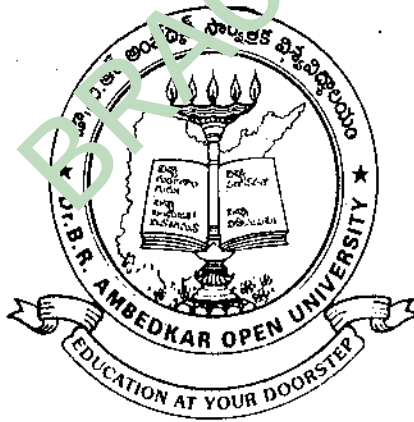


ENGLISH LITERATURE

B.A. DEGREE

SECOND YEAR COURSE

Course II: PROSE
UNITS 1 To 6



Dr. B.R. AMBEDKAR OPEN UNIVERSITY

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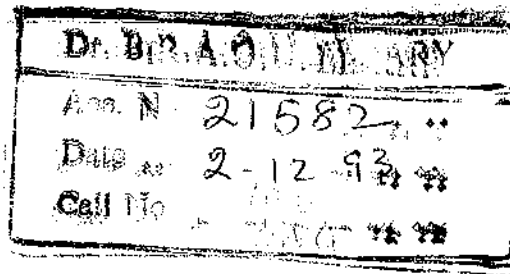
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PREFACE

This volume presents a discussion of the Prose texts prescribed for detailed and non-detailed study under paper II (Prose) of the second year Course in English Literature. It includes the original texts prescribed and the analyses of the individual texts. Its aim is not to ensure mere comprehension but to sharpen the student's critical perception.

The course material offered by this volume is in the form of Blocks each of which concerns a text included in Paper II (Prose). The blocks 1 to 5 are meant for detailed study. They deal with the essays of Francis Bacon, Joseph Addison, Charles Lamb, Matthew Arnold and Vemana respectively. The block 6, Prose of Our Time, is meant for non-detailed study. It is hoped that this material would help the student to cope with the demands of the course with understanding and confidence.

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CONTENTS

BLOCK-I

Francis Bacon

Unit-1 The English Essay

Unit-2 'Of Studies'

Unit-3 'Of Friendship'

BLOCK-II

Joseph Addison

Unit -1 Mischiefs of Party Spirit

Unit-2 Analysis of the Text

BLOCK-III

Charles Lamb

Unit-1 Introduction and text

Unit-2 Outline and comment

BLOCK-IV

Mathew Arnold

Unit-1 The Text

Unit-2 'Sweetness and Light'-Critical introduction

BLOCK-V

Vemana

Unit-1 The Text

Unit-2 Analysis of the text

BLOCK-VI

Non-detailed Text: PROSE FOR OUR TIME

Unit-1 The Modern English Essay

Unit-2 Dr. Johnson

-Robert Lynd

Unit-3 History and the Reader-G.M. Trevelyan

Unit-4 Life's Philosophy-Jawaharlal Nehru

Unit-5 Science: The Destroyer or Creator-J. Bronowski

Unit-6 The Place of Science in Liberal Education-Russell

PAPER II : PROSE

BLOCK I FRANCIS BACON

There are three units in this block.

- Unit 1 The English Essay gives a general introduction to the origin of essay as a literary form. It also discusses critically Bacon's life and his works.
- Unit 2 'Of Studies' is Bacon's essay prescribed for study. This unit gives the original text of the essay and also provides the textual analysis.
- Unit 3 'Of Friendship' is one of the essays of Bacon prescribed for study. This unit gives the original text of the essay and necessary explanation of the important passages. Certain sample passages for annotation are dealt with.

PAPER II : PROSE

BLOCK 1

UNIT 1 THE ENGLISH ESSAY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- describe the way the essay developed as a literary form and also discuss the types of essay.
- bring out the contribution of different essayists of 18th century to the development of the form.
- critically examine and appreciate Francis Bacon's skill as the pioneer English essayist.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 The English Essay : Introduction
- 1.4 Francis Bacon : Life and work
- 1.5 Bacon's essays : A critical study
- 1.6 Let's sum up
- 1.7 Sample questions
- 1.8 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses that the English essay had come to stay as a literary form. It also describes the aim and purpose of an essay. It describes the Types of essay and also distinguished essayists of 18th century. This unit is a critical appreciation of Francis Bacon as a pioneer-essayist.

1.3 THE ENGLISH ESSAY : INTRODUCTION

1.3.1

The English Essay has many a form or manner and scarcely any rule or regulation to govern it. A general definition of the Essay is that it is a composition in prose (an exception is Alexander Pope's Moral Essays in verse) which is not devoted to narrative. The essayist may use anecdotes to make his point, but his chief aim is not to tell a story. The essayist's usual role is that of a social philosopher, critic or annotator.

There are many types of Essays in English. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) the father of the English Essay, has a compact terse and at times, laconic style, which he has employed in writing on a variety of themes including those of social custom or behaviour. His essays read like strings of mottoes and proverbs or moralistic sermons on conduct, but they are full of factual observations and precepts of wordly wisdom.

Many seventeenth century essayists were preoccupied with similar themes or purposes. During the 17th century there developed a popular literary mode called 'the Character' - a kind of still-life portrait of a familiar 'type' - the Undergraduate, the Poet, the Yeoman or any such other person. These character studies, modelled on those of Theophrastus, a Greek writer, had brought a new interest into essay writing and set of fashion by which such essayists in the 18th century as Addison, Steele and Goldsmith introduced into their essays fictional characters like Sir Roger de Coverly and Beau Tibbs. Daniel Defoe's pamphlets and journalistic essays acted as a spur to the development of the essay.

The eighteenth century produced a galaxy of essayists. The format and tone of the essays which appeared in the 18th century were influenced by the contemporary development of the Press. It was the 18th century periodical and newspaper which made the 18th century essay popular as a form of literature. By the end of the century there were sixty daily or weekly papers published in London alone. Most of them supplemented the news with the article or comment upon literature, manners or politics; some of them like the famous Spectator left the presentation of news to others and focused on social comment or criticism. In these periodicals the essay found a new scope; and such masters as Addison and Steele gave the essay a new character or form.

Self-check exercise - 1

What is the aim of an essayist?

1.3.2

It would be interesting to compare the different varieties of the essay which appeared during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Addison (1672-1719) was meticulous and elaborate in the presentation of details, and his essays were intended to be 'light in tone, but weighty in influence'. He brought to the essay greater clarity, simplicity and literary 'good manners' than any other of his time. Addison and Steele also gave the essay greater attractiveness and vitality by catering to a much wider circle of readers having a more varied range of interests than others. Goldsmith (1728-1774) was as inclined as Addison to comment on social behaviour, but his attitude was more humane than Addison's.

Hazlitt's essays are of more exacting kind than Addison's and his essays are longer and less didactic than Addison's.

Lamb (1775-1834) presents a sharp contrast to Hazlitt. Lamb usually concerns himself with a mood rather than a topic, and what he writes is a kind of ode in prose.

Further comparisons between the themes and styles of different English essayists can be made by the reader himself. Through the immense varieties of the English essay there runs a sense of moral purpose which is sometimes boldly revealed, some times hidden behind humour or irony. The English Essay is thus a serious form of literature. Whether the essayist is writing about social behaviour, books, science or politics, his purpose, generally is to edify rather than to entertain. But Lamb and Hazlitt wrote not to reform or instruct their public, but to interest and amuse them.

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) wrote hundreds of essays but he was, first and foremost, a journalist, and deliberately chose such topics as would appeal to the 'man in the street'. He wrote of them in an essay in conversational manner reminiscent of fireside talk. This informal manner continued till the present time although serious subjects have come to be written upon in the essay form. Indeed, the essay has become a popular medium for literary writers, journalists, reviewers and newspaper columnists.

Self-check exercise - 2

What are your reasons to say that the English essay is a serious form of literature?

1.4 FRANCIS BACON (1561-1626) : LIFE AND WORK

1.4.1

Francis Bacon is generally regarded as the Father of the English Essay. The final edition of his essays, brought out in 1625, consists of 58 essays and the fragment of an essay on Fame. The range of the topics discussed in these essays is suggested by the titles themselves- Of Truth, of Love, of Death, of Superstition, of Suspicion, of Gardens, of Buildings, to name a few-and his approach to these topics is that of a pragmatic man of affairs.

Francis Bacon was born in 1561, the younger of the two sons of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. He lost his father when he was only about eighteen years old. Francis Bacon had his education at Trinity College, Cambridge (which he entered when he was a little over twelve years old) and studied law at Gray's Inn. In 1584, he became a Member of Parliament. Although he was a nephew of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and although his own merits were acknowledged, he did not secure any public office during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The Queen was succeeded by James I in 1603.

In 1607 Bacon was appointed Solicitor-General; in 1613, he became the Attorney-General. Soon he rose to the position of Privy Councillor in 1616, Lord Keeper in 1617, and Lord Chancellor in 1618. In 1618 he was created Baron Verulam and in 1621 Viscount St. Albans.

Shortly thereafter began his downfall when he confessed to the charges of having received bribes. He was sentenced to imprisonment in the Tower of London, fined \$ 40,000 and expelled from Parliament. The imprisonment was very brief, and the fine was placed in a trust for Bacon's benefit, but his earnest pleas to be allowed to reenter Parliament were disregarded. Bacon spent the remaining years of his life at a private estate, reading and writing. He died in 1626 of a chill which he caught when he had gone out for a scientific investigation.

The way he died illustrates his total involvement with the subject of his life-long study, namely, a scientific understanding of Nature. Interestingly, Bacon's major works are his philosophical scientific writings and he is credited with having introduced the inductive method of scientific thinking which laid the foundation for the development of Science in England. Indeed, he was considered an important precursor of theirs by the founders of the Royal Society.

It must be noted that Bacon was not a "scientist" in the present sense of the term; nor was his knowledge of science as it had developed in his time quite accurate. He possessed what might be called a scientific imagination, and had chalked out an ambitious plan for the systematic improvement of scientific knowledge, he could be regarded as the philosopher of modern science.

This plan was projected in a massive work in Latin, *Instauratio magna* or great renewal of the sciences and aimed at providing "a total reconstruction of sciences, arts, and all human knowledge, raised upon the proper foundations", but it was not completed. An early English work of his, *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), was translated into Latin and it was enlarged in 1623. This part takes stock of the advance in knowledge made by mankind till that period.

An interesting point about Bacon's writing needs to be stressed: namely, that he, like most scholars of the time, wrote in what was then the language of scholarship, Latin. Bacon's English prose-works, apart from the early work, *Advancement*, include his *History of The Reign of King Henry VII* (1622), his incomplete *The New Atlantis* (of the Utopian type of writing), and the *Essays*. Bacon had also translated the *Essays* into Latin, and firmly believed that "the

Latin volume of them (being in the universal language) may last as long as books do last" (from his *Epistle Dedicatory*). Bacon has elsewhere referred to English as the "Vernacular of a little island". Ironically, Bacon's English Essays have won him a significant place in the history of English Literature and the language itself is now studied in all parts of the world; but his Latin works are read only by a rapidly diminishing number of scholars. Bacon wrote most of his works in Latin and his mastery of that language

Self-check exercise - 3

How did Bacon contribute for the development of science in England?

1.5 BACON'S ESSAYS : A CRITICAL STUDY

Bacon's interest in propagating the scientific temper is reflected in his observation that "the kind of man is far from the nature of a clear and equal glass, wherein the beams of things should reflect according to their true incidence: Nay, it is rather like an enchanted glass, full of superstition and imposture, if it be not delivered and reduced". He looked upon the scientific study of Nature as the study of the book of God's Works, just as the Bible is the Book of God's Word.

With his keen desire to advance knowledge, Bacon found delight even in the writings of moralists like Seneca, Lucian and Montaigne; in the writings of Tacitus and Plutarch noted for their profound studies in human character; and in the writings of Cicero and Machiavelli dealing with public policy and political subjects. Bacon's own style reflected the qualities of these writers, specially those of Montaigne and Machiavelli, in his essays.

Bacon has been charged with displaying a highly cynical, often amoral, attitude to people and ethical values in his essays, and it is in this sense that he is called "Machiavellian". Bacon himself once said: "My soul hath been a stranger in the course of this my pilgrimage"; it must be remembered that he moved about in Court circles at a time when the court was charged with intrigue. Bacon had also travelled widely and seen life in its true colours.

The Essays were meant to be read by young men of noble birth who wished to succeed in the world. Bacon describes his essays as "certain brief notes set down rather significantly than curiously: not vulgar, but of a kind whereof men shall find much in experience and little in books; ("Significantly" would mean "for their significance", and "curiously" did not have its present day meaning in Bacon's time, but meant "elaborately" or "carefully"; and "vulgar" would mean "common place"). Bacon was a friend and guide to the young Earl of Essex who aspired to success at the Court. A random reading of the Essays will show that Bacon is concerned with the idea of getting on in the world; whether he discusses "cunning" "Adversity" "Custom and Education" "Goodness and Goodness of Nature" or any other topic his focus is on how that particular quality appears when presented to other people; to Bacon, the means do not seem to matter so long as at the end success is achieved. The essays are written in an impersonal tone and do not reflect the innermost feelings and sentiments of the writer.

It is this quality that makes Bacon's essays different from those of most other literary essayists (Charles Lamb or Robert Lynd, for instance) whose individual personalities, tastes and ideas are revealed in their writings. Bacon's style is terse and dignified. Bacon is often contrasted these characteristics with the French essayists, Montaigne, from whose work Bacon borrowed the title of his collection. Michel de Montaigne (1533- 92) published his *Essays* in 1580 (Books I and II) and in 1588 (Book III); there was also posthumous edition in 1595. John Florio translated them into English in 1603 (Bacon's first edition had appeared before this). The early essays of both these masters of the Essay-form read like a string of quotations on a given subject. But their approaches to the topic differ: we have mentioned Bacon's impersonal aloofness; Montaigne in contrast to him reveals a lively and genial (i.e. friendly) personality, full of curiosity

about other people and himself. He shows intellectual curiosity, does not approve of pedantry (show of learning) or falsehood, but is kindly and wise, and is tolerant of easy morality. His reactions to a variety of topics show his subjective response, and a rambling style ("I speak unto paper as unto the first man I meet", he says of himself).

The title of Montaigne's work is derived from the French word, "essaier", meaning to attempt or to try; it is infrequently used in English too, with the same meaning. "Essay" then, suggests the informal, complete, personal nature of this kind of literary composition, an attempt at examining a given subject without arriving at a final or a universal conclusion. Bacon's own "essays" interestingly, are given a longer title in the final edition, namely, *Essays or Counsels: "Civil and Moral"*.

Self - check exercise - 4

In what way are Bacon's essays different from those of other literary essayists?

1.5.1

Bacon published ten essays in 1597 with a few other of his minor works. These essays were very short, and read like collections of semi-proverbial sayings. In 1612, 38 essays appeared in print, including some of the earlier ones in an enlarged form. The final edition of 1625 contains 58 essays, 19 of which are new ones. Here the essays have a connected flow; the writer has provided ideas and words which link the sentences. Metaphorical illustrations reveal often an unsuspected poetic talent in Bacon. The quotations from, and allusions to the classical Greek and Latin writers, and to the Bible, are expanded and explained. All the same, there are many points in the essays which remain obscure (not clear and easy to follow), because the structural links are missing in the sentences, or because Bacon does not state the source or context of his quotation. Also, the reader has to be alert to follow Bacon's shifts from one argument to another, for even in their final form the essays retain their aphoristic quality.

An aphorism is generally understood as a concise statement packed with meaning, which, therefore, makes it easy to remember, and which often becomes semi-proverbial by being frequently quoted. This has happened with Bacon's essays, especially some of the opening sentences which arrest the reader's attention: "Men fear death, as children fear to go in the dark"; **Revenge is a kind of wild justice**; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out". However, there is much more to Bacon's use of the aphoristic mode than merely compact expression. In his book, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose*, Brian Vickers observes that this mode of expression was taught in that period to be attained in both speech and writing. It was closely associated with "maxim", and students of Medicine, Law and Philosophy were trained through axioms, maxims and aphorisms. Besides being weighty statements, aphorisms imply the backing of intellectual authority, and contain hidden meanings to be uncovered, and also a didactic intent (i.e., to point a message, a precept, a warning in a moralistic manner). Bacon's aphoristic style reveals a good deal of variety in his use of the mode: we shall point these out in our detailed study of individual essays.

Bacon's sentences are also described by critics as 'apothegms' an old classical Greek mode of utterance where the maximum meaning is packed into as few words as possible. (But short sentences noted for their witty content of this type are usually called 'epigrams'). An apothegm is quickly impressive, impressing the reader by the truth of its content rather than by the striking way in which it is said. There are numerous examples of this in Bacon's essays. Talking of riches, he says, "Of great riches, there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit" (i.e., "the vanity of possessing riches;" this essay should be read to dispel the notion of Bacon being a ruthless, unscrupulous seeker of wealth and power.)

These types of pithy (compressed expression packed with meaning) sentences were a part of the Renaissance student's training in language through the study of the ancient classics. The Ancients admired 'generalization' expressed neatly - called **gnome** in Greek and **sententia** in Latin. Today, we might look upon such statements as being pompous and platitudinous (trying to preach) and use the adjective, "sententious", to describe them, but, in the earlier centuries, they were greatly admired.

Most young men possessed "common-place books" or "tables" in which they noted down such memorable sentences and continued to do so in later life also whenever they came across such sentences. This explains the change from the earlier versions to the later ones in respect of essays written by Montaigne and Bacon. Bacon remarks in the **Advancement of Learning** that the aphoristic expression is particularly suitable for the presentation of tentative opinion ("broken knowledge" as he calls it). It may be interesting to note that the essay "Of Studies", the first one in the 1597 edition, reads like a collection of pithy sentences, about 250 words in length; but it does not appear to be so in the final version of it which is prescribed for your study.

Self - check exercise - 5

What is an aphorism?

1.5.2

In his presentation Bacon usually states a point and follows it up with a detailed explanation of the argument, using illustrations and supporting quotations, very often in Latin. His method of dividing the argument into parts follows the tradition of **partitio** which the Renaissance student learns as part of logic and rhetoric. However, the run of the argument in his essays is not often clear, as discussed earlier, for he has intended them to be "brief meditations".

Bacon found that his essays were well received by readers of his time, and was, therefore, anxious to bring out a final version which would be authoritative: "They come home," he says, "to men's business and bosoms" and hence gained popularity. We might quote from one of his letters written around 1609 to a friend:

To write at leisure what is to be read at leisure does not interest me. My concern is with life and human affairs and all their troubles and difficulties. It is these I wish to improve by true and wholesome thoughts.

Bacon's **Essays** have found him a significant place in the history of English Literature - perhaps, much to his surprise. The essays are admired for their style although the mind behind them is labeled cynical and unscrupulous. Critics from the earliest times have reacted adversely to the man and hence to his essays, and some of the condemnations have stuck to Bacon. Alexander Pope epigrammatically calls him "the wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind". Macaulay pities the "So much glory and so much shame" of Bacon's achievements. It is only of late that a less prejudiced, and more objective assessment of Bacon's writings is being made by considering him in the context of his times, both social and literary. (****)

About the dignity and weight of the content of his essays, there is no doubt. And even today when we read them, we are struck by the aptness of his observations on human nature, particularly of man and society, and more so, by his manner of presentation. What the great playwright and contemporary, Ben Jonson, wrote of his speeches in the Parliament may be applied to Bacon the essayist:

He was full of gravity in his speaking... No man ever spoke more neatly, more presently (i.e.; compressing a great deal of matter), more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idealness,

in what he uttered..... His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss.... The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.

If you read a few of Bacon's essays (e.g., the ones mentioned in the Introduction) you will soon become familiar with the rhythm of his prose, and find that even the old fashioned words and sentence structures follow familiar patterns. The explanatory notes on the essay, "Of Students", given here provide a brief analysis of Bacon's style. You may attempt a similar exercise with the other prescribed essay, "Of Friendship". There are several published editions of the *Essays*, two of which provide helpful notes; they are the Macmillan edition (ed. F.G.Selby) and the Oxford University Press edition (Indian edition, ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri).

Most critics on Bacon devote more attention to the *Advancement* than to the *Essays*; any *History of English Literature* would contain a brief discussion of Bacon's *Essays*. Most of them deal with the contents of the essays and with his terse, sententious and aphoristic style. In fact, the questions that you can expect on Bacon's essays would centre round the *Matter* and the *Manner* of his essays (i.e., his pragmatic approach to the topic and the stylistic features). A good book on Bacon is *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose* by Brian Vickers.

Self-check exercise - 6

What is it that attracts our attention when we read Bacon's essays?

1.5.3

You will also notice that many critics refer to Bacon in relation to "the Dissociation of Sensibility", which beginning with the development of scientific thinking in the 19th century has continued upto our time. (T.S.Eliot has given this phrase. L.C.Knights discusses it with reference to Bacon in an article included in his book, *Explorations*). To put it very briefly, this phrase implies that people have lost the knack of combining faith and reason, religion and science, emotion and intellect, during the course of the last few centuries, and this is reflected in literature and in the other arts as well. The writer's sensibility, i.e., his attunement to the environment around him no longer reflects a unified perception through which he could hold these seemingly contradictory (disparate) experiences together. T.S.Eliot points out that John Donne's poems reflect such a unified sensibility. With the advent of scientific thinking and ratiocination, educated people tend to analyse and compartmentalize ideas and experiences, and hence there is a growing gulf between different intellectual disciplines, particularly between the Humanities and the Sciences. L.C.Knights suggests that Bacon was among the earliest English "thinkers" responsible for the dissociation of sensibility.

To go into a deeper discussion of this question would really mean a study of Bacon's philosophical-scientific works. In the *Essays*, Bacon brings this intellectual habit to bear upon a literary form which is intended to reveal the essayist's own personal feelings and observations. Bacon always keeps in mind the pragmatic needs of the people he writes for, namely, men who wanted to succeed in public life. (You will notice this even in an essay like "Of Gardens").

Bacon's essays may be classified as *Essays on Human Nature*, on *Morals and Conduct*, on *society and the State*, on *Thought, Art and Leisure*, and *Philosophical Essays*. You will notice that even in the last group, Bacon's characteristic approach, pragmatic based on observation and his wide reading, and also his style are evident (these essays include those on *Atheism*, *Superstition*, *Fortune*, *Death*, *Truth*, the last two are among his best).

In Bacon's own lifetime there were at least two noted prose-writers whose works reflected the "unified sensibility" which Bacon's did not, Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) is best known for his *Religio Medici* ("The Faith of a Physician"-he was one himself) in which he expresses his sense of wonder and mystery experienced through religious beliefs. Robert Burton (1577- 1640 in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (a rather difficult book to read because of its diffused style)

combines old ideas with the new intellectual knowledge then shaping itself in the field of science and psychology.

We shall now read two of the essays, of **studies** and of **Friendship**, in detail. It would be useful if you read a few more, say six or ten, for yourself-for instance, the essays on Truth, Death, Travel, Gardens, Parents and Children, Married and Single Life, Simulation and Dis-simulation, and the Vicissitude of Things.

Self-check exercise - 7

How are Bacon's essays classified?

1.6 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed how essay had come to stay as a serious form of English literature. It has pointed out how pamphlets and journalistic essays acted as spur to the development of the essay. It discussed the role played by the 18th century essayists in establishing this literary form.

This unit has examined the reason to call Francis Bacon "The father of English Essay". It revealed the characteristic approach of Bacon to the subject, his pragmatic observation of men and matters, his wide reading and his unique style in writing his essays.

1.7 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write about different types of essays?
2. What role did Addison and Steel play in establishing essay as a serious literary form.
3. What was the main purpose of an essayist?

1.8 ANSWERS TO SELF - CHECK EXERCISES

SCE - 1

The aim of an essayist is to play the role of a social philosopher, critic or annotator.

SCE - 2

The English essay is a serious form of literature because it has a moral purpose which is some times boldly revealed, at times hidden behind humour and irony.

SCE - 3

Bacon introduced the inductive method of scientific thinking which laid the foundation for the development of science in England.

SCE - 4

Bacon's essays are written in an impersonal tone and they do not reflect the innermost feelings and sentiments of the writer. In the essays of other literary essayists their individual personalities, tastes and ideas are revealed.

SCE - 5

An aphorism is a concise statement packed with meaning, it is easy to remember and it often becomes proverbial by being frequently quoted.

SCE-6

When we read Bacon's essays we are attracted to the aptness of his observations on human nature, particularly, of man and society, and his manner of presenting what he had observed.

SCE-7

Bacon's essays are classified as Essays on human nature, on morals and conduct, on thought, on society and the state, on art, and on philosophy.

BRAOU

BLOCK - 1

UNIT 2: BACON'S ESSAY: OF STUDIES

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- examine the various components of Bacon's essays.
- realise how meaningful Bacon's essays are
- identify what sort of subjects are to be studied to keep yourself engaged and sharpen your intellect.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Of Studies (Text)
- 2.4 Textual explanation
- 2.5 Let's sum up
- 2.6 Sample questions
- 2.7 Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit brings out many aphorisms of Bacon which are frequently quoted in modern times. It illustrates the essayist's characteristic method and style in writing his essays. It discusses Bacon's view that learning is not to develop one's capacity for correct judgement after thorough weighing of pros and cons of a situation but to study certain subjects to enlarge one's intellectual domain.

2.3 OF STUDIES (TEXT)

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshaling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in experience. Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confuse; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts

made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books: else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. **Abeunt Studia in mores.** Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen for they are **cymini sectores**. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyer's cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

2.4 TEXTUAL EXPLANATION : "OF STUDIES"

2.4.1

Bacon's Essays appeared in three editions published in 1597, 1612 and 1625 and this essay, 'Of Studies', appeared in all of them. The 1597 version of it is much briefer than the others and is marked by clipped expression; in the 1612 edition a small addition was made at the end; the final 1625 version considerably expanded the earlier part of the essay, and briefly enlarged its later part.

Of Studies contains many aphorisms (brief, pithy sayings) which we now frequently quote. Also, the development of the argument in this essay as well as a number of features of the writer's style illustrates Bacon's characteristic method in the *Essays*. We shall examine these points while studying the text.

The first sentence illustrates Bacon's aphoristic style and the three-part rhythm of his sentence-structure. The Latin translation explains the meaning clearly: "Studies and the reading of books serve for pleasure in reflection, for ornament in speech, and for assistance in business". It also illustrates Bacon's practical approach to the topic of his essay, namely, keeping the purpose of any activity in mind. Bacon does not moralise in an abstract manner as any essayist can readily do with such a topic as "Studies". Finally, this sentence also exemplifies Bacon's manner of using "arresting opening sentences".

Then in the manner of a lawyer Bacon elaborates the three points made in the first sentence. In seclusion, reading provides pleasure that one can meditate upon; reading supplies phrases and ideas that can be used while one speaks; and it helps the man of affairs to order his work in a systematic manner ("business" in the sense of work at hand, not merely in the sense of commercial transactions). The third sentence makes the contrast, which Bacon's essays constantly suggest, between people whose knowledge is gained from experience and those whose knowledge is gained from reading and the study of books. While experienced people can carry out ("expert men can execute") any particular task or tackle a problem which actually faces them, learned people can lay down principles and broad-based theories about how to accomplish different kinds of work.

The next sentence shows Bacon's balanced summing-up of a proposition, besides illustrating his use of the rhythmic three-part sentence structure. There should be moderation about time devoted to reading, in using it while speaking or in arriving at practical decisions. ("Humour" can be understood as "eccentricity"; it refers to the medieval and Elizabethan idea that an

individual's temperament is governed by the nature of the element or elements which are predominant in him, the four elements bring air, fire, water and earth. For instance, a hot-tempered person was supposed to have much "fire" in him). Bacon concludes with a metaphorical connection between "nature" and "experience" (i.e., natural abilities and learning) to suggest that each is necessary to complete the other. Just as plants would grow wild if left to themselves and not tended by pruning ("proyning") or trimming, i.e., experience controlling 'nature'), so also learning by itself would shoot "branches" in all directions without any purpose unless it is put to practical use ("bounded in by experience").

Self-check exercise – 1

What are the three points expressed by Bacon in the very first sentence of his essay "Of Studies"?

2.4.2

Consider the sentence, "crafty men condemn studies". Here we see Bacon's habit of moving into a new idea without making the necessary links. Once again, we have a three-part statement, followed by a related observation. Cunning people condemn studies (because presumably they cannot pursue learning themselves); "simple", i.e., the ordinary, the unsophisticated, the uneducated people are in awe of them (in Bacon's time literacy was not very widespread, and 'learning' even less); and the third part contains the 'punch' of the statement: wise men put their learning to use. Studies cannot teach how they should be used: it is up to the wise man to use his wisdom which is outside ("without") and beyond books, learnt through experience and observation. Here again, Bacon connects second study with observation of life around oneself.

Bacon then comments on the attitude with which one should pursue learning. Learning should not have the contradicting of themselves as its object; nor should one read without questioning anything that is written. The object should not be to display one's learning in conversation; the true end of reading is to develop one's capacity for correct judgement after weighing all the aspects. This statement is followed by a sentence which is frequently quoted, and in which the metaphor is direct and clear ("some books are to be tasted.....attention. The word, "curiously", means carefully"). Then Bacon, the practical guide, suggests that every book need not be read through; reading excerpts or summaries is enough for some books. Such a method, Bacon comments, is suitable only for works of a minor nature; otherwise abridged books are "flashy", i.e., insipid like distilled liquors or spirits. He concludes this part of the essay with another memorable *sententia*, "Reading makethexact man" You can note the aphoristic quality of this sentence. "Conference" would mean conversation or discussion which requires a man to use his wits and be quick-tongued, i.e., "ready; writing refers to the commonplace book which can be useful when one is writing. He then makes the practical observation that if a man does not note down much of what he reads (note the Elizabethan grammar of "write little", we would say "writes little", then he should have a good memory; if he is inclined to be taciturn, i.e., not talkative, then he must have "ready knowledge" to say much in the little that he speaks, and if he does not read much, he should, says the wordly-wise Bacon, cunningly pretend to know all that he really does not.

Bacon then discusses the effect that different subjects of study can have on a person. By "histories" Bacon means natural history in addition to political history-the study of history gives a person factual knowledge ("wise"). Reading poetry which includes all creative writing allows the development of a sharpened fancy ("wit" in this sense). The study of mathematics makes a person acute and discerning, the study of ethics, serious and thoughtful. Logic and rhetoric help the student to argue out any given proposition. The more an individual devotes himself to one subject, the more likely it is that he will develop characteristics suggested by his

study—"Studies pass into character" is the meaning of the quotation from Ovid's *Heroides* (*Abeunt studia in mores*)

Bacon rounds off his argument by asserting that every infirmity ("stond or impediment") of an individual's mental capacity ("wit") can be set right by concentrating on a particular subject of study. (The word, "wit", was at one time used to mean knowledge, mind and other related ideas, and not only in the sense of intellectual humour as now used).

Self-check exercise - 2

How does, according to Bacon, the study of logic and rhetoric help a student?

2.4.3

Bacon illustrates his point listing different exercises prescribed to improve different physical deficiencies: bowling (i.e., with a metal ball; a game which is popular today in Scotland and in the U.S.A.) was held to be good for kidney ailments; shooting to develop the lungs and chest; long, ambling walks to tone up the stomach; riding for headaches, "and the like". Similarly "every defect of the mind may have a special "receipt" (i.e., recipe or prescription: you must have noticed the symbol, 'Rx', at the head of a doctor's prescription.) If an individual finds that he cannot concentrate, that his mind wanders, he should study mathematics, because if while solving a problem his attention wanders (Note the expression "never so little"; as per the present-day grammar we would say 'ever so little') he would have to begin all over again. If an individual's mind cannot make distinctions between different categories (of thoughts, ideas, etc., i.e., a person who tends to get confused in his mind or "wit"), he should read the old School-men, for they were experts at hair-splitting ("cymini sectores"). 'School-men' is the term applied to Medieval philosophers, especially certain classes of theologians, who would take up a proposition and go on splitting up ideas and words to such niceness, as fine as splitting a hair, or splitting a tiny cummin-seed ("cymini sectores"). Again, if an individual cannot find resemblances and analogies ("if his mind is not quick at passing from one matter to another" as Bacon's Latin translation puts it) he should study the lawyer's cases. Lawyers need to remember a number of "precedents" to help strengthen the cases which they are arguing.

This essay illustrates Bacon's practical approach to the given topic. After reading it carefully twice or thrice, you should note down the different aspects of the subject which he discusses and the arguments he advances to support each statement. Against each, you should note the image, i.e., the metaphors or examples he uses to illustrate his point. In this essay, you will become familiar with both the "matter" and the "manner" of a Baconian essay.

(It would be a useful exercise to recall any other essay on the same topic, or to try to list out the aspects which most writers would think of in respect of this subject, "On Studies", or you may write out a brief essay on the subject yourself, putting down your own thoughts about the topic. This will help you to observe the "impersonal" tone of Bacon's essay, and also to note his pragmatic approach as the usual essay writer's tendency is to preach a sermon on how necessary studies are to the development of the human mind, and furnish a pompous list of subjects which might be recommended!)

Self-check exercise-3

How does the study of mathematics help a student who can not concentrate his mind on one thing at a time?

2.5 LETS SUM UP

This unit has discussed the matter and manner of a Baconian Essay. It has pointed out the impersonal tone of Bacon's essay. It has illustrated the essayist's practical approach to a given topic. It has pointed out the metaphors or examples used by the essayist to illustrate a particular point.

2.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. "Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability." Explain.
2. List out your own thoughts about the topic 'Of Studies'
3. "Read not to contract and conjure; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weight and consider." Discuss.

2.7 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

The three points expressed by Bacon are:

1. reading in seclusion provides pleasure that one can meditate upon;
2. reading supplies phrases and ideas that can be used while one speaks;
3. reading helps the man of affairs to order his work in a systematic manner.

S C E - 2

According to Bacon the study of logic and rhetoric help a student to argue out any given proposition.

S C E - 3

The study of mathematics makes a student acute and discerning. It will arrest his wandering mind as he has to concentrate his attention on a problem he is trying to solve.

BLOCK - 1

UNIT 3: OF FRIENDSHIP

3.0. OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Appreciate how elaborate Bacon could be on certain topics.
- Point out the fruits of friendship
- Recollect classical characters who placed friendship above every thing.

3.1. CONTENTS

- 3.0. Objectives
- 3.1. Contents
- 3.2. Of Friendship (Text)
- 3.4. Textual Explanation
- 3.5. Annotations - sample passages
- 3.6. Let's sum up
- 3.7. Sample questions
- 3.8. Answers to self-check exercises
- 3.9. Audio-Visual support
- 3.10. Further reading.

3.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the importance of friendship. It displays a rare warmth and sincerity in Bacon's essays. In this unit, a comparative study of Bacon's views with those of Aristotle on the same topic is made. It also gives classical examples of kings and emperors who cared for real friendship. This unit lists out the benefits of friendship.

