a literary evolution had already unfolded themselves, preparing for the new age. Themes had been sketched out, innovations attempted in form. The apparent break with the moral past conceals the working of a need for psychological renovation which constitutes the solidarity of the period. A sort of detachment inveighed literature away from what was practical, Analysis and reasoning, realism, criticism, comedy and satire-these are the main features of literary activity during this period. In the forms of pure sensibility of creative imagination, in lyricism, drama, in epic and allegorical verse if often achieved creditable success.

THE AGE OF DRYDEN-POETRY

John Dryden (1631-1700) was a literary giant of a kind very different from Milton. He was a superb professional craftsman. He consciously devoted himself to the refinement of English prose and verse. He came of a Puritan family but moved in stages through Royalism and Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism. In 'Annus Mirabilis' 'The Year of Wonders, 1666 he celebrated the national achievement against the Dutch and also paid tribute to London's ordeal in the Fire. The full

flowering of Dryden's satiric wit was marked by the publication of 'Absalom and Achitophel' in 1681. Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, became involved in an attempt to exclude the Catholic Duke of York from succession to the throne. Dryden represents the Earl of Shaftesbury as Achitophel and the Duke of Monmouth as Absalom. Absalom is lured by Achitophel to join the rebellious action. The memorable force of the poem lies in its gallery of portraits, sagaciously sketched with an adroitness of stroke that flaunts Dryden's consummate mastery of the couplet.

There is a comparable polish and humour in the satire 'Mac Flecknoe', an attack on the poet, Shadwell, who is selected to succeed the retiring arch-poet of nonsense.

“Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he
who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense”.

His 'Religio Laici' is a defence of the established religion against the extremes of Roman traditionalism and dissenting individualism. There is a decisive theological emphasis, in the poem where Dryden defends Orthodox Christianity against the Deists, laying great stress on the doctrine of the Incarnation and Atonement.

In 'The Hind and the Panther', he defended the Roman Church fully. In the satirical poems he was able to sustain the flow of logic. The milk-white hind immortal and unchanged, represents the Roman Church. 'Bloody bear' represents the Independents, a buffoon-Ape the atheists, etc. The Church of England is represented by the Panther. The animal allegory is ornamental to the dialogue. It creates an impression of one reading a fable within a fable.

The odes and lyrical poems form the last, distinctive group. The famous 'Alexander's Feast' is a clever masterpiece in imitative harmony. 'The Song of St. Cecilia's Day' is purer in form and of a more communicative musical beauty and sweetness. In the Ode to the memory of Mrs. Anne Killigrew' Dryden strikes his most touching chords. In it we feel the breath of modern Romanticism. It is worthy of note that in several passages of these later compositions, there are lines written in triple measure (anapestic, etc). It is so restful to the ear after the Iambic rhythm and the short hammering of the couplet.

OTHER SATIRISTS

The great influences of the time united to make the Restoration an age of satire. In the exclusive circle of the cultured, the art of expressing one's judgement in literary terms became a highly natural exercise of the critical faculty. The satirists of this period were most often realistic and crude. The study of the classics promoted familiarity with the works of Horace and Juvenal. The dominant influence was political hatred and aggrieved sentiment or motives of abstract morality.

Samuel Butler was a lover of sober commonsense and the sworn foe of enthusiasm. His most important work was a long octosyllabic poem 'Hudibras'. In it he attacked savagely the parliamentary party. It paved the way for the Restoration satirists. The name 'Hudibras' is taken from 'Faery Queene'. In Butler's poem, he is an ignorant, repulsive-looking Presbyterian knight, with a squire. They set out in pseudo-romantic fashion and soon engaged in an anti-bear baiting crusade. The poem, with its echoes of Rabelais and Cervantes and its wild burlesque and buffoonery is rich in genuine flashes of comic insight.

Denham dealt with the politics of the hour in his 'Four Instructions to a Puritan', Waller, a courtier poet at heart had occasion to celebrate the English naval victory in 'Instructions to a Painter'. The satires of Marvell-'Instructions' 'Advices to a Painter' 'Brittania and Raleigh' 'Dialogue Between Two Horses' etc-are lampoons of extraordinary ferocity. He wrote most often in heroic couplets. His unpolished verse had got the necessary suppleness or regularity. John Oldham's satirical temperament offered a natural affinity with that of Juvenal. His preface to 'Ars Poetica' of Horace is very explicit. It is by his four 'Satires on the Jesuits' that Oldham should be judged. In the rest of his satirical work, he aimed at general, impersonal criticism, supported by crudest details but bearing on the vices themselves.

Dryden's satirical vein owes its outstanding quality to the fact that it represents reconciliation between the scholarly ideal and popular inspiration. It remains popular because of its biblical setting, its imaginative theme, direct allusions and the portraits. "The Medal" struck with the effigy of Shaftesbury after his acquittal became for Dryden the symbol of sedition. Shadwell, the dramatist and a Whig is the hero of 'Mac Flecknoe'. The various kinds of popular satire including the ephemeral writings recall their close connection with the political incidents of the day, the most important of which is the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

RESTORATION LYRICS

The Restoration poets are less complex by nature. Almost all of noble birth, the rhymes of madrigals, treatises in verse and odes who wrote in Charles the second's court were true poets. Three main themes were dominant; gallantry, the sustained dignity of an abstract argumentation and the vehemence of a philosophic ardour. Passion, strong imaginations that can grasp the reality of the soul are scarce in them. Earl of Roscommon composed a rhymed essay on the art of translation in verse. The Duke of Buckingham wrote an 'Essay on Poetry' All the talents that court life demand-wit, the ready and correct reply, the ease of expression, clearness of thought, regularity in the metrical arrangement - give to these exercises in verse a polish that bespeaks elegance and good taste.

Rochester is the most interesting personality of this band. His most popular cry was his recipe for youth and beauty. The nearest approach to genuine feeling is made by him in some of his lyrics, as for example. "I cannot change as others do"

The mood of mockery suits him better and many will prefer such songs as 'Love and Life' with its delightful finish. Though Sir Charles Sedley essayed various forms of poetry, he was essentially a songwriter, less careful than Rochester in his art. He had a happy knack of agreeable song, as is proved by the well known "Phyllis is my only joy."

Lord Buckhurst (Earl of Dorset) was largely esteemed by his contemporaries. His most attractive song is the familiar ditty, 'To all you Ladies now on Land' written at sea, in the first Dutch war. Other less distinguished writers of the period include the Earl of Roscommon, an austere gentleman, mentioned already, a decent scholar and critic with occasional success in epigrammatic lines.

Nahum Tate's 'Melancholy' or 'The Midnight thought' anticipate Young. His psalms in verse enjoyed a long popularity. Flatman, in the best passages of 'Retirement' or of his funeral dirges shows a faculty of effusion. There is no gulf separating the Restoration from the great lyrical century of the English Renaissance. The one is the continuation of the other, and prolongs its decline. These poets have yielded more than one gem and enough to key up the very totality of the period and to give it a richer coloring.

6.3 2. DRAMA - TRAGEDY - COMEDY

The Puritan Revolution had closed the playhouses in 1642. For fourteen years, no regular performance was given. In 1656, Sir William D'Avenant came out with an allegorical entertainment. 'The First Day' Entertainment at Rutland House'. This was followed by a more ambitious show. 'The Siege of Rhodes'. This period of writing extended just over fifty years, Comedy in particular, that of Wycherley. Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar, would appear to represent an unbroken series of connected works. In every respect English literature between 1688 and 1702 forms a period of transition.

It bore a stamp of special character in both inspiration and style. Each literary kind revealed the influence of a spirit akin to that of the Restoration itself. The works of Dryden. Etherege, Wycherley, Lee Otway, together with those of their immediate contemporaries constituted the theatre of the Restoration.

In order to understand the development of dramatic art under the Restoration, one must imagine the King's company and his brother, Duke of York's company, gathering together talented actors as Betterton and actresses as Nell Gwynn. The theatre now became both a fashionable amusement and a daily occasion for meetings and intrigues for the young noblemen. It was one of the main social centers of the age. The passion for an art rendered the more pleasing because it had in it the value of the protest expressing a political preference, triumphs over despised enemies and sense of freedom. The literature that reflected them all, was singularly free, crude in its boldness, insolent in its self-assertion and seeming to pursue the confusion of an abolished regime of ideas. In the dramatic form, with which the age invested the common spirit of the time, it sowed itself wholly impregnated with foreign influences.

Exiles like D'Avenant, Waller and Denham brought back with them a taste for foreign models, images and rhythms. Translations already revealed Corneille to English readers. Soon the tragic-comedies of Thomas Corneille, the heroic tragedies of Scideru pr Quinault, the comedies of Moliere and the purely French art of Racine were welcomed and imitated. The Spanish influence was an element of the original character of the Restoration theatre. A definite Spanish origin can be assigned to plays such as Sir Samuel Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours* or George Digby's *Elvira*. Elsewhere it was only limited to some episodes, as in Wycherley's *Gentleman Dancing - Master*.

A certain imaginative infection emanates from these plays. They transport the mind into a domain of superiority that is somewhat unreal. Life has its own splendour and beauty. The suggestion of generosity which radiates from it may very well be hollow. While it is felt to be illusory, one yields to it in a certain measure. The reader finds himself moved at times. Lastly, the diction is almost always sonorous, often firm and nervous, reveals such vast glimpses at one stroke. The style drags along many a trace of bad taste-conceits, affected tricks of all kinds. The brilliant success of these dramatic ventures seems to have inspired Dryden with a feeling of confidence in his own powers, which at times got the better of the sureness of his critical judgement.

TRAGEDY

The tragedy of the period could be divided into two parts - the Heroic drama between 1660 and 1680 and the blank-verse tragedy. In both kinds, the mighty craftsmanship of Dryden led the way. *The Rival Ladies* and *The Wild Gallant* were neither tragic nor comic. *The Indian Emperor* was Dryden's first, original venture. *The Maiden Queen* is a blend of tragic heroic and CLlic prose. *Tyrannic Love* is a dramatisation of the legend of St. Catherine, *The Conquest of Granada* contains many of the best pieces of declamation. The most curious of Dryden's experiments, the tagging of *Paradise Lost* into a drama *The State of Innocence* is half an opera and more than half a heroic play. In 1675 appeared the extremely fine *Aurangazeb* still heroic. Dryden's *All For Love* is a very great play with more of the earth and less of the air in it than in its model, *Antony and Cleopatra*. In 1690 he wrote the very fine tragedy of *Don Sebastian*. Next came *Cleomenes*, a pure tragedy and a fine one. His last play of all was *Love Triumphant*, a tragic-comedy.

Heroic tragedy was reaching the final stage of decay, dying from an inner exhaustion. *The Empress of Morocco* by Settle had been very successful. *The Destruction of Jerusalem* by Crone did not reawaken the languishing interest of the public. While the influence of the heroic kind was still to be felt in today and in Lee, it was permeated by a very different spirit, leading us back to the English dramatic tradition.

COMEDY

The spirit of comedy is essentially a social thing. It develops through the reciprocal observation of characters, the refining of the critical sense, the fixing of conventional values. All the circumstances which favoured satire, also favoured the satirical notation of manners. The stage offered the easiest as well as the most pleasing field for the collective exercise of ridicule. From 1660 onwards there was a revival of Ben Johnson's 'humours', as much as of Fletcher's dramas. After several tentative efforts, Etherege and Wycherley created the new type of comedy.

Dryden's first comedy 'The Wild Gallant' is mediocre. The comic scenes of 'The Spanish Friar' show that he knew how to imbue such work with racy nerve and a quality for genuine invention. He displays even more marked freedom of tone than in his tragedies His dialogue sometimes, as in 'Marriage-la-Mode' has brilliance and drollery. More successful was his contemporary, George Etherege. Three plays of merit bear his signature. The first 'The Comical Revenge, or 'Love in a Tub' is the least interesting. The second, 'She Would if She Could' is a bright and ingenious play' of mannes. The third, 'Sir Fopling Flutter', decidedly the best, has something of that dexterous wit.

Thomas Shadwell succeeded Dryden to the laureateship and wrote nearly twenty plays. His 'Squire of Alsatia' 'Epsom Wells' and 'Bury Fair' are vital pictures of well-known 17th century localities. William Wycherley's first play 'Love in a Wood' attracted the attention of the Duchess of Cleveland. 'The Country Wife and; The Plain Dealer' Inspired by Moliere's 'La Misanthrope' are extremely witty with all their coarseness and occasional prolixity. He is infinitely superior to Shad well. Etherege or Dryden in the bright and vivacious quality of his dialogue.

