INTRODUCTION

The two approaches in comparative literature, influence and analogy studies, are parallel to each other and in the process of scholarly investigations these approaches are combined. Such a combined approach has been employed in the present thesis for a well balanced and just sociological study of two great writers, Charles Dickens and Premchand.

Even though René Wellek stated in 1958 that the new discipline of comparative literature "had not been able to establish a distinct subject matter and a specific methodology"¹, now, after nearly four decades comparative literature has become an established genre. Recent studies have brought to light the immense scope in this field. A survey of the research conducted in the recent past reveals that more than any other area in literature, comparative literature nourishes the strengthening of bonds between various nations, cultures.

Comparative studies are undertaken in all the different branches such as history, theology, philosophy, etc. Comparative analysis in literature is, in fact an offshoot of such studies.

In the beginning of this century there was a tendency to find out the influence of great personalities on other great personalities and the impetus for such influential study was the easy availability of translations of their works. Translations in English of major works became available by the beginning of the century. Though translations of classics from Greek and Latin languages were done long ago, the process established itself only after the translation of works from Russian literature, especially the works of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy.

Translations were done for a different purpose also. Sometimes, the need of the hour welcomed a different kind of literature than the existing dormant one. Then, writers instead of starting a new movement, and failing to start a new trend, sought for alien works. Arthur Wailey translated Chinese
poetry and the Japanese novel, The Tales of Genji, Scott Fitzgerald translated Omar Khayyam and even Ezra Pound went to the Chinese models under such circumstances. These are only a few examples. This method yielded positive results. These and more translations flourished and the result was the emergence and establishment of a new genre of comparative study of works of art in different languages.

A striking example of influence is that of the English writer Byron on the Russian writer Pushkin. The political and aesthetic climate of Russia after the Napoleonic war of 1812 demanded a change in the existing mode of writing, and Romanticism was the right choice. The most revealing influence was that of Byron on Pushkin, and the reason for this was that the aesthetic and ideological needs of the latter at the time of influence approached Byron most in quality.

The study of unknown influences also has become an important feature of comparative study. Such influences arise when similar socio-economic factors
in countries without direct contact or influence give rise to similar themes. Folklorists have contributed greatly to this area. One example for such a study of unknown influences is, the comparison of Tagore's short story 'The Judge' (1894) and Tolstoy's novel, Resurrection (1899). As Tolstoy's novel was written later, the only possibility in this case is that Tolstoy might have been influenced by Tagore's short story. Both the works have similar plots. A young girl, the heroine, is seduced by the hero and then abandoned by him. She later becomes a prostitute. Many years later, she is brought to a court on charges of murder. In Tagore's short story the heroine is sentenced to death by the Judge, who is none other than the young man who was responsible for her fate. In Resurrection, the man who had seduced the heroine is one of the judges who sentence her.

Even though Tagore and Tolstoy were contemporaries, the former gained literary recognition only years later. Resurrection was Tolstoy's last novel, whereas Tagore was just establishing himself as a writer at that time. Moreover, Tolstoy had based the
story of his novel on a real-life incident. Negating the possibility of direct influence, there is no mention of Tagore in his diaries or letters. The comparison between these two novels is only one example of many such attempts at studying unknown influences between different writers.

Another important approach in comparative literature is the systematic aesthetic study of two writers belonging to two different cultures separated by time and space with no imaginable influence on each other. This approach which is termed analogy study or parallel study has yielded fruitful results. The scope of this kind of study is unlimited.

As stated at the outset a combination of both these approaches has been used in the present thesis. Charles Dickens and Premchand belonged to two different cultures and were not contemporaries. Dickens passed away in 1870 and Premchand was born only in 1880. Premchand established himself as a writer in the second decade of the twentieth century. But both Dickens and Premchand expressed the plight of the lower class and the lower middle class, of
their respective environs in most of their novels. The study of these two writers as champions of the poor is one of the purposes of this thesis.

Dickens was not the only western writer who had influenced Premchand or who can be compared with Premchand. Tolstoy and Romain Roland were well-known to the Indian lover of literature during Premchand's youth. Premchand had read Tolstoy's stories and before Gandhi appeared on the national scene he had produced an Indian version of twenty-six of the stories under the title _Prem-Prabhakar_. This collection included almost all of Tolstoy's famous stories. Tolstoy influenced both Gandhi and Premchand in terms of human values like love, pity, patience, service, non-violence and sacrifice. "The moral precepts embodied in these stories were no mere cliches for Premchand but truths which he had re-discovered for himself through experience and reflection. These truths had permeated so deeply into his sensibility as to become a part of his creed and his vision and they manifested naturally in his writings."² Premchand revealed the influence

of both Tolstoy and Gandhiji on him but "whatever new elements of thought or philosophy he might have imbibed from Gandhi he had in fact already imbibed from Tolstoy." "In the field of action there was a teacher-disciple relationship between Premchand and Gandhi, in the field of thought there was a teacher-brother relationship between Premchand and Tolstoy." 3

Premchand had read Thackeray's Vanity Fair in 1903. Some felt that his Rangabhumi was an Indianized Hindi version of Vanity Fair. But in all such occasions Premchand proved that his works were original. He was accused of imitation due to the resemblance of Tolstoy's Resurrection and his Premashram and Ryder Haigard's She and his Kayakalpa. The resemblance between She and Kayakalpa was in the use of narrative techniques. Premchand argued that such resemblances occur because he took his subject from life and life everywhere was one. He stated that Rangabhumi was a political novel whereas Vanity Fair was a social one. He had Annie Besant in his mind while depicting the history of Sofia and

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Surdas was the alter image of Gandhi-Nehru. The fact was that Premchand was a scholar of Western novels and all that he had read had become a part of his personality. His translations included Anatole France's Taira and Galsworthy's plays Strife and Silver Box. He appreciated Victor Hugo's Les Miserables and had read Hall Caine's Eternal City and Ryder Haigard's She. He encouraged emerging writers to read important Western works. He used whatever Western merit he thought was beneficial to his art. For instance in the portrayal of the divine communication in Ghaban one can see the influence of Thomas Hardy. But the novel remains original and does not lose its quality because except for the technical speciality of Hardy no other philosophy of Hardy is made use of by Premchand—neither his tragedy nor his love of nature. The novel bears the stamp of Premchand's genius both in content and form.

Turgenev, Chekhov and Gorky were the other Russian writers whom Premchand admired. But they were less important to him as far as Tolstoy was concerned. In this context, Gorky needs special
emphasis because more than any other Russian writer, he was the writer of the workers and peasants. And, Premchand is sometimes called "The Gorky of India". A book is also published on these two writers titled Premchand and Gorky by Shachirani Gurtu.