3.3. OF FRIENDSHIP (TEXT)

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in a few words, than in that speech, Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god. For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society, in any man, hath somewhat to the salvage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature; except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, Magna civitas, magna solitudo; because in a great town friends are sought; so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighbourhoods. But we may as far as we will affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a

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wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind: you may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flowers of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of *favourites*, or *privadoes*; as if it were matter of grace or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum*: for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called *friends*, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (surnamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent threat and began too speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; *for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting*. With Julius Caesar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to hide death. For when Caesar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favour was so great, as Antonius in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's *Philippics*, calleth him *ve efica*, 'witch', as if he had enchanted Caesar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of the mean birth) to that height, as, when he consulted with Maecenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Maecenas took the liberty to tell him, **that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life; there was no third way, he had made his so great**. With Tiberius Caesar, Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, **Haec pro oamicitia nostra non occultavi**; and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also in a letter to the senate by these words: **I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me**. Now if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature, but being men so wise, for such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half piece, except they ought have a friend to make it entire; and year: which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten, what Commineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith, that towards his latter time **that closeness did impair and a little perish understanding.** Surely Commineus ought have made the same judgement also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Lewis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true; **Corne edito,** 'Eat not the heart.' Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression: and even so is to of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another: he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the kind of Persia, **that speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.** Neither is the second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel: (they indeed are best); but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smoother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point, which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heracitus saith well in one of his enigmas, **Dry light is ever the best.** And certain it is that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgement; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune. For, as S. James saith, they are as men, **that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape**

and favour. As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty letters; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers. One, that he shall not be faithfully counseled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy: even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but over throweth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgement) followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say, **that a friend is another himself**: for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath as it were two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy. For he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself! A man can scarce allege his own merits with modest, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook or supplicate or beg; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless: I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part: if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

3.4. TEXTUAL EXPLANATION

3.4.1.

This essay was written to commemorate friendship with Toby Matthew. The latter requested Bacon to write on the topic (in a letter dated 1623). All the same, the treatment of the theme remains impersonal and quite pragmatic, particularly when compared with the numerous writings on "FRIENDSHIP" during the Renaissance.

In the earlier essay Bacon's ideals were of a higher level: "It is friendship, when a man can say to himself, I love this man without respect to utility", i.e., without any ulterior motive of gaining something material from the friendship. But in the 1625 version, Bacon concentrated on the "fruits" of friendship. We should note that when Bacon had suffered a set-back in his

career and experienced "the mere and miserable solitude" a rare friend like Toby Matthew was among the few people who sustained him.

Bacon's ideas in this essay have been compared to Aristotle's on the same topic; but Aristotle goes deeper into the subject than Bacon. For instance, Aristotle recognises three degrees of friendship: for profit, for pleasure, and the superior one of the pure rapport of two noble minds or souls. Aristotle also emphasizes loving rather than being loved. Montaigne's essay on the subject seems to have influenced Bacon, but Montaigne, too, goes much deeper into it than the English essayist, Bacon.

We notice in the argument of this rather long essay Bacon's use of the method of *partitio* (dividing into parts) for the major argument as well as for each "section" of the essay.

Bacon begins by examining an Aristotlean idea, "whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god". Bacon weighs the "truth" and the "untruth" contained in this statement. Aristotle has written in his *Politics* that a man might be so degraded that he is like a beast, and unfit for human society; or he might be so self-sufficient that he might resemble a god. Bacon agrees that a man who dislikes and hates ('aversation' means 'aversion') human society is comparable to a savage beast; but considers it "most untrue" that such a person has godlike qualities, unless, Bacon adds, such a person "sequesters" (i.e., withdraws) himself to follow a higher way of life like those who renounce the material world, as seen from some examples from ancient times. Epimenides lived around 600 BC, in Candia (Crete); he was a philosopher and poet. He is said to have fallen asleep for fifty-seven years in a cave (he was a boy when he fell asleep). Numa, the legendary second king of ancient Rome, often retired to a cave where he would receive counsel from Egeria, goddess of fountains. Empedocles of Crete, also of the sixth century B.C., was rather proud and aloof. This philosopher is said to have thrown himself into the volcano of Etna so that his sudden departure would make people think of him as a god. Appolonius (born 04 B.C.), a Greek philosopher and mystic, maintained a vow of silence for five years. Ascetic by nature, he was, however, friendly and cheerful even during his self-imposed silence. There were, says Bacon, such hermits and holy fathers in the early years of Christianity who came to be known as "desert fathers" such as St. Anthony. St. Jerome and St. Augustine also lived briefly as hermits.

But people do not understand the true meaning of solitude, and its true scope. By merely being part of a crowd one is not really in the company of people; casual acquaintance (i.e. surface friendship) is like belonging to faces in a picture gallery; and polite social conversation, or other superficial conversation, which does not communicate any depth of feeling ("love") is like a tinkling "cymbal" (a phrase which recalls St. Paul's *Epistle to the Corinthians* 1 13.1 where it says that if a person has not charity in his heart, yet speaks eloquently "with the tongue of men and of angels" he is merely "like sounding brass" and tinkling cymbals which ring clearly outwardly). The Latin saying, "A great city, a great solitude", is appropriate (This phrase was a pun by a Roman poet on the name of an Arcadian town, Megalo polis, which is Greek for 'great city').

Such lack of deep friendship, Bacon comments (and we in our 20th century urban environments most certainly agree), is true of big towns, particularly when contrasted with smaller neighbourhoods. But it is even more true in a deeper sense — when a man finds that he has acquaintances and even friends, but no true friends: he then finds the whole world to be a wilderness. Similarly, if a person is unfit for friendship because of his difficult or unpleasant nature as a result of which he finds himself alone or in solitude, he is said to desire such a situation as is derived from the animal kingdom and not from that of humanity.

Self-check exercise-1

When does man find the whole world to be a wilderness?

Then follows a long disquisition on the "fruits of friendship". Bacon discusses three of them concentrating on the first one, namely, the relief of being able to unburden one's innermost feelings to a true friend. Bacon uses medical imagery to describe "the fullness and swellings of the heart" caused by disaffections, miseries, etc. Talking to, and receiving the consolation and advice of a true friend is like easing and discharging". (This refers to the ancient method of blood-letting, the universal remedy in prescientific days for all ailments, as this was believed to release the "poison" attacking the blood-system). Just as blockage and suffocation are the most dangerous of all bodily ailments, so is the suppressing mental sufferings (i.e., bottling up emotions) to the well-being of the mind. Bacon illustrates his point with different remedies that were prescribed for "stoppings" of different organs of the body- sarsaparila (an American plant whose dried roots provide a tonic; it is also widely used in traditional Indian medicines) for the liver, "Steel-drink" (i.e., water in which a smith has dipped his red-hot iron) for diseases of the spleen; powder of sulphur for the lungs; and castoreum (a substance obtained from the beaver) for the brain. However, he points out, there is no remedy for the opening of a choked heart except a true friend to whom you can pour out the innermost feelings of your heart and feel the relief that comes after religious confession (Catholics "confess" in private to their priest all the sins which they have committed, and are counseled by the priest on how to obtain God's pardon; "Civil shrift" is confession made to a layman).

(Compare this passage listing 'receipts' for ailments of the body and of the mind to a similar passage in the essay, of Studies).

Before going into two other "fruits of friendship" Bacon digresses at length to draw illustrations (from Classical times) of the importance of a true friend or confidant. Great kings and monarchs have always had such friends, and in many instances they retained such friendships at great personal risk. Because princes have to maintain a certain distance from their subordinates and subjects, they cannot easily maintain close friendships unless they elevate one or more people to a level almost equal to their, and such an action involves the risk of their being deceived at sometime by such confidants who know their innermost thoughts. (Here Bacon is like a pragmatic adviser to princes, and justifies the title given to his essays, "Counsels, Civil and Moral". The "modern languages" (i.e., European languages other than Latin and Greek, and largely derived from these Classical languages) call such companions "privadoes" or intimate friends, or favourites. Bacon feels that the Latin term, *participes curarum*, is most appropriate as it means "sharer of cares" (The Roman Emperor Tiberius gave this title to his Minister, Sejanus). Examples show that such a bond has been developed not merely by weak and temperamental ("passionate") rulers, but also by the wisest and most able ones.

Lucius Cornelius Sylla (138-78 B.C.), a Roman general and politician, raised Pompey to great heights through befriending him, so much so that Pompey (who later called himself the Great) attempted to go over Sylla's head. (Sylla declared himself perpetual Dictator in 82 B.C., but resigned in 79 B.C.). Pompey was keen on taking out a triumphal procession when he returned victorious from a battle, but Sylla denied him this. It was then that Pompey made his threatening remark (quoted by Bacon) about the rising sun, implying that Sylla was the "setting Sun". Later, when Pompey tried to promote his friend, Lepidus, to Consulship against Sylla's will, Sylla resented it. (We would leave out "that" in "Sylla did a little resent thereat" in modern English).

Julius Caesar favoured Decimus Brutus so highly as to nominate him heir after his own nephew, Octavius, in case Octavian died without a natural heir (Octavian did become Augustus Caesar). Nevertheless, Brutus turned against him and joined the conspirators who planned to kill Caesar: when Caesar narrated his wife's dream of ill omen and repeated his wife's pleadings that he should not go to the Forum that day, Brutus sarcastically asked whether the Senate should wait till Calpurnia dreamt more pleasant dreams. (If you have read Shakespeare's play,

Julius Caesar, you will recall this episode). Decimus Brutus was such a favourite of Julius Caesar's that to Mark Antony he appeared to have enchanted Caesar with some kind of black magic. (This is quoted in one of Cicero's **Philippics**, orations against Mark Antony).

Augustus Caesar elevated Marcus Agrippa (63-12 B.C) on account of his close friendship with him, although the latter was of humble birth. When Augustus consulted Maecenas (one of his Ministers, and a favourite Counselor) about the marriage of his daughter, Julia, the Counselor replied that the princess must be betrothed to Agrippa, failing which Agrippa should be killed. Augustus had raised Agrippa to such esteem that no third way was possible.

Tiberius Caesar (who ruled from 14 to 37 A.D) valued Sejanus (d. 31 A.D) as a friend so highly that the Senate raised a monument to their friendship with statues of the two of them. The Latin quotation means "Because of our friendship, I do not hide these matters from you". "The like or more" is translated by Bacon in the Latin version as "an instance of equal or even greater friendship than this is seen" between Septimius Severus (Emperor of Rome from A.D. 193 to 211) and Plautianus, the latter practically ruling the kingdom for over ten years. He married his daughter to the Emperor's eldest son, who detested his bride. Plautianus feared the prince's revenge, and conspired to kill him and the Emperor. The courtier's anger ran so high that Septimius was forced to execute Plautianus (although he still loved him). Septimius used to support his favourite when the latter insulted the prince, and had expressed a wish that Plautianus should outlive him (so that, perhaps, he could succeed Septimius).

Bacon observes that all these princes were practical-minded, and shrewd (i.e., quite capable of managing political affairs), and also had wives, sons and nephews of their own, and yet seemed to need these friends to complete *hæc felicitas* (i.e., happiness). It is not as if they were like Trajan or Marcus Aurelius who were noted for their virtue and goodness. Trajan was Roman Emperor from A.D. 98 to 117 and Marcus Aurelius from A.D. 161 to 180. Legend has it that Pope Gregory the Greek prayed successfully for the release of Trajan from hell, even though the Emperor was a heathen (i.e., not a Christian). Bacon praises him in his book, **Advancement of Learning**, as also Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher-king famous for his work, **Meditations**.

A close friend or confidant is, perhaps, necessary for a prince; otherwise by keeping their troubles to themselves, the princes would suffer mental agonies. Commineus (Philip de Comines), the late 15th century French historian, observed that his master Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy would never communicate his inner-most thoughts to anyone and such "closeness" seemed to have finally weakened his mental faculties. (Duke Charles actually suffered through a double defeat at the hands of the Swiss in 1476).

Self-check exercise – 2

Who does a prince need a close friend or confidant?

3.4.3.

Bacon observes that Commineus could have made the same observation about Louis XI, Duke Charles' rival, whose service commineus was persuaded to join when he tried to bring about a rapprochement between the two princes. Louis's "closeness" was deep enough to be a torment to him. Bacon comments that Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher-mathematician, has aptly observed "Eat not the heart", which Plutarch explains as "Do not injure your soul by wasting it with worries". (Bacon here uses "parable" as an equivalent to "aphorism"; 'parable' comes from a Greek word meaning "comparison", and is usually used in English to describe simple stories with profound meanings: Jesus Christ, for instance, preached using parables).

Anyone, who lacks a friend in whom he can confide fully, is like a cannibal eating his own heart. And the most admirable quality of this first aspect of friendship is that communication doubles one's joys, and halves one's sorrows. Just as the philosopher's stone could provide remedies for bodily ailments, so also friendship can benefit the mind. (The alchemists of old days searched for the philosopher's stone which was supposed to turn all base metal to gold; it could also provide medicinal remedy. The liquid gold derived from it could, according to Paracelsus, one of the most famous alchemists, can work contrary benefits, curing ailments pertaining to all "humours" and elements).

But friendship, without calling in the aid of alchemists, can serve as a true elixir of the mind ("praying in aid of" was originally a legal term, and meant calling another interested party for help in one's case). The last sentence is made clearer in the Latin translation, where "bodies" means "natural objects"; a "natural action" is strengthened and sustained by the union of two bodies, and grief "a violent impression" is weakened and dulled because it is faced by the combined force of two minds. Two united bodies are stronger than one, and can resist the impact of other bodies; it is also true of united minds.

Bacon then discusses the "second fruit of friendship", namely, its efficacy of curative power for the understanding, i.e., a person's intelligence or reason (the first fruit was beneficial to emotions or feelings). Friendship transforms "storms and tempests" experienced emotionally into fair weather; similarly, it transforms "darkness and confusion of thought" into the clear daylight of understanding. This is true not only of sincere advice received from a close friend, but even of discussing and talking over a problem with someone other than oneself. A person's ideas and thoughts become clearer and the confusion sorts itself out logically ("breaks up") if and when a problem is discussed with someone else. A person thereupon views his problem from different angles ("Tosseth his thoughts"); he organizes his thoughts in a more orderly fashion, and sees them in a new perspective when they are converted into words. Thus he grows wiser than he was earlier through an hour's discussion with a friend, or wiser than he could have been after an entire day's grappling with his thoughts by himself. Bacon refers to the Greek Naval leader of the 4th century B.C., Themistocles who told the king of Persia whom he defeated, that speech could be compared to tapestry woven at Arras, the entire design being seen in detail when the cloth was unfolded and spread out, whereas only parts of it could be seen when it remained folded. Arras is a place in France. There is an anachronism in Themistocles' use of the comparison, but Bacon has got it from North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*. (Themistocles fled to Persia when he fell out of favour at Athens, and promised to render the Emperor a valuable service. It was then that he made this comparison between perfect and imperfect speech, not between speech and thought).

This particular result of friendship, namely, the clarifying of one's thoughts and ideas, is achieved only through discussions with friends who are capable of providing help, and although such friends would be the best to discuss with, discussion with anyone would enable a man to know himself by bringing his thoughts to light (i.e., by giving expression to them in words), and sharpen his intellect like a knife which acquires sharpness through whetting on a stone, though it is not itself sharp. Indeed, it would be better for a person to share his thoughts even with a picture or a statue than keep them to himself or stifle them.

Self-check exercise-3

When a person discusses his problems with a friend what benefit does he derive?

Bacon then proceeds to discuss the complementary aspect of friendship, namely, sound advice from a friend (this point should be obvious; 'vulgar' as mentioned earlier, means 'common'). Heraclitus (known as "the obscure" for his enigmatic statements) states that the pure light of reason, not blinded by emotions and desires, is the best guide to one's soul. Bacon also uses 'dry' in its sense of opposition to 'soaked, or drunk' as seen in his comment; "And certain it is..... affections and customs" which means that a friend's advice would not be drenched with prejudices and emotions (i.e., would not be conditioned by prejudices or emotions) as one's own counsel is certainly likely to be.

One's own advice, says Bacon, is like that of a flatterer, for no one can flatter a man more than he himself can. And no remedy is better for such blind flattery than the frankness ("liberty") of a true friend.

Advice can be of two kinds-one pertaining to conduct or morals, and the other to any specific work. As for the first, the best tonic for the mind is correct advice (warnings) from a true friend, for it sometimes, and commencing with oneself, could turn out to be extremely strong medicine (Bacon uses "a man" where we now use "one"). Reading good books or observing others is also helpful, but books of morality provide dull reading, and the experiences of others might be found unsuitable to one's particular situation, if one tries to correct one's own faults through the observing of the same in other people. Hence, the counsel or warnings of a friend is the best recipe (remedy).

People (especially people in high positions) often commit great and absurd mistakes, and ruin their reputation and fortune simply because they lack a friend who could have advised them, Bacon quotes the Bible to suggest that a friend could function like a mirror.

On the question of advice from a friend regarding some particular work, Bacon says that it is possible for a man to think himself self-sufficient ("all in all") and justify it to himself with imaginative observations. He might say that two eyes see only as much as one (our modern expression would be "two heads are better than one") or that the person who participates in an event sees more than a spectator, or that an angry man is quite as wise as one who tries to control his anger (by reciting the alphabet; "count up to ten", as the modern expression has it); that a musket may be fired as well by holding it as from a stand or support. But when all is said and done, good advice sets matters right.

Bacon goes on to say that if a man seeks advice "by pieces", i.e., from various people in different matters it is certainly better than not seeking advice at all. But there are two dangers in doing so: One, he might not obtain sincere advice, for it is very rare to receive advice without the giver of it distorting it to suit his own purpose, since only a "perfect and entire" friend would give honest advice. Second, he might receive advice which might not be really good for him (although it is given with good intentions), as advice could be partly harmful ("mischief") and partly useful ("remedy"). Bacon compares this aspect to that of calling in a doctor who is reputed to cure the disease from which you are suffering, but who, because he is not familiar with your system, may provide you with an immediate cure of that particular illness and upset your health in some other way (because his medicine doesn't agree with you-what we today term "side effects"), perhaps, with fatal results. Similarly, a friend, who is fully acquainted with your total circumstances, will be careful that you do not suffer in any other way because of his advice, satisfying only your immediate requirements. Therefore, Bacon advises us not to rely on "scattered counsels" because such miscellaneous advice is more likely to upse us further and mislead us rather than solve our problems.

(This part of Bacon's essay, dealing with advice from a variety of people, recalls Machiavelli's views on the same topic in his work, *The Prince*).

Bacon then takes up the "last fruit of friendship, namely, receiving help whenever necessary and sharing in all activities: Bacon compares this aspect to an actual fruit, the pomegranate, which has a number of 'sections' or 'layers' containing the fruit (We may recall the saying "A friend in need is a friend indeed"). We can appreciate this benefit of friendship if we consider ("Cast our minds") and realize how many things we cannot do single-handed without the help of a friend. We might then conclude that Pythagoras's statement that a friend is only another self to oneself is an understatement, and that a true friend is really much more than oneself: Aristotle calls a true friend the "alter ego".

Every human being has an allotted span of life ("their time") and often worries himself to death about his deepest desires such as the settling of a child (in marriage) or the completing of a piece of work. (The phrase recalls Shakespeare's "Cowards die many times before their deaths", in *Julius Caesar*). If a man has a true and close friend, he can be confident that the friend will attend to these tasks even if he dies any untimely death. It is as if such a man had two lives to carry out his wishes: his body is confined within a limited space of time but where there is true friendship, his earthly duties can be carried out by his friend acting as his deputy.

Besides, there are many things which a man cannot do or say, himself without appearing to be boastful or without boring "face" (i.e., dignity). He cannot even talk of his own merits, leave alone praise them; he cannot sometimes plead or ask for a favour for himself, and so on. A friend can do all this on his behalf with grace. If he were to do so himself, he might have to blush with shame or humiliation or modesty. (Critics have noted the similarity between these views and Cicero's views, but whereas Cicero discusses what a man might do for a friend, Bacon the pragmatist, considers how a friend might benefit oneself).

Even in dealing with close relatives one will find a friend useful; a man cannot speak to his son except as a father, or to his wife except as a husband, or to his enemy except as an adversary, offering terms of surrender or compromise, whereas a true friend can sometimes speak on his behalf to these people as the situation requires without being conditioned by the relationship.

Bacon concludes by saying that he has not exhausted the benefits of friendship—the list would be endless if he tries to enumerate all of them. He has provided the groundwork, and the essay should provide helpful guidelines to a person who cannot function by himself ("play his own part"). If a man does not have a friend, concludes Bacon, he might as well not live on earth ("quit the stage"). (Bacon uses the image of life as a theatre, a frequent image in literature, made particularly famous by Shakespeare's statement "All the World's a Stage, and all the men and women merely players").

The essay, "Of Friendship", is unusually lengthy for a Baconian essay. But as the analysis shows, the ideas are systematically presented and discussed one after another, each major point consisting of a number of sub-points. Bacon illustrates his observations from his reading and knowledge of ancient literature and history, and with examples from everyday life (such as calling in a doctor who is not your usual doctor"). This essay brings out Bacon's practical approach even to a topic which was quite close to his heart.

Self-check exercise-4

Why does Bacon advise us not to rely on "scattered counsels"?

3.5. PASSAGES FOR ANNOTATION — A SAMPLE

1. "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested".

This sentence from Francis Bacon's essay, "Of Studies", is one of his numerous statements which are frequently quoted.

Bacon discusses how learning and experience of life should go together in enabling a man to face the world. He says that the purpose of reading books should not be to contradict other people's opinions nor should people believe and take for granted everything they read. Also, one should not read merely to find a topic for conversation—the aim of reading should be to "weigh and consider", i.e., something which one can ponder over and which helps one to unite his opinions and judgments.

In his characteristic way—that of adopting a practical approach to any topic — Bacon points out that it is not possible for an individual to read every book available nor are they all worth reading through. Some books are to be tasted, i.e., as he himself explains, "read only in parts"; some to be swallowed, i.e., read through but not with close attention; and some to be chewed and digested", i.e., to be paid careful attention to and pondered over which are, indeed, few in number. Bacon goes on to say that in certain cases the reader can also read excerpts from books or summaries of them, i.e., reading "by deputy".

The sentence quoted is also characteristic of the style of Bacon's essays, especially his latter ones, in which he uses similes or analogies from everyday experience to emphasize the point which he wishes to make. He also usually explains the analogy which he draws, as he has done with this one.

2. Following the same pattern, you could try to annotate the following sentences:

- i) "Nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies" (towards the end of the same essay).
 - ii) "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man".
 - iii) "Natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proying by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience".
3. "We may go further and affirm most truly that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness".

Francis Bacon asserts the importance and value of true friendship in his essay, "Of Friendship". Here, he says that the World would appear to be a wilderness to a man who lacks a true friend, even to a man who prefers solitude. This statement follows the discussion of the idea that human beings who do not need company are either gods or beasts. Bacon admits that there are a few people, particularly saintly people, who seek solitude and quiet for their meditations, but they are usually ascetics who aspire to a higher plan of life. He cites examples of ancient Greeks such as Epimenides, Numa, Empedocles and Appolonius from ancient "pagan" times and of the Christian hermits and holy fathers who practised such solitude.

Most people, however, do not realize the true meaning of "company" and "solitude". They imagine that they are in company when they are part of a crowd. But there is no companionship if people are only closely acquainted with one another; thus one can be lonely in a big crowded city. Hence, says Bacon, true company lies in one's association with a close and trusted friend, also in one's being part of a pure and complete solitude which would make even a thickly populated city appear as a wilderness.

Bacon then goes on to discuss the "fruits" or benefits of friendship in the rest of this essay. The essay itself is much longer and more personal than his other essays.

4. The parable of Pythagoras is complex but true: **Cor ne edito; Eat not the heart.** Certainly, it is true that those, that want friends to open themselves unto, are "cannibals of their own hearts".

After citing examples (from ancient history of kings and princes who benefited from the advice of close or trusted friends, Francis Bacon recalls a few kings who suffered for want of such a confidant. Duke Charles of Burgundy was said to have almost lost his mental balance because his "secrets troubled him most"; so also the "closeness" of Louis XI proved itself to be his "tormentor". Bacon quotes a "parable", i.e., an aphorism of Pythagoras in this context, and explains it himself by picturesquely describing a friendless prince as a "cannibal" eating his own heart. Many of Pythagoras's statements are enigmatic; but he himself explains this particular one as follows: "Do not injure your soul by wasting it with worries".

This passage is characteristic of Bacon's style employed in the *Essays*: he frequently quotes from the ancient Greek and Latin writers, and sometimes explains what the reference means, as he does here. Also, such quotations often sum up a particular argument as in the case of this one.

5. The following are two more important passages from the same essays:
- (a) "The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections".
 - (b) "And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels: they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct".

3.6. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has explained the need for true friends, not only to ordinary people but also to the princes. It has discussed the benefits of true friendship. It has pointed out the pain of solitude to a human being. It has drawn examples of classical characters in emphasizing the need for true friendship. It has discussed certain important passages with reference to their context.

3.7. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What is the comparison between Bacon and Aristotle as far as their ideas are concerned about true friendship?
2. What is the meaning and scope of solitude as explained by Bacon?
3. How does Bacon assert the importance and value of true friendship?
4. "Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them and wise men use them". Explain.
5. It is not to be forgotten, what Commines observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most." Discuss.

3.8. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

SCE – 1

A man finds the whole world to be a wilderness when he realizes that he has acquaintances and even friends, but no true friends.

SCE – 2

A prince needs a close friend or confidant to complete his felicity-to unburden his troubles to the friend and get relieved from mental agony.

SCE – 3

When a person discusses his problems with a friend his ideas and thoughts become clearer and his confusion gets sorted out logically.

SCE – 4

Bacon advises us not to rely on “scattered counsels” because such miscellaneous advice is more likely to upset no further and mislead us rather than solve our problems.

3.9. AUDIO-VISUAL SUPPORT

Francis Bacon – A critical study. (Audio lesson)

3.10 FURTHER READING

Try to read other essays of Bacon to have a thorough knowledge of his themes and style.

Dr. Bala Kothanda Raman.

BLOCK II JOSEPH ADDISON

There are three units in this block.

- Unit 1** Mischiefs of party spirit-A gives a general introduction to the essayist. It provides the original text of the essay apart from giving the necessary explanation of certain important passages.
- Unit 2** Mischiefs of Party Spirit - An Analysis discusses the merits and demerits of party spirit as envisaged by the essayist.
- Unit 3** Mischiefs of Party Spirit-B Discusses that Addison is a first-rate and original journalist. It explains that Addison's writings carry a value even to the 20th century readers.

BLOCK - II JOSEPH ADDISON

UNIT - 1: MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - A

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- have an idea of what an essay as a literary form is
- see Addison is an improvement as an essayist
- examine the situation that favoured political journalism and
- discuss the rise and the purpose of the new parties.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Mischiefs of party spirit-A - Introduction
- 1.4 Mischiefs of party Spirit - The Text
- 1.5 Let's sum up
- 1.6 Sample questions
- 1.7 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the way the political parties rose in England. This unit explains how Tories and Whigs carried on active controversies in politics and recruited writers to propagate their views. It points out that the number of reading public slowly increased. It also points out the role played by some periodicals those days. It explains the subject and the style of the essays of Joseph Addison, Steel etc.

1.3 MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT-A – INTRODUCTION

1.3.1

The essay which is one of the most common of literary forms is also one of the most difficult to define on account of its seeming formlessness. As a writer puts it, "The essay is not to be concerned in a definition. For, what genius could find a common denomination for essays so contrary in tendency as Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Lamb's A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig". Nevertheless, there have been many definitions of the essay form ranging from Dr.Johnson's "a loose sally of the mind, an irregular undigested piece, not a

regular composition" to Prof. Saintsbury's "a work of prose art". Though impossible to define with precision, the English essay atleast implies such qualities as brevity, randomness, informality, humour and charm of language. The subject can be anything under the sun.

The essay is also a comparatively new genre, "one of the late courses in the banquet of literature". It was in 1580 that the Frenchman, Montaigne, set down his reflection in the form of *Essais* (etymologically, the word 'essay' means an attempt). The first English writer of essays was Sir Francis Bacon who in 1597 published his first collection of ten essays, later enlarged into fifty eight in 1625. While Montaigne's essays were personal, informal and exploratory, those of Bacon were impersonal, exact and magisterial in tone. These two main streams of the essay became happily blended in the efforts of Sir Richard Steele and Joseph Addison to introduce the periodical essay into the English literature in the eighteenth century.

Social and political conditions at the time also favoured the emergence of periodical journalism. After the political convulsions of the previous century, English settled down to a two-party system in government. The Tories and Whigs carried on active controversies in politics and recruited writers to propagate their views. With the rise of the commercial middle-class, a large reading public—both male and female—came into view. Taking advantage of this favourable situation, Daniel Defoe launched his *Review* in 1704 and established the social essay as a popular brand of literature.

Self-check exercise-1

What is an essay according to Dr. Johnson?

1.3.2

It was, however, given to Steele and Addison to elevate the periodical essay, Defoe's brainchild, to the level of literary art. It was the dexterous and dramatic presentation of political, social and ethical comment that won for them instant popularity and fame. They kept the tastes and requirements of their readers, male and female, constantly in mind and provided a great diversity and range in the choice of the ones—papers on London life, on fashion, on literature, theatrical papers, moral essays and last but not least, the character essays such as those on Sir Roger de coverly. Their aim was two-fold; to amuse and to reform. "Entertainment went hand in hand with improvement. If human nature demanded amusement, it had its better self to be considered too". Similarly, the collaboration of Steele and Addison also proved to be an advantage. They complemented and sustained each other. Steele on the one hand had the ready wit and pen of the journalistic reporter which was balanced by the cautious and penetrating wisdom of Addison. Together they combined such qualities of creative genius as to give their essays the permanence of literature.

The first periodical, *The Tatler*, was founded by Steele under the pseudonym of Isaac Bickerstaff and ran from 1709 to 1711 with 271 issues. The purpose of the paper as stated by Steele was "to expose false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity and affections" and "to recommend truth, innocence, honour and virtue as the chief ornaments of life". The paper appealed to a large audience but was terminated because the disguise of Isaac Bickerstaff was penetrated and the periodical had become involved in party politics,

Within two months of the termination of *The Tatler*, *The Spectator* made its appearance in March, 1711. It was published six times a week until December, 1712 (555 issues) and was briefly revived in 1714 for a further 80 issues. It became even more famous than its forerunner with the introduction of various representatives of society as members of The Spectator Club. The aim was similar: entertainment and improvement. To quote Addison, "it was said of Socrates that he brought philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries,

schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses". The dissemination of philosophy (i.e., knowledge and wisdom) was accompanied, however, with humour and understanding so as to make "their instruction agreeable and their diversion useful". Apart from a wide variety of topics, **The Spectator** was noted for its vividness of social panorama. But the **Spectator's** most enduring attraction has been the characterization of Sir Roger de Coverley, the jovial, eccentric, kindly, elderly Tory country-squire. As someone commented, to meet him is to love him. Created by Steele (in Paper No.2 about the Spectator Club) and developed by Addison, Sir Roger has been described as "the perfect portrait of a perfect English gentleman". There is little that is hidden from the reader regarding his life and convictions. We watch him with indulgent humour as he moves about his various activities-at home, at church, at the Assizes, in London, at the theatre—and peep into his heart to learn of his disappointment in love; and we are constantly made aware of his views and comments. He is without doubt one of the most popular characters in English literature.

Though written more than two and a half centuries ago, the essays of Addison and Steele can be enjoyed for their prose style. They still appeal to us with their elegance, simplicity and ease of writing. Dr. Johnson felt that "whoever wishes to attain an English style familiar but not coarse and elegant without ostentation, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." Through a happy combination of matter and manner, Addison and Steele fully achieved their desire "to enliven morality with wit" and "to temper wit with morality".

Self-check exercise - 2

What was the most enduring attraction of **The Spectator**?

1.4 MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - THE TEXT

My worthy friend Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a school-boy, which was at the time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to enquire which was the way to St. Anne's Lane, upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young popish cur, and asked him who had made Anne a saint? the boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met, which was the way to Anne's Lane; but was called a prick-eared cur for his pants, and instead of being shown the way, was told that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. "Upon this", says Sir Roger, "I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but going into every lane of the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane." By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after, without giving offence to any party. Sir Roger generally closes this narrative with reflections on the mischief that parties do in the country: how they spoil good neighbourhood, and make honest gentlemen hate one another; besides that they manifestly tend to the prejudice of the land tax, and the destruction of the game.

There cannot a greater judgement befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another, than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but destroys even common sense.

A furious party spirit, when it rages in its full violence, exerts itself in civil war and bloodshed; and when it is under its greatest restraints naturally breaks out in falsehood, detraction,

calumny, and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of good nature, compassion, and humanity.

Plutarch says very finely, "that a man should not allow himself to hate even his enemies, because," says he, "if you indulge this passion in some occasions, it will rise of itself in others; if you hate your enemies, you will contract such a vicious habit of mind, as by degrees will break out upon those who are your friends, or those who are indifferent to you". I might here observe how admirable this preempt of morality (which derives the malignity of hatred from the passion itself, and not from its object) answers to that great rule which was dictated to the world about an hundred years before this philosopher wrote; but instead of that, I shall only take notice, with a real grief of heart, that the minds of many good men among us appears soured with party principles, and alienated from one another in such a manner, as seems to me altogether inconsistent with dictates either of reason or religion. Zeal for a public cause is apt to breed passions in the hearts of virtuous persons, to which the regard of their own private interest would never have betrayed them.

If this party-spirit has so ill an effect on our morals, it has like-wise a very great one upon our judgments. We often hear a poor insipid paper or pamphlet cried up, and sometimes a noble piece depreciated, by those who are of a different principle from the author. One who is actuated by this spirit is almost under an incapacity of discerning either real blemishes or beauties. A man of merit in a different principle is like an object seen in two different mediums, that appears crooked or broken, however straight and entire it may be in itself. For this reason there is scarce a person of any figure in England, who does not go by two contrary characters, as opposite to one another as light and darkness. Knowledge and learning suffer in a particular manner from this strange prejudice, which at present prevails amongst all ranks and degrees in the British nation. As men formerly became eminent in learned societies by their parts and acquisitions, they now distinguish themselves by the warmth and violence with which they espouse their respective parties. Books are valued upon the like considerations. An abusive scurrilous style passes for satire, and a dull scheme of party notions is called fine writing.

There is one piece of sophistry practised by both sides, and that is the taking any scandalous story that has ever been whispered or invented of a private man for a known undoubted truth, and raising suitable speculations upon it. Calumnies that have never been proved, or have been often refuted, are the ordinary postulata of these infamous scribblers, upon which they proceed as upon first principles granted by all men, though in their hearts they know they are false, or at best very doubtful. When they have laid these foundations of scurrility, it is no wonder that their superstructure is every way answerable to them. If this shameless practice of the present age endures much longer, praise and reproach will cease to be motives of action in good men.

There are certain periods of time in all governments when this inhuman spirit prevails. Italy was long torn in pieces by the Guelfes and Gibellines, and France by those who were for and against the league; but it is very unhappy for a man to be born in such a stormy and tempestuous season. It is the restless ambition of artful men that thus breaks a people into factions, and draws several well-meaning persons to their interest by a specious concern for their country. How many honest minds are filled with uncharitable and barbarous notions, out of their zeal for the public good? What cruelties and outrages would they not commit against men of an adverse party, whom they would honour and esteem, if, instead of considering them as they are represented, they knew them as they are? Thus are persons of the greatest probity seduced into shameful errors and prejudices, made bad men even by that noblest of principles, "the love of their country". I cannot here forbear mentioning the famous Spanish proverb, "If there were neither fools nor knaves in the world, all people would be of one mind".

