CHAPTER II

Brief biographical sketch of Edward J. Thompson and J. G. Farrell

Edward J. Thompson

Edward John Thompson was born on April 9, 1886 at Hazel Grove, Stockport, in England. As an intelligent young man he would have a university scholarship from Kingwood School, Bath, but he was compelled to work in a bank for livelihood in Bethnal Green. From Richmond College, having graduated his B. A. at London University in 1909, he was soon ordained as a missionary and sent to Wesleyan College, at Bankura in Bengal. There he taught English literature to Indian students and single-mindedly studied Bengali. As a peace-loving person, he usually sought his mental satisfaction outside the college. His meeting with the poet Rabindranath Tagore in 1913 triggered off his Bengali studies and latter made himself an expert in Bengali poetry.

During the World War–I Thompson became a chaplain in 1916 and worked with 7th Division of British Army in distant lands like Mesopotamia and Palestine. After his marriage in 1919 Thompson returned to Bankura College as an acting principal and soon became aware of the political turmoil and conflict between the Indian and the British. He vehemently opposed the heinous act of General Dyer at Amritsar. Then he became convinced that Indians and the British would be fundamentally irreconcilable until India had self government. He returned to England in 1923 and became a lecturer in Bengali at Oxford to Indian Civil Service Probationaries (1923-33), Leverhulme research fellow (1934-36) and also a research fellow in Indian history at Oriel
College (1936-46). Successfully he visited India in 1932, 1937, and at last, in 1939 with the aid of the Rhoder Trustees.

More than a poet Thompson is widely known to the Indian public as a major Anglo-Indian novelist. His Indian novels are about ‘ideas’ rather than novels of ideas and their discursive form allow scope for debates on conflicting viewpoints amongst the Anglo-Indians. Thompson was very outspoken but always fair in controversy. Never had he respected the prejudiced people around him. Often he talked much of his works and interests little of himself. Being sick and ailing in his old age he died on April 28, 1946 at Bedlow in Buckinghamshire, England.

Thompson was a liberal advocate for Indian culture and political self-determination at a time when Indian affairs were of little general interest in England. He attacked Anglo-Indian attitudes and conducts and attempted to explain Indian grievances to an indifferent British public. In later years Thompson totally rejected the concept of Empire. He called on the British people to make atonement for the wrongs which their nation had done to India, to guide and assist India with love instead of bureaucratic disdain. He exhorted them to strive for reconciliation with Indians, for a coming together which would merge Western values with Indian spiritual creativity.

Thompson was considered as an expert on Indian affairs and as a result was sent to India on assignments by the British Government. He had visited Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru many times. He had developed warm relationship with Nehru, which must have influenced his views on Indian politics and the Indian nationalist movement. As a friend of Nehru, Gandhi and other leaders, Thompson had contacts that many English officials did not have and did not know how to get. Thus, Thompson was an excellent channel for interpreting India to England and England to India.
E. P. Thompson, son of Edward Thompson, writing in 1993 of his father’s deeply respectful relations with Rabindranath Tagore, describes him as a man on “the interface of two cultures”, Thompson was an outspoken advocate of Indian self-realization. Thompson found an intellectual community in Calcutta, in the circle of Rabindranath Tagore, whose standing and achievements went largely unrecognized at Bankura, and were known to very few outside of India. Thompson happened to be present in 1913 when Tagore had won the Nobel Prize for literature, the first such award to an Asian. It inspired in Thompson the idea of devoting himself to translation of Bengal’s vernacular writers: he would be a kind of literary apostle to the English speaking West.

Edward John Thompson was impulsive and impatient. His relation to India was often a sort of love-hate relationship. He was always a humanist. His political journalism and Indian histories strive to keep advocacy and criticism in balance, although his sympathies are never in doubt. His novels tend to become discourse on contemporary issues, and the poet in him sometimes allowed the lyrical to overload his narrative, but critics often noted the eloquence of his descriptions of flora and fauna; whether in England or in India nature’s variations gave him intense satisfaction.

Thompson was a liberal and a pacifist. There is no doubt about his genuine sympathy for the Indians and his sincere efforts to bring about reconciliation between the Indians and the British. But at the same time he believed in the benevolent intentions of the British in India and did not agree with the American criticism that the British were raining the Indian economy and immensely benefiting at the cost of India.

Thompson’s fictional as well as non-fictional works often drew heavy criticism from the British officialdom. And he himself was sometimes very critical about the Congress Leadership for their
incompetence to deal with the poverty in India. He felt very disillusioned and depressed by the British as well as the Nationalist attitudes towards the genuine problems of the poor in India. Though he often felt like bringing to a close his active connection with the Indian matters, he returned to India again and again for one reason or the other. As Mahatma Gandhi once told him, he was a prisoner of India.

Thompson’s authentic contact with India made him ‘an expert on Indian affairs’, ‘a friend of India’, ‘a prisoner of India’. His position is so complex that we are unable to put him in any neat category and label him as an imperialist or anti-imperialist, a pro-Raj or anti-Raj writer. After studying his expository writings one feels that he was a pendulum hanging downward, free to swing to and fro between the two extremes of India and Britain. On this point Benita Parry’s observation is very relevant:

The will to effect a Christian reconciliation inspired the message on India which Edward Thompson addressed to the two nations. Thompson was dedicated to humanizing an inhuman situation, putting forward and working to implement a multitude of suggestions and schemes at making the British Empire a more generous and moral institution and the British-India relationship a more compassionate one (Delusions and Discoveries, 164).

Edward Thompson wrote all sorts of books – plays, poems, novels, essays, prose-works, thoughtful books on Indian politics etc. All this shows us his intimacy with India and grasp of Indian reality which was so complex during the twenties. Thompson’s career as an Anglo-Indian novelist began in 1924. At first he wrote Cithaeron Dialogues (1924). In 1927, he published These Men Thy Friends, a rather journalistic account
of the Mesopotamian Campaign than a novel. In the same year was published his first novel from the famous Indian trilogy, *An Indian Day*, which was set in Bengal during the disturbed period of 1925. According to Benita Parry it is a ‘counterblast’ to *A Passage to India* (181). In this connection Mulk Raj Anand observes that “*A Passage to India* and *An Indian Day* are complementary with only minor differences in emphasis” (25).