As regards Dickens and Premchand no mention is made about any fondness for the writer or his works except for the fact that Premchand enjoyed reading Pickwick Papers. Moteram Shastri, a character who frequently occurs in his works is a product of Premchand's appreciation of the satiric humorous vein of Pickwick Papers. Premchand asked for a copy of the novel even when he was bed-ridden during his last days. He told Ganga Prasad Mishra, the short-story writer, "I feel quite depressed these days. If I could somehow get hold of Pickwick Papers, that might cheer me up." This incident is the only instance in the life of Premchand to show that he had any serious interest in the works of Dickens.

4 Dr. Bharat Bhushan Agarwal, Premchand-Parvati Hindi Upanyas par Paschatya Upanyas ka Prabhav (Rishab Tharan Jain Sons, Delhi, 1971), Pp.85-90.

even if it is narrowed down to only one novel.

But, both Dickens and Premchand were not hailed for their humorous characters or works as much as for their serious works. W.H. Hudson states, "From beginning to end the great Victorian writers devoted themselves to a literature of purpose." And, among them Dickens was without doubt the greatest. He had the advantage of a good tradition behind him and also the challenge of great contemporaries. F.R. Leavis's ranking of Dickens only after George Eliot and Jane Austen is despite his strong and solid arguments rather incongruous and does not do ample justice to a writer often considered second only to Shakespeare in many respects.

On the other hand, Premchand lacked a good tradition of writers. The novel itself is a form that is very new to India and is borrowed. In this respect, the influence is unmistakably western, rather English and European. In fact, Premchand

was the pioneering writer of purpose in Urdu as well as Hindi literature. He found the existing system and the existing literature moving in exactly opposite directions. When the country was experiencing torment and gradually slipping down to the path of destruction, the writers of the period busied themselves in writing fairy-tales. At this juncture, Premchand felt a hidden urge to reveal to both the writers and the reading public the need for a different kind of literature. He voiced his opinions in journals, and through his works. It was unavoidable for him to search for models in Western literature. He heralded a change in Urdu and Hindi fiction writing.

The combined impact of the existing atmosphere in India and the changing trends in Western literature warranted a shift towards a new kind of literature. The conditions in both the countries, England, and India during the respective periods were also quite similar, though the former was a free nation. Yet, England experienced a spiritual unrest just as India experienced political subjugation. If Premchand wanted to portray the unimaginably miserable plight of women, Dickens was concerned with the sufferings
of poor children; if Premchand dealt with the miserable life of the Indian peasant, Dickens exposed the difficulties of the British labour class and where Premchand revealed the hypocrisy of the upper class and the ruthlessness of the British, Dickens dealt a severe blow on the system as such.

The present study deals with the two writers as writers with a message or purpose. Three novels have been selected from the works of each of the writers to illustrate the central concern of this study. So the approach is sociological. *Hard Times* is not the last novel of Dickens. Yet, this novel and *Godan*, the last completed novel of Premchand, have been taken together for analysis in the third chapter. The two socially important novels, *Oliver Twist* and *Sevasadan* are studied in the first chapter. The novels immediately preceding *Hard Times* and *Godan*, namely, *Bleak House* and *Karmabhumi* have been considered in the second chapter.

All these novels are primarily social novels, and so the sociological approach employed for the study does not discuss the complexities resulting from other critical approaches.
The Victorian age in which Dickens wrote had a multifaceted personality. The age witnessed continual change and unparalleled growth in almost every field. It was not only a period of reform, industrialization, achievement in science, government, literature, and expansion but also a time when man emerged out of his shackles to assert his independence. The labour class represented the common man, rose in power and made its voice heard.

Society as well as the individual experienced great intellectual and spiritual disturbance, and the literature of the period reflected the conflict between the advocates of the material creed of the country and those who felt that human beings had been exploited at the expense of spiritual and aesthetic values to achieve this prosperity. Most of the literature was idealistic and romantic despite the strong inclination of the people towards a realistic utilitarianism.

The growing scientific progress even intruded religious faith, and this was a cause for concern for the guardians of faith of the time. The political
situation in England was not easy to comprehend. The issues were not clear-cut. The repeal of the Corn Laws of 1815 was the great reform of the age. Though initiated by the Whigs, the repeal was finally brought through Parliament by Sir Robert Peel, a Tory leader in 1846. Outside England, America experienced a ruthless Civil War; France was faced with the problems of recovery after the Wars of Napoleon; and Germany was becoming a force to reckon with.

Studies of the living and working conditions in England between 1800-34 were presented to Parliament and it resulted in some attempt to bring about reforms in working conditions and to alleviate some of the dire poverty in England. The Industrial Revolution which had its positive aspects was still responsible for the migration of people from villages to cities and of many people from some of the poverty-stricken places in Ireland into England. After the fall of Napoleon, the returning soldiers added to the growing number of workers. The advent of the power loom created unemployment. An increase in labour supply resulted in a drop in wages. Sometimes,
even whole families had to be employed in the many industrial establishments to survive. Children were exploited by employers, and studies revealed that 82 percent of the workers in the mills between 1830-1834 were between the ages of eleven and eighteen and 62 percent of the workers in the fabric mills had tuberculosis.

With the Poor Law of 1834 workhouses came to be built. But the living conditions were so bad that they were called the "Bastilles of the Poor". The poor people in these workhouses were treated very cruelly by inhuman supervisors. Dickens's Oliver Twist gives an example of such a person in the character of Mr. Wackle. Conditions in prisons were even more deplorable than in the workhouses. Life in debtors prisons was a penalty worse than death and it is revealed in David Copperfield and Little Dorrit.

The undemocratic character of the Reform Act of 1832, the unpopularity of the Poor Law, and the unhappy conditions of the labourers led to the Chartist Movement of the 1840's. But this working-class
movement failed. Yet, in the end, the Chartists could achieve most of the ends they sought through free discussion and legislative action.

The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 helped in the advent of a period of free trade and a rapid increase in manufacture and commerce which gave the working class an opportunity to exist outside the workhouses.

Thus the country started awakening itself to the degradation of the working-classes, and industrial reform began to proceed gradually but inevitably, despite the advocates of laissez-faire and industrial freedom.

