Talking about his own stories he (Premchand) said, “In my view the plots of stories should be taken from real life and should solve the problems of real life.” The secret of Premchand’s success is that he knew his subject matter well and identified his characters with real life (Bandopadhya 171).

The situation and scenario of Premchand's beginning in literature was the transitional era when the congress party was formed as a political institution and the freedom movement had not merely been the movement of middle-class but it had become the movement of the common people. The economic status had been transferred from the feudals to the capitalists. The villages were being fragmented which were the nucleus of the feudal system. It is a fact that the feudals had a little faith in human values but the capitalist landlords used to suppress the poor people. The condition of the peasants had become pitiful due to the recovery of tax and levy policies of Indian Kings, landlords, capitalists and Britishers. The nature of religion had got entirely distorted. The inter-veining of capitalism into religion had taken shape in the form of a defiled alliances as in that period of time religion had involved itself with the outside conduct. The social life had also been facing havoc.

The situations were acquiring newer shapes as well as the attitude. So the ancient values and customs had been devastated. Nothing new could seem to emerge in such chaotic situation. In this upheaval era Premchand accepted the challenges of creating the literature, feeling the demand of the era. It is a matter of fact an appraisal of comment of given by Aacharya Nand Dulare Vajpaie in his book 'Hindi Sahitya : Beesveen Shatabdi ' that the time had not supported Premchand rather than
Premchand had supported the time. As a psycho-physician of society Premchand had diagnosed the social evils and provided the remedy with proper treatment by analyzing its root causes.

A renowned Hindi critic Acharya Hajari Prasad Dwivedi commented in his book. 'Hindi Sahitya' about the author Premchand that Premchand had not admired the glory of ancient India nor he made a hypothesis of its amazing future. Narender Kohli, a critic gave his views in his book 'Premchand' that Premchand had not claimed to formulate any sort of principle for writing. He accepted the objectives from his personal and social experiences of life in which he made his living. Some notes of literature appear naturally in his creations which are automatically shaped in deemed principles of literature.

The most reflective effect on literature of the author's own personality is found. The imprint of his personal thoughts, views, experiences and psychological aptitude are observed and reflected in his works. He always tried to put forth the human desires and emotions but he presented them by polishing through his personal touch of own interest. This is the way of sustaining originality in any author's writing. The same thing happens with the vocal singer. If the one suppresses one's tone and tries to change it in an artificial manner, then it loses its original value. The realization of one's own thinking is very important aspect in literature. In the whole world every great writer's creation has some uniqueness/speciality which is far beyond from the external features and circumstances. These qualities are directly concerned with the author's psychological state of thought in the life. Shakespeare's dramas are unique in this world even among the dramas of his contemporaries. The same logic is applicable with the literature of Premchand also.
The spontaneous outburst of Premchand's writing is the result of his own personal and social experiences with life struggles so it is inevitable to throw the light on his entire life so that the views and opinions expressed in his fiction could be easier to be understood so that it could be correlated with the socio-economic conditions of his period. As it is assumed that the author had made a pathway of idealistic cum realistic approach to mirror the society being a pioneer of his age diverging from the ancient plot construction of his predecessors.

Premchand, a renowned epoch making fiction-writer, was born on Saturday 31st July 1880 at a village Lamahi near Varanasi on the way to Azamgarh in U.P. To make his memory immortal the road to Lamahi has now been named as ‘Premchand Marg’. He had descended from a family of shabby genteel Kayasthas, who owned some six bighas of agriculture land and could afford to run a large family. His father Ajaiblal was a clerk in post office whose initial salary was ten rupees per month. At the time of his retirement it was forty rupees. His mother was Aanandi Devi, a pretty, good natured and accomplished woman reminiscent of ‘Bare Ghar ki Beti’, in which Aanandi is the heroine. Premchand lost his mother at a tender age of eight who died after a prolonged illness. Two years later his father got married again, so a step mother came into his life. The step mother was a recurrent theme in the works of Premchand. It seems clear that the step mother could not fill the vacuum left in his life by the death of his mother. Premchand left Lamahi to live with the step mother in Gorakhpur. His father had to move on transfers still his longest period was spent at Gorakhpur, where Premchand passed his VIII standard from Mission high school. He, however had no interest in academic books. He was fond of reading Urdu novels and so could read the best pieces available at the time. Premchand could not resist the temptation of the novels’ enjoyment. He read Mirza Ruswa’s Umrao Jan Ada and the
humorous works of Maulana Sajjad Hussain. But more than the source of pleasure from such novels Premchand derived strength and inspiration. Since in subsequent years he was to make such use of it in his technique of plot construction as it is primarily seen in his early works. The entertainment aspect has not been entirely overlooked for the readers.

