Chapter III
Major Themes-II
3.1. Theme of Religion:

Themes of Religion, War and Loneliness in the novels of Hugh MacLennan are discussed in the present chapter. Hugh MacLennan has handled the theme of religion in his novels, in which, he emphasises Calvinism, Puritanism and the conflict between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. It is difficult to define religion as there are many interpretations of what a religion is but not one that can be said to be the most accurate. In dictionaries, religion is defined as, ‘any specific system of belief, worship or conduct that prescribes certain response to the existence (or non-existence) and character of God’. Also, ‘a set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices pertaining to supernatural power.’

Christians do not define Christianity as a religion but as an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Calvinism is a theological system and an approach to the Christian life that emphasises God’s sovereignty or control over all things. Puritanism regards pleasure or luxury as sin. It adheres to strict religious principles opposed to sensual pleasure. The puritans emphasised that each person should be continually reformed by the grace of God to fight against dwelling sin and do what is right before God. A humble and obedient life would arise for every Christian. Puritan culture emphasises the need of self-examination and the strict accounting for one’s feelings as well as one’s needs. This was the centre of evangelical experience, which women in turn placed at the heart of their work to sustain family life. Post-Christian world is the one where Christianity is no longer the dominant civil religion, but one that has,
gradually, over extended periods of time, assumed values, culture and world views that are not necessarily Christian.

Without the dimension of a personal and infinite God, the world becomes an insensitive and mechanical universe, indifferent to human goals and aspirations, seemingly without ultimate meaning or purpose. Moreover, in an age of the Holocaust and Hiroshima, humanity has lost its former faith in rationalism, science and humanism. These concerns gave rise to existentialism, the dominant philosophy for most of the twentieth century. Existentialism proposes that man is full of anxiety and despair with no meaning in his life, just simply existing, until he makes decisive choice about his own future. That is the way to achieve dignity as a human being. Existentialists feel that adopting a social or political cause is one way of giving purpose to life. Both theologians and religious writers have attempted to respond to the need for spirituality in an age bereft of God.

The spiritual crisis of twentieth century and the Christian theological responses to it form an important part to any discussion of modern literature and religion. It has been said, by authors and literary critics as well as theologians, that all literature is essentially religious:

> Whatever the subject matter which an artist chooses, however, strong or weak his artistic form, he cannot help but betray by his style his own ultimate concern, as well as that of his group and his period. He cannot escape religion even if he rejects religion, for religion is the state of being ultimately concerned.²

In *Two Solitudes* Hugh MacLennan deals with serious problem in Canada, the conflict between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Athanase Tallard, a Roman Catholic, is a rich landowner with high
respect in Saint-Marc, who, after his first wife's death, marries a Protestant Kathleen, much younger like his daughter's age. Priest Beaubien, who has also gained respect in society like Athanase Tallard, came to Saint-Marc seven years ago to build the church which is the largest in surrounding forty miles. Liberal Athanase desires to change the socio-economic conditions of his parish so he is interested in setting up a factory in partnership with Huntly McQueen who is a Protestant businessman from Montreal. It brings him into conflict with the priest Beaubien and the people of his village. Even Marius, Athanase's son, resists his father's plan of setting up a factory in partnership with the Protestant person, and supports the priest. When Marius is conscripted, Father Beaubien meets Athanase to discuss various issues. Athanase objects to Marius's interest in becoming a priest, as he thinks Marius has not understood the meaning of religion, but Father Beaubien is against Athanase, as he considers himself to be the master of religion, and Athanase has no right to speak on religion. He says, 'Perhaps I'm a better judge of that.'

He continues that at one time Marius had a vocation as he was called by God to the priesthood but, Athanase, who has scientific outlook, rejects this impulsively as he never believes in such a vague feeling in an immature person. Next, the priest points out to Athanase that for nearly three hundred years, Tallard family has lived in parish as good Catholic and raises a question to Athanase, 'Why doesn't he attend mass and confess?' Here, the priest attempts to prove his superiority, Athanase loses his temper for interfering in his personal life and refuses to discuss anything with him, but the priest still insists on his superiority as he says:

I don't intend to discuss it with you. You are a proud man Mr. Tallard. But even if you were Prime Minister, you'd still
be a member of a disciplined church, and I'd still be your priest.4

He also objects to Athanase's intention of sending his son, Paul, from his second wife, to English school and warns Athanase that he is the final authority in this parish:

You completely forget that in this parish I'm the representation of God.5

The priest considers himself the supreme authority in the parish and wants to put everything under his control.

When Marius is arrested, Father Beaubien pays second visit to Tallard's house to inform Athanase that Janet, daughter of Protestant Yardley to whom Athanase has helped to purchase the land in Saint-Marc, has disclosed the hiding place of Marius, so the priest advices Athanase to drop all the plans of setting up a factory, and come back to the church to live like a Christian. Athanase, already psychologically disturbed due to his son's arrest, does not like the priest's advice and warns Father Beaubien to mind his own business. But the priest threatens to destroy his political career saying that he will tell all the people not to vote Athanase and outcaste from the Roman Catholic society. It is clear that the politician's political career is depended on the religious people who are attached to the Church.

The very next day, Athanase, with Paul, hastens to Montreal to convert himself as a Protestant, which affects Athanase and his family. When Paul goes to a store to get mail in Saint-Marc, he notices that the children near the store, stop playing, stare at him and go to the other side of the road as they are told by their parents not to play and talk with Paul because he has converted to the Protestantism, which hurts Paul deeply.
On Sunday, Kathleen goes as usual to mass where she notices that the Tallard pew is occupied by another family from Saint-Marc. When Athanase goes to bring mail in Drouin store, Drouin gives the mail; and turns his back immediately, whereas Athanase speaks pleasantly but gets no answer and also notices that all the other men in the store have turned their backs too. Athanase and his family is outcaste by the Roman Catholics in Saint-Marc. The maid-servant Julienne meets Athanase, and declares, in uncomfortable condition, that she resigns her job, which, he hardly believes because she has been in his house since her childhood. As she is a part of his family, he insists on giving the reason, to which, she states:

This isn’t a Christian house. I can’t work here anymore.6

The tears flow to come down her plump cheeks and with a choking sound in her throat she rushes out of the door, and, for several minutes he remains without any movement. An hour later, there is another knock on his library door and this time it is Blanchard who has been working for twenty-five years on Tallard’s field. For a short time Blanchard keeps quiet and finally gathering all his strength declares, ‘Next year I won’t be working for you any more, Mr. Tallard’7 Without asking for reason, he calculates money to write a cheque as he has become aware that it is not possible to stop Blanchard who is weeping but he consoles him, and when Blanchard leaves the place, he removes his glasses to wipe his eyes. Athanase Tallard is shocked when his maid servant Julienne tells him the reason for resigning as she has worked, like Blanchard, in his house for many years. There is no personal grievance yet they leave him, which hurts him deeply because he has developed intimate relations with them. Hugh MacLennan points out the influence of Roman Catholics in Quebec

-129
province in Canada, by which, the honorable person like Athanase Tallard is also destroyed.

Now, Athanase shifts to Montreal with Kathleen and Paul. In Montreal, once again, he is shocked when Huntly McQueen declares his unwillingness to set up a factory at Saint-Marc, in partnership by giving the reason that he must not come in conflict with the priest and the people. This time, he collapses never to rise again as he feels he has lost everything. In the hospital, he repeats the word ‘Pierre’ to which Marius understands that he is calling the name of the Catholic priest Pierre Arnaud, who was his classmate in school. Marius is now very happy as his father wants to reconvert to Roman Catholicism, so he telephones to the priest Pierre, requesting him to come and perform the ritual of conversion. He returns to the hospital to make the arrangement of the conversion. He sets two candles among the flowers, then, he places a crucifix between the candles and waits for the priest. When the nurse expresses Athanase’s inability to speak in front of the priest due to weakness, Marius smiles calmly and tells her with confidence, ‘He’ll speak.’ Marius is happy because his father, once again, becomes Roman Catholic which suggests that his relation is based on the religion.

The next morning, Father Arnaud performs prayer, then he makes the final sign of the cross and the priest sets himself aside from the bed. Marius with a quick motion comes forward to take one of his father’s hands and kisses it as he is happy for, his father is, once again, Roman Catholic while Paul is happy to see his father speak and considers that the priest has performed miracle. Immediately, Marius tells Paul that Paul is again accepted in Tallard family but also never forgets to tell him that it is not necessary for him to continue in English school. The same day Athanase dies. The difference between Marius and Paul is clearly brought
out by the author as both Paul and Marius are happy for one incident but for different reasons. Paul is happy because after many days his father is able to speak while Marius is happy as his father is now a Roman Catholic.

Athanase Tallard is a responsible citizen of Canada. He has planned to write a religious book. Once, in enthusiastic mood, he starts writing:

The basis of all religious belief is the child’s fear of the dark. When the child grows into a man, this fear appears to lie dormant, but it is still in him. He invents a system of beliefs to render it less terrible to him. Among primitive tribes we call these beliefs superstition, but among civilized nations they are masked by the honoured name of religion. God, therefore, is mankind’s most original invention, greater even than the wheel.  

He stops writing when he considers the purpose of the book, as he knows that these thoughts are not useful in divided culture of Canada, on the basis of religion. While talking with Captain Yardley regarding the priest and people of Saint-Marc, he observes:

Well, Captain, this is just like any other parish in Quebec. The priest keeps a tight hold. Myself, I’m Catholic. But I still think the priest holds the people too tightly. Here the church and the people are almost one and the same thing.  

When he fails in political career, he attempts to set up a factory in partnership with the Protestant Huntly, which brings him in conflict with the church to ruin him completely due to the command of the church on people.
Barbara Pell, in his book, *Faith and Fiction* writes 'In his portrayal of the struggle between the simple piety of Father Beaubien and modern Athanase Tallard, MacLennan paints the rural life of Saint-Marc as a hallowed pastoral existence, threatened by godless capitalism and technology, but in any case outmoded and doomed. In the end, betrayed and destroyed, his instincts lead him back home to his faith, his church and his people.'

Paul and Heather decide to marry but Heather's mother, Janet who is a staunch Protestant opposes their marriage. Captain Yardley attempts to convince his daughter Janet to give permission to the marriage of Paul and Heather but she rejects it and tells Yardley:

\[
\ldots \text{the whole thing's unthinkable from any point of view.}
\]

\[
\text{But just suppose the worst did happen? How could Heather like to see her children brought up as Catholics? They insist on that, you know. You haven't a chance with them when it comes to the children.}
\]

Janet's attempt to discourage marriage of Paul and Heather on the ground of Catholic and Protestant is unsuccessful because ultimately lovers marry without considering resistance. Hugh MacLennan insists on the importance of humanity, in which, love is the source of life and the conflict between the two sects, when human beings love and live together, is useless.