Economic theorists and their theories played an active role in the political life of the nineteenth-century. The doctrine of laissez-faire, first projected by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*, was later elaborated upon by Jeremy Bentham and T. R. Malthus, whose doctrine of utility was the principle of "the greatest happiness to the greatest number". The principle meant that the government should allow the economic situation to adjust itself
naturally through the laws of supply and demand. But this system would produce a millionaire at one extreme and a beggar at the other and Thomas Carlyle was forced to call this system of economy "the dismal science". Dickens was influenced by Carlyle, and he castigated the system again and again. The utilitarians, however, helped bring about the repeal of the Corn Laws and to abolish cruel punishment. During Victoria's reign she brought down the number of offences punishable by death from four hundred and thirty eight to two (for murder and treason only). This and the stressing of prevention and correction resulted in a decrease in crime.

Karl Marx founded the first international working Men's Association in London in 1864. Trade unions were legalized the same year. In 1867 *Das Capital* was published. The Fabian Society appeared in 1884, headed by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw, and other upper middle-class intellectuals. The Fabians believed that socialism would come about gradually without violence.

The rights of the workers were recognized, and
Then Parliament began to give priority to education. In 1870 the Elementary Education Bill provided education for all; in 1891 free common education for all became compulsory. George Meredith and John Stuart Mill, worked for "female emancipation". After this emerged women like Florence Nightingale and Frances Powers.

Prosperity and advancement in science were the main features of the second half of Queen Victoria's reign. Inventions such as the steam engine, the telephone, telegraph and the wireless made communication easier and simpler. Men became curious about and interested in the unknown. Scientific and philosophic research in theology and biology influenced the religious mind of England. There was a series of discoveries regarding man's origin which challenged accepted opinions regarding man and the universe. Sir Charles Lyell's Principles of Geology (1830-33) established a continuous history of life on this planet; Sir Francis Galton did pioneerwork in the
field of heredity and Charles Darwin gave the theory of evolution through his Origin of Species. This book influenced the thinking of the period most profoundly. Three schools of thought concerning man's origin emerged after its publication. The first group expressed that Darwin's evidence did not justify his conclusions, and nothing had changed in man's religious beliefs regarding his origin and creation. The second maintained that Darwin's evidence had left no room for God in the universe, therefore, everything had changed and thinking must change. According to the third school of thought, Darwin's theories simply reaffirmed the Biblical concepts, and so, "evolution is just God's way of doing things."

The conflict between the theologians and the scientists continued throughout the century and it was reflected in the literature of the period also. While some poets like Tennyson and Browning voiced their faith in their writings most others put forth their cynicism and loss of faith which, later fermenting through the Modernist influence gradually accentuated itself.
Dickens gave expression to all the misery and oppression of his countrymen of the period through his writings. He was a part of the scene and could not just ignore the happenings around him. His novels from *Oliver Twist* to *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* reveal his close affinity towards his environment.

For India too, the times marked a great social and political upheaval and Premchand like Dickens witnessed and experienced the stress.

Premchand was born in 1880. India had experienced a bloody confrontation in 1857, which is a major event in the history of the Indian struggle for independence. The Indian Association was formed in 1873 by Anand Mohan Basu, Surendra Nath Banerjee, and Yojendra Vidyabhusan. It grew in strength very quickly, and many Bengali patriots came under its influence. The novel *Anandamath* by Bankim Chandra, which contained the song "Bande Mataram" appeared in 1882.

The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885 with the intention of curbing the growth of the Indian Association and of dividing the nation.
But the attitude of appeasing the British did not last long. Soon after Gokhale and Tilak joined the Congress in 1893, there was a difference of opinion between these two leaders and the emergence of the moderates under Gokhale and the extremists under Tilak. Tilak had the following of the younger generation. He gave the lead from within the Congress, while revolutionaries who were gaining in strength, continued with their activities outside the Congress. On 11 August 1908, fifteen year old Khudiram Bose was hanged for sedition. At this time Premchand was a government servant, still he could not stop himself from hanging a portrait of Khudiram in his room. Tilak was also arrested the same year, and a lull followed in Indian politics till 1914. The Congress withdrew, almost to its old liberal stance, as the party leadership had passed completely into the hands of the Moderates at the Surat session of the Congress in 1907. The Moderates and the Radicals were reconciled at the annual session held in Lucknow. Gandhi had become a famous personality by then.

Meanwhile, Swami Vivekananda had become the
leading spiritual figure at the Congress of World Religions held in the United States in 1893. He influenced the Indian masses through his revivification of the sagging Indian spirit.

Later, the world experienced a war which ended in November 1918. All the political events, along with the internal conflicts such as the oppression of the peasant by his landlord, the humiliation of the lower castes by the upper castes, the hypocrisy of the guardians of different religions, communal tension and the untold misery of women had a deep impact on Premchand which can be seen reflected in his writing. Unfortunately, he could not live to see free India and he passed away on 5 October, 1936.

BIographies

The earliest substantial biography of Charles Dickens, The Life of Charles Dickens, was written by his close friend, John Forster. Forster drew largely on Dickens's letters for his book and the immediacy of the book owes much to this and to his intimate personal knowledge of his subject. Dickensian
biography was given a new lease of life by the revelation made in the 1930s by Thomas Wright, and also by Gladys Storey, who set down the reminiscences of her friend, Kate Perugini (Dickens's older daughter) in *Dickens and Daughter*.

Una Pope-Hennessy's *Charles Dickens* was the first biography to make use of the new facts and this along with Hesketh Pearson's *Dickens: His Character, Comedy and Career* are generally reliable. K.J. Fielding's *Dickens: A Critical Introduction* can be complemented pictorially by J.A. Priestley's straight-forward account in *Dickens: A Pictorial Biography*, or by Martin Fido's *Charles Dickens: An Authentic Account of His Life and Times* (the finest, most suggestive Dickensian picture-gallery, however, will be found in Angus Wilson's *The World of Charles Dickens*). The nearest approach to the writing of the definitive life of Dickens is Edgar Johnson's *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph*, which combines detailed scholarship and readership to a remarkable degree, though the book's main thesis—that as Dickens grew older his insight into society
became sharper and more comprehensive—does not
come general assent. Four other important
sources of biographical information are: J...T.
Ley's The Dickens Circle, Arthur A. Adrian's Geogina
Hogarth and the Dickens Circle, innumerable articles
in The Dickensian on all aspects of Dickens's life,
notably those by William J. Carlton and W.J. Fielding's
admirable and definitive edition of Dickens's speeches.