Away from step mother’s tyranny in the house he would spend most of the time outside in sports with friends. Being a wretched fellow he had fallen into bad company of the smokers at the tender age of thirteen. He got married at the age of fifteen when he was in IX standard. His father also expired at the same time. His marriage soon turned out to be an unhappy one; not because of the girl’s dark complexion and ill looking but because of her ill behaviour. In his biography entitled Premchand: Qalam ka Sipahi his son Amrit Rai has described his mother’s features minutely in vivid details:

Her appearance was displeasing, ugly, fat, slatternly…There were glaring scares of small pox on her face. Her one leg was shorter than the other for which the unfortunate girl had to walk limpingly (Bandopadhyay 7).

Later on she returned back to her father’s home and never come back to Premchand’s home. After attaining maturity he wanted to marry again but was not in search of any beautiful eligible spinster, but keenly interested to marry with a widow because he wanted to set an ideal example before the society. Thenceforth in 1906 he got married with a widow named Shivrani Devi who accompanied Premchand spiritually and academically till his death. She was a literary woman and a prolific writer too. She wrote a treatise on Premchand’s life and her own experiences with him in the book entitled ‘Premchand Ghar Mein’. Premchand used to share each and
everything with her. From Shivrani Devi Premchand had three children, a daughter named Kamla and two sons Sripat Rai and Amrit Rai both of them are writers.

Premchand’s early education was pursued under a Maulvi in a Madarsa where he learnt Urdu. After passing the intermediate examination he had to stop studies. He got a job as a teacher in a primary school. In 1919 he passed his B.A. with English, Persian and History. After a number of promotions, he became Deputy Inspector of schools but the influence of Mahatma Gandhi’s movement of non-co-operation forced him to quit the job. When Premchand resigned his job after being stirred with Gandhiji’s speech, he applied several methods of earning money by opening shops as a Khadi centre. This business shows his belief in Swadeshi movement. As an editor he worked in many magazines like Maryada, Zamaana, Azad, Madhuri, Hamdard, Kahkashan, Subah-e-Ummeed, Pratap, Chand, Swadesh, Janbharti and Aaz. Being an editor of those magazines he felt suffocation during working under other authorities of the publishing houses through realizing the importance of freedom. Then he established his own publishing house and printing press to embody his own daring thoughts and imaginations with the help of his literary and intellectual friends. He started to publish two weeklies Hans and Jagran. After all this he had devoted the rest part of his life to literary writings. His first story appeared in the magazine Zamana published from Kanpur.

Soz-e-Watan, an anthology of patriotic stories was published by Premchand in 1907 which attracted the vigilant attention of the British government for the revolutionary writing skills.

Premchand wrote near about some two hundred and fifty stories but all of them are not possible to trace today. His son Amrit Rai has listed some two hundred twenty four stories in his biography, Premchand: Qalam ka Sipahi. These are in Hindi
and Urdu. They have been published in the collection or anthologies namely; *Sapta-Saroj*, *Soz-e-Watan*, *Navanidhi*, *Prem-Battisi*, *Prem-Pachchisi*, *Mansarover* and *Firdous–e-Khayal*. Premchand was born in the British India. The Indian Independence movement was at its peak when he started his writing career. His early writings were largely influenced by the nationwide movement in which he often expressed his vivid support. He wrote sixteen novels in Hindi and Urdu including an unfinished incomplete work *Mangal Sutra*. The titles of the novels are the *Godan*, *Karmabhoomi*, *Nirmala*, *Gaban*, *Sevasadan*, *Mansarovar*, *Premashram*, *Vardan*, *Ranga Bhoomi*, *Prarthna*, *Prema*, *Roothi Rani*, etc.