William Congreve's first play 'The Old Bachelor' was written to amuse himself. 'Love for Love' and 'The Mourning Bridem followed next. 'The Way of the World' is the finest comedy of the period. Its felicitous phrasing and polished wit give it an air of sophistication. Mirabell's aim is to win Lady Wishfort's niece, Millamant. Of Congreve's earlier comedies, 'Love for Love' is the most memorable. There is thematic unity in the spectacle of true love required by true love and spurious love meeting with the spuquous requitals. The construction of 'The Double Dealer' is greatly superior to 'The Old Bachelor' and the dialogue is rich in happy conceits.

In construction and grasp of character. Congreve steadily improved with each succeeding play. From the very first he exhibited himself as a master of light and witty dialogue. He has the easy gaiety of Etherege and the satirical force of Wycherley. His scenes, characters and flashes of wit reveal the restoration, drama at its highest point. Sir John Vanbrugh's first play. 'The Relapse' was performed in 1697. This was followed by 'The Provoked wife' and 'The Confederacy'. In them the fops and fools are treated with more naturalness. Though they have less intellectual force, they show his genial humour and a genius for farcical development.

George Farquhar wrote 'The Inconstant'; and 'The Way to Win Him' 'With the other plays, 'The Recruiting Officer' and 'The Beaux' Strategem' he reached his

highest point as a dramatist. There is an open-air atmosphere about his work that gives it a distinctive place in the Restoration drama. Nathaniel Lee reawakens the temperament of some among the decadent dramatists of the Renaissance. Notable of his plays are 'The Rival Queens', 'Mithridates', 'Lucius Junius Brutus' etc. His work remains interesting as a psychological problem. The works of Colley Cibber - 'Love's Last Shift', 'The Careless Husband' - and those of Mrs. Centlivre - 'The Busy Body' and 'A Bold Stroke for a Wife' - as the last representative comedies of the period, coincided with a change of public taste in comedy.

6.3 3. PROSE -THE DIARISTS

PROSE

In the prose of this period the fall of the poetic spirit, the neap of inspiration, the preference of the merely practical and the merely prosaic are apparent. The manifesto of change is an oft-quoted passage in Bishop Sprat's 'History of the Royal Society'. Dryden, Tillotson, Temple, Halifax were Sprat's elders. Cowley's handful of extremely pleasant essays display many of the characteristics of the new prose. In his most brilliant piece, the 'Discourse concerning Oliver Cromwell' old and new jostle with each other. The fire of the sinister angel who defends the protector contrasts with the almost eighteenth century correctness of some passages.

The immediate stimulus to prose composition in Dryden's case was the interest which he felt in dramatic criticism. The famous 'Essay of Dramatic Poesy' is not only the manifesto of heroic plays, an exposition of divers views as to the different kinds of drama, but also of the correct notion of poetry and of literature. It contains that magnificent criticism which puts Dryden at the head of modern English critics. His other prose works are very considerable. Except his translations, they almost are the form of essays. One of them the 'Preface to the Fables' is as much the capital example of his style in verse. His vocabulary is almost daringly enriched from foreign tongues and seldom hesitates at an archaism. It is forcible without the slightest effort, eloquent without declamation.

The same characteristics appear in the best of contemporary writers. Sir William Temple's 'Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning' is extremely engaging. His thought is none the less of the most purely rational quality with that practical best, that attention to health, comfort and the happiness that can accrue from the little pleasure of life. He went higher than Dryden in developing the music of prose. Halifax's literary fame rests upon a little volume of 'Miscellanies' containing four political tracts. His variety is different with a quiet antithesis, more suggestive of a 'word to the wise'. Richard Head's 'The English Rogue' possesses a certain historical value. It represents the first elaborate attempt to transplant the Spanish picaresque novel. But it has no merits of dialogue or description.

Thomas Burnet and Joseph Glanvill are the chief exponents of the gorgeous style in prose. Burnet's book 'Theoria Sacra' is a fanciful explanation of cosmogony and cosmology, in which the Deluge is the great event in the past and the final

conflagration the great event of the future. Glanvill's 'Scientifica' appeared in 1665; his Defence of the Belief in Witches in 1666; and 'Essays' in 1678.

On the eve of the Restoration, those thinkers who were tempted by the need for lucidity and order turned readily to the philosophy of Descartes. This very spiritualism alienated the greatest English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, a thinker of exceptional quality in whom a radical empiricism produced fearless reason and cold practical realism. The Royal Society (1662) brought into touch with one another these minds that were keen on the knowledge of accurate facts in Mathematics and Physics. Samuel Butler penned a satire. 'The Elephant in the Moon. The discoveries of Boyle on the relation of the volume to the pressure of gases give the society every right to be respected. In 1672 Newton read before it his first note on the composition of white light.

THE DIARISTS

The Diarists and Memoir writers supplied one of the most remarkable divisions of prose. Of them Samuel Pepys occupied a position unparalleled in English. Then came Evelyn, Roer North, Sir John Reresby, Abratomdela Pryme, Mrs. Hutchinson and others. Evelyn's 'Diary' is justly famous for the fullness, variety and fidelity of its records, while in such passages as the well-known account of the Great Fire, the subject rouses the writer to real strength. Pepys's 'Memoirs relating to the State of the Navy' is a very meritorious production. 'The Diary' deals literally with the entire occupatiCims of a busy life. All the details therein acquire in passing under his hands a sort of varnish or a sort of saturation of immortality.

'The Lives' by 'Roger North are the more interesting. The whole is written in a curious style, free from any of the new classicism. Locke published 'Letters on Toleration' and 'Essay on the Human Understanding. The 'Treatise of Government' appeared in 1690. Sir Roger L'Estrange wrote and edited many newspapers. He had a vigorous intellect and adept pen which wounded his Whig adversaries very sorely, Jeremy Collier wrote 'Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain, 'Essays' and the famous 'Short view of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage'. Tom Browns 'Amusements, Serious and Comical' portrays vividly the manners anticipating the best of the later novelists. His poems, squibs, translations bore abundance of wit and humour. 'Athenian Mercury' was the most remarkable project of John Dunton. It later appeared in book form as 'Athenian Oracle' that anticipated the answers to correspondents. 'Life and Erros' was his another book. He wrote and partly published a great amount of matter, a pamphlet, 'Neck or Nothing; and then died in obscurity.

6.3 4. THE AUGUSTAN AGE

For the sake of convenience, the generation of which Pope is the center is called by the term 'classical'. The writers of the first decades of the 18th century enjoyed a preeminence of merit, as compared with their predecessors or successors. These men wanted to endow England with a literature which was polished, rational and perfect. They lived upto their ideal of classicism in though and will. The pleasure of being able to understand, the easy sense of simple orderliness, a smooth balance in ideas as in forms, such was the end pursued in those days.

The upper middle classes associated themselves with the nobility in the exercise of power.

The great merchants and financiers who rose into social prominence were the wealthy descendants of the puritan Republic. The classical ideal of art found full realisation during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. These men had ingrained in them the instinctive respect for moral laws. Immorality and licentiousness were opposed. In certain domains of public life, the proprieties were better observed. The teaching of Steele and Addison started a movement. A breath of tenderness, a relaxing in the characteristic tension and dryness were already perceptible in the opening years of the reign of Anne.

The sobered atmosphere of the time of Queen Anne enabled classicism to develop freely. It also permitted the bold negative spirit in thought and in manners. Sensibility; imagination, lyricism which the repressive action of culture could not correct, showed through in all the writers of this age. The phase of literary history was built upon conditions favourable to be full growth. Pope and the group of poets who acknowledged his superiority were naturally the center of a literature so attentive to the laws of form.

Poetry was dominated by reason and correctness. As its activity is now almost universal, we have a gathering of many provinces-moral philosophy, criticism, satire, history and politics. Swift was the king of this group. With the middle class writers classicism showed itself, slightly coloured by a moralizing and sentimental intention. Here, Steele and Addison are to be grouped with Defoe. Lastly one must survey at a glance all the dissident writers. They showed the spirit of the future, and the beginnings of the literature of sentiment. The works of writers glow with an inward transparency which enables us to grasp the development of their forms and the links which unite these with the creative inspirations.

6.3 5. QUEEN ANNE- PROSE WRITERS

DANIEL DEFOE

Daniel Defoe (1600-1731) is best remembered for the novels, 'Robinson Crusoe', 'Moll Flanders', 'Captain Singleton' and the notable 'Journal of the Plague Year'. Though he published diverse other titles, only his novels have the stamp of life upon them. Their form is autobiographical. There is no unified pattern of relationships embracing a number of characters. Crusoe's story was based on the experience of Alexander Selkirk who spent five years on an uninhabited island. The fundamental appeal of the book depends on the patience and self-reliance with which Crusoe copes with his difficulties and constructs an oasis of individual civilisation. Crusoe's reflections on man's frailty and God's mercy, on the need for prayer and repentance and on the worthlessness of worldly possessions are the logical outgrowth of the story of man's struggle to dominate his own national surroundings. 'Moll Flanders' is a fascinatingly vital fictional autobiography of a woman "born in Newgate, twelve years a whore, five times a wife, twelve years a

thief, eight years a transported felon in Virginia, at last grew rich, lived honest and died a penitent”.

In all his prose works, including the fictional biographies, an unenviable air of truth is produced by Defoe's directness and by his conversational readiness to be specific in reference to facts and figures. Nothing could be more seemingly authoritative than his sober, direct reportage, packed with descriptive and anecdotal detail and threaded through with the reflections of commonsense and piety.

JONATHAN SWIFT

Swift (1667-1745) served the Whigs and then the Tories with his pen. While in the service of Sir William Temple, he became the great friend of Esther Johnson (Stella), a girl who fell in love with him and to whom he was attached for the rest of his life. His ‘The Tale of a Tub’ is a humorous satire. The preface explains ‘That seamen have a custom when they meet a whole to fling him out an empty tub by way of amusement, to direct him from laying violent hands upon the ship’ The three sons Peter (The Roman Catholic Church) Martin (the Church of England) and John (the dissenters) quarrel they disobey their father's injunction by tampering with their coats, for when the fashion changes they rummage the will to find clauses that can be twisted. Later in life when Swift reread the tale, he exclaimed “Good God!” What a genius I had when I wrote that book.”

In support of William Temple he wrote ‘The Battle of the Books’ and pictured the ancients at war with the modems. On the side of the moderns every private trooper pretended to the chief command from Tasso, Milton, Dryden and Withers. The army of the ancients is different. Homer led the horse and Pindar the light horse; Euclid was the chief engineer; Plato and Aristotle commanded the bowmen; Herodotus and Livy the foot. Swift's satirical masterpiece is ‘Glliver’s Traves’. Part I tells of Gulliver's shipwreck on the island of Lilliput, an island inhabited by diminutive beings. Part II takes Gulliver to Brobdingnag, whose gigantic inhabitants question Gulliver about his homeland. In Part III the satire is more direct, for Glliver visits Laputa, where the learned are abstracted from the realm of commonsense.

‘Journal to Stella’, was never intended for any eye except Stella's. ‘The Examiners’ are of extraordinary force and vigour. ‘The Remarks on the Barrier Treaty’, ‘The Public Spirit of the Whigs’ and ‘The Conduct of the allies’ are masterly specimens of the political pamphlet. Swift’s style is extremely unadorned. It is on the whole correct enough, and is perfectly straightforward and clear.

Richard Steele

Steele is a classicist only by accident and opportunity. He possesses a certain faculty for composition, the gift of delicacy and fine shading. He began ‘The Christian Hero’. ‘The Tatler’ opened his true vein. In it and in the ‘Spectator’, in the ‘Guardian’ and other periodicals he displayed a faculty for miscellany, more engaging than Addison’s own. ‘The Conscious Lovers’ is distinguished for its

mixture of briskness and amiability. There is a third ingredient, sentimentality, prominent in Steele's earlier comedies 'The Funeral, 'The Lying Lover' and 'The Tender Husband', The essay not the drama, was his real field.