Thompson pays attention to the political aspects of the Indian problem and puts in a vigorous case for India’s freedom. According to him, lack of mutual understanding between the two races is the root cause of the problem. In 1929, another Indian novel *Night Falls on Shiva’s Hill* came out. It is the Anglo-Indian failure dealing with the period of 1900, a portrait of the British India. The novel with a very thin story line, describes the life of an English planter and his family in the wilderness. Thompson being one of the few Anglo-Indian writers keenly sensitive to the native landscape in an unprejudiced manner, the work reveals a charmed awareness of the wilderness through its central character- Nicky Lion. After examination of the novel Sujit Mukherjee argues that: “The novelist is unable to project any persistent image of India of 1900 where he has chosen to set his story” (303).

In the next year, another novel, *In Araby Orion* (1930) was published. In 1931, his second novel from Indian trilogy, *A Farewell to India*, came out. The novel is a political dissertation and a picture of Indian nationalism. It is his political inspection of India during the twenties, a sequel to the earlier novel *An Indian Day*. Some characters are continued from the earlier Indian novel. The failure of an Englishman,
Alden, in solving the racial and colonial problem of reconciliation between India and England is projected here.

In 1932, Thompson visited India to work as a special correspondent for the Manchester Guardian. The reflection of the visit made him write *A Letter from India* (1932). In the same year his next novel *Lament for Adonis* (1932) was published. In 1933 appeared another of the Indian novel *So A Poor Ghost* which aroused a severe reaction in England. Thompson himself in a letter to Tagore writes: “The book caused intense resentment to Anglo-Indians more than anything I have done since *The Other Side of the Medal*” (1933).

The hero of this book is a critic of the English Government and wants to be a connector between East and West and hopes for the reconciliation of the two races.

In 1935, appeared *Introducing Arnison*, which is a semi-autobiographical novel where he writes about his early childhood and school-days and poverty after his father’s death. Another novel *Burmese Silver* was published in 1937. It takes us away from India into the heart of Burma.

Thompson’s last novel from Indian Trilogy, *An End of the Hours* came out in 1938. It is a serious novel. Thompson wrote to Nehru about this novel:

> It hardly pretends to be a story, and can please no one from our own diehards who will want to flay me alive for the opening pages, to the Indian nationalist who will want to stone me for others…, but then I am nearly finished (303).
Alden, the mouthpiece of Thompson, and the protagonist of the novel, returns to India after five years as Thompson revisited India in 1936-37. He came to India to examine the impact of changing conditions of Christian mission. From this visit to India he knew that the whole epoch of British India was about to be finished. His mood in 1937 and 1938 was part elegiac and part mystic. He saw the great British Raj taking its place alongside the Moguls and other conquerors its memory falling back into oblivion. In this mood he wrote An End of the Hours (1938). In the same year he published another novel Youngest Disciples (1938), narrated the life and the teachings of the Buddha. His last novel John Arnison was published in 1939, which is his semi-autobiographical base.

**Thompson’s Expository Writings:**

Thompson was a very prolific writer and he wrote many books of topical interest about India. The foremost among these are his two books- Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work (1921) and Rabindranath Tagore: Poet and Dramatist (1926). Thompson’s friendship with Tagore was a complex thing and recently much light has been thrown on the psychological problems resulting out of Thomson’s continuous attempts to befriend Tagore and Tagore’s strange treatment meted out to Thompson. E. P. Thompson, Edward Thompson’s son has written a touching book about these complications (1993).

Thompson wrote an important book on India in 1924-25. The Other Side of the Medal was a radical, historical reinterpretation of the ‘Mutiny’ of the 1857. Thompson realized that the Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre was a sort of reaction to the happenings of 1857. He feels that there is a need to put forth the Indian case and accept the fact that Indians had valid reasons for their grievances against the British Imperialists. The book is the Indian side which had so far received scant attention from the
British. Writing in 1925, with the memory of 1919 Jallianwalla Bagh massacre fresh in his mind, and stricken by a liberal guilt, the book called for and offered an act of ‘atonement’, by means of which the unavenged and unappeased ghost of the rebellion could at last be laid to rest. In this book, Thompson’s critique of the dominant interpretation was questioned the tendentious cast of British historiography and popular fiction, and concluded that it was the ‘shadow of the Mutiny’, exaggerated by British writing, which had embittered relations between Indians and the British. Concluding the book, Thompson says: “There is no commoner word on Indian lips today than atonement. England…. has never made atonement and she must do it before we can be friends” (131).

Benita Parry’s comment on the book says that –

… Thompson aspired, the work is in fact a powerfully presented polemic, neither wholly academic nor entirely propagandist, which in its combination of historical perspective and moral concern makes it something of a classic amongst British writings on India” (177-78).

In the same year, Thompson wrote Atonement (1925), a dramatized debate between representatives of the British and Indians, uneasy officials and missionaries on the one hand and militant and pacifist nationalists on the other. The focal point of this play is a statement of the wrongs committed by both sides, the British throughout their years as rulers of India, the Indians recently and in retaliation.

A History of India (1927-28) places the emphasis on the British work in India and in this book Thompson appeals to Indians not to
continue extravagant laudation of their past or their spiritual qualities in order to detract from the British reconstruction of India.

In 1928, Thompson wrote Suttee, a study of the Hindu custom of burning widows on the funeral pyre of the dead husbands. In the next year appeared an essay, Crusader’s Coast: The Reconstruction of India (1930) marks Thompson’s moving sympathy for Indian cause and the defense of his own people, defense of the Raj. It was directed at an American Audience which he thought, was misinformed on the subject of Indian nationalism and the British Raj. In 1932, he published A Letter from India. It is the outcome of his Indian tour of 1932, an outline of his ideas for the encouragement of Indian regional literature. It deals with the episode of the ‘Amritsar Massacre’. He gives an account of the incident, true picture of the complex situation in India upon Gandhi’s arrest.

The Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India, written in 1934 in collaboration with G.T. Garratt, is a comprehensive history of the Raj from 1599 to 1933. He himself states that it is a good book than An Indian Day. In a letter written to Nehru he says: “I wish your Universities instead of An Indian Day, a mere novel, would use The Rise and Fulfillment…. That is a good book” (Thompson’s Letter to Nehru).

