E.M. Forster broadens his subject in Howards End from a private to a public world, confronting for the first time not just personal or domestic antagonists, but the representatives of England's social, political and economic power. Like the earlier novels, Howards End is built on a major antithesis, the contrast between the ways of the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. The contrast has deeper social implications, the canvas that portrays it is wider than it was in the earlier novels. The crucial problem, whether personal relations and public relations can join in creative harmony, has been uppermost in the author's mind. Margaret Schlegel's motto, which is the author's also, is "Only connect", and Hawards End's aim is to test whether the Bloomsbury liberalism can survive a marriage with the greater outer world of business, the world of 'telegrams and anger'. The main stress is on harmony. This theme, that runs through the gamut of personal and social relationships, sets Hawards End in the English Romantic tradition. The imaginative reconciliation of the opposites is the central ideal of this tradition. Typical expressions of this ideal are Coleridge's balance and reconciliation of opposite or discordant
qualities, Keats's constant striving to unite thought and feeling, and Wordsworth's vision of harmony between man and nature.

In *Howards End* attempts at reconciling the inner life and the outer life, the seen and the unseen, poetry and prose, culture and commerce are made, so that an integrated life may be lived. The Schlegels, the sisters, Margaret and Helen, represented what is most dear to Forster, personal relations, culture, and an appreciation of music. Margaret, more than Helen, is also gifted with a sense to acknowledge the forces beyond the contingent world, the actualities of the mundane life. Forster's motto, which is also the novel's "Only connect" is put to test through Margaret. She aims at building "a rainbow bridge" to effect the ideal connection between prose and passion in Henry Wilcox's life:"Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height."

It also signifies the way E.M. Forster reconciles everyday reality and poetry in his fiction. If the setting of a typical Forster novel is microcosmic, his explorations of symbolical significance are poetic. This is, in fact indicative of the structure of the novel. There is indeed an antithesis between the foils in the novel - the Wilcoxes and the Schlegels - both the way they are brought closer and
The garden, overhanging whych-elm, the sloping meadow, the great view to the west, the cliff of fir trees to the north, the adjacent farm through the high tangled hedge of wild roses were all utilized by me in Howards End, and the interior is in the novel too.

Through the rhythmic use and the pervasive presence of the house, Forster aims at contrasting the urban life of hurry and the peaceful, quiet life of the countryside. Critics such as Wilfred Stone, J.B. Beer, V.A. Sahane, M.L. Raina have analysed the rhythmic significance and the symbolic role of the house in their scholarly works on Forster. In Edwardian literature the spirit of the place has been accorded a significant role. The attitude towards the spirit of the place is a point common between D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Forster. The elegiac strain that one hears in Howards End at the vanishing English agricultural life is also found in Lawrence's The Rainbow. Both in Howards End and the Rainbow we have the moving view of life under the impact of transition between the collapse of an agricultural civilization and the rise of an industrial society. This transitional phase brings down the whole set of old values and the climate seems to be uncongenial to the emergence of the new values. The basic problem of the human 'connection which is central to the novel, Howards End, is fundamentally the problem created by the new order. Both Forster and Lawrence are intensely involved in the probing of this modern world.
J.B. Beer emphasising the similarity in their attitude to the spirit of place calls Lawrence the "poet of the place" and Forster its "philosopher". Like the "rooms" in A Room with a view, the houses in this novel have symbolic role. 'Howards End' is Windy Corner with a view, and according to Wilfred Stone it represents all of England and her spiritual inheritance. Writing about the significant role of buildings and places in Forster's fiction, Peter Buma sums up the views of the critics:

Most important of all, he uses buildings and places and names of places - such places as can be appropriately associated with a recurring idea, and thus take on significance as symbols. The Room with a view and Howards End represent thoughts which stamp their pattern on the story.

The house, the wych-elm and the hay provide a sense of permanence in an age of flux caused by rapid industrialisation of England.