He was in Allahabad where he first started writing seriously. He started his literary career as a freelance writer in Urdu and wrote several short stories in that language. His first novella, *Asrare Ma Abid* was first published in *Awaz–e–Khalq* an Urdu weekly. Soon after he became associated with an Urdu magazine *Zamana* in which he wrote columns on national and international events. His career as a writer began to take shape and he became a reputed part of the literary world of Kanpur. His literary work in Urdu gained him a reputation of a journalist having social aim rather than a mere entertainer. He has been honoured as the 'Upanyas Samrat' the emperor of Novels by some Hindi critics. His initial name was 'Dhanpat Rai' but he first began to write under the pen name Nawab Rai. He further switched to the name Premchand after the publication of his short story collection *Soz-e-Watan* which was banned by the British *Raj*. He is also known as Munshi Premchand, Munshi is for being an honorary prefix. The remarkable features of these novels are that they have an emotional touch to uproot every kind of decayed social evils of the society that provides the privilege for the common people. All the prominent characters of his fiction are common people they do not belong to the elite class of the society. There is
a vigour and sharpness in his expression. Since 21 May 1934 to 4 April 1935 Premchand spent his time at Bombay in the film industry. This time-span was very short but its impact on Premchand’s life was remarkable. He realized that any literary person should remain happy in one’s own premises and circumference of literature only but without freedom and happiness, money is worthless. He came to Bombay in search of support in his adverse days of life but he had to resume soon. He worked there for 'Ajanta Cinetone Company' which decided to produce movies on socio-cultural subjects with the hope of bringing awareness in the society to convey the message to the educated and uneducated people. The filmmaker considered Premchand the very famous author of that time who had social perspectives. This incident proves his value in presentation of socio-cultural thoughts.

There is an instance where Premchand also acted in a short sequence in the role of a “sarpanch”. (Bandopadhya 136)

Amrit Rai has described in his book *Qalam Ka Sipahi* about Munshiji’s role played in the movie *Mazdoor* that Mohan Bhavnani, the director of the film got Munshiji agreed to play on the screen for a minute or two. It could not be known how Munshiji could be satisfied in favour of whims of Bhavnani Premchand could agree to his proposal only on one condition that he would neither wear any costume nor apply make-ups and then he appeared in his routine dress *dhoti-kurta* as a Sarpanch to subside the dispute of the mill-owners and the workers which was viewed on the silver screen for a while.

After this incident there was a strike in his press. It was a coincidence that a man who played the role of a Sarpanch giving a decision to the workers on strike against the mill-owner had to face the real strike, called on by the workers of his own press. On this grievance he wrote a letter in a newspaper *Bharat* to make the situation
clear explaining that he had been a man of socialist ideology and his entire life had been devoted in advocating the poor and the dalits. The press workers could not have thought whether the press owner was making any capital with the income of the press or not. The situation was explained to the workers but the union got victory and the Jagran's publication was closed.

Till the end of his life, he continued to write with social purpose and social criticism, in short stories like Sadgati, Kafan, Shatranj ke Khiladi, Idgaah, Poos ki Raat, Namak ka Daroga and the best selling novels, Gaban, Godan and Sevasadan were adopted into films and television programs by great film makers of Indian film industry like Satyajit Ray, Gulzar and Hrishikesh Mukherji and Rajesh Sisodiya etc.

Premchand has translated several English works of fiction in Hindi as Eliot’s Silas Marner as Sukhdas, Anatole France’s Thais as Ahankar, Galsworthy’s play Strife as Hartal, Justice as Nyay, Silver box as Chandi ki Dibbi, Tolstoi’s stories and Urdu writer Ratan nath Sarshar’s Fasana-e-Azad as Azad Katha, Charles Dickens’ The Story of Richard Doubledick as Ashk-e-Nadamat (Tears of Shame) in Urdu etc. Premchand has also written a number of historical romances for example Raja Hardaul, Rani Sarandhra, and Roothi Rani.

Along with a novelist and author, Premchand was also a social reformer and a thinker. The remarkable characteristics of his writing were the reality and idealism through which he depicted his characters in the novels. Unlike other contemporary writers he did not write stories based upon fantasy or heroism. The hero of his fiction is always a common man. His novels mainly consisted of messages of social evils like dowry, poverty, communalism, colonialism, feudalism, zamindari, women's exploitation and corruption. He was the first writer of the twentieth century to bring forth reality in the literature.
Most of the stories of Premchand are based on socio-economic realities of contemporary age, composed on the plot of human weaknesses. They have ability to compel the readers to evoke and to shed tears with the characters. The plot and characters are relevant in this contemporary times too.

Premchand’s literature is the literature of society. Not only it reveals the reality of the society but it also spreads awareness among the people who are totally ignorant of the consequences of social evils and the related history. He projects humanism in his writings with idealistic approach.

The second interest that gripped him in this last phase of his career was the Progressive Writers’ Movement. He had already accepted the goal of socialism, and had come out strongly in support of the Soviet Union. When some Indian intellectuals convened a meeting in London to establish an association of progressive writers, Premchand wrote an enthusiastic article welcoming the move. He felt that writer could no longer be content with nationalism; they had to move on to socialism. The country’s freedom was only one stage of the journey. Social justice, the end of exploitation, the end of illiteracy and poverty-these were the ultimate goals, Premchand expressed his opposition to the “art for art’s sake” approach to creative writing. He insisted that literature must serve a social purpose. “I do not have any hesitation in asserting,” he said, “that I judge the value of art in the weighing- balance of utility. We will have to change our criterion of beauty… (Naravane 93).
Premchand chaired the first meet of the writers at Lucknow on 9th April 1936 which was organized to establish the Progressive Writers Association to respond to the various linguistic zones of India for producing and translating literature of progressive nature. To fight against the cultural reaction and suppression by the elite class. In this way to further the cause of India’s freedom and social regeneration having belief in democracy, secularism, unity in diversity and attaining socialism without any discrimination of caste, creed, language, and gender.