In *Each Man's Son*, Hugh MacLennan has dealt with the religious theme, in which, he has criticised Calvinism by including existential struggle in the protagonist of the novel. On the demand from the publisher to describe Cape Breton and Calvinism, Hugh MacLennan gives an introduction to the story of his novel *Each Man's Son* to explain what he has to say and introduces the beautiful but decayed world of
Cape Breton Island and the curse that dwells within the noble, exiled Highlanders:

To Cape Breton the Highlanders brought more than the quixotic gallantry and softness of manner belonging to a Homeric people. They also brought with them an ancient curse, intensified by John Calvin and breaded upon their souls by John Knox and his successors - the belief that man has inherited from Adam a nature so sinful there is no hope for him and that, furthermore, he lives and dies under the wrath of an arbitrary God who will forgive only a handful of His elect on the Day of Judgment civil.\(^\text{12}\)

Hugh MacLennan also introduces the protagonist of the novel Dr. Daniel Ainslie in the introduction, who is a free thinker and attempts to escape the sense of sin by denying God's existence. But when he displays his knowledge and intelligence as a priest displays his beads, he feels guilty because he knows so little and is not intelligent enough.

Like Hugh MacLennan's father, Dr. Daniel Ainslie is a colliery doctor in Cape Breton, who is engaged in hospital and when he is free, involves in reading translated Homer. His wife Margaret is very attractive sensual woman, descended from the Loyalist - she does not understand the Highland temperament and that has helped to create a gulf between them. He is forty-two without children as his wife is unable to conceive, which a medical fact, and Margaret's unhappiness makes him feel increasingly guilty day by day. Like Captain Yardley, Dr. Dougal Mackenzie, senior and friend to Dr. Ainslie, plays the role of a mouthpiece of Hugh MacLennan. He has overcome his guilt with grace and has reconciled science with religion. He advises Dr. Ainslie that it is entirely possible for a man of medical science to believe in the power of
prayer. Like Angus Murray, he becomes a mouthpiece to Hugh MacLennan, who criticises Calvin's theology:

Man having through Adam's fall lost communion with God, abideth evermore under His wrath and curse except such as he hath, out of His infinite loving kindness and tender mercy, elected to eternal life through Jesus Christ - I'm a Christian, Dan, but Calvin wasn't one and neither was your father. It may sound ridiculous to say, in cold words, that you feel guilty merely because you are alive, but that's what you were taught to believe until you grew up.13

But, in rejecting God's judgment, Dr. Mackenzie articulates the hope of the novel in Christ's mercy, 'The old Celts knew as well as Christ did that only the sinner can become the saint because only the sinner can understand the need and the allness of love' 14

Dr. Ainslie does not believe in the love of God, whom, he considers to be cruel but fails to find other values to believe. Dr. Mackenzie has told Dr. Ainslie that though he is an intellectual agnostic, he is an emotional child and slave to his Presbyterian past which makes Dr. Ainslie think and feel guilty again. He asks himself, 'Was there no end to the circle of Original Sin? Could a man never grow up and be free?' He decides to solve the problem of his barrenness by adopting Alan, Mollie's son, which will be the purpose of his future life. When he is blindly after Alan, denying the feelings of Alan's mother, Dr. Mackenzie warns him, 'You aren't looking for a son, Dan. You're looking for a God.'15 For Dr. Ainslie, sexual repression has corrupted his love for Margaret, and professional ambition has prevented their having children until it is too late, so that he has symbolically as well as
physically sterilized his wife. Now, in trying to acquire a son, he recklessly neglects the rights of both Margaret and Mollie.

Dr. Ainslie operates Alan, which gives an opportunity to him to develop the contact with Alan. He compels Alan to take lunch every day in his house in order to recover his health fast. Margaret advises Mollie to keep Alan away from her husband so Mollie restricts Dr. Ainslie from seeing Alan, which makes Dr. Ainslie a tragic figure. He walks to a remote place where he lies on the ground for an hour thinking existential anxiety of meaninglessness:

If there was no God, then there was nothing. If there was no love, then existence was an emptiness enclosed within nothing . . . world where there were no gods, no devils, no laws, no certainties, no beginnings and no end. A world without purpose, without meaning, without intelligence, dependent upon nothing, out of nothing, within nothing, moving into an eternity, which itself was nothing.\(^{16}\)

Now, he considers that there is no meaning in life and if the life is without purpose then God is dead. After a long time he overcomes his psychological crisis and thinks of going to Europe to reach to the top, in his medical profession. But Alec Mackenzie, husband of Mollie, who is away for boxing career, appears unexpectedly where he finds a Frenchman Louise Camire in his house with Mollie, which makes him lose his temper and he kills both Mollie and Camire. After a short time he also lies unconscious and dies. Now, practical minded Margaret accepts the responsibility of Alan. The unexpected incident takes place at the end of the novel and Alan becomes the son of Dr. Ainslie. Here, Hugh MacLennan provides a purpose of living to Dr. Ainslie in the form of Alan.
Barbara Pell, in her book, *Faith and Fiction* regarding the novel, *Each Man's Son* recapitulates most of the author's previous criticisms of Calvinism, both as a theology and as a crippling psychological complex, and he again probes the existential meaninglessness that accompanies a renunciation of religion. This time he offers a solution, based neither on abstract dogma nor on religious rhetoric, but on the dramatically satisfying resolution of human relationships.\footnote{17}

In some of his novels Hugh MacLennan has described the places and characters with puritan background which helps him to intensify his religious theme. In *Two Solitudes*, in the parish of Saint-Marc, the environment is almost puritan as it is in Greenville of *The Precipice*. Father Beaubien considers himself superior in Saint-Marc as all the French-Canadians are under his control, which helps him to maintain the puritan environment in the parish. He even keeps an eye on the length of the girl’s dresses. When Athanase Tallard stops coming to the church he objects to it and insists on his attending the prayer. In the same novel, the Protestant community of Montreal is represented by the Methuen family who distrust physical beauty in women as they are ‘expected to be irreproachable wives and solid mothers of future Methuen’s.’ Marius Tallard, Athanase’s son both fears and despises sex. He is fascinated by the pictures of nude women in his father’s art book, ‘They signified only the female being he did not know, the being which was beautiful and dangerous and at the core of sin’.\footnote{18} The sensual beauty which Kathleen embodies both repels and attracts him, but he considers that she has made the atmosphere of the house evil and warm with sin. His puritan attitude has been inherited from his mother, Marie, whose memory he worships. Marie Tallard keeps her aloof and involves herself in the religious
prayers. After her death, Athanase thinks that his first wife lived her life to die in order to enter Heaven.

In *Barometer Rising*, the Wain’s house is historical as mentioned earlier. The huge doors of the house are to feel security and dignity, not for the beauty. The heavy oak in front of the Wain Mansion, weighted with a brass knock, is seen by Penelope Wain as a symbol, ‘Her family had shut her in from the world when she was young; it had shut her out from itself when she has ceased being a child’. So that she will remain away from the evil in the society.

In *The Precipice*, the town of Greenville makes itself feel a personal character. Although, there are five parts in the novel, the first, dealing with Greenville, occupies one-half of the novel. The city is dominated by Calvinists who think it more moral for a man to buy a bottle of whisky and drink it in secret in the park than to drink it comfortably in public. It concentrates on the town’s puritan attitude which helps to understand the problems of the major characters in the novel. Matt McCunn is Lucy’s uncle who is always engaged in criticising the puritans, to whom, Greenville is old ‘... like respectable women’. The city strictly disapproves drink, sex and dishonest work, which has outcaste Matt McCunn from the puritan society of Greenville because he always carries wine bottle with him. Patricia Morley in his essay writes

> The social environment which forms the background for the major portions of his novels - the city of Halifax, the Protestant community of Montreal, the Roman Catholic, parish of Saint-Marc and the Ontario town of Greenville is depicted in each case as an uncompromisingly puritan.

In *The Precipice*, Hugh MacLennan concentrates on the Puritanism. Jane Cameron, Lucy’s elder sister, adheres more to the
puritan than to any other characters in Greenville; she is the model of controlled Puritanism:

She was the only one of them who followed, in thought and life, all the principles of the religion and morality which the entire Protestant part of the country professed to honour. The great crimes had no reality for her whatever. She had never in her life seen an act of deliberate wickedness. It was quite natural for her to believe that sex was the dirtiest thing in the world, and near to the root of all evil.\(^{21}\)

She values correct behaviour in life more than anything else which brings her in conflict with Lucy.

Lucy Cameron grows under the influence of her father John Cameron and her elder sister Jane who is timid and shy 'without knowledge of good and evil, probably the only kind possible in puritan town.' John Cameron was a man of 'iron self-controlled' and after his death Jane inherits all his father's principles. When Lucy falls in love with Stephen Lassiter, she has to face internal conflict between her desire for freedom and Calvinist shame, in which, she is tormented due to her puritanical background. Jane advices Lucy to keep 'appearance' so that the people of Greenville may respect them, but Lucy, now, thinking realistically, replies to her sister, 'Respect us, for what we do? Or for what we don't do?'\(^{22}\) She has decided to enjoy the life fully by denying her the puritan background which develops the gap between the two sisters. Though, she attempts to overcome her Puritanism, Lucy is terribly shocked, and is unable to sleep the whole night when she discovers that Stephen is already married and that his attitude towards divorce is apparently casual. She loves Stephen sincerely but fails to take decision of marriage due to the puritanical conflict, so she takes guidance from her
uncle, Matt McCunn who advices her that she must not miss the opportunity to marry Stephen and not think of his divorce. Accordingly, she runs to America and marries Stephen Lassiter.

Lucy in America realises that the American people discard traditional religious concept and worship the new gods of technology, materialism and sex. Carl Britain, owner of the firm in which Stephen works, is high devotee of materialism. At first sight, Stephen appears to be free from the puritan tradition as he laughs at the Greenville attitude towards drink and sex but, later, it appears to Lucy that he, even when drunk and in bed with another woman, is more of a puritan than she herself has ever been. Whenever, Stephen lives with her at Princeton, she discovers him unhappy. If he involves in sex with Gail for five nights in a week in New York, then, what is the reason of his unhappiness. Similarly, when Colonel Wain spends his night with his mistress Evelyn, he is disgusted because Colonel considers Evelyn lower than his class and despises her behaviour while she hates him and uses sex as a weapon for materialistic happiness. In the same way Gail uses sex for money and when Stephen is thrown away by Carl Bratian she also rejects him. Women like Evelyn, Daphne, Joyce, Gail are beautiful in physical appearance, but all these women are not happy and are unable to make male partner happy as they lack spiritual beauty. Hugh MacLennan believes that if there is beauty without morality there is always unhappiness.

Bruce Fraeser, neighbour to Lucy in Greenville, is completely opposite of Stephan and Bratian. Bruce’s retreat from life can be illustrated by considering his reaction to the realization that he is on the verge of falling in love with Lucy, who at that point is still happily married to Stephen:
With a ruthlessness toward himself which was typical, which in fact was a product of his whole life-training, his will power took control and crushed the color and the wildly trembling excitement into the hinterland of his mind. Lucy was married. Therefore, it was impossible to fall in love with her. Therefore, he did not lover her. Therefore, he must think of something else.  

T. D. MacLulich here states, 'Bruce’s puritan heritage is the force that dictates this self-denial; his reticent approach to life makes him a typical representative of his country.' Bruce’s behaviour in New York puzzles Marcia who remarks to Lucy, 'Strange people you are - both of you. Are you all like that where you come from - shy and self critical and under the surface as passionate as hell.' Despite her role as wife and mother, Bruce remains spiritually in love with Lucy as he considers she has the power of making him think of beautiful things.