'The Tatler' is the individual work of Steele. It appeared thrice weekly and preserved the features of periodicals. Each number treats of several themes and allots special headings to literary and political news. In a series of imaginary portraits, he undertakes to bring to the notice of the public the errors of vanity, egoism and extravagance. In 'The Tatler' he discovers the charm of tender sentiments of family affections and of homely manners. His humour is of a prettily tender and persuasive quality. But he is wanting in care and self-control. With all the merit of their spontaneity, these essays are of a rather loose pattern. The portraits thus remain a little sketchy and superficial.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719)

Steele and Addison were educated at the same school and were friends at Oxford. Addison contributed a few numbers to the 'The Tatler' which was started by detailing news mingled with essays, stories and dramatic criticism. It was through the influence of Addison that the essay became the most important constituent. January 2, 1711 saw the death of the 'Tatler' and the following March 1, the birth of the 'Spectator'. It ran for 555 numbers. The sobriety and moderation, the humour, the genial moralising, these qualities made for the immense success of the journal.

The character and genius of Addison are best exemplified in the pages of the Spectator. In the words of Courthope 'he may be said to have almost created and wholly perfected English prose as an instrument for the expression of social thought. "The happy blend of the puritan spirit and the Renaissance spirit proved greatly to the taste of his countrymen. Nowhere is Addison more delightful than in illustrating the contrast between the country and town life; the clash of rural feudalism with urban manners.

The Spectator was probably a picture of Addison himself. He is a gentleman who betakes himself to London and notes all the phases of life to be observed. He listens to the wits at Will's, smokes with the philosopher of the Grecian. An excellent commentary on the London life of the day is furnished by Sir Roger's opinions on matters theatrical, Westminster Abbey, town fashions etc. At the outset Addison's face is set against the shameless license and shallowness of Restoration manner. He attacks the fashionable youths and cynical mep about town. His favorite mood is a mood of delicate and playful satire.

Other Prose Writers

Richard Betley is remembered in connection with his famous 'Phaslaris' dissertation. His absurd emendations on Milton would seem like a parody on classical scholarship. His force and wide learning save him from the merely vulgar. Middleton's famous prose work is the 'Life of Cicero'. He also wrote two controversial works. 'A Letter from Rome', showing an exact conformity between popery and Paganism and 'A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers.' His place is

that of the most distinguished representative of the absolutely plain style, John Arbuthot is identified with the famous 'History of John Bull' and 'The Memoirs of Scriblerus'. Francis Atterbury was a brilliant and popular preacher, a pleasant letter writer and a good critic. Bolingbroke is an orator, pure and simple. The letter to Windham and 'The Ideal of a Patriot King' exhibit him at his best.

Benjamin Hoadly, Bishop Joseph Butler and Anthony Ashley Cooper gave their contributions to this age's prose. They were essays full of aphorisms and polish. Bernard Mandeville wrote 'The Grumbling Hive', better known as 'The Fable of the Bees'. He had a strong fertile and whimsical humour; he thought with great force and acuteness. Berkeley's works 'The Theory of Vision', 'The Principles of Human Knowledge' and 'The Dialogues of Hylas and Philonus' - continued the Lockian process of argument against innate ideas. His last important work was 'Siris' which advocated excellent mysticism to the soul.

6.4 REVISION POINTS

1. From 1600 to 1660 there is a gradual change in the tone of the literature as well as in the temperament of writers. The last works of Shakespeare, the subtle imaginative analyses of Bacon the poems of Donne had all revealed the secret working of the mind of the age.
2. The Restoration of King Charles II which followed marks the decisive birth of the new world. The influence upon England was marked for court reasons. Much of Charles's exile has been spent in France. He had been attracted towards its literature and did his best to enforce the ideals he saw there. Psychologically the new spirit involved the substitution of the critical for the imaginative spirit.
3. The creative imagination moves on the plane of primal human qualities. It is concerned with the interpretation of human nature. The new spirit brings the intellect rather than the poetic imagination into play.
4. The literature of the day aimed at clearness, conciseness and concentrated force. Poetry had to fall back on epigram, but the 'good sense' ideal, formulated by Boileau was an admirable one for prose.
5. The object of the prose writers of the day is to be simple in style and natural in manner. The drama had come to be a courtier's game. Here for the sake of amusement, lucidity and directness are made subsidiary to brilliance of wits and scholars.
6. The aspects of the changes noticed during the age may be summarized thus:
7. The academic aspect - the substitution of Classicism for Romanticism
8. The political aspect due (a) to the general influence of France at the time and (b) the particular influence through the medium of the king and his court
9. The psychological aspect that underlay these, signifying surely more than a change of fashion, a change of attitude while influencing all of them was the general drift of the age, towards matters of civil and national interest.
10. The generation of which Pope is the center is called by the term 'classical'. The writers of the first decades of the 18th century enjoyed a preeminence of merit, as compared with their predecessors or successors. These men

- wanted to endow England with a literature which was polished, rational and perfect. They lived upto their ideal of classicism in thought and will. The pleasure of being able to understand, the easy sense of simple orderliness, a smooth balance in ideas as in forms, such was the end pursued in those days.
11. The upper middle classes associated themselves with the nobility in the exercise of power.
 12. The great merchants and financiers who rose into social prominence were the wealthy descendants of the puritan Republic. The classical ideal of art found full realisation during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. These men had ingrained in them the instinctive respect for moral laws. Immorality and licentiousness were opposed. In certain domains of public life, the proprieties were better observed. The teaching of Steele and Addison started a movement. A breath of tenderness, a relaxing in the characteristic tension and dryness were already perceptible in the opening years of the reign of Anne.
 13. The sobered atmosphere of the time of Queen Anne enabled classicism to develop freely. It also permitted the bold negative spirit in thought and in manners. Sensibility; imagination, lyricism which the repressive action of culture could not correct, showed through in all the writers of this age.
 14. The phase of literary history was built upon conditions favourable to be full growth. Pope and the group of poets who acknowledged his superiority were naturally the center of a literature so attentive to the laws of form.
 15. Poetry was dominated by reason and correctness. As its activity is now almost universal, we have a gathering of many provinces-moral philosophy, criticism, satire, history and politics. Swift was the king of this group. With the middle class writers classicism showed itself, slightly coloured by a moralizing and sentimental intention.
 16. Here, Steele and Addison are to be grouped with Defoe. Lastly one must survey at a glance all the dissident writers. They showed the spirit of the future, and the beginnings of the literature of sentiment. The works of writers glow with an inward transparency which enables us to grasp the development of their forms and the links which unite these with the. Creative inspirations.

6.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of the political and social background of the Augustan Age.
2. Name the characteristic features with examples of the Augustan literature.
3. Give a summary of the development of poetry during the Age of Dryden.
4. Write a note on the satirists of the Age.
5. Comment on the features in the Restoration lyric poetry.

6.6 SUMMARY

From 1600 to 1660 there is a gradual change in the tone of the literature as well as in the temperament of writers. The last works of Shakespeare, me subtly

imaginative analyses of Bacon the poems of Donne had all revealed the secret working of the mind of the age. The Restoration of King Charles II which followed marks the decisive birth of the new world. The influence upon England was marked for court reasons. Much of Charlets's exile has been spent France. He had been attracted towards its literature and did his best to enforce the ideals he saw there. Psychologically the new spirit involved the substitution of the critical for the imaginative spirit.

The creative imagination moves on the plane of primal human qualities. It is concerned with the interpretation of human nature. The new spirit brings the intellect rather than the poetic imagination into play. The literature of the day aimed at clearness, conciseness and concentrated force. Poetry had to fall back on epigram, but the 'good sense' ideal, formulated by Boileau was an admirable one for prose. The object of the prose writers of the day is to be simple in style and natural in manner. The drama had come to be a courtier's game. Here for the sake of amusement, lucidity and directness are made subsidiary to brilliance of wits and scholars.

The aspects of the changes noticed during the age may be summarized thus: The academic aspect-the substitution of Classicism for Romanticism. The political aspect due (a) to the general influence of France at the time and the particular influence through the medium of the king and his court. The psychological aspect that underlay these, signifying surely more than a change of fashion, a change of attitude while influencing all of them was the general drift of the age, towards matters of civil and national interest.

The generation of which Pope is the center is called by the term 'classical'. The writers of the first decades of the 18th century enjoyed a pre-eminence of merit, as compared with their predecessors or successors. These men wanted to endow England with a literature which was polished, rational and perfect. They lived upto their ideal of classicism in though and will. The pleasure of being able to understand, the easy sense of simple orderliness, a smooth balance in ideas as in forms, such was the end pursued in those days.

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The sobered atmosphere of the time of Queen Anne enabled classicism to develop freely. It also permitted the bold negative spirit in thought and in manners. Sensibility; imagination, lyricism which the repressive action of culture could not

correct, showed through in all the writers of this age. The phase of literary history was built upon conditions favourable to be full growth. Pope and the group of poets who acknowledged his superiority were naturally the center of a literature so attentive to the laws of form.

6.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Write an essay on Restoration drama.
2. Trace the development of Heroic Tragedy in the Age of Dryden.
3. Who are the chief writers of the Comedy of Manners? Explain the features in them.
4. What are the important characteristics of the prose of the Age of Dryden?
5. Write a note on the Diarists of this period.
6. What is the role of Daniel Defoe in the field of prose?
7. Highlight the significance of Swift's writings.
8. Give an account of Richard Steele and his prose works.
9. How does 'The Spectator' throw light on the society of Queen Anne's time?

6.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. John Dryden the Major Works, ed. by Keith Walker, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
2. Oden, Richard, L. Dryden and Shadwell, the Literary Controversy and 'Mac Flecknoe' (1668–1679).
3. Eliot, T. S., 'John Dryden', in Selected Essays, (London: Faber and Faber, 1932), 308.
4. Maurer, A.E. Wallace. "The Form Of Dryden's Absalom And Achitophel, Once More." *Papers on Language & Literature* 27.3 (1991): 320. Academic Search Premier.
5. Krook, Anne K. "Satire and Constitution Of Theocracy In Absalom And Achitophel." *Studies in Philology* 91.3 (1994): 339. Academic Search Premier.
6. "Mauchline kirk session records, National Archives of Scotland". "The Legacy of Robert Burns's feature on the National Archives of Scotland website. National Archives of Scotland. 1 July 2009

6.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Political Background of the Restoration Period
2. Restoration Drama
3. Richard Steele - The Tatler and Spectator

6.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. 1.Encyclopaedia Britannica(<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/172371/John-Dryden>)
2. Scott, W. Waverley, vol. 12, chap 14, The Pirate: "I am desirous to hear of your meeting with Dryden". "What, with Glorious John?"
3. Hopkins, David, John Dryden, ed. by Isobel Armstrong, (Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers, 2004), 22

4. John Dryden The Major Works, ed. by Keith Walker, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987),ix-x

6.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Form a group and discuss about the impact of Political Background of the Restoration Period

6.12. KEY WORDS

Knack – cleverness enabling one to do something skillfully

Obscurity – not clearly understood, Ridicule – being made fun of,

Emanates – Proceed,

Declamation – speak with strong feeling.

Mysticism – of hidden meaning or spriritual power,

Vanity – worthlessness,

Fendalism – a method of holding land,

Satire – a form of writing or holding up a person to ridicule.

THE AGE OF POPE

7.1 OBJECTIVES

This lesson will familiarize the poetry of the eighteenth century and also its classification with a completeness and convenience uncommon in literary periods

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In the first place, we see the complete triumph of the classical and correct ideal at once exemplified and achieved in the work of Pope. This is followed by a rather long period, more or less in imitation of Pope. Along with these, there is a party of mostly unintentional revolt, first represented by Thomson and then by Gray. In respect of form the first two schools are wholly busied with the couplet. The third takes refuge in blank verse and stanza-forms.

English classical poetry founded itself upon the scrupulous searching for perfection. A certain quality of the language that expresses emotion and ideas is its main feature. The nature of its theme is left to its own free choice. Poetry is almost always busy with the exposition of criticism of theses. The works of Pope, animated and sustained as they are from the beginning to end will assuredly be part and parcel of this period, With Pope, one must also link up the contemporary poets, the school over which he presides.

7.3 CONTENT**7.3.1. POPE'S PLACE IN ENGLISH POETRY**

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) consciously devoted himself to poetry. His prodigious gifts and disciplined application enabled him to reach a level of technical virtuosity. 'Windsor Forest' blends scenic description with reflections on associated historical and literary figures. The 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady' pays tribute to a victim of suicide in couplets handled with delicacy and feeling. 'Eloisa to Abelard' versifies the appeal in the tender letter of the abbess Eloisa to her former lover, Abelard.