Forster describes the effects of the life in a city where personal relations come under great strain, and the life in the country which helps Margaret bring about the connection between the inner and the outer life. Howards End forms the galaxy of novels dealing with the change overtaking England. It is one of those "condition of England" novels that attempt to depict the fast changing life-style in England. Some of the works such as the condition of England and From the Abyss by C.F.G.
Masterman, *Life and Labour of the people of England* by Charles Booth, and *Heartbreak-House* by Bernard Shaw also focus attention on the problems besetting the social life as a result of industrialisation, and on the role of money.

*Howards End*, through an interaction of the three families, the Schlegels, the Wilcoxes, the Basts, imaginatively turns its attention to the evolution of a new society. In an entry in his *Diary* (28 June, 1908) Forster perhaps for the first time thought of writing a novel based on the three families and the significance of the relationships among their members:

Idea for another novel shaping, and may do well to write it down. In a prelude Helen goes to stop with the Wilcoxes, gets engaged to the son and breaks it off immediately, for her instinct sees the spiritual cleavage between the families. Mrs. Wilcox dies, and some years later Margaret gets engaged to the widower, a man impeccable publicly. They are accosted by a prostitute. M. Because she understands and is great marries him. The wrong thing to do. He, because he is little, cannot bear to be understood and goes to the bad. He is frank, kind and attractive. But he dreads ideas.

Margaret, Helen and Tibby form the Schlegel family. Helen is a romantic idealist who believes in personal responsibility and personal relations. She possesses the heroic trait and views life idealistically. She resembles, according to Lionel Trilling, the heroine of the ideal life in *Faust* and Margaret reminds one of the heroine of the practical life.
The novel begins with Helen's visit to the Wilcoxes in their house at Herfortshire. Her letter to Margaret introduces the readers to the important forsterian "rhythms" that stitch the novel from the inside, a device dear to the author. The house, "Howards End", the hay growing in its fields and the wych elm, described by the author as the genius of the place, all help the author stitch the book from the inside, like the little phrase in Proust's novel, *Remembrance of Things Past* (Aspects of the Novel P.168) or the blind beggar's song in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. They also help in "expansion" of the novel which he admires in *War and Peace*.

Expansioh. That is the idea the novelist must cling to .... Not rounding off but opening out. Is not there something of it in *War and Peace*? .... do not great chords begin to sound behind us, and when we have finished does not every item .... lead a larger existence ....

Ruth Wilcox is also introduced in the letter "....with her hands full of the hay that was cut yesterday -" (Howards End P.6). Reaction to hay marks the Wilcoxes off from Ruth, Margaret and Helen. The Wilcoxes suffer from hay fever and hence flee *Howards End*. They live in London and have little interest in their country house which is "Holi of holies" (P.81) for Ruth Wilcox. For Henry Wilcox,
his sons Charles and Paul, Howards End, is a piece of property to be sold, but for Ruth it was "a temple", "a spiritual sanctuary" (Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain, P.258). Though the Wilcoxes hold the title-deeds and the door-keys of the house, it is the Schlegels, Margaret in particular through the wish of Ruth, who come to possess the house. "We know this is our house", says Helen about Howards End, "because it feels ours" (P.282).

The house also forms part of the larger rhythm of permanence and peace set against the rhythm of "hurry", "panic and emptiness" which epitomizes the life of the Wilcoxes.

The descriptions of London and the countryside are not mere backdrops for the localization of the action. They embody feelings, associations and the authorial voice not easily conveyed by the plot. If one examines the passages describing the urban and the rural landscapes one feels the significance of the scenic descriptions Forster's anathema is manifest towards the urban life:

The city seemed satanic, the narrower streets oppressing like the galleries of a mine. No harm was done by the fog to trade, for it lay high, and the lighted windows of the shops were thronged with customers. It was rather a darkening of the spirit which fell back upon itself, to find a more grievous darkness within. In the streets of the city she noticed for the first time the architecture of hurry on the mouths of its inhabitants - clipped words, formless sentences, potted expressions of approval or disgust.
Further:

And month by month the roads smelt more strongly of petrol, and were more difficult to cross, and human beings heard each other speak with greater difficulty, breathed less of the air, and saw less of the sky.13

The rhythm indicates the movement of the "civilization of luggage" and the resultant sense of regret. This is the type of life which Wilcoxes have promoted and encouraged through their business. Contrasted with the fogginess accompanied by a melancholy brooding of the above passages is the refreshing description of the Howards End and the surrounding countryside.