Marcia sometimes becomes spokesman of Hugh MacLennan. While discussing with Bruce, she explains Stephen’s and her generations condition in terms of a puritan heritage:

I call us the well-meaning generation. We threw away the wisdom of the ages because we quite correctly despised our parents. In our own way we were so terribly moral. We slept with each other whenever we felt like it because we thought it was hypocritical not to follow our natural instincts. We believed that wars were made by munitions-makers and old men who should have been dead, and so we let this one become possible because we weren’t going to let ourselves be fooled a second time. We thought Science had arrived to
Marcia gives the picture of American society which clearly suggests that they are after materialism which has failed to make them happy. She discloses the great feelings of guilt for her own generation. All the people in America enjoy free sex to follow their natural instincts but fail to get spiritual satisfaction. Sex is the part of the life but if it fails to give spiritual satisfaction then it feels disgusting. So Marcia marries three times and eventually fails to get spiritual satisfaction. She continues to give her didactic opinions regarding the puritan tradition, this time to Lucy:

For three hundred years we’ve lived on this continent in that same puritan tradition without ever knowing ourselves forgiven and that’s why we’ve become so callous and hard and rebellious. Even when we no longer believe in the God of our ancestors, the old guilt-habit stays. That’s the trouble with Steve and I know it’s the trouble with me - trying to run away from ourselves not by finding something better but just trying to escape.27

Stephen and his sister Marcia have assured that they never believe in God, which is false as, here; Marcia accepts that the old guilt-habit stays. The escape to new Gods, technology, materialism and sex has neither brought forgiveness nor salvation to their lives. Stephen also thinks in the same direction as his experience with materialism has also failed to give him satisfaction which makes him repent and understand the importance of Lucy.

When Lucy comes to know that Carl Bratian has thrown Stephen away from the business, she thinks she must go to him because he is
alone as Gail has also already rejected him under the influence of Bratian. She has decided not to contact him first at any cost, but when he is alone in critical situation, her mind changes and instantly she declares to Jane that she will go to America immediately. Lucy’s Calvinist background does not allow her to blame her husband, when problems begin to occur in their marriage as she holds herself responsible for not being able to satisfy him. Now, she feels that it is her duty to support him in his bad time. Her upbringing in the puritan environment compels her to go back to Stephen. When Lucy goes to Stephen, she discovers the depth of Stephen’s inherited Puritanism as he is ashamed of himself. He informs her that he has stopped drinking. Lucy commits herself to Stephen once again and forgives all his sins. The forgiveness she extends to him is the early echo of the divine forgiveness she remembers, is part of the Christian heritage. Into her mind floated a scene from her childhood in Greenville, her father reading the Morning Prayer, ‘And by grace are ye saved through faith, not of yourselves; it is a gift of God’. 

Matt McCunn, Lucy’s uncle, tells Stephen in Greenville, that ultimately all devotees of the material gods are going to be defeated, he says:

You know what I told Lassiter? I told him that when New York burns, efficiency will be the cause of it. He didn’t get the point so I tried again. I asked him if he believed in progress, so of course he said he did. So I told him the most progressive animal the world had ever seen had been the Garderene swine. That didn’t do any good, either. He’d never heard of the Garderene Swine.

American society is betrayed by the material gods as ultimately, the characters in the novel realize after all, they are unhappy. Lucy, on behalf
of Hugh MacLennan expresses their failure in the replacement of religion to materialism, which she tells Bruce at the end of the novel:

The other night after we heard about the atomic bomb I began to think of the Americans the way you do - like a great mass of people and not as individuals. I saw them moving in a vast swarm over a plain. They had gone faster and farther than any people had ever gone before. Each day for years they had measured out the distance they'd advanced. They were trained to believe there was nothing any of them had to do but keep on traveling in the same way. And then suddenly they were brought up short at the edge of a precipice which hadn’t been marked on the map. There they were with all their vehicles and equipment, jostling and piling up on the front rank. For of course the ones behind didn’t know the precipice was there and couldn’t understand why the ones in front had stopped advancing. The pressure from behind kept increasing on the front ranks and they were all shouting at each other so loudly nobody could hear anything.30

Alec Lucas is right while commenting on the fiction of Hugh MacLennan in his book, *Hugh MacLennan*, who writes, 'According to MacLennan tacit postulates, it has kept the nation from the want of restraint and the ruthless practicality that particularizes America’s efforts to forget its past and that, as the dropping of the atomic bomb indicates, has driven the country to the brink of spiritual collapse.'31 Hugh MacLennan emphasises Canadian Puritanism in the light of Lucy and Bruce, while the result of materialistic world in terms of people’s unhappiness which makes him conclude that the life of man is governed by the external forces. T. D. MacLulich is right when he comments on the novel, *The Precipice* in
which Hugh MacLennan tells the story of the ill-fated romance of Lucy Cameron and Stephen Lassiter. However, the crucial force shaping events in the novel is not the attraction between the two lovers but the attitudes implanted in them by their fathers and their societies. The romance is heavily shadowed by an almost irresistible working out of parental influences, which in turn were shaped by closely related versions of the outlook MacLennan likes to describe as 'puritan'.

Hugh MacLennan focuses on the spiritual dilemma of the modern world and the personal religious quest of George Stewart in *The Watch That Ends the Night*. When he realises the basic human conflict is spiritual, Hugh MacLennan decides to write the novel which will not depend on character-in-action but on spirit-in-action. George Stewart, narrator of the novel, tells us that as a boy he has been religious and believed in God. Nevertheless, in the disillusionments of the thirties, like millions of others, he loses his faith in religion and in himself but he is free from Calvinism unlike Dr. Ainslie. In the lack of confidence he fails to marry Catherine at his early young age, but subsequently marries her when the news comes from the war that Catherine's husband Dr. Jerome is dead. Catherine's rheumatic heart makes her suffer continuously which hurts him so he rejects the power of divine as he narrates:

I had made Catherine the rock of my life. As a boy, at least for a time, I had been religious and believed that God cared for me personally. In the Thirties I had said to myself: There is no God. Now I had Catherine and Catherine's fate and that winter feeling confident of being equal to it, I said to myself: 'what difference does it make if there is no God? Or, if God exists, why worry if He is indifferent to justice'?
When he marries Catherine he becomes happy because he loves her sincerely, but his happiness is not based on the strong foundation as it has been weakened by the uncertain state of Catherine’s health. Dr. Jerome’s return to Canada shocks Catherine which makes her serious, so she is admitted in the hospital where she lies on death-bed many days. Her illness destroys George’s self-confidence and maturity but, it is Jerome who brings George back to the normal stage from the mental disintegration. When George learns that Dr. Jerome has been with Catherine in the hospital, he feels the spirit of murder, but this impression, however, is immediately dissolved as he looks into Jerome’s eyes to get strange experience. He narrates:

I had never in my life seen an expression like his. His face seemed white, very lined but the lines finely drawn, the eyes very large. His whole face seemed transparent. And in his eyes was an expression new and uncanny. They seemed to have seen everything, known everything suffered everything. But what came out of them into me was light, not darkness. A cool, sweet light came out of them into me then. It entered me, and the murderous feeling went out, and I was not afraid any more.34

He considers Dr. Jerome as his spiritual father who has now helped him to show the light from the darkness where he thinks, he was tackled. Dr. Jerome helps him to remove ‘Great fear’ - the fear of death, the fear of the dark, the fear of one’s own insignificance. He sits beside Catherine, but his ‘unique healing power’ has somehow, been transferred to Catherine and she revives.

Dr. Jerome tells George that Catherine must ‘live her own death’ and he should built shell around himself like a snail. The shell is death
where he must crawl inside of death and die himself to recognise that his own death will not affect the universe. Finally, he gives last message of Jesus to him and departs from Montreal forever. He tells:

Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life'. He died in order to prove it and He rose in order to prove it. His spirit rose. He died in order to live off he had not died. He would not have lived.35

He remains silent for a long time and then tells him that Catherine will live so he will live. Something new and strange has begun to happen to him as the chaos which has been dark within him for days has disappeared. He is convinced that the world is meaningful and accepts the divine power in this universe:

All over lives we had wanted to belong to something larger than ourselves. We belonged consciously to nothing now except to the pattern of our lives and fates. To God, possibly, I am chary of using that much misused word, but I say honestly that at least I was conscious of his power whatever the spirit might be I did not know but I knew it was there. Life was a gift; I knew that now.36

Thus, Hugh MacLennan concentrates on the spiritual revival of George who in childhood believes God but subsequently loses faith in religion. Some critics are dissatisfied with the continuous religious didactic passages at the end of the novel.

Jerome is an orphan who escapes from his mother's murderer in a New Brunswick logging Camp, and is finally adopted by devoutly religious clergyman and his wife in Halifax. Like George, he is a soldier of God in his childhood as, 'He believed the Gospels literally, and they
meant a more to him than they could mean to most people, and because he had such a desperate need to belong but the horrible experience of the First World War destroys his faith in religion. After losing faith in religion, Dr. Jerome, with Catherine's human love, seeks salvation through humanistic work as he tells George:

I used to dream of city on top of a hill – Athens perhaps. It was white and it was beautiful, and it was great privilege to enter it. I used to dream that if I worked hard all my life, and tried hard all my life, may be some day I’d be allowed within its gates. And now I see the fascists besieging that city and a handful of Spanish peasants holding out inside. They’re dying for lack of medical care. So what is my duty?

His conscience torments him that he must go to Spain to support medical aids for dying people. Confronted by the ghost of original sin in Capitalist medicine and fascist politics, he embarks to join anti-war movement in Spain. He explains the reason to George elaborately:

A man must belong to something larger than himself. He must surrender to it. God was so convenient for that purpose when people could believe in Him. He was so safe and so remote ... The only immortality is mankind.

Dr. Jerome, on his way to Spain, is captured and sent from one prison camp to another. He is released in China, where he has a religious revival:

One day I woke up and Jesus himself seemed to be in the cell with me and I wasn’t alone. He wasn’t anyone. I had ever known before. He wasn’t the Jesus of the churches. He wasn’t the Jesus who had died for our sins. He was simply a
man who had died and risen again. Who had died outwardly as I had died inwardly.  

Jerome is brought up in the Christian family in Halifax which makes him believe in God but the horrible experience in the war makes him lose his faith in the religion. He finds salvation by working for human beings but when he is once again trapped eventually, there is spiritual revival in him. There is much similarity between Jerome and George as both have made spiritual progress in the same way. First, they believe God, then they lose faith in religion and eventually they are revived spiritually.

Hugh MacLennan has shown a serious concern towards the modern issue of the relationship of individual with God in a way he takes us to an important subject of materialism verses spiritualism. It appears that he has discussed this issue against the background of spiritual dilemma leading to the spiritual quest of individual, which probably is the salvation for an individual who is engrossed with the material problems.

3.2. Theme of War:

The theme of war has become an important issue for the novelists all over the world in the twentieth century. The experience of the war led to a collective trauma for all participating countries. The optimism of the 1900s was gone and those who fought in the war became known as the Lost Generation. For the next few years, much of the world mourned. Memorials were erected in thousands of villages and towns. The soldiers returning from the war suffered greatly from the horrors they had witnessed. Many returning veterans suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, called shellshock at the time.
The socialist movements had long voiced their opposition to a war, which they argued, meant only that workers would kill other workers in the interest of capitalism but, once, war was declared, however many socialists backed their government.

