CHAPTER I
THE CONCEPT OF UTOPIA - EREWHON

The Introductory Chapter, as we have seen, has offered a brief outline of Butler's biography and of his writings in a chronological order. An attempt has been made to link up Butler with his age by sketching out the social ferment taking place in the early and late Victorian Period. In the background of tracing the social preoccupation of some leading and representative thinkers of the period Butler's intellectual quest which is my chief concern in this dissertation has been outlined. Samuel Butler, a late Victorian writer, was a man of varied interests and his writings, though mainly of biological interest with special emphasis on the relation between science and Christianity, are of diverse nature - starting from the theme of Utopia to the Knotty problem of authorship of the Iliad and the Odyssey. But his chief creative works are three - Erewhon, The Way of All Flesh and Erewhon Revisited and, as already stated in the Introductory Chapter, I shall confine my survey to these three chief literary works. But any attempt to sketch Butler's intellectual quest necessitates the presentation of the growth and gradual development of his intellectual life unfolded in his works which are not all literary writings in the strict sense of the term. But without a nodding acquaintance with Butler's non-literary and minor literary works no comprehensive evaluation of his intellectual quest, as revealed
in his major literary works, is neither possible nor practicable. So his works are discussed chronologically with stress on the three major literary works and with cursory look into other writings.

Section - I. Earlier Writings

Butler's earliest writing on English Composition and Other Matters appeared in print in the first number of The Eagle, a Magazine run and edited by the members of St. John's College, Cambridge. In this composition, a young undergraduate's freshness and originality of thinking find clear expression and the rules laid down for a young writer are scrupulously followed by Butler himself in his own writings. Sincerity, candour and earnestness are firmly advocated even in this early work. Malcolm Muggeridge writes on this essay:

"It shows how early his own style and essential attitude to life became formed, his curious literalness, distrust of rules, the directness of his thought and occasional breakdown into naivete and sentimentality. What he says in this essay - that there are no rules for anything that the 'greatest masters in language whether prose or verse, in painting, music, architecture .... have been men whose intuitive perception led them to right practice', - is what he kept on saying in one form or another all the rest of his life." 1

Among these earlier Cambridge writings - two pieces - *Prospectus of the Great Society* and *Powers* are worthy of notice. Both these compositions, steeped in irony and satire, foreshadowed the writer of *Erewhon*. The first writing proposes to investigate into the means of "producing, fostering and invigorating strife of all kinds, whereby the society of man will be profited much." The other essay entitled *Powers* deals with the advice of a father to the son for attaining power and the means for acquiring it is to cultivate - love of self, love of show, love of sound, reserve, openness and distrust. The future critic of life is finely foreshadowed in this early writing, which steeped in irony, exhibits the young undergraduate's serious preoccupation with life.

On September 30, 1859, Butler set sail for Cantlebury Settlement in New Zealand and from 1860 to 1864 he wrote a few articles for a New Zealand Magazine named *The Press* and among these articles, the principal ones were: *Darwin on the Origin of Species*, a defence in dialogue form of the *Origin of Species*, and a brilliant application of the laws of evolution to machinery entitled *Darwin Among the Machines*. A character called 'F', a staunch Darwinian, advocates the cause of Darwinism refuting all the charges of another character called 'C' who opposes Darwinism. Butler himself speaks through 'F' who says - "I believe in Christianity and I believe in Darwin."  

1. *A First Year in Cantlebury Settlement and Other Early Essays* - Samuel Butler, p. 31  
2. Ibid, p. 193
This attempt at reconciling science and religion is thoroughly Butlerian. Both are accepted as truths, hence they must be reconcilable. No artificial grafting or pruning is advocated. Difficulties in the way of reconciling religion with science must be clearly stated and explained and this fair dealing will bring them together. In the second essay - *Darwin Among the Machines*, Butler himself states the subject matter of the essay - "We find ourselves almost awestruck at the fast development of the mechanical World, at the gigantic strides with which it has advanced in comparison with the slow progress of the animal and vegetable Kingdom." The remedy of a war to the death by man on fast evolving machines is playfully suggested by Butler. This whimsical essay was incorporated in *Erewhon* later on and it effectively brings out Butler's serious concern with the future of mankind. The dialectical process of viewing the problems of life, a confirmed habit of Butler to arrive at truth, is clearly present even in these earlier writings on evolution. His argument advanced in *Darwin Among Machines* is

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1. Butler writes in his *Note Books on Science and Theology* -
"We should endow neither; we should treat them as we treat conservatism and liberalism, encouraging both, so that they may keep watch upon one another, and letting them go in and out of power with the popular vote concerning them."


countered in another essay called *Lucubratio Ebra*. His dialogue shows him as an unflinching advocate of Darwinism, his *Darwin Among Machine* is a satire of it and *Lucubratio Ebra* again upholds the cause of Darwinism. In the third writing Butler dispels the fear that machine will supplant man and writes—"every fresh invention is to be considered as an additional member of the resources of the human body." The entire controversy has been skilfully summed up in another writing—*The Mechanical Creation*, 1st July, 1865. This attitude to machines may be of two types—(a) the mechanical kingdom as the commencement of a new phase of life, a phase as distinct from any that have preceded it as the animal from the vegetable kingdom; (b) machines may be regarded as the extra-corporaneous members of the machinate mammal, man. The essay ends with a humorous rejoinder that the subjugation of the human race to the fast flourishing machines is no problem, because man as the lover of the amenities of life will prefer this subjugation in exchange of the amenities provided by the machines.

These earlier writings on Darwinism bear his serious philosophic quest in the problems of life. Further they contain Butler's favourite method of arriving at truth by judging a

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thing from a normal angle and simultaneously from an inver-
ted angle.

A First Year in Cantlebury Settlement (1863) was a colle-
cction of his letters written to his family from New Zealand. It was edited and printed by his father much to his dissatis-
faction. He professed to think poorly of it. He could not write freely to the members of his family, nor had he yet shed his Cambridge skein and for all these in later life he found the word 'prig' written large over the book and never liked it.

From the standpoint of tracing Butler's intellectual quest this book is not very helpful. On board the ship bound for Cantlebury Settlement he consecrated his break with Langer by omitting to say his prayers. This sudden break with accept-
ed religious practice was an expression of his repressed revolt against his father whom he feared and hated.