Pope's gifts reach their peak in 'The Rape of the Lock'. The occasion is a dispute between two families over the theft of a young lady's curl. The account of Belinda at her toilet has the ceremonial splendour of a sacred rite. In her sail to Hampton Court, she is charged with the protection of her hair, her complexion, her petticoat and the like. A game of cards leads upto the fatal climax; the scissors are drawn, the glittering force is spread wide; as the fatal engine closes to detach the lock, it cuts a too dutiful sylph in twain. Shrieks rend the affrighted skies. Then a dusky, melancholy spirit dives down to the middle of the earth to the care of Spleen, to beg the wayward queen to touch Belinda with chagrin. Belinda burns with more than mortal ire.

"O wretched maid, she spread her hands, and cry's. But the lock is carried up aloft to become a new star in the firmament. Belinda is urged to cease mourning the ravished haird, for it 'adds new glory to the shining sphere. "The poem is a

masterpiece of light, satirical wit and delicate contrivance abounding in the qualities of tact, sensitivity and good humour.

"The Dunciad" is a satire after the model of Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe". The first three books were published in 1728 with Theobald as the chief target. In 1742 a fourth book was added and Colley Cibber was used in place of Theobald. By using the devices and events of the classical epic, Pope extends the treatment to 'The Dunciad', Book I introduces us to the empire of the goddess, Dullness who claims Cibber for the throne to succeed Eusden. Book II shows Cibber throned Miltonically:

"High on a gorgeous seat, that far outshone.
Henley's gilt tub, or Fleckno's Irish throne."

In Book IV the goddess Dullness comes into her own on earth, leading the sciences captive and silencing the Muses. The final consumption is the restoration of Night and Chaos. The serious concern for human values underlies the poet's assault upon the spurious literature.

'An Essay on Criticism' (1711) shows how seriously he thought out his critical principles and poetic practice. Reduced to prose, the instruction is perhaps platitudinous, but the memorable couplets give it freshness. They perfectly illustrate the character of wit as summed up by Pope himself:

"True wit is Nature to advantage dressed"
"What of it was thought but ne'er so well express'd"

Pope's Essay on Man (1733-34) is a serious philosophical work consisting of four epistles in couplets and addressed to Henry Bolingbroke. There are beautifully lucid and sensitive passages here; "God loves from whole to parts", but it is not easy to extend one's love of parts to its whole.

The immensity of his achievement is to be seen in the translation of Homer's Iliad' and 'Odyssey' into heroic couplets. Some of the most genial things are passages of portraiture and criticism to be found in his epistles. 'Epistle to Miss Blount' is a neatly voiced contrast between urban and rural life. Pope's many-sided talent and personality are to be found in the 'Epistle to Dr, Arbuthnot' which contains his frank reflections as a writer, warm words for his parents and the praise of Gay. It also has the well-known portrait of Atticus (Addison)

"The pleasure which the poetry of Pope procures us rises primarily from a joyous intellectual activity which moves among ideas, seizes them, combines them, arranges them into groups, with so much ease that it seems to soar of itself in a full bright light above the confusion of human thought" (Legouis & Cazamian)

POPE'S PLACE IN ENGLISH POETRY

Pope had an all-dominating love for the craft of poetry. He was never content with less than the polished best. The three poems which made him the spokesman of the age are 'The Rape of the Lock' picturing its frivolities, the 'Dunciad' unveiling its squalor and the 'Essay on Man', coaching its philosophy. His own attitude

towards literature is nicely expressed in the 'Essay on Criticism', where the merits and limitations of the 18th century School of poetry are clearly exhibited. Pope excels Dryden in exquisite finish and detailed touches. His poems may be linked to polished fragments, cunningly fitted in to a form a whole. They are remarkable for workmanship.

There are a few graces of style beyond crispness and lightness. There is no hint in his work of high imagination, subtle fancy, and sense of mystery or romance. With Jane Austen, we must grant him the "two inches of ivory". At any rate he was an incomparable craftsman and a delightful wit. His philosophy, may be shallow and sometimes mere nonsense. His satire may lack the large Olympian sweep of Dryden. But he looked on society and on humanity and tried to express his ideas with an un clouded eye. He expressed his views with a pen that never stumbled, never made slips of form and always said the right thing in the right way.

7.3 2. MINOR POETS

Samuel Garth (1661-1719) owes his place in English literature to his poem "The Dispensary published in 1699. Its subject, a doctor's quarrel, makes advances on Dryden's own in Pope's direction. Afterwards he wrote a poem on 'Claremont' and translated Ovid. Sir Richard Black more is the next important verse-writer. He published the long poems of 'Prince Arthur'. 'King Arthur'. 'Job', 'Eliza', 'Creator', besides essays, psalms, etc. Matthew Prior collaborated with Charles Montague in 'The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse', a burlesque on 'The Hind and the Panther' of Dryden. He also wrote two long poems- 'Solomon on the Vanity of the World' and 'Alma or the 'Progress of the Mind'. He is more than a professional jester. He is a true humorist with a sense of tears as well as of laughter. Throughout all his bright and tender whimsicalities there runs a cheerful tolerant outlook on life.

John Gay had a rich gift for vivid description - a rural scene or the delights of the town. His good, all-around power and attractive manner compensated for his singular ineptitude in turning his fortune to better account. Among his best works may be noted 'Rural Sports' 'Trivia', the famous 'Block-Eyed Susan', the equally agreeable lyrics - 'Philleda' and 'T Was When the Seas were Roaring' and some capital 'Fables'. Easy good humour marks both prior and Gay. They are typical products of their age, genuine artists in their way.

Three poets of the time stand apart and mark the transitional spirit between the school of Dryden and Pope and the Romantic Movement in verse. Edward Young in his 'Universal Passion' proved almost as skilful a satirist as Pope himself. His most characteristic work is the 'Night Thoughts', a lengthy poem of sententious reflection. Thomas Parnell, the second poet, wrote more varied verse, achieved some excellent translations and freshness, observation and metrical power in 'The Night - piece of Death' and 'Hymn to Contentment. The third poet Lady Woinchelsea presents a curious and sometimes piquant mixture of the old and the new in her methods. She wrote 'The Spleen' a Pindaric Ode, 'The Prodigy'. 'Miscellancy Poems'

and a tragedy 'Aristomones, Natural taste and the opportunities of life seem to have inclined her to take natural objects as the source of her imagery.

7.4 REVISION POINTS

1. English classical poetry founded itself upon the scrupulous searching for perfection. A certain quality of the language that expresses emotion and ideas is its main feature.
2. The nature of its theme is left to its own free choice. Poetry is almost always busy with the exposition of criticism of theses. The works of Pope, animated and sustained as they are from beginning to end will assuredly be part and parcel of this period, With Pope, one must also link up the contemporary poets, the school over which he presides.
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7.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on Alexander Pope and his poetry
2. Write a note on the contribution made by the minor poets of the age.
3. Write an essay on pope's " Essay an Man"
4. Explain "An Epistle to Dr.Arbutnot"
5. Explain the traits of mocking in " The Rape of the Lock"

7.6 SUMMARY

Pope had an all-dominating love for the craft of poetry. He was never content with less than the polished best. The three poems which made him the spokesman of the age are 'The Rape of the Lock' picturing its frivolities, the 'Dunciad' unveiling its squalor and the 'Essay on Man', coaching its philosophy. His own attitude towards literature is nicely expressed in the 'Essay on Criticism', where the merits and limitations of the 18th century School of poetry are clearly exhibited. Pope excels Dryden in exquisite finish and detailed touches. His poems may be linked to polished fragments, cunningly fitted in to a form a whole. They are remarkable for workmanship.

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romance. With Jane Austen, we must grant him the “two inches of ivory”. At any rate he was an incomparable craftsman and a delightful wit. His philosophy, may be shallow and sometimes mere nonsense. His satire may lack the large Olympian sweep of Dryden. But he looked on society and on humanity and tried to express his ideas with an unclouded eye. He expressed his views with a pen that never stumbled, never made slips of form and always said the right thing in the right way.

7.7 TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Where Pope stands in the English poetry?
2. What are the impacts made by Pope?
3. Write an essay on Social Criticism on Pope’s satires.
4. Write an essay on the themes employed by the minor Poets of the Augustan Age

7.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Fulk, R.D. and Christopher M. Cain. *A History of Old English Literature*. Malden et al.: Blackwell, 2003.
2. Godden, Malcolm and Michael Lapidge (eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*. Cambridge, 1986.
3. Greenfield, Stanley B. and Daniel G. Calder. *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*. New York: NYU Press, 1986.
4. Sisam, Kenneth. *Studies in the history of Old English literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.

7.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Biography of Alexander Pope.
2. Literary Career of Samuel Garth.

7.10 REFERENCE BOOKS

1. Wrenn, Charles L. *A Study of Old English Literature*. London: Harrap, 1967.
2. Abrams M. H.ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, seventh edition, general 2 vols. (New York: Norton, 2000).
3. Grierson, Herbert and J. C. Smith, *A Critical History of English Poetry* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, in association with Chatto and Windus, 1962).

7.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss with your friends about the position of Pope in English Literature.

7.12. KEY WORDS.

Imagery – The use of images

Sparious – false, not genuine

Delicacy – soft as tender

Prodigy – an extremely talented child.

THE AGE OF JOHNSON

8.1 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is to introduce and familiarize the literary and intellectual background of poetry and prose during the age of Johnson.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

The London of Johnson was a noisy, turbulent and high spirited one. The old gaiety and the picturesque festivals had disappeared. Violence was the key note of the social life. There was another world outside the leisurely urbane, visitation of the Spectator. It was a dark underworld of want and misery; Fielding and Smollett had tarried there for a while. The tragic figure of Richard Savage never emerged from the gloom. One could recall the wretchedness of scribblers like Boyes and Derrick whom Johnson befriended. There was that quaint, delightful, impecunious Irishman, Oliver Goldsmith. But the great uncouth, burly, lovable figure of Johnson will serve our purpose. He survived like the pilgrim in the allegory, he struggled through the valley into the sunlight beyond.

Humour and tragedy were the inseparable bedfellows in the life of Grub Street. Floyd comes across an unfortunate brother sleeping soundly by the wayside. Johnson's neighborhood at Covent Garden was rife in thieving activities. Henry Fielding gives a clear picture of the plague of dangerous never-do-wells. Breakfast parties sprang into vogue during the 18th century. Tyburn district slowly emerged as a fashionable quarter. Soon an agitation against the executions and the public processions were started.

The age produced great men and even the greatest. Its business was to extend the domains of literature by opening up fresh provinces and arranging equipment for settling them. It got the essay thoroughly into shape. It left the novel and the regular history was born. It set flying new specters of lighter verse. It saw at least further development of periodical literature.

8.3 CONTENT**8.3.1. THE AGE OF JOHNSON: POETRY**

James Thomson (1700-48) the Scotsman, contributed matter of very great, value to English literature. 'Winter' was published in March 1726, was successful from the first and brought him many friends and patrons. He continued 'The Seasons' (Summer, 1727, Spring 1728) and finished with 'Autum' in 1750. His poems served as an antidote to Pope's own poetry, Couched in the Spenserian stanza or in blank verse they showed a bold front to the insolent domination of the stopped couplet, 'Liberty' is a which prize poem in the fine parts dealing with Italy, Greece, Rome, Britain 'A prospect. 'The Seasons' and 'The Castle of Indolence' looking straight at nature. He is not much less convincing than when he touches the wallflower or the birds at the approach of vain or the disturbance of the trout by sleep/walking. 'The Seasons' combines an excellent adherence to truth of fact with

a more than competent skill in art. The charms of the 'The Castle of Indolence' are those of a great poem. The famous picture of the dale of Indolence is almost as noble a thing as we shall find anywhere in the 18th century poetry. The very spirit of the stanza, its long-drawn sleepy, yet never sluggish melody passes with the murmuring should of it into the poet's song.

In William Shenstone's verse, we find him tentative, often feeble and nearly incomplete. A batch of elegies, unfortunately artificial, is followed by odes and songs and ballads. Of them the most graceful is the famous 'Pastoral Ballad' which is really four separate [poems and the charming Spenserian imitation of "The Schoolmistress". It is in Shenstone that the sentimentalism of the 18th century finds its most genuine and unadulterated expression.