The social trauma caused by years of fighting manifested itself in different ways. Some people were revolted by nationalism and its results, and so they began thinking of more internationalist world, supporting organisations such as the League of Nations. Pacifism becomes increasingly popular. Others had the opposite reaction, feeling that only strength and military might be relied upon in a chaotic and inhuman world.

Two World Wars have produced an unprecedented number of the war themes in literature by the writers from countries on all sides of the conflict. Hugh MacLennan has dealt with the theme of war in his five novels: *Barometer Rising, Two Solitudes, The Precipice, The Watch That Ends The Night*, and *Voices in Time*. Halifax during First World War is the setting for the *Barometer Rising* and naturally the war is one of the important themes of the novel. Halifax is full of foreign soldiers and sailors and the port of Halifax is one of the centers of the war. The departure of the Olympic Ship is one of the few events in Halifax sure to draw crowd, although its sailing hour is never published, it can never be entirely concealed, for it is invariably preceded by march through the streets of thousands of soldiers who are accompanied by considerable band music and swarms of children. An armed soldier stands as guard over an open draw-bridge giving access to the military enclosure. Over it all raises a flag pole and signal masts. When Penelope Wain, heroine of the novel, sees a new ship in Halifax harbour she thinks that the war has
brought so many of these mongrel vessels to Halifax; they have become a part of the landscape.

Once, two vessels, one a British cruiser, the other a freighter with a lean funnel and high bow appears in early morning, in Halifax harbour. A battalion is standing for the protection. Thousands of men and women are walking with thoughts of the war; boys ride out bicycles to the harbour to see what new thing the war has brought on that day. There is always tension among the people in Halifax. People in Halifax are tired of the war as they are unable to do anything but lie torpid and wait for the next calamity to overtake them. The picture of Halifax is the condition of the entire world, and in this sense, Halifax and the people of the city is microcosm, to the world.

The novel opens with the arrival of a young soldier Neil Macrae secretly to the Nova Scotia capital, Halifax, who is interested to work as a ship designer but is enlisted to join army where Colonel Wain is the chief. In France, he is injured and becomes unconscious in bombardment, and awakes in an English hospital, where he is considered to be an Englishman Harry Bowman. He is in Halifax to find out Alec Mackenzie who can clear him from a court-martial conviction for dereliction of duty, as one of the soldiers from another battalion has told him in London that Alec is alive and he is now in Halifax. While looking for Alec in the streets of the city, he minutely observes the changes in Halifax due to war by which he is terribly shocked. On his second day in Halifax, he watches a procession of five freighters which are painted in dazzle colours and are loaded to the plimsoll lines, passes seaward in line ahead. Evidently what he has read is true – the war has made Halifax the third port in the empire.
Along with socio-economic factors the war has also affected to a great extent the individual psychology. In the lodge, Neil Macrae looks at himself in the mirror to analyse the change war has made in him. His shoulders are wide and he is just six feet tall, but his appearance is of rundown ill health and he knows he looks much older than when he had left three years ago. This is the same condition of all the soldiers in the world who have joined the war. Penelope, lover of Neil, suffers a lot as Neil is enlisted in conscription and her desire to marry him remains in a hanging position. When she examines with detachment what has happened to herself and her relatives during the past three years she is forced to admit that their experience has not been unique. The war has taken control of them just as it has of everyone else. She finds herself helpless in existing circumstances, and waits for the end of the war.

In the same novel, Angus Murray is a medical officer in Colonel Geoffrey Wain's regiment, who nearly loses his arm in the service of the country and the horrible experience in the war has turned his mind against the war. When he is in Halifax, he compares Halifax before and after the war, as he imagines beautiful, silent and pollution free city at the time of his college days. When he is in the house of Penelope to discuss the problem of Neil's court-martial, he hears the louder sound of bells ringing in the harbour, which disturbs him. The creeping noises of this town never cease for as long as there are wars. Hugh MacLennan has pointed out the issue of noise pollution which has destroyed the peace in Halifax, as the city is always flooded with sailors, soldiers and the loud noise of bells in the harbour. The loud noise of the bell in the harbour makes everybody restless, especially Angus Murray, as it reminds him of the horrible experience of war which has brought much grief and sorrow in the life of human beings. In *Voices in Time*, John Welfleet narrates the
story of his cousin Timothy Welfleet with the references of manuscript written by Timothy himself. When Timothy was a small boy he narrated the picture of the street where he used to live. Many nights during the war the downstairs is crowded with men in the uniforms of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The noise they make when they talk, drink, sing and dance with their women and girls is like the noise of the riot, in which, small children are unable to sleep until three in the morning. Among the soldiers some of these men are going to be killed, others have already missed death or have returned wounded. And some of them have already killed other men.

Colonel Geoffrey Wain was the chief of one of the battalion in France who is now, transferred to Halifax as Transport Officer due to failure of attack in France. He holds his nephew Neil responsible for his failure in Europe but he still desires to join the war for which he is trying in many ways. Even though he supports the war he has realised that after this war the entire world will be bankrupt. It has already become a military society for the sake of the war. Colonel Wain is of colonial mentality, so he thinks his reputation in military will help him to exploit the people easily for which he, once again, desires to join as the officer in the British Army.

Hugh MacLennan uses a historical event of Halifax explosion in this novel. In Halifax harbour, there is Mont Blanc, France munition ship loaded with 50,000 pounds of trinitrotoluol and another ship with Norwegian flag comes directly in front of Mont Blanc to collide, whose result of explosion is nearly nuclear in its destructiveness. Three forces are simultaneously created by the energy of the exploding ship: an earthquake, an air-concussion, and a tidal wave. Hugh MacLennan describes the effect of the explosion on the earth, sea and atmosphere:
These forces rushed away from the Narrows with a velocity varying in accordance with the nature of the medium in which they work. It took only a few seconds for the earthquake to spend itself and three minutes for the air-expansions to slow down to a gale. The tidal wave traveled for hours before the last traces of it were swallowed in the open Atlantic.41

When the shock strikes the earth, the rigid ironstone and granite base of Halifax peninsula rocks, and the houses sway as the earth trembles. Sixty miles away in the town of Truro window breaks and glass falls to the ground, but the ironstone is so solid that it resumes its immobility after the shock has passed.

Underneath the keel of the Mont Blanc the water opens and the harbour bottom is deepened twenty feet along the channel of the Narrows. And then the displaced water begins to drive outward, rising against the town and lifting ships and wreckage over the sides of the docks. It boils over the shores and climbs the hill carrying with it the wreckage of small boats, fragments of fish, and somewhere lost in thousands of tons of hissing brine, the bodies of men.

In the city, the wreckage of the wooden houses in the North End have begun to burn and if there are any ruins which fail to ignite from falling flames, they begin to burn from the fires in their own stoves, on to which they have collapsed. Every building has been smashed so it is impossible to discover a single wall standing while the furniture, clothing and human beings are among the debris. The trees and lampposts lining the streets have disappeared whereas dead bodies of horses and human beings have packed the roads.
The explosion is so terrible that thousands of people are wounded and killed and if anybody is physically safe, his condition is worse. The whole Halifax is in chaos as there is the crackling of the flames and the cries of hidden voices from under smoking heaps of timber, plaster and bricks. The school going boys Roddies and Willie talk on the dead bodies:

: You missed something.
: I’ve been around.
: But you haven’t been up to the North End.
: I bet I have.
: I bet I saw more dead people than you did.42

Hugh MacLennan has given an ironical conversation between school going boys, which is also the climax point of the novel, to convey the intensity of the effect of the war. Halifax is used by the leading nations as Neil says the third port in the Empire, but it suffers much because the explosion affects environment, infrastructure and ultimately human beings due to chemical explosion. Hugh MacLennan has given details of about how everything is affected by the explosion which is the part of the war.

In *Voices in Time* Conrad Dehmel is the protagonist of the novel, who participates in the Second World War involuntarily with specific intention to save his Jew fiancée from the Nazis in Germany. Conrad’s maternal grandfather, professor of Philosophy, is retired from the University when the war breaks out and he has to live with the Conrad family because he is alone as well as his pension has been shrunk. In Germany, before the First World War the pension was banned in order to divert the funds to purchase the ammunition but the administration fails
to consider what will be the effect of their scheme to the old people who have no other economic support. Conrad’s grandfather takes Conrad for morning walk and once while they come across the soldiers marching in the street at the west side of the city where all the soldiers are gathered to send them on different front. They march with the blank eyes of men who have learned long ago to live without hope and each soldier stares at the jogging pack of the men just ahead of him. On this occasion he tells Conrad how the war takes place:

This war wasn’t caused by laws, it was caused by fools and spoiled beasts.\textsuperscript{43}

Here, the grandfather becomes the mouthpiece of Hugh MacLennan, who ironically criticises the war which definitely strikes the minds of the readers for whom there are no other words in language to express the anti-war feelings. Hugh MacLennan has presented the facial expressions of the soldiers minutely which show their involvement in the war is the act of compulsion, the compulsion either by the concerned government or by the critical economic condition. Conrad’s grandfather tells him how his two sons have been killed in the army, the younger one fighting the Canadians in Flanders, the elder by the French in the Champagne, while his daughter has married a French soldier. He receives a letter from his daughter informing after a long time that her husband has been killed on the Aisne and she herself has been interned as an enemy alien. Conrad’s grandfather is a tragic figure who has seen all his children die which is the great injustice caused by the war, and his family represents the families who have lost all men in the war and more than that the worst condition is of the person who is alive alone like him.

Conrad’s grandfather lives long enough to see the soldiers coming home after their defeat. Conrad is eager to see the soldiers who march in
their patch, muddy uniforms with broken boots and the crowd has pity for them but suddenly a man in the crowd begins to shout ‘Nein! Nein! Nein! Feige!’ Conrad shivers as this is ugly experience for many of these watching people who have lost their sons, husbands, lovers, brothers and these defeated soldiers at least alive, but to call them coward is shameful. One of the women from the crowd loudly remarks regarding the man who shouts as ‘nein’.

He has four sons and they are all killed.44

The man ironically calls the soldier coward because all his children have died in the war which has lost his psychological balance and whenever the picture of the war comes in front of him he generally becomes mad. He considers that it is essential for a soldier to die in the war to call him brave which is a completely ironical statement. Further grandfather tells Conrad, ‘These people will obey orders again. They have learned nothing and they will forget nothing’45 he is disappointed because he thinks that this horrible experience is not going to stop the war. In Two Solitudes, in Saint-Marc, during the First World War, at Drouin store people gathered and naturally they talked on war and all of them agreed that the war must stop. One of the men gives example of Mrs. Pitre who lives in Saint-Marc, whose all her seven children are dead in the war since then she has become lunatic. When the war stopped in 1919, soldiers were returning home after five years but whoever failed to return, were declared to be dead by Canadian government. If, one of the soldiers is late to arrive, family mourns his death. There is tension among the people at the time of war. The effect of war on economic sector is so much that there is a shortage of food as the news has started coming from all the corners of Germany that in the cities the hunger is terrible.
Conrad's grandfather is shocked to see the man's psychological condition that has lost all his sons in the war. For the next three days he is so withdrawn that he seldom answers when Conrad speaks to him and barely tastes the few morsels of food and on the fourth day he is discovered dead. There were thousands of families like Conrad's grandfather and like the man who has lost all his children in the war and in this sense these two families are typical families. Hugh MacLennan here has been successful to create anti-war feelings in the minds of the readers as the readers lament the plight of grandfather and the man, besides this, the author has effectively presented the effect of war on the families of the soldiers. Gottfried Dehmel, Conrad's father, is a naval officer in German navy who has studied mathematics, mechanics and electrical engineering. He advances so rapidly in his profession that he has been promoted by passing the heads of officers many years older than him due to his nature of giving importance to his duty and the nation.