In 1935, Thompson published Sir Walter Raleigh: The Last of the Elizabethans, and in 1937, The Life of Charles Lord Metcalfe, in 1939, You Have Lived Through All This. It is his finest historical work. Soon afterwards he published Enlist India for Freedom (1940) which he dedicated to the memory of C. F. Andrews. He takes up now the theme of social and political conditions in India and seeks answers to the questions like “What is National Congress? What were its ministries? Why were they withdrawn? What is the present situation in India? …. ?”(6).
Before 1940 Thompson thought that India was unable to govern herself. But after it he began to think that India could also govern herself -

I do not understand what constitutes fitness for natural right. India’s neighbors Siam, Tibet, Nepal, and Iran are independent … because they are fit for self government …. I have often wondered if the British are fit for self government (91).

Thompson’s literary career can be divided into three periods –
1) 1907 – 1920: The Pre-Indian period, herein he wrote poetry.
2) 1921 – 1936: Most of the novels were written in this period.
3) 1940 – 1946: Written in this period were the expository writings.

Really Thompson was an expert on Indian affairs. He published over sixty volumes about half of which are related to India. In spite of this detailed and varied consideration of the Indian cause according to Michael Edwardes, Thompson’s Indian novels have remained “unjustly neglected” (Edwards, The West in Asia 317). Comparing Thompson’s achievements with that of E. M. Forster, Edwardes exposes Forster by making the perspective observation –

E. M. Forster’s A Passage to India uses few Indian words, probably because of the author’s inability in spite of the uncritical praise lavished upon the work to understand either India itself or the world of the British in India (317).

Many literary critics like Benita Parry, Shamsul Islam, Sujit Mukherjee and M. K. Naik commented critically on Thompson’s Indian
novels emphasizing his sympathy for Indians. From this source of the available critical comment on Thompson’s novels, it is obvious that although he has successfully attracted many Indian critics, he remains neglected writer because of the lack of any detailed consideration of his major concerns. To conclude, it is clear that Thompson’s contribution to the Anglo-Indian novel requires a detailed consideration so that the traditional image of the writer of political tracts is disapproved and he is placed properly in the tradition.
J. G. Farrell

The British novelist, James Gordon Farrell, was born on 25th January, 1935 in Liverpool into a family of Irish background. Farrell from the age of twelve attended Rossall Public School in Lancashire. During this time his parents moved to Dublin, and from this point on Farrell spent much time in Ireland. This may be the reason why he had been treated as an Irish writer. In 1956 he went to study at Brasenose College, Oxford, while there he contracted polio.

Prior to polio attack Farrell had been a healthy 21 year old youth, keen on sport. He was now transformed, literally overnight, into an invalid. His hair turned white, his weight shrank and he lost the use of both arms. He spent six months in a device, now-a-days obsolete, known as an iron lung, which was used to administer prolonged artificial respiration by means of mechanical pumps. The attack of polio which left Farrell an invalid throughout his life was perhaps the most shattering experience in his career. This painful and terrifying experience was subsequently enshrined in vividly realistic detail in Farrell’s second novel *The Lung* (1965). The novel is a black comedy based on his experience as a polio victim.

In 1960 Farrell graduated with a B.A. degree in France and Spanish. He then found employment in France, where he worked as a language teacher from 1961 to 1963. During this period Farrell wrote his first novel, *A Man from Elsewhere* (1963). This novel was dedicated to Farrell’s parents.

After leaving France, Farrell spent the mid-sixties in London. There he survived financially by teaching English to foreigners. In London Farrell quickly followed up his first book with two fluent but uneven comic novels, *The Lung* (1965), and *A Girl in the Head* (1967). In 1966 Farrell was awarded a Harkness Fellowship and set off to spend two years in
North America. It was while he was living in New York that he decided to write a novel set in a time that was over. He chose Ireland in 1919-21, the popular name for this period – that of ‘the troubles’ – supplying Farrell with his title. Perhaps living in New York gave Farrell the distance he needed in space and time from his subject matter.

In deciding to write a novel set in India Farrell was drawing partly on his family history for inspiration. Farrell’s parents had been married in Burma in 1930 and then went to live in Chittagong, East Bengal. This was the period of the ‘freedom riots’ and the situation was threatening for the white expatriate population. Farrell’s father was himself wounded in a raid on the armoury at Chittagong. Farrell showed a keen interest in his father’s Indian experiences and subsequently dedicated the finished novel, The Siege of Krishnapur (1973) to him. In November 1973, shortly after publication, The Siege of Krishnapur won that year’s Booker Prize. In 1972, when he was completing The Siege of Krishnapur, Farrell read about the fall of Singapore and thought it would make a good project for him. The result was a massive, polemical epic intertwining the fortunes of colonial capitalism and the doomed city of Singapore, The Singapore Grip (1978).

In Farrell’s case his importance as a novelist rests entirely on his three historical novels: Troubles (1970); The Siege of Krishnapur (1973); and The Singapore Grip (1978). With the trilogy completed Farrell decided to leave London. He bought a farmhouse on the remote Sheep’s Head peninsula in County Cork and moved there in April 1979 and set to work on finishing a short novel set in the hill station of Simla twenty years after the Indian Mutiny. The manuscript, untitled and consisting of an unrevised and unfinished first draft of around fifty thousand words, was cited by John Spurling and posthumously published in 1981 under the title The Hill Station.
On 11th August 1979, four months after moving to his new home in Ireland, J.G. Farrell was fishing from some rocks on the beach below his farmhouse when he either slipped or was washed by a large wave into the sea and drowned. He was forty-four years old. His body was washed ashore later the same month on the other side of Bantry Bay, and he was buried in the graveyard of St James’ Church of Ireland Church in Durrus.


The influence of Farrell’s life on his work is so powerful and consistent that there exists absolute critical consensus on this point. As Binns has remarked, “Farrell was not an autobiographical novelist; yet his fiction cannot neatly be separated off from his life” (Binns, *J. G. Farrell* 30).

Farrell’s life has had a tremendous impact on his work. A close look at his work shows how certain treasured moments and unforgettable experiences of his own life are ingested by his artistic consciousness and beautifully assimilated into the craft of fiction.

Farrell’s first novel, *A Man from Elsewhere* (1963) was set in France. A careful study of the novel shows the clear influence of French Existentialism. It entirely lacks the ironic humour and the tender appreciation of human frailty which characterize his later work. The plot centers on the mission of a young communist, Sayer, to uncover material suitable for destroying the reputation of a famous novelist, Regan, who is dying. Regan is an ex-party member about to be awarded ‘the catholic
prize for world peace’ and Sayer is sent from Paris to interview the writer in the remote backwater of Saint Guilhelm, where Regan has lived for twenty years. There are rumours that Regan was a collaborator and Sayer sets to work quizzing both Regan and those who know him in an attempt to uncover the truth about some murky wartime episodes involving Regan’s wife, the German Commandant and some young men who were executed.