There were the greenage trees that Helen had once described. Down by the dell-hole more vivid colours were awakening and Lent lilies stood sentinel on its margin, or advance in battalions over the grass. Tulips were a tray of jewels .... she was struck by the fertility of the soil, she had seldom been in a garden where the flowers looked so well .... 14

And:

Here had lived an elder race, to which we look back with disquietitude. The country which we visit at week-ends was really a home to it, and the graver side of life, the deaths, the partings, the yearnings for love have their deepest expressions in the heat of the fields ...

In these English farms ... one might see life steadily and see it whole, group in one vision its transitoriness and its eternal youth, connect - connect without bitterness until all men are brothers.15

The passages describe the benevolent powers of the countryside. The lyricism brings out the joyous contrast to the bleakness of the urban life.
Foster's sympathies, like those of D.H. Lawrence, are evidently with the life lived on the farms. The characters are also loved or detested by the author to the extent of their response to the symbols of the novel. Apart from being "flat" or "round", some of them, Ruth, Margaret and Helen, are filled with a sense of the incomplete comprehension of the unseen and the inconceivable. They are aware of the forces they can't phrase. Margaret in particular upholds the superiority of the "unseen" over the "seen" but she believes in keeping "proportion" or Arnoldean "disinterestedness".

Helen's impetuosity lands her and the Basts into difficulties. Her engagement to Paul Wilcox is broken before it is announced to the members of the Wilcox family. In love as well as in hatred she swings from one extreme to another. Her attitude towards the Wilcoxes and their business is misconceived like D.H. Lawrence's.

Helen holds wealth to be filthy lucre for she identifies it with the dishonest means through which it is accumulated. Margaret tells Henry Wilcox that, "she dislikes all organisations, and probably confuses wealth with the technique of wealth" (H.E. P.169). Likewise, not fully comprehending Forster's attitude towards the Wilcoxes in Howards End, D.H. Lawrence criticised him for his charity towards the businessmen, "But I think you did make a nearly deadly mistake glorifying those business people in Howards End. Business is no good."
The hypocritical attitude towards money comes in for sharp criticism by Forster. The Victorian reticence about money is perhaps embodied in Henry Wilcox. Margaret's fortnight appreciation of the salutary effects of riches is a measure of her emancipation from Victorian mores.

Noel Annan discussing the emergence of England as the leading financial power around the turn of the century touches on the question of money in the Edwardian society. According to him the "restraints of religion and thrift and accepted class distinctions started to crumble and English society to rock under the flood of money .17 A host of books were written on the money theme, The spoils of Poynton, Major Barbara, The way we Live Now, Belchamber. According to Wilfred Stone: ... Howards End perhaps heads the this list of novels exploring ways the intellectual rich can live with their bank accounts and keep their conscience.18

Mrs. Munt, a conventional woman is shocked when Margaret, her niece speaks out for money: "Money pads the edges of things" Margaret says to her aunt, "God help those who have none".19 She adds to her views about money: "I began to think that the very soul of the world is economic, and that the lowest abyss is not the absence of love, but the absence of coin.20
Through Margaret Forster hits out at the Edwardian hypocrisy about money that was pouring into England from Africa and Asia. In an article "The Challenge of our Time", he lashes out at this hypocrisy:

In came the nice dividends, up rose the lofty thoughts, and we did not realise that all the time were exploiting the poor of our own country and the backward races abroad .... we refused to face this unpalatable truth. I remember being told as a small boy, 'Dear, don't talk about money, it is ugly - a good example of the Victorian defense mechanism."