In 1865 Butler published anonymously a pamphlet—Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As Given by the four Evangelists and this pamphlet also is another early evidence of his habit of viewing a problem from an uncommon angle. In it Butler points out inconsistencies in different Gospel accounts and attempts to provide a plausible explanation of Christ's resurrection. This writing, except providing encour-
agement to free-thinking even in the field of cherished and con-
secrated convictions, contains an important aspect of Butler's
intellectual quest. From an examination of these earlier pamphlets I now pass on to a consideration of Erewhon, a major literary writing of Butler.

Section II

The Concept of Utopia—Erewhon

In his Preface to the Revised Edition of Erewhon, published on August 7, 1901, Butler himself writes about the genesis of Erewhon and states that the "first part of Erewhon written was an article headed Darwin Among the Machines, and signed Callarius"¹ Lucubratis Ebra, another article published in New Zealand, upholding the cause of Darwinism "was the basis of p.p. 270–274 of"² Erewhon. The 'World of the Unborn' was written in a preliminary form and published "in some London Paper."³ At the suggestion of the late Sir F.N.Ercome, a friend of his, Butler attempted to "string them together into a book."⁴ Butler himself criticised Erewhon—"In Erewhon there was hardly any story, and little attempt to give life and individuality to the characters."⁵ "It was a mere peg on which to hang anything that I had a mind to say."⁶

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) – Samuel Butler, Preface, p. xi
2. Ibid, p. xi
3. Ibid, p. xii
4. Ibid, p. xiii
5. Ibid, pp.xv-xvi
The dream of Utopia is the game of 'Let's Pretend' and it has always provided a refuge from the pressure of real life. The term Utopia, as generally used, refers to those ideal states which are impossible of realization. They are peopled by human beings uninfluenced by personal jealousies or individual passions. Their life is organized without regard for the complexities and varieties of real society and this standard of life is fixed upon what the writer thinks ought to be, rather than upon the collective experience of mankind. More broadly speaking, however, the term need not be confined to those fantastic pictures of impossible societies or romantic accounts of fictitious states. But the term may be applied to any social, intellectual or political scheme which is impracticable at present, but may be practicable in the future.

Utopias have made their appearance during periods of social and political unrest. Generally they come into existence

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1. Utopia - Lit the Land of No place, from Gr. on, not, and topos, a place. It was a term invented by Sir Thomas More, and applied to an imaginary island in his celebrated work (called also Utopia) as enjoying the utmost perfection in laws, politics & c, as contrasted with the defects of those which then existed. Hence - A place or state of ideal perfection.

- The Imperial Dictionary of the English Language.
at a time when the existing social set-up is not propitious for open criticism of its defects and shortcomings and when the expected breakthrough is not in keeping with the occurrence of actual facts. Human nature, constitutionally idealistic, is never satisfied with things as they are and always finds pleasure in things as they ought to be.

The Republic of Plato is the earliest Utopia in which a vision of ideal commonwealth is recorded. Plato's purpose behind framing this ideal of Utopia was a reformation of the Athenian society of his own day. The Republic was written during the dark days in the history of Athens. Living in a period of degeneration after the Peloponnesian War, and shrinking from the government responsible for the death of his beloved master, Socrates, Plato created his The Republic. The Middle Ages, with their fixed institutions, their blind faith and their acceptance of authority were not a suitable seed ground for the growth of Utopian schemes. But in the period following the Middle Ages men woke up to the fact that government had become corrupt and tyrannical, and social relations unjust and immoral. This awakening led men to find comfort and satisfaction in casting into romantic ideal form their conception of what society ought to be. Examples of such Utopias can be found in the works of 16th Century writers, who, prompted by the new spirit of enquiry, constructed ideal conditions that should eliminate the
contemporary evils. More's *Utopia* (1516) presents the lofty ideals of the Oxford reformers and survives as the greatest literary effort of the time. More's book contains not only a picture of ideal community, but a severe indictment of the disorders attending the great social and economic transformation of England from an agricultural to an industrial and commercial state.

The Renaissance stimulated the spirit of enquiry, moved away from the philosophy of Aristotle and led men to study the operation of nature in order to discover the fundamental principle underlying the constitution of the universe. This spirit produced philosophical and intellectual concepts of Utopias based on contemporary ideas of science. Bacon in his *New Atlantis*, written before 1617 and published in 1627, exhibited a state of which the most striking feature was a college instituted for the interpretation of great and marvellous works for the benefit of man. The revolutionary crisis in Bacon's Utopia is basically philosophical. Like Sir Thomas More, Bacon did not concern himself with the economic and social conditions of his time. He felt the need of a fundamental reform of natural philosophy. Some passengers on board a ship, caught in a storm and lost in the wilderness, arrived at an unexplored island called New Atlantis, inhabited by a nation called Bensalem, were given warm and hospitable reception and were introduced to an institute, named Salomon's House, the aim of which was to
find out "the true nature of all things."¹ A Father of
Salomon's House narrated the end of their institute - "The end
of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret
notions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human
empire, to the effection of all things possible."² In this
Utopian vision Bacon gave a list of experiments and observa­
tions, which he hoped would increase knowledge, ameliorate the
conditions of life, improve the physical well-being of man, and
enlarge the bounds of the human empire. In matters of medicine,
surgery, meteorology, food and mechanical contrivances he anti­
cipated many of the improvements of later times. Bacon's vision
of Salomon's House suggested the foundation and programme of
the Royal Society in England and of similar societies abroad.
But Bacon's book as a Utopia lacks the gift of romance which is
abundantly present in More's Utopia.

The Utopian vision which Shakespeare gave expression to
in the speech of Gonzalo in Act II, Sci, of The Tempest is in
tune with the idealistic vision of pritive Utopia which is a
common feature of the 17th Century literature. This picture of
primitive agrarianism is a reaction against the intriguing
courtlife of the Elizabethan Period, bubbling with political
rivalry and competition. All things in this ideal commonwealth

¹ New Atlantis in Famous Utopias - Bacon, p. 252
² Ibid, p. 263
would be executed "by contraries"¹ and no kind of "traffic"² would be admitted, magistrate should cease to exist.