*A Man from Elsewhere* is a bleak cheerless book with a bleak cheerless ending and the wit, irony and charitable good humour which is so characteristic of Farrell’s mature fiction is strikingly absent from this very first novel. The interest of the novel today lies mainly in the way it shows Farrell toying with techniques and themes later to become central to his historical fiction. These include a romantically melancholy view of male-female relations, the inertia of Luc, later to become a major trait of Farrell’s heroes. Regan represents a liberal individualist viewpoint, whereas Sayer is an orthodox communist hardliner.

*A Man from Elsewhere* is a novel of ideas, genuinely dialectical in the sense that the author abstains from siding with either party in the debate. One expects Regan to emerge the winner, since he is a novelist and Sayer a cold machine-like figure indifferent to the attraction of fiction. In fact Sayer succeeds in untangling the dark secrets of Regan’s past, revealing him to be not a collaborator but a man who has destroyed those who loved him most, for the sake of creating a new ideal. In their final confrontation Regan is shown to have far more in common with Sayer than the reader could have imagined was possible.

Finally there is the all important theme of the body. Farrell emphasizes the frailty and tangible physical decay of the dying Regan. There are also Gretchen’s grotesque reflections upon the absurdity of
human physical relations. This unromantic, defamiliarizing view of human beings as slightly absurd creatures was later to become a trademark of Farrell’s writing, and it forms the central theme of his next novel, *The Lung*.

His next novel, *The Lung* (1965) provides a grimly humorous account of a man in an iron lung fighting his way back to health in the company of some comically eccentric fellow patients and a desirable young nurse. The human body as a fragile, vulnerable organism is an omnipresent motif. The novel’s protagonist, Martin Sands, contracts polio and has to spend months in hospital. Sands’ problems are not simply physical. He finds it hard to communicate with others; his marriage has broken up; he has abandoned his job as a reporter, disgusted by it. From being an alienated member of the world of the healthy Sands is abruptly transported to an enclosed community of the sick, where his condition merely worsens. Sands is consumed by world-weariness.

*The Lung* is a more ambitious novel and is prefaced by portentous epigraphs from Tolstoy and A.L.Thomson indicating how the human spirit is dragged down by the desires and needs of the flesh. The handling of the theme of disease and hospitalization in *The Lung* is uncertain. Much of the novel takes place inside Sands’ mind and consists of autobiographical fragments and surrealistic fantasies. Many of these fantasies are extremely funny, but they risk the charge of self-indulgence. The problem which arise in *The Lung* out of the author’s own too close identification with the protagonist are present in Farrell’s next novel, *A Girl in the Head*.

In 1967 Farrell published *A Girl in the Head* set in the fictional English seaside town of Maidenhair Bay. Like its two predecessors, the book met only middling critical and public reaction. The plot concerns the comic misadventures of Count Boris Slattery. Boris is a penniless
wanderer who has found refuge by marrying into the Dongeon family. His relationship with his wife, Flower, has broken down and he spends his time behaving eccentrically and wandering aimlessly around Maidenhair Bay involving himself in unfortunate situation.

Boris bears a number of similarities to Martin Sands. Like Sands he is haunted by thoughts of death and consumed by a sense of absurdity and worthlessness of existence. Boris, like Sands, also suffers from ill-health and the novel begins with his suffering a mild heart attack and being conveyed to a nearby hospital.

The theme of despair is underlined in *A Girl in the Head* by the appearance of Cohen, the drunken ex-doctor. Cohen has given up medicine, convinced that human beings are nothing more than machines. Boris attempts to cling to some sustaining illusion and disagreeing with Cohen, puts his faith in young love.

Farrell had evidently been reading Nabokov around the time he wrote *A Girl in the Head*. Count Boris Slattery’s extravagant aristocratic ancestry clearly owes much to Nabokov, as does Farrell’s use of odd and absurd names. Farrell’s title points to Nabokov’s *Lolita* (1955), the classic account of ‘a girl in the head’.

In later years Farrell looked back upon his first three novels with some dissatisfaction. However, he did subsequently write one more piece of comic fiction, ‘*The Pussycat Who Fell in Love with the Suitcase*’ (1973-74), his only published story. It is a bizarre, eccentric piece narrated in the intimate tone of voice which is such a striking feature of the Empire Trilogy. The story concerns a cat named Rameses, who is a shop steward in a peppermint factory. One day Rameses comes home to find a suitcase in the middle of his bedroom floor. Rameses falls head-over-heels in love with suitcase, which responds with a disdainful, indifferent silence. The lovelorn cat absents himself from the factory and
industrial disputes soon bring chaos to the town. The mayor therefore hides a tape-recorder in the case so that every five minutes it tells Rameses it loves him.

Beneath the light comedy one can detect continuity with the gloomy view of human relations which Sands and Boris subscribe to. It is a chilling, ironic view of human relationships and one which Farrell was to elaborate very much more compellingly in his comically entertaining but ultimately dark, sombre and tragic Empire Trilogy.


The action takes place in the Majestic, a once-proud but now decaying hotel located in the fictional coastal town of Kilnalough. It is run by an eccentric red-faced English expatriate who has let the hotel slide after the death of his wife. The protagonist, the English Major Brendan Archer, is a survivor of the Great War. Upon his demobilization Archer decides to travel from his home in London to Ireland in order to finalize his relationship with Angela Spencer, a young lady he met and perhaps became engaged to, while on leave during the War. Angela’s father runs what was once a grand hotel, The Majestic, and Archer finds himself immediately swept up in the collapse of what was once a thriving Anglo-Irish community in Ireland. The Majestic is a mess, rotting from within much the same way that English dominion in Ireland is rotting from without.

Here the Majestic Hotel is an obvious metaphor for the British Empire itself in the early 1920s. It is an apt metaphor for the condition of
the Irish Republic, the Irish in general and the condition under which England still sought to control the large land holdings. Yet this novel is not entirely political. Human beings live within its covers, complete within their loves, their follies, their prejudices, and their madness. It is a rich, imaginative, and funny work, even as its atmosphere is morbid and gothic.