A collection of Dickens's letters was published
by his daughter Mary, and sister-in-law Georgina
Outline, and remained the only one available until
Winter Buxton published Dickens's letter to his wife
in Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens. Another special
collection concerned with Dickens's philanthropic
activities, was made by Edgar Johnson of some of
Dickens's letters to Barrowess Jardett-Scotts.
Buxton also edited the three volumes of letters
in the Nonesuch edition and these will remain the
standard edition until they are superseded by the
much fuller and more accurate Pilgrim edition. This
splendid edition supplies detailed and scholarly
annotation. The first two volumes published in
1965 and 1969, cover Dickens's life up to the end of
1841.
In *Oliver Twist* (1837–8) and *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839–9), the books written after *Pickwick Papers*, Dickens emerged as a crusader to reform the wrongs, a journalist to expose the evils, the philanthropist with causes to espouse and the memorandumist with villains to denounce. His popularity had grown by now and the demand for his novels was rapidly increasing. His *Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) was an immense success. In 1841 he came out with *Martin Chuzzlewit* which was a historical romance.

Dickens was invited by Washington Irving to America and his impressions of American life are recorded by him in *American Notes* (1842) and *The Chuzzlewit* (1844). His next work, the all-time classic *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844), is a collection of five Christian stories.

In 1842 he went to Italy, and after his return in 1844, he was appointed Chief Editor of *Household Words*. But he left it in three weeks. In 1845, he started writing *Martin Chuzzlewit* and was appointed as the editor of a newly started weekly magazine — *Household Words*. *David Copperfield* was started in 1852 and *A Child’s History of England* was published in three volumes in 1852, 1853 and 1854. *Hard Times* was published in 1854 and *Little Dorrit* in 1856.

Dickens started *All the Year Round* as a sequel to *Household Words*. It was more literary than the other
One. A Tale of Two Cities appeared in this journal. Articles contributed by him to this journal were published by him later under the title, All the Year Round. Our Mutual Friend (1864) was his last complete novel.

Dickens's life was marked by a long series of hectic activity and strenuous enterprises which ultimately had an adverse effect on his health. He went on with the public readings of his works inspite of his bad health and he was consequently fully exhausted. His last novel, The Mystery of Edwin Drood was started in 1869, but he could not complete this novel as he passed away on 9 June, 1870.

The most familiar biography of Premchand is the one written by his son, Amrit Rai. The book, Premchand: Yalam ka Sipahi, (Premchand: Soldier of the Pen) is translated into English as Premchand: His Life and Times by Harish Trivedi. Although he writes about his own father, Amrit Rai has retained his scholarly objectivity to a remarkable degree. At the same time, having seen his father closely in his childhood and boyhood, he is able to give intimate glimpses of Premchand's personal life. The main events in Premchand's life are presented in the context of his environment and the book achieves a balance between his private and public life.

Madam Gopal who had written Premchand: Yalam ka Mazdoor (Premchand: Servant of the Pen) has an English book also to his credit entitled Munshi Premchand.
A Literary Biography. This work is based on painstaking research, in which all available Hindi and Urdu sources have been tapped. The author tells the story of Premchand’s life, and side by side gives a commentary on the important works written in each phase of his evolution. A fairly clear picture of Premchand’s personality and character emerges from this book and the main events of his life are described with enthusiasm but without undue glorification.

A reference should also be made to a book of memoirs written by Premchand’s wife Shivrami Devi. The book bears the title _Premchand: Ghar Mein_ (Premchand: In the Home). There is a delightful, sometimes touching account of Premchand as a human being, given by one who was not only devoted to him but also understood him more than anyone else in the world.

Almost like Dickens, Premchand was somewhat delicate in his childhood, yet playful and active. At the age of eight he was sent to a ‘Maulvi’ who used to give Urdu and Persian lessons to a small group of children. The ‘Maulvi’ was a good teacher.
and gave Premchand a solid foundation in Persian grammar. Premchand retained his interest in Persian even after he became a famous Hindi writer. Persian was one of the subjects which he offered at the Intermediate and B.A. Examinations. When Ajaib Lal, Premchand's father was transferred to Gorakhpur, a city which was to play an important part in his son's life. Premchand was admitted to the Mission High School where he received a much superior education than at any of the previous schools he had attended. From now on, his entire life was to be a perpetual struggle against poverty and want. However, he was cheerful, and continued to join other schoolboys in their games. There was the excitement of 'Ramalila' also every autumn. The boys who played Rama and Lakshmana were super-heroes in his eyes.

Premchand had found in the pages of _Tilism-i-Moshruba_ a new world of mystery, romance, chivalry and adventure. And at Gorakhpur his passion for reading was satisfied without having to trudge for miles. So, his interest in reading was now thoroughly aroused that he went on to other books. He read all the famous works of Urdu fiction that were available. By the age of thirteen he had finished
the writings of Sarshar, Huswa, Sharar and many other Urdu writers. He also read Urdu translations of many English novels and of Puranic myths. By a lucky chance, he got a job as salesman for the owner of a book store. He was allowed to read all the works in his shop. Besides fiction, he also read the classics of Urdu poetry and attended 'mushairas'. However, fiction remained the focal point of his interests.

It was soon after his marriage that Premchand first tried his hand at writing. He wrote an account of a love affair between one of his paternal uncles and a girl of the 'Chamar' caste in the form of a play. His friends had a good laugh over it and it also had a strong influence on his uncle. He realised the power which a play or a story can give to its author, a power which could be used effectively in a good cause. He never forgot this important lesson.

Premchand studied Ratan Nath Dar's Urdu classic, 
fasana-o-azad which he later translated into Hindi. He also read Urdu translations of novels by Bankim Chandra Chatterji. The latter influenced Premchand
deeply. Bankim was one of the first Indians of the modern age to write patriotic novels. He was also a pioneer in the field of the historical novel. Both these features of Bankim's writings—patriotism and a deep interest in medieval history—appealed to Premchand.

A world-view was also emerging in his mind, an outlook on life firmly rooted in certain values that he had made his own. By 1903, he wrote his first Urdu novel, Asrar-i-Maabil (Secrets of the Temple). At Kanpur, his correspondence with Munshi Daya Narain Wigam, editor of the Hindi journal 'Zamana,' led to a lifelong friendship. The columns of the 'Zamana' were now open to him, as much for his creative writing as for the expression of his views on the vital issues of the day. This was also the period when Premchand began to take an active interest in the nationalist movement. He began to see over more clearly that many of the social problems of India were linked with political subjugation.

Premchand worked at Kanpur till 1909. He was not involved in politics directly, yet he leaned
towards the radical wing of the Congress. But after Gandhi assumed the leadership, he came under his influence.