A great poet was William Collins. At the age of 24, he published his tiny handful of 'Odes'. His poetical work consists of a few eclogues, a large batch of odes, together with two or three minor pieces. The odes on the subjects of pity, fear, simplicity, the poetical character, patriotism, Mercy, Liberty, the manner, the Passions are among the great texts of English poetry. The slow motion of his lines, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants, which Johnson blames, often provides exactly that music which is memorable. His model seems to have been Milton. Johnson charges saying that it is much easier to imitate Milton's pedantries than to borrow his genius.

Thomas Gray is closely called to Collins and yet differs from him. A scrupulous artist, conscientious and delicate in the extreme, his desire was to realize both the harmony of tone and perfection of form. To him belongs the honour of recalling the delicate and fine felicity of a Virgil or Racine. His work is divided into two equal parts. Most of his short poems are occasional compositions. They range from light playful verse to his Pindaric ode, develop commonplace themes, team with allegories and personify all the virtues and vices. Gray's classical poetry contains within itself effects of subtle fitness, suggestions which foreshadow Romanticism. He has discovered rhythms, utilized the power of sounds and even created evocations. The triumph of this sensibility allied to so much art is to be seen in the famous 'Elegy'.

'The Bard', "The Fatal Sisters" and "The Descent of Odin" are soundings taken in the ocean of medieval superstition of primitive legends and beliefs, of simple and popular wonders. In his letters one enjoys the charm of a real spontaneous ness that is witty without effort. They are full of an affectionate nature, made for friendship, susceptible to the comic side of things, free from any Puritan narrowness, and enowwed with a lovable and simple grace. The diary of the journey to the English Lake District is full of an intelligent and precise passion for the nobility and austerity of the horizons that Wordsworth was later to love.

THE REVIVAL OF MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

The Resurrection of the ballad and indeed old poetry generally was going on during the whole of first half of the century. The effects of it are visible in some of

the poets notably Mallet and Shenstone. The appearance of Percy's *Reliques* in 1765 is the most important of them all. At the time of the union of Scotland with England. Thomas Watson, the King's printer, printed his choice collection opening with other pieces from Montgomery, Drummond, Ayton, Sempill and others. Allan Ramsay's 'Evergreen' and 'Tea-table Miscellany' appeared later. The two more interesting collections that appeared before Ramsay's are 'Tom Durfey's 'Pills to Purge Melancholy' and an anonymous assembly of old ballads.

Macpherson's *Ossian* gave just as the ballads gave, something different - the necessary twist and alternative to the hymns of Watts. Those of Charles Wesley can be referred to in passing. Christopher Smart's 'Song to David' consists of some hundred-six line 'Romance' stanzas. He translated Horace, easy epigrams and fashioned Prior - like verses. William Mason wrote 'The English Garden', a blank-verse poem. He has to his wife and divers odes. William Falconer's 'The Shipwreck' is one of those numerous 18th century poems, which try to escape the tyranny of the couplet form by taking on unconventional subject.

Thomas Warton's 'Observations of Spenser' is the true product of the age. 'The Triumph of Isis' is after the manner of Pope. 'The Progress of Discontent' reminds one of Swift. Chatterton produced the first of the famous 'Rowley' poems in would-be Old English. He produced his pother verses, as local ignorance and vanity tempted him. The 'Rowley' poems and James Beattie's 'Minstrel' expression determination to escape from the conventional present by appealing to the romantic past. Chatterton fully anticipated Coleridge's reversion to the 'Genesis and Exodus' scheme. His phrase and word-music have now and then a singular romantic appeal. John Langhorne did a great deal of literary work which included the well-known translation of Plutarch. William Julius Mickle's best known and most successful work is his translation of 'The Lusiad'. His songs and ballads such as 'There's name luck about the house' in Scots and Oliver Goldsmith's the pretty 'Cummor Hall' in English are famous.

Finally the poems of Goldsmith have remained popular for their inspiration which fuses sentimentality melancholy, the love of nature and a simple life. They carry moral and political themes after the style of Johnson. He had in him the natural instinct of an elegiac rhythm. He knew how to harmonize the cadence of his verse with the emotion. His famous poems are 'The Traveller' and 'The Deserted Village'. His two light poems are 'The Haunch of Vension' and 'Retaliation'. These poems enjoyed the benefit of Johnson's criticism. They were the last really great works of the artificial-conventional school of verse.

8.3 2. PRECURSORS OF THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

In the early stages the Romantic Revival concerned only a very limited set of university people. Methodism modified the general attitude of minds towards the problems and duties which life brought in its train. It came in its turn to react as a stimulating emotional force upon the sensibility of the people. Pre-Romanticism borrowed from it certain elements. The reading public had to acquire a more

spontaneous facility for seeing and feeling according to the laws of mystical imagination. There had to be a rekindling of thought, a regeneration of the whole inner soul, Methodism contributed in making the established order of things more fundamentally secure.

Romanticism induced a speculative and inquisitive turn of mind. Mention has been made of the effect of the heightened sense of mystery in philosophy and history. In these departments of thought, the intellectual aspects of Romanticism are more significant intellectual attempt of satisfy the idealizing passion that lies behind Romanticism. Rousseau's return to nature may be regarded as an intellectual generalization apart from its aesthetic suggestiveness. So also in poetry we have not only to reckon with the heightened sensibility of the imagination, but with the speculative and intellectual power.

WILLIAM COWPER

William Cowper (1731-1800) is able to regain a certain sense of balance, despite the depression that weighs upon his soul. His lie pursues its course, still molded by the social and literary traditions of the 18th century. He feels their weight, seeks to liberate himself and in a certain measure succeeds. He never desires to break off with the past. His religious hymns have at times a fresh beauty of expression, a purity of thought that is truly inspired. Every page, every line breathes the effusion of a believing soul and yet lacks the sustained effort.

It is to Lady Austin's happy suggestion that we own our delight in Cowper's ballad 'John Gilpin' and in 'The Task'. The ballad how Gilpin, a London tradesman, borrows a horse so that he can have an anniversary wedding lunch with his wife. Mrs. Gilpin goes in a coach. Her husband follows on the borrowed mare but it is determined to race back to London. On the outward and return journeys alike Gilpin flashes past his waiting wife. The Task is a discursive exercise in which the poet mingles descriptive writing with reflections on the world around him and on the human lot.

The mood shifts and veers delightfully. The garden the fireside and the teapot get the same poetic attention as do the external world of nature. Cowper's lyric is gift flared with excellence once or twice in poems like 'The Poolar Field and 'To Mary. The poem 'The Castaway' draws a dreadful parallel between a man washed overboard at sea and his own spiritual ease. We see in his poems his great desire to pour forth his soul, the fitness of his judgement, his ability to lose himself in daily life with its reassuring regularity.

GEORGE CRABBE

George Crabbe (1754-1832) began his poetic career with a poem called 'The Village', which is a discursive poem in two short books, mingling description and reflection in the manner of Cowper, but in sturdy heroic couplets. The volume 'The Parish Register' surveys the simple annals of the poor, baptisms, weddings and funerals. The sad tale of 'Phoebe Dawson' is masterly. 'The Borough' consists of twenty four letters that pictures the life and personalities of the township. In

'Prisons' the account of the damp, noisome and sunless place is characteristic of Crabbe's unblinking confrontation with the real world.

'The Tales in Verse' show his technical powers their height. Their strength lies in narrative techniques, management of dialogue and rhetorical possibilities of the couplet and in deft economic concentration on lively incident and verbal interchange. A free rein is given to mellow humour in 'The Frank Courtship'. The comic potential of the crisp couplet is something Crabbe hands on to Byron. 'Tales of the Hall' repeats the mixture as before; there is tragedy and bitterness, comedy and pathos.

WILLIAM BLAKE

William Blake (1757-1827) was the revolutionary of the poets of the previous period. With the publication of 'Songs of Innocence', the new and powerful poetic voice was unmistakable. Wonder and delight, simplicity and deep composition—these qualities caught in lines that glitter with flashes of insight. Poems like 'The Lamb' 'The Little Black Boy' and 'The Chimney Sweeper' have a potency that transcends sentimentality. 'The Songs of Experience' counterbalance the 'Songs of Innocence'. A note of evil—especially of the evil of selfishness, poverty and rigid religiosity intrudes into similar lyrical forms. The collection includes the magnificent poem. 'The Tyger' in which there is dichotomy, but positive not negative – “Did he who made the lamp make three?”

Blake's poetry is not a record of men and women studied and of nature observed; It is a vision registered and affirmed. Aurthur Symons would say, “he starts into a speech of angels, as if just awakening out of Paradise”. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" was published by Blake's own method of engraving the text and illustrations and colouring the copies by hand;

Prisons are built with stones of Law. Brothels with bricks of Religion.

The nakedness of woman is the work of God.

The tygers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction:

Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.

Such are the proverbs of Hell collected by the poet. His rapturous sense of life's wonder and delight is offset by harsh criticism of social institutions and human sufferings.

The difficulty of Blake lies in his intention of a new symbolism by which he gave personification and voice not only to abstract concept and natural agencies but also to forces of current thinking and civilization. The last great poems in this vein are 'Milton' and 'Jerusalem'. Though critics are divided in the matter of his capacity and genius, there is no denying the fact that he has immense imaginative power. Blake's oppositions between the native goodness of man and the corruptions of society between the full range of imaginative and elemental sides. and the inhibiting effects of the rational and institutional intensity, late 18th century drifts

towards the cultivation of sensibility and feeling. His protest against the severance of the spiritual from the rational is perceptively diagnostic of the human condition.

ROBERT BURNS

Robert Burns (1739-96) was ever as enthusiastic admirer as the warmest of his own countrymen. He encouraged the legend of the unlettered spokesmen of natural passion. In the 'Epistle of J. Lapraik' he lambasts superior critics. The volume that won Burns fame in Scotland and acceptance in Edinburgh, 'Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect' contained the sentimental if highly sensitive picture of the homely, pious peasant family. His genius infuses it all with a genuine fervor for what is good and happy, with love for his native soil and with prayer for the blessing of sweet content on the hardy sons of rustic toil.

He proves a scathing satirist in 'Holy Willies Prayer'. Its liturgical tone adds bitter fore to the irony. 'The Holy Fair' makes its point at the expense of ecclesiastical rigorism. In poems like 'Address to the Unco Guid' he flays the wealthy and the pious. 'To a Mountain Daisy' and 'To a Mouse' lead directly from finely observed wonder at the bonnie gem to reflections on the precariousness of human happiness. Burns is also the spontaneous singer of tender love, voicing its irreparable raptures, its vicissitudes and homely stabilities. Lastly he is known for the fresh and graceful simplicity of the elegies and idylls, where the atmosphere is one of tenderness and sad regret.

The reader finds a glossary indispensable. Once this is done the use of dialect will lend greater charm to the work. Burns' poetry conjures up a peasant-like atmosphere of shrewd observation and genial good nature. It reveals a keen sense of character and of radicals, while at the same time it has a canniness and impossibility pregnant with mockery. There is the inborn gift of quiet mirth, of a gaiety, which brings with it into almost everything a touch of fine irony. It is the expression and playful revenge of a personality which judges life without embittered rancor and loves it without illusions. His meters are of a light, quick movement whether it be to convey the satiric impulse or the descriptive talent. Many of the best poems are written in the traditional six-line stanza, which serves to end in a sly comment or the brief avowal of some bestirring emotion.

MINOR POETS

The Scottish poetry of Allan Ramsay is more interesting. The famous 'Gentle Shepherd' a pastoral contains some charming description and some pleasant painting of manners. Hamilton of Bangour, Alexander Ross, John Skinner, Isabel Paga, Lady Anne Barnard are the other poets who followed him. Robert Ferguson wrote partly in dialogue and was adopted by Burns as his master. Michael Bruce wrote some pleasing verses. John Logan, his friend, literary executor and supplanter had more talent in writing minor poems. The handful of sonnets published by Williams Bowles in 1789 had extraordinary influence on Coleridge. The unrhymed indiarics of Sayers showed in the same way the revolt against the smooth tyranny of the rhymed couplet.

William Gifford edited the parodies and diatribes of the Anti-Jacobin. He was also the author of two extremely clever satires 'Baviad' and 'Maeviad'. In serious poetry the standard names are those of Erasmus, Darwin and William Haylay, the former in his 'Bitabuc Garden' and the latter in bombastic verse. Below them was a group of versifiers at the head of whom was Robert Merry. His poetaster showed the poetical degradation of the time.