The next novel of the trilogy is *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973). This is an excellent novel about the Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1857. The focus of the story is the siege of the British Civil Service enclave at Krishnapur (historically this was the siege of Lucknow). Hearing about the Mutiny the Collector in Krishnapur had ramparts built around the British buildings in Krishnapur. Shortly afterwards the sepoys attacked in wave after wave for a period of several months. Surprisingly Farrell describes the sufferings of those besieged with a good deal of humour, humour that pricks holes in the pompous beliefs and attitudes of 19th century British colonizers. Here, Farrell’s focus is less on Krishnapur and the siege than on the attitudes and the beliefs of the colonizers who made that siege inevitability. He puts these empire-builders under the microscope, skewers their arrogant and superior attitudes with the rapier of his wit, subjecting them to satire and juxtaposing them and their narrowly focused lives against the realities of the world around them. Remarkably, Farrell does this with enough subtlety that one can recognize his characters as individuals rather than total stereotypes at the same time that one sees their absurdity and recognize the damage they have done in their zeal to spread their “superior” culture.

Farrell’s dark humour is unparalleled. Using irony, understatement, and a sense of the absurd, he conveys his disapproval of imperialism without resorting to the harshness of polemics. By concentrating exclusively on the inhabitants of the Residence and not on India’s local
population, he makes their behaviour appear ridiculous in its own right, rather than ridiculous in comparison to other cultures.

Every aspect of this novel is exceptional- the characters and characterizations, the plot, the setting, and both the historical and the literary value. For a novel written in 1973, the style of *The Siege of Krishnapur* is unabashedly traditional; making no pretence of any type of modernism, it simply tells us its story in colorful detail and muscular prose, recalling the tense narrative spirit of Kipling and Conrad. Although it is based on a historical event, it is much more about its characters and how they are affected by the Siege than it is about the historical forces that drive the event. What Farrell has achieved here is a very neatly structured and satisfying fictional picture of British colonial life in India during an extraordinary time of turmoil.

*The Singapore Grip* (1978) is the third novel in Farrell’s Empire Trilogy. It is Farrell’s most obviously accessible and cinematic novel, offering an exotic location, romance and dramatic wartime events. What is striking about the novel the way in which Farrell used the form of the popular ‘blockbuster’ to convey what is at heart a bitterly ironic and politically highly-charged vision of Empire. Farrell certainly seems to have *War and Peace* in mind when writing *The Singapore Grip*. Farrell has an uncanny ability to root out and deflate pretensions and hypocrisy wherever it exists, and that is what he does here to incredible comic effect.

The buffoonish tycoon Walter Blackett is a solid stand-in for British imperialism at its blindest- having convinced himself of the great service he has supposedly done for the natives of Singapore, he struggles to maintain his rubber empire even in the face of steadily encroaching chaos. He is surrounded by characters of depth and interest: the skeptical Dupingy; the well-meaning but naïve Matthew Webb; the “divided”
Ehrendorf; and the wonderfully droll Major Archer. Each of these men, in his own way, fleshes out the novel’s vision of colonialism and the pitfalls of world diplomacy.

*The Singapore Grip* is a book of epic proportions, playing off—often humorously – the pomposity of British Colonials and the grim onset of occupation by the Japanese. Farrell’s ability to place the reader in pre-war Singapore is well-executed. In the final analysis, nobody comes out looking good, not the Japanese, not the British, not the Capitalists, not the Communists.

*The Hill Station* (1981) is Farrell’s last unfinished novel edited by John Spurling and posthumously published in 1981. The novel, set largely in Simla in 1871, forms a kind of modest sequel to *The Siege of Krishnapur*. *The Hill Station* is set in the middle of the long period of civil peace in India which lasted from the suppression of the Mutiny up until the 1890s. The plot of the novel centers on a doctrinal row about ritualism which has broken out in Simla between Kingston, a tubercular clergyman, and his Bishop. A parallel sub-plot follows the fortunes of Mrs. Forester, an outcast from polite society because of her flagrant liaisons.

The real thrust of *The Hill Station* would seemingly have been less concerned with either religious ritual or social satire than with a development of Farrell’s interest in the theme of sickness. Farrell portrays a world where sickness is omnipresent. McNab’s niece, Emily, has a paralyzed hand, the hotel owner Mr. Lowrie suffers from a heart condition, Mr. Forsythe, the curate, is sick with fever, and one of the young curates at Elysium House has a swollen gland in his neck. The chief focus of interest is Mr. Kingston, who displays all the symptoms of suffering from tuberculosis, a subject Farrell clearly intended to explore
with the same relish for encyclopedic detail that he brought to cholera in *The Siege of Krishnapur*.

*The Hill Station* would apparently have taken Farrell’s interesting sickness, a stage further by exploring some of its psychological spiritual dimensions, illustrated in the clash between Mr. Kingston and the Bishop. Both men are sick and both are able to transcend physical incapacity by sheer force of will. Farrell’s notes for the unwritten part of the novel suggest that Kingston would have resigned from the Church at the request of the apparently dying Bishop, leave Simla and die. A note by Farrell indicates the mordant and melancholy conclusion which the book would have had: “The Bishop, recovered, is playing croquet again. Another curate-challenger McNab does not wait; he knows how it will end” (*The Hill Station* 175).

Farrell had a great flair for story-telling. Though, he was basically a reserved and introverted character, his gift for story-telling made him gloriously eloquent. Malcolm Dean says that he knew no other person who could tell a story so well or who would be asked so excitedly by friends to repeat a tale even though everyone round the table had heard it several times (‘A Personal Memoir’). Farrell was later to fully capitalize on his God-given talent in his fiction.

Farrell’s novels are compellingly readable and his belief in the importance of a strong narrative drive and a solidly established plot and characterization has won his books a wide audience. His fiction contains elements of popular narrative modes— a fairy story, the adventure story, the ‘blockbuster’—but Farrell treats them ironically and his novels convey a distinctively dark, idiosyncratic, tragicomic picture of existence. Farrell’s narrative method is both sophisticated and old-fashioned. His
omniscient narrator moves confidently between his characters. Like some latter day Thackeray or Fielding, he watches their follies.

Farrell’s novels are unique examples of post-modern historiographic metafiction. His writing is well worth rediscovering. Sardonic, generous, eccentric and sad, it seems as original now as it must have done in the 1970s, before successive waves of historical and post-colonial fiction dampened the memory of Farrell’s achievements in this line. His “trilogy” is concerned with the gap between imperial deals and imperial practice.

Farrell’s novels are never earnest or pompous. On the contrary, they are often extremely funny, combining vivid historical backdrops with an ironic, absurd sense of humour pitched somewhere between P.G.Woodhouse and Samuel Beckett.