For my own part I could heartily wish that all honest men would enter into an association, for the support of one another against the endeavours of those whom they ought to look upon

as their common enemies, whatsoever side they may belong to. Were there such an honest body of natural forces, we should never see the worst of men in great figures of life because they are useful to a party; nor the best unregarded because they are above practising those methods which would be grateful to their faction. We should then single every criminal out of the herd, and hunt them down, however formidable and overgrown he might appear: on the contrary, we should shelter distressed innocence, and defend virtue, however beset with contempt or ridicule, envy or defamation. In short, we should not any longer regard our fellow-subjects as whigs or Tories, but should make the men of merit our friend, and the villain our enemy.

In my yesterday's paper I proposed, that the honest men of all parties should enter into a kind of association for the defence of one another, and the confusion of their common enemies. As it is designed this neutral body should act with a regard but truth to nothing and equity and divest themselves of the little heats and prepossessions that cleave to parties of all kinds. I have prepared for them the following form of an association, which may express their intentions in the most plain and simple manner.

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed do solemnly declare that we do in our consciences believe two and two make four; and that we shall adjudge any man whatsoever to be our enemy who endeavours to persuade us to the contrary. We are likewise ready to maintain with the hazard of all that is near and dear to us, that six is less than seven in all times and all places; and that ten will not be more three years hence than it is at present. We do so firmly declare, that it is our resolution as long as we live to call black black, and white white. And we shall upon all occasions oppose such persons that upon any day of the year shall call black white, or white black, with the utmost peril of our lives and fortunes".

Were there such a combination of honest men; who without any regard to places would endeavour to extirpate all such furious zealots as would sacrifice one half of their country to the passion and interest of the other; as also such infamous hypocrites, that are for promoting their own advantage under colour of the public good; with all the profligate immoral retainers to each side, that have nothing to recommend them but an implicit submission to their leaders; we should soon see that furious party-spirit extinguished, which may in time expose us to the derision and contempt of all the nations about us.

A member of this society that would thus carefully employ himself in making room for merit, by throwing down the worthless and depraved part of mankind from those conspicuous stations of life to which they have been sometimes advanced, and all this without any regard to his private interest, would be no small benefactor to his country.

I remember to have read in Diodorus Siculus an account of a very active little animal, which I think he calls the ichneumon, that makes it the whole business of his life to break the eggs of the crocodile, which he is always in search after. This instinct is the more remarkable because the ichneumon never feeds upon the eggs he has broken, nor any other way finds his account of them. Were it not for the incessant labours of this industrious animal Egypt, says the historian, would be over-run with crocodiles; for the Egyptians are so far from destroying those pernicious creatures, that they worship them as gods.

If we look into the behaviour of ordinary partizans, we shall find them far from resembling this disinterested animal; and rather acting after the example of the wild Tartars, who are ambitious of destroying a man of the most extraordinary parts and accomplishment as thinking that upon his decease the same talents whatever post they qualified him for, enter of course into his destroyer.

As in the whole train of my speculations, I have endeavoured as much as I am able to extinguish that pernicious spirit of passion and prejudice, which rages with the same violence in all parties, I am still the more desirous of doing some good in this particular, because I

observe that the spirit of party reigns more in the country than in the town. It here contracts a kind of brutality and rustic fierceness, to which men of a polite conversation are wholly strangers. It extends itself even to the return of the bow and that hat; and at the same time that the heads of parties preserve towards one another an outward show of good-breeding, and keep up a perpetual intercourse of civilities, their tools that are dispersed in these outlying parts will not so much as mingle together at a cock-match. This humour fills the country with several periodical meetings of Whig jockies and Tory foxhunters; not to mention the innumerable curses, frowns, and whispers it produces at a quarter-sessions.

I do not know whether I have observed in any of my former papers that my friends Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport are of different principles, the first of them inclined to the landed and the other to the monied interest. This humour is so moderate in each of them, that it proceeds no farther than to an agreeable raillery, which very often diverts the rest of the club. I find however that the knight is a much stronger Tory in the country than in town, which as he has told me in my ear, is absolutely necessary for the keeping up his interest. In all our journey from London to his house we did not so much as wait at a Whig inn; or if by chance the coachman stopped at a wrong place, one of Sir Roger's servants would ride up to his master full speed, and whisper to him that the master of the house was against such an one in the last election. This often betrayed us into hard beds and bad cheer; for we were not so inquisitive about the inn as the inn keeper; and provided our landlord's principles were sound, did not take any notice of the staleness of his provisions. This I found still the more inconvenient, because the better the host was, the worse generally were his accommodations; the fellow knowing very well that those who were his friends would take up with coarse diet and a lodging. For these reasons all the while I was upon the road I dreaded entering into a house of any one that Sir Roger had applauded for an honest man.

Since my stay at Sir Roger's in the country, I daily find more instances of this narrow party-humour. Being upon the bowling green at a neighbouring market-town the other day, (for that is the place where the gentlemen of one side meet once a week) I observed a stranger among them of a better presence and better behaviour than ordinary; but was much surprised, that notwithstanding he was a very fair player, no body would take him up. But upon enquiry, I found, that he was one who had given a disagreeable vote in a former parliament, for which reasons there was not a man upon that bowling green who would have so much correspondence with him as to win his money of him.

Among other instances of this nature, I must not omit one which concerns myself. Will Wimble was the other day relating several strange stories that he had picked up, no body knows where, of a certain great man; and upon my staring at him, as one that was surprised to hear such things in the country, which had never been so much as whispered in the town, Will stopped short in the thread of his discourse, and after dinner asked my friend Sir Roger in his ear if he was sure that I was not a fanatic.

It gives me a serious concern to see such spirit of dissension in the country; not only as it destroys virtue and common sense, and renders us in a manner barbarians towards one another, but as it perpetuates our animosities, widens our breaches, and transmits our present passions and prejudices to our posterity. For my own part, I am sometimes afraid that I discover the seeds of a civil war in these our divisions; and therefore cannot but bewail, as in their first principles, the miseries and calamities of our children.

1.5 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has shown certain political convulsions of the past century which settled down to a party system of Government in England. It has discussed the importance of the periodicals like *The Tatler*, and *The Spectator*. This unit has explained that the periodical essay form was

elevated by Addison and Steele to the level of literary form. It discussed the ease, elegance and the simplicity of Addison and Steele in writing their essays. This unit provided you with the text for detailed reading.

1.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write a few lines about Montaigne's essays?
2. Explain the role played by the Tories and the Whigs?
3. Write about 'The Spectator'

1.7 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

Dr. Johnson defined an essay as "a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular composition".

S C E - 2

The most enduring attraction of The Spectator has been the characterization of Sir Roger de Coverley, the jovial, eccentric, kindly, elderly Tory country squire.

BLOCK - II

UNIT - 2: MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - AN ANALYSIS

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the political controversies that raged in England between the years 1685-1715.
- point out how the essayist pleads for unity and sanity amidst the senseless acrimonies roused by party spirit
- examine the damage caused, according to the author, by party spirit to the virtue of the nation and to the common sense
- discuss the characterization of Sir Rager, the jovial, eccentric, kindly country squire.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Mischiefs of Party spirit - An Analysis (A)
- 2.4 Let's sum up
- 2.5 Sample questions
- 2.6 Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit illustrates the mischief wrought by party spirit. This unit explains that the political and religious antagonism has adversely affected the spirit of men. It discusses the partisan spirit which destroys virtue and common sense and turns people into barbarians.

2.3 MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - AN ANALYSIS (A)

2.3.1

Papers 125 and 126, contributed by Addison to The Spectator on July 24 and 25, 1711 respectively, deal with the evil effects of party politics on the minds of men. They truly reflect the bitter controversies that raged in England from 1685 to 1715 in the political field. The country was split into Tory and Whig supporters and violent politicians were "throwing Whig and Tory at one another". Addison true to his aim of "moral cleansing" pleads for unity and sanity amidst the senseless acrimonies roused by party spirit. To quote Dr. Johnson, the two essays "were published at a time when two parties, loud, restless and violent, were agitating the nation; to minds heated with political contest, they supplied cooler and more inoffensive reflections".

The first essay begins with the narration of an incident from Sir Roger de Coverley's boyhood which illustrates the mischief wrought by party spirit. England had been split in two

factions—the Roundheads and the Cavaliers, the Puritans and the Roman Catholics—by political malice. The anger roused by the innocuous name of a street—St. Ann's—illustrates how political and religious antagonism has adversely affected the minds of men. Sir Roger points out how in the countryside political partisanship had spoiled good relations between the gentlemen, and made them hate each other. It led to the prejudices of the land tax and the destruction of game, i.e., hunting.

Addison goes on to examine the damage caused by Party spirit: first, to the virtue of the nation and secondly, to its common sense. A furious party spirit at its worst leads to Civil War and bloodshed as it had already done once in England. Even in a small measure, it spreads falsehood, abuse and favouritism. It rouses mutual dislike and hatred and destroys goodness, compassion and humanity. Addison quotes a remark of Plutarch how hatred is a vicious habit of mind which affects both a person's enemies and his friends. It is unchristian and inconsistent with the principles of religion or reason. Addison remarks that even virtuous people who in private affairs do not develop hatreds do so when it comes to public affairs.

Self-check exercise - I

What was the purpose of Addison in writing these two essays?

2.3.2

Apart from its deleterious effect on morals, the party spirit does harm even to the judgement of people. The value of books and people is judged by political prejudices. Knowledge and learning suffer consequently. People are either completely black or completely white, depending upon their party affiliations. People gain distinction by supporting this party or that and not by merit. Even the dullest political writing is praised as fine writing and scandal-mongering is termed literature. Untruths and rumours are given wide currency, though known to be false, and are utilized to damage a person's reputation. Addison fears that if such shameful practices persist, praise and blame will lose distinction and would cease to motivate the actions of people.

Addison gives the examples of Italy and France as victims of party spirit. Even the noblest of men were led into shameful errors and prejudices on account of their political involvement. They were guilty of cruelties against their political opponents whom they would have honoured if only they were dispassionate in their judgement. Hence, Addison pleads for a group of neutral men who would rise above party politics and judge people according to their true worth, and not by their usefulness to or eminence in a political party. They should expose criminals, however eminent in politics, and defend the virtuous. In short, they should regard people not as Whigs or Tories but as meritorious or villainous ones. Men of merit are our friends and the villains are our enemies.

In the Second Para on "The Mischiefs of Party Spirit", Addison renews his plea for an association of neutral men composed of honest people from all parties. It should be their task to defend themselves against their common enemies. Nothing but honesty and truth should motivate them. They should free themselves of petty party jealousies and passions. For them, two and two should always be four; six should always be less than seven and the value of ten should not change every two years. Black should be black and white white. Those who try to persuade men to believe otherwise would be enemies of truth and hypocrites, who under the guise of public serve their own interests. They have no merit except unquestioned subservience to their leaders. It shall be the duty of the body of honest men to rid the country of party spirit, which has made England the laughing-stock of nations.

Addison feels that the "pernicious spirit of passion and prejudice" is stronger in the country side than in towns. The brutality and fierceness with which party spirit is manifested comes as a shock to a civilized person. Ordinary courtesies and polite behaviour become affected

by party spirit. Sports and entertainments are organized on party lines. There are thus Whig jockies and Tory fox hunters. Dissensions, quarrels and crises follow every meeting of the quarter-sessions.

Addison remarks that Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport—who are Tory and Whig supporters respectively—retain their mutual esteem because their political partisanship is kept in moderation. Sir Roger, however, becomes a vigorous Tory once he is in the countryside. He informed Addison that this was necessary as he had to keep up his interests as a land-owner. On his journeys from and to London, he avoids the inns kept by a Whig sympathiser and prefers the bad food and accommodation of a Tory inn. Addison found this practice of the old knight very uncomfortable for himself.

During his stay with the Tory Knight in the countryside, Addison personally experienced the evil effects of party spirit. At a bowling-green he found that a gentleman who voted against some bill in a former Parliament was not made to feel welcome by the gathering of a particular side. Such a partisan spirit destroys virtue and commonsense and turns people into barbarians. What is more, it sows the seeds of animosities and transmits them to posterity. Addison wonders whether a Civil War would ensue consequently with much suffering and loss to the future generation.

Self-check exercise - 2

What, according to Addison is the duty of honest men?

2.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed the evils of partisan spirit. It also pointed out how on the countryside too this spirit has sown the seeds of evil. This unit has explained how Addison aimed these essays to plead for good sense on the part of the honest men who should put forth their efforts to their country of party spirit. This unit has explained Addison's desire to have a group of men—neutral men who would rise above party politics and judge people according to their true worth.

2.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What, according to Addison, is the purpose of having an association of neutral men drawn from all parties.
2. How did Italy and France suffer as Victims of party spirit?
3. How is the countryside afflicted with partisan spirit?

2.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

The purpose of Addison was to plead for unity and sanity between the two contending parties and to supply cooler and more inoffensive reflections to minds heated with political contest.

S C E - 2

According to Addison, the duty of honest men is to rid the country of the party spirit, which has made England the laughing stock of nations.

BLOCK - II

UNIT 3: MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - AN ANALYSIS - B

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss Addison as a first-rate and original journalist
- Point out the relevance of his essays to the modern reader
- Appreciate the reflective, appealing and edifying nature of his essays.

3.1 CONTENTS

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Contents

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Mischiefs of party spirit. An Analysis - B

3.4 Let's sum up

3.5 Sample questions

3.6 Answers to self-check exercises

3.7 Further reading

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the skill and artistic abilities of Addison as an essayist. It points out the moral force and social utility of his reflections in the form of essays. It explains how Joseph Addison introduced periodical essay into the English literature in the 18th century. It also throws light on the fact that Addison, apart from being a famous writer, was an MP and also held important positions. This unit discusses in detail the ideas of Addison regarding political parties and partisan spirit.

3.3 MISCHIEFS OF PARTY SPIRIT - AN ANALYSIS - B

3.3.1

Addison is one of the prose writers regarded as great in English literature. That is a popular estimate of him for which Macaulay's praise of him in the nineteenth century is responsible. Macaulay's praise is good enough, but it doesn't ring true; rather it sounds like a rhetorician's homage to a great statesman. All the same, Addison cannot be ignored for he is a first rate, original journalist. His writings are sincere and excellent. He was a man of character discharging his public duties conscientiously. Although his writings are topical they carry a value for us by their historical importance of the author's purpose. He is not a penetrating author of the first order. When we call him a journalist, whatever praise he deserves, we point out his limitations: of course, he is very different from any modern journalist in many ways, as

he is public-spirited, as he could rise above crude partisanship, and more important, as he is conscious of humane values by his learning. He could speak so well to the point in his writings that their authority was felt by his contemporaries. So being accepted by his contemporaries is what distinguishes his work, and praise is due to him on account of this achievement. He established a way of speaking to the public, which is reflective, appealing, and edifying, but which is not taxing.

We apply 'style' to his work to designate his literary merits of originality and naturalness in sentence construction. We find the moral force and social utility of his reflections-stated according to the norms of the Augustan age-in epigrammatic, humorous and satirical style with the aim of entertaining and instructing the reader not disturbingly but pleasantly. He is not one of those profound writers whose work could have the great force of changing the condition of life but he is an author of personal distinction and charm, and of talent and originality.

Addison is famous, today, for his contributions to the Spectator which he had run in collaboration with his friend Steele-in the Augustan age after the Restoration. It was the most successful journal in his times, and has been read ever since with interest and benefit more often than any other journal. And it has acquired a classic status with anthologists, while its prose is exhibited as the model for any learner. It may not deserve the exaggerated reputation it enjoys, but it is worth one's attention. This journal has touched on several topics suggesting to the reader what is in place and what is out of place. The eighteenth century popular level is very different from the popular level today; it is a level at which serious questions can be discussed engagingly, and serious learning can be made popular without any degradation in spirit, it is Addison's level of writing in the Spectator. At this level, he served a very important purpose of educating the public as a man of public spirit rather than as a partisan, though he belongs to the Whig party. There are certain broad principles, which can be termed liberal and bourgeois, that adorn his work, giving it the humane appeal it has. This humane appeal is to the standard sentiments and ideas of the times regarding human virtues and vices. The author's eye is on the interest the reader is capable of taking in the ridiculous, the perverse the out-of-the ordinary sides of life. The Spectator is written in the confident tone of personal letter, and it captures the readers' attention as a collaborative enterprise. Like Swift Addison does not distance himself from his readers by any unpleasantness of suggestions or the offence of insinuation to them. The Spectator is always in a 'cordial' relation to its readers; it is a model of journalistic success. Of course, it lacks the punch of an energetic mind and the penetrating thought of intellect. What we can learn from him is that great possibilities are opened up for using language in the communication of sentiments and ideas, and that journalism can be a good affair or a sinister one, as must be evident in our times.

Self-check exercise - 1

What are the two literary merits that we appreciate in Addison's style?

3.3.2

England in Addison's time was very different from the England of the civil wars; it was a settled England of political stability, the zeal for science after the Foundation of the Royal Academy (1666), and commercial prosperity; of civil society with the upper classes living 'fashionable life'. The two main parties were formed; the Tories and the Whigs which began to dominate the public life of sentiments and opinions. An English man was bound to be a partisan either to the one or to the other. The spirit of this party promoted a war of opinions, scurrilous use of language in the mutual accusations, and satirical mode of attack in literature. The period beginning with Dryden (Restoration) and ending with Dr. Johnson is the best period of relative peace in England, when no first-rate mind thought in terms of changing the conditions of life. One can say that between one thinking man and another thinking man there was only a marginal

difference, and not an irreconcilable opposition. Wherever a literary work was profound it was profound in the knowledge of human vices and virtues exhibited.

Addison was not only an author who wrote dramas and poetry, although he was famous, being remembered for this achievements in the Spectator writings, but also he was an M.P., and held several high positions, which made him rich. He also held a Fellowship in Oxford University; he was a scholar, a public figure, and a writer of immense popularity; and was a man of pleasant temper and of balanced mind. The 18th century found its best type in him, who represented those virtues and perfections which the upper classes coveted. Then only the upper classes counted, and naturally any appeal must be to their sentiments and ideas. The upper classes were responsible, being leaders of higher life and representing the values of learning, good breeding, and cultivated sensibility, unlike the modern upper classes. The upper class code of behaviour has cultural and moral standards, which informs Addison's writings: it is the code of manners to which belong the questions of what is right, what is proper, what is elegant, what is dull, and so on. His essays in Spectator are never dull but always lively and sparkling with evocative scenes and telling anecdotes. They smack of the coffee house conversation, which had been carried out in the newly set up coffee houses, and therefore in parts, his writings appear trivial but the liveliness of his work is attractive to us.

The two essays prescribed for II Year B.A. Degree (English) of the A.P.O.U. are very characteristically Addisonian; containing humorous anecdotes and humane appeal, and Sir Roger's anecdote illustrating the party spirit which divides one from another in bitter hatred. Party spirit is a danger to public life, by its division, keeping one another strangers. Addison deplores its consequences to the nation, but he sees in it human vice at work rather than the opposition of interest, and talks of it deplorably as well as convincingly as if it can be removed, because it is a human vice. The appeal against vices could be effective, and so, his appeal is effective. Look how he paints it.

"A furious party spirit, when it rages in its full violence, expresses itself in civil war and bloodshed; and when it is under the greatest restraints naturally breaks out in falsehood, detraction, calumny and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of good nature, compassion and humanity".

This quote is as good an example of his writing as any Party spirit unrestrained could make for a civil war, and restrained, it breaks out into acrimonious abuse of each other and it affects the administration with the consequences of the bureaucracy being partial to its interest. A nation in party spirit is a nation torn into pieces by hatred and dispute. Doesn't this party spirit remove all the springs of good nature, sympathy and humanity? - it does indeed.

Self-check exercise - 2

What does Addison appeal against in these two essays and why?

3.3.3

Note the irresistible moral appeal of the last sentence; but it is the appeal of sentiment more pleasing to the reader than changing him. Yes, party spirit cannot be removed as a vice; that is how Addison looks upon it. But on the other hand we know that it is not only a vice; but a contradiction between the two parties very much related to the hostility between them. Addison goes wrong in separating the party spirit as a human vice from the deep hostility between them, instead of dealing with the hostility he deals with party spirit as a vice. Lack of depth, and verbiage betray the passage as journalism. But, again, it is a journalism of sincere wish to cause the readers to understand their mind dominated by the party spirit. The effect is that the readers find exhortation acceptable but would remain unchanged, because they are unchangeable in this regard.

Here is another statement making a different point typical of the 18th century mind and also an appeal of sentiment similar to the one we have already noticed.

".....that the minds of many good men among us appear soured with party principles, and alienated from one another in such a manner, as seems to me altogether inconsistent with the dictates either of reason or religion. Zeal for a public cause apt to breed passions in the hearts of virtuous persons, to which the regard of their own private interest would never have betrayed them".

The appeal of first sentence to 'reason or religion' carries the spirit of the 18th century. Reason gets more importance than religion 'Religion' is too holy to be placed alongside of 'reason'. Addison could very well be unconscious of it. It is a betraying statement. Reason is the standard and the dissolvent of human ills or errors. There is a slight implied to religion as it gets a second place, suggesting spiritlessness in the sentiment and idea expressed. The second sentence is a surprise for us: 'Zeal' is derogatory, and 'public cause' hardly gets the emphasis we are accustomed to give to it. The sentence is spoiled by the adjective 'virtuous', but it is required for stronger appeal. Here, 'private interest', far from being denounced, is on the other hand, recommended, 'Zeal for public cause' is condemned far misleading 'Virtuous men'. We must remember that the 18th century social norms would look down upon emotional outbursts, excessive demonstration of sentiment or in fact, any bit of violence in expressing one's feeling or emotions. By this norm zeal or enthusiasm for the 18th century mind is almost close to distemper. One could easily earn contempt by displaying them.

Party spirit can make its victims self-blind. Owing to its fairness, decency and sanctities the human relation might disappear. Talent and greatness would go unrecognised when every one is blind with party spirit. When mind is warned by this partisan spirit, knowledge and learning are bound to be impure. One conceives, thinks, and looks at things with this spirit, and one becomes empty of humanity. When party spirit is prevalent, no one however good, can escape it, one has to take it on, as if unavoidable. How does Addison propose to avert the consequences of the party spirit? He answers like a journalist

"For my own part I could heartily wish that all honest men would enter into an association, for the support of one another against the endeavours of those whom they ought to look upon as their common enemies, whatever side they may belong to".

A clear limitation of what is possible in such a writing cannot be better shown. This easy way of writing might please the reader but it has no strength to offer. In the same vein he ends this essay.

"In short, we should not any longer regard our fellow-subjects as Whigs or Tories, but should make the man of merit our friend, and the Villain our enemy".

It is too large a gesture to be put into more vigorous and effective English. If one ought to read him for the good things in his writings, one ought to know his limitations as well. The popular estimate, that his prose is a model to any learner to work upon in order to improve his English, must be seen as untruthful:

Self-check exercise - 3

What happens when every one is blind with party spirit?

3.3.4

The second essay continues the argument against the party spirit and its disastrous consequences, by offering a programme of action. There is something facetious about the programme of binding one another to stick to truth and to get rid of partisan dangers. Here what is intended is to show how easily Addison works out a programme for the removal of party spirit without realising how ineffective it is. In this essay self-seekers under the cover of public cause, are exposed and attacked. Addison holds that in the country the party spirit is stronger and more dangerous than in the town saying that:

"It (the party spirit) contracts a kind of brutality and rustic fierceness, to which men of polite conversation are wholly strangers".

There could be some truth in such a representation but it is not a balanced statement. The country would not be interested in politics if the town is not interested in politics; however polite the town people might be, they would be affected by party spirit no less than the rural people are. Perhaps it is not surprising to find that Addison endorses the party spirit of the kind he has; he says, quite in tune with his liberal mind of humane concerns.

"I do not know whether I have observed in any of my former papers that my friends Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport are of different principles, the first of them inclined to the landed, and the other to the moneyed interest. This however, is so moderate in each of them, that it proceeds no farther than to an agreeable raillery, which very often diverts the rest of the club".

Well, Addison would not mind a weaker sort of party spirit in the upper class, as it leads no farther than 'to an agreeable reality', and offers entertainment, may be, by way of gossip!

Self-check exercise - 4

What did Addison do in his second essay?

3.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed certain ideas of Addison which are relevant even to-day and certain ideas which are not practically possible. It has also pointed out certain contradictions in the sentences of Addison. It has discussed the limitations of the essayist. It has also shown that some essays of Addison are pleasant to read. Here in the unit it has been observed that the essayist entertains the readers by the reports of Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport, the two important characters invented by him.

3.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Why are these two essays of Addison specially prescribed for your study?
2. What are the evils of party spirit as envisaged by Addison?
3. What is the speciality of the 18th century social norms?

3.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

The two literary merits we appreciate in Addison's style are his originality and naturalness in sentence construction.

S C E - 2

In these two essays Addison appeals against party spirit as it is a vice and it is a danger to public life.

S C E - 3

When every one is blind with party spirit talent and greatness would go unrecognised.

S C E - 4

Addison in his second essay continued his argument against the party spirit and its disastrous consequences and also offered a programme of action.

3.7 FURTHER READING

Try to read some other essays of Joseph Addison to know more about the author and his skill as an essayist.

BLOCK III CHARLES LAMB

Block three comprises of two units

- Unit 1** Charles Lamb as an essayist, gives an introduction to the personal essay and to Charles Lamb. It provides the text of the essay, Old China, prescribed for detailed study along with the glossary. It discusses the general theme of Lamb's essays.
- Unit 2** Old China - An Analysis-gives a detailed explanation of the important passages of the essay. It explains the way Lamb draws this essay upon his personal experiences. Lamb's life and philosophy's brought out in this unit.

BLOCK - III OLD CHINA

UNIT - I: CHARLES LAMB AS AN ESSAYIST

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the general themes of Lamb's essays
- explain that Lamb loved the prose of the 17th century more than that of the 18th century
- see the point that Lamb was the best critic of his age
- justify the statement that Lamb was the master of many harmonies.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Charles Lamb as an essayist
- 1.4 Old China - Text
- 1.5 Old China - Glossary
- 1.6 Let's sum up
- 1.7 Sample questions
- 1.8 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses Lamb as a great essayist. It talks of his essays on a variety of subjects where sometimes the title rarely gives a clue to the contents. This unit shows that Lamb's essays are full of reminiscences, and are based on his own experiences. This unit shows that Lamb considers himself as one among the crowd sharing its most ordinary pleasures and sorrows.

1.3 CHARLES LAMB AS AN ESSAYIST

1.3.1

Charles Lamb is considered to be an influential essayist and autobiographer and master of the 'personal essay'. Many of his friends from Hazlitt to De Quincey wrote well of him. His literary output was not large, though he attempted various forms of writings – verse, tales, drama, criticism and the essay. His best work, and by which he is best known, however, is found in his essays, written under the pen name of 'Elia'. They first appeared in the **London Magazine** and were afterwards published in two volumes, **The Essays of Elia** (1823) and **The Last Essays of Elia** (1833).

Lamb told his publisher John Taylor that he adopted the name Elia out of regard for the feelings of his brother John (then a clerk in the South Sea House) who was annoyed by trifles. The original Elia was an Italian with a literary bent of mind whom Lamb remembered as a clerk in the service of the company. He died almost at about the time when Lamb borrowed his name for these essays. They were an immediate success. Lamb was no new writer and the authorship soon became known; it was an open secret.

There are fifty four essays in these volumes. They are on a variety of subjects and the title rarely gives a clue to the contents. For example, in 'Old China' he writes about contentment in human life and not entirely about old China. His essays are subjective in the sense that they deal largely with his responses to life and the people in his life. Many of the essays are based upon his own experiences. They are full of reminiscences. Hence his essays may be classified as 'personal essays'. His style is markedly individual. He uses his own impressions and recollections as the text for his work, but without any trace of egotism or self assertion. He considers himself as one among the crowd sharing its most ordinary pleasures and sorrows.

He has an eye for the ridiculous and the pathetic in human nature. But the most striking quality of his essays is humour. The humour of Elia is an admixture of tenderness and playfulness, his essays are a clever mixture of fact and fiction. He finds pleasure in dazzling the readers with illusions.

Lamb's essays form his most delightful work which reflects his personality that shuns ostentatiousness and strong sensations. His work cannot be separated from the circumstances in which he has written. His essays seem to be shaped by the impulses of the moment and by a lively remembrance of the past. His sympathy is boundless and pervades his style. His native place London, is to him what the Lake District is to Wordsworth. His reminiscences of his life with sister Mary in Pentonville are recorded in the essay, 'Old China'. The little luxuries afforded by a meagre income, the holiday walks to Potter's Bar, Wilkham and Enfield, the folio Beaumont and Fletcher carried home one Saturday night from Covent Garden, the buying of the print from Leonardo which Lamb called 'Lady Blaych', the visits to the sitting gallery of the theatre are some of the recollections figuring in this essay.

Self-check exercise - 1

Who is the original Elia and when did Lamb borrow his name for his own essays?

13.2

The London Magazine of 1820 carried his essay, the 'South Sea House' the first of the miscellaneous essays which bore the signature, Elia. From October 1820 to the end of 1823 Elia was a regular contributor to this brilliant but short lived journal. The wide sympathy, the blending of tears and laughter, the eccentricity of Elia added charm to his style. His essays are series of exquisite sketches presented in a prose the expressiveness of which can never be surpassed. He found himself 'the hero of the London Magazine'. 'How I like to be liked !' he cried. A large portion of his biography indeed, can be written from the material provided by the essays. "His subject was humanity at large but, in himself he saw its microcosm".

His writing is simple but his style is never plain, since it is fashioned to sustain his person; and as Elia is wayward and old fashioned, his style abounds in echoes and archaisms, ellipses and nuances, periphrases and calculated familiarities. Archaisms are essential to his style, although at times they are overdone.

Lamb loved the prose of the 17th Century more than that of 18th century, he was particularly drawn to Sterne who draw inspiration from the 'association of ideas'. The persona

of Elia is less prominent in the *Last Essays* most of which are inferior to their predecessors with the exception of 'The Superannuated Man' which served as a fitting epilogue to an incomparable series of essays. They have always, as their deepest and truest theme, the character of Elia himself.

Some critics, because of the private character of his work, are of the opinion that Lamb's essays 'form no integral part of the history of English Literature'.

For instance, E.V. Lucas says that the essays of Elia are 'perhaps as easily dispensed with as any work of fancy and imagination in the language'. But George Gordon does not subscribe to this view. He considers Lamb the best critic of his age, though living privately. Too much has been made of the idiosyncracies of Lamb's work and too little attention is paid to what is excellent in it. Elia is not all fantastic. It was not of his essays that he was thinking when he declared his intention to cut the age and write 'For Antiquity'. When he wishes to do so, he writes like the man of his time. There are many passages in Elia written in the very idiom of the day. "Lamb was the master of many harmonies," and was undoubtedly the most delightful, the most provocative, the most witty and sensible of men. "Lamb has the very soul of an Antiquarian as this implies a reflecting humanity." He is, above all a very lovable writer.

Self-check exercise - 2

What is the opinion of George Gordon about Lamb?

1.4 OLD CHINA - TEXT

I have an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when China jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then - why should I now have? - to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective - a china teacup.

I like to see my old friends - whom distance cannot diminish - figuring up on the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still - for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, - which the decorous artist, to present absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

He is a young and curtly Mandarin, handling tea to a lady from a salver two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another - for likeness is identity on teacups - is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the higher side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead - a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream.

Farther on - if far or near can be predicated of their world - see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here - a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive - so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon) some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extra-ordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort-when a passing sentiment seemed to overshadow the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich, I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state" -so she was pleased to ramble on,- "in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it is used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O !) how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!)-we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and two weigh the *for and against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it."

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread bare-and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o' clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late-and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures-and when you lugged it home wishing it were twice as cumbersome-and when you presented it to me-and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (collating you called it)-and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till day-break-was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit - your old co beau-four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen-or sixteen shillings was it? - a great affair we thought it then-which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now."

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Leonardo, which we christened the 'Lady Blanch': when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money and looked again at the picture-was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's and buy a wilderness of Leonardos. Yet do you?"

"Then do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar and Waltham, when we had a holyday-holydays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich-and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad-and how you would pry about at noon-tide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store-only paying for the ale that you must call for-and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth-and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went afishing-and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us-but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now,-when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom, moreover, we ride part of the way-and go into a fine inn,

and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.”

You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the *Battle of Hexham*, and the *Surrender of Calais*, and *Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood*—when we squeezed out our shillings a piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered if where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with *Rosalind in Arden*, or with *Viola at the Court of Illyria*? You used to say, that the Gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation, than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough,—but there was still a law of civility to woman recognised to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty”.

“There was pleasure in eating strawberries before they become quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologises and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

“I know what you are going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet—and much ado we used to have every *Thirty-first Night of December* to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now) we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with ‘lusty brimmers’ (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton* as you called him), we used to welcome in the ‘coming guest’. Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us.”

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of a poor—hundred pounds a year. “It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin.

I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other if we had always and the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straighten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride where we formerly walked; live better, and lie softer—and shall be wise to do so—than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a-day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment instead of this quite argument by our well-carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious **Thank God we are safe**, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Croesus had, or the great Jew R—is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonnaish chit of a lady in that very blue summerhouse.”

1.5 OLD CHINA-GLOSSARY

partiality	a special liking
china-closet	a cupboard, often with glass doors, where crockery is stored or shown
picture gallery	a private room or hall where paintings or other works of art are shown
to be conscious of	to know, to understand, to see with the mind
repugnance	a feeling of strong dislike
azure - tintured	bright-blue coloured
grotesque	(of forms of art) containing figures of men, animals, plants, etc., of unusual size and shape.
uncircumscribed	not limited
perspective	the art drawing solid objects on a flat surface so that they give a natural effect; have a view, especially one stretching far into the distance.
diminish	to cause to become or seem smaller
optic	sense of sight
terra firma	(Latin) dryland, firm ground
decorous	pleasant
absurdity	funny appearance
sandal	a light shoe with a flat bottom and bands to hold it on the foot

mandarin	a member of any one of 9 ranks of officials under the Chinese Empire
Salver	fine metal tray for serving food, drink, etc.
set off	to cause
moor	to fasten (a ship, boat, etc.)
hitherside	this side
dainty	delicate
mince	to walk taking short steps
incidence	the rate of happening
infallibly	without fail
mead	a plant with common type of flower; grassland.
predicted	foretold
pagoda	a temple (Buddhist) built on several floors or levels
hays or the hay	an old country dance
couchant	lying down with the head raised
Co-extensive	live together in peace with one another
lucid	bright (Old use)
Cathay	China
My cousin	Mary Lamb (named Bridget in the Essay)
Hyson	(from the Chinese), a kind of green tea
Speciosa miracula	'dazzling miracle' or 'beautiful marvels' from the Latin poet Horace: <i>Ars Poetica</i> 1.144
trifle	a thing of slight importance
sentiment	a tender or fine feeling of imaginative remembrance of the past
over-shade	to throw a shadow over
summer clouds	melancholy thoughts
ramble on	talk continuously in disordered and wandering way
triumph	the joy or satisfaction caused by success
covet	desire eagerly to possess something
ado	anxious activity, trouble or fuss
hit upon	to find by lucky chance
feel the money	know the value of the money
thread-bare	(of clothes) worn out after much use
folio-Beaumont and Fletcher	The first collected edition of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, published in 1647. Lamb bought it in 1799. It is now in the British Museum. It contains

	marginal notes by Lamb and Coleridge and passages marked for copying.
Barker's	shop of an old Book-seller
taper	a very thin candle
light out	to discover or find (something)
relic	something old that reminds one of the past
Lug	to carry with great effort
Cumbersome	heavy and awkward to carry
explore	to examine carefully
collate	to arrange (the sheets of especially a book) in the proper order.
finical	too delicate and fussy about detail
vanity	the quality or state of being too proud of oneself or one's appearance
flaunt	(derogatory) to show for public admiration
over-worn	very much used and old
corbeau	a dark green verging on black
lavish	to spend freely or generously
Leonardo	Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1512), the great Italian artist
christen	give a name to a person
Colnaghi	Jacob Colnaghi, print-dealer, a Milanese by birth. The premises of the firm were in Pall Mall East.
wilderness	a large number of (see the Merchant Venice, III. i.106)
day's fare	food for the day
savoury	pleasant in taste without sugar
cold lamb	meat cooked but not hot
Pry about	inquire about
noon-tide	middle of the day
speculate	to think (about a matter) without facts that would lead to a firm result.
Izaak Walton	the author of The Compleat Angler
Lea	name of a river
Trout-Hall	one of the inns Piscator frequents
debating	discussing
relish	enjoy something, especially food.
pit	the seats at the back of the ground floor of a theatre, behind the stalls.