At about eight o'clock in the morning on 8 October 1936 Premchand breathed his last. His death at the prime age marked the end of an era in realm of literature.
II

The theme of a story is its backbone which provides support to the sequence and development of the events which are obtained through the plot. It is very essential that the plot must be inter-veined within its warps. Its beginning, middle and the end must be correlated with one another because the entire objective is hidden in it. The plot possesses the ideology of an author.

Premchand’s age had some predefined parameters of the plot but he himself perceived the social facts. Various varieties of plots are found in the fiction of Premchand. His stories can be classified into multidimensional at the level of the themes. In his age the conventional pattern of story writing was descriptive which was later on limited to unnecessary extension and repetition. Such type of extension of plot could be seen in *Bade Ghar Ki Beti* but *Poos Ki Raat* has not such deficiency up to the mark and it seems symbolic and modern styled. As the story writer Upendra Nath Ashk has written in his book *Hindi Kahani: Ek Antarang Parichay* “Premchand is the emperor of plot” *(Raza 28).*

The prose piece of a literature that belongs to fiction is known as a story. The story is almost divided into six parts. These are script, events, action or incidents, characters, dialogues, atmosphere, language and style of description and the objective of the story. Upendra Nath Ashk a famous Urdu poet and writer has stated if any story does not depict life or does not help us to understand life then it might be interesting and treated as the best piece according to the norms and attitude of fine art but it can never provide any benefit to life. It means that the stories depicting life is the real story based on realities of life. According to this belief Premchand's stories are the only stories of the scenario because in them true depictions of sketches of contemporary lives are drawn in way of characters and situations. In his Urdu novels
and short stories, he emphasized in presenting the minute, observation of the naked realities and sufferings of life. He had chosen the Indian villages in his themes of writing. His novels describe the problems of the urban middle-class along-with countryside and their problems. He also emphasized on the Hindu-Muslim unity. It would not be wrong to say that Premchand was the father of Urdu short stories. His stories mirrored the society where he lived in.

He admired Gandhism and adopted Gandhian philosophy. Such revolutionary ideology is observed in his writings such as social equality, social evolution, social problems due to caste segregation, exploitation of the lower class, exploitation of women, problems generated due to industrialization, interpersonal relationships, love & marriage, political scenario of the same period, Indian peasants, colonialism, Hinduism, educational system & its evils, child marriage, unmatched marriage, freedom movements and corruption. Premchand's fiction could lead his readers from realism to idealism. His fiction has thrown light on Dalit issues, ethics & social values, and, journalism's journey. *Thakur ka kuaa, Namak ka Daroga, Jurmana* and *Sava Ser Gehun* are the very good examples of Premchand's theme or it can be said that they are the true representative stories in all respects of socio-cultural reality of that period.

The idea of social change came into light during the time of the Indian freedom movements. It forced to use *khadi* made by Indian weavers, boycotting foreign clothings. It further influenced Indian rural people so emotionally that they could organize themselves against landlords and *Tallukedars* who were the class of exploitatives. In this period the *Sahukars* and the businessmen grew active to harass and exploit the peasants and the labourers. It was the world-wide recession in 1929 after the First World War when prices increased, the causing the scarcity of daily life
commodities. That the poor people were compelled to borrow loans from the *Mahajans*. Those Mahajans were blessed by the British people. The properties of poor peasants began to be mortgaged and sold on lower rates. The *Mahajans* started to suppress illiterate people. The poor people had to face violence and cruelty of the Britishers for being turned into force labour.