Except one book on him by Ronald Binns (J. G. Farrell 1986), criticism of Farrell has been confined to a few articles and reviews, not amounting to a great deal. Strangely enough, the major books on the fictional literature of imperialism published in the recent years – Molly Mahood, The Colonial Encounter: A Reading of Six Novels (1977), John A. McLure, Kipling and Conrad: The Colonial Fiction (1981), David Rubin, After the Raj: British Novels of India since 1947 (1987) and D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke, Images of the Raj: South Asia in the Literature of the Empire (1988) have marginalized Farrell.

The most recent works in the field of imperial fiction – K. C. Balliappa, Images of India in English Fiction (1991), Sujit Mukherjee, Forster and Further: The Tradition of Anglo-Indian Fiction (1993), and Vrinda Nabar and Nilufer Bharuchia (eds) Postcolonial Perspectives on the Raj and its Literature (1994) do practically nothing to add to the critical literature on Farrell. Similarly, almost all significant surveys and studies of post-war British imperial fiction – for example, Giles Gordon,

Ronald Binns’ J. G. Farrell (1986) is itself a thin and exhaustive, a nutshell review of the corpus of Farrell’s fiction. Binns does not pay enough attention to vital questions like Farrell’s treatment of history and his profound response to colonialism in his Empire fiction. As Binns himself admits, “in the trilogy as a whole Farrell explores more values and concepts of history and imperialism about which there will always be a great deal to say” (102).

Though Farrell is not an Anglo-Indian novelist in the manner of Kipling, Thompson, Forster or Paul Scott, he undoubtedly deserves a significant place within the rich tradition of British fiction about India. This research work, therefore, attempts to link Farrell more firmly to this tradition.
A BRIEF REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction:

In British history the Victorian period marks the highest point of British imperialism. Consequently, the literature of the period is inextricably thrown into confusion in the imperialist project. In the view of many critics, irrespective of the direct involvement of individual literary works with the colonial enterprise, the overall structures of Victorian literature are consistently shaped by the influence of colonial ideology, which informed the collective unconscious of the British public during the whole era. However, the impact of imperialism is not restricted to the so-called colonial novels. The 19th century’s dominant genre of domestic fiction is also implicitly informed by colonial ideology. At the same time, the implicit presence in these novels of ideas such as the savage nature of natives and the white man’s burden of bringing civilization to them also involves these texts in the dissemination of racial and colonial ideologies that provided the conceptual framework for imperialism.

The most obvious influence of imperialism on Victorian literature is evident in the novels of Rudyard Kipling and H. Rider Haggard. Such novels, which include works like Kipling’s *Kim* (1901) and Haggard’s *She* (1889), are usually set in the distant lands that Britain colonized and attempt to expose the insular domestic public to the alien strangeness of their country’s colonial possessions. The connection of colonialism with the genre of the romantic adventure story is also evident in the abundant children’s fiction of the time, which includes works by R. L. Stevenson and R. M. Ballantyne. While using Britain’s colonial enterprise as the setting of their narratives, such novels also participate in the construction of propagation of colonial ideology by providing an implicit justification
for British imperialism. Imperialism, therefore, appears in these colonial novels not only as the literal backdrop for their narrative action, but also as the ideological framework that provides justification for existence of the action.

Though an awareness of the colonial presence in Victorian literature is evident in critical studies during the first half of the 20th century, such criticism is usually restricted to an examination of colonial novels and an evaluation of the authors’ distinctive attitudes to the imperial enterprise as reflected in their writings. It is only in the second half of the 20th century, that critics have explored the pervasive influence of colonial ideology throughout 19th century British culture and society. In this respect, Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) is a seminal work providing a thorough analysis of the Europe’s construction of the Orient as its “other”. According to Said, such construction is not motivated by any desire to represent faithfully the reality of the colonized cultures and their people. Instead, it functions as a form of ideological control, allowing the West, to create a series of oppositions regarding the belief in religious and philosophical duality between the colonizer and the colonized that make the latter manageable and provide a moral justification for the imperial enterprise.

The 20th century, properly beginning during the last few years of the 19th century, opened with the Edwardian period and the Georgian period. Leading up to the beginning of the 20th century, social and aesthetic changes were already marking the passing of the Victorian era. With the aesthetic movement of “art for art’s sake” challenging middle-class understandings about the nature and function of art and with educational reforms increasing literacy, the periodical press experienced rapid growth, and literature became a more pessimistic and skeptical mode of expression.
The 20th century novel experienced three major movements: the high modernism of 1920s; the return of social realism and documentary projects as a reaction to modernism in 1930s; and the postmodern movement, which can only be adequately expressed as postmodernism, since the movement emphasizes the fictional claims of various realisms, including regional, postcolonial, urban etc. All trends in fiction, whatever the reactionary aims of movement, continue to demonstrate the legacy of modernism with its self-consciousness about language, form and meaning.

Literature in the beginning of the 20th century openly indicted and ironically debunked Victorian mores. In this connection Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians* (1918) and Butler’s *The Way of All Flesh* (1903) serve fine examples. More anti-imperialist sentiment found its way into fiction and essays, such as those of Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, Paul Scott, Myers, Edward Thompson etc. Some nostalgia for imperial days gets expressed in the fiction of J. G. Farrell, Paul Scott and others. In the postwar, post imperial period, the fiction of William Golding and Iris Murdoch and their contemporaries began to examine the moral bases of society.

Majority of the writers of imperial literature tend to take Shakespeare’s *Tempest* as a pioneering point for an elaborate chronicle of imperialism in literature. But Martin Green, in his study of literary imperialism, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1980), makes a case for a different view of the matter:

There are reasons for dating the British empires rise at the end of the 17th century, in fact at the union of England with Scotland in 1707; which is to say at the very historical moment when the adventure tale began to be written, since *Robinson Crusoe*
appeared in 1719. Defoe was one of the English government’s agents in negotiating that union. And Defoe, rather than Shakespeare, is my candidate for the prototype literary imperialism (5).

Here Martin Green suggests that the origin of the adventure story is almost having the same period with the beginning of imperial literature itself and even goes to the extent of concluding that the genre of adventure fiction was probably “more influential than the serious novel” (49).