In the First World War, there is little chance of Gottfried Dehmel's coming home because his ship has sailed out for a long time with the rest of the fleet to fight against the British which fails to return, but after the end of the war many months later he returns home and Conrad sees his mother sobbing in his father's arms. Gottfried is a professional soldier who becomes restless due to the defeat of German navy in the war. Like Colonel Geoffrey Wain in *Barometer Rising*, he boasts as well as criticizes the war. He boasts about the performance of German navy in the war, about which he tells his wife, 'We had better shells and optical equipment and our ships could be hit again and again and still keep fighting. Every time we hit an English ship, it blew up. But, by that time the English had many more ships. We nearly destroyed their battle cruiser fleet at odds of five against nine'.

157
One day, Gottfried takes one of the books from his library to show Conrad the final page containing the scroll with the single word 'nada' inscribed on it. He stares at this in silence and Conrad understands that he wants to show him, '... that the war had been nada, the heroism, the suffering, the great victories and the final defeats, the millions of dead state and mutilated, the total surrender, the bankruptcy of the country and the starvation.'

Hugh MacLennan points out that in the war there is always defeat in the victory as ultimately it affects the social, economical state and individual psychology. When Gottfried points out the effects of the war in details to Conrad, readers with Conrad wonder then why this man is actively involved in the war.

After a short time, once again, Gottfried's mood is changed as his spirit of nationalism is revived. He shuts the book and screams that the next time there will be no mistakes, he also know that until the next war begins it is necessary to improve many things in the navy. Conrad is surprised to see his father's interest is still in the navy. Officers like Gottfried in Germany try to find out the reasons of the defeat in the First World War. When his son Conrad meets him, he tells him that intelligence department has been bad in the last war and the English has made fool of it, but he assures that in the next war it will be good as now Bureaucracy has been taking every precaution. He also dreams of the kind of navy he and other officers are planning; there will be five, possibly eight of the most powerful battleships which will be built strongly with special hard steel. Conrad is shocked to see the pride in his father's face and feels unhappy. There were people like Colonel Wain and Gottfried in the world who supported the war by which it became possible for the politicians like Hitler to push the world into war.
In the Second World War once again Gottfried becomes officer in the navy. This time, he is proud as his second son Siegfried has also joined the navy under his influence but the craze of war is changed into harsh reality when the news comes that the German navy is virtually finished and among the ships that fail to return is Siegfried’s. It has been a long time since Conrad has seen his father but when this news arrives he meets him to find a man whose face proclaims more than grief for his son. At last Conrad’s father understands that once more his beloved country has lost a great war. He blames Hitler for deceiving the navy and begins to shout, ‘The idiot! The maniac’! He thinks that if Hitler had waited till the navy was ready, nothing would have prevented them from winning this war. He blames the politicians and regrets that this is the second time they have refused to understand what the sea power means. Now he is disgusted with war, and desires, ‘... this war must end while there’s still something left.’

Though he has mixed opinions regarding war, Gottfried is a navy officer who supports the politicians of his nation till the defeat of Germany in the Second World War, but, now he realises that the war is of no use. All the nationalists like Gottfried have realised that there is ultimately great loss due to the war, which is of no use to the human beings and so it must stop.

Conrad Dehmel is brought up in the atmosphere of the war as his father, brother and the relatives have participated in the war. He is against war but joins the Second World War to rescue his Jew fiancée from Nazis in Germany. He takes help of Admiral Canaris who has the experience of two wars, and has great status in Hitler’s administration. Admiral Canaris is connected to Conrad and Dr. Erlich, father of Conrad’s fiancée’s family so he suggests to Conrad a plan to save his lover and Dr. Erlich.
Accordingly, Conrad joins the training, completes it with the only intention of saving Hanna but the final session of the training is terrible as actual harassment is done in front of new Gestapo, and if anybody vomits or gets disturbed, he is thrown out of the Gestapo.

Hugh MacLennan makes fun of profession of soldiers’ who are involved in the war to kill people whom he has not seen all his life but he kills him as the part of the duty. Admiral Canaris is diplomatic military officer who narrates his personal experience of the First World War to Conrad:

You see, though this Englishman and I have never met personally we’re old acquaintances. In the last war he tried to kill me, understand there was nothing personal, it was his duty, just as it was my duty to kill him if I could.50

The more ironical thing in the war is that the officer, sometimes even soldiers can understand what will be the result of the war, yet they have to fight knowing the defeat in the war, because their opinions have no value as the ultimate power to stop or make peace treaty is in the hands of the politicians. So what Aronson in The Watch That Ends the Night tells Jerome that wars are made by the Capitalists is to some extent true because the capitalist system and the politicians hand in hand play an important role in the war, otherwise the soldiers unknown to each other would have never fought against each other. Admiral Canaris is a very diplomatic person, who easily predicts the future winner in the Second World War:

They’ll keep Hitler from winning the war. They’ve almost done it already but they will lose the war just as we will. The winners will be the Russians and the Americans.51
Conrad is surprised to hear this prophecy as Russians and Americans are not yet involved in the war. He is finally arrested by Gestapo and is imprisoned for many years for helping the jew family. When George Stewart, in *The Watch That Ends the Night*, is on Russia tour, he meets an American and an Englishman who discuss international politics. Regarding war the Englishman tells George that the war is going to be so terrible and only the Russians can win it because only they can suffer enough as they have more energy than Germany and hence Russia will win.

Siegfried, Conrad’s brother, is very young, who is soon given his own battleship and during eighteen months he becomes a national hero so he is awarded for his heroism by the government of Germany, for which ceremony all the family members were present. His father Gottfried was very proud of him at that time, as he had achieved great success in a short time. His mother and Conrad participate in the ceremony physically as both of them know that Siegfried’s luck would survive only for a short time as ultimately everybody is defeated in the war. Siegfried’s involvement in the war is due to his father, who has great fascination for heroism; his craze for heroism disappears when his son dies in the war, but it is too late.

In the same novel, for Timothy, the war is just the war, the biggest thing in the world and he has no interest in it. When his father comes home after the victory, with his smiling face and all the medals and ribbons on his chest stuff uniform, he is scared. When Timothy is lifted by his father, he shows no emotion as he thinks the father must be crazy, for how any full grown man can expect a child to believe he loves him, when he has never seen him. Physical absence of soldiers in the house has
developed a gap between them, and future generations create new domestic problems in the world.

Colonel Greg, Timothy’s father, is shocked to see his wife’s strange behaviour. He returns home after five years from the war, but during the time his wife cannot remain faithful to her husband, as she enjoys free sex. When Colonel objects to this she suspects his being faithful to her all these years. He asks for the proof, to which she answers ‘none of them were.’ The conflict reaches the court to get divorce where Timothy’s possession goes to his father. Immediately his mother marries another person who has already three children while Colonel Greg marries a woman of Montreal, only to get disappointed later. This is another great loss due to the war. When soldiers were on war, in their leisure, they got involved in drinks and sex in order to escape homesickness, loneliness and fear of death, but it develops into a habit in them, which affects morality and culture. Similarly, women have taken the same step by which after the war, their relations are broken and many of them prefer to have divorce. Thus, polygamy is the new problem created by the war.

Colonel Greg takes admission for Timothy in a boarding school. In the same school, there is one student, Scrivener, who tells Timothy that much the same thing has happened to him; the only difference between them is that he is in his mother’s custody, while Timothy is in his father’s. Timothy and Scrivener are orphans though they have their parents, and it has affected their psychology. Thus, the war has destroyed the family relations.

All over the world there is atmosphere of chaos in which news papers and radio play an important role. Almost all countries have developed their radio broadcasting stations which deliver news as per
their national interest; for instance, German radio tells the plot against Hitler to kill him while the English radio centre makes no mention of the conspiracy against Hitler. There are number of news items which create chaos in society and increase the tension among the people. Early in 1941, there was a news in *The Watch That Ends the Night* that Dr. Jerome had been tortured to death by the Nazi. When the news is confirmed by the Canadian authority, George proposes to Dr. Jerome’s wife, Catherine, but, later Dr. Jerome returns to Canada to see Catherine and George married. Catherine, George and Dr. Jerome get psychologically disturbed. Catherine is serious in hospital for many days. Dr. Jerome explains his intention of returning to Canada; ‘All I lived for was to come home to Kate and Sally.’ He is destroyed due to the false news of his death. Such rumours in the war affected the lives of the people. Dr. Jerome is the victim of the wrong news that he has died in Germany, which leads Catherine to take decision of remarriage with George.

In *The Watch That Ends the Night*, Hugh MacLennan has highlighted the individual character of Jerome Martell, who joins the First World War but returns with anti-war feelings. Once, Jerome tells George why he became a doctor. He seriously tells George that at the age of seventeen when he was physically and psychologically strong, so he joined the army. He was a very brave soldier in the war, as he tells George, ‘I killed eleven men with the bayonet, George.’ According to him to kill a man with a rifle at a distance is easy but with the bayonet, it is murder. He narrates the incident:

His face is right in front of you and he wants to live. His hands drop to the knife and get sliced. I killed eleven men that way.\(^5\)
The expression on his face becomes more serious, disturbed and he continues, 'I got one poor devil through the throat. I kicked him off it and he fell back into a shell hole. I took one step forward and the bullet smashed me in the thigh and I fell into the hole on top of him. He gurgled his life away before I could get off him and then I had to spend ten hours in that hole with the body . . .'. He says that there will be no wars if every soldier who kills a man with the bayonet has to spend ten hours in a shell hole with the dead body. He is in a state of psychological shock in a hospital for number of weeks, where in the bed, next to him, is a Jewish boy from Oshawa, Aronson, who is mature enough to understand politics of the war as he discloses the fact regarding war to Jerome:

It wasn’t you who killed that soldier, you were just an instrument. It was the system, the Capitalistic system.

Then he explains in detail to him how the system works, and for the first time he understands why every soldier thinks he is cheated. On this occasion he decides to become a doctor for which he works at various jobs to earn money for the fees. In this novel, Hugh MacLennan has created a character to discuss critically the effect of the war. Jerome’s experience of the war makes him take a stand against the war.

When the Spanish war begins, he wants to go to Spain, this time for a different reason, to serve the injured people in the war; besides this, he gives one more reason to George, 'The big war made no sense at all, but this Spanish thing does. If we can stop fascism there, we’ll stop it for good and there won’t be another big, senseless war.' When Dr. Jerome decides to go to Spain, like Catherine, George is also nervous, Jerome explains that he sees the fascists besieging the city in Spain and a handful of Spanish peasants holding out inside, who are dying for the lack of medical help. In this situation his conscience tells him that he must go to
Spain to give medical aid to the injured people, but his social and humane intention is shattered as he faces number of problems in Europe. He is forced to travel across the world, Spain, France, Russia, China then back after a long time like a ghost to his native place Canada. Meanwhile he loses his passport, falls sick and eventually feels frustrated.