"Letters should not be known: riches, poverty, And use of service - none: contract, succession, Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard - none: No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil: No occupation, all men idle, all: And women too, but innocent and pure: No Sovereignty - "

[The Tempest, Cambridge, 1948, LL 149 - 155]

The innocent dwellers of this ideal commonwealth would be fed by nature which would yield all the necessities of life abundantly and spontaneously -

"All things in common nature should produce Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony, Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine, Would I not have: but nature should bring forth, Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance, To feed my innocent people."

[The Tempest, Cambridge, 1948, LL 158 - 163]

During the 18th Century the concept of primitivistic Utopia, current in the earlier century, is transposed in Swift's Gulliver's Travels which presents the picture of a highly

2. Ibid, p. 151
institutionalised society. Gulliver, a representative and above-the average-man, is carried to four places and these journeys afford Swift opportunity of criticising the drawbacks and short-comings of human society. The Lilliputian principle of reward and punishment, their attachment of importance to good morals than to great activities, their severe attitude to ingratitude and theft are superior to those current in England. The sharpness of the satire intensifies in the second voyage in which a legislator is satirized-
"ignorance, idleness and vice are the proper ingredients for qualifying a legislator". The history of Europe is described as "a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, banishments, the very worst effects that avarice, faction, hypocrisy, perfidiousness, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice or ambition could produce". The philosophers, mathematical over-preoccupation, credulity in astrological faith, scientific explorers, ineffectual researchers, short memory of ministers, political strife etc. are severely castigated in the third voyage. Swift's satirical flair reaches the climax in the account of the fourth voyage. Man is presented as a Yahoo, an "abominable animal".

2. Ibid, p. 139
3. Ibid, p. 244
"detestable"\textsuperscript{1}, full of "cunning"\textsuperscript{2} and "the strongest disposition to mischief"\textsuperscript{3} and "the most unteachable of all brutes"\textsuperscript{4}. They are "cunning, malicious, treacherous and revengeful"\textsuperscript{5}. The society of the Houyhnhnms is particularly organised and after this last journey Gulliver develops an aversion to everything at home. With the help of the arsenal of satire, Swift in this book castigates contemporary society and in a negative manner projects his vision of what should be. The defects of the existing European society have been subjected by Swift to censure, sometime mildly, sometime severely. Through a process of systematic negations Swift's positive vision of an ideal society emerges.

Among the romantics, Shelley with a passion for reforming the world, stretched his imaginative vision to an idea of the millennium in which all the contemporary problems of society stand resolved. Shelley's Utopian vision, tinged with an idealistic abstraction, finds expression in \textit{Prometheus Unbound} and \textit{Hellas}. In conceiving Prometheus as an embodiment of enfranchised liberty Shelley held the primary necessity of love in effecting a revolution. Suffering Prometheus, standing

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] \textit{Gulliver's Travels} - Swift (Everyman's Ed, 1946), p. 245
\item[2.] Ibid, p. 250
\item[3.] Ibid
\item[4.] Ibid
\item[5.] Ibid, p. 284
\end{itemize}
for suffering humanity under the heels of oppression in the
form of Jupiter, is stimulated by Panthea, a spirit of faith.
In Act II, Sc IV, following the fall of tyrant Jupiter the
state of ideal human society is delineated by the spirit of
Hours. In this blissful state love will penetrate everything
and will shed her lustre and men will work in a spirit of self-
respecting brother-hood. Hate, disdain, fear, self-love, self-
contempt have no room in this regenerated humanity. Pride,
jealousy, envy and shame will no longer exist. The speech of
Demagorgon in Act IV, LL 554 - 578, concluding the drama, brings
out the bliss of this regenerated world. But this speech points
out that evil is not annulled thoroughly, it is suspended only
temporarily. The evil or the fear of the recurrence of the evil
is necessary to create goodness. Demagorgon gives an idea of
the highest type of glory - "to love and bear"¹, to forgive
great wrongs, to stand against a tyrant, seemingly all powerful.

Hellas, a lyrical drama, written in 1821 and published in
1822, hails the Greek insurgence against the Muslim oppression
and subjugation and champions the cause of the rejuvenation of
Greek civilisation and culture for the regeneration of the modern
society. In the Preface to Hellas Shelley writes - "I have

¹ Prometheus Unbound -
The Poetical Works of P.B. Shelley,
Vol. I, (1870), Act IV, p. 377
therefore contended myself with exhibiting a series of lyric pictures, and with having wrought upon the curtains of futurity, which falls upon the unfinished scene, such figures of indistinct and visionary delineation as suggested the final triumph of the Greek cause, as a portion of the cause of civilization and social environment. The drama presents the tyrant Turkish ruler, Mahmood, stricken with his own conscience and giving out signs of inner decay. The imminent fall of Islam and the rise of new and independent Greece are announced:

"The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return
The earth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn."

The latter half of the 19th century was an age of sweeping changes which from the standpoint of gross, facile optimism held the promise of ushering in an era of uninterrupted progress. The obverse of this phenomenon was retrogressive and reversible. This retrogressive aspect of scientific explorations is mirrored in Tennyson's vision of the future expressed in *Locksley Hall*. Tennyson probed the future and visualised the future world and his vision was chiefly based on science and increasing commercialism.

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the World, and all the wonder that would be:
Saw the heavens fill with commerce argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales:
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;”

Tennyson further believed that “war-drum” would not throb always, sanity of the people would prevail—

"In Parliament of man, the Federation of the World,
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law."

All these dallyings with imagination prophetically turned true. Tennyson foretold the coming of aeroplane, of aerial warfare, the world war, the formation of an international federation for peace.