Henry Wilcoxes and people of his ilk made money through devious means" .... the man who had earned money out of Greece and Africa and bought forests from the natives for a few bottles of gin"22. V.A. Sahane draws attention to Forster's preoccupation with money in his novels, "Howards End" shows Forster's profound pre-occupation with a money civilization and its moral dilemmas."23

In D.S. Savage's view, "The focal point is money"24. The importance of money as a significant theme in the novel tends to make one think that the creation of a character like Margaret was, to some extent, to assuage the author's conscience as an inheritor of unearned money.

When Forster was a student at King's College, Cambridge businessmen and money used to come in for great deal of criticism and it was generally conceded that the scholars and civil servants ran Britain. In "Howards End" the author
makes an attempt at self-criticism by portraying the Wilcoxes as the people who have made England prosperous and strong. But, as Margaret tells Helen, their qualities are inferior to those possessed by the Schlegels, "... virtues of the second rank, no doubt, but they have formed our civilization."

26 Helen is a relentless champion of the personal relations. Her strident objection to Margaret's marriage with Henry stems from the fear that the Wilcoxes have no regard for personal relations she tells Margaret that: .... Personal relations are the important thing for ever and ever, and not this outer life of telegrams and anger.27

The characters of the Schlegel sisters, Margaret and Helen, lend a unique charm to the novel and offer an interesting study in contrast. They were, in some respects, modelled on Dickenson's three sisters, May, Janet and Hester. In a letter to Dickenson Forster wrote (17 March, 1931) that 'May was, perhaps, more definitely Margaret ... though Janet has entered in too.29 At the same time it won't do to stress the resemblance too much because as P.N. Furbank and J.K. Johnstone hold, the sisters represent their author's intellectual and emotional sides. According to Johnston: Between them, the Schlegel sisters represent two sides of Forster. Forster's intellect accepts Mr. Wilcox; his emotions revolt against the acceptance.29
Margaret's marriage with Henry depicts the clash between the novel's conscious drift and the subconscious wish of the author, Dr. M.L. Raina calls it a clash between the realistic structure and the symbolism of *Howards End*.30 Margaret's philosophy of connection between the social strata of English life affords her an opportunity to come into contact with Leonard Bast who aspires to acquire culture through Ruskin and music. He is Stephen Wonham of *The Longest Journey* but uprooted from the country and forced to work as a Clerk. It was the common fate of many young people in the wake of industrialisation. He is ill at ease in foggy London and pines after a home - a romantic home. Though born into the "struggling and the submerged" class, Leonard was full of the spirit of adventure and beauty. The Schlegel sisters are thrilled to learn that imbued with the spirit that led Jefferies to write his books about return to earth, Leonard undertook the nocturnal journey to tramp the woods in order to enjoy the dawn. According to Granaden, ...... he tests art by nature, and thus at once is one of Forster's saved.32 Forster has been praised as well as criticised by various critics for the character of Leonard, J.B. Beer, Swinnerton, D.S. Savage calling Leonard a 'least convincing fabrication in the book'. Savage adds that Leonard Bast is "... an effigy made to walk and talk in such a way as to bolster up the liberal philosophy which inspires the book".34
D.H. Lawrence and I.A. Richards, on the other hand, admired Forster for the creation of Leonard Bast. D. H. Lawrence, who detested the Bloomsbury group, found little to appreciate in Forster's fiction except the character of Bast in *Howards End*.35 According to Richards:

The presentation of Leonard Bast, in its economy and completeness and its adequacy to the context, would be enough by itself to give any novellist enduring memory.36

In an interview to Angus Wilson, Forster told him that he created the character about whose family life he knew very little and yet ".... I believe I brought it off". But his experience at the working Men's College in London might have given him an opportunity to observe persons like Leonard Bast who were eager to acquire culture in order to rise along the social ladder. In the novel Forster presents his views about the students from labour classes at the Working Men's College through Margaret: "She knew the type— the vague aspirations, the mental dishonesty, the familiarity with the outsides of books.37

Leonard Bast meets the sisters at a Beethoven concert. The symphony of Beethoven and the appearances and disappearances of Leonard are beautifully blended with great suggestiveness. The Fifth Symphony of Beethoven affects Helen the most and she sees a meaning in it.

