PREFACE

The subject of my thesis "A Critical Examination of the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway" may appear wide and vague but an attempt to study any one aspect of so compact and well-knit a writer as Ernest Hemingway may lead to dangerous results as involved in a statement containing half-truth. However, I have laid emphasis on the thematic study to have a correct assessment of the craft of fiction as actually practised by Hemingway in his short stories.

Out of fifty-two stories discussed here, forty-nine were published as short stories in Hemingway's life-time. The stories Under the Ridge, The Butterfly and the Tank and The Chauffeurs of Madrid, have been included as stories by Scribners in The Enduring Hemingway published in 1966. With the passage of time, many of his journalistic dispatches, instead of losing their charm, have steadily risen to the status of the short stories. Similarly A Good Lion, Nobody Ever Dies, The Night Before Battle, and The Denunciation may also be grouped as stories. I have made passing reference to these at relevant places.

Each story is in its own place. No doubt, the stories deal with war and violence but Ernest nowhere deals with the same theme twice. The stories bear the impress of the originality of Hemingway to such an extent that each of them has its own identity and hence cannot be herded together in a group. The ice-berg principle operative in the stories makes it imperative to deal with them separately and
individually. Three of my chapters have been captioned after the titles as given by Hemingway to the collections of his stories.

The present work has been divided into nine chapters. The first chapter examines the various influences on Hemingway against his family background at Oak Park. He draws heavily on his personal experiences but, at the same time, he does not work too close to life. The discipline of style emanates from the inherent discipline in the life of Hemingway. For this purpose, the background of his family and native place has been closely and carefully studied, but not with a view to give a mere biographical account. His literary apprenticeship has been both wide and varied but, taking the incidents from Hemingway's life, I have pointed out that the originality of his genius has been apparent from the very beginning of his career. His rebelliousness against his parents, society and the literary fashions of his times is not the wayward exhibition of his he-mannish posturings. On the other hand, his rebelliousness is the direct result of his originality and individuality developed out of his hard-earned convictions. The originality of his genius accounts for the uniqueness of the stories.

The second chapter deals with the stories in In Our Time. The tough reticent style evolved out of his 'lived experience' is very much there in the very first collection of the stories. I have dealt at length with the inter-chapter sketches which have a literary value of their own. They are not mere newspaper cuttings, but have their own importance in paving path for Hemingway's novels and short
stories. The sketches are short stories in germinal form. Many of the favourite symbols used in the inter-chapter sketches recur throughout his works. Nick Adam's wound in the spine and his subsequent efforts to have 'separate peace' speak of mankind's efforts to establish an order of society where violence and brutality may be reduced to the minimum. In this chapter, I have also pointed out that Hemingway does not delight in war, violence and brutality. On the other hand, he portrays the absurdity and futility of all kinds of violence. His emphasis is on man's individuality which is the first casualty in these days of mass-organisations. Once the individuality is lost, there is inevitable doom, and the individual's efforts are the only hope for the survival of mankind. I have further pointed out that while portraying the violence prevalent in our time, Hemingway has depicted the efforts of man to replace war by love and peace.

The third chapter scrutinises Hemingway's concern for 'men' and not for a single man. Our time is a particularly difficult one when the violence creates a world of isolates. A man without a woman is an embarrassment to himself and to the society as well. Hemingway's 'women' stands for the home-symbol equivalent to peace and security, dignity and courage. A man without the love and affection of woman is a lost man. The woman without an aggressive and virile man loses touch with the ideals of domesticity. The relationship between man and woman should not be like that of a master and a slave. One should have
the fullest opportunity to develop one's real self. Whenever there is an encroachment on the personality of other, the result is abortive. Thus the isolates crave for a world where the ideals sanctified by the true experience are realiseable.

The fourth chapter deals with the stories contained in *Winner Take Nothing*. Hemingway does not rule out the possibility of war, violence and abnormality. A man endowed with capacity to think over the predicament of human life, is bound to be a lonely man. He sees the evil but does not yield to it. The overwhelming actuality of evil destroys the man but his spirits remain undefeated. His eyes are constantly fixed at the top of Kilimanjaro. His failures are, in fact, his victories. His victors are actually the losers. The hero attains mystical heights when the suffering is penance and the real thing is the moral victory. Moreover, Hemingway's fidelity to truth is of such a high standard that he neither spares the Turks nor the Greeks when they indulge in the acts of brutalities.

The fifth chapter deals with the stories not included in the earlier chapters. It also examines three stories included in Scribner's *The Enduring Hemingway*. Hemingway has reached his Kilimanjaro as a short-story writer in the two African stories which are, no doubt, superb from the point of view of technique. The rest of the stories deal with war, but not with a view to enumerate its brutalities. On the other hand, the stories reiterate the need to have 'grace under pressure'.
In the sixth chapter, I have pointed out how Hemingway revolutionised the very concept of hero. He has always a common man as the main character of his stories. The recurrent character of Nick Adams, no doubt, stands for almost all of us but it is never reduced to a type.

The seventh chapter deals with the devices of irony and symbolism as they have been employed by Hemingway in his short stories. Hemingway is ruthlessly economical in the use of words. He has presented the stark realities of life and, at the same time, he has used the symbols which, if properly interpreted, uncover the hidden part of the iceberg.

The eighth chapter deals with the note of cynicism in the stories of Hemingway. I have endeavoured to show his concern for the good of mankind and, hence he emerges out as a crusader against evil, war and violence. He has preference for soldiers, bullfighters and waiters because he wants to study man in an environment away from the corrupting influence of the modern sophisticated life with a view to expostulate the primary laws of human nature. Moreover, his faith in the ultimate good of man is unshaken.

In the ninth chapter, I have discussed the technique of short story as developed by Hemingway. His stories are not meant to be a pastime for the leisurely class of people. Without describing the thrilling incidents, Hemingway gives the intensity like that of poetry to the moments of intense
passivity in the hero's life. His technique has been of such a high excellence that there have been no successors though there have been many imitators.

In conclusion, it can be said that Hemingway, the short story writer is distinctly present all though the works of Hemingway. His short stories paved path for his novels. The study of his short stories is quite necessary to have a correct assessment of Hemingway, the writer-artist.