Battle of Haxham, Surrender of Calais	Historical Plays by George Colman the Younger (1762-1836)
Bannister	John (1760-1846), an actor of comic parts in Drury Lane theatre. His acting is noticed in the Essay 'On some of the Old Actors'
Mrs. Bland	Maria Theresa (1769-1838), a singer attached to Drury Lane from 1782 to 1824. She acted with Bannister.
The Children in the Wood	a musical play (by Thomas Morton, produced at the Haymarket in 1793).
Rosalind	heroine in Shakespeare's 'As You Like It'.
Viola	heroine in Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night'
chasm	big gap
treat	something that gives pleasure, joy or delight
dainty	an especially nice piece of food-small and sweet, like a little cake
make much of oneself	(here) to be content with what one has, to derive pleasure in simple things.
Veriest	Very, Very
exceedings	the occasion when one has spent money more than one can afford to
contrive	to plan or make in a clever or skillful way.
betwixt	between
lusty brimmers	from Charles Cotton's lines—'To the New Year' Then let us welcome the new guest with lusty brimmers of the best (with cups of the best wine which are filled to the top)

Charles Cotton (1630-87), of Stratfordshire was a good writer and excellent fisherman, and wrote a continuation of Walton's Compleat Angler. He was a great favourite of Lamb's.

reckoning	the act of calculating
rhetorical vein	speaking or writing so as to persuade people effectively
shake the superflux	see King Lear (III. iii. 37)
dilation	straighten
rabble	a disordered crowd of noisy people, the common people
scrambler	One who moves up or climbs up eagerly for the best seat
fathom line	a nautical measure, 6 feet, for measuring depth

Croesus	an ancient King of Lydia in Asia Minor who was reputed to be the wealthiest man in the world
the great Jew R	Nathan Meyer Rothschild (1777-1863) member of a banking family who established a branch of his business in London in 1805 as contractor of state loans.
bed tester	a canopy over a bed
Madonnaish	like Madonna-the picture or figure of Mary, the mother of Christ

1.6 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed Lamb as an influential essayist, autobiographer and master of the personal essay. This unit has explained the salient points in Lamb's essays and the style he had adopted. This unit has also provided you with the text: Old China with the necessary glossary.

1.7 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What do you know about Lamb's literary style?
2. Who is Bridget in the essay and what do you know of her?
3. What do you know about 'The Children in the Wood' as mentioned in the essay?

1.8 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

SCE - 1

The original Elia was an Italian with a literary bent of mind. Lamb remembered him as a clerk in the South - Sea House and borrowed his name for his essays when Elia died.

SCE - 2

George Gordon considers Lamb the best critic of his age, though living privately. He feels that more attention was paid to the idiosyncracies of his work than to the excellence of it.

BLOCK - III

UNIT - 2: OLD CHINA - AN ANALYSIS

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss that this essay expresses the philosophy of contentment
- recognize that, like the other essays, this essay draws upon Lamb's personal experiences
- have a thorough knowledge of what the feelings and ideas of Lamb are about life and its philosophy

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Old China - An Analysis
- 2.4 Let's sum up
- 2.5 Sample questions
- 2.6 Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the essay extensively. This unit gives you an insight into the philosophy of the author towards life and things. It talks about the philosophy of contentment. It shows that the theme of the essay is drawn from Lamb's personal experiences.

2.3 OLD CHINA - AN ANALYSIS

This essay was first published in The London Magazine, March 1823, and then in the collection, The Last Essays of Elia, 1833. The theme of the essay is not really 'Old China' but the philosophy of contentment, and like the other essays, it draws upon Lamb's personal experiences.

Charles Lamb (Elia of the Essay) says that he has a special liking for crockery made of a special type of fine clay or China clay. When he visits a rich man's house he likes to see his china closet-cupboard with fine crockery and also his picture gallery- the room where he keeps paintings and other objects of art. He does not know why he has such an interest but he is sure that every person has an interest in something or the other which is natural for human beings and which cannot be thought of as artificially developed. Lamb remembers the first play he had witnessed and the first exhibition he had gone to see. But he fails to recollect when exactly he started liking fine crockery.

He has never, in his childhood, disliked the figures of men and women in blue colour on the tea-cups. So, even when he has grown into a man he continues to like them.

Even if his friends (the figures on the China tea cups) are away from him he can visualize them with the help of his mental eye. He can see them appear 'in the air' (in his mind) although on the tea cup they are supposed to be on the firm ground which the artist has painted in a deeper blue colour, under their feet.

Lamb says that he loves men with feminine faces and women with still more feminine ones.

He sees the picture of a young and polite Mandarin serving tea to a lady from a tray. He imagines that the same lady (because she looks like the first one) is then going to step into a little fairy boat and step out on the flowery land on the other side of the stream which is strangely painted on the tea-cup.

A little farther away if one imagines the distances on a China tea-pot, one can see horses, trees, pagodas and country girls dancing. There is a picture of a cow and rabbit lying down with their heads up. Lamb says that the colour on the jar makes one feel that it is the clear atmosphere of China.

Lamb says that he was sitting with his sister Mary (referred to as cousin Bridget in the Essay) the previous evening and having green tea (Hyslop). He was pointing out to her the beautiful and marvellous figures on the new tea-set newly bought and used for the first time. He happened to remark then that they were fortunate in being able to buy such things as pleased their eyes. But he observes melancholy thoughts hovering on Bridget's face when she looks at him.

She begins to recollect the good old days when they were poor but well content. She does not want to be poor but she feels that both of them were happy when they had to struggle to find money for the things they wanted. In the olden days if they could buy a thing it would be a great triumph for them. If they had wanted to buy a thing they had to find ways and means to cut down their expenses on other items and scrape money, after long discussions on the necessity of buying such a thing. They knew the value of the money that they spent.

Mary reminds him that he had to wear an old brown suit much longer than he should, so that, they could save fifteen or sixteen shillings to buy the first collected edition of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher from Barker's shop in Covent Garden. She recollects the pleasant experience when he brought the folio home one Saturday night and she sat till late in the night arranging and pasting its loose sheets so as to put them in order. She insists that there was pleasure in such experiences though they were poor then. Now her brother can buy new clothes and maintain them very neatly. He can buy new books. She complains that he no longer brings home for her any nice old things.

She reminds him of the print of a picture by Leonardo which he bought for a few shillings. They named it 'Lady Blanch'. The pleasure they had derived from buying something when they were poor is not there with them when they could afford to buy any number of prints from the print-dealer – Paul Colnaghi.

Self-check exercise - 1

What do you know about Colnaghi?

She reminds him of their long and pleasant walks of Enfield, Potter's Bar and Waltham whenever they had a holiday. Both used to carry their day's food-cold meat and salad-and he would look for a decent house where they could have some ale on payment and eat their own food. They always wished that they would come across a good hostess on such occasions. They thought of the hostesses described by Izak Walton in his, *The Complete Angler*. They thought of Piscator the Chief character in the book who visited the inn 'Trout Hall' frequently. They did not feel jealous of Piscator and his life but they ate their simple food with great satisfaction. Though they are rich now they do not enjoy their holiday half as much as they used to do when they were struggling to make both ends meet. Now they can go to any good inn and order the best food there. But she feels that they enjoyed themselves better in the good old days than now when they were received by the hostesses who were honest and good. The rich dinners they now eat do not please her as much as they should. Here again she observes that a person can be contented even with meagre means.

She recollects their enjoyment at watching a play in the Pit and the pleasure they derived when they saw the plays by George Colman. They were delighted seeing Bannister, the comic actor, and Mrs. Bland, the singer (both actors of Drury Lane Theatre) in the musical play - 'The Children in the Wood' by Thomas Morton. They used to be very economical and they saved some shillings for that pleasure. They used to occupy one shilling gallery seats. They did not care for comfort, as they were fully engrossed in the different scenes they saw; for example, Rosalind in Arden and Viola in the Court of Illyria. Lamb used to say that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially but now he feels that he cannot sit in the gallery at all if he has to enjoy a play. The staircase was difficult to climb up, the crowd was very ordinary, yet everyone was civil to a lady. To settle down in a comfortable seat and watch the play had appeared to be a great achievement to them in the old days. Today they are rich, and can just pay the money and walk into a theatre. But now, she does not find the pleasure of the old days.

When they were poor they had enjoyed eating strawberries because they were expensive and difficult to buy. Their first dish of peas, though a bit expensive, was their special enjoyment during those days. But now to have something above their means would be selfish because they have all the necessities of life. To be able to get a thing which the poor could not get was a treat in those days. Both shared the blame if they happened to take to some cheap luxury. Mary does not see anything wrong in such people making much of themselves. She is of the opinion that only the people just above poverty can make much of themselves.

Self-check exercise-2

Why did the narrator in the essay enjoy eating strawberries when he was poor?

Mary goes on recounting the joys of their past. She says that they used to have fun on every New Year's Eve. They used to calculate how much they spent in excess that year and how they had spent it. Then they used to take a decision to be frugal in the coming year. They used to decide which items they could cut their expenses on to compensate for the extra expenditure in the previous year. They used to welcome the New Year as a welcome guest. Lamb used to quote the lines from Charles Cotton's poem, 'To the New Year'— 'Then let us welcome the new guest, with lusty brimmers of the best'. But now Mary says that they do not bother about either the accounts of the Old Year or hope to do better in the New Year.

Lamb will patiently hear what Mary has to say. He knows that his sister does not usually speak much but when she gets into the mood it is difficult to interrupt her. He wonders how

his sister can think of themselves being wealthy now as they have only a hundred pounds a year. He argues that it is true that they were happy when they were poorer, but then they were also younger. If they do not spend according to their means they cannot live well. It is true that they had to struggle through life from their childhood. This struggle itself had brought the brother and sister closer to each other. Lamb says that if they had everything they needed, as they have now according to Mary, they would not have grown as affectionate towards each other as they are. Now they lead a comparatively easy life because the times have changed, but then they are no longer young enough to struggle with poverty and be cheerful in spite of the troubles in life. He does not deny the charm of the good old days. But he is practical enough to see that those days will not return and that they are not young enough to enjoy a thirty mile walk as they did in their youth. They cannot dream of getting back those days when they enjoyed a play sitting in the one shilling gallery. They cannot expect Bannister and Mrs. Bland to appear on the stage young again. To wish for a such thing would be day-dreaming. Now they are sitting comfortably on the sofa enjoying the warmth of the fire resting their feet on the carpeted floor. Lamb wonders whether both of them can now climb up the inconvenient staircase to the Pit and enjoy the play as they did before. He tells her that even if he is prepared to spend more money than Croesus (the wealthiest king of Lydia) and Nathan Meyer Rothschild (member of a banking family) he cannot buy back the youthful spirits and the joys of that age. He draws Mary's attention back to the figures on the new Chinaware (crockery) and the beautiful and small figures of Chinese men and women on them. He points out to a little Chinese Waiter holding an umbrella over the head of a small lady who looks a little like Madonna. Lamb is fond of Chinese crockery and he admires the art in blue on it.

The essay, "Old China," reads like a fireside chat of a brother with his sister bound by ties of blood and affection. Their dialogue brings out their respective attitudes to life. The brother (the 'I' in the essay) is concerned with the present rather than with the past which cannot be got back, while his sister (Bridget in the essay) in a reminiscent mood dwells on the past in contrast to which the present seems to be drab to her. But the issue is not one of 'realism versus nostalgia', but of recognition of what the passage of time spells, an issue that has engaged the attention of Wordsworth and other Romantic poets.

Self-check exercise - 3

Who are Mr. Bannister and Mrs. Bland mentioned in the essay?

2.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has explained the meaning of the essay 'Old China'. It has pointed out that this essay is not about the China crockery but is about the philosophy of contentment in one's life. This unit has thrown light on personal experiences of the essayist and his tender feelings towards life.

2.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What do you know about Lamb's style?
2. What is this essay 'Old China' about?
3. Why does the narrator say that he was happier when he was poor?

2.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

Paul Colnaghi was a dealer in prints of famous paintings. He was a Milanese by birth. His firm was in Pall Mall East.

S C E - 2

The narrator in the essay said that he enjoyed eating strawberries when he was poor because they were expensive and difficult to buy.

S C E - 3

John Bannister (1769-1838) was an actor of comic parts in Drury Lane Theatre. We can read more of his action in Lamb's essay "On Some of the Old Actors".

Mrs. Bland was Maria Theresa who was a singer attached to Drury Lane Theatre. She acted with Bannister.

Ms.V.Komala.

BRAOU

BLOCK - IV MATTHEW ARNOLD

Block Four consists of two units

Unit 1 : Sweetness and Light from Matthew Arnold's Culture And Anarchy, discusses Arnold as a critic of both literature and culture. It explains Arnold's vision of life and art. It points out Arnold's ideas regarding anarchy. It also provides the text - Sweetness And Light.

Unit 1 : 'Culture And Anarchy' says that it is a great book one needs a trained mind to follow it.

BLOCK - IV MATTHEW ARNOLD

UNIT - 1: SWEETNESS AND LIGHT FROM MATTHEW ARNOLD'S CULTURE AND ANARCHY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss Arnold as a critic of both literature and culture.
- comprehend his vision of art and life.
- see the importance of Culture And Anarchy as a land- mark in the history of intellectual thought in the 19th century England.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Matthew Arnold - A critical introduction
- 1.4 Sweetness and Light-Text
- 1.5 Let's sum up
- 1.6 Sample questions
- 1.7 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the ideas of Matthew Arnold on culture and anarchy. This unit also explains the influence of the author on modern intellectuals. It also brings about the primary aim of 'Culture' while discussing the ideas of perfection as the worthy goal of human will.

1.3. MATTHEW ARNOLD - A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

Matthew Arnold (1822-88) is acknowledged as a major and perhaps, the most influential critic of his age. He was eulogised as a neo - Victorian Aristotle in his day. His distinction as a critic lay in the fact that he was a critic of both literature and culture, and that he had a comprehensive vision of art and life. His achievement as a man of letters, poet, critic, intellectual, thinker and, above all, the leading light of his day, has been most impressive; and he touched life at so many points that his influence is felt even today on modern intellectuals and critics of literature and culture.

1.3.1

The *Zeitgeist* of Matthew Arnold (a term he used in his *Literature and Dogma*) is rather a complex credo, but it is necessary to understand it. It is the **time-spirit** which indeed holds

the key to the understanding of Arnold's mind. *Zetgeist* would, perhaps, mean "the spirit or genius which marks the thought or feeling of a period or age", and it is in this sense that Arnold himself primarily used this term. Arnold's ideas in *Culture and Anarchy*, especially his concept of "Sweetness and Light", must be set against the spirit of his times, the *Zeigeist* which enabled him to express his sensitive responses and intellectual reactions to his age.

The publication of *Culture and Anarchy* in 1869 is a land-mark in the history of intellectual thought in nineteenth century England. Over a hundred years have passed since the publication of this epoch making work, but it has heightened, rather than diminished, the dramatic tenor of its essence. Matthew Arnold has posed many questions to his contemporaries of culture and anarchy which today have become almost a nightmare. Today one may ask grimly : Culture or Anarchy? Not culture and Anarchy. The grim tragic overtone in our present day time-spirit has merely sharpened the edge of the issue with which Arnold confronted his contemporaries.

First things first. What did Arnold really mean or imply by culture? What, indeed, are the fundamental components of his concept of culture? For Arnold, the essence of culture lies not in curiosity (which is sometimes subjected to a pejorative meaning), but in the love of perfection. Continual pursuit of excellence in every significant arena of life is a hall-mark of culture in the best sense of the word. Culture is not a narrow concept at all, nor should it be applied to a narrow or selective circles in society. Culture, says Arnold, shouldn't be allowed to function as an engine of class distinction or aristocratic snobbery. Its motive is neither exclusiveness nor vanity, but the pursuit of moral and social good. Culture is inspired by moral passion which must motivate men to action and transform their dreams into actual realities. Culture, in the Victorian context of progress and moral fervour, must welcome the new lights on the horizon of a new age - the lights that will lead to practical social good for the betterment of both individual and society.

Arnold, quoting Bishop Wilson, says that the primary aim of culture should be "to make reason and the will of God prevail." He also highlights the relationship between religion and culture from his special liberal viewpoint. Religion, he notes, is the "voice of the deepest human experience" and is motivated by the ideal of perfection. Culture's aim too is the attainment of perfection. In this way, for Arnold, culture is an adjunct of religion and both have a bearing on man's internal condition, and both aim at a state of perfectibility. Perfection, of course, is a term of a much wider connotation. Culture does not seek merely the individual's advancement, but the progress of the whole society itself. It seeks harmonious expansion of all powers of man and society and thus goes beyond the limited realm of religion.

The idea of perfection itself is a worthy goal of human will as it is an 'inward condition of the mind and spirit'; and it is quite different from the objects of the mechanical and material civilisation. Wordsworth, a little earlier than Matthew Arnold, had diagnosed the disease of modern life : "The world is too much with us." Faith in the machinery is thus shown as a besetting danger, as an end in itself, and true culture must guard against 'these false indicators. In Matthew Arnold's vision of culture, the basic concept is endowed with Grace. Culture is no longer a term denoting surface graces, good manners or mere gentility. It has far deeper roots in man's heart and soul. It is an expression of his inner condition. It is the voice of reason, in a philosophical sense, and it is enveloped by Grace. Reason and Faith are synthesized in it, and it becomes a high moral and social value. It is the condition precedent to man's progress and the advancement of civilization (progress used as a term in philosophy). It moves towards a state of perfection in which the voice of reason is harmonised and sweetened by Grace.

Self-check exercise - 1

What, according to Arnold, is the concept of culture?

Arnold's concept of culture is not merely the product of a liberal imagination but also an embodiment of Victorian values of reason, progress and moral belief. It also includes the phase of the mood of doubt. Arnold's view, it must be said, is totally different from the ideas of culture emanating from modern anthropologists. Leslie Johnson in her study, **The Cultural Critics From Matthew Arnold to Raymond Williams** (London, 1979), quotes G.H. Bantock's definition of culture comprising "important forms of human thought and behaviour without any distinction of value." Bantock's view seems to be an echo of the anthropological images of culture which unfold their value- neutrality. Arnold views culture as a set or pattern of values of art, religion, morals and of life itself, as a kind of new Kingdom of God in which Man has an equally important place. Culture is neither exclusive nor is it limited to a minority of intellectuals or sophisticated aristocracy. The individual's search for perfectibility, says Arnold, is co-extensive with the divine aim of promoting the Kingdom of God, of ensuring the welfare of large numbers of people, of society in a wider context. This is no echo of the Benthamite doctrine, the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" because Arnold's whole concept is imbued with the inner stream of spirituality. He knows that 'No Man is an Island', and that the Island cannot prosper unless man gives up his ego-centric nature and plays his part in the diffusion of culture, 'Sweetness and light.'

This brings us to a consideration of the phrase "Sweetness and Light", and its implications, "Sweetness and Light", is a phrase originated in Jonathan Swift's **The battle of the books** (1704) in a debate between the spider and the bee. Swift conceived it as an allegory of the conflict between the Ancients and the Moderns, the bee and the spider. Arnold appreciates the bee because the bee-hive is filled with "honey and wax, thus furnishing making with two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light." Sweetness and light, for Matthew Arnold, became the metaphor of beauty and reason. Culture becomes the source of sweetness and light both, and not religion because it is exclusive, it is Hellenic, it is narrowly moral, and excludes the whole arena of Hellenic beauty and joy. The language of religion has become a jargon whereas the language of culture retains its vitality, its pristine glory. One must concede, however, that the term, 'sweetness and light', has come under a cloud of pejorative darkness, denoting social snobbery and hypocrisy and a narrow superior attitude, whereas Matthew Arnold saw in it both the glory of man and efflorescence of culture. Sweetness and light have primarily an aesthetic value, the essence of Arnoldian culture synthesised with the wisdom of civilisation, beauty allied with truth, and finally culminating in joy.

In the first chapter of **Culture and Anarchy**, sub-titled "Sweetness and Light", Arnold speaks at length about the concomitants of culture, and machinery of modern civilisation, and the material bases of our spiritual culture. He notes that wealth has generated prodigious material advantages to mankind-rail roads and coal- machines which have made consequence of this new-found affluence, population has grown and health of the people has improved. But it is not bodily health that should be our primary concern, but the formation of spiritual character that must be our aim. The Greek were great because they sought this perfection. We must emulate the Greek ideal and seek perfection in all walks of life, and sweetness and light are the true modes of that search for perfectibility.

Arnold is critical of Gladstone's ideas expressed in a speech in Paris that the contemporary movement towards wealth was necessary for material well-being of society and that was the true way to happiness. Culture, of course, accepts this movement, a march towards prosperity, but refuses to accept Philistinism, which is a by- product of this newly acquired wealth, of the new-rich. It also refused to accept Puritanism and even in Non-conformist trend. Arnold realises that a new power has arisen in England which is different from the force of middle-class liberalism. It is a new and over-powering democratic force. Culture has to admit the vitality

of this new force. It must worship Apollo, the God of Light and Learning, health and reconciliation. It must also aim at perfection, the pursuit of sweetness and light, the conjunction of reason with divine will.

True men of culture do not seek exclusiveness or the idea that God has His 'chosen people'. They are apostles of equality which means that all people will have equality of opportunity for their growth and progress. They will diffuse the best knowledge and the best thought of the time among all who wish to receive it and thus become the torchbearers of sweetness and light. Abelard in the Middle Ages and Lessing and Herder in Germany were such notable leading thinkers. These are great minds and their greatness lies in their endeavour to humanise knowledge and diffuse sweetness and light.

Arnold's view of culture leads inevitably to a discussion of his attitude to class and state. Arnold's ideas are undermined by curious contradictions which weaken his basic position. Arnold, in his search for an ideal society activated by the ideal of perfection, is indirectly seeking a class and state based on these altruistic principles. Every realistic sociologist has to concede the fact that any class has first its own self interest to pursue, and that each state must also work for its own interests. This is applicable to all classes in society - the lower; the middle, the higher-and this is equally true of the modern state. A state, in fact, is represented by government and all governments are keen on promoting their own interests. It is a fallacy to speak of a class without interests or a state of government without its self-interest. Arnold's concept of culture which is diffused by people who have no interest of their own is a fallacy. And then, who among these deserving pundits will judge reason and unreason? Who will say that Mr. X has reason, and Mr. Z hasn't? And who will listen to these pronouncements? Arnold's view of the state is too idealistic, it is almost a Platonic myth, a kind of Victorian Utopia. His view that Hellenism is the source of culture and that Hebraism is the root of anarchy may now appear to be a false over-simplification.

Self-check exercise - 2

How does Matthew Arnold associate Sweetness and light with culture?

133

It is quite obvious now that Arnold's ideas of liberty had been influenced by John Stuart Mill and that his concept of the state had been moulded by Burke's ideas. Arnold tries to relate these two concepts to the Greek ideal, the pursuit of perfection, the diffusion of sweetness and light in a world which, he only partly realised, was darkened by shadows of doubt and despair. He holds on his liberal values in an uncertain world-one dead and the other powerless to be born-increasingly imperilled by dark wordly powers which go against the very grain of Arnold's fundamental beliefs. It is interesting to know that Arnold's basic beliefs as expressed in his concept of culture were satirized in his own day by his contemporaries. The first chapter, **'Sweetness and Light' of Culture and Anarchy** was published in July, 1887. Frederick Harrison in **The Fortnightly Review** of November, 1887 published a brilliant satire on Arnold's ideas and it was entitled: "Culture : A Dialogue". Frederick Harrison (Arminius) raised a moot question : How is Culture to work?" -"What Gospel does this offer poor stricken men?"

Arnold had a good sense of humour and he said, in a letter to Lady Rothschild, that he was delighted with the satire. He further elaborated his point that culture has its own values 'Sweetness and Light' and that it showed how England was endangered by "anarchy and how the danger can be overcome by adhering to the principle of authority—the authority of the state." We must rise above the idea of class—the Barbarians, the Philistines, the Populace—and recognise the social, economic and political values of the state which will ensure the operative force and an environment for the culture to function for human good. In his view of the state, Arnold relied on Edmund Burke's view of the liberal state.

Culture for Arnold is a positive, constructive and almost sacred value in life and art and thought. He diagnosed the disease of modern life, its banality, its philistinism which caused a diminution of the stature of man's spirit. Culture, he said, is "to know the best that has been said and thought in the world"

And finally we must conclude with a sensitive exchange which occurred between Walt Whitman, the perfect Bohemian and Matthew Arnold, the perfect Philistine during the course of Arnold's famous visit to America. Arnold was introduced to the Americans as a prophet of culture in England, an 'aesthetician'. However, the Americans saw in this England prophet of culture a singular lack of refinement. He looked like a brick-layer to them. Whitman warned Arnold that if he wanted to discover America, he must find it in farms and factories, foundries and crowds, Whitman's comment on Arnold's quest for a 'clean culture' are relevant:

"Arnold always gives you the notion that he hates to touch the dirt-the dirt is so dirty! But everything comes out of the dirt- everything; everything comes out of the people; the everyday people, the people as you find them and leave them; not university people, not F.F.V. people : people : people, people, just people!"

Arnold's concept of culture was not comprehensive enough, says Whitman, as to include the dirt, the caterpillars of the commonwealth, the leaves of grass. However, this is an extreme view and does little justice to Arnold's multifarious genius and his seminal ideas. Arnold was both a great critic of literature and society as well as a great influence. "Never since the sun has stood in the firmament and the planets revolved round him," said Hegel, "had it been perceived that man's existence centres in his head-in Thought." Man has built civilisation on this reality. Arnold realised the truth of Hegel's thought and envisioned a new concept of culture, which would diffuse 'sweetness and light' in the societies of this brave new world.

Self-check exercise - 3

How was Arnold introduced in America?

1.4 SWEETNESS AND LIGHTTEXT

This disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; some times, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance, or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title; from other people who have not got it. No serious man would call this **culture**, or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very differing estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word **curiosity** gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in some what disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unidentifying activity. In the **Quarterly Review**, some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte Beuve, and a very inadequate estimate it was in my judgement. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this : that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word **curiosity**, thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praise - worthy and not blame worthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For, as

there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease so there is certainly curiosity - a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are, - which is, in an intelligent being natural and laudable. Nay and the very desire to see things as they are, implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame curiosity. Montesquien says :- "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term **curiosity** stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbour, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it, - motives eminently such as are called social, - come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a **study of perfection**. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words : "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson: "To make reason and the will of God prevail!"

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be overhasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because it is bent on acting rather than thinking, and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reasons and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other, which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardour, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all round us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adopting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine, - social, political, religious, - has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should under rate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own

sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, there is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavour to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to, - to learn, in short, the will of God, - the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavour to see and learn this but as the endeavour, also, to make it prevail, the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere endeavour to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavour of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself, - religion, that voice of the deepest human experience, - does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the greatest aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with what which culture, - culture seeking the determination of this question through all the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of all science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution, - likewise reaches. Religion says: **The kingdom of God is within you** and culture; in like manner, places human perfection in an internal condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper" as distinguished from our animality. It places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid and that is the true value of culture". Not a having and a resting, but a growing and becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a **general** expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, one more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

But, finally, perfection, - as culture, from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it -- is a harmonious expansion of **all** the powers which makes the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances, - it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright, and Mr. Frederic Harrison, and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilisation is, to a much greater degree than the civilisation of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that mechanical character, which civilisation tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an **inward** condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilisation in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a **general** expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality, our maxim of "every man for himself." Above all the idea of perfection as a **harmonious** expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs, than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. And meanwhile, the mode of action they have to pursue, and the habits they must fight against ought to be made quite clear for every one to see who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself, what is freedom but machinery? What is population but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organisations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were the precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's stock argument for providing the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and for quite stopping the mouths of all gainsayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing of it. "May not every man in England say what he likes?" - Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worthy saying, - has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the *Times*, replying to some foreign strictures on the dress, looks, and behaviour of the English abroad, urges that the English ideal is that every one should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries not to make what each raw person may like, the rule by which he fashions himself; but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Every one must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England, but what is greatness? - culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration.

If England were swallowed up by the sea tomorrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind, would most, therefore show the evidence of having possessed greatness, the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depending on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth again the end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed — the commonest of commonplaces tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe any thing more firmly, than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines. The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being very rich, and who most give their lives and thoughts to becoming rich are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope from being vulgarised, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigour, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresh from reading certain articles of the *Times* on the Registrar-General's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigour, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition, and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarising a worship as that is. Every one with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigour and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the author of the Epistle to Timothy. And the utilitarian Franklin says just as explicitly:—"Eat and drink such an exact quantity as suits the constitution of thy body, in reference to the service of the mind". But the point of view of culture, keeping the mark of human perfection simply and broadly in view, and not assigning to this perfection, as religion or utilitarianism assigns to it, a special and limited character, — this point of view, I say, of culture

is best given by these words of Epictetus:—"It is a sign of *aathnueia*" says he,—that is, of a nature not finely tempered,—to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way; the formation of the spirit and character must be our real concern". This is admirable; and, indeed, the Greek word *euthneia*, a finely tempered nature, gives exactly the notion of perfection, as culture brings us to conceive it; a harmonious perfection, a perfection in which the characters of beauty and intelligence are both present, which unites "the two noblest of things,"—as Swift, who one of the two, at any rate, had himself all too little, most happily calls them in his *Battle of the Books*,—"the two noblest of things, sweetness and light. The *euthnes* is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the *aathnes* on the other hand, is our Philistine. The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education and is in itself a kind of homage to it.

In thus making sweetness and light to be characters of perfection, culture is of like spirit with poetry, follows one law with poetry. Far more than on our freedom, our population, and our industrialism, many amongst us rely upon our religious organisations to save us. I have called religion a yet more important manifestation of human nature than poetry, because it has worked on a broader scale for perfection, and with greater masses of men. But the idea of beauty and of a human nature and invaluable idea, though it has not yet had the success that the idea of conquering the obvious faults of our animality and of a human nature perfect on the moral side,—which is the dominant idea of religion,—has been enabled to have; and it is destined, adding to itself the religious idea of a devout energy, to transform and govern the other.

The best art and poetry of the Greeks, in which religion and poetry are one, in which the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides adds to itself a religious and devout energy, and works in the strength of that, is on this account of such surpassing interest and instructiveness for us, though it was,—as, having regard to the human race in general, and, indeed, having regard to the Greeks themselves, we must own—a premature attempt, an attempt which for success needed the moral and religious fibre in humanity to be more braced and developed than it had yet been. But Greece did not err in having the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, so present and paramount. It is impossible to have this idea too present paramount; only, the moral fibre must be braced too. And we, because we have braced the moral fibre are not on that account in the right way, if at the same time the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, is wanting or misapprehended amongst us; and evidently it is wanting or misapprehended at present. And when we rely as we do on our religious organisations, which in themselves do not and cannot give us this idea, and think we have done enough if we make them spread and prevail, then, I say we fall into our common fault of overvaluing machinery.

Nothing is more common than for people to confound the inward peace and satisfaction which follows the subduing of the obvious faults of our animality with what I may call absolute inward peace and satisfaction,—the peace and satisfaction which are reached as we draw near to complete spiritual perfection, and not merely to moral perfection, or rather to relative moral perfection. No people in the world have done more and struggle more to attain this relative moral perfection than our English race has. For no people in the world has the command to **resist the devil to overcome the wicked one**, in the nearest and most obvious sense we have had our reward, not only in the great worldly prosperity which our obedience to this command has brought us, but also, and far more, in great inward peace and satisfaction. But to me few things

are more pathetic than to see people, on the strength of the inward peace and satisfaction which their rudimentary efforts towards perfection have brought them, employ, concerning their incomplete perfection and the religious organisations within which they have found it, language which properly applies only to complete perfection and is a far-off echo of the human soul's prophecy of it. Religion itself, I need hardly say supplies them in abundance with this grand language. And very freely do they use it; yet it is really the severest criticism of such an incomplete perfection as alone we have yet reached through our religious organisation.

The impulse of the English race towards moral development and self-conquest has nowhere so powerfully manifested itself as in Puritanism. Nowhere has Puritanism found so adequate an expression as in the religious organisation of the Independents. The modern Independents have a newspaper, the *Nonconformist*, written with great sincerity and ability. The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." There is sweetness and light, and the ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! One need not go to culture and poetry to find language to judge it. Religion, with its instinct for perfection, supplies language to judge it, language too which is in our mouths every day. "Finally, be of one mind, united in feeling," says St. Peter. There is an ideal which judges the Puritan ideal: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion"! And religious organisations like this are what people believe in, rest in, would give their lives for! Such, I say is the wonderful virtue of even the beginnings of perfection, of having conquered even the plain faults of our animality, that the religious organisation which has helped us to do it can seem to us something precious, salutary, and to be propagated, even when it wears such a brand of imperfection on its forehead as this. And men have got such a habit of giving to the language of religion a special application, of making it a mere jargon that for the condemnation which religion itself passes on the shortcomings of their religious organisations they have no ear; they are sure to cheat themselves and to explain this condemnation away. They can only be reached by the criticism which culture like poetry, speaking a language not to be sophisticated, and resolutely testing these organisations by the ideal of a human perfection complete on all sides, applies to them.