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2. Ibid, p. 192
3. Ibid
The last quarter of the 19th Century in England saw the growth of a new form of trade—unionism. The successful strike of the London dock labourers led to the foundation of Dockers' Union. This new unionism grew apace and tended towards state socialism and finally ended in the formation of the labour party. This socialistic preoccupation converted William Morris from the aesthetic pursuits to socialistic thinking and News From Nowhere is a record of Morris's dream about a new order of society based on socialistic ideas. In the Nowhere of Morris the parliament will cease to exist. The old system of education based on "systematised robbery" no longer functions. Monetary transaction is regarded here as "extinct commercial morality." Idleness here is regarded as a disease and the incentive of work in the present civilization is "the reward of creation." Production will be need-based, not profit-oriented. People will choose work suiting their individual temperaments. Men and women will enjoy equal and uniform social rights and women will not be regarded as male property. Slums will disappear. This Utopian society is founded upon fellow-feeling, not on the principle of "robbing each other." The abolition of private property will do away

1. News From Nowhere
   In (Famous Utopias, Ed. Charles Andrews) New York p. 64
2. Ibid, p. 37
3. Ibid, p. 91
4. Ibid, p. 80
with the system of framing laws and in Nowhere there will be no criminals. All over the world rivalry and contention will disappear. But Morris, though a believer in socialism, had no faith in catastrophic communism, and believed the change from the present state in a gradual manner. He desired to effect a reform which, he held, lay in the elevation of the class and in humanising the conditions of life. Morris's crusade against capitalism is sincere, but the means of achieving the basis of socialism painted here is rudimentary in shape and furthest removed from material means of realization. This theoretical framework of the book with excessive emphasis on love-making led P. N. Furbank to write about News From Nowhere — "The feature most important about the world of Morris's book is its deliberate juvenility". \(^1\) This socialistic Utopia of Morris constitutes a class by itself. The ideal society portrayed here, based on brotherly love, is dominated by a kind of Christian socialism without religion.

Section III Erewhon

Erewhon, a major literary work of Butler, published in 1872, contains Butler's concept of Nowhere. In his Preface to the Revised Edition of Erewhon on August 7, 1901, Butler himself

\(^1\) Samuel Butler - P. N. Furbank, 1971, p. 95
said about *Erewhon* - "There is no central idea underlying *Erewhon*" and further wrote - "In *Erewhon* there was hardly any story and little attempt to give life and individuality to the characters ..." This absence of a systematic plot to bear the burden of a pervasive satire in the book robs much of the edge and incisiveness of its satiric purpose. But the book was warmly hailed by the reading public because it carried the "sound of a new voice, and of an unknown voice"; because it provided a satire on the contemporary situation in an entertaining Utopian framework, a form resuscitated after a long interval and because of its anonymous publication (the reading public was left to wild guesses about its author whom they expected to be a celebrated writer). P.N. Furbank on his book on Butler calls *Erewhon* - "the most self-sufficient of Butler's Books" and "the most completely satisfactory one". He attributes the cause of Butler's success in *Erewhon* to

1. *Erewhon* - Samuel Butler, Preface p. xv
2. *Ibid*, pp. xv - xvi
3. Preface to (the Revised Ed, 1901) *Erewhon* - Samuel Butler, p. xiv
5. *Ibid*
"a savage strength," derived from "the special power that he derived from that life-and-death struggle which seems to have taken place in his own nature as a young man." But he is not ready "to sustain Butler as a rival of Swift" and about the "life-and-death struggle" which Malcolm Muggeridge found out in Butler, Furbank is half-sceptical.

Butler turned to the concept of Utopia for a number of reasons. Erewhon was a peg devised by him to hang his unfledged ideas on. This dream vision afforded him greater liberty of recording his ideas. Butler's attitude to life was basically critical and this critical approach to life found incisive expression through his satire and irony which function diabolically in a Utopian field. Moreover, this Utopian framework was devised by a budding writer in the face of respectability and complacency of an age which claimed egregiously of a social progress without any parallel.

In 1871 Butler "was thirty-four years old, brimming over with ideas, dissatisfaction and protests, but as yet he had done nothing." At Venice he met an elderly Russian lady who

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2. Ibid, pp. 10-11
3. Ibid, p. 8
4. Ibid, pp. 10-11
5. Samuel Butler - A Mid-Victorian Modern (Ed. 1972) Clara Stillman, p. 82
advised him to stop looking into others' works, but to do something for himself. This advice pushed him into creative life. The slow progress of his painting was yielding a feeling of frustration and his inner creative urge, provoked by the lady's suggestion, stimulated by the feeling of frustration, led Butler to the writing of Erewhon, a satiric and philosophic phantasy. He based Erewhon in part of the articles he had contributed to New Zealand and English journals. Erewhon appeared in 1872 anonymously and received enthusiastic reviews. Butler himself wrote - "I do not doubt that Erewhon owed its success in great measure to its having appeared anonymously". The book was received very warmly by the reading public and it met with a commercial success, a singular incident in Butler's literary career. The disclosure of his authorship suddenly robbed the book of its popularity. The idol-worshipping victorian people lost interest in a writing by an unknown writer. The sudden decline of the popularity of Erewhon was also largely due to Butler's sudden emergence as a polemical figure - both in the field of religion and science.

Malcolm Muggeridge in his book on Butler's attempts to analyse the cause making Erewhon an instant success and views

1. Note Books of Samuel Butler - (Ed. Keynes & Hill, 1951), p. 188
it representing "his intellectual pilgrimage". "Erewhon contains most of the ideas that Butler spent his life arranging and rearranging. These are in their "freshest and leastlaboured form. Erewhon is also free from his later morality - preoccupation, as it records a "pleasant transitional stage in his life.

Miss Savage, a friend and literary inspirer of Butler, wrote on Erewhon - "It is enough to say that the lash of the author's satire falls fiercely on many of our social and religious hypocrisies and unrealities. She found in the book some satiric qualities which she thought would make Moliere writhe with envy. Correctly she discerned Butler in it in advance of his time in many of his ideas. The public was induced to swallow his advanced ideas by his wit - a recipe afterwards adopted by Bernard Shaw, who always acknowledged his great indebtedness to Butler.

Butler's usual method of approaching a problem was to view it first from an ordinary angle and then from an inverted

1. The Earnest Atheist (1971), Malcolm Muggeridge, p. 208
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. The Earnest Atheist (1971), Malcolm Muggeridge, p. 206
angle. J.F. Harris in his book on Butler writes - "it was Butler's delight to be turning things inside out, and examining them from a new point of view, which though an absurd one, may contain valuable guidance in real life."¹ He loved to turn familiar things inside out, so as to show the preposterousness of much that we accept as rational. He considered the Erewhonian world as ours, and in many features more absurd.