Another great effect of the war in his life which he tells George is, 'The war had destroyed his religion and launched into a new orbit.' When he returns from the First World War with horrible experience, he lives with a Christian couple who have helped him in a very critical situation. He leaves them silently, as he would not be able to bear their tenderness. But Martel couple becomes unhappy to see tremendous change in Jerome. Thus, wars have destroyed the lives of the people like Dr. Jerome. Hugh MacLennan concentrates on the psychological effect on Jerome in the First World War, which makes him to become a doctor. Subsequently he shows how his life is destroyed when he joins the Spanish war with a grand intention. Here, the author takes particular example of Jerome to generalize the effect of war on the lives of people and ultimately points out how war destroys domestic life.

The novel Two Solitudes opens with the background of the First World War. When Father Beaubien, the priest in Saint-Marc, thinks about the war, his face sets into a heavy frown. He is worried as that year the English provinces have imposed conscription on the whole country and officers in charge of conscription have been in the neighbouring parish of Saint Justine, who have taken young French Canadians out of their homes like thieves, to put them into army. At the moment everyone in Canada is worried because the war becomes worst again as Canadian troops under British commander-in-chief are killed like flies. In the same novel Athanase Tallard, Member of Parliament, has suffered a lot due to the
war. Since the beginning of the war, somebody who has been new to Athanase has drawn imperceptibly away because Athanase has taken a strong stand with the English in favour of conscription but the reality he discloses to the priest Beaubien is that the decision is taken by the English Canadians who are in majority in Parliament. His own son, Marius, is conscripted and he is helpless. Marius hides from the military police as he realises the war has finally caught up with him. In Quebec, particular group of the French Canadians is selected for conscription, which makes them to gather in Montreal and protest against the Conscription Act passed in the Parliament. There have been hundreds of other meetings like them all over the province, in which Marius takes lead and delivers spontaneous speeches against conscription. When the police are after him in Saint-Marc, Janet, daughter of Captain Yardley, discloses the hiding place of Marius, which creates great tension in the village, so Athanase Tallard’s liberal attitude is shaken. Thus, in Saint-Marc the tension between the English and the French Canadian is increased, which develops a wider gap between them. Soldiers are compelled to join the military by the government, which is injustice to them.

In the last part of the novel Paul, Athanase Tallard’s son, falls in love with Heather, the daughter of Janet; and they decide to marry, but Paul is jobless so he waits for the war to begin. Unemployment is one of the reasons among the common people to support the war. Hugh MacLennan has focused this issue in more than two novels, in which, he has suggested that with the help of science and technology, industries must be increased in Canada so that the problem of unemployment would be solved. John Yardley, the sea Captain, is retired from the profession as he has lost his leg in the war, and now walks with an artificial leg. He
becomes spokesman of Hugh MacLennan regarding unemployment problem in Canada, as he expresses number of times in the novel the need of jobs and industries in the country. Heather also wonders how many millions of others are, like her and Paul, waiting all over the world for the war to begin, because each of them is looking at the war with different interests: to destroy the burden on their own identities, to give them jobs, to cut the umbilical cords that bound them to the past.

In Halifax, Paul watches the slow process of ten thousand ton freighter being warped out of dock by a pair of tags. He realizes the war is unavoidable now and becomes happy as he thinks that there will be no obstacle to marry Heather. In this novel Paul and Heather are married as the war begins, but on the other hand Conrad in *Voices in Time* and Dr. Jerome in *The Watch That Ends the Night* are separated from their beloved due to the war. In *Voices in Time* one of the missions of Nazi in Germany at the time of war is to find out Jews and kill them, which makes it impossible for Conrad to marry Hanna, as she is a Jew, while in *The Watch That Ends the Night*, a wrong news is received by the concerned people that Dr. Jerome is tormented to death by the Nazis. Even Canadian Government confirms the news, which compels Catherine to marry George. After some years Dr. Jerome returns to Canada to see Catherine married. His life is completely ruined, as he had struggled all these years to survive only for his wife.

In *The Precipice*, during the Second World War, people share the same agony of fate in Canada as everywhere else in the western world, since they know that they will be in it from the beginning of the war because they are the part of the British Empire. Once, Matt McCunn, uncle of Lucy, talks of miseries of soldiers sarcastically:
A man can have his head blown off and they put his name on a monument. He can have his leg shot away and he comes home a hero. But he can lose his most priceless possession for king and country and he's not supposed to mention it to a soul. Even if he talks about it to the boys in the black room, what do they do? They laugh.  

Here, Matt McCunn laments the grief of the soldiers because what he says is absolutely right as everybody neglects the soldiers who have returned. He is right when he says that, if anybody wants to become a hero, he must lose some part of the body or die on the battle field. Then, he discloses to Lucy his personal incident which took place in the First World War. On the front of the war, he has got his left testicle shot off. This type of thing, he says, has never happened anywhere. He just looks up at the ceiling of the base hospital and lets the tears stream down his cheeks and he wishes if he had a gun he would have blown his brain out. He, once again, joins the Second World War to get horrible experience on the sea as there is terrible battle between the two side's ships.

Bruce Fraser, the neighbour of Lucy, is enlisted for the Second World War and for five years he sees neither Lucy nor any of the people he has known in Greenville. While bombarding through plane, he is shot down by the enemies. He is blown away from the city to come down in fairly open country to the south of Ludwigshafen. One side of his face is injured, one eye blinded, and his left shoulder shattered, and he remembers almost nothing until he is discovered the next day by a French prisoner of war on his way to work in the fields. The man conceals him until night, and then arranges for another Frenchman to have him smuggled across the German border in a freight car. After three days, a doctor in a small town in the Frenche-Compte operates on his left eye and
removes it. The shrapnel has crushed some nerves in his left shoulder and for many days he is in great pain, lying alone in the attic of a house. The doctor visits him often and finally contrives to get him into a hospital for another operation. Afterwards, he shifts Bruce to a private home in the country near Besancon where a French family, at the risk of their own lives, nurses him. By August, he is well enough to travel, though there will always be a scar crossing his left cheek from the temple of the chin. He will never be able to lift his left elbow above shoulder height, and he will one day have to exchange the glass eye with which the doctors have fitted him for a plastic one. By slow stages he manages to reach Perpignan and five weeks after, crossing the Spanish frontier, he is back in England. From there, he is sent home to Canada and is relieved from the air force. The life he had spent in the remote place of Germany was the life like hell, and it was better to die. The authorities fail to care of him as they have never made efforts to find what has happened to him. There were many soldiers in the two World Wars, who were injured, and who were not cared by any authority. In their words, what Aronson says is right, that they are only utilised by the authority.

After six months, Bruce, once again, goes to England but this time as a minor correspondent for the Canadian press. He is posted in Yorkshire and now he feels lonely, which makes him write a letter to Lucy. In the letter he tells her that he is saved due to humanity still present in the people, otherwise he might not have survived, so, he feels, ‘The world is filled with men of good will’. He then tells her that a year ago he had enjoyed his bomb dropping experience from plane, but if he had been on the ground when the bombs fell, he would have hated himself for what he had done. Finally, he concludes his letter by mentioning that the war must stop as its results are always devastating,
and expresses his rootlessness caused due to the war. Like Dr. Jerome, Bruce’s opinions, regarding war, have also changed subsequently. He hates himself for participating in the war.

In Canada, Bruce, Lucy and her other sisters, Jane and Nina, together hear the news on radio, in which, they get detailed description of the destruction of Hiroshima caused by the atomic bomb. No one in the room speaks for a long time and no one moves until Bruce switches off the radio.

3.3. Theme of Loneliness:

Hugh McLennan considers loneliness as the major theme in his novels. People can experience loneliness for many reasons and many things are associated with it. The lack of friendship relations during childhood and adolescence, or the physical absence of meaningful people around a person are causes for loneliness. At the same time loneliness may be a symptom of other social or psychological problems. Many people experience loneliness for the first time when they are left alone as infants. It is also very common, though normally temporary consequence of divorce or the break up, or a loss of any important long term relationship. Loss of a significant person in one’s life would result into a response of grief here; one may feel lonely, even in the company of others. In extreme cases, a person may feel a sense of emptiness, which may become a state of clinical depression. Thus, feelings of abandonment, rejection, depression, insecurity, anxiety, hopelessness, unworthiness, meaninglessness, resentment, etc. are the causes of loneliness. All the major characters in the Barometer Rising have
experienced loneliness. Angus Murray who was the medical officer in Colonel Geoffrey Wain’s battalion in France lives alone in Halifax after the death of his wife. Penelope does not believe the news that Neil has died in France, in bombardment, so to get detailed facts she invites Angus Murray for dinner as he was one of the members of Neil’s battalion. Ignorant of Penelope’s intention, Murray begins to love her, thinking that his loneliness would disappear in her company. She admits her loneliness, but realising his intention, she changes the subject. Neil’s return to Halifax shatters all his dreams, so he finds solace in visiting a whorehouse, there, in a drunken condition, he talks about his personal feelings to the whore. When she asks him why he is telling all these things to her, he responds:

Who in god’s name else have I got to tell it to.\textsuperscript{60}

Frustrated, Murray finds a whore to satisfy his emotional needs, but she makes him aware that it is a wrong place. He is physically as well as emotionally alone in his life because his wife, who used to accompany him all his life, is lost permanently, which is the important reason for his loneliness. While commenting on the novels of Hugh MacLennan, Robert Cockburn points out, ‘Angus’s is lonely but a forceful character. . .’

Neil Macrae is enlisted to join the western front. His parents have died. He decides to marry Penelope, but circumstances force him to separate himself from her for two years, which makes him lonely. When he wanders through the streets of Halifax to find Alec Mackenzie, who can vindicate him before the court-martial, the writer describes his loneliness as:

There was no one in the world to whom he could send a telegram, even if he should discover something to say.\textsuperscript{61}
Like Angus Murray, he is physically as well as emotionally alone for two years. Penelope expresses her loneliness in a novel couple of times. When Simon, a technician in Penelope's ship Design Company, remembers the skill of Neil in ship designing, Penelope, reminded of Neil, feels tired and empty. It is as though, 'a stone had been plunged into the pool of her mind until her memories were surging like troubled water, and for a few moments her whole body ached with loneliness and a sense of loss.'

Thus, Neil's absence for two years makes her lonely. Unlike Murray, her family is larger with plenty of relatives, but she feels lonely even among all these members. According to T. D. MacLulich, 'Penny's loneliness and sense of loss, we discover, are the result of the supposed death of Neil Macrae.'

Even, Geoffrey Wain does not escape the feeling of loneliness. His contempt for loneliness, which he imagines to be the most commonplace ailment in the world, is so great that he refuses to acknowledge its presence in himself.

The reasons of the feeling of loneliness are different for each character in the novel. Colonel Wain fails to achieve a position in the war, which he links to his social status, so he feels lonely, while physical absence of Neil is the cause of Penelope's loneliness, and Neil's loneliness is due to social and personal problems.