But men of culture and poetry, it will be said, are again and again failing and failing conspicuously, in the necessary first stage to a harmonious perfection, in the subduing of the great obvious faults of our animality, which it is the glory of these religious organisations to have helped us to subdue. True, they do often so fail. They have often been without the virtues as well as the faults of the Puritan; it has been one of their dangers that they so felt the Puritan's faults that they too much neglected the practice of his virtues. I will not, however, exculpate them at the Puritan's expense. They have often failed in morality, and morality is indispensable. And they have been punished for their failure, as the Puritan has been rewarded for his performance. They have been punished wherein they erred; but their ideal of beauty, of sweetness and light, and a human nature complete on all its sides, remain the true ideal of perfection still just as the Puritan's ideal of perfection remains narrow and inadequate, although for what he did well he has been richly rewarded. Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage, they and their standard of perfection are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil,—souls in whom sweetness and light, and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent,—accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them! In the same way let us judge the religious organisations which we see all around us. Do not let us deny the good and the happiness which they have accomplished, but do not let us fail to see clearly their idea of human perfection is narrow and inadequate, and that the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion will never bring humanity to its true goal. As I said with regard to wealth: Let us look at the life of those who live in and for it,—so I say with regard to the religious organisations. Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the *Nonconformist*,—a life of jealousy of the

Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a human life completing itself on all sides, and aspiring with all its organs after sweetness light, and perfection!

Another newspaper, representing, like the *nonconformist*, one of the religious organisations of this country, was a short time ago giving an account of the crowd at Epsom on the Derby day, and of all the vice and hideousness which was to be seen in that crowd; and then the writer turned suddenly round upon Professor Huxley, and asked him how he proposed to cure all this vice and hideousness without religion. I confess I felt disposed to ask the asker this question: and how do you propose to cure it with such a religion as yours? How is the ideal of a life so unlovely, so incomplete, so narrow, so far removed from a true and satisfying ideal of human perfection, as is the life of your religious organisations as you yourself reflect it, to conquer and transform all this vice and hideousness? Indeed, the strongest plea for the study of perfection as pursued, by culture, the clearest proof of the actual inadequacy of the idea of perfection held by the religious organisations,—expressing, as I have said, the most wide-spread effort which the human race has yet made after perfection,—is to be found in the state of our life and society with these in possession of it, and having been in possession of it I know not how many hundred years. We are all of us included in some religious organisation or other; we all call ourselves, in the sublime and aspiring language of religion which I have before noticed, *children of God*; it is an immense pretension!—and how are we to justify it? By the works which we do, and the words which we speak. And the work which we collective children of God do, our grand centre of life, our city which we have builded for us to dwell in, is London! London, with its unutterable external hideousness, and with its internal canker of *publice egestas, privatim opulentia*,—to use the words which Sallust puts into Cato's mouth about Rome,—unequaled in the world! The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, the newspaper with the largest circulation in England, nay, with the largest circulation in the whole world, is the *Daily Telegraph*! I say that when our religious organisations,—which I admit to express the most considerable effort after perfection that our race has yet made,—land us in no better result than this, it is high time to examine carefully their idea of perfection, to see whether it does not leave out of account sides and forces of human nature which we might turn to great use; whether it would not be more operative if it were more complete. And I say that the English reliance on our religious organisations and on their ideas of human perfection just as they stand, is like our reliance on freedom, on muscular Christianity, on population, on coal, on wealth,—mere belief in machinery, and unfruitful; and that it is wholesomely counteracted by culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and on drawing the human race onwards to a more complete, a harmonious perfection.

Culture, however, shows its single-minded love of perfection, its desire simply to make reason and the will of God prevail, its freedom from fanaticism, by its attitude towards all this machinery, even while it insists that it is machinery. Fanatics, seeing the mischief men do themselves by their blind belief in some machinery or other,—whether it is wealth and industrialism, or whether it is the cultivation of bodily strength and activity or whether it is a political organisation,—or whether it is a religious organisation,—oppose with might and main the tendency to this or that political and religious organisation, or to games and athletic exercises, or to wealth and industrialism, and try violently to stop it. But the flexibility which sweetness and light give, and which is one of the rewards of culture pursued in good faith, enables a man to see that a tendency may be necessary, and even, as a preparation for something in the future, salutary, and yet that the generations or individuals who obey this tendency are sacrificed to it, that they fall short of the hope of perfection by following it; and that its mischiefs are to be criticised, lest it should take too firm a hold and last after it has served its purpose.

Mr. Gladstone well pointed out, in a speech at Paris,—and others have pointed out the same thing,—how necessary is the present great movement towards wealth and industrialism, in

order to lay broad foundations of material well-being for the society of the future. The worst of these justifications is, that they are generally addressed to the very people engaged, body and soul, in the movement in question; at all events, that they are always seized with the greatest avidity by these people, and taken by them in their sins. Now, culture admits the necessity of the movement towards fortune-making and exaggerated industrialism, readily allows that the future may derive benefit from it; but insist, at the same time, that the passing generations of industrialists,—forming, for the most part, the stout main body of Philistinism,—are sacrificed to it. In the same way, the result of all the games and sports which occupy the passing generation of boys and young men may be the establishment of a better and sounder physical type for the future to work with. Culture does not set itself against the games and sports; it congratulates the future, and hopes it will make a good use of its improved physical basis; but it points out that our passing generation of boys and young men is, meantime, sacrificed. Puritanism was perhaps necessary to develop the moral fibre of the English race, Nonconformity to break the yoke of ecclesiastical domination over men's minds and to prepare the way for freedom of thought in the distant future; still, culture points out that the harmonious perfection of generations of Puritans and Nonconformists has been, in consequence, sacrificed. Freedom of speech may be necessary for the society of the future but the young lions of the **Daily Telegraph** in the meanwhile are sacrificed. A voice for every man in his country's government may be necessary for the society of the future, but meanwhile Mr. Beales and Mr. Bradlaugh are sacrificed.

Oxford, the Oxford of the past, has many faults; and she has heavily paid for them in defeat, in isolation, in want of hold upon the modern world. Yet we in Oxford, brought up amidst the beauty and sweetness of that beautiful place, have not failed to seize one truth:—the truth that beauty and sweetness are essential characters of a complete human perfection. When I insist on this, I am all in the faith and tradition of Oxford. I say boldly that this our sentiment for beauty and sweetness, our sentiment against hideousness and rawness, has been at the bottom of our attachment to so many beautiful causes, of our opposition to so many triumphant movements. And the sentiment is true, and has never been wholly defeated, and has shown its power even in its defeat. We have not won our political battles, we have not carried our main points, we have not stopped our adversaries' advance, we have not marched victoriously with the modern world; but we have told silently upon the mind of the country, we have prepared currents of feeling which sap our adversaries' position when it seems gained, we have kept up our own communications with the future. Look at the course of the great movement which shook Oxford to its centre some thirty years ago! It was directed, as any one who reads Dr. Newman's **Apology** may see, against what in one word may be called "Liberalism." Liberalism prevailed; it was the appointed force to do the work of the hour; it was necessary, it was inevitable that it should prevail. The Oxford movement was broken, it failed; our wrecks are scattered on every shore:—

Quae regio in terris nostri nou plena laboris?

But what was it, this Liberalism, as Dr. Newman saw it, and as it really broke the Oxford movement? It was the great middle-class Liberalism, which had for the cardinal points of its belief the Reform Bill of 1832, and local self-government, in politics; in the social sphere, free-trade, unrestricted competition, and the making of large industrial fortunes; in the religious sphere, the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. I do not say that other and more intelligent forces than this were not opposed to the Oxford movement; but this was the force which really beat it; this was the force which Dr. Newman felt himself fighting with; this was the force which till only the other day seemed to be the paramount force in this country, and to be in possession of the future; this was the force whose achievements fill Mr. Lawe with such inexpressible admiration, and whose rule he was so horror struck to see threatened. And where is this great force of Philistinism now? It is thrust into the second rank, it has become a power of yesterday, it has lost the future. A new power has suddenly appeared.

a power which it is impossible yet to judge fully, but which is certainly a wholly different force from middle-class liberalism; different in its cardinal points of belief, different in its tendencies in every sphere. It loves and admires neither the legislation of middle-class Parliaments, nor the local self-government of middle-class vestries, nor the unrestricted competition of middle-class industrialists, nor the dissidence of middle-class Dissent and the Protestantism of middle-class Protestant religion. I am not now praising this new force, or saying that its own ideals are better; all I say is, that they are wholly different. And who will estimate how much the currents of feeling created by Dr. Newman's movement, the keen desire for beauty and sweetness which it nourished the deep aversion it manifested to the hardness and vulgarity of middle-class Liberalism, the strong light it turned on the hideous and grotesque illusions of middle-class Protestantism, — who will estimate how much all these contributed to swell the tide of secret dissatisfaction which has mined the ground under the self-confident Liberalism of the last thirty years, and has prepared the way for its sudden collapse and supersession? It is in this manner that the sentiment of Oxford for beauty and sweetness conquers, and in this manner long may it continue to conquer !

In this manner it works to the same end as culture, and there is plenty of work for it yet to do. I have said that the new and more democratic force which is now superseding our old middle-class Liberalism cannot yet be rightly judged. It has its main tendencies still to form. We hear promises of its giving us administrative reform, law reform, reform of education, and I know not what; but those promises come rather from its advocates, wishing to make a good plea for it and to justify it for superseding middle-class Liberalism, than from clear tendencies which it has itself yet developed. But meanwhile it has plenty of well-intended friends against whom culture may with advantage continue to uphold steadily its ideal of human perfection; that this is an **inward spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy.** Mr. Bright, who has a foot in both worlds, the world of middle-class Liberalism and the world of democracy, but who brings most of his ideas from the world of middle-class Liberalism in which he had bred, always inclines to inculcate that faith in machinery to which as we have seen, Englishmen are so prone, and which has been the bane of middle-class Liberalism. He complains with a sorrowful indignation of people who "appear to have no proper estimate of the value of the franchise;" he leads his disciples to believe, — what the Englishman is always too ready to believe, — that the having vote, like the having a large family, or a large business, or large muscles, has in itself some edifying and perfecting effect upon human nature. Or else he cries out to the democracy, — "the men," as he calls them, "upon whose shoulders the greatness of England rests," — he cries out to them : "See what you have done ! I look over this country and see the cities you have built, the railroads you have made, the manufactures you have produced, the cargoes which freight the ships of the greatest mercantile navy the world has ever seen ! I see that you have converted by your labours what was once a wilderness, these islands, into a fruitful garden; I know that you have created this wealth, and are a nation whose name is a word of power throughout all the world." Why, this is just the very style of laudation with which Mr. Roebuck or Mr. Lowe debauch the minds of the middle classes and make such Philistines of them. It is the same fashion of teaching a man to value himself not on what he is, not on his progress in sweetness and light, but on the number of the railroads he has constructed, or the bigness of the tabernacle he has built. Only the middle classes are told they have done it all with their energy self-reliance, and capital, and the democracy are told they have done it all with their hands and sinews. But teaching the Democracy to put its trust in achievements of this kind is merely training them to be Philistines to take the place of the Philistines whom they are superseding; and they too like the middle class will be encouraged to sit down at the banquet of the future without having on a wedding garment, and nothing excellent can then come from them. Those who know their besetting faults, those who have watched them and listened to them, or those who will read the instructive account recently given of them by one of themselves, the **Journeyman Engineer**, will agree that the idea which culture sets

before us of perfection,—an increased spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy,—is an idea which the new democracy needs far more than the idea of the blessedness of the franchise, or the wonderfulness of its own industrial performances.

Other well-meaning friends of this new power are for leading it, not in the old rusts of middle-class Philistinism, but in ways which are naturally alluring to the feet of democracy, though in this country they are novel and untried ways, I may call them the ways of Jacobinism. Violent indignation with the past, abstract systems of renovation applied wholesale, a new doctrine drawn up in black and white for elaborating down to the very smallest details a rational society for the future,—these are the ways of Jacobinism, Mr. Frederic Harrison and our disciples of Comte,—one of them, Mr. Congreve, is an old friend of mine, and I am glad to have an opportunity of publicly expressing my respect for his talents and character,—are among the friends of democracy who are for leading it in paths of this kind. Mr. Frederic Harrison is very hostile to culture, and from a natural enough motive; for culture is the eternal opponent of the two things which are the signal marks of Jacobinism,—its fierceness, and its addiction to an abstract system. Culture is always assigning to system-makers and systems; smaller share in the bent of human destiny than their friends like. A current in people's minds sets towards new ideas; people are dissatisfied with their old narrow stock of Philistine ideas, Anglo-Saxon ideas, or any other and some man, some Bentham or Comte, who has the real merit of having early and strongly felt and helped the new current, but who brings plenty of narrowness and mistakes of his own into his feeling and help of it, is credited with being the author of the whole current, the fit person to be entrusted with its regulation and to guide the human race.

The excellent German historian of the mythology of Rome, Preller, relating the introduction at Rome under the Tarquins of the worship of Apollo the god of light, healing, and reconciliation will have us observe that it was not so much the Tarquins who brought to Rome the new worship of Apollo, as a current in the mind of the Roman people which set powerfully at that time towards a new worship of this kind and away from the old run of Latin and Sabina religious ideas. In a similar way, culture directs our attention to the natural current there is in human affairs and to its continual working, and will not let us rivet our faith upon any one man and his doings. It makes us see, not only his good side, but also how much in him was of necessity limited and transient; nay, it even feels a pleasure, a sense of an increased freedom and of an ampler future in so doing.

I remember, when I was under the influence of a mind to which I feel the greatest obligations, the mind of a man who was the very incarnation of sanity and clear sense, a man the most considerable, it seems to me, whom America has yet produced,—Benjamin Franklin,—I remember the relief with which, after long feeling the sway of Franklin's imperturbable common-sense, I came upon a project of his for a new version of the Book of Job, to replace the old version, the style of which, says Franklin, has become obsolete, and thence less agreeable. "I gave" he continues, "a few verses, which may serve as a sample of the kind of version I would recommend." We all recollect the famous verse in our translation: "Then Satan answered the Lord and said: 'Doth Job fear God for nought?'" Franklin makes this: "Does Your Majesty imagine that Job's good conduct is the effect of mere personal attachment and affection?" I well remember how when first I read that, I drew a deep breath of relief, and said to myself: "After all, there is a stretch of humanity beyond Franklin's victorious good sense!" So, after hearing Bentham cried loudly up as the renovator of modern society, and Bentham's mind and ideas proposed as the rules of our future, I open the *Deontology* There I read: "While Xenophon was writing his history and Euclid teaching geometry, Socrates and Plato were talking nonsense under pretence of talking wisdom and morality. This morality of theirs consisted in words; this wisdom of theirs was the denial of matters known to every man's experience," From the moment of reading that I am delivered from the bondage of Bentham! the fanaticism of his adherents can touch me no longer; I feel the inadequacy of his mind and ideas for supplying the rule of human society, for perfection.

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Culture tends always thus to deal with the men of a system, of disciples, of a school, with men like Comet or, the late Mr. Buckle, or Mr. Mill. However much it may find to admire in these personages, or in some of them, it nevertheless remembers the text: "Be not ye called Rabbi!" and it soon passes on from any Rabbi. But Jacobinism loves a Rabbi; it does not want to pass on from its Rabbi in pursuit of a future and still unreached perfection; it wants its Rabbi; and his ideas to stand for perfection, that they may with the more authority recast the world; and for Jacobinism, therefore, culture, eternally passing onwards and seeking, is an impertinence and an offence. But culture, just because it resists this tendency of Jacobinism to impose on us a man with limitations and errors of his own along with true ideas of which he is the organ, really does the world and Jacobinism itself a service.

So too, Jacobinism, in its fierce hatred of the past and of those whom it makes liable for the sins of the past, cannot do away with the inexhaustible indulgence proper to culture, the consideration of circumstances, the severe judgment of actions joined to the merciful judgment of persons. "The man of culture is in politics," cries Mr. Frederic Harrison, "On of the poorest mortals alive!" Mr. Frederic Harrison wants to be doing business, and he complains that the man of culture stops him with a 'turn for small fault-finding, love of selfish ease, and indecision in action.' Of what use is culture, he asks except for "a critic of new books or a professor of **bells lettres**" Why, it is of use because, in the presence of the fierce exasperation which breathes, or rather, I may say, hisses, through the whole production in which Mr. Frederic Harrison asks that question, it reminds us that the perfection of human nature is sweetness and light. It is of use because, like religion, that other efforts after perfection, it testifies that, where bitter envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work.

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness works in the end for light also; he who works for light works in the end for sweetness also. But he who works for sweetness and light united, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred, culture had one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater, the passion for making them prevail. It is not satisfied till we all come to a perfect man, it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unskilled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that he must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius. When there is a national glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measures permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be **real** thought, and **real** beauty; **real** sweetness and **real** light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses.

The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organisations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to reach down to the level of inferior class; it does not try to win them for this or that set of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely, nourished and not bound by them.

This is the **Social idea**; and men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making it prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanise it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the **best** knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of

sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder in Germany, at the end of the last century; and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they **humanised** knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With Saint Augustine they said: "Let us not leave Thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth and thou shalt crown the year with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth labourers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new labourers to new seed-times whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

1.5 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed the ideas of Arnold on culture and said that his culture has become the source for Sweetness and light. It has explained the idea of perfection. It has shown that culture, in the Victorian context of progress and moral fervour, will lead to practical social good for the betterment of both individual and society. This unit has explained the phrase "Sweetness and Light" and its implications. This unit has given the text 'Sweetness and Light' from Arnold's Culture And Anarchy.

1.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What is culture according to Arnold?
2. What do you know about The Battle of the Books?
3. What does Gladstone say about wealth?
4. 'Culture for Arnold is a positive, constructive and almost a sacred value in life, art and thought.' Explain.

1.7 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

SCE - 1

Arnold says that the essence of culture does not lie in curiosity but in the love of perfection. Continuous pursuit of excellence in every significant arena of life is the hallmark of culture. Its motive should be the pursuit of moral and social good.

SCE - 2

Arnold associates Sweetness and light with beauty and reason. For him, Culture becomes the source of sweetness and light.

SCE - 3

Arnold was introduced in America as a prophet of culture in England, an aesthete.

BLOCK - IV

UNIT - 2: CULTURE AND ANARCHY

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the fact that Culture And Anarchy is a book with a great power of mind in perception and thought and also in discrimination and judgement.
- explain that this book has acquired reputation as a classic in the 19th century.
- see that one needs a trained mind to follow this book by Arnold.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Culture and Anarchy
- 2.4 Let's sum up
- 2.5 Sample questions
- 2.6 Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses Culture and Anarchy as a book with complexity of thought which needs a special training of the mind to be able to understand it. This unit explains that the readers make generalizations on the author without getting at his specific points of force. This unit makes one know that Culture is a study of perfection one needs to achieve.

2.3 CULTURE AND ANARCHY

2.3.1

It is Matthew Arnold's best known book. It possesses a great power of mind in perception and thought, and in discrimination and judgement. This work has acquired far greater reputation as a classic of prose than any other in the 19th century. This book has a great reputation but it is rarely understood. Usually we retain a few key phrases and ideas of it and nothing more. On the other hand, it is a book with complexity of subtle thought, which is too difficult to understand. The point is that it needs a trained mind to follow its content.

CULTURE AND ANARCHY is a work of criticism regarding the contemporary Britain. There are works by others, similar in purpose, but they are inferior-for example, Carlyle's "Past and Present", and Ruskin's "Unto This Last" which ought to be read, but would not possess the importance Arnold has for us.

That importance, let me put it briefly here, is Arnold's subtle, thoughtful, discriminating consciousness of the 19th century England. No other author of his age has such an importance for us. Arnold's idea of his contemporary England runs counter to the general estimate of it by his contemporaries. For others, England has too many attractions as the most leading nation in scientific advance, industry and commerce and above all, as an Empire. The general mind in England at that time could never look at it as Arnold does.

While Arnold is popular, he is difficult to read and understand. Usually one doesn't admit that he is a difficult author, because he appears easy enough so long as one translates him into such ideas and sentiments as one holds. It is common to make generalisations on him, being unable to get at the specific points made and at their force, and these generalisations are so pleasing to us by their emotional appeal, that we don't suspect their invalidity. Take, for instance, the contrast of materialism and spiritualism, a contrast most inapplicable to Arnold, but quite often applied to him in order to have said something profound. Arnold's work is too subtle and complex, and it is a crude and miserable way of understanding him to find this contrast as applicable to him. Academic explanation very rarely catches the spirit of Arnoldian work. Misunderstanding and misrepresentation seem inevitable when one doesn't understand him but has to explain him out of professional duty. It is pathetic that such an academician produces easy ideas and sentiments as if they are Arnoldian, - and one can do so because one is not facing those whose demands are exacting.

CULTURE AND ANARCHY is directed towards living with the spirit of defying theories or system-building. It is not theoretical, so it cannot be represented in ideas. A demand of what it says in statement often meets with a pseudo-answer of ideas, sentiments and gestures. What is true of the whole book is true of the first chapter SWEETNESS AND LIGHT which follows the well-known preface Arnold wrote to explain the purpose and scope of his work.

"The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as great help out of present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and though this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically".

A statement like this doesn't take on meaning with us because it requires an engagement at a level in the issue of the statement, at which it is not possible for us.

We hardly see that engagement in the text is very crucial before we can make sense of it. Our usual habit is to expect to have a sense of the text by merely reading it. We must always keep this distinction between mere reading of a text and being engaged in it.

There is, of course, the most important word 'Culture' along with the others like 'total perfection'. We can see in it the spirit and tone of the author, -the spirit of commitment, and the tone of one who has something very urgent to say in the manner of exposing that which will usually make us self-satisfied and blind. He says something which we may not like him to say, but which is truly relevant to us. We can only perceive what the statement offers if it is related to living, -if it is taken to be directed towards an effort we ought to make to enrich living. The habit of understanding the statement by referring ennobling sentiments or uplifting ideas to it - let us name it an academic habit, - is too misleading.

Self-check exercise - 1

What is Culture and Anarchy about ?

We must give content to SWEETNESS AND LIGHT; clearing ourselves of the ideas and sentiments however attractive to us, which we generally read off in it. Let us turn away too from any stimulating evocations that the very name of Arnold conjures up in us. It is, on the other hand, being ignorant of Arnold to raise such questions as 'what is culture?', 'What is perfection?', because they make us take up ideas for these words and quarrel about them, as if we are talented in arguing. Let me assure you that there are no ideas standing for these words, and that an argument over ideas might lead to the stupid use of critical jargon or to forgetting oneself. Let it be noted that 'idea' here means superficial idea which comes easy to us when we read a statement. For instance, Arnold's word 'culture' cannot easily be explained in terms of a few ideas, which we could carry with us representing Arnold. It is a word the contents of which is shown in the whole book - mainly in the subtle distinctions and the deep thought that the book has, therefore I made the distinction between the word, 'idea' and the word 'content'. On the contrary, they have a content, and a very important content it is. By stating it we come to grips with the author. Remember, we are dealing with an author who must mean so much to the human mind.

As it is referred to above, the importance of Arnold is in his condemnation of the spirit of the 19th century England, the spirit of believing in commerce, industry, science, and in religious non-conformism so blindly as to content itself with wealth and hideous living, and ignoring the "Things of the mind". There is the strain of thought we call Arnoldian, and the subtleties it offers make clear all his key words, and the popularly misunderstood phrases of his. There is the 19th century industrialised England going its way with its own spirit, and there is Arnold's consciousness of it which is central to us and which we must see in his perception and thought. The force of his perception and thought are in his power of judgment of contemporary living in England. It is most invaluable to us, for the 19th century spirit of England is with us to-day, with our spirit believing more crudely and fanatically in science, commerce, and industry and making a fetish of any so called progressive ideas while ignoring 'the things of the mind'. By the things of the mind we might interpret Arnold as having meant that those human achievements literary, musical, artistic and so on - give the human mind power to see things as they are and not to be misled by them and that this power which the mind gets is again so indispensable for fine living. Hence things of the mind in the Arnoldian sense come as a very important contrast with what we mean by "practical affairs" that absorb our mind in day to day life, and of course, the Arnoldian emphasis on things of the mind must never be lost sight of.

Our fate is now worse than that of the nineteenth century England; therefore, rightly understood, Arnold could be of great help to us. Let me give an example of an Arnoldian thought.

Once Arnold thought well of Benjamin Franklin, but now condemns him in this work deservedly for preferring his translation of "Then Satan answered the Lord and said: "Doth Job fear God for Nought?", in the book of Job. Franklin's translation runs like this

"Does your majesty imagine that Job's good conduct is the effect of mere personal attachment and affection?" We see very little in this condemnation, as we are ourselves swept away by a spirit similar to that of the 19th century England. But there is a great deal of value here in Arnold, to human mind. The charge that could be brought against Franklin is that he is blind to the poetry of the original in the Bible, and hence, to the value of poetry, and that his spirit, which is not self questioning but self assumed, is a crude spirit preferring his own translation. There is another point which goes much deeper-namely that if Franklin is representative, living has no vital standards informing it. We have to make a crucial distinction in the Arnoldian line between the mind formed by standards choosing its life and the mind uninformed by them preferring its choices in life. Arnold's comment is significant; "After all, there is a

stretch of humanity beyond Franklin's victorious good sense !” What is valuable is not any Arnoldian idea, but his irony, urban in communication, which is vitally related to living.

Watch carefully Arnold saying this; “Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers’ voyage, they and their standards of perfection are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil, souls in whom sweetness and light, and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent - accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them !” There, do not ask for ideas of sweetness and light, and of perfection. They refer to the quality and ability of mind which are achieved, and the degree of quality and ability acquired would suggest if one has perfection or what Arnold calls, harmonious perfection, - perfection in all sides of human nature, - or not. Perfection in this sense endows one with sweetness and light or beauty and intelligence. The Pilgrim Fathers, who are admirable for their moral courage and religious fervour, fall short greatly of the perfection-sweetness and light of Shakespeare and Virgil.

Culture is the study of this perfection, the acquiring of it. It is most vital that we should have it. Living uninformed by culture is hideous. Arnold here exposes the true nature of the industrial civilization which becomes more and more mechanical, turning people away from “the things of the mind”, and making them believe mechanically in wealth, commerce, and industry as if they are ends in themselves. This believing in them mechanically is believing in machinery. Those who believe in wealth, commerce, industry and so on, have a mind fixed on them and do nothing but increase their wealth, promote commerce, and advance industry, as if they are ends in themselves; they are famously called Philistines.

According to Arnold culture says:

“Consider these people, then their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voices; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read and things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds. Would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one has to become just like these people by having it?”

Self-check exercise – 2

Who are called philistines?

2.3.3

To say so vibrantly in that tone representing the hideous life of the middle class Philistines, who are the champions of liberalism in the 19th century, to us, and to imply that their degree of perfection is of no avail to their life is unmistakably Arnoldian. These Philistines who deserve the contempt of Arnold are so led by their stock notions as to find nothing worthwhile in culture, the pursuit of perfection, in the attainment of sweetness and light as inward condition that could change and enrich their life.

The middle class Philistines in the 19th century with their belief in machinery, with their stock notions, and with their trust in non-conformist religious organisation constitute a threat of destruction to the values of learning, feeling and thinking. They represent the force that worked on the nineteenth century mind; in doing so, he is a supreme example of intelligence committed to life swimming against the current. Common thought runs in the line of preferring and praising science, the increase of commerce, trade and industry, of political and religious institutions of liberalism, but Arnold opposes this line, showing the possibilities of a different one in the interest of life and intelligence. Philistine preoccupations ruin life, but “the things of the mind” advance it; to have these preoccupations but to ignore the latter seen to be consistent

with the industrial civilisations; Arnold's consciousness of this phenomenon, so different from his contemporaries' consciousness of it' is the most valuable thing in this work.

Thinking carried out by Arnold is against ill-thinking and ill-acting of which the mind has little chance of becoming conscious. Both ill-thinking and ill-acting are so great a force of the middle class Philistines that it provoked Arnold's opposition; and Arnold presents the 19th century as it must be seen. The way he states the case against the trend-thinking in the last century in a sense against the Enlightenments' easy way of dismissing values is a superb defence of values in support of true life.

After the same time he sensed the growing force of democracy by its violent temper and abstract system surpassing the middle class philistine liberalism which had been ruling in England, and by the standards of culture, democracy does not get any concession from him. Arnold pulls up Frederick Harrison for unintelligently taking up the cause of the working class democracy under the influence of Comte. Perhaps it might be relevant here to offer Arnold's sense of each class though it is not included in this chapter; he doesn't hold a brief for any of the three-classes namely the aristocrats, the middle classes and the workers. He calls them, to make us see the defects of each, the Barbarians, the Philistines and the populace. For Arnold, this Frederick Harrison's taking up the cause of the working class is as much life negating as the philistinism. It is as much life-negating belief in one kind of machinery or another as is the case with the middle class liberalism. Let me end by answering the question 'where is Arnold's value?' His ironic and suggestive power of statement, so free from the defects and lifelessness of sloganising statement, academic and rhetorical expression, and partisan attacks and insinuations, place him in value above other authors of his time. One could make a claim for Arnold to be a master from whom a distinction between true thinking and false thinking could be a line of advance for us.

(Note: 1. The Enlightenment movement of the 18th century France has been a powerful force in the world ever since the French Revolution. It is the force which has created the spirit of liberalism. This force has been an irresistible attraction to the Indian mind since it began to revolt against the British and absorb what are called 'western liberal ideas' The main point for us to note is that it gives a point of view to the mind and shapes the use of language, offering us rather attractive and easy ideas about religion, society, and democracy and so on).

Self-check exercise - 3

Why does Arnold criticise Frederick Harrison ?

2.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed the importance of Arnold's ideas on culture and anarchy. It has discussed that often Arnold is misunderstood by people who make generalizations on him. It has explained the thinking carried out by Arnold against ill-thinking and ill-acting which is a great force of middle class philistines. It has discussed the Arnoldian defence of values in support of true life.

2.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What do you know about philistinism, as explained by Arnold ?
2. How does Arnold develop a thinking about ill-thinking and ill-acting ?
3. What according to Arnold is culture ? What does he say about the idea of perfection ?

2.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

Culture And Anarchy is a work of criticism regarding the contemporary Britain.

S C E - 2

People who believe in wealth, commerce and industry and have a mind fixed on him and do nothing but increase their wealth, promote commerce and advance industry are called philistines.

S C E - 3

Arnold criticised Frederick Harrison for unintelligently taking up the cause of the working class democracy under the influence of Comte.

Prof. T. V. Subba Rao
Prof. Shahane

BRAOU

BLOCK - V VEMANA

Block V is of Two units

- Unit 1** 'Vemana' tells us that Vemana is the 'supreme master' of lucid Telugu Verse. It shows that Vemana's poetry has a natural appeal to the readers. It discusses that Vemana, though not highly educated, thought soundly about the social and spiritual problems of his time.
- Unit 2** 'Issues Raised' discusses the poetic techniques of Vemana. In this unit certain stanzas from Vemana's poetry are explained. It explains how Vemana champions the idea of casteless society.

BLOCK - V VEMANA

UNIT - 1: VEMANA

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss Vemana as the supreme master of the lucid Telugu verse
- comprehend the simple and natural appeal of Vemana's poetry
- explain that Vemana, though not highly educated, is a sound thinker whose thoughts reflected on the social and spiritual problems of his time.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Vemana - Text
- 1.4 Analysis of the Essay, "Vemana"
- 1.5 Let's sum up
- 1.6 Sample questions
- 1.7 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the poetic talents of Vemana. This unit gives an insight into the rigid, meaningless class divisions as actually practised during and since Vemana's time. This unit explains how Vemana through his poetry fought against the social evils and political blunders of his time. This unit also provides you with the original text which was a Radio talk by Dr.Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy.

1.3 VEMANA - THE TEXT

Vemana is a poet of Western Andhra. The mountainous tract, which being less accessible than the coastal to influences from the north, was less Aryanised, and retained to a greater degree its robust independence of thought and spirit. Sanskrit culture had not spread there to the same extent as in the Circars and we had fewer translations and more original writings.

"..Geography is a bit older than history and it is by far the more powerful determinant of racial character. The real difference between the two natural divisions of the Andhra Desa is due to geography and its consequence. Western Andhra is mountainous. It is a poor country-poor, simple and sturdy. Rivers flow and also expeditions from West to East. Because it was less accessible and provided fewer temptations for outsiders to establish contact as they had nothing to gain in that land of ragi and maize, though the people never lacked the spirit

of free hearty hospitality, it grew, relatively speaking, in isolation and individuality. Its literature, therefore, was less imitative and more original; fewer translations and adaptations; greater originality of thought and feeling; less of Panditism, more of popular types with direct appeal to the feelings of the simple and the unsophisticated; a land, I believe, of Dwipada and Yakshagana; and above all also of revolt against priest-ridden, caste-ridden, ritualistic Hinduism, as is evidenced by that supreme master of trenchant style and epigrammatic thought, Vemana, one of the greatest critics of life that South India has produced, and that other iconoclast, Pothuluri Veerabrahmam.

..If the mountainous Andhra, which I have called the "Parvateya" region has produced Vemana, the "Sagara" has produced Kumarilabhatta, Thikkana, and the commercial colonising enterprise, which have taken our people to the Far East including the Philippines. In the Parvateya Andhra sculptures of Ajanta, you find the same direct, natural, simple appealing style and life force as Vemana in his verse.

Vemana was a villager by birth, and if we could refer to the caste of a man who had discarded caste, a Reddy.

By no means a learned man, not at all a pandit but a man of profound thought, of great reflective power and penetrating intuition into life and its secular and spiritual problems. His poetry is a spring, pure and undefiled, entirely spontaneous and original in thought and in style. In three short lines he gives us a whole poem. If brevity is the soul of wit, there has been no greater wit in the world. All his similes and metaphors are drawn from woods and fields and rural scenes and atmosphere. He is both a poet of nature and a natural poet.

I said that his deep intuition penetrated into the problems of life, secular and spiritual. The two are one. It is the hypocrites whom he denounced, that pretend to spirituality while grovelling in sensuality. In common with the genius of Hinduism, Vemana holds that the supreme end to be pursued by man is the liberation of the individual soul from the cycle of births and deaths and its absorption into the Paramatma-the Supreme Soul which pervades the universe. Moksham, or liberation, which is not different from salvation and absorption into the Universal Spirit, is the objective of every wise person. But this objective cannot be gained if you are worldly and attached to the world. That attachment has its root in sensuality and that sensuality shows itself not merely in lust and in greed but in all that produces or enhances Ahankara, egoism; that is to say the feeling of pride and the placing the self above others.

Every idea or institution that differentiates man and makes him think himself to be superior is a form of Ahankara-egoism, self-love and self-pride—which inhibits the possibility of your being absorbed and dissolved into Eternal Bliss in the Universal Spirit.

Accordingly Vemana attacks with ruthless logic the different religions current in his time, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Lingaithism and Buddhism, since the followers of every one of these religions considered themselves to be separate from the rest, and superior, and well above others in their pride. Furthermore their pomposity was not based on real virtue and merit. It is pretension based on externals and through appeal to superstition, through hypocrisy and deceit, through rituals and symbols to degrade the soul instead of exalting it. Even the idea of an Avatar of God cannot be regarded as true, since God is every where and there is no sense in saying that he takes for us a special birth.

Vemana's style ranges from bitter and caustic to mild sarcasm, gentle irony and sweet humour. Humour is his characteristic. He does not argue philosophically, but hits so as to inflict a mortal wound and make these infamous pretensions ridiculous. It was Voltaire who laid down the most powerful of all maxims said that in dealing with superstition there is no use arguing. For, superstition is not amenable to reason. Sneer at it and make it ridiculous; that will have more effect. Here is an instance of the Voltairean humour of Vemana. In disproof of Avatars he says:

Kanaka mrigamu bhuvini kaladu ledanakaya

Taruni vidicchi poye dasaradhiyu

Telivilenivadu devudetlayara !