8.3.3. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY NOVEL

About the beginning of the second quarter of the 18th century the period immediately succeeding the appearance of Defoe's work, there began a development of the prose novel. There was a deep affinity between the dominant instincts of the middle classes and this branch of literature. Realism came to find its most favorable field in the novel. For nearly three generations which passed between the Restoration and Richardson's 'Pamela' there was ever greater determination and concentration towards completed prose fiction. Mrs. Manley and Mrs. Heywood achieved a certain popularity but the roots of the former are thinly veiled political libels. The earlier books of Mrs. Heywood are in 17th century styles, though she did better in 'Betsy Thoughtless', 'Jemmy and Jemmy Jessamy' - these were not published until after the three great recreators of the novel had shown the way.

IMPORTANT NOVELISTS OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) took to novel writing by accident when two booksellers invited him to compile a volume of letters. Richardson's imagination helped him to use the epistolary technique to tell a story he had once heard of a young servant girl who resisted the seductive assaults of her young master. She liked him and thus won not only his respect but also his person in marriage. 'Pamela' or 'Virtue Rewarded' was an immediate success. The vitality of the book lies in Pamela's strength of character, her bold self-defence and her rigorous distinction between dutiful obedience and equality of relationship.

The success in this venture enable its author to produce as masterpiece in 'Clarissa Harlowe'. Here too, in the form of letters, we have a day-by-day record of the heroine's persecution at the hands of her own family who would marry her to the hateful Mr. Solmes. Having been rejected by her family, she finds herself in the company of Lovelace whose trickeries culminate in her being drugged and violated. The approach of her demise she records with unflagging literary assiduity. The pressurized naturalism of the book is such that a felt intimacy between Clarissa and the reader involves one in her agonies and frustrations. Dr. Johnson pays him tribute thus: 'there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all 'Tom Jones'.

Richardson gave way to popular feminine clamor in another case. 'Sir Charles Grandison' fulfils the solemn purpose of the display of a thoroughly good man. Sir Charles foils the proposal of marriage to the heroine. Harriett By ton by the arrogant Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. An obligation to Ann Italian lady hinders Sir Charles from allowing his delightful relationship to ripen into marriage. But the

obligation is removed at the eleventh hour. The artist in Richardson has his own power and his own merits. The style, conscientious and slightly self-conscious, suggests that the writer is persevering rather than gifted. But the language has precision, energy and at times raciness. The influence of this novelist in Europe is an important chapter of comparative literature. In France, in German and in all the countries in which the contagion of sentimentalism was awakening, he favored it all with the force of his pathos.

HENRY FIELDING

Henry Fielding (1707-54) discusses his own work with the introductory chapters in 'Tom Jones'. He is an innovator in the tradition of great poets and dramatists of the past. Illustrative references reach out to Homer, Milton, Horace, Shakespeare and Johnson. Arthur Murphy, Fielding's biographer, spoke of 'Amelia' as Fielding's 'Odyssey' and of 'Tom Jones' as his 'Iliad'. Later Byron called him as the Prose Homer. The stories of Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones and Amelia are structured so as to parallel the patterning of adventures in both Homeric and Virgilian epics.

The eighteen books of 'Tom Jones' fall into three groups of six each, centered respectively at home on the road and in London. 'Tom Jones' is brought up by Squire Allworth who is unaware that the fondling is his sister, Bridget's son. Bridget's another son, Blifil becomes Tom's rival for the love of Sophia Western and cunningly discredits him in all worthy's eyes. After a series of adventures it ends happily. The themes from which the plot is woven are the stuff of drama-the sinister villain's conspiracy against the hero, the hero's uncertain origin and the alienation of the hero from his friends by misunderstanding and deception. The author acts as a chorus, curtain-puller and fellow member of the audience.

It was Richardson's 'Pamela' that drove Fielding to burlesque fiction, first in 'Shamela' where Mt.B. emerges as Mr. Booby and Pamela becomes a calculating minx and then in 'Joseph Andrews' where Pamela's brother Joseph suffers assaults on his virtue from Lady Booby and is sacked for resisting them. In the preface Fielding defines his novel as a comic epic poem in prose differing from comedy, as the serious epic from tragedy. And endearing aspect of fielding is the righteous normal indignation that lies at the back of his ironical glorification of delinquency, cruelty and crime in Jonathan Wilde, the great.

'Amelia' opens in New gate Prison with an impressive picture of the squalid indignities and corruptions of the place. Through the trials of the feckless William Booth and his suffering wife Amelia were explore a world of rottenness and the author's judgement on it. The last picture we have of the author, the posthumously published 'Journal of a Voyage to Lesbian' is movingly expressive of his humanity and fortitude in his last illness.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

Smollet (1721-71) wrote his first novel 'Roderick Random' which established the form known as picaresque. There is but the rail shadow of a plot, yet the book

has immense vitality. The hero's adventure as a naval surgeon's mate allows Smollett to give a visionary picture of seamen in action and to spotlight evil conditions and bad leadership in the story. In 'Peregrine Pickle' the plot is a little stronger. Peregrine is alienated from his parents. Young Gamaliel's machination against his brother are parallel to Blifil's in 'Tom Jones's Peregrine's protector.

Commodore Hawser Trunnion remains so nautical that his bride Mrs. Grizzle has to share a hammock with him on the nuptial night. After falling in love the hero goes on a foreign tour a sequence of scrapes, attempted seductions, practical jokes and dissipations that culminate in poverty and imprisonment. Some incidents also tire the readers considerably.

'Ferdinand Count Fathom' is superior in organization. Smollett's ideas about the novel are given thus; A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups and exhibited in various attitudes for the purpose of a uniform plan and general occurrence. There is a rich man with a real son 'Fathom'. Fathom persuades Renaldo and his mistress. Menimia each that the other is unfaithful then attempts to kill Menimia. We are taken to the dreary aisle under which the lady is interred.

Sir Lancelot Greaves turns Don Quixote and crusades about the 18th century countryside, punishing corrupt justices and freeing innocent prisoners. In 'Humphrey qinker' Smollett recaptures the exciting vitality of his earlier picaresque style. Using the epistolary technique he allows diverse members of a family to characterize themselves by their own pens. There are the benevolent Matthew Bramble, the lady's idiom in which Lydia delicately veils and unveils her heart and the comic output of Jenkin's pen as she overflows with feelings. Smollett's novels are lively and entertaining. His Travels in France and Italy is an invalid's record of a roaming search for health.

LAURENCE STERNE

Sterne (1713-68) published 'The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy' in two columns at time between 1759 and 1765. The ninth volume, was added in 1767. The book exploits typographically tricks like asterisks, clashes, expurgations, catalogues and blank chapters. The Shandian world is buzzing with innuendoes, ambiguities and double entendres. Widow Wadman's woo ling of Uncle Tobe is all the richer for the equivocal interchanges in connection with the miniature fortifications and the wound in his groin. His characters are lovable as well as funny. 'A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy' develops c. trifling but compassionate vein. The traveller's delight is contrasted with the peevishness of Smollett. The cheerful inconsequentiality is uniquely touching at its finesse.

MINOR NOVELISTS

Among the minor novelists, Robert Paltock published Peter Wilkins, an autobiographical adventure story that takes us to a new world inhabited by flying men and women. Fanny Burney scored a success when her novel 'Eveline' or The History of a Young Lady's Entry into the World' was published in 1778. It is in

Richardson tradition. Her later novels are 'Cecilia' and 'Camilla'. Her lively 'Diary and Letters' records events in a life so long that at the beginning she is praised by Dr. Johnson and at the end by Sir Walter Scott. Henry Mackenzie's 'The Man of Feeling'; is a collection of linked essays as a novel. In the person of Harley, the gentler, tendered virtues are cherished as the natural expression or a benevolent soul, fraught with pity and overflowing with sensibility. Mackenzie also wrote 'The Man of the World' and 'Julia de Roubigne'.

Richard Cumberland was content to keep the mid-century model ticking over in the eighties and nineties with 'Arundel' and 'Henry'. Horace Walpole's 'The Mysterious Mother' is a less aristocratic brand of disgust. His gothic novel 'The Castle of Otranto' is a pseudo-medieval extravagance. His disciple, Clare Reeve's novel 'The Old English Baron' is the literary offspring of 'The Castle of Otranto' Her story'. 'The History of Charoba, Queen of Egypt' is an adaptation of an ancient Egyptian tale that was later to be used in Landor's 'Gebir' William Beckford's 'Vathek' is steeped in the colour and magic of the Arabian Nights. Another writer whose imagination enabled her to drench her work is 'The Mysteries of Udolpho'. Her last novel 'The Italian' has the inquisition with all its sinister paraphernalia.

Mathew Gregory Lewis was the most original and powerful imitator of Mrs. Radcliffe. On her 'The Mysteries of Udolpho', he wrote 'The Monk'. He used the paraphernalia of sorcery-magic mirrors, charmed tale, 'Chrysal of the Adventures of a Guinea' was a bitter assault on the public and political scene of his day. Robert Bage is chiefly remembered for 'Man as He is' and 'Man as He is Not'. William Godwin's two propaganda novels are 'Calet Williams' and 'St. Leon'. His message is brought home thus; "But of what use we are' talents and sentiments in the corrupt wilderness of human society?"

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LETTER WRITERS

The zest for experimentation in literature began to be noticeable about the close of the 17th century and continued throughout the 18th century. It led to the creation of a class of books, written for amusement rather than for any ulterior purpose. Those who in an earlier age would have indicted sonnets and lyrics, now turned their attention to satiric verse, gossipy letters on things in general. By means of this light discursive literature, we have a steady flow of illuminating gossip on the life of the time, highly valuable to the social historian.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE

In 1716 Montagu went as ambassador to Constantinople, accompanied by her husband, and in this way material was collected for her Turkish letters. From Italy she wrote frequently to her daughter and the letters are among her best. In them her keen humor and alertness are clearly shown. She is equally happy either in describing her life at home or in commenting on the fiction of Richardson and Smollett. As a letter-writer she has a clear, lively and natural style.

CHESTERFIELD

Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield distinguished himself in various offices, the most important of which was the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. He had written earlier in the 'Craftsman', as he wrote later in the world. A few other minor things, 'Characters; and the like show the great literary ability and the thorough knowledge of the past of human nature. As a letter-writer, in his few excursions into the essay and in such other literary amusements, he stands very high. He never gallicised his style as Horace Walpole did. The singular ease, with which he adjusts his writing to his boy correspondents is only one function of his literary adaptability. The shrewdness of his judgement on men and things was only conditioned by that refusal to entertain and enthusiasm in ethics, aesthetics, religion and other things which was the characteristic of his age.

HORACE WALPOLE

Walpole established himself comfortably at Strawberry Hill, near Twickenham. Besides an enormous number of letters, he wrote in the 'world' produced the original novel of 'The Castle of Otranto' and compiled Anecdotes of Painting, catalogues of Engravers, Catalogues of Royal and Noble Authors, Historic doubts and other things. His Letters give the reader far greater interest. For part of the politics much of personal history, social. Gossip, chitchat manner and what not of the middle of the 16th century, Walpole is an authority to be trusted indeed with caution, but to be enjoyed almost without alloy or satiety.

POPE

The orthodox poetry of the classical age does not include any very great names besides that of Pope. Temperaments do not show great variety. One recognizes first of all a group in which the 'Epistle and Satires' of Pope form an important part. Pope's qualities fit him admirably for versified talk, Whether the form of the dialogue is adopted or the poet is addressing an intimate friend, like Dr. Arbuthnot, Augustus, Atticus, etc., it is always in action the mind which occupied the stage is shown. The thought has a liveliness of movement, spontaneity, an animation without which the moralizing would run the risk of becoming heavy. Underneath disguised mimes. Pope has left to us the picture gallery of all his enmities and hatreds.

JOHN GAY

John Gays 'Epistles' exhibit the same pleasing accomplishment as found in 'Trivia' a pleasant poem. There is in him a kind of intellectual cynicism. It renovates the superficial application of the classical ideal by virtue of the truth, concrete and therefore new and rich. His 'Epistle to the Earl of Dorset' describes the effects of a Danish winter with a sureness to touch. But the precision of the vocabulary tends to become exceptional.

WILLIAM COWPER

William Cowper's letters have a most attractive charm and real sincerity. They are devoid of the slightest affection as of the faintest vanity. The man in Cowper is fully revealed. We see all the workings of his wavering heart, his great desire to

pour forth his soul, the finest of his judgment his gift of gentle raillery, his ability to lose himself in daily life with its reassuring regularity. The record of that existence always overshadowed by the menace ornate, works upon us the soothing spell.