Unlike Dickens, Premchand wrote a large number of short stories also. The first story was entitled 'Daniya Ka Saboo Anmol Katan' published in 'Zamana' in 1907. He wrote articles on Garibaldi and Mazzini lauding their patriotism and their work for the unity and freedom of Italy. His story, 'Ishq-i-Duniya aur Hubbo-Watan' written in 1908, is based on the life of Mazzini. His first article in defence of the Indian National Congress was written in 1905. His second novel in Urdu, 'Hamkhurma-o-Hamsawab' came out in 1906, and a year later he published its Hindi version entitled Prama. His third novel, Krishna was published in 1907.

Premchand was promoted to the rank of sub-deputy Inspector of Schools and transferred from Kanpur to Mahoba in Hamirpur District. In the stories which he wrote at this time, the picturesque and stirring history of the Bundelas is clearly reflected. He always had a weakness for the age of chivalry and
heroism. 'Rani Sarandha' and 'Raja Hardaul' are based on folk-stories about episodes in medieval Bundelkhand, especially in the small kingdom of Urchha. 'Gunah Ka Agnikund' deals with an episode in the history of Hamirpur, while 'Vikramaditya ka Taigha' takes us to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh state in the Punjab.

Pratapchand published *Soz-i-Watan*, a collection of short stories in 1908. But, when the government noticed the rebellious tone of some of the stories and began to harass him, he was forced to use the pseudonym Pratapchand, which he first used when he published 'Bare Ghar ki Üsti', a beautiful short story and his own favourite, in December 1910.

In 1914, Pratapchand was sent to Yasti, a backward town in the Himalayan foothills. Urdu journalism was in a state of decline and Hindi journals and publishing houses were becoming popular. By a coincidence Pratapchand made the acquaintance of Mannan Dwivodi, a Hindi writer and through his influence, he was attracted towards the classics of Sanskrit literature. The increasing fascination
for Hindi, coupled with the practical consideration that Hindi offered a better market than Urdu, gave an entirely new direction to Premchand's life.

In 1915, he passed the intermediate examination, with English, Logic, History and Persian as his subjects. It will be noted that Hindi was not one of the subjects he offered.

Premchand suffered from dysentery which became chronic and persisted till his death. So, at Basti, due to his nagging ailment, his literary output was modest. Yet, he produced many stories which included 'Marham' (Balm) (published in Hindi as 'Vismriti' (Forgotten)) and 'Panch Parameshwar', two of his best ones. In August, 1916 he was transferred to Gorakhpur on promotion.

His stay at Gorakhpur till February, 1921 was eventful. He made new and valuable friendships, published his first two major novels and some of his best-known stories, and was increasingly involved in the country's struggle for freedom under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.
Promchand felt at Gorakhpur a renewal of his creative energy. His first novel, Bazar-i-Huan was ready by early 1917 but he could not get it published. He was able to get the Hindi version, Savasadan published. Savasadan was a turning point in Promchand's literary career.

Savasadan received unanimous acclaim and encouraged by it, Promchand started writing his second major novel. Nakam was published in Hindi as Premashram in 1921. With this novel Promchand was recognized as a Hindi writer, not merely an Urdu writer who translated his own works into Hindi. He translated Jalwah-i-Isar, written ten years earlier into Hindi as Varadan, which was not well acclaimed. He published fifteen short stories also, noted among them being 'Ishvariya Nyaya', 'Atmaram' and 'Maryada Ki Vodi'. In 1919, Promchand wrote an article 'Daur-i-Qadim aur Daur-i-Jadid' which is a passionate indictment of feudal and capitalist exploitation.

The period between his departure from Gorakhpur in 1921 and his arrival at Lucknow as editor of
'Madhuri' in 1927 yielded a rich harvest of novels and stories. *Rangabhumi*, one of his two greatest novels was published in 1925, *Kayakalpa* in 1926. *Karbala*, a play based on an episode in Islamic history was serialised in the 'Zamana' in 1926–27. More than forty-five stories were written during this period, including such famous ones as 'Pariksha' 'Vajrapat', 'Shatranj ko Khilar' and 'Jaba Sor Gohun'. In much of his work of this phase, Premchand had given a lot of attention to the Muslim element in Indian life and culture. Premchand made a valuable contribution in helping the two communities understand each others' heritage, not only through his stories but also through his articles.

Premchand was now regarded as the most important Hindi novelist and story writer. He was invited to address meetings convened by literary societies and other institutions. His views were heard with respectful attention. He had won this prestige not only because of the excellence of his writings but because of his integrity, generosity, solicitude for younger writers and his patriotism. He lived in a very simple style, without any ostentation.
Premchand wrote about twenty-five stories during the first four years of his stay at Lucknow. They include a few well-known pieces such as 'Nyaya', 'Mantra', 'Fatiha' and 'Motiram Shastri'. Some of these show a continuing concern with the Hindu-Muslim question which promoted him to write on themes taken from Islamic history.

On 10 May, 1940 the first issue of 'Hans' (The Swan), a nationalist monthly started by Premchand, was released. In this magazine, he wrote articles on important events and issues.

After Shivrani Devi's arrest on 9 November, 1930, Premchand also was ready. But his health was delicate, and Shivrani persuaded him not to court arrest.

The deep impact of political events can be seen in the two major novels which Premchand wrote during this period (1931-32): Ghaban and Karmabhumi. Many of the stories and articles written during this period are also based on contemporary events.

Meanwhile, his relations with his employers at
the Naval Kishore Prasad had become strained. They relieved him of the editorship of 'Madhuri' and transferred him to the section dealing with the publication of books.

Promchand took over 'Jagaran', a fortnightly magazine which was running at a loss and would soon be closed down, and turned it into a weekly. The first issue of the weekly appeared in August 1932. But the weekly could not be made financially viable and it soon became one of Promchand's major worries.

Promchand had been deeply interested in Soviet Communism since 1919. He had followed the Soviet experiments in economic planning with great interest. He was adopting increasingly radical positions on social issues. He accepted uncritically all the praise that was lavished upon the Soviet Union. Some of the stories of this period show an intensity and bitterness that is strangely at variance with the balanced, comprehensive outlook reflected in almost all his novels. On several issues he seems to have drifted away from the Gandhian perspective during the last four years of his life.
Promchand started his masterpiece, Godan in 1932 but his work was interrupted for over two years due to the problems he faced with his journals and the press. In July, 1935, 'Hans' became the mouthpiece of the 'Uharatiya Sahitya Parishad'. Godan was published in June, 1936. By this time Promchand had become an exhausted man. His health had received a serious setback. Soon afterwards, he, along with Nehru, Tagore and some other outstanding Indians signed the manifesto issued at Brussels on behalf of intellectuals and artists in which the war mongers were denounced and there was a call to mobilise public opinion against Fascism.