Erewhon is Nowhere reversed. In this land of Nowhere common English names are presented in an inverted order. Nosnibor, Yram and Senoj are the inverted versions of common English names - Robinson, Mary and Jones. The hero of this Utopia - Thomas Higgs accidentally explores the country of Erewhon inhabited by people whose ways bear a striking dream-like similarity with the ways of the English men. Clara

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1. Samuel Butler Author of Erewhon: 
The Man & His Work (1916) - J.F. Harris, p. 75
Stillman expresses this strange amalgamation superbly -

"Here fact and circumstance, premise and conclusion, spirit and letter perform strange convolutions, like a dance of atoms, separating and recombining into shapes of Kaleidoscopic richness. For everything in Erewhon is reminiscent of something known but just a little different - even the animals and plants, the customs and implements in daily use, the concepts which underlie Erewhonian institutions ..... Paradox and truth join hands, change places, becomes indistinguishable, as pattern is woven of what is and what should be, intricate in detail, yet clear in structure and design".1

The country of Erewhon or Nowhere is a satiric replica of the 19th Century England nominally ruled by the Anglican Church (the Musical Banks), but actually dominated by a worship of conventionality and respectability (Ydgrunism standing for Grundyism) and by a blind acceptance of a false system of education (the colleges of Unreason). Butler wished to attack the institutions and opinions which he considered stupid and evil in late 19th Century England, and this he did by devising parallel or similar institutions and opinions for Erewhon.

The Musical Banks in Erewhon occupied a position of great importance. These were buildings of great splendour, at least one being found in every town. They differed from ordinary

1. Samuel Butler A Mid-Victorian Modern - (1972)
Clara Stillman, pp. 86-87
banks in several particulars - "they have two distinct currencies, each under the control of its own banks and mercantile codes."¹ The currency in which they "had no direct commercial value in the outside world."² Most citizens of Erewhon "who wished to be considered respectable, kept a larger or smaller balance at these banks."³ People (especially if they were ladies) liked to be seen doing business there at least once a week. But in "commercial panics and times of general distress, the people as a mass did not so much as even think of turning to these banks."⁴ Higgs was greatly moved by the dignity, ambiguity, and splendour of these banks, and by the splendid music which accompanied all the business they did. The clerks and officers working in these banks "lacked, with few exceptions, the true Erewhonian frankness"⁵ and upon their faces "a cramped expression"⁶ could be discerned. The profession of the cashier "was a career from which retreat was virtually impossible, and into which young men were generally induced to enter before they could be reasonably expected, considered their training to have formed any opinions of their own."⁷

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 147
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, p. 154
5. Ibid, p. 157
6. Ibid
7. Ibid, p. 159
People "would talk as though all currency save that of the Musical Banks should be abolished; and yet they knew perfectly well that even the cashiers themselves hardly used the Musical Bank money more than other people." Enterprising managers, however, were doing their best to attract custom.

The whole account is a severe satire on the religious practice current in late 19th Century England. Anglicanism dominating the British Church in late 19th Century has lost its inner spirit and the ritual of lip-dip interest is shown to it as a duty only - "their professed faith had no great hold upon them." Mrs. Nosnibor, the hostess of Higgs, spoke eloquently defending the existence of and expounding the utility of the Musical Banks, but "her manner carried no conviction" and Higgs saw "signs of general indifference to those banks that were not to be mistaken." In normal conditions the show of spiritual life is retained, but in economic crisis this formal allegiance to the Church, inspite of the best efforts of the ecclesiastical personnel, gives way to material pursuits. The satire is obvious in the lines where Higgs is

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 158
2. Ibid, p. 174
3. Ibid, p. 154
4. Ibid
made to say - "the strongest thing of all was that these very people would at times make fun in small ways of the whole system."1

The presentation of the profession of the straighteners (the name itself is ironical) also is fraught with a severe satire on the Christian practice of confession to ecclesiastical persons. These straighteners, not concerned with physical ailments, were occupied with the moral ailments of people. They were the healers of ailing morality, but personally they themselves were traffickers in the same "vices."

"The student for the profession of straightener is required to set apart for the practice of each vice in turn, as a religious duty."2 Priestcraft, its hypocrisy and moral pretensions have been directly attacked here.

Erewhonian ideas on religion, according to Higgs, was somewhat primitive. They had idols, priests, and temples, but their worship was merely formal and perfunctory - "there was a discrepancy between their professed and actual belief."3 Their religion was something mysterious - something which was hardly ever referred to openly, but which nevertheless exercised a profound influence on everything they did. This was the

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 156
2. Ibid, p. 107
3. Ibid, p. 168
worship of the Goddess Ydgrun (inverted form of Grundy), symbolising British Respectability and Conformity. The Erewhonians "seldom spoke of Ydgrun, or even alluded to her, but would never run counter to her dictates without ample reason for doing so." Higgs said two types of Ydgrunism — "high Ydgrunites" and "low Ydgrunities". Low Ydgrunism implies a slavish, often hypocritical submission to skin-deep conventions. High Ydgrunites, the best of the Erewhonians, had no need of religion at all and formed the elite who were manly, young, generous, unaffected by error or paradox. They are Butler's heroes.

Through the presentation of the Erewhonian system of education teaching Hypothetical Language in the colleges of Unreason Butler has satirised the Victorian system of education. The Erewhonian colleges of Unreason were entrusted with the duty of the suppressing any kind of originality. Higgs says — "I heard of his (Prof. of Wordly Wisdom) having plucked one poor fellow for want of sufficient vagueness in his saving clauses paper." The professional scientists have been

2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, p. 224
subjected to severe satire in the passage - "Another was sent down for having written on a scientific subject without having made free use of the words 'carefully', 'patiently' and 'earnestly'."¹ The British habit of steering the middle course has been bitterly satirised in these lines - "The art of sitting gracefully on a fence has never, I should think, been brought to greater perfection than at the Erewhonian colleges of Unreason."² The students of the colleges of Unreason caught the disease of the fear - of - giving - themselves away."³ and Higgs "found it difficult to get definite opinions from any of them, except on such subjects as the weather, eating and drinking, holiday excursions, or games of skill."⁴ The dig at British national habit in these passages is obvious. The comment of Higgs on the Erewhonian system of education - "it is better for a country that its seats of learning should do more to suppress mental growth than to encourage it"⁵ - is an explicit satire on the British system of education current in the second half of the nineteenth Century.