The quantity of imperial literature increased by leaps and bounds in the heydays of the empire, but without a corresponding rise in their literary quality. To a great extent, the imperial literature was an expression of ecstasy about the over expanding colonial world and also about the exploits of a so called ‘exile race in action’. In this literature of imperialism, writers like Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, George Orwell, Joseph Conrad, Paul Scott, and J. G. Farrell stand out as writers of all times who succeeded in giving certain depth and respectability to the genre of imperial literature. The Raj writers like John Masters, Edward Thompson, Rumer Godden, Henry Haggard, Maud Diver, Philip Taylor, and M. M. Kaye etc succeeded to pose a challenge to receive ideas on imperialism in their works.

Martin Green, in his book, The English Novel in the Twentieth Century: The Doom of Empire (1988) explains how a writer’s reputation stands or falls in the course of time. Not all writers survive their generation of readers. In some cases, the writer as a man of letters passes into oblivion while he continues to be remembered for his ideology. For example, fifty years after in 1920, Kipling was widely ignored as a writer,
though he was all along on the minds of readers of imperial literature as an ideologist. Thus all the novelists of imperial fiction, despite certain significant formal differences in their treatment of imperialism, share traces of imperial pride in their fiction. But for want of space the researcher would like to throw light on some major novelists of Empire with their major imperial fiction in brief.

**Joseph Conrad: (1857-1924)**

Joseph Conrad’s novel *Heart of Darkness* (1902) is a fine example of literature about imperialism. The novel utilizes Britain’s Age of Empire as a backdrop for the narrative and it explores British attitude and behavior in the alien locality of the imperial frontier.

Polish by birth and after twenty years at sea (during which time he received a British citizenship in 1886) Conrad settled in England in 1894 and devoted himself to writing. Conrad drew heavily on his experiences as a seaman for material in his fiction and *Heart of Darkness* is no exception. The story of the novel loosely based on Conrad’s experiences as a mate of a small river steam boat in the African Congo in 1890. The novel is set amidst the scramble for Africa that took place among the European imperial powers in the last three decades of the 19th century and which culminated in the Boar War. British handling of the War and of the events leading up to it was criticized as inept, costly, and inefficient and the other imperial powers took note. Britain’s reputation was damaged and many wondered if Britain could hang onto and manage its far flung territories.

Though the novel was published during the Boar War and though based on an earlier trip to Congo, Conrad could not have helped but revise his interpretation of the European presence in Africa in light of the War, as many others did in Britain. The conflict engendered a certain loss
of British prestige in the international arena and a corresponding loss of self-confidence at home. Explaining consequences, A. P. Thornton in his *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies* (1985) writes that as a result of the War the “imperial idea … suffered a contraction, a loss of moral content, from which it never completely recovered” (109).

Britain began to question its imperial mission seriously and publicly and the reader hears an echo of this in Marlow’s internal monologue. Also, native resistance was still strong and uprisings frequent as were European atrocities against the natives. All of these historical elements are present in *Heart of Darkness* making it a rich example of realistic fiction and a fairly typical representation of this period of European imperialism.

**Rudyard Kipling: (1865-1936)**

Kipling’s stories of Anglo-Indian life first appeared in English newspapers. Some collections of his stories delighted patrons of Wheeler’s Indian Railway Library, a series of cheap paperback books sold at most railway stations, and designed to help tired and weary travelers overcome the tedium of long train journeys across the Indian sub-continent. Although primarily written for domestic consumption, Kipling’s stories began to attract attention of people in England. After leaving India in 1889, he established himself in the literary circles of London. By the end of the 19th century he had become one of the Britain’s greatest literary figures.

The 1970s saw a remarkable rehabilitation of Kipling’s literary reputation, and the present flood of critical studies show no sign of omission. Although Kipling’s Indian stories comprise but a small fraction of his total literary output, the quality, range and authenticity of these
stories have established him as the finest exponent of the genre. Nearly all subsequent writers of Indian novels have acknowledged their debt to him, and in this, more than any fickle academic reputation, lies ample testimony to his genius.

In Kipling’s work, the British Empire assumed a complex mythical or legendary function, which he passed on to his readers. He viewed his imperialism, predicated on deeply-held political, racial, moral, and religious beliefs which sustained a feeling of innate British superiority, as being primarily a moral responsibility. Kipling saw World War-I as a threat not only to Britain itself but to her civilizing mission. He announced his artistic loyalty to the rulers of the Empire, rejoiced in his racial superiority and almost invariably attempted to spread the imperial myths.

In other words, Kipling’s imperial fiction represents the most ardent expression of British imperialism. The most recurrent image of an Indian in the works of Kipling is that of a ‘half-devil’ and ‘half-child’ and it was in his view the God-given mission of the Empire-builder to adjure the ‘devil’ and educate the ‘child’. Kipling’s notorious description of the colonized as ‘lesser breed without the law’, is usually taken as a clear proof of his racial bias.

E. M. Forster: (1879-1970)

*A Passage to India* (1924) crowned the fictional phase of Forster’s writing that began in 1904; it is widely considered his most mature and complex novel. The novel takes place among the British in India following World War I when the British Empire was in its decline. The story is related from the viewpoints of European characters who find themselves in foreign land as direct representatives of a European power or due to some connection with imperial activity although the novel is
unusual for the fiction of the time in also featuring the viewpoint of a colonial native. Because all of the contact between the Europeans and the natives and for that matter between Europeans who met within an imperial context, is influenced by the economic imperatives of imperial conquest the relationship that develop between the various characters are to a great degree structured and determined by these conditions.

The novel is told against the background of political and racial turmoil in India after World War I and all the historical details are evident in the text. Political opinion in Britain regarding India during this time was contradictory; admitting independence for India was inevitable on the one hand and maintaining India was too backward and fragmented to govern herself on the other. Britain’s anxiety at this time is explained by A. P. Thornton: “Somehow the British had to reconcile this rising nationalist spirit and the desire for self-government with the maintenance of their own power…. and of imperial unity” (217).

In *A Passage to India* the British do not maintain this balancing position with grace. Forster’s treatment of the British civil servants in the novel highlights Britain’s self-deception with regard to her position in India. Forster also accurately reproduces the conflicting attitudes of the Indians, especially through the characters of Aziz and his friends, who admire and resent the British at the same time. Because of the comprehensive quality of historical details, *A Passage to India* is a realistic representation of its time. Yet, the novel not only represents but also comments on Historical conditions through character development, description, and plot.
George Orwell: (1903-1950)

George Orwell tapped on his first-hand experience in the Indian subcontinent as an officer of the imperial police in the then Burma (between 1922 and 1928). British imperialism provided the setting and the major topic for Orwell’s first novel *Burmese Days* (1934). In the novel, Orwell provides a bitterly severe view of social life within the context of imperialism. He also provides an array of developed characters that highlight and reveal varying perspectives of imperialism.