On 8 October 1936, Promchand passed away.

PRIMARY TEXTS

Dickens began his career as a novelist with Sketches by Boz (1833-4) but it was Pickwick Papers (1836-37), his next work which helped him to be ranked along with the other novelists of the day. This novel was followed by Oliver Twist (1837), Nicholas Nickleby (1838-39), The Old Curiosity Shop
(1840), Barnaby Rudge (1841), Martin Chuzzlewit (1843-44) and Dombey and Son (1846-48), which are classed as his earlier novels. His later novels began with David Copperfield (1848-50), which was followed by Bleak House (1852-53), Hard Times (1854) Little Dorrit (1855-57), A Tale of Two Cities (1859), Great Expectations (1860-61), Our Mutual Friend (1864-65) and the unfinished The Mystery of Edwin Drood (1870). He began writing this unfinished novel in 1869.

Pachchand wrote as many novels as Dickens, but all of them are not popular. Just as Pickwick Papers is reckoned as Dickens first important novel, Sevadasan is considered to be Pachchand's first major novel. It was published in 1919. Sevadasan was followed by Premashram (1921), Kangabhumi (1925), Kayakalpa (1926), Ghaban (1930), Karmabhumi (1932) and Godan (1936). The rest of his novels were shorter ones and except for Mirmala (1927) were inferior too. It is a strange coincidence that Pachchand also like Dickens was not able to finish his last work. Mangalsutra (1948), the incomplete novel follows his masterpiece, Godan.
THEMES

Although Dickens is known for his excellence as a humorist his role as a social critic is no less important. In almost all his novel he champions the cause of the lower middle-class and the lower-class and attacks social injustice. *Oliver Twist* is the first novel of Dickens which deals with this aspect in a full-fledged manner.

Pathos and innocence of the child is the main theme of *Oliver Twist*. The wickedness and criminal trends of cheats, pick-pockets, like Fagin, the old Jew come to be exposed along with those of his accomplice Bill Sikes, the burglar, and the Artful Dodger and Nancy.

*Oliver Twist* is brought up in a work-house, dominated by Bumble, the Parish beadle. Bumble is cruel by nature and one day when Oliver asks for more than his usual share of food, he is severely beaten and is eventually thrown out of the poor house. He falls a victim to the company of a group of villains and ruffians whose leader
is Fagin. Now he is brought up as a pick-pocket and a thief. He is sent out for stealing in the process of which he is grievously hurt. He is rescued by a good man, Mr. Brownlow, but is again kidnapped by the villains. The villains are arrested ultimately and punished severely for their nefarious activities. Fagin is executed and Sikes is forced to commit suicide. *Oliver Twist* comes under the umbrella of good fortune when facts about his parentage are known. His marriage is celebrated with Rose, the daughter of his saviour. The novel closes on a note of comedy though it deals throughout with the tragedy of persecuted life presented with grimness and macabre imagination.

*Oliver Twist* is study in crime and villainy. The vice is triumphantly pursued and does not result in the delights promised by the romances. Reform in the working of the poorhouses is suggested and a case is made for the dismissal of callous persons like Bumble. A strong appeal is put forward for the better treatment of children. *Oliver Twist* for the first time illustrates that Dickens has the reformatory and idealistic tone.
Nicholas Nickleby is also a reformative novel, which is an attack on the evil practices in the Yorkshire school. This novel indicts severely callous teachers like Squeers and is a scathing denunciation of the system of teaching imparted by the teachers in schools like Dotheboys Hall.

A miscellany named 'Master Humphry's Clock' was started by Dickens in 1840. It served as a framework for his next novel, Old Curiosity Shop. This novel is the depiction of the pathetic and miserable life of Little Nell and her grandfather. They are put to great financial losses as a result of certain borrowings by the old man from a sinister and callous money-lender, David Julip, who subjects them to an untold torture until Little Nell meets her death. Her grandfather also dies soon after.

This is one of the most sentimental novels written in a sentimental age. The present-day reader, however, product of a more hardened age, may be moved to scoff rather than weep. Certainly he will feel that the novel is not 'great' by present-day standards, even though it is a monument
to the sentimentalism which moved a bygone generation, both in England and in America.

**Barnaby Rudge** was Dickens's first venture into the field of historical fiction. A novel filled with violence and melodrama, it undoubtedly owes much to Scott's *The Heart of Midlothian*, particularly in those scenes dealing with the historic Gordon riots and the burning of Newgate prison by the infuriated mob. Barnaby Rudge and his talking raven forecast at the beginning of the book the development of a nightmarish plot in which Dickens tries to combine two themes of interest and suspense: private crime and public disorder. As in many of his novels, the book lives chiefly in the lively and original minor characters whom he created. Lord George Gordon, drawn from history, is presented in a more sympathetic light than that in which he was viewed by Parliament and responsible citizens of his own day.

**Martin Chuzzlewit** is a novel complicated in plot but rich in characterization and Dickensian humour. In addition, this book contains the writer's most outrageous caricatures, in those scenes dealing
with young Martin Chuzzlewit's experiences in America. Dickens himself had been disappointed in the United States, and his account of the land and its people is far from flattering. The pictures of rude frontier life fade, however, beside his portraits of Mr. Pecksniff the archhypocrite, and the cockney vitality of Mrs. Gamp, perhaps the author's best humorous character.

_Dombey and Son_ is the best of Dickens's earlier novels. It was an effort by Dickens to regain popularity he had lost with the publication of his previous novel. _Dombey and Son_ is also a milestone in Dickens's work in that he placed the story at a higher social level than he had done in his previous novels. For the first time he indicated an interest and a sympathy in the upper middle classes and the aristocracy. The story is a very serious one, involving the downfall of a dignified and pompous merchant and his learning of the power of love as compared to the lesser power of money. The novel shares the evil effects of pride and haughtiness. In typical Dickensian style, however, there is a whole catalogue of characters to provide a humorous background.
**David Copperfield** is an autobiographical novel. The account of the life and adventures of David Copperfield are, in fact, an account of the life and adventures of Dickens himself. The pen-portrait of Micawber in the novel is based on his own father. Uriah Heep, representing flattery, sneaking humility and hypocrisy, Murdstone, standing for a cruel father, Peggotty who stands for a kind nurse, Betsy Trotwood, representing benevolence, though eccentric, are some of the unforgettable characters of Dickens in *David Copperfield*. Although not free from the artificial device of poetic justice, it is not a novel with a didactic bearing. Except for a few re formations of sinners and the lurid tragedy of Steerforth, all of which have no direct connection with the history of David, this is free both from didacticism and melodrama.