Gandhism-Realism can be achieved through imparting love or through spreading violence. The base of realism lies in the social service. Premchand is a follower of the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi. In the biography of Premchand which is written by his wife Shivrani Devi entitled ‘Premchand Ghar Mein’ her comment was that he had been disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, without liking his ideology before seeing him. Actually Mahatma Gandhi was the first Indian leader at that time under whose leadership many antagonists had joined Congress Party who were not the disciple of Gandhi but believed that under his absolute leadership independence could be achieved. The Gandhian socio-political ideology believes in moral working style based on the truth more than materialistic resources. Religion was his great ideal which was in the form of truth. He had taught a lesson to his followers that non-violence preaches us unity and equality. His individual attitude influenced many generations. On the basis of this attitude the government of India could become secular. *Satyagrah* was the chief weapon of his struggle movement to achieve independence of India. He believed that one should conquer the concepts of the enemy in place of the enemy in the battle field. There are so many levels of *Satyagrah* prescribed by Gandhi as to suggest, to advise, to keep fast, to non-cooperate, to disobey with appeal, to un-pay the taxes, to chase and to elope etc which can be changed according to the situations’ need and intensity of the problem.
Premchand was influenced by Gandhi and Gandhi was influenced by Leo Tolstoi who believed in the philosophy of transformation of an individual whose motto is to demolish the humanity and devastate the human values. So Premchand believed in the social philosophy with ethics of Gandhiji on one side as well as of Leo Tolstoi on the other side. But it is said in comparison of Premchand with other writers that:

The marvel of Premchand’s novels (the later ones) is that they are not insipidly flat like those of C.P. Snow but present a surface which is at once plain and impressively rugged like that of Tolstoy’s War and Peace (Bandopadhya 172).

The hero of the story ‘Samar Yatra’ states that they are fighting for the sake of justice and truth so they have to fight with the weapons of justice and truth. They are in need of such warriors who can fight through violence and rage out of their heart and soul.

The meaning of Realism is not just any kind of an exact description of influence, effects, work and activity but it is a specific individual imagination of literature, which limits an artist with photographic description. Some critics say about this quality that literature is thrice removed from the originality. Realistic artist does always depict in his creation, influenced by one’s own surroundings and atmosphere in comparison to one’s own personal life. These are the qualities of realism and realistic artist who follows the same path. The artist experiences the incidents near one’s premises of social life. It includes all auspicious-inauspicious, good-bad, hope-desperation, failure-success incidents or accidents. In order to mean it the intellectuality of the literary man takes shapes and reshapes according to the social
changes, therefore the literature of any particular era of a writer always distinguishes one from the other ones.

In Premchand’s ideal realism, the elements of realism are amalgamated in such states which are impossible to differentiate apart from one and another individually. If it is necessary to analyses one’s fiction on the basis of theme and plot, on the basis of socio-economic view only, in addition to it a person should keep in one’s mind the socio-economic differences of the society.

Humanism is not the formula but it is a virtuous ideology for the sake of humanity that lies very deep inside the heart of such human beings who devote and sacrifice their time for making social atmosphere to increase the benediction of the society.

The basic philosophy of his life was humanism but it was his practical humanism. He sought to serve some utility without delving into the recesses of human psyche in display of abstraction. His delineation of mental states is as such not the study of human psychology but the presentation of human nature which he telescoped in perceptive phenomenon. Alongside his largeness, accordingly, there is minute perceptions which add vivacity and colour to his writings. Premchand knew the essential evil in human society but this knowledge was not an obsession with him, with his utilitarian approach he sought to show how evil could be eliminated and society could be reformed. His humanism as such was a reformative humanism (Bandopadhyay 173).
Humanism is found everywhere in the writings of Premchand. In every nook of the fiction he always kept humanism at the centre of his thought for advocacy. He kept aside all the materialistic issues but the sense of irony that is intrinsic to any story of the author. By this art of writing he throws light on cruelty by and with human beings. Along with humanism other issues are also simultaneously raised by the author. For illustration the story named 'Mantra', 'Panch Parmeshwar' and 'Do Bailon Ki Katha' are the good examples of humanism. In the story 'Mantra' a poor old man took his seriously ill son to Doctor Chadda's clinic for treatment, there Chaddha refused them because he was busy in playing badminton. He said, if he will sacrificed that time for treatment then his health would suffer. After that lacking treatment the poor child died. After few day's of this incident Dr. Chadda's son was bitten by the snake at midnight: on request of doctor the same old man goes there treating his son. Though he hated Dr. Chaddha yet he helped him. According to Gandhi- “Humanity is not divided into water-tight compartments so that we can go from one to another” (Sen 137).

By these types of stories the author has tried to present that, to commit mistakes is a common thing in human beings but it should not be treated as the weakness in serving the society. The realization of the mistake is a great repentance. Even in the story 'Do Bailon Ki Katha' he has personified the human feelings in animals. It is a good example of humanity. Humanity lies in every one's heart in this world but sometimes it gets buried by the materialistic urges and human nature, vices and selfishness. Being an important part of the progressive writer's association it is undoubtedly sure that he is truly a humanist like 'Mulk Raj Aanand' who is considered as the pioneer of humanism. Mulk Raj Aanand has written in an essay entitled 'How I Became a Writer'
I have indicated that the compulsion to write was in my case the choice between life and death, the quality of love, the values which make man human-far consciously and unconsciously, in oscillating between Asia and Europe, I have evolved for myself the philosophy of synthesis in what I call my comprehensive historical humanism (Sinha 24).