... as the music started a goblin walked quietly over the universe, from end to end. Others followed him. They were not aggressive creatures, it was
that made so terrible to Helen. They merely observed in passing that there was no such thing as splendour or heroism in the world. After the interlude of elephants dancing, they returned and made the observation for the second time. Helen could not contradict them, for, once at all events, she had felt the same, and had seen the reliable walls of youth collapse. Panic and emptiness! Panic and emptiness! The goblins were right. Beethoven chose to make all right in the end. . . . the goblins were scattered. He brought back the gusts of splendour, the heroism, the youth, the magnificence of life and death . . . . But the goblins were there. They could return. 38

The movement of the Fifth Symphony epitomises Helen's life. She enjoys 'gusts and splendour' when she is kissed by Paul under the Wych elm outside Howards End, but when Paul and the whole family appears to her to be a fraud, there is "panic and emptiness" in her life and "the reliable walls of youth collapse". Eventually she settles down at Howards End and Forster likes Beethoven 'brought back gusts of splendour', into her life. Similarly whenever Leonard or his wife Jackey appears Margaret is filled with a sense of uneasiness at the footfalls of goblins in the form of odour from the abyss (HE, P.111).

The Schlegel sisters are interested in him because of his genuine aspirations and struggle to rise above the abyss. Though they stand on the "islands" of prosperity, Leonard's desperation evokes sympathy in them. Helen who believed in personal responsibility insists that Henry should give him
a job for his misguided advice to him to leave the Insurance Company where Bast was working, has cost him his job. When she learns that Leonard's wife Jackey was Henry's one time mistress, she is filled with anger. She takes the Bast to Quinton to demand justice for them. But Henry who believed in "each for each" in "the battle of life" advises Helen not to "...take up that sentimental attitude over the poor" (HE, p.179). But Helen is not convinced and in the moment of pity and remorse she surrenders herself to Leonard" for half an hour surprisingly Margaret does little to persuade Henry to do something to alleviate Bast's suffering. As some critics aver, Leonard, like a note in a symphony, passes away and out of the book to satisfy the demands of the plot. He leaves behind a son in charge of Helen to inherit Howards End. In Gransden's view: In their child there lies an economic prophecy as well as a moral hope, the classes mix, the cruel structure breaks down.39

The child, the "Euphorian" as Trilling calls him, as a symbol of "Only connect! Through him the connection is made between classes. The child like Helen and Margaret can play with "hay" and does not suffer from "hay-fever". The house so dear to Ruth who wished to bequeath it to Margaret will eventually come to the child of Leonard and Helen. Thus Trilling's views on Howards End seem prophetic:
Howards End is a novel about England's fate. It is a story of the class war. The war is latent but actual — so actual indeed that a sword is literally drawn and a man is really killed. England herself appears in the novel in palpable form, for the story moves by symbols and not only all its characters but also an elm, a marriage, a symphony, and a Scholar's library stand for things beyond themselves ... It asks the question, "who shall inherit England?" 40

The subconscious sympathies of the author leave little doubt that England shall be inherited by the people like the Schlegels. The question about the real inheritors is raised by the author himself.

Does she belong to those who have moulded her and made her feared by other lands, or to those who have added nothing to her power, but have somehow seen her, seen the whole island at once ....?

If the Wilcoxes, the empire builders, have a run of the country. England will be a poor place to live in because — They have swept into the valley and swept out of it, leaving a little dust and a little money behind.42

Wilcoxes are interested only in the title-deeds of houses. Ruth's deep, passionate attachment for the house was something incomprehensible to them: To them Howards End was a house: they could not know that to her it had been a spirit, for which she sought a spiritual heir.43
Though a kind and steady woman, Ruth was deeply attached to the house and to the elm that overshadowed it. Like the house, Howards End, Ruth like Mrs. Moore in *A Passage to India*, is a presence throughout the book, to criticise the modern forces of flux, "the civilization of luggage".