¹ Erewhon (Ed.1924) - Samuel Butler, p. 224
² Ibid, pp. 230-231
³ Ibid, p. 231
⁴ Ibid, p. 230
⁵ Ibid, p. 227
In the chapter entitled "Books of the Machines" Butler, inspite of his vehement protest of not attacking Darwin, satirizes Darwinism. Higgs, the hero of Erewhon, came to learn that all kinds of machines were regarded as evil, and banned in Erewhon as a result of an agitation against machines. This revolt against mechanical tyranny resulted in the destruction of all existing machines in Erewhon. Higg's carrying a watch was eyed with suspicion by the Erewhonians. But some appliances were saved because the Professors of Inconsistency and Evasion (another satire on the Victorian academicians) failed to carry the new principles to their legitimate conclusion. The Darwinian theory of the Survival of the Fittest has been parodied here. Natural selection, i.e. the mechanical operation of external circumstance on living organism, is shown at work in man's deliberate selection of better and still better machines. Butler hints here the purposive impulse bringing about evolution. "Where does consciousness begin, and where end?"¹ - this statement attributed to an Erewhonian writer with a humorous purpose became Butler's serious concern in Luck, or Cunning ?, his last writing on evolution. His later theory of heredity is hinted clearly in the lines - "The assurance that the future is no arbitrary and changeable thing, but that like futures will invariably

¹. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 237
follow like presents, is the groundwork on which we lay all our plans - the faith on which we do every conscious action of our lives. The context of the lines is ironical, but the idea expressed here is serious and this interweaving of levity and seriousness brings out the relevance of P.N. Furbank's comment on Butler that he "was so persistent worrier of ideas."  

In Erewhon anyone with an income of over twenty thousand pounds a year is exempt from taxation, because he has done a lot for society by earning so much money. Ability to earn money is regarded as a special quality. The materialistic and capitalistic obsession of the Victorian people has been held up to ridicule in this account. But this treatment is also marked with the usual ambivalence distinguishing his general attitude to life. In this account Butler satirises the Victorian money-craze and at the same time extols money. Higgs is made to say - "It has been said that the love of money is the root of all evil. The want of money is so quite as truly." In his Note Books Butler writes almost identically - "It has been said that the love of money is the root of all evil. The want of money is so quite truly."  

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 261
2. Samuel Butler (1835-1902) - P.N. Furbank, p. 9
3. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 209
4. The Note Book of Samuel Butler - (Keynes & Hill, 1951), p. 262
he writes - "The money that men make lives after them." The pinch Butler had to endure for want of money till his father's death moulded his practical attitude to money. P.N. Furbank in his book on Butler frames an important aspect of Butler's attitude to life on the basis of his prepossessing passion for money - "Money is the most constantly recurring notion in all Butler's writings. Whenever an image or illustration is required, money is the idea readiest to hand." This constant preoccupation with the theme of money in Butler led Mr. Furbank to detect "Butler's strangely proprietary attitude" in all the affairs of life.

The English judicature has been put to severe satire in "Some Erewhonian Trials." In the Personal Bereavement Court the jury tried "a man who was accused of having just lost a wife to whom he had been tenderly attached," "but recommended the prisoner to mercy on the ground that he had but recently insured his wife's life for a considerable sum." The Erewhonian law was framed and applied to reinforce the natural

1. The Note Book of Samuel Butler - (Keynes & Hill, 1951) p. 262
2. Samuel Butler (1835-1902) - P.N. Furbank (1971), p. 20
3. Ibid, p. 24
4. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 109
5. Ibid, p. 110
law. The suffering of the bereaved husband was caused by nature and the law was aiding nature by meting out punishment to him "who was charged with having been swindled out of a large property during his minority by his guardian."\(^1\) The Erewhonian law held that "People have no right to be young, inexperienced, greatly in awe of their guardians, and without independent professional advice."\(^2\) The long verdict delivered by the judge upon a youngman "accused of the great crime of labouring under pulmonary consumption"\(^3\) brings out the ludicrous aspect of ostentious but insane British legal system. The law has an outward show of humanitarianism, but in practice it operates mechanically. The mechanical operation of the British law has been subjected to a severe satire.

Higgs, the hero of Erewhon felt puzzled about the Erewhonian attitude to crime and disease. Any act of crime was treated as an effect of mental unsoundness in Erewhon. If a man robbed or assaulted his neighbours, his friends, far from condemning him, would send flowers and messages of condolence, wishing him a speedy recovery after his attack of felony. In obstinate cases it might be necessary to send for the family straightener. Higg's host, Mr. Nesnibor, was

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1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 107
2. Ibid, p. 111
3. Ibid, p. 113
actually under such treatment when Higgs first made his acquaintance. The Erewhonians were very rigid about the maintenance of the purity of their race. Hence disease was a crime to them.

Erewhon also contains some miscellaneous satire on some social conventions. The social convention of mourning which is very frequently affected and artificial has been parodied. The Erewhonians have the custom of sending "little boxes filled with artificial tears, and with the name of the sender painted neatly upon the outside of the lid."

The Erewhonians also hold children themselves responsible for their birth and blemishes - "They hold that the unborn are perpetually plagueing and tormenting the married of both sexes, fluttering about them incessantly, and giving them no peace either of mind or body until they have consented to take them under protection." Here the practice of infant - baptism has been lampooned. In the verdict of the judge who sentenced a young-man suffering from the pulmonary disease the medical practitioners are called "medicine - vendors" who could be consulted "at the greatest risk."

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1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 137
2. Ibid, p. 221
3. Ibid, p. 116
4. Ibid
The nature of Butler's criticism in these satires is primarily negative, i.e. the function of this criticism is demolition only, without any constructive suggestion. This criticism elaborates one of his main tenets that any idea followed logically to its conclusions becomes absurd. He changes from one side to the other several times in a single argument. In the Chapter entitled "College of Unreason" Higgs is made to say "Unreason is a part of reason; it must therefore be allowed its full share in stating the initial conditions."¹ In this ambivalent comment of Higgs it is Butler who speaks. The reversal of an argument in which 'Unreason' has been held up to ridicule and simultaneously lauded as an instinctive wisdom - also is indicative of the typical dialectical method of Butler's criticism. 'Unreason' interpreted as an instinctive wisdom anticipated Butler's later theory of evolution emphasizing purposiveness. Higgs exposed the stupidity of the Erewhonian system of education on account of its being evasive, inconsistent, divorced from life and fostering unreason. But surprisingly and suddenly he becomes a serious spokesman of his creator in upholding the cause of unreason. To the Erewhonians want of logic was a merciful provision of nature. Unreason "is natural compliment

¹ Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 221
of reason, without whose existence reason itself were non-existent.\(^1\) This play with ideas and taking them to two extremes bespeak his general fondness for contradiction.\(^2\)

In Erewhon - the country of Nowhere the inverted forms of values operate. Disease is treated as a crime and the vice versa. This provides laughter from the satirical point of view. But this strange view is extolled, as this attitude to disease offered the Erewhonians gracefulness and physical strength. The mixture of Egyptian, Greek, and Italian made them 'Ishmaelitish' in the fullest sense. Higgs is made to approve of the Erewhonian eugenic practices. Moreover, in this satiric statement - disease is a crime and vice versa - Butler surprisingly anticipates the 20th Century view of the same.