Premchand has presented the rural problems of Indian society very sympathetically. He analysed the stories with the positive spirit of a reformist and thinker. He tried to pay attention to the problems of day to day life faced by countryside people due to the other interrelated problems like illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, the Mahajan system and the British Government. His most of the fiction moves around those themes like Godan, Sadgati, Kafan etc.

In comparison with other contemporary writers of Premchand’s era, Premchand emphasised on the issue of women's exploitation tremendously with all facts and realities. He wrote about women of all classes and castes as—in Godan the character of Malti as a doctor and Ratan in Gaban were presented as the highly polished women. Even one of his novels named Sevasadan from the beginning to the end revolves around a prominent character Suman. Due to poverty, some ill-fated people get their young beautiful girls married to such old aged men who could pay some levy against the marriage to the bride’s parents like Ramsevak of the Godan. In order to understand that their daughter would avail a luxurious life yet she could not enjoy the bliss of married life of a wedded couple. In this reference though the girl becomes a wretched woman, yet she forgets all emotional and physical feelings and tries to forget the grievances running after the fragile losing and time being luxuries inside the wed of roses and velvet and can’t experience the emotional thorns. This
kind of theme is well dealt in Premchand’s fiction. His novel *Nirmala* is based on the same theme of unmatched marriage and dowry system. In our Indian culture a marriage is not an agreement of contract but it is such a bond of relationship between husband and wife which could be considered as the relationship of soul to soul made in heaven by the God.

For discussing on the child marriage it is very important to find out its origin why and when this evil custom came in adaptation. It seems that it might have been adopted by the society for the sake of the young girls' security and safety from the unwanted people of the society or outside the society. There are many examples of the ancient India where the battles took place and resulted into ruins or a treaty afterwards by handing over young girls. Akbar’s empress Mankuwar Bai Jodha is a vivid example of the same result during Mughal Empire. Mostly in Rajasthan along with all the provinces of the northern India this customs was firstly found among the high class society but later on it became a social parameter for all the Hindus. The marriage even of a breastfeeding child took place according to the so-called rituals. Actually it was due to ignorance and lack of knowledge. The children who can’t understand meaning of the marriage or the husband-wife relationship got married at the age of playing with toys along with acquiring proper education for building their physique and mind fit to resume the relationship of husband and wife. It is a well-known fact that like other social reformers of our country Premchand did not play a role of an activist but experiencing the fact, observing the evils of the society he laid down his pen for this superstitious evil custom. He used his weapon of writing fiction to uproot the problem from the minds of the readers as it is said that the wars are fought afterwards in the battlefield firstly they are fought in the minds in the shape of thoughts of ideology.
It is a fact that dowry has been a social evil which has infected each and every caste and creed of India. Even Premchand who wrote about the social evil of dowry in his fiction *Nirmala*, had been victim of that custom by doing compromise with that problem during the marriage of Kamla, his daughter. Goyanka, a writer has revealed this fact in his book *Premchand : Adhyayan ki Nayi Dishayen*. He wrote this incident after Premchand's daughter was married to Vasudeo Prasad at Sagar.

Before discussing on the Dalit Issues, this fact should be kept in the critic's minds that there is no basic difference among Dalits and other Aryan Hindus. Within the class system of society this cadre of Shudras was used to serve the rest of other three sections known as Brahmin Varna, Kshattriya Varna, and Vaishya Varna according to the occupation. Dalits were not in existence as a unit but they were living separately scattered here and there. In the ancient times Brahmins had crowned themselves at a special place in social and religious status. This caused hatred towards Dalits in normal social life and they were ill-treated as untouchables. Premchand’s sympathy towards Dalits is based on economic resources. In the story *Dudh ka Daam*, Suresh was breastfed by Mangal’s mother. After the death of his own parents Mangal began to live under the shelter of *Neem tree* stood in front of the house of Suresh since he could not get room to live being his co-breast-fed brother. Later on he had to returned back to his home for want of food and water. Mangal somehow got used - food left by the waterman (*Kahar*). When he gets hunger fulfilled then the waterman makes this dialogue that- “Dekha, peit ki aag aisi hoti hai ki yeh laat maari hui rotiyan na milti to kya karte”(Premchand 204).