Note the irony of the term "Taruni" which means a youthful woman in the full flush of her beauty. If it had been an old frump it would not have mattered. But imagine a God leaving a beautiful woman behind, in pursuit through greed of a golden deer.

Many people impress the multitudes by performing sacrifices and claiming thereby a superior spiritual stature. But as is well-known, before the performance of the sacrifice could be commenced the Yajaman must get shaved and bathed, and here Vemana's flashing wit pierces and illumines like a Streak of lightning:

Sakala yagnamulanu sakala teerthamula

Talalu gorugakunna phalamu ledu

Mantrajalamu kante mangali jalamechchu.

Evils like social inequalities, gradations and degradations based on birth are, generally speaking, attacked on two grounds. Firstly, on amoral grounds, as wrongs, secondly on utilitarian grounds as weakening society and leading ultimately to its destruction or subjugation by a stronger power. Vemana adds yet another line of attack; such distinctions produce pride in the superiors and abasement in the inferiors-both of which are inimical to the salvation of the soul. Usually in most religions, the idea prevails that individual's salvation could be acquired irrespective of one's conduct as a member of society. It is to the immortal credit of Vemana that he propounded the view that if you want to get absorbed in to the Universal Spirit after your death, you must first get absorbed in Universal Humanity while you are alive; and this sublime feeling he expresses in the following verse:

Urivarikella vokka kanchamu betta

pottu gadipi kulamu poliyajeda

Talanu jeyi betta tagunamma jeppara

I wonder whether Vemana got this idea of eating fraternally from one plate, without distinction between man and man, from Islam. For there is just one reference in his works to Islam:

Annita paripurnudella Mahatmudu Even granting that this line is authentic, I do not think that Vemana derived anything from anybody. For he derived everything from himself.

He wonders why people do not realise that in spite of their pretensions to be different from each other and higher and lower, they are just humans of like nature, of like essence and of like end.

Bapadanaga nemi, bhaktudanaga nemi

Jogiyagananemi, Sompul leka

Yenni perulaina yinajudu poni deerchu,

There is not an aspect of Hindu religiosity which has not been the target of Vemana's satire. Can we get salvation by bathing frequently? Why, then; all the fishes must be saved ! Can we get salvation by smearing ourselves with ashes (Vibhuti) ? Why then, a donkey rolls

frequently in ashes ! Can we get salvation by eschewing eating of meat and taking to vegetarianism — as though that is a religion.

Akulella tinna meka potula kela

Kakapoyenayya kayasiddhi

Lokulela verri pokallu poduru

As regards the superstitious, what can you do with them? They are perverse by nature. You can straighten the snake-gourd by tying a stone, but how can you ever straighten a dog's tail?

Potlakaya rayi podugu tratana gatta

Leelatoda vankaleka perugu

Kukkatoka gatta kuduruna chakkaga !

In point of fact, character and nature are superior even to knowledge, You can read Vedas and recite Manthrams. Frequently your book knowledge leaves no impression on you unless you are of the right nature. This is like Christ's parable: a seed may be sown, but whether it will produce good crop depends on where it falls. The superstitious man is like a donkey carrying a load of sandalwood.

Preparation of Moksham, freedom from Samsara consists in eschewing Ahankara and avoiding the temptations that bind you to the world, to the earth, viz. lust and gold. Bhagawan Ramakrishna's warning against Kamini and Kanchana are well known. In addition, all forms of Ahankara must be overcome and overthrown. Bhagawan Ramakrishna claimed that he was the lowest of the castes and denounced caste system and caste feeling. Vemana is the poetic anticipation of Ramakrishna. "If you want to be one with God you must be one with man." Caste is not only a social curse and a political blunder, but one of the worst hindrances to Moksha; an anti-religion which hypocritically poses as religion. Get rid of it.

NOTE:

Dr.Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy (1880-1951) was well known as a political thinker, educationist, administrator, orator and writer. He founded the Andhra University and headed it as its Vice-Chancellor for eighteen years shaping it into a leading centre of study and research. In 1949 he became the Pro-Chancellor of Mysore University in which position he continued till his death in 1951.

"Vemana" is a Radio talk of C.R.Reddy (Oct. 1948, Madras Station—All India Radio) published by the Centenary Celebration Committee in Vol.I of his writings entitled, Some Great Lives.

".....Geography in his verse".... the second and third paragraph framed part of his address to the Andhra Mahasabha at Guntur delivered on the 23rd February, 1946.

1.3 ANALYSIS OF THE ESSAY "VEMANA"

1.3.1

In his Radio talk C.R.Reddy examines Vemana's contribution to the realization of a casteless society.

Vemana is a poet born in the mountainous region of Western Andhra called 'Rayalaseema'. This poor country was not much exposed to Aryan influence and Sanskrit culture. Hence it

nurtured independence of thought and spirit and produced more original works in literature than translations or adaptations. **Dwipada** and **Yakshagana** were direct appeal to the emotions of the simple folk. **Vemana**, the supreme master of the lucid Telugu verse and **Pothuluri Veerabrahmam** (the heroic crusader against superstition) were typical products of this region in the 17th century. The world-famous **Ajantha** sculpture and frescoes pertaining to this culture have the same simple and natural appeal as **Vemana's** poetry.

Vemana, a villager born in the Reddy community in the 17th century, had no formal schooling. But he was an original thinker with a keen insight into the worldly and spiritual problems of the times. His poetry—a gift of the gods—has the freshness and purity of a mountain spring. Brevity is its soul.

Vemana believes that the goal of life is liberation from the cycle of births and deaths and union with the Universal Spirit. But he hates and attacks hypocrisy and aims at exposing all impostors.

He examines the different faiths of his time—**Saivism**, **Vaishnavism**, **Lingaithism** and **Buddhism**. He hates their vain show, self-conceit and pretence, their degrading rituals and symbols, and strongly condemns them. Ridicule is the weapon of his attack. It ranges from gentle irony to biting sarcasm. There is no better remedy for superstition and hypocrisy. A bath and a shave before the performance of **Yagna** looked like an empty show to him. Social inequalities based on birth are the main target of his ridicule. They are morally wrong: they also weaken society and expose it to attacks from stronger powers. Further, they swell the pride of the 'superiors' and humiliate the 'inferiors'. Thus, both the sections get disqualified for salvation.

All pretensions are to be condemned—bathing, **vibhuti**, vegetarianism and the like. By themselves they are not marks of superiority. A moral crook or a pretender practising these can never get purified. Character and human kindness are far more important than bookish knowledge—another mask worn by hypocrites. Knowledge of the **Vedas** too can be wasteful like the load of sandalwood on a donkey's back.

Ego must be shed; the lures of lust and gold should be overcome. One can attain union with God only when one has become one with man. Caste, as practised now, is a social curse and a political blunder. It is the worst hindrance to salvation, the goal of life.

According to **C.R.Reddy**, **Vemana's** attacks are directed not against the original Hindu division of society based on human nature and functions, but at the rigid, meaningless caste divisions as actually practised during, and since **Vemana's** time. **Reddy** says that they are a social curse and a political blunder.

Self-check Exercise - 1

What is the main target of **Vemana's** ridicule ?

1.3.2

Let us now consider **Reddy's** argument. **Vemana** was born in Western Andhra which being mountainous and isolated was not much exposed to Sanskrit culture. It is not as fertile and advanced as Coastal Andhra, but it has excelled in independence of thought and spirit and produced original literary works. People of this area are simple, plain, affectionate and hospitable. **Dwipada** and **Yakshagana** are their typical literary forms reflecting their traits — freedom of spirit and guilelessness. **Vemana**, the master of epigram and satirical vigour, and **Pothuluri Veerabrahmam** the dynamic propagator of **Adwaita** among the villagers, were the men of destiny, the rebels and reformers of this region. The famous **Ajantha** sculptures and frescoes breathe the same spirit in the realm of art as **Vemana** in his simple and forceful poetry.

Vemana was not a learned man but a sound thinker who reflected on the social and spiritual problems of his time. His poetry is pure, natural and spontaneous like a mountain spring. Its thought and style are refreshingly original. His lines have a brevity and force all their own. He is a born poet of Nature drawing inspiration from his surroundings.

Most people wear masks and hide their real nature. They pose as spiritual leaders but actually they are selfish and sensual. Vemana tears off their masks and shows them as they are. He upholds the Hindu view of life that **Moksha** (liberation) is the ultimate goal of man. The individual soul (**Jivatma**) of man finally achieves union with the Universal soul (**Paramatma**). This can be achieved only through the conquest of (**Ahankara**) Egoism and (**mamakara**) Attachment which are man's worst enemies. Pride and Sensuality are the worst obstacles to spirituality. By conquering these man can be absorbed into and dissolved in Eternal Bliss.

From this conviction Vemana condemns the followers of the different faiths of his time: **Saivism, Vaishnavism, and Buddhism**. Most of them were hypocrites, according to him. They took to rituals and symbols in order to deceive the world. Vemana exposed them all and attacked them mercilessly in his verse. Such rituals would degrade the soul rather than uplift it. In his disgust Vemana went to the extent of laughing at the concept of 'Avatar'.

Vemana's style varies from mild and gentle irony to biting and bitter sarcasm. His humour has a peculiar flavour. Arguing philosophically he deals a deadly blow and exposes the pompous pretenders. Like the French Philosopher, Voltaire, he has no sympathy for the superstitious. Argument is not helpful and so he employs mockery, ridicule, sarcasm as his weapons of attack.

Ridiculing the concept of 'Avatar' he says

Without considering whether a golden deer can at all exist, Dasarathi (Rama) left his charming, young wife alone. How can he be a god?

Reddy adds spice to this gibe by underlining the epithet 'Taruni' Rama's folly is heightened by this keyword, which means a girl in the prime of youth. Lured by a golden deer, Rama left not ill-dressed old hag but a girl in the bloom of youth. How can he be regarded as God?

Next, Reddy refers to the custom of a **Yajaman** having a ceremonial shave and a bath before performing a **Yagna** (sacrifice). Vemana scoffs at this practice thus:

All Yagnas and pilgrimages become fruitless without shaving! The barbers' spray is holier than the sprinkle during the ritual!

Reddy goes on to say that social inequalities based on birth are usually condemned as moral wrongs. Secondly, they weaken and break up society and expose it to the risk of conquest by a stronger power from outside. There is yet another danger stemming from this inequality. These absurd distinctions make the so-called 'superiors' arrogant, and they humiliate the 'inferiors'. For both of them salvation is delayed and even, denied. So Vemana affirms that service to fellowmen is the way to '**Mukti**' and ultimate absorption into the Universal Spirit. Man must achieve, during his life, the goal of universal brotherhood before he can dream of liberation or '**Moksha**'. Vemana exhorts:

Let the entire human family eat from one plate; cultivate affinity, destroy caste; take a solemn oath to do so.

This idea is usually associated with Islam but Vemana never borrowed ideas from anybody. It must have been entirely his.

Vemana wonders why people persist in their folly (of caste) even though all are just humans, sharing the same essence.

Brahmana, Devotee, Yogi (jogi) Do these names matter ? No, Death sternly levels them all.

Vemana attacks Hindu religiosity thus:

'Can bath confer Moksha? then all fish must be liberated souls

'Can Vibhudi liberate? If so, donkeys rolling in ashes are verily blessed'

'Can Vegetarianism save souls ? Why, then, goats top the list (of muktas)

But the superstitious people are wrong headed. Vemana pours ridicule on them:

The snake-gourd grows straight when a weight is hung on it; Can a dog's tail be thus straightened?

Knowledge of even the Vedas and the mantras is of no use unless it results in better character and nobler nature.

Christ's 'Parable of the Sower and the Seed' is of deep significance. A good seed sown yields a good crop only in the right soil.

The superstitious, for all their book knowledge, are the despair of Vemana. He likens them to donkeys carrying a load of sandal wood, profiting little in the process.

The mean fellow acquiring vast knowledge remains unrefined. Is the donkey any better for the load of perfumes it carries?

In conclusion, Reddy sums up Vemana's message thus:

The goal of life is Moksha, liberation of man from the cycle of births and deaths. To achieve this man must get over Egoism (ahankara) and Attachment (mamakara). Temptations like lust and gold (kamini and kanchana) should be conquered. Reddy cites the example of Sri Ramakrishna who calls himself the lowliest of the lowly. He is totally free from Ego and Attachment.

He too denounced the caste system as it prevailed in his time. Vemana thus becomes 'the poetic anticipation' of Ramakrishna. Both give essentially the same message: 'If you want to be one with God, you must be one with man'. So caste as it obtains in Vemana's time and since his time, is a social curse and a political blunder. It is anti-religion. It is the worst obstacle to Moksha. It must be eradicated forthwith.

Self-check exercise - 2

What was the technique of writing employed by Vemana as a weapon to attach social evil of caste?

1.5 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed that in the name of caste and religion certain evils entered into human life which are a danger to mankind. This unit has explained that according to Vemana, certain rituals and symbols are employed by certain hypocrites to deceive the world. This unit has discussed the technique and style employed by Vemana to condemn certain social evils. It has discussed that Vemana is both a poet of nature and a natural poet.

1.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How does geography determine racial character?
2. "Vemana" is both a poet of nature and a natural poet". Elucidate.
3. What are the obstacles to "Moksha" ?
4. On what grounds does Vemana attack social inequalities?

1.7 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

Social inequality based on birth is the main target of Vemana's ridicule.

S C E - 2

Vemana employed mockery, ridicule and sarcasm as his weapon to attack the social evil of caste.

BRAOU

BLOCK –V

UNIT - 2: ISSUES RAISED

2.0. OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- examine critically the issues raised in Dr. Reddy's Radio talk
- discuss the problems of life both worldly and spiritual as were pointed out by Vemana
- discuss Vemana as a poet of nature and a natural poet.

2.1. CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Issues raised
- 2.4 Vemana is the poetic anticipation of Rama Krishna
- 2.5 Glossary
- 2.6 Sample questions
- 2.8 Answers to self-check exercises
- 2.9 Suggested Reading.

2.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the problems and issues raised in the Radio talk. It discusses the poetic technique of Vemana while explaining his merits, as a natural poet. In this unit an attempt is made to explain certain stanzas from Vemana's poems which are relevant to the issues raised in the talk. This unit also describes Vemana as a champion of casteless society. At the end of the unit certain important terms are glossed for your ready reference.

2.3. ISSUES RAISED

In unit 1 the main ideas in Reddy's talk on Vemana are discussed. A critical examination of the issues raised in the talk can now be made.

1. If brevity is the soul of wit, there has been no greater wit in the world.

Reddy speaks of the poetic genius of Vemana and pays him a glowing tribute.

Vemana has a rare insight into the problems of life both worldly and spiritual. His poetic utterances are made in pure and simple Telugu; brevity gives life to them and makes them memorable. Yet they have a deeper meaning for those who think and reflect on their content.

In three short lines of **Ataveladi** metre Vemana gives us a whole poem. Judged by this standard he is the greatest wit in the world.

‘Brevity is the soul of wit’ is taken from Shakespeare’s **Hamlet**. Ironically, it is put into the mouth of Polonius who preaches ‘brevity’ without practising it.

2. Vemana is both a poet of nature and a natural poet. Reddy admires the sparkling epigrams (short and pithy statements) of Vemana. All his figures of speech (similies and metaphors) are drawn from the Woods and fields and the village milieu familiar to him. Poetry flows out of him effortlessly and makes him a natural poet. He is also a poet of nature because nature is often reflected in his verse and gives life to his utterance.

3. Kanaka mrigamu bhuvini kaladu ledanakaya
Taruni Vidichipoya Dasarathiyu
Telivi lene vadu devudetlayera.

Reddy quotes this stanza to illustrate the power of Vemana’s weapons of attack: **ridicule** and **Sarcasm**.

Rama leaves his wife alone in the forest and goes in pursuit of the golden deer. He does not think for a moment whether such an animal can ever exist in this world. How can such a man lacking in common sense be an incarnation of Divinity (an Avatar)?

Reddy pauses to stress the term **Taruni** to make Vemana’s ridicule all the more pungent. Rama’s folly (of deserting his wife) is all the more great because the person so forsaken is a girl in the prime of youth, not an ill-dressed old hag.

Note: (Both Vemana and Reddy seem to be speaking in a lighter vein here.)

The stanza as it reads here is cited as an illustration of Vemana’s disbelief in an Avatar. This stanza has alternative versions. In one of them:

i) ‘Daivamaina Kshanamu Dalachuchundenu gade. Look! even a God is after money’ is the sense here. In this version Vemana does not doubt Rama’s divinity—even he (a deity) runs after money; so potent is money.

In another version, the entire stanza reads differently.

Kanaka mrigamu bhuvini galuggancherugada
Ramuderuka galgu raju gado
Chetukalamunaku chedu buddhi puttunu.

Vemana’s inference is different here. It is not through delusion that Rama, a wise king, acts thus. Adversity forces such a ruinous course of action upon him.

It is not known which of these versions is authentically Vemana’s. His utterances are all spontaneous and prompted by the mood of the moment. They are, full of contradictions.

If we interpret the stanza as it is given in the text, we may call Vemana a disbeliever of the concept of ‘**Avathara**’.

4. Uri Vari Kella vokka kanchamu betti
(urvi Vari kella)
Pothu gadipi kulamu poliya jesi
Talanu jeyi betta thaganamma jeppara

Reddy cites this verse in support of Vemana’s ideal of a casteless society.

Social inequalities are morally wrong. No man is justified in considering himself superior to others in the society on the basis of his birth or his caste. Secondly, these differences weaken society and expose it to attacks from outside and make a nation slavish. Thirdly, caste divides society into 'superiors' and 'inferiors': the former get conceited and the latter suffer diffidence. And both get disqualified for 'Moksha' (salvation). So Vemana advises that such stupid distinctions should be wiped out.

All the people in a village, may, all the people in the world should eat from one plate and thus root out caste. This is the practice in Islam. But Vemana's idea is his own, not borrowed. He says that people must take a solemn oath in support of this ideal of oneness and create confidence in their fellowmen.

5. Akulella tinna mekapotula kela
kakapoyanayya kaya siddhi
lokulella verri pokallu poduru

Vemana has a contempt for show and pretension. Vegetarianism is one such show. On that basis the vegetarians show off their superiority to meat-eaters. But by itself this eating-habit cannot make them better in any way, otherwise the goat which eats only leaves is a stricter vegetarian and qualifies for a higher place -- How foolish are men's ways and how absurd their expectations! Bathing and Vibhuti are likewise mistaken for means of purification. In such a case, Vemana mockingly asks: Are not fishes and donkeys far purer than man because of their more steady habits?

6. Potlakaya rayi podugutrata gatta
Leela thoda Vankaleka perugu
Kukka toka gatta kuduruna chakkga?

A dog's tail can never be made straight. Even so, superstitious people who are perverse cannot be educated out of their follies. They are not amenable to argument or advice or persuasion. Ridicule is the right weapon to beat them with, just as trying stones alone can make the snake gourd grow straight.

6. Heenudenni vidyalila nabhyasinchina
Ghanudu gadu moratu janudu gani
Parimalamulu gardhabhamu moya ghanamoune?

Mere book learning makes no one better than one is. Even knowledge of the Vedas or Mantras is unavailing if the scholar is not of the right nature. It is like a good seed sown on barren soil. It is no better than a donkey carrying sandalwood. The superstitious and vicious men do not profit from Vedic or some other learning. Higher learning, spiritual knowledge is unavailing to vicious and low natures as perfumes are to the donkey. Neither of them gets refined or transformed.

Self-check exercise-1

Why does Vemana express contempt towards Vegetarianism?

2.4. VEMANA IS THE POETIC ANTICIPATION OF RAMA KRISHNA.

Reddy describes Vemana as a champion of casteless society. He attacks 'caste' as practised in Hindu society and ridicules the follies of the so-called superiors. He does not preach the philosophy of equality consistently but his contempt for caste — distinctions and social inequalities is very clear. No pretender or wrong-doer in society escapes his attack.

Sri Ramakrishna did similar work on a much larger scale in the 19th century. He rooted out all distinctions between man and woman, between the rich and the poor, the literate and

the illiterate, Brahmins and Chandalas, Hindus and Muslims, Hindus and Christians. We may say that Vemana's dream of a casteless society was fulfilled by Sri Ramakrishna later. Ramakrishna lived the Eternal Religion (Sanathana Dharma) and his disciple Vivekananda, propagated his master's gospel and awakened India and the rest of the globe. Vemana's attacks are bitter, however witty his verse might be. But Ramakrishna's mission of religious reform is free from bitterness and hatred. He advocates a synthesis and harmony of all religions.

Self-check exercise – 2

Compare and contrast Vemana and Ramakrishna in their attack on caste and religion.

2.5. GLOSSARY

tract	region or area
accessible	that which can be reached, entered
Note: a colon or comma would be more appropriate after Andhra; the rest of the sentence beginning with 'the mountainous tract ...' is put in apposition to Western Andhra. This part of the sentence gives a fuller description of 'Western Andhra'.	
robust	strong, sturdy
originations	original works
determinant	the factor that decides
expeditions	war-like enterprises
hospitality	friendly welcome and entertainment of guests
isolation	state of complete separation
adaptations	literary works reproduced with slight modifications
unsophisticated	natural, innocent
Dwipada	a couplet; two lines of verse of the same length and metrical structure
Yakshagana	Typical Andhra literary form consisting of dance and song, designed for stage production.
trenchant	incisive, vigorous
Epigrammatic	short and witty in expression
iconoclast	one who attacks popular beliefs which he thinks, are mistaken or unwise; one who assails cherished errors & superstitions
Potuluri Veerabrahmam	a great exponent of Adwaita philosophy; a religious head who propagated Adwaita among villages in the 17th century – His 'Kalagnana' is a classic
Kumarila Bhatta	a Vedic scholar who opposed Buddhism before Sankara.
Thikkana	the great Telugu Poet of the 13th century – a creative translator of Vyasa's Mahabharata : 15 cantos (4th-18th)
Ajantha	the world-famous cave-paintings & sculptures in the Sahyadri hills excavated between 200 BC and 650 AD
discarded	gave up as useless

intuition	power of instant understanding without conscious reasoning
undefiled	not made impure
brevity	briefness, shortness (of statement)
soul of wit	what gives life to clever and humorous expression of ideas
simile	figure of speech; direct comparison of one thing with another using 'like' or 'as'
metaphor	an indirect or implied simile
hypocrites	people who hide their real nature or belief
denounce	speak publicly against
grovelling	taking pleasure in mean or low things
Moksham	liberation
enhance	heighten, intensify
egoism	self conceit or egotism
differentiate	bring out the difference between
inhibit	hinder, restrain
ruthless	cold, merciless
Saivism	a Bhakti cult devoted to Siva
Vaishnavism	a cult devoted to Vishnu
Lingaithism	Siva cult emphasizing devotion and faith
Buddhism	a religion originated by Buddha
pomposity	showy display of dignity or importance
rituals	established procedures for a religious ceremony
symbols	signs, marks, etc., representing something (Ex: Om, cross, crescent)
caustic	bitter, severe
sarcasm	a bitter remark made in scorn or contempt, intended to wound the feelings
inflict	cause to suffer
Voltaire	famous French Philosopher, historian, dramatist (1694–1778). His inspiring work has brought about phenomenal progress of the world in enlightenment and humanity in the 2nd half of the 18th century.
frump	unattractive, untidy woman
subjugation	bringing under complete control or subjection.
propounded	put forward for consideration
authentic	genuine; known to be true
eschewing	avoiding
perverse	contrary to reason
Parable	story designed to teach a moral lesson
Poetic anticipation	a poetic forerunner;

2.6. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed certain issues and problems raised in the talk. It has also explained certain stanzas from Vemana as they are relevant even to-day. This unit has brought out a comparative reference between Vemana and Rama Krishna Paramahansa. This unit has provided you the meanings of essential terms and references.

2.7. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on Vemana, the poet and critic.
2. 'Vemana' is the poetic anticipation of Rama Krishna'. Elucidate?
3. Why is communal eating commended by Vemana?

2.8. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E -- 1

Vemana expresses contempt towards Vegetarianism because he feels that vegetarians show off their superiority to meat eaters. He also feels that this eating habit cannot make them better in any way. Vemana feels that the goat which eats only leaves is a stricter vegetarian and so qualifies for a higher place.

S C E -- 2

Vemana used satire and ridicule while attacking the caste and religion. His attacks are bitter though his verses are witty. Rama Krishna's mission of religious reforms is free from bitterness and hatred. He advocates a synthesis and harmony of all religions.

2.9. SUGGESTED READING

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Vemana | Lectures in Telugu,
Sri R.A.K. Sarma
Published by Andhra University Press,
Waltair. |
| 2. Lecture on Vemana | M.Kondanarama Reddy
Chaitanya Lahari Yuva Bharathi,
Secunderabad. |
| 3. Selected Writings of Dr.C.R.Reddy | Vol.1. Some Great Lives, Edit. by Prof. B. Muttu
Swamy. |
| 4. C.R.Reddy's Essays and Addresses | Ed. by Dr. K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar |

Mr. R.Pandu Ranga Rao

BLOCK VI PROSE FOR OUR TIME

Block six has six units.

- Unit 1** The English Essay-discusses the origin and development of the English essay. It discusses the great essayists like Bacon, Addison, Steele, Goldsmith and Charles Lamb along with modern essayists - Russell, Nehru, Trevelyan and Lynd.
- Unit 2** Dr. Johnson, talks about the distinguished essayist Robert Lynd. It discusses the defects and merits of Dr. Johnson as brought out by Lynd. This unit discusses the age of Johnson.
- Unit 3** History and the Reader discusses the liberal approach of Trevelyan to human life. It explains the author's view that history should be presented in a variety of forms.
- Unit 4** Life's philosophy discusses Nehru's intellectual, moral emotional and scientific approach to life. It explains that the author is interested in this world and in this life.
- Unit 5** Science – The Destroyer Or Creator shows the relationship between science and literature. It emphasizes the point that science, if used rightly, can help human talent of creativity to flourish
- Unit 6** The place of Science in Liberal Education, discusses the need for a study of science and a scientific attitude in education and culture. It says that most of our education comes from our personal experience.

BLOCK–VI PROSE FOR OUR TIME

UNIT - 1: THE ENGLISH ESSAY

1.0. OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the origin and development of the English Essay
- discuss the great essayists like Bacon, Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Charles Lamb and also the modern essayists - Russell, Nehru, Trevelyan, Lynd etc.,

1.1. CONTENTS

1.0. Objectives

1.1 Contents

1.2 Introduction

1.3 The English Essay

1.4 Let's sum up

1.5 Sample Questions

1.6 Answers to Self-check exercises

1.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the origin and development of the English Essay. This unit discusses the point that the English essay has a multitude of forms and manners, and not much of rules and regulations. It also discusses the role of an essayist as a social philosopher, critic, and annotator.

1.3. THE ENGLISH ESSAY

1.3.1.

The English essay has a long tradition. The word 'essay' is from the French 'essai' which means an attempt and sure enough an essay is characteristically not a conclusive treatment of a subject. There is always the expectation that much more can be said about the matter. Dr. Johnson, himself one of the greatest English essayists; has said that an essay is a loose sally of the mind and if one were to look at a typical essay, say, by Charles Lamb's, one immediately understands Dr. Johnson's definition. Lamb's essays play around a subject but they are not loose in the sense of being disorganized. Even Dr. Johnson does not imply that an essay is disorganized when he describes it as a loose sally. Indeed, the essay is a well organised literary piece and one always gets the impression that the essayist knows what he is about. He may give the impression of playing about but behind his engaging style there is always a seriousness of intention. The essayist casts a spell over the reader so that his meaning gets implanted indelibly in the reader's mind.

Montaigne was a French writer and one of the chief employers of the essay form of expression. He said that the creature he knew best was himself and his essays were about himself. Montaigne's example points to a basic fact about essayists. Whatever their subjects, the essayists reveal their personality. This is not true of other forms of literature. The novelist, for example, may intrude into the novel but that is not his main purpose. He is more interested in the creation of characters and their interplay. He is interested in delineating the social conditions and he is interested in telling a story and in the construction of a plot. Again, the dramatist is the most impersonal of literary men. His form prevents the expression of his personality. He is forced to show characters and ideas clashing dramatically, one or more characters may be his mouthpieces, but they are mouthpieces, not the author himself. His main manner is to enact action and to produce effective dialogue. Poetry is closer to the essay than any other form because poetry is, by and large, personal, particularly in its lyrical form. The Romantic poet is always revealing his personality.

Even the public poetry of the Augustans, to take an extreme example, ultimately is a revelation of the poet's likes and dislikes. Pope and Johnson reveal themselves as much as Wordsworth or Shelley. Of course, epic poetry is closer to the novel in its narrative form, but most poetry is quite as personal as the essay.

While these generalizations about the Essay are safe, it is not my intention to set any rigid limits to the form. In fact, the English Essay, as W.E. Williams, in his *Introduction to A Book of English Essays* (Penguin: 1941) says, "has a multitude of forms and manners, and scarcely any rules and regulations". For Williams a minimum definition is that the "Essay is a piece of prose, usually on the short side which is not devoted to narrative". The essayist, of course, can use anecdotes to make his point, or like the novelist conjure up characters like Beau Tibbs in Goldsmith, Will Wimble and Roger de Coverley in Addison and Steele, and Boyers in Lamb. "But his chief interest is not that of the story-teller. The essayist's usual role is that of the social philosopher, the critic, the annotator". This appears to be a reasonable remark.

Self-check exercise – 1

What is an essay according to W.E. Williams?

1.2.2.

Bacon was the first great English essayist and he wrote in a compact and laconic style. Bacon's sayings are memorable and, represent the quintessence of his thought on some topic of social custom or behaviour. He is also capable of illuminating his bare truths with brilliant analogies and images. For example, he likens the ill-natured man "to the thorn or briar which prick or scratch because they can do no other". Another well known example of his pithy statements is from *Of Studies*: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested". After Bacon the essay developed in the hands of the 18th century writers like Addison, Steele and Goldsmith. 18th century essay is intimately linked to the 18th century periodical and newspaper, in short the whole mechanism of the new journalism. By the end of the 18th century nearly 60 daily or weekly papers were being published in London alone and good number of these supplemented the news with articles of comment upon literature, manners and politics. *The Spectator* concentrated entirely on criticism. The Essay has become free to comment on any subject. Addison did this with meticulousness and elaborateness. His essays are models of precision and his sentences have balance. In the manner of a stonemason or a carpenter he introduces anti-theses in his sentences. His diction is formal as the costume of his day, never relapsing into a full-blooded colloquialism, never robust in its humour. His style is a lesson for anyone wanting to master the mechanics of good English. Here is an example:

I would desire the fair sex to consider how impossible it is for them to add anything that can be ornamental to what is already the master-piece of nature. The head

has the most beautiful appearance, as well as the highest station, in a human figure. Nature has laid out all her art in beautifying the face: she has touched it with a vermilion, planted in it a double row of ivory, made it the seat of smiles and blushes, lighted it up and enlivened it with the brightness of the eyes, hung it on each side with curious organs of sense, given it airs and graces that cannot be described, and surrounded it with such a flowing shade of hair as sets all its beauties in the most agreeable light. In short, she seems to have designed the head as the cupola to the most glorious of her works and when we load it with such a pile of supernumerary ornaments, we destroy the symmetry of the human figure, and foolishly contrive to call off the eye from great and real beauties, to childish gewgaws, ribands, and bone-lace".

Goldsmith's essays are endearing and his Beau Tibbs is one of the great figures in literature. Like Addison, Goldsmith can be equally elegant but he is more supple than Addison. He too can comment on social behaviour but he is less pontifical and more humane than him. Goldsmith is clearly the less formal of the two writers:

"Though naturally pensive yet I am fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus dismissing the mind from duty. From this motive I am often found in the centre of a crowd, and whenever pleasure is to be sold, am always a purchaser. In those places without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward; work my passions into similitude of frivolous earnestness, shout as they shout, and condemn as they happen to disapprove. A mind thus sunk for a while below its natural standard, is qualified for stronger flights, as those first retire who would spring forward with greater vigour".

This passage is typical of Goldsmith's conversational, intimate and friendly tone.

When we come to the Romantic period, roughly between 1770 and 1830, the two major English essayists are Lamb and Hazlitt. Hazlitt combines passion with intellect. He is often precise in his definitions, very logical, at times esoteric and always very emotional.

"A mere scholar, who knows nothing but books, must be ignorant even of them. 'Books do not teach the use of books'. How should he know anything of a work who knows nothing of the subject of it? The learned pedant is conversant with books only as they are made of other books and those again of others, without end. He parrots those who have parroted others. He can translate the same word into ten different languages, but he knows nothing of the thing which it means in any one of them. He stuffs his head with authorities built on authorities, with quotations quoted from quotations, while he locks up his senses, his understanding, and his heart."

From the censoriousness of Hazlitt it is pleasant to turn to Elia, as Lamb called himself. Lamb is essentially a creator of moods and his essays work on the principle of poetic suggestion. For Lamb a subject is often a pretext for all kinds of digressions. As Williams says: "It moves him as a mind flutters the thousand bits of glass which hung from the ridges of a Japanese temple; it sets him off on an excursion as liable to land him into the fanciful as anywhere else". Yet Lamb's essays are hardly disorganized. They are very disciplined and his fancy and his responsiveness to moods are at the service of a pattern of progress and development. If you want to see this at work I can only refer you to his delightful essays, too long for quotation, particularly *In Praise of Chimney Sweepers* or *The South-Sea House*. The digressions shock us into an awareness of their relation to the main argument and heighten our pleasure.

These, indeed, are the great English essayists against whose achievement we have to place a Bronowski, a Russell, a Nehru, a Trevelyan and a Lynd. A common strand that brings each

of these essayists together is a sense of moral purpose. There is in each of them, to quote from Williams, a "zeal to edify and clarify our thought upon a thousand different themes". In all of them the purpose is boldly revealed and in all of them some reflection is called for if we are to grasp their closely argued essays. Lynd who is capable of humour shows only a little of it in his essay on Johnson and the others are all very serious. Humour and irony which distinguish the English essay are absent in the essays which these writers have given us for study. This is not to downgrade their achievement because their seriousness is no less a strength; because as Williams put it, "The English Essay is a 'serious' mode of literature"; and the form may entertain but must always edify, and this each one of our modern essayists does.

Self-check exercise – 2

What is the common strand which brings each of the essayists mentioned in the unit together?

1.3.2.

Robert Lynd (1879-1949) is one of the most distinguished of modern essayists and it is no accident that he has chosen Dr. Johnson for a subject. Samuel Johnson was a great essayist himself and Lynd is able to talk about Dr. Johnson's personality with detachment. Humour is possible only through detachment but in this essay Lynd is less humorous and witty than he is in an essay like the famous 'Money box'. Lynd's ability to say things precisely, however, stands out in this essay on Johnson.

Jacob Bronowski is not British but has a Polish background. His use of English language is thus peculiarly his own but he uses it effectively. He has written a very known book on the English poet, William Blake, and perhaps it was this exposure to Blake's mysticism that has enabled Bronowski to speak of science as destroyer or creator from a humanist's angle and with the passion of a Romantic.