*Black House* published in 1853, is a virulent satire on the abuses of law-courts, particularly the old Chancery court. Delays and inequities of the law-courts are attacked forcefully in this novel. *Black House* is based upon an actual case in Chancery. The story of lives sacrificed on the rack of a
meaningless judicial system is an arresting one. Several of the minor characters are caricatures of well-known literary figures of the day.

*Hard Times* was published in 1854. It intends to expose the evils of industrialism and the excessive love for money and the worship of machinery. Gradgrind is a miser and a man of cold, calculating reasoning and Josiah Bounderby is a manufacturer and rich merchant. Both of them have been satirised in this novel. Gross materialism is ridiculed and imaginative and spiritual values of life are upheld.

*Little Dorrit* is a treatment of the corruption and delays in Government institutions, particularly the office named Circumlocution Office, and Marshalsea Prison. Many years of his life are spent by William Dorrit in Marshalsea Prison. The evils of prison life of the day have been exposed through his character and experiences. The novel suggests that the prison-life needs reform.

*A Tale of Two Cities* is a historical novel which deals with events connected with the French
of revolution. **Great Expectations** has a high place among the novels of Dickens. Miss Havisham is deserted on her wedding day. Pip gives help to an escaped prisoner (Abel Magwitch) hiding in a marsh. From these two events Dickens weaves an amazing story of vindictiveness on one hand and gratitude on the other, and both of these motives affect Pip's life, for Miss Havisham has marked him as one of her victims, and the prisoner has sworn to reward the small boy who had helped him in the marsh. Although an absorbing tale, this is also a gloomy one, not lightened by Dickens's usual capricious characterizations. Pip is mainly helped by Joe Gargery, a simple-minded man and also his brother-in-law. Miss Havisham is a rich eccentric lady, her character is rather unrealistic and fantastic. The love of Pip and Estella constitutes one of the most important parts of the novel. Apart from this there are few moments to relieve the reader from the pressure of Pip's problems in life.

Premchand's literary output is not any less when compared with the profuse writing of Dickens and he is as well-known with the readers of Hindi fiction as Dickens is with the readers of English
fiction. His themes are also similar to that of Dickens's in that he too deals with the lower middle-class and the lower class. While Dickens deals with the workhouses, the hardships in prison, the exploitation of children, Pramchand is concerned with the existing evils of Indian society, especially the exploitation of the farmers, of women, widows in particular, child marriage and the dowry system.

Sovasadan, published in 1919, is the first major novel of Pramchand and it represents a turning point in Pramchand's literary career. Here, for the first time in Hindi fiction, an important social problem is taken up by an artist who can combine technical excellence with purposiveness. Moreover, the central issue is not seen in isolation but as a corollary of the entire prevalent system of values and institutions. The different strands of the story are woven in such a way that many different issues—social, political, religious, even economic—are connected with the central theme through a skilful introduction of characters and situations. The main theme is the fate of the fallen woman, the woman who is driven to a life of sin largely
through social conditions beyond her control. This raises the larger question of the status of women in Hindu society which, in turn, involves the role of custom and convention. In Sovasadon Promchand employs for the first time, and with considerable success, the western technique of social realism in a novel wholly Indian in its atmosphere and subject matter.

In Sovasadon social evils are exposed, but there is a tendency towards escapism. Instead of carrying his analysis of these evils to its logical conclusion the author seems to be satisfied with patched-up solutions through repentance and atonement. In his second novel Promashram, too, there is repentance because Promchand continued to accept the possibility of change of heart. But repentance plays a minor part in this novel. Instead of seeking a way of escape, the victims of injustice assert their rights and fight. Though the author remains an idealist, he has come face to face with the struggle and conflict that had begun in the Indian country-side: the conflict between the downtrodden peasant, who was, after centuries of holiness
submission waking up to a realisation of his own rights, and the zamindars, whose prosperity was synonymous with the misery of the landless peasant.

In Promashram Premchand has taken a decisive step towards the countryside. Part of the action takes place in cities like Benaras, Gorakhpur and Lucknow. But the village, with its people and their problems, dominates. The middle class plays an insignificant part. There is polarisation: the rich landed aristocrat on one hand, the starving peasant on the other. The author also turns his gaze inside the family, particularly the joint family with its suspicions and rivalries. Other questions which were agitating the Indian mind at that time also got some attention: religious fanaticism which stood in the way of Hindu-Muslim unity, the effects of Western education, the perpetual threat of epidemics and natural calamities like flood and drought. But the focal point of Promashram is the decline of the old feudal order and the exploitation of the peasant by the zamindar (landowner) with the assistance of government officials.
Promashram was followed by Varadan, the Hindi version of a novel published in Urdu nine years earlier under the title of Jalwah-i-Iqar. Then came Rangabhumi, the last of Promchand's novels originally written in Urdu but first published in Hindi.

Many Hindi scholars have described Rangabhumi as Promchand's second greatest novel. The novel reflects with amazing vividness the two main forces that were working in India at that time: The emergence of a new capitalist class which was bringing modern industries to the villages, thus disrupting the life and values that had survived for generations, and the nationalist movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi—a movement which transformed Indian nationalism by taking the struggle for freedom to the masses. Thus there was a new turn in the economic and political life of India. In Rangabhumi both these movements, and the changes they brought about in the social, cultural and even religious aspects of life, are depicted in a very convincing manner. But the significance of this novel is not confined to its
depiction of the contemporary situation. It puts forward a view of life which transcends the dimension of time, a view which has always derived its strength from the spiritual unity of mankind. Promchand saw in Mahatma Gandhi the exponent of the universal philosophy based on tolerance, love and primacy of truth. And the marvel of it is that in Rangabhumi Promchand chose as the exponent of this philosophy a blind beggar, Surdas, in a tiny Indian village.

Rangabhumi raises the problem created by the establishment of factories in the countryside. In this novel Promchand has introduced characters belonging to every group in society. There are characters drawn from the Indian Christian Community also.