There are many stories with relevance to Dalit issues dealt by Premchand as *Sadgati, Kafan, Poos ki Raat, Thakur ka kuan, Prem ka Udaya, Mantra* etc. which reveal the contemporary issues existed in the so called *Varna Vyavastha*. 
An important criticism about Premchand has been written by the great critic of Hindi Literature, Nagendra in his book *'Vichar aur Vivechan*

Premchand has produced the social and political life's history of the three steps of Gandhian age. Actually whenever the social history of this period would be written, it would be a matter of fact that the historians would not avail anywhere such well arranged material for their writing of the history of the particular age except the fiction of Premchand (Nagendra 91).

When the literature of Premchand is comprehended it can be easily observed that the most of the families were *joint* families founded our cultural and social values. It was not more disturbed in the *Mughal* period but in the Britisher’s reign it was entirely disturbed. The management of the society was run through the exchange of the goods which was the main basis of the business. People were busy in their production and consumption. That was the time of solely village and villagers. Every needful thing was available in the village.

After arrival of the Britishers the management was badly disturbed, they captured the villages and started business based on money which diverted the whole system of the common people. Thence money became the main source of selling and purchasing things. The Britishers arrived in India on condition of the trade only. They started industrial revolution which badly affected the life of the countrymen. They were in search of the new market for their products and raw material, which was easily found in India. The Britishers were not satisfied by the local government of the village or *Panchayats* (the group of the selected villagers). They created the new
scenario of governance through the Zamidars group who were declared as the landlords. They were authorized, to sell and purchase the land which was previously not in regular custom. Those landlords had become the real representative of the Britishers in the villages among the common people. They were ruling in their own way. In this way the innocent people of the villages were tortured and exploited by them. Those landlords had made their own rules and laws for collection of taxes and revenues, as they liked. They cheated and befooled the common men to get them deprived of their own capacity of paying the same. In the stories and novel of Premchand the villagers are the main source of reflecting all these socio-reality of exploitation in peculiar style. Some stories are good examples of the Zamidari system, casteism and the Britisher's intention of arrival in India. Such stories are Sadgati, Kafan, Garib ki Hai, Sava Ser Gehun and Atmaram. The Britishers formed the new acts for settlement of land permanently so that the Indian industrialists could pay their entire attention to the land and agriculture. They intended to do so in order to divert their attention from small industries, crafts, hand made things on small and large scale which could provide opportunity for a market of London and Lancashire. As a historical critic Karl Marx had mentioned in his book 'Capital vol I/Chapter V/part V that-“Angrezee kapdon ke udyog ne Bharat ke udyog per gehra prabhav dala” (Raza 84).

The mode of transport proved a boon to India for today's requirements to establish railway lines and other means of transportation but its aim was for the import of the things of commodity. This also caused the civilization in the towns which promoted the public escaping from the rural areas. In search of job, people used to migrate from villages to the cities as a result of frustration of being exploited in village.
In this era freedom of press came into existence which continued to develop day by day as the means of exploring information, where-ever it could reach by the distant far approachable places to teach lesson and preach the new dimensions of the so called emerging country in the British regime. The Britishers campaigned for their Christianity among the poor Indians who were traditionally followers of Hinduism or Islam as their chief intention was to establish Christianity in India.

In this period many the movements and revolutions for reforming the society were initiated such as Brahma Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Bharat Samaj Sudhar society, Ramkrishna Mission, Mohammaedan literary society, Indian association, Scientific society etc. They were organized for the harmony of religious social and cultural reforms. The protest of the customs or superstitions was not the result of any revolution or revolt but it was a trial of reform by grievances of the customs existed in the social life.