WILKES

The years which preceded and followed the accession of George III witnessed an increase in the swarming numbers of pamphleteers and political journalists. The figure of Wilkes is of very great historical interest. He owes his place in the national memory of the English people to the independence. Prone to be aggressive of a conduct and a language, the sincerity of which is at times a little questionable. This author with his powerful fertility of verve, represented for a brief time the cause of a constitutional liberty to which the British instinct still attached.

JUNIUS

The series of letters signed Junius and published by 'Woodfall appeared in 'The Public Advertiser' from January 1769 to a period of some three years later. They showed inside knowledge of official pattern. The evidence connecting Francis with Junius is very strong.

An affectation of exaggerated moral indignation rhetorical interrogation, the use of balanced antitheses, a very good ear for cadences and rhythms, a cunning adaptation of that trick of specializing with proper names-these are the chief features of the Junian method. The eloquence of Junius reveals a strong and cultured temperament. He has the gift of vigour, neatness and sarcasm. His mind at will grasps a point of fact, a legal point. The tenor of his style is sober; the short sentence predominates.

8.3.4. THE AGE OF JOHNSON: PROSE (ESSAY)

The essay continues to be the most strictly popular form of writing. There was a heavy demand for those kinds of writing which may be hackwork, according to the abilities and disposition of their executants for translation, historical and miscellaneous compilation and popular science. The most distinguished members were Johnson and Goldsmith. Since their best and most congenial work partook of the essay, they have been set at the head of the essayist class more particularly.

Dr. Johnson (1709-84) is more powerful in the history of English literature than anybody else. The magnetism of the man is evident from his own work and through 'Life of Johnson' written by James Boswell (1740-95). Johnson first worked for Edward Care on his 'Gentleman's Magazine'. Soon the journal became more serious in tone. The magisterial eloquence and shrewdness pervade the essays he wrote, twice weekly for the 'Rambler' between 1750 and 1752 and again those he wrote under the title 'Idler' and for the weekly 'Universal Chronicle' between 1758 and 1760. The moralizing is weighty in the essays. Entertaining anecdotes lighten the tone and a rich vein of humor is tapped in such pieces as the solemn inquiry into the tendency of writers and thinkers to dwell in garrets. Johnson develops the theory that we cannot know a man's capacities well until he has been tested in operation at every degree of elevation.

'The Dictionary' was published in 1755 and won him academic renown. He introduced subtle variations through illustrative quotations. The Preface, lays emphasis upon the universality of Shakespeare's sympathetic reading of human nature. Johnson maintains firmly whatever man finds his mind more strangely seized by the tragedies of Shakespeare than of any other writer. He observes; 'Addison speaks the language of poets and Shakespeare of man,'

Boswell called 'The Lives of the English Poets', 'the richest, most beautiful and indeed most productive of Johnson's pen. "In many cases the concise account was expanded into a full-scale biographical and critical study. Thus the Lives of Milton, Dryden Pope and others became major critical works The well-known attack on Milton's character as a republican and the crude dismissal of Lycidas of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain and the numbers unpleasing' must be offset by the example of 'Paradise Lost';, The Lives are peppered with illuminating judgements, crisply voiced and imaginatively conceived.

JAMES BOSWELL

James Boswell is known as the biographer of Dr. Johnson His life of Dr. Johnson was published in 1791. Its earlier compliment 'the Tour to the Hebrides' appeared in 1773. He took infinite pains both before and after his idol's death to procure all the information he could about him and wove it into one of the most extraordinary books in literature. Except Pepys, there is perhaps no author whom we regard with so much affection mixed with so much contempt. The joint Scottish tour he undertook with Johnson resulted in 'the Journal of the Tour of Herides'. In Boscwell's journal the never-failing sensitivity to human personality is continually stimulated by his experience of travel. His alert perceptiveness, his zest for encountering interesting personalities and his indefatigable assiduity in putting experience into paper are evidenced in a number of journals and papers. He organized his materials meticulously and artistically.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith's (1710-74) prose works included an eight volume of (History of the Earth and Animated Nature' as well as a Roman History. Greek History and a History of the Fathers, He also wrote biographies of Lord Bolingbrook. Dr. Parnell, Richard Nashe and Voltaire. His journalistic essays included the series of letters supposedly written by a Chinese Philosopher known as 'The Citizen of the World'. It is a satire on the absurdities, superficialities and hypocrisies of contemporary society. Goldsmith also commented on the evils and abuses of politics, law, drink, gambling and the like.

He attracted some attention by his 'Enquiry into the Polite State of Polite Learning in Europe', then he started 'The Bee' a short-lived periodical containing in some of his essays. 'The Traveller' appeared in 1764. 'The Vicar of Wakefield' came two years later. He could be as sentimental as Sterne. He had a miraculous gift of seizing touches and traits in humanity. He had the gift of a charming style which is impossible to analyse. In his hands, the essay served as the opportunity for the creation of lively figures of whom Beau Tibbs is the most famous. 'Reverie at the Boar's Head' is unique in the work of the 18th century outside Swift. In short

Goldsmithy cannot be grudged or denied the title the greatest of all miscellaneous writers on the lighter side.

MINOR ESSAYISTS

Edward Moore edited the 'World a distinct journal of society. The contributors to it included Chesterfield. Horace Walpole, Soame, Jenyns, Hanbury Williams etc. Soon after the 'World' appeared the 'Connoisseur of Colmon, the Elder Bonnel Thornton'. Two more periodicals 'Mirror' and the 'Longer' came from Edinburgh at the instance of Henry McKenzie. They provide information on costume, the manners of society, some vivid sketches of the Pitt and Fox struggle some valuable literary criticism, some details of nabobs and numerous evidences of the growing taste for the picturesque.

As the 1st attempt to carry on the 'Spectator' tradition, the 'Observer of Cumberland' and the 'Looker on' of a clergymen named Roberts could be cited. There is little of interest in them which shows that the form was dead. The Essay caused to break fresh ground in every direction and paved way for the novel as the distinguishing form of the coming century.

8.4 REVISION POINTS

1. Humour and tragedy were the inseparable bedfellows in the life of Grub Street. Floyd comes across an unfortunate brother sleeping soundly by the wayside. Johnson's neighborhood at Covent Garden was rife in thieving activities.
2. Henry Fielding gives a clear picture of the plague of dangerous never-dowells. Breakfast parties sprang into vogue during the 18th century. Tyburn district slowly emerged as a fashionable quarter. Soon an agitation against the executions and the public processions were started.
3. The age produced great men and even the greatest. Its business was to extend the domains of literature by opening up fresh provinces and arranging equipment for settling them.
4. It got the essay thoroughly into shape. It left the novel and the regular history was born. It set flying new specters of lighter verse. It saw at least further development of periodical literature.
5. Romanticism induced a speculative and inquisitive turn of mind. Mention has been made of the effect of the heightened sense of mystery in philosophy and history.
6. In these departments of thought, the intellectual aspects of Romanticism are more significant intellectual attempt of satisfy the idealizing passion that lies behind Romanticism. Roussean's return to nature may be regarded as an intellectual generalization apart from its aesthetic suggestiveness. So also in poetry we have not only to reckon with the heightened sensibility of the imagination, but with the speculative and intellectual power.
7. About the beginning of the second quarter of the 13th century the period immediately succeeding the appearance of Defoe's work, there began a development of the prose novel.
8. There was a deep affinity between the dominant instincts of the middle classes and this branch of literature. Realism came to find its most favorable field in the novel.
9. For nearly three generations which passed between the Restoration and Richardson's 'Pamela' there was ever greater determination and

- concentration towards completed prose fiction. Mrs. Manley and Mrs. Heywood achieved a certain popularity but the roots of the former are thinly veiled political libels.
10. The earlier books of Mrs. Heywood are in 17th century styles, though she did better in 'Betsy' Thoughtless' Jemmy and Jemmy Jessamy' - these were not published until after the three great recreators of the novel had shown the way.
 11. The essay continues to be the most strictly popular form of writing. There was a heavy demand for those kinds of writing which may be hackwork, according to the abilities and disposition of their executants for translation, historical and miscellaneous compilation and popular science.
 12. The most distinguished members were Johnson and Goldsmith. Since their best and most congenial work partook of the essay, they have been set at the head of the essayist class more particularly.

8.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Summarise the main features of the Age of Dr. Johnson.
2. Discuss James Thomson as a religious poet.
3. Examine the main features in the poems of Gray and Collins.
4. In what way can it be said that medieval literature got revived in the Age of Johnson?
5. Write an essay on William Blake's Poems as allegorical creations.

8.6 SUMMARY

The London of Johnson was a noisy, turbulent and high spirited one. The old gaiety and the picturesque festivals had disappeared. Violence was the key note of the social life. There was another world outside the leisurely urbane, visitation of the Spectator. It was a dark underworld of want and misery; Fielding and Smollett had tarried there for a while. The tragic figure of Richard Savage never emerged from the gloom. One could recall the wretchedness of scribblers like Boyes and Derrick whom Johnson befriended. There was that quaint, delightful, impecunious Irishman, Oliver Goldsmith. But the great uncouth, burly, lovable figure of Johnson will serve our purpose. He survived like the pilgrim in the allegory, he struggled through the valley into the sunlight beyond.

Humour and tragedy were the inseparable bedfellows in the life of Grub Street. Floyd comes across an unfortunate brother sleeping soundly by the wayside. Johnson's neighborhood at Covent Garden was rife in thieving activities. Henry Fielding gives a clear picture of the plague of dangerous never-do-wells. Breakfast parties sprang into vogue during the 18th century. Tyburn district slowly emerged as a fashionable quarter. Soon an agitation against the executions and the public processions were started.

The age produced great men and even the greatest. Its business was to extend the domains of literature by opening up fresh provinces and arranging equipment for settling them. It got the essay thoroughly into shape. It left the novel and the regular history was born. It set flying new specters of lighter verse. It saw at least further development of periodical literature.

8.7. TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Write an essay on the precursors of Romanticism.
2. Analyse the notable features in Blake's poetry.

3. Discuss the part played by Dr. Johnson in the field of essay writing.
4. What is Goldsmith's contribution to the essay in English Literature?
5. Write an essay on the Letter Writers of the 18th century.

8.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Alexander, Michael. *A history of English Literature*. London: Macmillan, 2000.
2. Brink, Bernhard Ten. *History of English Literature*. London: G. Bell, 1986.
3. Quennell, Peter. *A History of English Literature*. London: Ferndale Editions, 1981.
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5. Harry Balmires. *A Short History of English Literature*, London: Methuen, 1974.
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9. Samson, George. *Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*.
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8.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. The main features in the poems of Gray and Collins.
2. The precursors of Romanticism.
3. The literary career of Dr. Johnson

8.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Blamires Harry, *A Short History of English Literature*. London, Routledge, 2020
2. Francis Collier William, *A History of English Literature a series of Biographical Sketches*, Norderstedt Hans eBooks GmbH 2017.
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8.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss with your friends about the importance of the Age of Johnson in the periods of English Literature.

8.12. KEY WORDS

Picturesque – having the quality of being like
 Miscellaneous – having various qualities,
 Meticulously – giving great attention
 Discursive – wandering one point to another.
 Menace – danger,
 Obligation – Promise
 Indignation – anger caused by injustice
 Antitheses – Direct opposite

THE TRANSITION POETS

9.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, learner shall study the literary and intellectual background of poetry and prose during the age of Transition.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

The Age of Transition is an historical and cultural period situated between 1760 and 1798, and so between the Augustan Age and the Romantic Age, which saw the explosion of the Romantic Movement from 1798, year of the publication of the Lyrical Ballads by Wordsworth and Coleridge. This age sees a coexistence of different tendencies, between the concepts of regularity, clarity, order, neo-classicism and the supremacy of reason and, on the other side, the new romantic emphasis on feeling and emotions and the rediscovery of medieval times.

His age is marked by four important events:

First of all, in 1765 Bishop Percy published a volume of ballads called 'Reliques of Ancient English poetry' which became very popular and made ballads become very popular;

In 1764 Horace Walpole wrote the first gothic novel in English, called 'The castle of Otranto', a frightening story full of supernatural events set in medieval times. We also know that he transformed his home in Strawberry Hill in a gothic castle;

In 1777 Thomas Chatterton wrote 'Rowley poems', poems in pseudo-middle English (saying he had found them and that they were written by Rowley who didn't exist. Thomas Chatterton committed suicide at the age of 17 and so he is now considered as the example of the romantic poet not appreciated by the society;

In 1765 James MacPherson, a Scottish poet, translated from Gaelic in English a story wrote by Ossian about an unknown hero. MacPherson was so famous for his characteristic 'ossianic poetry'.