His next major novel, Koyakalya is built around two main themes: religious fanaticism, especially as manifested in Hindu-Muslim conflicts, and the belief in reincarnation. The two have nothing in common and the novel has therefore no recognisable structure. This work marks a definite
lowering of the literary level. Nevertheless, *Kayakalpa* is not without its significance for an understanding of Premchand. In the first place something rare in his novels is seen here—a serious interest in an aspect of life which is not confined to the temporal dimension. Secondly, in *Kayakalpa* there are some remarkable anticipations of trends and events that were destined to darken India's life two decades later: the progressive alienation of two communities that had lived together for centuries, and the methods—sometimes crude, often ingenuous—by which the foreign rulers encouraged that alienation.

*Kayakalpa* was followed by two novellettes, *Nirmala* and *Pratigiya*. Premchand's next major novel was *Ghaban*. It deals with the life of the lower middle class in the cities. Almost all the characters belong to this class, and the action takes place almost entirely in the cities. It is in fact a tale of two cities: Allahabad and Calcutta.

In *Ghaban*, Premchand returns to the subject of
foreign rule and the various ways in which the
British resorted to repression. One of the characters
in this novel is a classic example of the 'Satyagrahi',
and the experiences narrated by him are grim reminders
of what the followers of Mahatma Gandhi faced during
the struggle for freedom. The corruptions and
dishonesty of the police, the subservience of the
judiciary, and the hypocrisy of some nationalist
leaders—all these aspects of Indian political life
have been depicted in Ghaban. Among the social
questions dealt with, the most important are: the
artificiality of life created undigested western
values; the darker side of the joint family system
and the extravagance resulting from a false sense
of family pride, which is itself supported by
outdated customs. The novel shows the disastrous
results of women's love for jewellery, and this
love of finery is itself attributed to values
created by social customs. It is also far from
being limited to a study of social forces. The
weaknesses of human nature, as reflected in the
thoughts and actions of 'individuals', also come
in for perceptive psychological analysis—weaknesses
that are not necessarily connected with the "social system".

Karmabhumi was published in 1932. From the standpoint of the novelist's craft, this novel marks an important step forward. The characters attain more distinctive personalities and are shown in the process of growth. The title indicates not only that the novel is action-oriented but also that the main participants fashion themselves in the course of their practical life. The story begins in the city, moves on to the countryside, and is then resumed in such a way that the rural and the urban environments become equally important. The atmosphere of struggle is maintained throughout: the struggle against bureaucracy, against caste oppression and against the exploitation of the peasants by the zamindar. The influence of Mahatma Gandhi is seen not only in the realm of ideas but also in the methods adopted by the leaders of the various movements. The novel shows that Premchand was still wedded to the constructive approach to social problems.
Promchand was still very much an idealist. His views, however, were changing rapidly. In Godan, which he started writing immediately after the publication of Karmabhumi, he makes a radical break with the Gandhian world-view. Godan has been described as "the mahakavya" (epic) of the Indian farmer's life. The Indian village, and the farmer who is rooted in it, are central to the story. Together they form the axis around which everything else in the novel revolves. The utter ruination of the village through the many-sided exploitation to which it has been subjected during British rule is revealed here in its stark reality. The peasant is so tightly enmeshed body and soul, in the net woven by the landlord, the police, the moneylender and the 'biradari' (the code of the clan), that there seems to be no possibility of escape. Release can come only through death. But the forces which bind the victim are not necessarily external. His own obstinate adherence to customs, conventions, and beliefs that cannot stand the test of a national enquiry are equally responsible for his plight. In Godan, the outlook of the peasant—with his fatalism, his convictions that his sufferings are
the result of his own 'karmas' in previous lifetimes—is depicted with as much clarity as the modus
operandi of the priest, the moneylender or the
government official.

Promchand has given in Godan a convincing
estimate of the roles enacted by the 'zemindar'
and 'nouveau riche' capitalist: the double standards
that they adopt, the velvet gloves under which they
conceal their iron claws. He has also shown glimpses
of the new woman of the modern Indian city, the
westernized woman who has little use for the
traditional ideals of Indian womanhood. The migration
of the village people to the city, their attempts
to come to terms with the conditions of life in an
industrial community, and the erosion of their
cherished values: all these have been brought out
through the experiences of one of the characters
in the novel. Promchand has shown remarkable
prevision in his delineation of the 'new leader',
the man who uses patriotism for his own personal
ends and continues his exploitation of the weak
through more subtle methods. Some of the passages
in Godan read like an accurate anticipation of the
declining values of the nationalist movement, and the corruption that was destined to set in two decades later. Even the dishonesty and opportunism of some of the newspaper editors of that age have not escaped the notice of the novelist.

Both Dickens and Flaubert are considered weak artists and technique is given only secondary importance in their works. Dickens inherited a tradition but Flaubert had no tradition worth speaking. Yet, it is to be said to their credit that they developed and improved their techniques as they matured. Dickens began with episodic plots and his serialized presentation constrained his early works. Dickens is primarily an entertainer. His *Pickwick Papers* heralds his true nature as an entertainer. Social reform is another important aspect of his purpose. To all these he subordinated his technique. As he matured he developed dramatic plots. In this development from episodic to dramatic plots, Dickens employed other narrative techniques also. He demonstrated his abilities in farce-caricature, speech-dovices, conflicting and exciting actions and use of sentiment and horror. His penchant
for farco and molodrama was derived from the tradition of stage towards which he had an inclination early on in life. His maturity resulted in a synthesis of different techniques with the entire action revolving around a central pattern.

Promchand, on the other hand, gave primary importance to social reform and technique was subordinated to this main purpose. He wanted a good story which could transform life. He too had a weakness for melodrama which is evident in almost all his works. Then, his idealisation of characters and themes tended to debilitate his art, though he tried to correct this error later on and struck a balance between realism and idealism, a good example of which is his last complete novel, *Godan*. He produced novels consisting of a single plot as well as those containing more than one major plot.

Speech-devices were used by Promchand also to good effect. Still, his language was devoid of the symbolism employed by Dickens to a telling effect. For example, the fog in *Bleak House* is a predominant symbol, the like of which was beyond the scope of Promchand. Yet, Dickens's language was sometimes
cumbersome and could irritate the reader whereas
Panchand was always lucid and the reader could
only be troubled by his narrations which were
sometimes longer than necessary. Both Dickens and
Panchand gain added advantage through their
effective use of irony, satire and humour.

Just a note has been made above of the art of
the two writers. It is a fact that both these
writers are not known for their art. Yet, they
should be remembered as children of their respective
ages who were precursors to the artistic revolution
which subordinated theme and gave primary importance
to technique in literature. The following chapters
deal with three respective novels of these writers
keeping this point in mind.