She reminds one of Shakespeare's "gentle" women, the counters of *All's Well That Ends Well* or an older Imogen. She is "round" in the Forsterian definition in *Aspects of the Novel* and has her own reality. She is a "contemplative" character as defined by E.K. Brown. Trilling calls her "...remarkably - and perhaps surprisingly - successful" when Margaret shows interest in the "Pigs' teeth" in the elm and does not dismiss them like Henry as a "run notion" (p.177), Ruth Wilcox finds her spiritual heir in her. Therefore her wish, pencilled on a piece of paper, that Howards End be given to Margaret, comes as a great shock to the Wilcoxes. The comedy that follows is reminiscent of Jane Austen's comedy in *Sense and Sensibility* in which the distribution of wealth evokes readers' muted laughter and ridicule. In both cases a personal appeal of the deceased person is rejected. The Wilcoxes in *Howards End* and the Dashwoods in Jane Austen's novel are materialistic, and possesses "undeveloped" hearts. The Wilcoxes avoid "the personal note in life" (p.88). Like the Benthamites, Wilcoxes "motto is concentrate". They cannot "notice things"
and hence they cannot "connect". The failure to "connect" results from the Wilcoxes' inability to see something in its totality or in its "wholeness". The phrase "To see life steadily and to see it whole is used by the author as a rhythm, to show the Schlegels' superiority over the Wilcoxes. Matthew Arnold's famous line about Sophocles: 'who saw life steadily and saw it whole' is referred to four times to emphasise the ability or inability to have a clear perspective of things.

Margaret like Ruth Wilcox is aware of the complexity and variety of life. She is able to see a situation from all aspects. This feminine quality, according to James McConkey and Desmond Maccarthy, is the hallmark of Forster's novel and criticism. Forster admires Margaret because unlike Helen she prefers to see life 'whole': It is impossible to see modern life steadily and see it whole, and she had chosen to see it whole. Mr. Wilcoxes saw steadily.45

Henry Wilcoxes, on the other hand, believes in the Benthamite approach to "concentrate" on details and not on wholes. He has the business mind and feels happy on dealing with things separately. This leads to 'obtuseness' and a failure to connect. He doesn't even realise that it is duplicity and double talk to suppress the fact about
the existence of "mews" behind the Wilcox house at Ducie street when Margaret wanted to shift to it, but he protests against them, after marriage, when Margaret wants to live there. The Wilcox manner, Forster says, "... lacked the clearness of vision that is imperative for truth" (p.170). He cannot see the connection between his crime of seducing Jacky Bast and thereby betraying Ruth and the seduction of Helen. In his moral blindness he refuses Margaret permission to spend a night with Helen at Howard's End Forster is very hard on his "goats". Margaret's denunciatory speech to Henry exhorting him to see the connection between his sin and Helen's rings with author's moral convictions.

No more of this! She cried. You shall see the connection if it kills you, Henry! You have had a mistress - I forgave you. My sister has a lover - you drive her from the house. Do you see the connexion? Stupid, hypocritical, cruel - Oh, contemptible! - a man who insults his wife when she's alive and cants with her memory when she's dead. .... No one has ever told what you are - muddled, criminally muddled.46

It is the same problem with almost all Forster's goats, they cannot "see" things, in their wholeness. For Henry and people like him. "Steadiness included all praise". (p.90), whereas Margaret, Helen and even Leonard Bast were clear-seers, in the ranks of Arnold's "children of light". The inability of the Wilcoxes to "see" is also an
inability to "hear", and Forster hints all their inability to "hear" metaphorically:

Charles and his father sometimes disagreed. But they always parted with an increased regard for one another, and each desired no doughtier comrade when it was necessary to voyage for a little past the emotions. So the sailors of Ulysses vovaged past the sirens, having first stopped one another's ears with wool.47

This is the common characteristic of all the "undeveloped "hearts" that the author refers to in his essay. "Notes on the English character" published in Abinger Harvests (1967).