Athanase Tallard in *Two Solitudes* helps Captain Yardley to purchase the land in Saint-Marc. He knows that the people of his village will not co-operate with Captain Yardley as he is an English Canadian, so Athanase gives him the idea of social atmosphere in his village. He tells him his own experience that nobody from parish will mix with him. As a result Captain Yardley would feel lonely. He tells him:

But you may find it lonely. I do myself sometimes. My wife, she finds it lonely all the time.
Here, loneliness occurs on account of social problems created by the English-French Canadian conflict, when Athanse Tallard marries the Protestant Kathleen, which makes him isolated in the society, where he has lived near about all his life. Captain Yardley who is a practical person immediately understands the situation in the village, but he is not worried about it as he has spent many years in military, which have developed in him the habit of loneliness. He lives solitary life for seven months in Saint-Marc with nothing but the animals, farm work, his books and his astonishing health. In the second half of the novel he shifts to Halifax where his experience is not different from his previous life. He has lived all his life alone though he has a daughter who is married and lives in Montreal. In Saint-Marc he develops intimate relation with Paul, the son of Athanase Tallard, which is the only solace for him because this relation lasted till the end of his life.

When Athanase Tallard fails in his ambition to set up a factory in Saint-Marc, he spends his last three years in loneliness. The person who is the Member of Parliament for many years is outcaste when he tries to set up a factory in partnership with the English businessman, Huntley McQueen. His failure in political career diverts his mind to set up a factory for his personal gain as well as to bring social changes in the region, but shrewd Huntley rejects the plan of factory when he understands that Athanase is an outcaste in Saint-Marc. Athanase Tallard’s financial as well as social position is endangered, so his loneliness is based on personal and social problems.

Kathleen, as a Protestant, is outcaste though she is the wife of an honorable person. Her husband, Athanase, is much older than her, which affects their married life. There is lack of communication between them; he fails to fulfil her sexual desire, and understand her emotions, which
makes her physically as well as emotionally lonely. Marius, Athanase's son from the first wife, is conscripted but he refuses to join the military so the military police are after him to arrest him. Every day he changes the place to hide his identity. Once, at home, he watches the mother's picture on the side wall, which fills his eyes with tears. Tears for his own loneliness overflow, he falls on his knees in front of the altar and clasps his hands. He remains in the same position for a long time. His mother is dead and he hates his father for his liberal attitudes and his marriage to the Protestant girl who is much younger than him, of his daughter's age, so his loneliness is rooted in the lack of family life. While commenting on the novels of Hugh MacLennan, Robert Cockburn writes, 'But Tallard, whose time has largely been given to politics, must share the blame for Marius' attitude; he has not been a companion to his sons and is, for all his logic and intelligence, a distant, rather cold man. This lack of parental consideration has spurred Marius' alienation.'

When Athanase Tallard dies Kathleen decides to remarry in Montreal. Paul watches the function of his mother's second marriage with Henry Clayton and remains silent; he fails to communicate with anybody. If loneliness is a man's inability to share his feelings with another, he has never been as lonely in his life as he is now. Alone sitting aside, he attempts to console himself that this marriage makes no difference to him. After marriage, Kathleen goes to live with her husband but this time Paul fails to control the feeling of grief and loneliness. At the time of departure, he hears the words of his mother, 'Forgive me, Paul' which draws tears in his eyes. He stands irresolute, running his hand through hair, he thinks that he has no place to go anywhere, but tries to console himself thinking that it is not a new situation. The places he goes to are always temporary. Meanwhile Captain Yardley dies, which makes him
feel lonelier, as he loves him like father. In Saint-Marc everybody hates him as he is the son of a Protestant woman, so loneliness is his companion from his childhood, but he feels more lonely when Kathleen remarries and Captain Yardley dies.

Paul Tallard loves Heather, a granddaughter of Yardley, which is his only permanent relation. When Paul becomes a soldier, he is away from Heather for five years, which makes them feel lonely and this loneliness disturbs him more in Greece as there are only two days to depart to Canada. He sits in a bar drinking, but becomes restless so he keeps moving in the street of the city of Athens, which now seems him more empty than ever. In the afternoon the city surrounds him like a giant presence of loneliness, but it is not a new feeling for him as most of his life he has known it, and now it is recurring like a periodic disease. He also wonders if Heather has ever felt as he does now.

Heather is impressed by socialism but this influence comes to her from books of philosophy, as a result whatever goes around her makes her restless. She feels lonely whenever she finds the difference between the socialist idealism and the practical world. When she declares her decision to marry Paul, her family members neglect her, which makes her analyse her whole life and then realises that she is all alone in the world. Janet, mother of Heather, opposes her daughter's marriage due to racial discrimination, which is strictly observed in Quebec society. Straightforward Heather fails to understand the reason of her family's disinterest in her marriage, so she feels the world to be inimical, which makes her feel lonely.

Huntley McQueen, an unmarried businessman in Montreal feels lonely whenever he has no work. Janet, also, has the same feelings like Huntley McQueen, as her husband has died in war and she refuses to
remarry. Thus, major characters in Two Solitudes feel lonely for one or the other reason.

The theme of loneliness is widened in The Watch That Ends the Night. Catherine, heroine of the novel, is a victim of loneliness from childhood as she carries a rheumatic heart, which makes her isolated from all her friends. All the parents restrict their children from playing with Catherine but Gorge is the only friend who gives company to her, so their friendship is converted into love and they decide to marry. But Aunt Agne, George’s aunt, conspires against their love, and George fails to overcome the obstacles created by the aunt and Catherine once again becomes lonely. Eventually, in Montreal, she meets Dr. Jerome whom she marries late and a few initial years are heavenly to her. Unfortunately, she feels lonely again as Dr. Jerome is always engaged in his medical profession and in the politics which makes him disappear from Montréal to Spain with specific intention – to give medical aids to injured people. Even Dr. Jerome is aware of Catherine’s loneliness as he tells George:

Kate’s lonely. Any doctor’s wife is bound to be left with the pickings of her husbands’ time, but Kate gets a worse deal than most. It makes me feel better to know you’re around and can take her out occasionally when I’m tied up.67

Thus, Dr. Jerome requests George to give Catherine company as she feels lonely. When Dr. Jerome requests Catherine to forgive him for leaving her alone due to his specific principles of life, Catherine responds immediately as she is the victim of these principles:

Yes, I’ve never forgotten that. And I’ve been lonely for that ever since.68
Catherine is physically as well as emotionally lonely. In childhood nobody played with her and after marriage Dr. Jerome is always busy in his work so the absence of dear ones always makes her lonely. Similarly, Dr. Jerome fails to fulfill the emotional needs of Catherine except for her life with George.

Jerome, a man of strong desire, makes the journey of his life almost alone, as in his childhood, he lived with the woman whom he called mother and was completely ignorant about his father. He escapes in the night from his native place when the Engineer kills his mother and attempts to kill him also; he never thinks of returning to his native place because he has no relation there whom he can meet. Like Neil, he also feels lonely due to lack of parental love. A Christian childless couple adopts him but he lives with them only for seven years as he becomes a soldier at the age of seventeen to participate in the war, where again he feels lonely and returns frustrated. The horrible experience of war makes him to become a doctor, with the specific intention to save life of people. Then he marries Catherine, loves her sincerely, but fails to satisfy her emotional needs because he is always engaged in his Operation Theatre. He departs to Spain to serve injured people in war, where his spirit is shattered on the way to Spain, because he is forced to wander from one place to another to perform the job of a surgeon. He remains lonely but this time the intensity of loneliness is more tormenting. Now, he blames himself for Catherine’s loneliness. He returns to Montreal with great expectation to spend the remaining life in love and peace, but finds Catherine married to George. He accepts the reality without complaint and leaves alone thereafter.
Dr. Jerome is always engaged in some work with specific intention, as he considers himself a man of social leaning, but eventually he fails in every work and finds himself alone.

From the time of his failure to marry Catherine, George feels sad and lonely so he decides to remain unmarried in his life because inspite of his efforts twice, he realises that it is not possible for him to love any girl other than Catherine. Loss of beloved Catherine is the cause of his loneliness.

In the same novel, Giles and Josephine Martell is a childless Christian couple in Halifax, so they adopt Jerome but Jerome leaves them after war, for which he gives reason that he cannot face the gentleness and simplicity of this Christian couple. Giles dies in loneliness and leaves Josephine alone. Once Jerome remarks regarding Josephine, ‘How lonely she is, she never told him’. Hugh MacLennan has given very little space to the Christian couple, in this novel.

Like Dr. Jerome, Dr Daniel Ainslie in Each Man's Son, who is forty years of age, is a childless doctor who lives near the mine workers' lane in Cape Breton with his wife Margaret. When he is in hospital, Margaret feels lonely realising that her desire for child increases day by day, though technically it is impossible for her to become a mother, so she visits her mother's house frequently to share her loneliness, but Dr. Ainslie has no such place where he can find solace for his loneliness. Once he takes Margaret to her mother's house from where he returns with tears in his eyes, and feels lonely as her mother's family never respects him. Sometimes he shares his loneliness with his wife to find her lonelier than him. He considers himself responsible for her loneliness because he did not allow children when young, as he had to concentrate on his career, and when he wants children, circumstances so develop that he has
to operate her and there is now no opportunity of having a child. She also holds him responsible for making her sterile. As a result, he finds himself in critical condition because her unhappiness makes him feel guilty. Childlessness is the grief of the couple, which is the reason for their loneliness.

Dr. Mackenzie, a retired senior reputed doctor, who lives alone because his wife is dead and children are away, frequently visits Dr. Ainslie’s house as he has very close relations with them. When Margaret complains to Dr. Mackenzie that her husband is either engaged at the hospital or in Greek literature, the old man tells her that he has also realised the change in Dr. Ainslie during last three years, but he thinks that Dr. Ainslie is trying to escape from loneliness of which he is also a victim. He tells her about his own loneliness:

Since Janet died and the children went away, that house of mine gets on my nerves.

Janet is Dr. Mackenzie’s wife who died, and his children are away from him for their career.

As the time passes Margaret worries about her husband’s aloofness and silence, and thinks how she can help him. She insists on taking holiday from the hospital for a week. Dr. Collie McCuen, Dr. Ainslie’s assistant agrees to take care of the patients but Dr. Ainslie is disinterested in all other things because his grief and loneliness have increased rapidly. He thinks of adopting Alan, Mollie’s son, who lives in the miners’ lane, to cope with their loneliness, without thinking of the feelings of Alan’s mother. When Dr. Ainslie comes to know that Mollie, with her son Alan, is leaving the place forever, he goes to her house to confirm the news, where she speaks indifferently to him, which disturbs him.
psychologically, and he walks away for an hour aimlessly, realising that life without Alan would be totally empty.

Archie MackNeil, Mollie’s husband, is in Trenton, America, to make career in boxing, as he is not interested in working in mines in Cape Breton, and he thinks of returning home to his wife after the successful fight with the American boxer, Picky Miller. He is away from home for four years, so he feels lonely in Trenton. A few days ago before his final boxing match, he is psychologically disturbed due to loneliness, so to cool his mind, he wanders in the street alone, thinking of his boxing match, his wife, the son, the native place etc. Instead of escaping loneliness he feels more lonely. He thinks Mollie would help him to lessen his loneliness, so he wants her in Trenton to support him at the time of his match, as he is tired and sick of being alone. As the day of boxing match approaches, he feels the necessity of escaping from the feeling of emptiness, but Mollie is far away. So in his loneliness of, like Angus Murray in *Barometer Rising*, he finds a whore. When they feel lonely, some characters of Hugh MacLennann are involved in sex, which they think is a solution to escape from their emptiness. According to Robert Cockburn, ‘MackNeil is lonely and it is his own fault . . .’