Before analysing the political events incorporated in the stories of Premchand it would be appropriate to know about the political background of the period of Premchand. In ancient India the political management was under the age is of Brahmins and Kshatriyas on the basis of higher castes. The other castes had to follow their orders. Till the arrival of the Mughal Empire only the rich people could possess the authority to interfere in the political affairs that took over management on behalf of the king or worked like mediators. Meanwhile the Mughal rulers accepted the local conventional rituals so the political chaos could not arise among the common people. It changes when the Britishers took over the governance; they declared the Indian culture as of lower standard. They harmed the Indian Feudal arrangement and promoted capitalism fed by British Imperialism. The story of misbehaves dominance and helplessness is hidden behind the revolution of 1857 which had particular
economic and political causes behind religious believes. The English people used to apply brutality during management and governance as they co-operated Christian missionaries in their religious activities. It is a fact that the missionaries made mockery of Indian religions and culture. These causes aroused sedative emotions among the Indians against the Britishers which appeared through Indian policemen in the very beginning. Though in this major revolution for freedom the Indians failed and the English succeeded yet the Englishmen lost their mental balance as a patient of mental disorder. They controlled the havoc through exploitation and harassment. They propagated communal divide to break unity between Hindus and Muslims. Gradually the situations of Indian politics were shaken and became out of control. The wise English administrator Alen Aktawien Hume thought that some institution should be established for co-ordination, brotherhood and unity among the Indians and Britishers and Lord Daffrin accepted that proposal. The Indian congress party was established on 28 December 1885. The English regime always followed the proverb of divide and rule. During that period, the English government tried to crush the medium of access of news to the common people. On account of suppression of press as many as 350 printing presses, 300 news papers and more than 500 editions of books had been seized between 1910 to 1919. Some revolutionary thinkers believed in violence to end the injustice so they exercised protest by creating violence. The massacre unforgettable assassination of the 'Jallianwalla Bagh' was the moment in the form of an unrecoverable sore of the English brutality and hopelessness in 1919. Then the congress party’s convention at Lahore in 1929 is a mile-stone in the Indian political history in which declaration of the complete freedom was resolved.

Gandhi started civil disobedience movements and breaking Salt Act. At the same time Bhagat Singh and his accompanying comrades were sentenced to death and
Gandhi made an appeal against it before the Britishers but Lord Irwin rejected his appeal and after sometime Gandhi Irwin pact was signed which benefited to get the political prisoners released from prisons. In between these uncertainties the British regime declared separate nationality to Dalits. In protest of this declaration Gandhiji declared to keep fast for forty one days.

Meanwhile the nationalist movement had been gathering momentum all over the country. In April 1936, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Indian National Congress. Under his leadership, socialistic trends became obvious within the movement. Several Indian writers of the time were already inclined towards socialism notably Premchand. These writers earnestly wished to see inequalities removed from the social and the economic spheres. It was in these circumstances that the Progressive Writers’ Association was born (Nath 9).

In Premchand’s literature the influence of these socio-political happenings and miss-happenings can easily be found as his aim behind jotting literature was to gain freedom so that he could evoke the common people to devote and sacrifice themselves for attaining freedom, and proceeding towards the freedom movement. He is such a writer who is beyond being fortunate that his first volume of his stories caused to resist of mismanagement the English and recognized as a matter of sedition.

A question always strives in the mind of a critic about Premchand's relevancy in present era. After the deep study of his works it could be clarified now. His selection of themes and his treatment to those problems formed the marks of his relevancy. His fiction basically based on the issues which can never ever be ended in
the coming age also until the desire of dominance hidden inside the nook of the heart. The fundamental characteristics of Indian society is unity in diversity because there are variety of caste, creed, colour, class and living standards of the Indian people. This division of the Indian society was according to the occupation. This fact has been mentioned as *Varna Vyavastha* in the mythological books.

Equality and fraternity, culture and love have been the golden dreams of idealists since the beginning of human society. Religious founders have made a continuous but futile effort to make these dreams a reality through religious, moral and spiritual codes. Mahatma Buddha, Jesus Christ, Hazrat Mohammed and other prophets and religious leaders tried to raise the edifice of equality on a foundation of morality. But none of them succeeded and today the difference between high and low is sharper than ever before (Nath 96).

The writer or a man of letters is the person who is responsible to find out and to define the basic factors of the classified structure of the society. This is an essential task to defend, conserve and preserve the national culture. During the prolonged period of imperialism and colonialism the traditional cultural values of the lexical rituals were demolished.

Premchand’s novels are the greatest contribution to the Indian society and the literature of Urdu and Hindi. He is one of the effective fiction writer, rather than preliminary writers of Urdu and Hindi novelist, who exposed the warps of social norms and reality of his contemporary age before the readers. It helps in arousing to get the major population of the country with the body and eternal soul of its common inherited culture.
In Hindi and Urdu there was a conventional pattern of stories pertaining to mythological, romantic and fairy tales but in the nineteenth century modern fiction can be treated as an observation of a search in the field of literature. Its beginning belongs to same regions as the schools established by the Britishers, emerging of a new middle class etc. In that premises of objectives there was neither rural and urban inconvenience nor cultural life of local society Premchand’s pen is remarkable which could make an approach to the villages and the streets of small towns. For Premchand, art was not for art's sake, it was entirely utilitarian. As Premchand wrote in his anthology 'Kuchh Vichar' -

*Literature is the image of its own age. The emotions and ideas which shake the hearts of the people, put impression on the literature (Premchand 8).*
Works Cited


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