Inspite of the glaring shortcomings of Henry, Margaret, to the shock and surprise of Helen, and of the critics, decides to marry him. Wilfred Stone is of the view that through her "exogamic marriage" to Henry ".... she makes a definite effort to join the prose and the passion"48 She realises fully that Henry has many faults - ".... spiritually, he's not as honest as I am "(p.255).Perhaps the most stringent criticism of the marriage comes from P.R. Leavis. Who says:

Nothing in the exhibition of Margaret's or Henry Wilcox's character makes the marriage credible or acceptable .... We are driven to protest, not so much against the unreality in itself, as against the perversity of intention it expresses ... 49
The marriage is essential to the sociological dimension of the novel, perhaps a victory for the "plot", as Forster mentions in *Aspects of the Novel*. Does the author not compel his character into an acquiescence for the sake of the exigencies of plot? which he criticises in Henry James's novels? Is it the intention of the author to pay "homage" to the practical man of business? Margaret replies to Helen about her marriage.

If Wilcoxes had not worked and died in England for thousands of years, you and I couldn't sit here without having our throats cut. There would be no trains, no ships to carry us literary people about in .... More and more do I refuse to draw my income and sneer at those who guarantee it.50

Forster's sympathetic outlook towards the Wilcoxes led Peter Buyne, like D.H. Lawrence, to incorrectly interpret the author's admiration for the people like Wilcoxes.51 But a careful and close reading would reveal that, like Galsworthy's Forsytes in *The Man of Property*, they forfeit Forster's sympathy. Jolyon's view of the Forsytes echoes Margaret's:

"You talk of them", says Bossiney, "as if they were half England". "They are", repeats Jolyon, "half England, and the better half, too .... It's their wealth and security that makes everything possible; makes your art possible, make literature, science, even religion possible ." 52
Margaret, without any illusion about the faults of Henry marries him, because the author wishes to prove a point. The point is that the inner life could remain incomplete without its acceptance of the outer. If Helen rejects Wilcoxism as hostile to the life of the spirit, Margaret accepts its role in the society and tries to come to terms with it: She tells Helen to accept the differences among people and develop what she possesses:

It is only that people are far more different than is pretended. All over the world men and women are worrying because they cannot develop as they are supposed to develop. Don't fret yourself, Helen. Develop what you have. 53

Margaret is emancipated, candid about money matters and charitable towards sexual matters. In the beginning of the novel she is portrayed as talkative and impulsive. She, Helen and their brother, born of a German father, live alone, and remind readers of Virginia Venesa, and Thobby. Margaret wants their house to remain "feminine" though not "effeminate". Like Ruth, she loves "folklove and all festering superstitions" (p.68). Perhaps it is this affinity between them that makes Ruth make up her mind to appoint her as her spiritual heir; She believes in the supernatural like Ruth, and like Ruth she also loves the countryside and its peaceful and fertilizing rhythms. She
hates the creed of hurry of the Wilcoxes which is symbolised by their dedication to motor cars. Houses, according to her, have their own life and significance. On her first visit to the Wilcoxes' house Howards End, she falls in love with it. She is fascinated by the pigs' teeth stuck up in it and the hay grown in the fields. Miss Avery, the housekeeper prophesies that she will come to live in Howards End. In a way one of the "rhythms" of the novel is Margaret's movement from the city towards the countryside and her residence in the house when Ruth tells her that there is nothing to get up for in London, Margaret feels scandalised. (p.67) Like the young and rich women of the age she participates in all the autumnal exhibitions musical concerts and debating societies. But in time she wakes up to the influence of Ruth which bits deeper with the passage of time. Ruth is described by the author thus:

She seemed to belong not to the young people and their motor, but to the house, and to the tree that overshadowed it. One knew that she worshipped the past, and that instinctive wisdom the past can alone bestow had descended upon her.54.