Butler's attitude to Ydgrunism (inverted form of Grundy-ism standing for conventional propriety) also is marked with the same ambivalence. Low Ydgrunism implied a slavish hypocritical submission to skin-deep conventions. But among the High Ydgrunites there existed a high standard of courage, generosity, honour and every good and manly quality. With their elevated idea of Ydgrun (Grundy), they gradually lost all faith

1. *Erewhon* (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 221
in the deities of the country. Higgs considers them like the "best class of English man," but regrets their lack of religion. "Their only religion was that of self-respect and consideration for other people." According to Butler, conformity was the essential quality of a gentleman and his perfect gentlemen like Towneley in *The Way of All Flesh* and George in *Erewhon Revisited* fully fulfill those criteria of gentlemanly qualities. Butler satirizes Ydgrunism, but eulogises High Ydgrundism who constituted a small minority, scoffed at by most Erewhonians. But they were the pioneers of a new religion combining the postulates of 'C' and 'F', two characters in Butler's *Darwin on the Origin of Species*.

Butler's intellectual quest in Erewhon lies in framing the moral teaching which can be summed up under three heads—first, the state needs results in well-to-do healthy citizens. Secondly, crime could be remedied by improving social conditions. Butler stresses equal importance of nature and nurture for the production of men and women. Lastly, a balance should be maintained between moral excellence and physical well-being.

*Erewhon* directs the offensive into the citadel of Victorian craze for conformity and comfort in life. The material

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2. Ibid
expansion of late 19th century England was nothing short of a miracle. Industrialisation added to the amenities of life and made people richer, better served, housed, clothed and fed. The unparalleled prosperity led to the dream of a divinity—appointed superiority. The unprecedented explorations of science and technology made the dream of life reality. People in their devotion to science developed a slavish attitude to it and shut their eyes to the evil of a machine-dominated life. In the field of religion also industrialisation provoked people to shut their eyes and to cling to the formal creed of Christianity and to preserve the faith it enjoined. The ordinary English men made plenty of money and at the same time believed themselves to be pious and good. These people, habituated to a life of ease and comfort, were not in a mind to disturb the normal mode of life either social or religious. Endowed with an original mind, Butler applied the light of reason to the accepted idea of life and religion. He rejected the formal creed and the normal mode of life which he could not explain through religion. This failure led him to accept Darwinism. The detachment he derived during his term of exile in New Zealand led him to consider his countrymen pursuing a life of selfish materialism dominated by obstinate ignorance. Butler sought the remedy of the problem of growing dominance of machines on human life in Darwinism, but it failed to offer a solution.
He viewed his age intellectually and criticised its shortcomings in *Erewhon*.

Eminent writers like Shaw and Joad have warmly upheld Butler and considered him as a revolutionary in ideas. But Malcolm Muggeridge contradicted and viewed *Erewhon* as an attempt to escape the reality of existence into the realm of ideas only. A superficial evaluation may show *Erewhon* revolutionary in character. But Butler's attack on religion, on the false sense of respectability and on the teaching of Hypothetics at the Colleges of Unreason of the Victorian era, cannot claim revolutionary originality. Carlyle, Arnold, Ruskin and many others were voicing their protest against the machine-dominated materialistic life of the Victorian age. *Erewhon*, in a rambling manner, foreshadows Butler's later theory of heredity for which he can claim the memory of posterity. It foreshadows also Butler's idea of modern man in the form of the High Ydgrunites who have no faith in the mystery of religion, who are lovers of conformity and respectability.

Apart from an ideological preoccupation with some contemporary social problems from the standpoint of framing some general theories, Butler's intellectual quest lies in showing a profound interest in two aspects of the age—religion and evolutionism which he sought to correlate in his writings.
Erewhon, in spite of being an earlier writing containing the floating ideas of a young and an inexperienced writer, finely foreshadows his intellectual quest. In the Chapter on The Musical Banks Butler's satire on Christianity and Church as an institution is obviously evident. This satire becomes more incisive in the Chapter entitled "Ydgrun and Ydgrunites." The essential dichotomy characterising Butler's general attitude to life is in evidence in his view of Christianity also. The satires on Christianity through the description of the Musical Banks have already been shown. But some lines which express Higg's awe for the splendour of the imposing church-building are not ironical. The building of the Banks appeared to Higgs "as an epic in stone and marble"¹ and he rhapsodized over the splendour -

"I was more impressed with my own littleness, and much more inclinable to believe that the people whose sense of the fitness of things was equal to the upraising of so serene a handiwork, were hardly likely to be wrong in the conclusions they might come to upon any subject."

- Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 149

In the Chapter on "Arewhena" God is accepted as "the expression for man's highest conception of goodness, wisdom, and power."²

1. Erewhon (1924 Ed.) - Samuel Butler, p. 149
2. Ibid, pp. 171-172
This is also not an ironic statement. In his two Chapters - "The World of the Unborn" and "Book of the Machines" -, which are the extended forms of his earlier articles on Darwinism, Butler anticipated his later panzoistic theory of evolution. In this Utopian book there is no attempt on the part of Butler to reconcile science and religion, though the two themes separately have engaged his serious preoccupation. The presence of these two themes, constituting the chief elements of his intellectual quest, weaves the common thread which presents Erewhon of a piece with the rest of his writings.

The Utopian concept did not come to an end with Butler. For mankind, specially for mankind involved in a continuum of progressive thoughts, concepts, knowledge, involved in a situation in which there is no climax, no finality to human thought but, on the contrary, the emergence of new facts, new thoughts, new values, there is no finality of the vision of life, no stabilised Utopia. On the contrary, new values, new vision continue to emerge and the Utopian vision continues to be a never-diminishing, always forward-moving concept.