When Archie MackNeil is defeated, all the mine workers gather in front of Mollie’s house to console her where Mr. Maciver, the neighbour of Mollie, expresses that Archie must now be at home at least for the sake of Alan. Mollie answers him by putting stress on the first two words:

Four years, Mr. Maciver. Four years Alan and I have been alone here.

All the major characters in the novel feel lonely, though the reason for their loneliness is different. Alan and Margaret are sad on account of childlessness, which makes them feel lonely, while Mollie is tired of
waiting alone for her husband. Similarly, Archie also feels lonely physically as well as emotionally like his wife. Dr. Mackenzie, who is in the last stage of his life, is lonely because his wife is dead and children have flown away to live their own life.

In *Voices in Time* John Wellfleet, seventy-five years old, lives in a small village alone for a long time as there is a series of disappointment, fear, humiliation and loneliness in his life due to destruction. Andre Gervais finds John Wellfleet to explore the story of his life with the help of papers, photographs and audiotapes, which are found while clearing the debris in the two wooden boxes. For some time Wellfleet fails to communicate with Andre, as he has not spoken for many years with anyone other than a maid-servant.

Colonel Greg, Timothy Wellfleet’s father, was in military and in the First World War he had to remain away from the house for five years, which affects the morals of his wife, who subsequently divorces him when he is back from the war, so he remarries but fails to escape loneliness. He attempts to balance his life but all the time Timothy watches him growing older because of loneliness and emptiness. Timothy Wellfleet, Hanna Erlich, Conrad Dehmel, all these characters have experienced loneliness but in this novel the war is responsible for their loneliness. The writer, Hugh MacLennan has not developed their loneliness linking it properly in the plot construction. Timothy is a product of divorced parents. He lives in a hostel for education from his childhood and continues to live alone in future also. Hanna Erlich, the heroine of the novel, lives all her life lonely and under the tension of Nazis in Germany, while professor Rosenthal, a Jew scholar, has sent all his family members to Switzerland, which makes him feel lonely. Thus, all the characters in the novel feel lonely, here, due to the war.
When The Precipice opens, Lucy, the protagonist of the novel, lives with her two sisters and develop garden in front of her house in Greenville to escape her loneliness. Unexpectedly, she meets Stephen Lassiter, American Engineer, to love and marry him but, after five years, a tension arises between them and they feel lonely. When, for the first time Lucy discovers that her husband, Stephen, spends nights in his mistress Gail’s flat in New York, she becomes terribly nervous and begins to feel lonely. Now, she is alone in Princeton; for almost the first time since leaving Greenville, she feels that she is alone in a foreign city, in a strange land. When this terrible loneliness begins to torment her, she leaves Princeton with her children and goes Greenville where her experience is not different from Princeton.

When the novel opens Stephen Lassiter is in Canada for business purpose, but the reminiscence of his native place makes him lonely so he decides to work in New York only. In this loneliness he discovers Lucy’s internal beauty and marries her. Stephen is very happy to learn Lucy’s family background, in which the people are bound to each other emotionally and this helps him to understand the reason of terrible loneliness in his own culture. He tells Lucy that his own sister is a first class bitch and apart from his sister, all he has now is a lot of stuffy relatives whom he never visits. He feels that members of family together make life enjoyable, whereas living alone makes life bleak. Here, he talks about his loneliness to Lucy, ‘I’ve been alone too long’.

Stephen realises her absence when Lucy goes to Canada with her children. When he discovers that he is unhappy with his new mistress, Gail, he begins to drink wine until dawn to escape his loneliness. In the end of the novel he repents for giving ill treatment to Lucy, as eventually
his firm owner, Britain and Gail both dismiss him, which makes him impossible to control his internal crisis. He thinks:

May be all the rest of them were alone, too. May be that was how those grim men in the walnut frames had fixed things in America – the minute you stopped to think where you were you found yourself alone.  

As said earlier, the reason for loneliness of American people is explained by Stephen, who thinks that to live life happily, there must be emotional bond between relations. He blames himself that Lucy has learned to live in loneliness because he has given very little time to her and now, he thinks, his feelings of loneliness will not leave him, so he must learn to live alone.

Jane Cameron, the elder sister of Lucy, has inherited all the old traditions of her parents to manage the house in Greenville. Nina, the younger sister of Lucy, fails to understand the feelings of Jane’s loneliness, but a couple of times Lucy realises the feelings of Jane’s loneliness through music which Jane used to play on piano. All her life she is lonely as there is nobody with whom she can talk about her loneliness; even after five years, she complains to Nina that Lucy has left the house without saying goodbye to her, but Nina is unable to realise that Jane’s bitterness comes from her terrible loneliness.

When Nina gets a job in Toronto as a secretary in a prominent lawyer’s office, she spends the Christmas in New York in the same year, when she is bewildered by the apparent change in her sister. She returns to Toronto with an odd sensation that she is alone in the world and repents for somewhere along the line she has missed the cue which she thinks is the reason of her loneliness.
The other characters, Bruce, Lucy’s neighbour in Greenville, and Marcia, Stephan’s sister are also the victims of loneliness. Bruce lives alone as his parents are dead; he becomes a soldier and is injured in war. He joins the army once again to do an ordinary work in London. In London he feels lonely so he, once, writes a letter to Lucy in which he expresses his overpowering loneliness, out of his sense of being utterly useless. Marcia has taken divorce thrice because she is unable to adjust with her husbands and the environment in which they live. In each case she feels lonely and to escape from loneliness, she seduces Bruce who likes her very much, but she fails to develop relation with him as he is not interested in her. Marcia is another example of American product, who fails to find a person with whom she can live happy life, and that is the reason of her loneliness.

Alan Ainslie, the protagonist of the *Return of the Sphinx*, is the minister for Cultural Affairs in the Canadian government, living alone in Ottawa, whose wife Constance dies in a truck accident, which disintegrates his family. He has a young son, Daniel and a daughter Chantal, who live in Montreal. When Daniel calls himself lonely, Alan tells Daniel how lonely he has been since childhood. He and his mother Mollie were lonely for many years in a mine town, waiting for his father Archie MackNeil who was in America to make a career in boxing; eventually he saw his father only once when he killed his mother, then he was adopted by Dr. Ainslie who educated him. After his marriage with Constance, for some years it was good but her accidental death made him lonely forever. His loneliness becomes habitual, so he stops complaining against it. Besides this, separatist Daniel creates a problem in Alan’s political career as well as in their personal relations, which help to increase loneliness in Alan’s life. Even Daniel is aware of his father’s
loneliness as he tells his mistress, Marielle, ‘He’s pretty lonely. He’s worse than that - he’s fast plain lost’ the same feelings Alan expresses to Daniel when they are together in Ottawa for dinner, ‘I’m pretty much alone these days. It can’t be helped, but it’s not good’. He knows that there is no solution to escape loneliness. Finally, when he comes to know about love between Chantal and his friend Gabriel, he writes a note to Chantal telling her that he feels lonely and wishes to remain alone.

Daniel and Chantal also experience the feeling of loneliness. Chantal lives in Montreal with her brother Daniel. She fails to get parental love as her mother is dead and her father is a busy politician in Ottawa, which makes her feel lonely. To escape this loneliness, she falls in love with Gabriel, who is about to her father’s age. She complains to Gabriel that she feels extremely lonely because her father, Alan, has no time for the family, and Daniel has become active separatist. Daniel also feels lonely as he has complained about it to his father a couple of times. When Alan warns Daniel on telephone not to get involved in Separatist Movement, Daniel becomes very nervous and feels terribly lonely. Just like Angus Murray in Barometer Rising, he seeks company of a woman to escape from loneliness. He says to himself:

I want a woman. I’ve got to have a woman or I’ll go mad.

Constance’s death has scattered the family, which is the important reason for loneliness of Alan, Daniel and Chantal. According to George Woodcock, ‘... Oedipal pattern which emerges in the sexual longings of the Ainslie’s children, is the reaction to a sense of alienation ...’ War, social problems and disintegration of the family are the causes of loneliness in the novels of Hugh MacLennan. Angus Murray, Neil Macrae, Captain Yardley, Alan Ainslie, Huntly McQueen, Daniel Ainslie and Marius feel lonely because their family is scattered mainly due to the
death of the female figure. Besides this, lovers feel lonely as they are away from their dear ones whom they love very much.

Canadian consciousness, love, religion, war and loneliness are the major themes reflected in the novels of Hugh MacLennan. In the first two novels and in *Return of the Sphinx* he deals with nationalism, and in *The Precipice* he brings out the difference between Canadian and American values in culture. He is successful in presenting minute picture of Canadian society, with nationalistic messages, so that Canadians can forget all past ill memories and together struggle to develop the importance of their nation. His overdose of didactic messages has failed to make some of his novels entertaining. *The Watch That Ends the Night* and *The Precipice* fully concentrates on the theme of love, as George, Catherine, Jerome and Lucy are deeply in love but other love themes are fractured by nationalistic messages. In religion, he deals with the elements of religion like Calvinism, puritanism, catholicism in different novels, in which, he has accepted God, but denies traditional concepts. He has expressed his anti-war feelings very skillfully by giving number of examples. Family disintegration is the root cause of loneliness of major characters in his novels.

The next chapter attempts to analyse minor themes reflected in the novels of Hugh MacLennan.
Notes and References

1 www.google.com


3 Hugh MacLennan, *Two Solitudes*, (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd. 1945) 140.

4 Ibid, 141-142.

5 Ibid, 143.

6 Ibid, 195.

7 Ibid, 196.

8 Ibid, 84.

9 Ibid, 28.

10 Barbara Pell, 27.

11 *Two Solitudes*, 346.

12 Hugh MacLennan, *Each Man’s Son*, (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1951) VIII.

13 Ibid, 63.

14 Ibid, 66.
15Ibid, 189.

16Ibid, 220.

17Barbara Pell, 38.

18Two Solitudes, 36-37.

19Hugh MacLennan, Barometer Rising, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd. 1941).

20Patricia Morley, an untitled essay published online.


22Ibid, 148.

23Ibid, 182.


25Precipice, 268.

26Ibid, 188.

27Ibid, 263.

28Ibid, 318.

29Ibid.


32 T. D. MacLulich, 54.


34 Ibid, 361.


36 Ibid, 163.

37 Ibid, 216.

38 Ibid, 244-45.


41 *Barometer Rising*, 153.

41 Ibid, 183.


44 Ibid, 152.


46 Ibid, 156.
47 Ibid, 158.
48 Ibid, 256.
49 Ibid, 258.
50 Ibid, 253.
51 Ibid, 254.
52 Ibid, 33.
53 Ibid, 166.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
58 Ibid, 144.
59 Ibid, 196.
60 *Barometer Rising*, 137.
61 Ibid, 45.
63 T. D. MacLulich, 35.
64 *Two Solitudes*, 31.

66 Ibid, 280.

67 *The Watch That Ends the Night*, 149.

68 Ibid, 330.

69 Ibid, 59.

70 *Each Man's Son*, 150.


72 *Each Man’s Son*.

73 *The Precipice*, 123.

74 Ibid, 306.


76 Ibid, 233.

77 Ibid, 259.