G.M. Trevelyan is related to Lord Macaulay whose biographer, Sir G. D. Trevelyan has a lucid prose style and his exposition has that typical English quality of energy, manliness and clarity.

Quite the opposite must be said of Jawaharlal Nehru, our first Prime Minister. In the essay 'Life's Philosophy' where he discusses the religious life, he avoids being dogmatic and assertive. The essay is distinguished by its attempt at getting across the exact shade of feeling.

Finally, Lord Bertrand Russell is known for his passion for reducing philosophical matters to mathematical propositions. His analytic faculty is highly developed and his humanism is based on his analysis of society and civilization. His style is lucid and exact and the hallmark of this essay on 'The Place of Science in Liberal Education' is its authoritativeness.

Self-check exercise – 3

What is the speciality of Robert Lynd as observed in his essay on Dr. Johnson?

1.4. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed what an essay is about. It showed how different essayists established it as a literary form. It has also discussed the purpose of an essayist and the subject matter of an essay. It has introduced to you several essayists whose essays are taken for study in this Block. It has pointed out the merits and demerits of these essayists.

1.5. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What do you know about Goldsmith's essays?
2. Write about Montaigne the French Writer.
3. How does Dr. Johnson define an essay?

1.6. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

An essay, according to W.E. Williams, is a piece of prose, usually on the short side, which is not devoted to narrative.

S C E - 2

A sense of moral purpose is the common strand which brings each of the essayists mentioned in the unit together.

S C E - 3

Robert Lynd wrote an essay on Dr. Johnson which was a great essayist himself. Lynd's ability to say things precisely stands out in this essay on Johnson.

BRAOU

BLOCK - VI

UNIT - 2: DR. JOHNSON

2.0. OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- discuss Robert Lynd as a distinguished modern essayist
- justify why Lynd has chosen Dr. Johnson for his essay.
- explain the defects as well as the merits of Dr. Johnson

2.1. CONTENTS

- 2.0. Objectives
- 2.1. Contents
- 2.2. Introduction
- 2.3. Dr. Johnson
- 2.4. Johnson's personality
- 2.5. The Age of Johnson
- 2.6. Johnson's works
- 2.7. Let's sum up
- 2.8. Sample questions
- 2.9. Answers to self-check exercises.

2.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the defects of Dr. Johnson as pointed out by Lynd's physical appearance, habits, his irritable nature etc. This unit also discusses that Dr. Johnson's awkwardness and repulsion was counter-balanced by his charm. This unit explains that Dr. Johnson knew life and he used this knowledge well in his conversation. In this unit it was pointed out that Johnson, though a dictator in conversation, has been a dictator who cared for his people. This unit has discussed the age of Johnson and also Johnson's works.

2.3. DR. JOHNSON

Robert Lynd is a distinguished modern essayist. Among his well known essays are 'The Darkness', 'The Money Box', 'On Not Being a Philosopher', 'Why We Hate Insects' and 'The Pleasures of Ignorance'. He is an essayist with a penchant for the exact word. He has humour and wit and he always gives you the impression of being very knowledgeable.

Lynd's essay on Dr. Johnson has a generous proportion of well written statements. Here are two examples. Of Dr. Johnson, Lynd writes:

- (i) "He was most active when he was most slothful, and never wasted his time less than when he was wasting his time". (p.27)
- (ii) Johnson is in the best sense of the word all the more comic a figure because he is so tragic a figure." (p.36)

2.3.1.

Statements like this could be the result only of deep understanding. Lynd has, what he claims Johnson has, genius, and genius, as Lynd defines it, is "due to an infinite capacity for taking pains". (p.28)

Lynd's essay on Johnson may make you wonder why he chose Johnson for a subject. Johnson was probably the greatest of English men of letters in the Eighteenth Century. He was born in 1709 at Lichfield in England and he dies in 1784. During these years Johnson wrote a great deal and talked a good deal. A good number of books have appeared in recent times on Johnson's famous writings among which are his famous poems; 'London' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes'; his play, 'Irene', which ran for nine nights, a record in Johnson's time (but it is not acted these days) his romance, *Rasselas*; his *Dictionary* the first great lexicographical effort in English; his excellent editions of Shakespeare for which he wrote a very well known Preface, and his *Lives* of 52 English poets including Milton, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Addison, and Gray. James Boswell wrote the most famous *Life* of Johnson, but we have had recently an excellent psychological study of 'The Doctor' done by the distinguished American scholar, Walter Jackson Bate. During the 19th century William Hazlitt and Lord Macaulay wrote about Johnson but they concentrated on his personality. The modern period has concentrated on the works which are a product of that personality. The truth, however, is that for a man like Johnson it would be equally wrong to ignore the personality behind the works as it would be to concentrate on the personality to the exclusion of the works. Lynd ignores the works and concentrates on the virtues and defects of Johnson the man. The only reference Lynd makes to the works is in this passage:

It must be remembered that the Johnson whom we know best—the Johnson of those last twenty years from which the first-hand accounts of Boswell, Mrs Thrale and Fanny Burney are drawn was a Johnson who had almost ceased to write and who did little else but talk. The poems, the *Rambler*, the *Dictionary*, the *Idler*, and *Rasselas* were all behind him, and the *Journey to the Western Isles* and the *Lives of the Poets* alone remained to be written.(p.38)

Lynd is right about this gap between the early and later works. But the point is that Johnson's reputation as the great autocrat, the great Club Man and the great conversationalist had already been made in the Victorian period. Was it necessary for Lynd to underscore what men like Hazlitt and Macaulay had already done? Lynd charmingly justifies the approach of his essay by quoting Mrs. Thrale who said of Johnson:

His life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than talking, when he was not absolutely employed in some serious piece of work and whatever work he did seemed so much below his powers of performance that he appeared the idlest of all human beings.

Mrs. Thrale's authority is, of course, no small thing, and Lynd cleverly uses her to justify his purpose. Lynd clinches the issue by saying: "The truth is, Dr. Johnson built up his fame with his writings, and put a tower on his fame with his conversation". Lynd thus puts forward a clever reason for concentrating on Johnson's conversation and through the conversation on Johnson's personality.

Lynd begins by enumerating Johnson's defects. **His appearance** is first taken up and the opinions of Sir John Hawkins, Gibler, Cooper, Boswell, Johnson's wife and Hogarth are listed. Fanny Burney, the novelist declared, Lynd says that Johnson had "a face the most ugly, a person the most awkward, and manners the most singular that ever were or ever can be seen". If Johnson's appearance was one of monstrous grotesqueness, his **habits** were not less eccentric and grotesque. Johnson's facial and bodily contortions during conversation, the perpetual restless motion of his feet, hand, arms and body while he talked, his lack of table manners at the dinner-table. ("As a rule, he would neither talk nor listen till he had satisfied his appetite, which was so fierce and indulged with such intenseness that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible) and other peculiar habits are enumerated. He was an unaccommodating and eccentric guest whom Mr. Boswell was glad to see the last of because he persisted in "turning the candles with their heads downwards, when they did not burn bright enough" and let the wax drop upon the carpet". Johnson's **dress** was equally eccentric. He looked more like a beggar than a well-known writer. Bennett Langton, who went to see him, was shocked at the sight of Johnson "with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head", and Boswell found him "sufficiently uncouth".

Lynd, after enumerating the defects of Johnson in so far as he was uncouth, untidy, eccentric in his habits, draws attention to his irritable, gloomy and surly rudeness. The cause for Johnson's irascibility and surliness might have been his "vile melancholy" but his contemporaries were certainly affected by it. Lord Auchinleck, Boswell's father, called Johnson a brute, and even Boswell considered him to be victriolic. No friend of Johnson's escaped being snubbed. Mrs. Thrale, Hannah More, Boswell and many others suffered at his hands. Johnson justified his rudeness by saying that he had done more good by his rudeness than he would have if he had been gentle. "Obscenity and impiety have always been repressed in my company", he observed. And Lynd rounds off his catalogue of Johnson's defects by saying that he was a "virtuous bully." "I have begun", Lynd writes:

with a catalogue of the defects of Johnson as a social being, because it is only when we realise how unfitted he was in many respects for society that we can understand how prodigious is the position that he occupies in the affections of men and women today. Poor, repulsively ugly, uncouth, with disgusting table manners, surly irascible, a bully, intolerant, dirty, slovenly and ridiculous in dress, eccentric, unhealthy, morbid and gloomy, haunted by a bad conscience tormented by the fear of insanity and death-one would say it was the portrait of a sour misanthropist, doomed to avoid and to be avoided by his fellow men - Johnson, on the other hand, had scarcely a defect that was not more than counterbalanced by a corresponding virtue.

Lynd next begins to enumerate Johnson's virtues.

Self-check exercise - 1

What are the defects of Dr. Johnson that Robert Lynd enumerated in his essays?

2.3.2.

Whoever met Johnson found his awkwardness and repulsion counterbalanced by his **charm**. He was less churlish than charitable. He may have been dictatorial but he loved to give pleasure. He may not have been graceful but he valued grace. He was more playful than gloomy and while morbid men shrink from company no man lived who hated solitude and loved company as much as Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter, who knew Johnson very well, says: "Solitude to him was horror; nor would he ever trust himself alone but when employed in writing or reading. He has often begged me to go home with him to prevent his being alone in the coach. Any company was better than none."

Lynd comments that Johnson's life testifies to the large variety of people he knew, men of genius as well as mean persons. Truly it could be said of Johnson that in company his talents were at their best. His industry was in conversation and he practised his art as carefully as Stevenson did writing. He always pitched his conversation at the highest level whether or not his listeners understood him and he took pains to cultivate the art of talking. He knew life and used his knowledge well in conversation. He knew that conversation was dramatic in nature and consequently was as good a listener as he was a talker. He might have been a dictator in conversation but he was a dictator who cared for his people. He was always encouraging people to talk on their favourite subjects and so got them to give of their best in his presence or in company.

Johnson knew all kinds of things. He knew all about runts, dogs, dancing, farming, thatching, malting, manufacture of gunpowder, tanning, minting. These are not subjects on which most people can say much but Johnson could. And he did this in order to be able to give as much as he received in conversation. He was driven by an insatiable curiosity and tried all kinds of experiments to satisfy it. He expressed the opinion that biography is the most useful of literary forms and he preferred it to history. Biography taught us more of man, he declared.

Johnson was concerned with common life and what he would not do on his own (hunting, for example), he would for the sake of others who liked it. He found, Lynd says, "enjoyment in enjoying the enjoyment of other people".

He was a great sport though he was not much of a sportsman. He was ever ready to take challenges. At 66 he ran a race. He was quite like a child. In old age he climbed gates to the astonishment of admirers and on one occasion, he determinedly rolled down a hill in a fit of childish high spirits. In matters of living he had no formula to bind him down.

Johnson, Lynd concludes, is a great comic character of literature, like Falstaff. Men now laugh not only at what he says but his manner of saying it. Even his contemporaries saw in him a giant of comedy, not merely an awe-inspiring literary dictator. Fanny Barney noted in her diary that "Dr. Johnson has more fun, and comical humour and love of nonsense about him than almost anybody I ever saw". Today we not only laugh with him but at him, but we laugh at him not without reverence. He is both jocular and a joke but he is not a bad joke. In a sense, the fact that Johnson is a tragic figure makes him all the more comic because we laugh at him in full consciousness of the background of suffering and despair that was his life. He engages our sympathies at so many points that we find in him a companion with whom we can be wholly at our ease.

Johnson's genius of conversation is the central fact about Johnson and this, according to Lynd, was a view his contemporaries held. Lynd feels that by concentrating on this aspect of Johnson he is merely drawing attention to something basic in Johnson's personality. Lynd's presentation of his views is so interestingly done that one cannot help agreeing with him about Johnson who "more than any other Englishman who ever lived, raised a life of talk to the level of a life of action".

Self-check exercise – 2

As per Lynd what is the view held about Dr. Johnson by his contemporaries?

2.4. JOHNSON'S PERSONALITY

Ever since Boswell wrote his *Life of Johnson* the emphasis in discussions of Johnson has been on Johnson the man, till modern criticism began to attend to his works. He has been seen as a literary Dictator and as a great conversationalist. He was truly the intellectual leader of a literary club whose members included Goldsmith, Burke, Sheridan, Joshua Reynolds and Boswell

himself. Boswell's *Life* is one of the great biographies in literature and only Lockhart's *Life* of Sir Walter Scott and Trevelyan's *Life* of Lord Macaulay compare with it. Boswell admired Johnson immensely and during the years he spent with the learned doctor he made it a point to record every bit of conversation he could manage to. His *Life* is full of Johnson's conversation and replete with anecdotes. It is a very interesting book. Here is one example of Boswell's encounter with Johnson. Johnson was telling Boswell of his tutor, Jorden, at Oxford. He went to Jorden's lecture on logic on one day but absented himself for four days. He was not aware that attendance was expected and he seemed to have assumed that lectures, like books, were to be dipped into and used as one found them useful. On the sixth day Johnson met Jorden who asked him where he had been. Johnson said to him that he had been "sliding in Christ Church meadows". This happened in 1728 but Boswell got to know about Johnson's experience as a scholar of logic in 1776. Johnson told Boswell that he made this remark to Jorden "with as much nonchalance as I am now talking to you. I had no notion that I was wrong or irreverent to any tutor".

Boswell: "That Sir, was great fortitude of mind".

Johnson: "No Sir, stark insensibility".

This conversation puts Boswell in the wrong and we see Johnson administering a milk snub but it also shows Boswell quite willing to put himself in a bad light if that will help in putting Dr. Johnson in a good light.

During the 19th century William Hazlitt and Lord Macaulay commented on Johnson. In some sense their estimates had a bad influence because they observed the excellences of Johnson the writer. I shall not quote from Hazlitt who like other Romantics attacked Johnson. Macaulay comments on Johnson's style and these comments may be compared with his description of Johnson the man. When Lynd wrote his essay he was merely following a tradition set by the 19th century. Macaulay has this to say about Johnson's style:

"The characteristic faults of his style are so familiar to all our readers, and have been so often burlesqued, that it is almost superfluous to point them out. It is well known that he made less use than any other eminent writer of those strong plain words, Anglo-Saxon or Norman-French, of which the roots lie in the inmost depths of our language, and that he felt a vicious partiality for terms which, long after our own speech had been fixed, were borrowed from the Greek and Latin, and which, therefore, even when lawfully naturalised, must be considered as born aliens, not entitled to rank with the King's English

His constant practice of padding out a sentence with useless epithets, his antithetical forms of expression, constantly employed even where there is no opposition in the ideas expressed, his big words wasted on little things, his harsh inversions, so widely different from those graceful and easy inversions which give variety, spirit, and sweetness to the expression of our great old writers, all these peculiarities have been imitated by his admirers and parodied by his assailants, till the public has become sick of the subject".

Even when Macaulay is attacking Johnson he gives us indirectly, but of course, not intentionally, a very good idea of the characteristics of Johnson's style. When modern criticism focussed its attention upon Johnson it was just these aspects of Johnson's style which Macaulay deplored that were seen as Johnson's essential strength. What survived, however till late in this century was Macaulay's views on the man and I quote Macaulay on this point. As we close, Boswell, says Macaulay:

The clubroom is before us, and the table on which stands the omelet for Nugent and the lemons for Johnson. There are assembled those heads which live for ever on the canvass of Reynolds. There are the spectacles of Burke and the tail thin

form of Langton the courtly sneer of Beat clerk and the becoming smile of Garrick, Gibbon tapping his snuff-box and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure which is as familiar to us as the figures of those among whom we have been brought up, the gigantic body, the huge massy face, seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat, the black worsted stockings, the grey wig with the scorched foretop, the dirty hands, the nails bitter and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and mouth moving with conclusive twitches; we see the heavy form rolling; we hear it puffing; and then comes the 'why sir' and the 'what then, Sir?' and the 'No, Sir' and the 'you don't see your way through the question Sir!.'

It is almost certain that Lynd would have read Macaulay. In any case Lynd's essay is an elaboration of Macaulay's portrait and very much in the tradition of the 19th century accounts of Johnson.

Self-check exercise – 3

How was Johnson regarded in his time?

2.5. THE AGE OF JOHNSON

Dr. Johnson was born in 1709 and died in 1784. This means that his life spanned the greater part of the 18th century. The 18th century is linked up with three important literary periods. Till about 1740, and beginning from roughly 1660, English literature was in its Augustan phase. The emphasis during this period was on direct and clear expression, whether in prose or poetry. The literature of this period was classical in temper and what was sought to be avoided was 'enthusiasm', or freedom from restraint. The major writers of the period were Dryden, Pope, Swift and Addison. Johnson's early writings, particularly his poems, 'London' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes', were Augustan in temper. They are satires but they are tragical or philosophical satires unlike say Addison's *Coverley Papers*, Pope's 'Dunciad', Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe* or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. The Augustan age was also a satirical age, and the satirical vision was expressed variously.

From around 1740 there was a shift in sensibility in English culture which coincided also with the rise of the novel in England. Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe* may be said to be part of what is called the literature of sensibility. It was a period when sentiment was dominant in literature and the free expression of it was not thought to be wrong. Johnson himself was a great admirer of Richardson. In a lot of plays, which came to be called sentimental plays, it was more important to praise virtue and admire courage than to condemn vice or punish evil. It was against this kind of drama that both Sheridan and Goldsmith revolted in plays like *The School for Scandal* and *She Stoops to Conquer*. This period also witnessed the rise of what has come to be called the Augustan lyric. Poets like Gray, Collins, Cowper and Crabbe were writing poetry which might be called Pre-Romantic.

The Romantic movement began in the 18th century. Some scholars assign the beginning of Romanticism to 1798 when Wordsworth and Coleridge published their *Lyrical Ballads*, but it is generally accepted that Blake was the earliest Romantic. Blake's early poems were written long before Johnson died.

To sum up: Johnson lived through three major phases in English literature – Augustanism, sentimentalism or the 'Age of Sensibility' and Romanticism. His own works have important points of contact with each of these phases but in essence Johnson, was a Neo-Classical writer and a Conservative in politics who was not sympathetic to the currents of Romanticism visible in his time.

Self-check exercise – 4

Who are the major writers of the Augustan Age?

2.6. JOHNSON'S WORKS

Johnson's poems, 'London' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes' are imitations of the classical satirist Juvenile. The former poem gives us a portrait of London and the difficulties to be tackled by literary men. The latter poem philosophically discusses man's follies, pride and vanity. Both poems are written in majestically flowing couplets. **Rasselas**, was written by Johnson in seven days to defray the funeral expenses incurred by him when his mother died. It is a moral fable and adopts the method of a travel story and romance to underline the essential truths Johnson had already expounded in **The Vanity of Human Wishes**. Johnson's **Dictionary** was the earliest in English. While we cannot accept all his definitions as correct we cannot help admiring the ingenuity of Johnson in not only compiling the dictionary, but in also giving illustrations from literature to define words. Johnson's edition of Shakespeare was not an improvement upon Theobald's Warburton's or Bentley's, but it was distinguished by an excellent **Preface** where Johnson outlines his neo-classical critical principles. His Play, **Irene** ran for 9 nights, a record in his time. It is still good to read though it is not staged. Johnson's **Lives of the English Poets** is an extraordinary document. Many forgotten poets are discussed by Johnson in addition to the well-known ones, Swift, Dryden, Pope, Addison and Gray. Again, Johnson wrote many essays in journals like **The Rambler**, **The Idler**, **The Adventurer**, which he edited. These essays are loose sallies of the mind on a variety of subjects. These are some of his principal works and the quantity of his output should convince us that he was as important a writer as many others in addition to being a great talker.

S C E – 5

What is Johnson's poem 'London' about?

2.7. Let's sum up

This unit has discussed Lynd's opinion of Johnson. His defects as well as merits have been mentioned in the unit. It has also given a picture of the Age of Johnson. It has discussed the works of Johnson. It has discussed Johnson as an important writer apart from being a great talker. It has explained that Johnson was a Neo-classical writer and a conservative in politics and he was not sympathetic to the currents of Romanticism Visible in his time.

2.8. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What are the defects of Dr. Johnson as mentioned in the essay by Lynd?
2. What are the merits of Johnson pointed out by Lynd?
3. Substantiate the following statement of Lynd about Johnson: 'He found enjoyment in enjoying the enjoyment of other People.'

2.9. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E – 1

Robert Lynd enumerates the following defects of Dr. Johnson in his essay. Johnson was: * uncouth, untidy, eccentric in habits, irritable, gloomy and rude.

S C E – 2

As per Lynd Dr. Johnson's contemporaries held the view that Johnson's genius of conversation is the central fact about him.

S C E – 3

Johnson in his time was regarded as a literary dictator and as a great conversationalist.

S C E – 4

The major writers of the Augustan Age are Dryden, Pope, Swift and Addison.

S C E – 5

Johnson's poem 'London' is a portrait of London and the difficulties that the literary men had to face those days.

BLOCK VI

UNIT - 3: HISTORY AND THE READER

3.0. OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the liberal approach of G.M.Trevelyan to human life
- see the point of the author that history should be presented in a variety of forms - readable to various sections of the people.
- observe the necessity to generate interest in the study of history in an increasingly technological world.

3.1. CONTENTS

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1. Contents
- 3.2. Introduction
- 3.3. History and the reader
- 3.4 Let's sum up
- 3.5 Sample questions
- 3.6 Answers to self-check exercises

3.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the importance of study of history by the students. It explains that people are delighted in visiting the ancient buildings and monuments. It directs your attention to Anglo Saxon history which interests the readers at different levels. It explains that a study of history stimulates your interest in literature and fine arts. It holds the opinion that a patient historical research helps in the 'truthful reconstruction' of older societies which have been 'long forgotten or misunderstood'.

3.3. HISTORY AND THE READER

In these lessons we discuss two essays written by two important personalities of this century, both of them noted for their liberal approach to human life in a historical perspective. They belong to different countries and different walks of life. G.M.Trevelyan was a noted scholar and teacher of history at Cambridge. Jawaharlal Nehru studied Science at Cambridge, but we are well aware of his abiding interest in human history as seen in the letters he wrote to his daughter, collected in Glimpses of World History, and in his book the Discovery of India (from which this extract has been selected). Nehru's own contribution to the history of Modern India and of the post-war world is familiar to us; as a liberal thinker, he would have agreed with Trevelyan that the study of history is "the cement that holds together all the studies relating to the nature and achievements of man"(P88 of your text).

We shall take up the two essays separately as they deal with different topics. "History and the Reader" pleads for the importance of being aware of history if people are to call themselves educated and cultured in the broadest sense. In this connection, the writer emphasizes that historians should present their subject in a "readable form or rather, in a variety of forms readable by various sections of the public" (p.85). Nehru's essay deals with a rather personal topic, namely what he would consider his philosophy of life to be, but the essay acquires a wider scope as Nehru's attitude to religion, philosophy, science and history emerge, he talks about his view of life and the Universe. "A living philosophy must answer the problems of today" (p.121). His views strike a similar chord among thinking people of this century, and they also reflect the concerns of a World Statesman. **History and the Reader:** Trevelyan observes that in an increasingly technological world, where the study of science finds greater emphasis, there is an urgent need to generate interest in the study of history. For without a knowledge of history, readers of English literature will not be able to appreciate the great masters of English poetry, prose and drama. "Literature and History", according to him, "are twin sisters, inseparable".

Students of earlier generations in England were taught the Greek and Roman classics, and at that time, when people were more devout than they are today, everyone read the Bible regularly. Through these sources, people acquired a knowledge of Western literature and history, however unsystematic it might have been.

In a scientific age, there is very little emphasis on reading the Bible thoroughly, and a study of the Classics has dwindled (been reduced). Similarly, an interest in the Fine Arts (such as painting, architecture and sculpture) which is more meaningful when combined with a knowledge of history, is on the wane. Trevelyan does not find any other discipline taking the place of the Classics or the Bible in providing a humane foundation to readers.

What gladdens him, however, is that with increased mobility more and more people are taking delight in visiting ancient buildings and monuments. A number of such tourists might find their "historical imagination" stimulated and some might go on to read and acquire a better knowledge of past history. Here he makes an observation which is a major idea in the essay, "Disinterested intellectual curiosity is the life-blood of real civilization" (p.78).

(Notice the word "Disinterested", which means without any subjective prejudice or motive of personal benefit; it is usually confused with "uninterested" which describes some one who is not interested in whatever is going on)

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE – I

How did the students of earlier generations in England acquire Knowledge?

Trevelyan then cites two works on Anglo-Saxon history which would interest readers at different levels. The Anglo-Saxon period, he feels, should interest the English as these people were their ancient ancestors (the Angles were the native inhabitants of ancient Britain who were gradually overrun by the Germanic Saxons by the 7th Century, so that English people are now referred to as Anglo-Saxons. The Norman Conquest of 1066 paved the way for the development of the Fine Arts and of Government in Britain). Professor Stenson's work is scholarly and abstruse (difficult to understand) but it is of great importance and interest to trained historians, while R.H. Hodgkin's book is written in a style that would appeal to the general reader, retaining all the important facts and discoveries.

Apart from its capacity to stimulate an interest in literature and the Fine Arts, a study of history applies itself to two main questions, one relating to the life of men and women of earlier centuries and the other to the idea that the present has grown out of the developments of past. (In this connection, it may be added that Trevelyan himself is one of the most important scholar-historians who have shifted the focus of the study of history from kings, battles and

treatises to the economic and social conditions of ordinary men and women which gives a more complete picture of past ages).

Readers of history could have different reasons for enjoying the subject: finding delight in 'static' pictures of older times, or an interest in examining how ideas and institutions have evolved through the ages (this is the "moving stream of events" which indicates the causal, i.e. cause-effect, and evolutionary nature of human history).

Trevelyan then discusses these two aspects for the value they provide. Intellectual curiosity in past ages does not mean that the reader is indulging in "hedonistic escapism" i.e., finding pleasure in escaping from today's mechanical age to a more pleasant and leisurely world imaginatively. The value of reconstructing the past is to make us realize that "in the matter of reality, there is no difference between past and present" (p 80) - in other words, that while outward modes of social behaviour and organisations might change, there is an under-current of continuity in the human race. The hard working scholar of history and the spellbound general reader begin to ponder over this mystery of time and mutability (i.e. change through time) which all the same fosters succession.

Besides, patient historical research also helps in the "truthful reconstruction" of older societies which have been "long forgotten or misunderstood" (people of Third World countries such as India have experienced this situation).

The second great value of history is for the light it throws on the present. Awareness of history enables an individual to understand not only his/her own country, but also why people of other countries react in varying manner to the same situations. This is particularly important in today's technological society where the world has actually become a small place and in which even local events have international consequences. Again, because international contacts have become commonplace, it is necessary to get over prejudices and dislikes against people of other nations, and a knowledge of history helps in this for we understand the "historical experience and resulting mentality" of people we look upon as "foreigners". Trevelyan cites examples of major events in human history which have influenced the lives of certain nations and explains why Henry Ford stated that history was "bunk".

Self-check exercise – 2

How is the study of Past history important to the people of the present.

Trevelyan stresses the importance of disinterested historical reading and teaching. Imperfect knowledge in this sphere can lead to serious consequences such as propaganda brought about by falsifying or distorting the correct picture, and to building up inaccurate and incomplete pictures particularly of other nations. Trevelyan cites the example of Americans who still think of England as a feudal aristocratic society, the land brimming with castles and knights; and we in India know how our country is still thought of by Western Nations as a land of maharajahs and snake-charmers, with tigers and fakirs wandering freely.

To be over-conscious of history also has its dangers particularly because it leads to violence and war as a result of "one-sided, ultra patriotic" training and up-bringing.

We can overcome these strong prejudices if we train our minds to the idea that historical developments take centuries to make their impact felt. This will prevent us from rushing into strong reactions over every immediate problem and it will help us acquire a mentality which sees events in their total historical perspective. This is particularly necessary today, as the media supplies (Media is normally the plural form for the singular "medium". It has however now become accepted as singular when it refers collectively to the communications media-press,

radio, TV, cinema etc.) us with so much of material on any situation, that it is tempting to take "short-cuts to truth", forgetting that human affairs are always complex, never simple.

These, then, are Trevelyan's arguments for the necessity of being aware of history on the part of all educated people and those who would be considered intellectual and imaginative human beings. Hence he reiterates (repeats) that historians should write in a style (or styles) that appeals to various types of readers and holds them fascinated.

Man's history is the most fascinating of all, as Trevelyan eloquently describes it (p.85, last para). Man's origin and development is still a mystery, although we have increased our knowledge of the mysterious Universe. The study of history thus implies the study of religion, science, art and literature.

Going back to the first question which he raised in this essay, namely whether history can replace the losing fascination of literature, Trevelyan feels that there is a demand for history books. However, the dark side of the picture lies in the acute paper shortage today, so that the cost of books has become prohibitive. Publishers find it uneconomical to reprint excellent histories such as those by the 19th Century English historian, William Lecky. Similarly, or as a corollary, the habit of building up private libraries by individuals (as seen in Victorian; i.e. 19th and pre-war 20th Century) is on the decline. Also, families now live in smaller and smaller apartments, and would rather buy motor-cars on instalments with their limited resources.

All the same, Trevelyan feels hopeful that the new technological age will find its own solutions to these problems. If mankind survives by avoiding world wars, history (i.e. the knowledge or awareness of history as the writer has explained it) will play a great part. History, he concludes is the house in which literature and political science dwell; it is "the cement that holds together all the studies relating to the nature and achievement of man".

The student should critically examine the organization of the essay to appreciate its systematic argument. Trevelyan begins by stating the proposition (that the study of literature and of history is on the decline; that it is necessary to have an awareness of history). The body of the essay deals with why it is necessary to have this awareness, and how historians can help in sustaining the general reader's interest in history. He concludes by considering whether history can fill the place left by the declining interest in the Classics and in religion and believes that if mankind is to survive in the Atomic Age, it is vital to be aware of history.

Pay attention to the clarity of his expression, and also make a list of the use of metaphors and the almost-poetical passages in the essay.

Self-check exercise—3

What does the study of history imply?

3.4. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed why people should study past history not only about kings and Wars, but also about the social and economic conditions of the ordinary men of the past ages. This unit has explained the growing demand for history books as publishers feel uneconomical to print excellent history books. This unit has explained the word disinterested in the phrase 'disinterested historical reading and teaching.' Here it is said that 'disinterested' does not mean **not-interested** but it means 'without any subjective prejudice or motive of personal benefit'. This unit has emphasized the need to study history in this highly technological world.

3.5. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How does it help the people if they are aware of history?
2. What does the study of history stimulate in the readers?
3. What do you know about G.M. Trevelyan?

3.6. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E – 1

The students of earlier generations in England acquired their knowledge by studying Greek and Roman classics. They also read Bible regularly being devout. Through these sources the students acquired a knowledge of Western literature and history.

S C E – 2

The study of past history is important to the people of the present because the present grows out of the developments of past. The study of economic and social conditions of the people gives us a more complete picture of the past ages.

S C E – 3

The study of history implies the study of religion, science, art and literature.

BRAOU

BLOCK - VI

UNIT - 4: LIFE'S PHILOSOPHY

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you should be able to :

- discuss Nehru's various approaches to life, intellectual, moral, emotional and scientific.
- emphasize the point that blind belief in religion, superstitions and supernatural is a wrong one
- discuss that the essay is not merely a list of the personal views of the author but it broadens our vision of humanity.

4.1 CONTENTS

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Contents
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Life's Philosophy
- 4.4 Lets sum up
- 4.5 Sample questions
- 4.6 Answers to self-check exercises

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will get an idea of Nehru's approach to life- intellectual, moral, emotional, etc., you will see that if a religion makes people fanatics and blind believers in superstitions such religion need not be adhered to. You are given a scope to distinguish between mysticism and metaphysics and their merits and demerits. This unit emphasises the point that the author is interested in this world and this life, not in some other world or in a future life. It discusses that Gandhiji had the moral courage to apply the principle of satyagraha to public affairs on a large scale.

4.3 LIFE'S PHILOSOPHY

This essay is taken from Nehru's book *The Discovery of India* (published in 1944). He explains that when he was younger, he might have readily defined his philosophy of life, but that recent events (which were the years of the Second World War) have blunted the "definiteness about my thinking and objectives". He found himself losing interest in politics as they were practised. Evil seemed to triumph too often, and although this did not make them lose sight of his ideals, it pained him to note the coarsening of human nature and the distortion of truth in practical politics.

It raises in his mind a number of questions (papers 1 & 2 on pg.112) relating to the idea of ends and means. Basically this implies a consideration of whether the end (i.e. the aims or objectives) can justify any means (i.e. method, ethical or unethical) that may be adopted to obtain it. Pondering over this question at length can often lead an individual to inaction. But Nehru holds that not to act when required to do so is also wrong.

Nehru then goes on to discuss the various approaches to life, intellectual, moral, emotional which had shaped his outlook on life and the world "which is what and individual's philosophy of life" is all about. A person's up-bringing and training, combined with his own individual temperament and experiences, shape his reactions to the situations which face him, and he thereby develops his "philosophy of life".

As a young man, Nehru's approach was scientific, i.e. based on reason rather than emotion. He was economically well-placed, energetic and confident by temperament, and the optimistic idea of the perfectibility of man through the discoveries of Science was then prevalent. (In the 19th and early 20th century, people believed that the marvels of Science and technology would leave man with the leisure and means to pursue his higher aspirations so that he would move towards perfection). The young Nehru found himself towards a not-so-clearly defined humanism.

Nehru was not religious in the sense that he was a firm adherent or admirer of any particular creed - "religious" people appeared to him superstitious, relying on the supernatural and subscribing to blind belief. Nevertheless he realised that every religion had produced fine individuals, that each of them provided a set out values to guide human life and also that most people felt an inner need to seek the divine. On the negative side, some of these values have outlined their utility and religions often produce fanatics who cause harm in the name of their god.

Nehru then goes on to discuss what "religion" in the abstract implies (p.113-115). In brief, religion reaches out to those aspirations and visions of man, particularly in relation to the unknown around us, which the methods of science often cannot. Science requires measurement and verification, but all human beings do experience something of the invisible which does not answer the scientific test. Further, Science still cannot answer an age-old question, namely, what is the purpose of life? Religion at least provides some consolation and guidelines to behaviour in this connection. The old quarrel between science and religion now takes a new aspect - can Scientific method be applied to religious experience, which is mainly emotional?

Religion is closely allied to mysticism and metaphysics and philosophy. Nehru dislikes mysticism (a mystic is an individual who claims to have some inexplicable gift to "see" into things), as there is no disciplined system behind it, Metaphysics (systematic philosophical enquiry about the nature of existence, of truth etc.) is a more intellectually demanding discipline and every thinking person ponders within himself over some of these questions. Such a capacity varies from individual to individual, and from age to age; today's world is more concerned with things external and material unlike the non-scientific concern with man's inner being in earlier centuries.

Most people have some individual philosophy of life, although the majority generally go along with the attitudes around them. As for himself, Nehru says he infrequently tries to follow a certain metaphysical or philosophical line of thought as an intellectual exercise, but does not feel comfortable for long when it reaches abstract speculation.

(Note how Nehru moves from a personal topic to generalisations and then return to his personal views. This happens again from pg.119-120, and from page 121 onwards his concerns are universal rather than personal).

Self-check exercise - 1

How can a person develop his philosophy of life ?

