Byron is still considered to be one of the most controversial of all English poets. In his own age critics were divided in their opinion about him, some were shocked by his irreverence to the established code, some were stunned by his peculiar genius and many were shocked and stunned simultaneously. The subsequent Victorian age could absorb some of this shock because of its complacency born out of its all-round prosperity and progress. But the age refused to see what Byron saw very clearly: the ugliness under beauty, hypocrisy under polish, falsehood under truth, and the reality under appearance. It extolled only his courage and strength.

But the disillusioned twentieth century, knocked by two world wars and shocked by appalling suffering, is able to judge Byron without prejudice and serious attempts are being made to give the poet his due place of honour. A great many books have come out covering all the aspects of Byron's life and poetry. So far as his long poems are concerned more stress has been laid, however, on his Childe Harold and Don Juan. There are the scholastic works of E.F. Boyd, P. Quennel, Guy Steffan, D.L. Moore, J.J. Mangen, to mention only a few. But Byron was a poet who wrote narrative poems consistently in a prevalently lyrical age and this aspect of his poetic writing has not
been seriously looked into. Brief mention has been made of it in the Chapter on Byron by Karl Iftoeber in his book, *The Romantic Narrative Art*. The present work is an attempt to make a systematic study of his narrative poems in the light of his own narrative techniques.

The Romantic age coincided with the colonial wars, the French Revolution and at home, the Industrial Revolution which had by that time brought about considerable changes in the society all over the continent and England. All the Romantic poets reacted to these changes, Byron and Shelley most sharply. Yet all of them, including Shelley, evolved their own personal philosophy and tried to understand life in terms of certain philosophical concepts. Hence it was that the age was prolific in lyric poetry of wonderful brilliance and philosophical depth, hence it was that the poems were mainly songs of the liberation of the spirit. But Byron's attitude to life was that of a cynical observer who could also look within with a penetrating insight. It was not simply his emotional bond with his fellow beings but almost a physical one, that prompted him to write about them with such candour in his poems. The object of this thesis is not only to enquire how but also why Byron wrote these narrative poems.

The Introduction - Section 'A' and Section 'B' - is devoted to answer the "why". Section 'A' deals with
the background of the age; its social, political, economic and religious forces and, its literary heritage and current conventions. Section 'B' deals with how Byron reacted to these forces and how they and his ancestry helped him to develop his poetic temperament and genius. Chapter I briefly deals with the development of the art of poetic narration through the ages. As illustrative examples, to set them as foils to Byron's poems, the narrative poems of Byron's contemporaries have been briefly gone through. The rest of the Chapter is devoted to the discussion of the different aspects of Byron's own narrative techniques. In Chapter II we have discussed four poems, two of them are imaginative which show his extrovert romanticism and the other two have a historical foundation. It also includes Childe Harold, though it is not a narrative proper yet it is a narrative of a sort. Chapter III discusses three of his important satirical narratives including Don Juan. In all the discussions stress has been laid to show how the narrative techniques mentioned in Chapter I have been applied to them, and how far they are successful as narrative poems. In the concluding chapter an attempt has been made to assess Byron's success as a narrative poet.
The primary sources of the material used are,

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