In this period new sources are discovered, like the medieval times and the northern literature (Celtic, Scandinavian), which lead to the use of mythological ures unknown by the European public.

From a political point of view, we can say that this is the period of George III, king of Hanover, who reigned for sixty years, from 1760 to 1820. He was well accepted by Englishmen because he knew very well his land and also the English language.

But this is also the age of revolutions: 4th July 1776: American Revolution. In 1763 the war between France and England ended. England obtained colonies in Canada and Florida. In America, population was increasing (from Holland, Germany) and started to think about their independence. No taxation without representation (in Parliament). They didn't want to pay taxes because they didn't need any

protection. England maintained the tea tax (as an example of its power). American got angry: in Boston some people put some tea in the harbour and started to boycott the Import of tea. 1775: the war between colonies and England broke out, the year after in Philadelphia was signed the declaration of independence and in 1783 England recognised America.

1789: French Revolution. Destroyed the old social order in name of liberty, fraternity, equality. A lot of English intellectuals (Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake) expressed sympathy with the Revolution and were sensitive to the sufferings of the poor and oppressed. The situation changed when England understood that France was being dangerous (frightened of a French hegemony in Europe). Battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo. And then with the period of Terror.

9.3 CONTENT

9.3.1. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The thought of the writers was original and their application of literary treatment was more so. The qualities, which earned a place in literature for Sir William Blackstone (1723-80) and Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92) were really literary. Blackstone sits enthroned in the vast library of All Souls College. Yet the main interest of his 'Commentaries on the Laws of England' lies in the application of a literary common form at once easy and stately to technical subjects. Theology contrasts with the work of the preceding age. The Shellocks and Samuel Harsley have a certain traditional reputation. The Deist controversy produced some great controversialists, notably Charles Leslie and the mystic William Law. The latter's book, 'The Serious Call' has value by reason of the cogency and wealth of its logic its systematic development and its nervous style. Its rhetoric is wholly classical. 'The Case of Reason' refutes Tindal in attacking the attributes of the Divine. Later 'The Way to Divine Knowledge' expounds the conditions and stages in the reunion of the soul with God.

John Wesley was an irradiating center of mysticism. The creed of the Deists, the rational religion of philosophers, the apologetics of Butler and the lukewarm orthodoxy of the multitude—all these found themselves in conflict with a new tone of the national conscience. Wesley's numerous works on the teaching of religion, the propagation of the gospel and the task of rendering it intelligible to the masses have an incidental value. The hymns he translated have the flow of fervent devotion "All the psychology of a religious revival the scenes of conversion, its influence on the people, the spiritual anxiety and nervous unrest, the whole drama of the struggle between grace and human shortcomings is here enacted before our eyes. His style maintains a straightforwardness and simplicity of expression. Charles Wesley's many hymns including 'The Hymns of Chas Wesley' are still sung.

9.3.2. JAMES THOMSON

James Thomson (1700-48) was the first to bring the new note in poetry both in his Seasons and the Castle of Indolence. The Seasons is a blank verse poem and consists of a long series of descriptive passages dealing with natural scenes.

Though its style is clumsy, the treatment is refreshing, full of acute observation and acute joy in nature. The Castle of Indolence is written in Spenserian stanza and is remarkable for suggestiveness, dreamy melancholy and harmonious versification. James Thomson is the Scotsman, contributed matter of very great value to English literature. 'Winter was published in March 1726, was successful from the first and brought him many friends and patrons. He continued 'The Seasons' (Summer. 1727, spring 1728) and finished with 'Autum' in 1750. His poems served as an antidote to Pope's own poetry, Couched in the Spenserian stanza or in blank verse they showed a bold front to the insolent domination of the stopped couplet, 'Liberty' is a which prize poem in the fine parts dealing with Italy, Greece, Rome, Britain 'A prospect. 'The Seasons' and 'The Castle of Indolence' looking straight at nature. He is not much less convincing than when he touches the wallflower or the birds at the approach of vain or the disturbance of the trout by sleep/walking. 'The Seasons' combines an excellent adherence to truth of fact with a more than competent skill in art. The charms of the 'The Castle of Indolence' are those of a great poem. The famous picture of the dale of Indolence is almost as noble a thing as we shall find anywhere in the 18th century poetry. The very spirit of the stanza, its long-drawn sleepy. Yet never sluggish melody passes with the murmuring should of it into the poet's song.

9.3.3. OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74) represents the poetic tradition of neo-classicism so far as the use of the heroic couplet is concerned. His treatment of nature and rural life, note of human sympathy and simplicity of expression are characteristics of the transitional poetry. His first poem, 'The Traveller' is written in the heroic couplet and deals with his wanderings through Europe. He uses simple and polished language. He reveals human sympathy for the sufferings of the poor. In 'The Deserted Village' Goldsmith described the memories of his youth.

9.3.4. OTHER TRANSITIONAL POETS

It was the mid-eighteenth century and poets were tiring of the neoclassical ideals of reason and wit. The Neoclassic poets, such as Alexander Pope, "prized order, clarity, economic wording, logic, refinement, and decorum. Theirs was an age of rationalism, wit, and satire." (Guth 1836) This contrasts greatly with the ideal of Romanticism, which was "an artistic revolt against the conventions of the fashionable formal, civilised, and refined Neoclassicism of the eighteenth century." (Guth 1840) Poets like William, "dropped conventional poetic diction and forms in favour of freer forms and bolder language. They preached a return to nature, elevated sincere feeling over dry intellect, and often shared in the revolutionary fervour of the late eighteenth century." (Guth 589) Poets wanted to express emotion again. They wanted to leave the city far behind and travel back to the simple countryside where rustic, humble men and women resided and became their subjects. These poets, William Blake, Thomas Gray, and Robert Burns, caught in the middle of neoclassic writing and the Romantic Age, are fittingly known as the Transitional poets.

Thomas Gray transitioned these phases nicely; he kept "what he believed was good in the old, neoclassic tradition" ("Adventures" 442) but ventured forth into "unfamiliar areas in poetry." In particular, Gray brought back to life the use of the

first-person singular, for example "One morn I missed him on the custumed hill..." ("Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", p. 433, line 109) which had been "considered a barbarism by eighteenth century norm." (431) Thomas Gray's poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is a wonderful example of natural settings in transitional poetry. It "reflects on the lives of common, unknown, rustic men and women, in terms of both what their lives were and what they might have been". ("English" 268) Gray is unafraid to see the poor, and emotionally illustrates how death affects their life: "For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn, / Or busy housewife ply her evening care: / No children run to lisp their sire's return...."

However, humble settings were also readily used by Robert Burns, a Scottish poet "frequently counted wholly as a romantic poet" ("English" 281), but who's work often makes him a more transitional as it incorporates both neoclassical and romantic verse ideals. *To a Mouse*, also takes place in the country, and this time the humble subject is not a man, but a lowly mouse. Using such terms as "beastie" and "Mousie" results in an affectionate tone, as the human species is emotionally weighed up against "Mousie's" life. A common ground is found when the poet notes that "the best laid scheme o' mice an' men/ Gang aft agley, / An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain". This public display of emotion, such as the affection and concern for the mouse, as well as a depressing revelation that life can go wrong for all, would have been surprising to pre-romanticism readers. One of Burns most significant influences though, was his use of Scottish dialect to write his poems; it was "a great departure from the elegant and artificial diction of eighteenth-century poetry." ("Adventures" 441) His use of dialect gave the reader a sense of connection to the common man and the humble subjects of this poetry. It created a rawer, more real mood that would have been lost in the ornamental heroic couplets used by the neoclassic writers.

William Blake is, however, arguably the most important transitional poet. As a poet he did away with the common standards of "rationality and restraint" (Guth 589), instead favouring to write using "bold, unusual symbols to elaborate the divine energies at work in the universe" in poems such as *The Tyger*. This poem makes use of an awe-inspiring mood, coupled with deeply universal concerns and experiences. In this case, the tiger is a symbol of the evil in mankind, and the heavy knowledge of experience that is brought with adulthood. His poems also made great use of repetition and parallelism, sometimes to gain the effect of a nursery rhyme, simple soft and sweet, as read in *The Lamb*: "Little Lamb God bless thee, / Little Lamb God bless thee." However, the same device also emphasises the rhetorical nature of his famous question "Tyger what immortal hand or eye, / could frame thy fearful symmetry?" which makes up both the first and last stanza of *The Tyger*.

The transitional poets were no longer afraid to feel and were brave men who put their hearts on paper for all to see. They expressed a simple affection for uncomplicated country life, and used such settings to make profound comments on mankind in general, death, and religion. These poets idealised the humble man, the country setting, and universal truths. It is fitting to call Gray, Burns and Blake adventurers, whose guides to new lands were their pens. They dared change through the use of unconventional devices, such as dialect, the invocation of emotions, and the egotistic use of the first person singular. These changes in verse,

and the subsequent popularity, and admiration received from the public, for Gray and Burns (Blake was not appreciated until the next century) and their transitional poetry marked the beginning of the end of Neoclassicism. Now, these three poets having forged the way, it was time for the Romantics to follow.

9.4 REVISION POINTS

1. The transitional poetry marks the beginning of a reaction against the rational, intellectual, formal, artificial and unromantic poetry of the age of pope and Johnson. It was marked by a strong reaction against stereotyped rules.
2. The transitional poets derived inspiration from Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. Unlike the Augustan poetry, it is poetry of countryside, of common and ordinary people, and not of the fashionable, aristocratic society and town life. Love of nature and human life characterise this poetry.
3. The transitional poets revolted against the conventional poetic style and diction of the Augustan poetry. They aimed at achieving simplicity of expression. This poetry appealed to emotions and imagination.
4. It is marked by the development of naturalism. Crabbe, Burns, Blake and many others are the pioneers of naturalism. The transitional poets are the forerunners of the splendid outburst of the romantic poetry of the nineteenth century. Let's study briefly about these poets and their works.

9.5 INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on the miscellaneous prose writers.
2. Comment on the contributions to the English literature of the following: Gibbon, Burke, the Wesleys.
3. Write an essay on the aesthetic quality present in the poems of James Thompson.
4. Comment William Blake as a transitional poets.
5. How did the transitional poets are opposed to the Augustan Poets.

9.6 SUMMARY

The transitional poetry marks the beginning of a reaction against the rational, intellectual, formal, artificial and unromantic poetry of the age of pope and Johnson. It was marked by a strong reaction against stereotyped rules. The transitional poets derived inspiration from Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. Unlike the Augustan poetry, it is poetry of countryside, of common and ordinary people, and not of the fashionable, aristocratic society and town life. Love of nature and human life characterise this poetry. The transitional poets revolted against the conventional poetic style and diction of the Augustan poetry. They aimed at achieving simplicity of expression. This poetry appealed to emotions and imagination. It is marked by the development of naturalism. Crabbe, Burns, Blake and many others are the pioneers of naturalism. The transitional poets are the forerunners of the splendid outburst of the romantic poetry of the nineteenth century. Let's study briefly about these poets and their works.

8.7. TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Why tragedy was less popular in this age?
2. Give an account of Goldsmith's contribution to English drama of this age.
3. Analyse the features of 18th Century drama with reference to Sheridan.
4. Who are the Pioneer of Naturalism
5. Write an essay on the literacy and intellectual background of poetry in the transition age.

8.8 SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

1. Adventures in English Literature, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1996
2. English Literature 12: The Enlightenment Concluded, Victoria: Open School, 2000
3. Guth, Hans P., and Gabriele L. Rico. Ed. Discovering Literature. Toronto: Prentice-Hall Inc, 1997.

9.9 ASSIGNMENTS

1. Goldsmith's contribution to English drama
2. Thomas Gray

9.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Sampson: Concise Cambridge History of English Literature
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3. Long, William J. English Literature: It's History and Its Significance for the Life of the English Speaking World, New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2015.
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5. Compton-Rickett. A History of English Literature. New Delhi: USB Publication, 2009.
6. Carter, Ronald. The Routledge History of Literature in English. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2016.

9.11 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Let us discuss about the Transition Poets with your friends.

9.12. KEY WORDS.

Charotic – Complete absence of order

Reckless – Rash

Ferocity – Savage cruelty

Reputation– famous.