Margaret perceives a sort of greatness in Ruth though she was not intellectual. One finds her out of place in her own family of the Wilcoxes. Forster writes about Ruth that "....she and daily life were out of focus: One or the other must show blurred"(p.73) Descendant of a quacker "family, she effortlessly brings about peace and reconciliation among the warring people. She is a "shadowy" woman
"a wisp of hay, a flower" (p.71) and would be alarmed by "Clever talk". If such persons as Margaret and her friends, the members of the New English Art club. Ruth's character is a complex one. She is more than "sound" because she is "... hearer the line that divides daily life from a life that may be of greater importance" (P.73) There is a mysteriousness about Ruth which is conveyed by the word "Shadowy". She takes very little part in the human drama of the novel. The motif of hay is connected with her, a motif that suggests that essentially she belongs to the countryside. Critics have experienced a great deal of difficulty to accept Ruth as the centre of both realistic and symbolic meanings. But Margaret is able to intuit her significance:

She knows everything, she is everything. She is the house, and the tree that leans over it. I cannot believe that knowledge such as hers will perish with knowledge such as mine. She knew about realities. She knew when people were in love, though she was not in the room. I don't doubt that she knew when Henry deceived her.

Like the house, she is a symbol of harmony though she is unable to communicate it to others. She is, in the words of Peter Buwa, "... an elemental character ..." gifted with an intuitive power to see "straight through perplexities and complications". M.L. Raina finds her
unconvincing because "... she is not involved in the total family life at a human and intimate level." The difficulty stems from Forster's wish to make his characters take part in human drama and at the same time to symbolise something visionary which they, like Margaret cannot "phrase". Virginia Woolf complains that we must accept such characters as Ruth and Mrs. Moore as ordinary people as well as sibyls, or the mediators between the mimetic and the visionary planes. Forster confounds the readers' uneasiness by refusing symbolic possibilities in a character, in an interview to Angus Wilson:

**Question:** Would you admit to there being any symbolism in your novels? Lionel Trilling rather seems to imply that there is symbolism, that is distinct from allegory or parable. "Mrs. Moore", he says, "will act with bad temper to Adela, but her action will somehow have a good echo ..."

**Forster:** I didn't think of that.

Ruth like Mrs. Moore, has a good echo after her exit from the novel. She, through the house, helps Margaret perceive and communicate a sense of human "connection" among the characters, Molly-coddles and the Redbloody (G. L. Dickinson's distinction between persons like the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes), between the inner and the outer life. Margaret finally settles down at Howard's End to fulfil Ruth's wish. Ruth's apotheosis is implied through
the reference to the freshly cut hay. Helen and Hetty, seemingly irreconcilable persons, come to like each other and make their peace.

But the "red rust" of London is encroaching upon rural England. Fertile lands are being commandeered by the planning authorities for building satellite towns (Two cheers for Democracy p.70)

Inclined to tears, as it were, Helen tells Margaret, "Life's going to be melted down, all over the world" (p.316). Their house, like Oniton, Purbeck & Downs, was a survival to be swept over by industrialisation and urbanisation. Margaret, perhaps speaking for her author and for persons like D.H. Lawrence, wishes it otherwise. She feels that somehow the onrushing tide might be stemmed, "one's hope was in the weakness of logic. (p.316). She assures herself more than Helen why she says:

This craze for motion has only set in during the last hundred years. It may be followed by a civilisation that won't be a movement, because it will rest on the earth .... I feel that our house is the future as well as the past.58

One returns to the house, Howards End, again as one begins the reading of the novel with Howard's End. Softly, beautifully, majestically the refrain waxes and wanes and during four years of the human drama that is played out with
it as the backdrop, the house witnesses people entering and leaving it. Life happy and life sad runs its course and all events converge on and fan out from this centre, as the episodes point to and are pointed out by the Marabars caves in \textit{A Passage to India}. The structure of the novel rises like a cathedral. In the words of R.A. Scott-James, "The novel rises like a piece of architecture full grown before us". About the house he adds:

\begin{quote}
It is always there as a soft refrain which comes back and back amid a hundred new situations. This house itself is a sort of symbol of every-
thing in England, old and new, changeless, yet amid flux. 59
\end{quote}
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