The statement made in the above paragraph finds validity in the warm reception of modern critics like E.M. Forster, Edmund Wilson, Morton Zabel extended to Erewhon and the continuation of the Utopian tradition by H.G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Bernard
Shaw and others. Forster viewed "Erewhon, a work of genius"¹ and "It was the food for which"² he was waiting. To Edmund Wilson "it is brilliant first fling of an able and gifted young man."³ Morton Zabel considers Erewhon as "the most effective piece of social criticism and prophecy the Nineteenth Century produced."⁴

The present century is pre-eminently an age of science and technology and its dream also is shaped and moulded by science. H.G. Wells in his scientific romance dreams of a world bettered by the fruitful application of science in human life. In The Modern Utopia (1905) H.G. Wells presents the picture of an ideal land in the process of development. Well's Utopia is not some undiscovered earthly country, but a planet in which all earthly countries and peoples are duplicated. In this world without any boundaries or political heterogenousness people are united without race-distinction and in which is spoken a universal language. Scientific instruments provide

2. Ibid, p. 214
labour-saving comforts and amenities of life. In this modern Utopia idling is not encouraged and in conformity with this custom the travellers are also given temporary work. The residential buildings are constructed with the labour-saving ideal of a servantless world. Their physique is excellent and men and women wear the same kind of dress. This Utopia, without any provision for prison-system, has set different islands for different types of criminals who enjoy perfect freedom there. The travellers in this Utopia come across their doubles - their Utopian selves who are the Samurai or voluntary noblemen who are expected to lead an ideal life and who are to undergo a process of rigorous training in respect of food and play. For attaining a certain stoutness of heart and body, a week of solitude of extreme toughness is imposed on them. In contrast with other Utopias, this one lays no claim to perfection. It is the vision of practical Utopia corresponding fundamentally to the world which we know. H.G. Wells makes no attempt to create a new world, but shows us our own world as it might conceivably develop and incidentally shows himself something of a prophet. Many elements of Wells's fancy have been translated into reality.

Aldous Huxley in his *Brave New World* switches to the future and shows us life as he conceived it may be some thousand of years hence. With irrepressible wit and raillery, Huxley
satirizes here the idea of progress put forward by the scientists and philosophers. In his preface Huxley categorically stated - "The theme of **Brave New World** is not the advancement of science as such; it is the advancement of science as it affects human individuals." Huxley here is chiefly concerned with showing the impact of biology, psychology and physiology on the individual. The technological changes tending to produce economic and social confusion will create the imperative of increasing government control ultimately leading to a totalitarianism. Huxley shows two sides of the technologically advanced society - the scientific caste system and the sexual promiscuity. As Utopia, it is radically different from the past Utopias. It is primarily meant as an ironic commentary on the revolution wrought by science both in the fields of external and internal life of man. This Utopia is tinged with satire and the satire is enjoyable on the proviso that all over the whole world prevails one supra-national totalitarianism, called into existence by the social chaos resulting from rapid technological progress in general and the atom-revolution in particular, and developing, under the need for efficiency and stability, into the welfare tyranny of Utopia. Unlike other Utopias, **Brave New World**, does not paint an ideal society desired by

1. **Brave New World** - (Penguin Ed.), Huxley, Preface, p. 9
all. It holds a warning by presenting a society unduly dominated by science, industrialisation, technological and political imbalance.

In *Back to Methuselah*, Bernard Shaw stretches his futuristic vision of life shaped and moulded by the evolutionary principle. The Part III (*The Things Happen*) of *Back to Methuselah* stretches the action to 2170 A.D., when people will conquer the problem of short life. In Part IV, *Tragedy of an Elderly Gentleman*, the action is taken to 3000 A.D. This Utopian vision suffers from abstraction and is without any positive vision of life. In Part V, *As Far As Thought can Reach*, Shaw presents an imaginary picture about the future of man in the year 31920 A.D. Man in this stage will lose all interest in the creations of imagination or the researches of the intellect. The picture of such life is presented through the He - Ancient and the She - Ancient. The She - Ancient says - "The day will come when there will be no people, only thought"\(^1\) He - Ancient responds - "And that will be life eternal."\(^2\) These new people attempt to get rid of the fleshly body and aspire to reach the state of pure thought, free from the limitation of the body. But what do

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2. Ibid
they contemplate of is not indicated. Bernard Shaw in this picture of the distant future fails to communicate his prodigal vision with plausibility.

A full list of Utopias from Plato downwards up to the present day is offered in Appendix A.

In offering a sketch of the growth and development of the Utopian concept my purpose is to show the uniqueness of Erewhon as a Utopia. In Erewhon Butler portrayed a Utopia in which he exposed the shortcomings of the contemporary English society and lashed them out relentlessly. Butler gave a new lease of life to the Utopian theme and this pioneered a spurt of attempts in the same field by Lord Lytton, Walter Besant, Richard Jefferies, W.H.Hudson, Garnett, Edward Bellamy, Richard Whiteing, William Morris, W.D.Howells, H.G. Wells, J.D.Beresford etc. and many others in the present century. Butler's Utopia differs from the Utopias of the other writers who are dreaming of an ideal state. Among the Utopian dreamers Bacon and H.G.Wells stand apart. Bacon expressed his dream about the future development of science and H.G.Wells in his Utopian vision is not an escapist. The peculiarity of Erewhon as a Utopia is that it is not Butler's ideal state. He did not intend it to be so. In it he has not the detachment which is necessary for the presentation of a Utopian vision. As a Utopia Erewhon has a parallel only in
Gulliver's Travels. According to P.N. Furbank "no serious effort should or can be made to sustain Butler as a rival of Swift. There is here all the difference between a major and a minor writer."¹ But E.M. Forster prefers Butler to Swift — "And indignation — Swift's indignation in Gulliver is too savage for me; I prefer Butler's in Erewhon."² Erewhon differs from Swift's book widely. Swift finds everything bad in contemporary society and finds everything positive in the land of his imagination. Any criticism of his Utopian country is used as an insinuation upon human society. But Butler does not find everything commendable in his Utopia. This combination of idealisation and in some points condemnation, in conformity with the nature of his dialectical frame of mind, constitutes the uniqueness of Butler's Utopian vision.

1. Samuel Butler - P.N. Furbank, (1971), pp. 7-8