George Orwell remains unsympathetic towards overseas imperialists. He provides his critique of imperialism through his characters. The protagonist of the novel *Burmese Days*, John Flory represents Orwell himself. The man is staunchly opposed to the mission of the white man, and fails to see the justification for imperialism. The manipulator of the imperial atmosphere is the novel’s antagonist, U Po Kyin. He is wholly aware of how the imperialism affects the social structure.

By critiquing imperialism through the characters, Orwell is not sympathetic to the plight of the characters. The plight the Europeans face would be the failures and suffering they endure. Most of these situations are produced by their shortcomings and of the social perspective of imperialism.

Though Orwell is generally regarded as an enemy of the Empire, rejecting the Empire along with its attendant myths and protesting against the immorality, injustice and hypocrisy of the entire colonial system, some critics have identified a Kiplingesque strand in his attitude towards the Empire. Orwell could never bring himself to hate the Raj with the intensity of contempt which characterized his attitude to Fascism or Communism. He is absolutely certain that the real motive behind imperialism is the economic exploitation of other people and he ridicules
the pious theories about the white man’s burden. But in his later work, Orwell’s criticism of Empire can be seen to have lost its sting due to his belief that when compared to other tyrannies of the world, the British counterpart was relatively mild.

**Paul Scott: (1920-1978)**

Paul Scott’s ‘The Raj Quartet’- the four novels published between 1966 and 1975 – is concerned with the final phase of the British Empire in India. It covers the Indian struggle for independence, the Indian political scene and the party politics, as well as the Second World War atmosphere. Scott’s fiction shows that he had undertaken very detailed study of the last days of the British Rule in India. These four novels cover vast events and multiplicity of characters. But according to Paul Scott himself these four novels constitute:

> The story of a rape, of the events, that led up to it and followed it and of the place in which it happened. There are actions, the people and the place, all of which are interrelated but in their totality incommunicable in isolation from the moral continuum of human affairs” (Scott, *The Jewel in the Crown* 19).

After E. M. Forster, Paul Scott’s fiction is supposed to be most remarkable contribution to the Anglo-Indian fiction. Like Forster, Scott is also concerned with delineating the relationship between the British and the Indians and in addition the British and the Eurasians. How different he is from Forster can be seen from the political debates and the cognizance of the nationalist movement in ‘The Raj Quartet’. Paul Scott, being himself a part of the military service in India, had much more intimate experience of the political upheavals of the time and the Anglo-
Indian point of view of the changes on the scene. What’s more, the British characters in Scott’s fiction suffer from a sense of failure, for example, Tom Gower in *The Alien Sky* (1953) is tormented by a sense of failure.

Scott has concerned himself with the theme of British Imperialism in a massive scale in The Raj Quartet. His novels are artistic portrayals in the realistic mode of the nature and causes of the failure of the Raj, and also represent forceful denunciations of the unreliable policies of the British Empire. But, despite Scott’s highly publicized sympathy for the Indians, nowhere in his entire work does he portray the proverbial Indian kindness and generosity. On the other hand, he takes extreme care to depict the British restraint. According to Hilary Spurling, Scott saw the colonial past as an “unfinished business” and consequently, was accused of “a sneaking desire to return to the bad old days of British supremacy” (Spurling, *Paul Scott: Novelist and Historian* 118).

This is how the imperialistic perspectives work in the works of Conrad, Kipling, Forster, Orwell and Paul Scott, unknown to the authors themselves, but profoundly capable of dismantling the apparent anti-imperialist feeling in their works.

**L. H. Myers: (1881-1944)**

L. H. Myers who belonged to the phase of Anglo-Indian writing, was a different proposition altogether. His novels, *The Near and the Far* (1929), *Prince Jali* (1931) and *Raja Amar* (1933) are set on the Indian historical background of the sixteenth century. But he is not interested either in historical events or personages. He is more interested in the spiritual life of the individuals and their states of mind than the external events. The characters in his fiction, struggle to reconcile ‘the near’ and
‘the far’, material life and spiritual aspects, in their search for a satisfying creed. In his trilogy and also in its sequel, *The Pool of Vishnu* (1940), he was mainly concerned with the workings of personal relations at all levels of social encounters in courtly life or life of the common people.

Myers has never visited India and he was at no time involved with the Indian political scene. He is one of the few Anglo-Indian writers who were greatly influenced by the Indian religious philosophy. He wanted to satirize the contemporary authoritarian English society. His satire is directed more against the mainland British than the English in India.

**John Masters: (1914-1983)**

Unlike Forster and Thompson, Masters was an imperialist. In his fiction, directly or indirectly, he expresses his pride for imperial rule over India, and he even justifies this imperial domination. He in his *The Night runners of Bengal* (1976) suggests that like perpetually hungry tiger, the English also have a natural license to prey on the colonized Indians. Masters’ heroes do not think Indians are fit to rule themselves or protect themselves.

Sometimes Masters is criticized as an imperialist for false reasons. It is true that Masters was imperialist in his attitude towards India. He regretted the English loosing the Empire. But in his fiction we come across characters which criticize the British policy and the behavior of the English in India. For example, in *The Deceivers* (1957) William Savage, an Englishman is against ‘sutee’, but appreciates the idea being ‘sutee’, a case of intense love of a woman for her husband. In *Night runners of Bengal* Caroline Langford criticizes the English for their isolation from the Indian community and condemns the British policy of maintaining double standard in Dealing with the Indians.
Through the fiction of these writers we can see that the English community in India never tried to mix with the Indian population socially. They always nursed the clannish attitude. They maintained their separate existence in India and had a feeling at the back of their mind that they were a besieged community.

These major novelists of Empire, discussed briefly in the preceding pages, have a certain close affinity in their ambiguous relationship to the colonial enterprise. Rudyard Kipling rejoiced in the imperial glory while Joseph Conrad was a Kipling, guiltless of his inclination towards racism. There can be no doubt about Forster’s liberalist, anti-imperialist stance but he was not far-sighted enough to see a future for free India. Orwell hated the Fascist overtones of economic imperialism and at the same time, shared with Kipling a patriotic liking for the Empire. Though Paul Scott was basically an anti-imperialist writer of post-imperial Britain, a nascent streak of Kipling is demonstrably evident in his fiction.