4.3.2

Nehru categorically states that he is interested in "this world, this life, not in some other world or a future life". Having grown up in a Hindu environment, he takes the **Atma** and the **Karma** theory for granted and sometimes tries to understand such beliefs as an intellectual exercise, but does not subscribe to them as part of a religious creed by which he guides his life.

He frequently feels the urge to understand the "mysteries of unknown depths", but the method he would adopt should be objective and Scientific, and not "absurd and impertinent way(s) of investigating psychic phenomena' such as scances (sessions where a highly receptive person is supposed to be able to communicate with spirits of departed people from another world).

He is not certain of his definition of God, except that he definitely does not believe in the accepted representations of the Supreme Being in human form in traditional religion. Intellectually he is attracted by the idea of a unified concept of matter, mind of spirit such as is found in the **Advaita** system of philosophy, but as he has said earlier, he is too impatient to go into details of abstract speculation. A kind of pantheistic sense of harmony with nature attracts him, but without the myths of gods and goddesses attached to each manifestation of Nature as in ancient India or Greece.

He is very particular about an ethical approach to life, and that is why Gandhiji's insistence that the means should justify the end appeals to him (see p.112). It is also impressive that Gandhiji's method of **Satyagraha** has caught the attention of the world; the ethical idea is not new, but Gandhiji had the moral courage to apply it to public affairs on a large scale in a fairly successful manner (remember that at the time of writing, India had not yet won Independence).

In his view of society, he was attracted by the Marxist-Leninist dogma of a Communist or a Socialist state (as were most growing intellectuals after the Russian Revolution in 1917, an influence that went on beyond the 1930s). Nehru admires what this socialist philosophy and the Movement had done for Russia economically but he is not certain whether he would agree with a total curb on individual freedom.

He found he could accept much of the Marxist philosophy (p.118) but large ethical questions remained unanswered in the Socialism practised in communist countries. The Socialist concept of advancement and betterment of human living and Social organization, he feels, should not be at the loss of broader human values or through curbing the human spirit.

Various social philosophies have been propounded throughout history, but Nehru is impatient with those which move away from immediate individual and social problem and try to speculate about the Universe (see p.15 "essentially I am interested....."), or take refuge in excuses about "human nature" being difficult to please or the fruits of action in previous births. A rational scientific approach is needed to solve social problems, although Nehru does realize that such an approach cannot always solve human problems. But it can help to pick out the dominating factors which operate in society and so help to find a way out.

Self-check exercise - 2

What is the reaction of Nehru to the Socialist movement ?

It is in this limited manner that he was attracted to Marxist ideas, although he did not agree with many of the Marxist interpretations of history. Lenin's modifications to Russian conditions impressed Nehru; although in other European countries, he saw the practice of certain types of socialism leading to dictatorship-Fascism in Mussolini's Italy and Nazism in Hitler's Germany. The rapid development of technology at the time of writing also contributed to changing life-styles and therefore required adjustment of social philosophies.

As with religious doctrine, Nehru found himself getting impatient with rigid socialist doctrine as well as particularly the quarrels among various groups of Socialists and Indian Communists.

Read carefully the last sentence of the first paragraph on p.121, "Life is fixed doctrine" as it provides the basis for Nehru's fundamental philosophy of life.

In the last section, he repeats what his concerns are. You will notice here the point we had made earlier of how Nehru envisions a personal philosophy in a larger social context. Our experience of life and of the Universe shows us that we cannot overrule the importance of intuition, of art and poetry and other subjective experiences as Science alone cannot provide all the answers. However, he emphasizes, the scientific method must form our basis of objective enquiry— "Our anchor of objective, precise knowledge" For him, a "living philosophy must answer the problems of today".

The first paragraph on p.122 displays Nehru at his reflective best, his capacity to see his own thoughts in perspective, so that he makes his statements with a delicate hesitance and not with a loud assertion. The point he makes here is that people of all ages have always seemed to feel that approach to major questions was the right one, and we today should not fall under the same delusion about our approach.

This approach is the scientific method, which inspite of his reservation, appeals to Nehru as a viable method because the new frontiers opened by modern scientific discoveries have increased man's knowledge and the technical developments are enabling him to spread the benefits to a better life of a larger number of people.

Further the newer theories of Physics do not alienate man from nature but are restoring the link between man and his universe, something that ancient scientist-thinkers of Greece and India had foreseen. The ancient idea that the Universe is made of one substance whose form is perpetually changing, and further that the sum-total of energies remains always the same is now being substantiated by post-Einsteinian Physics.

Science, however, does not pause to ask the *why* of life (as philosophical speculations do) but forges ahead to seek out the *how*. And it might possibly not help us to solve the mystery of existence (i.e. the *why*). Very possibly, the progress of science might lead to destructive trends, because it is so easy to separate knowledge from ethics. (you will see this idea discussed at greater length in the essay by J.Bronowski in your collection, and furthermore forty years after Nehru wrote this piece, we today see all round the diabolical uses to which scientific knowledge is being put). The bombing of Hiroshima had not yet taken place at this time but a sensitive individual like Nehru can already perceive the "internal conflict of the spirit of man" who has the capacity to become both god-like and demonic.

He concludes with a poetic tribute to this amazing spirit of man, which in the darkest passages of human history has shown an incredible capacity for sacrifice, compassion, upholding of ideals and values and of the dignity of life.

It is this confidence that the spirit of man will always triumph which leads Nehru to look forward to the dark, uncertain future with reassurance. The lines he quotes from the play **The Bacchae** by Euripides recalls to us Tagore's famous poem "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high....."

Notice how the essay does not remain merely a list of the personal views held by Nehru but broadens out to include a vision of humanity. Also notice the reflective, often lyrical quality of Nehru's prose, while he continually asserts his adherence to the scientific mode. It is this combination of scientific-minded thinker, visionary-statesman, a man interested in literature and history which made Nehru a true representative of a liberal humane age and which also marked him out as an individual in Post-war international politics.

Self-check exercise - 3

What are the specific qualities of Nehru that marked him out as an individual in post-war international politics?

4.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed Nehru's philosophy of life. It has explained various approaches to life as envisioned by Nehru. This unit has also emphasized the irrational belief of people in religious dogmas which may be a danger to their wider perspective. It has discussed how far Nehru could agree with the Socialist Movements in the world. It has pointed out that scientific method is always a viable method through which a man finds new frontiers are open for him to develop his knowledge and technical efficiency with which he can be of help to his fellow beings. This unit has discussed what is needed to develop the vision of humanity.

4.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What are Nehru's views on religion ?
2. How do you distinguish mysticism and metaphysics on reading this unit ?
3. What helped Nehru in formulating his 'philosophy of life' ?

4.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

A person's up-bringing and training, combined with his own individual temperament and experiences, formulate his reactions to the situations that he faces, and he thereby develops his philosophy of life.

S C E - 2

Nehru admires the socialist movement in Russia as it has done some good to it economically. But he would not agree with it if it suppresses the broader human values by curbing the human spirit.

S C E - 3

Nehru is a scientific-minded thinker, a visionary statesman, a man interested in literature and history which made him a representative of a liberal humane age and all this in him marked him out as an individual.

BLOCK - VI

UNIT - 5: SCIENCE - THE DESTROYER OR CREATOR?

5.0. OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you should be able to:

- see the relationship between Science and literature
- discuss why non-scientists have developed a disbelief in scientists
- explain the role of science and technology in increasing the power of war-makers
- emphasize the point that science, if used for good, can help creative activity to flourish.

5.1. CONTENTS

5.0 Objectives

5.1. Contents

5.2. Introduction

5.3. Science - The Destroyer or Creator?

5.4. Let's sum up

5.5. Sample Questions

5.6 Answers to self-check exercises

5.2. INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the differences between science and literature and brings out the conclusion that both science and literature aim at the fulfilment of man. It discusses that scientists are dreaded by non-science people as the former maintain secrecy from the latter. The unit discusses the role of science in increasing the war mechanics. The unit discusses various nations that itch to fight, psychological readiness of mankind to fight and it points out that science helps them to get the deadly weapons to satisfy their desire.

5.3. SCIENCE - THE DESTROYER OR CREATOR?

5.3.1

In recent times there has been a growing antagonism among non-scientists towards science and scientists. After the atom Bomb, the humanists began to pillory the scientists for being indifferent about humane issues. Their argument is that the scientist has no concern for human values and, as in that very indiscreet remark of Robert Oppenheimer, he is ready to pursue any problem that is "technically sweet" to its logical end even if it spells death to millions. A general cry for a moratorium on science has gone up. Bronowski examines the various factors underlying the charge that science is life-destructive and comes up with the unflattering truth that we have only ourselves to blame for our fears about science, that, what has caused these

fears is our failure and our unwillingness to understand what science is saying. Let us now go over Bronowski's essay point by point.

Bronowski begins his essay with the image of science that obsessed the popular imagination as the Frankenstein monster, as a power which man has created but over which he had lost all control and is finally destroyed by it. Science has been the means for unravelling many secrets of nature—you have Copernicus, Darwin, Mendel and of course, Einstein. The products of science have helped us adapt ourselves to our Universe better than any other species and yet we live under a cloud of fear, that we may not survive “so over specialised a creature as the Pekinese”.

Bronowski acknowledges that scientists are to an extent responsible in creating such an atmosphere of panic but rightly points out that science is not responsible for the readiness of people to carry their public quarrels to the point of war. The war instinct in man exhibits itself only in groups and in nations. The cause for war is always something that is felt as a national need: the dignity of the Austrian Empire (ref: World War-I) or the presumed superiority of a race (as the Nazi belief in Aryan Supremacy) or coming to a close point in history, the Vietnam War, of super power hegemony. The causes of war are not created by science. They are racial or political. But what science has done is distort war in two distinct ways through a close pact with the military.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE-1

What are the scientists blamed for?

1) Science has increased the power of the war-makers frightfully. Warfare has become a highly sophisticated art. In earlier days it was man-to-man combat, and although men killed each other, there was something heroic and noble about the killing. In the atomic age it is missiles that stand eye-ball to eye-ball and the dead are innocent civilians. Science has given the military the means to kill more secretly and more unpleasantly than ever before. What such a war throws into relief is no heroism but barbarism.

Bronowski refers to this diabolism as ‘progress’ but one can sense the irony, the helplessness underlying the word. He adds that people ... rather naively..... have, every time a new weapon was invented, said that it was so powerful and annihilating that it would certainly frighten people to come to their senses and force countries to give up war for “lack of cannon fodder,” or human victims. To Bronowski this seems an impossible hope, for as he sees it “the acts of men and women are not dictated by such simple compulsions” like the desire to live or the fear of death. Besides, they are not directly involved in the making of crucial decisions of the nations to which they belong. The holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki did not deter nations from inventing the Hydrogen or the Neutron Bomb, did it?

2) The second way in which science has made the mechanics of war ugly is that it has added a few more reasons for nations to fight about. Science and technology have helped create a large surplus beyond our normal needs. Instead of using this surplus for arms build-up if the richer nations decide to provide the possibilities of a minimal human existence to the world's dispossessed (just think of America diverting all those billions of dollars which it is spending on the Star Wars project to aid the millions of droughtstricken Africans), the world would be a better place to live in. But it is due to some basic perversity in human nature that we shed all moral considerations and continue this appalling robbery. Bronowski puts his finger on the right spot when he says that “we have remained individually too greedy to distribute our surplus, and collectively too stupid to pile it up in any more useful form than the traditional mountain of arms.”

3) The third dimension — actually it is a take-off from the first two, more or less a corollary — is that science “has created war nerves”, and “war of nerves”. What Bronowski means by “war nerves” is the itch to make war, the readiness and alertness to fight. Why? Unless he fights someone, how would Mohammed Ali prove that he is the greatest. So also the case with nations. As for the, ‘war of nerves’ it is what the Superpowers are constantly playing at in Europe. All those Pershings and SS-20s facing each other; or a nuclear blast by India triggering off furious activity in a nuclear reactor in Pakistan. Or Saudi Arabia acquiring AWACS from the U.S. sending Libya on a shopping spree for strategic equipment. Defence, from the other side of the line is offence. What is frightening, however is not so much the theatrical equipment, as the psychological atmosphere of mankind in general. Laments Bronowski: there is a division in the mind of each of us that has become plain, between the main and the brute; and the rift can be opened’ the man submerged with a cynical simplicity, with the meanest tools of envy and frustration....”A case in point is Hitler’s persecution of the jews. In such a nerve-wrought state an alarm may go off and the Valkyries be airborne any moment. Thus the atomic age is characterized by a weapon and a threat and it is certainly science which has given it this character.

Self-check exercise — 2

How is warfare different today when compared to that of old times?

53.3

Science, says Bronowski, has undoubtedly contributed to creating such a situation, because it is mysterious and powerful. The scientist has, from the early days of alchemy been regarded more a wizard than man. Gradually the wizard became a ‘monk’ secluded from worldly matters and finally the ‘disembodied mind’ that thought but didn’t feel more like a computer. What can the common man think of the scientist who disappeared for long periods from the social picture and suddenly emerged from his hide-out with penicillin or jet engine or nuclear fission. He can only marvel at the skill of science and fear the power that is in the scientist’s hand alone. Who knows when they will run amuck? The scientist too enjoyed this hushed aura of mystery that surrounded him for long. True, his intellect and knowledge separated him from the common man, but he didn’t make any attempt to communicate with him either, and make him understand the ideas of science. He kept his knowledge secret for various reasons — for fear that another man might steal his thunder, or for security reasons, or because he thought the ideas of science far beyond the scope of the common man’s intelligence. The distance he enjoyed soon turned into distrust and the awe into terror. The common man began to look upon science as a conspiracy among nuclear scientists and that we are better off without them.

Whether he likes it or not, the scientist cannot escape these accusations. However, he evades them by such talk about ‘the common responsibility, ‘that he merely gives the results of his research to people and if they are their elected representatives decide to use them for destructive purposes he is not to blame. The man on the street who feels the malignant power of science in the disaster of the Three Mile Island or Hiroshima is not wrong when he says that the ideas of science are so much a Pandora’s box and are going to be misused and therefore it is better to shut the box altogether. What is wrong here—the crux of the whole matter,— is that “science and society are out of joint”. Science has progressed far more quickly than society and hence the two have become alienated from each other. Science — sometimes because the scientist did not foresee what can eventually be made out of his discoveries or sometimes because he couldn’t be bothered has given to nobody in particular a certain knowledge and power, and society has decided to use it to satisfy its own lust and greed.

The best way to resolve the problem, as Bronowski sees it, is to approach it scientifically — consider the facts of the case and arrive at a solution which is practical and sensible. Such an approach automatically overrules impossible and irrational solutions like “let us get rid of

all scientists". The idea is ridiculous. If nations can agree about such a wild scheme as this they can even come to an agreement about putting an end to the working partnership between science and the military. If only nations agreed to stop using science as an "instrument of nationalism", as the means to make a nation a world power, the nuclear umbrella is gradually folded up the threat of war disappears. But we know how any such agreement is impossible, how the talks on limiting, mind you, just limiting, end even before they begin. Or an Arcadia or a Garden of Eden where man and nature lived in perfect harmony is equally impossible, for there is no way of putting the clock back for one thing. And it is only a fool who would see wisdom in going back to the Dark Ages. Forget other luxuries, but is there a single soul among us who can live without electricity? We know that mankind never had it so good, and we also know that it is because of science and its inventions.

So there are no 'panaceas' or Universal clues. Neither scientists as advisors to Governments, helping them take policy decisions, nor religious men in the war office is the solution. We must realize that the survival of human civilization is in our hands - scientists and non-scientists - as socially responsible individuals. We must learn to handle the power of science for the benefit of society and the good of mankind as a whole rather than cultivate a hopeless attitude that deters us from learning. We know what has led to this situation of dread: science and society are "out of step" we must learn to fit them together, we must try to reintegrate science into civilization. This can only be done through an understanding of the ideas of science by society and through an understanding of the needs of society by scientists, as also increased commitment among scientists to preserve and promote human life and human values.

Scientific activity is considered to have two purposes mainly: one is the Baconian view that scientific research aims at making two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, and the other is the Newtonian view that science is pursued purely for the glory of the intellect. The first is utilitarian and philanthropic, the second one is at least initially limited to the interests of the self. This brings us to another motive not so healthy. The scientist who suffered a lot of hardship during his earlier years may wish to become the unseen force directing and controlling the destiny of nations as the Gray Eminence. In such a case science going amuck and destructive are greater. The scientist must bear in mind that, whatever role he wishes to play Baconian, Newtonian or otherwise, he too shares the aims of society and its fate, that scientific research is primarily guided by the needs of the society. Everything else comes later.

Self Check exercise - 3

What made a scientist be separate from the common man and what is the result of it?

534.

Science concerned itself with navigation when man wanted to reach other lands. Later, for a long, long time, science in the guise of technology, worked at making the world a better and still better place to live in. That doesn't mean that science has merely provided the means for a comfortable and luxurious existence, perma press material, instant foods and central airconditioning. Science has waged a constant battle against disease and succeeded on many fronts although just as many remain unyielding. It has visibly increased the life span of a human being. Therefore there is complete truth in calling the ideas of science as **Creative** - first, because they have created the material goods, and above all they have created life. you just have to look at what is happening in the field of genetic engineering to know how far the creative impulse in science has traversed. Science, as Bronowski conceives it, is a dynamic process of discovery impelled as much by a desire to know as to fulfil the growing and changing needs of society. The purpose of science in the atomic age, claims Bronowski, is "the vibration of personality", rather an ambiguous term at first sight, one which needs careful definition.

"The liberation of personality" involves two steps: first, the freeing of the mind from some belief or idea to which it clings and secondly the liberated mind working towards newer goals. What Bronowski sees in the activity of science is power which shall cure us of our prejudices – social, political or religious – and which shall rid us of narrow-mindedness, fanaticism and selfishness. Then, and only then, the mind inherits true freedom, freely inquires into what is true and what is not true and acts accordingly. Such an independent inquiry of the mind leads to the exploration of one's own potential as a human being. This is what is meant by "the fulfilment of man".

The question that now lies before us is how science and scientific research can manage to do all this. The answer lies in the method that science employs in its search for truth, the method that is popularly known as 'empirical' which simply means "the acceptance of what works and the rejection of what does not". The mistake that most of us commit is that we cling to ideas and values which are no longer valid and thus become rigid in our ways. The progress of science has shown that no concept has absolute validity. For Dalton the atom was the smallest indivisible particle, which the process of fission has proved as wrong. What Newton postulated may not be true today, but in his own time it was. Or to cite a more common example an "electron" can be both 'wave' and 'particle'. Thus science believes that a concept or an idea is true only when certain parameters (set of conditions) are given, and that when the parameters change, a new truth emerges. Society still changes to the Newtonian mechanics of 'cause and effect' long after the Uncertainty Principle in Physics and the Random theory in Statistics have been postulated. Since then 'chance' has become one of the fundamental ideas of science along with order and cause. Once society makes this principle its own, and realizes that there are no absolutes, no 'sacred cows' in any field-politics, religion or ethics-then it will gain a new freedom and a new direction. It too shakes itself out of petrification and begins to evolve, defining in the very process of growing, its values and norms. Because the ideas of science can set society on the move by liberating its creative potential, science proves itself, once again as creative.

Bronowski believes that a scientific temper which is "realistic, flexible and unbigoted" is not merely a "material code", (meaning that it is not merely applied to what we produce) but should also provide a moral code. It alone can if anything can, "heal the spiritual cleft" which has been disclosed in man in the recent past, the division between the human and the brute. Science and society are responsible for this division, the one we all know how and the other by making "men live in two halves, a Sunday half and a working day one". On the one hand we talk about the Christian virtues of love, kindness and charity, and on the other we foster social Darwinism where only the fittest can survive. To survive in a competitive world like ours requires that we push aside anyone who comes in our way mercilessly. Bronowski thinks that science will, like religion earlier, 'create values and discover virtues when it looks into man, when it explores what makes him man and not an animal'. What Bronowski means by the values and virtues of science is a morality of truth, justice and integrity. We must learn to weigh the consequences of what we intend – it could be the manufacture of a bomb as also the manufacture of babies – honestly and without any selfish considerations or compromises. We must learn to be just to mankind and soon the rift closes. "To listen to everyone; to silence no one; to honour and promote those who are right – these have given science its power in our world and its humanity", writes Bronowski elsewhere. And it is in such a climate provided by science that creative activity truly flourishes.

Self-check exercise – 4

What is the purpose of science as conceived by Bronowski?

5.4. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed that science and literature are related. It has explained that there should be no mystery hanging between a scientist and a common man. This unit has discussed that science has created 'war nerves' and 'war of nerves'. It has discussed the necessity to handle the power of science for the benefit of society and the good of mankind as a whole. At present it is felt that science and society are 'out of step' so the unit explains the need to fit them together, reintegrate science in to civilization. The unit emphasizes the point that the scientists should have the commitment to preserve and promote human life and human values.

5.5. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Why is a scientist accused of irresponsibility?
2. What according to Bronowski, should be the commitment of the scientists in the present-day world?
3. In what way is science a destroyer?
4. In what way is science a creator?

5.6. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E - 1

The scientists are blamed for being indifferent about humane issues and for not having any concern for human values.

S C E - 2

In the olden times war was a man-to-man combat. Although men killed each other it was something heroic and noble about the killing. But in the atomic age it is missiles that kill the innocent civilians. In the modern warfare people are killed more secretly and more unpleasantly.

S C E - 3

A scientist is separated from the common man by his intellect and knowledge. A scientist never made an attempt to communicate with the common man and make him understand the ideas of science. So much so, the common man has developed distrust in all scientists.

S C E - 4

The purpose of science, as per Bronowski, is to help a dynamic process of discovery and to fulfil the growing and changing needs of society.

BLOCK - VI

UNIT - 6: THE PLACE OF SCIENCE IN LIBERAL EDUCATION

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you should be able to :

- discuss the need for a study of science and a scientific attitude in education and culture
- emphasize the need for an objective study of science
- explain that education is what we learn in the school of life through personal experience

6.1 CONTENTS

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Contents
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 The place of Science in liberal education
- 6.4 Let's sum up
- 6.5 Sample questions
- 6.6 Answers to self-check exercises

6.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the potentialities of scientific education to generate the higher mental excellence which is also possible through the study of literature. This unit also discusses that the intellectuals of every generation carefully build up a certain order out of the chaos of nature-universe. It emphasizes that the ultimate end to education is to make the mankind see and imagine the world in an objective manner. It explains that science looks at an object from an emotionally and morally neutral distance which even philosophy should learn to do.

6.3 THE PLACE OF SCIENCE IN LIBERAL EDUCATION

6.3.1

"The Place of Science in Liberal Education" is not one of Russell's best essays. It lacks the coherence and concentrated thought that characterize his best writing. And coming as it does after Bronowski's essay in the anthology, it also has no interest of novelty. The subject matter—the need for a study of science and a scientific attitude in education and culture—is, in our day and age, no revelation but a truism. What Russell does in his essay is to shift our view of science from the purely materialist and utilitarian to an idealistic and aesthetic level. Whenever we think of science, we think of it only as material product — as wireless telegraphy or aeroplanes or radio activity. That is how science affects our every day life and that is how we look at it — as something which makes travel faster, communication easier and life, generally speaking, very comfortable. We don't distinguish between the idea and the object. What excites and impresses

us is the aeroplanes and not the ideas of aerodynamics. Literally, the body of science, Bertrand Russell, as he looks at science from a philosopher's angle, shows that there is a subtle difference between science and technology, that the one provides the other with ideas and concepts, and that when you pare it to the bone, science is a way of looking at the world. It is "with the intrinsic value of a scientific habit of mind in forming our outlook on the world" that Russell is concerned, which is very right so long as it doesn't run away with the idea. Science for science's sake can seem just as ridiculous as art for art's sake seems shallow. It may make Laputans of scientists. In the third section of Gulliver's Travels Gulliver goes on a guided tour of the Academy of projectors where professors are engaged in extracting sunshine from cucumbers. Science without purpose may become an absurd enterprise like the softening of marbles into pillows.

Bertrand Russell sets about his task by looking at the issue from a scientist's point of view. He takes the specific case of Faraday, Maxwell and Hertz - the creators of electromagnetism - and says that the mechanical application of these ideas - even though it needed considerable skill - "had not that broad sweep and that universality which could give them intrinsic interest as an object of disinterested contemplation." What he means by this is that the principles and concepts of science have a scope, an inclusiveness and a validity (because they can be applied to all cases and at all times) which merits an objective study.

Now, a literary education had always been considered indispensable for a day well-informed indispensable outlook that constitutes culture". This is a legacy from the classical ages which the West couldn't give up for a long time. What is ironic is that even scientists considered themselves somehow inferior to the humanists. Even they looked upon arts as refined and elitist and upon science (because it had practical applications) as vulgar. Russell fears that this may continue to be so as long as scientists ignore the finer and subtler aspects of science - a "leisurely systematic survey" of the mysteries of the Universe by the human mind. Russell feels that a scientific education has the same potential to generate "those habits of mind which constitute the highest mental excellence" as that of literature. Literature and science talk different languages - that is the popular misconception. Science is as much a matter of the imagination as literature and hence it should also have the same power of refining the moral and intellectual qualities of the mind.

Self-check exercise - 1

How do we generally look at science ?

6.3.2

Classical education, Russell thinks is rather lop-sided in its "exclusive emphasis on the past", on Greek and Latin literary works. Those civilizations are dead and if we immerse ourselves in their study, our mental faculties will invariably get stultified. There is no merit in making nostalgia a great virtue. Russell, accepts that the discoveries of science may hurt the delicate sensibilities of a sensitive man and he may escape into the romantic past and the Garden of Eden from the discoveries of Galileo and Darwin. As Russell points out, this happens because of ignorance, because of forgetting that the garden's of the past "were reclaimed from the wilderness by men as rough and earth-soiled as those from whom he shrinks in his own day". Now Russell here uses two distinct images - one of the 'garden' and the other of 'wilderness'. A garden has a defined form and hence stands for order. A wilderness is wild and is a metaphor for formlessness or chaos. Intellectuals of every generation carefully build up a certain order out of the chaos of nature - Universe. Ptolemy postulated the theory that the earth was at the centre of the planetary system. Centuries later Copernicus proved that the Sun was really at the centre, or, before Darwin, mankind had a pretty myth about man's birth, that God made Adam and Eve and that we were their children after the Fall. Darwin's theory of evolution exploded the myth. The man who shrinks in the face of new discoveries or a new order only flees into

another order which is no longer valid and alive. Science is an evolving process and when society fails to evolve along with it, there are problems. And an education which does not provide a perspective to the future and a direction forward but only shelters you from facing truth is not true education. Its end must be dynamic and not static.

In the broader sense of the word, education is all that man learns in the school of life through personal experience. In the narrow sense of the word, education is the instruction we get in schools and colleges. Now, Bertrand Russell views education as "the formation, by means of instruction, of certain mental habits and a certain outlook of life and the world". The 'mental habit' which Russell expects education to nurture in the human mind are a certain natural curiosity, independence of thought and objectivity that lead to the understanding of the Universe.

Human life, says Russell is made up of a "few primary instincts and impulses" like the instinct to live, the instinct to know, the instinct to create and, of course, the biological instinct. Education can create these impulses or forces that constitute a human being. Rather, it can 'enlarge the scope of those that human nature provides by increasing the number and variety of attendant thought and by showing where the most permanent satisfaction is to be found'. Education should allow instincts to range over freely and explore the world by providing them extra nourishment - by throwing open new fields of knowledge which deepens their perception. There was a time when these 'natural' instincts were suppressed by religion but fortunately there are no such inhibiting forces today, thanks to psychology and a tolerance that mankind has learnt over the years. Education should allow human personality to grow organically from within in full measure, in a complete and balanced manner.

This does not mean, however, that the natural instincts be allowed to play havoc. In the civilized man, says Bertrand Russell "each impulse has its constitutional ministry of thought and knowledge and reflection" a certain wisdom which controls and directs it. Education, Bertrand Russell believes, helps refine the instincts even as it widens his world and provides more knowledge. This is the chief moral end of education - to channelize the instinct properly and civilize the brute through thought and exposure.

Finally, there is the intellectual and that education has of making us "see and imagine the world in an objective manner" without any prejudice or selfish motive distorting it. Education should inculcate in us a sense of honesty which sees "our place in society, of the relation of the whole human society to its non-human environment, and of the nature of non-human world as it is in itself apart from our desires and interests", that is our proper place in the Universe.

Self-check exercise - 2

What is a true education ?

633

In the second part of essay, Russell considers the role of science in refining the mind and enlarging its vision and in making a complete human being. Russell thinks that a scientific education rather than a liberal education, can achieve this for two reasons : (1) science fosters an optimistic attitude, believes in the future of human achievement; and (2) it is completely impersonal and objective in its pursuit.

In the study of literature or art, the emphasis is constantly on the past, on what the Greek and the Renaissance writers and artists have done. A study of the great masters is necessary, to an extent for creative activity. All great artists, thus, have always been influenced by some one from the past. However after an intensive study of the past, one may merely repeat the masters without their brilliance. Instead of creating something that is original and completely one's own. For, creative activity needs "a certain freshness and naivete of impulse and vision", a novel and

a simple way of looking at things besides mere scholarship. In an attempt to shake off the overbearing influence of the past, a writer or an artist may deliberately set about being original in radical ways and merely succeed in creating something that is eccentric - a curiosity rather than an artistic piece. The artist ends up in despair because he can't truly create : he has no perspective that is his own.

An education based on science saves one for such despair. This is so because that what the man of genius discovers is food for thought for those who come after him. As they analyse concepts that have been formulated by great scientists, even mediocre scientists may hit upon something useful and new. Or, the concept may even become a take-off point for another. Thus, science provides a dynamic context for one to work, gives one a sense of contributing to something creative, of being productive.

The second point that Russell makes in favour of science is the unique method of science: its impersonal and objective way of analysing the facts as they are; "The kernel of scientific outlook" writes Russell "is the refusal to regard our own desires, tastes and interests as affording a key to the understanding of the world". Neither personal prejudices nor wishes come in the way of postulating the truth, as the stories of Galileo and Darwin reveal. The scientific mind believes only in one thing; to know the secrets of the Universe without any prejudices or preconceptions, without any prior conditions as to what should be made of the discovery and what shouldn't. Science looks at the object from an emotional and morally neutral distance and this is what, Russell feels, philosophy should learn. This scientific attitude is a totally unconditioned attitude. Such a disinterested curiosity unveils unknown secrets which can help in providing a larger life and wider interests. Russell hopes that the impersonal cosmic outlook of science may even give us the opportunity to escape from "the whole recurring human cycle of birth and death" our karma. This is so because there is a fuller understanding of what life is. Finally, he concludes that a life devoted to science is a happy life because the man of science enjoys a sense of achievement, of having created something useful to mankind, even if he had not thought up the concepts and ideas necessary for such creation by himself.

Self-check exercise - 3

How does a scientific education help a person ?

6.4 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed that scientific attitude in education will help the people to be better cultured. It has pointed out the subtle difference between science and technology. It has discussed the view point of Bertrand Russell that classical education is lop-sided in its exclusive emphasis on the past. It has pointed out that science is an evolving process and when society fails to evolve along with it, there arise problems. This unit has discussed the purpose of education that it should make people see and imagine the world in an objective manner. Scientific attitude, the unit says, enables a person to impersonal and objective way of analysing the facts.

6.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How is a person benefited with an education based on science?
2. 'Education is all that a man learns in the school of life through personal experience'. Explain.
3. What is the opinion of Bertrand Russell about classical education?

6.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

S C E – 1

We generally look at science as something which makes travel faster, communication easier and life very comfortable.

S C E - 2

A true education is one which provides people with a perspective to the future and gives a direction forward. It enables them to formulate certain mental habits and a certain outlook on life and the world.

S C E - 3

A scientific education will help a person in refining his mind, in enlarging his vision and in making him a complete human being.

Dr. Bala Kothanda Raman
Prof. Ramanan

BRAOU

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY

B.A. DEGREE

SECOND YEAR COURSE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE - 1 DRAMA

Block I	Julius Caesar	– William Shakespeare
Block II	The Apple Cart	– G.B.Shaw
Block III	As you Like It	– William Shakespeare
Block IV	She Stoops to Conquer	– Oliver Goldsmith
Block V	Sacrifice	– Rabindranath Tagore

COURSE-2 PROSE

Block I	Of Studies Of Friendship	– Francis Bacon
Block II	Mischiefs of Party Spirit	– Joseph Addison
Block III	Old China	– Charles Lamb
Block IV	Sweetness and Light	– Matthew Arnold
Block V	Vemana (a radio talk)	– C.R.Reddy
Block VI	Prose for our Time	– ed. Prof. Shahane.

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARTS
B.A.II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH COURSE II : PROSE

ASSIGNMENT - I

N.B.

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the questions independently, in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than one hour.

Section - A

Answer the questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. Summarise Bacon's views on friendship.
2. Bring out the elements of satire and irony in the poetry of Vemana.

Section - B

Explain the following passage with reference to the context in not more than 125 words.

- (a) Read not to contradict and confuse, nor to believe and take for granted.

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A.II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH COURSE II : PROSE

ASSIGNMENT - II

N.B.

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the question independently in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than one hour.

Section - A

Answer the following questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. Comment on Addison's contribution to English Journalism with special reference to the prescribed essay.
2. Examine Arnold's views on machinery and wealth.

Section - B

Explain the following passage with reference to the context in not more than 125 words.

- (a) I can not hereforbear mentioning the famous Spanish proverb, "If there were neither fools nor knaves in the world, all people would be of one mind".

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A.II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH COURSE II : PROSE

ASSIGNMENT - III

N.B

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the questions independently in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than one hour.

Section -A

Answer the following questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. What, according to Lynd, are Dr.Johnson's Virtues?
2. How does education help man? Examine Russell's views.

Section - B

Answer the question in not more than 125 words.

- (a) What aspects of Marxist philosophy fail to satisfy Nehru?

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A.II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH COURSE II : PROSE

MODEL QUESTION PAPER

Time : 3 Hours

Max.Marks-100

Min.Marks-35

Section-A 4x15 = 60

Answer any four of the following Questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. What, according to Bacon, are the uses of studies?
2. Elucidate Addison's views on Political parties and Party Spirit.
3. How does Lamb reveal his personality in his essays?
4. Consider Arnold's views on the contribution of Greeks to human perfection.
5. Bring out the elements of satire and irony in the poetry of Vemana.
6. What, according to Trevelyan, is the relevance of history to the present?
7. Comment critically on Bronowski's observations on science and war.
8. Explain the difference between literary education and the education based on science.

Section-B - 5x8 = 40

Answer any of the following in not more than 125 words each.

9. "Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself"-Explain with reference to the context.
10. "This humour fills the country with several periodical meetings of Whig Jockies and Tony foxhunters, not to mention the innumerable courses, frowns, and whispers it produces at a quarter sessions".- Explain with reference to the context.
11. "If we were to treat ourselves how that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked".-Explain with reference to the context.
12. "Culture is then property described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection"-Explain with reference to the context.
13. "But imagine a God leaving a beautiful woman behind, in pursuit through greed of a golden deer"-Explain with reference to the context.
14. What are the salient features of the essay as a literary form?
15. What idea of Bridget do you get from your reading of Old China?
16. Discuss Arnold's views on religion.
17. Examine the elements of humour in C. R .Reddy's Vemana.
18. Critically comment on Nehru's Idea of scientific method.

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