

The eighteenth century is marked by rapid social development in England. A tirade of change is seen in the social, economic and political vistas of the Englishmen. The coffee-houses as a den for social gatherings mushroom, journalism makes its proper appearance. Gossips, <sup>petty gossip</sup> tittle-tattle makes its way into the print, education reaches the wider section of the population, aristocracy is <sup>changed to</sup> transmuted to gentility, and middle class makes its presence felt strongly. After the <sup>hateful</sup> abominable execution of the monarch in the previous century the people were learning to be more tolerant of their neighbour, to live together in harmony, even if they did not belong to the same political or religious fraction. They treasured civilization and addressed any sort of differing view by polite, refined literary work under the disguise of satire. The satire comes into <sup>existence</sup> prevalence in the 18th century due to the unfortunate union of politics and literature, as the writers were used to criticize either Whigs or Tories and to propagate their respective political agendas.

The foreman of this genre is Jonathan Swift. His pleasure in ridiculing was far greater than his desire to correct, unlike Addison. Swift displays, like all moralists, the faults and vices of humanity, be he does not seem to have any hope of reforming them. Instead of making, like Addison, for cordiality he leads the reader towards <sup>hating</sup> <sup>human race</sup> misanthropy and pessimism. His habitual weapon is scorn; he <sup>taunt</sup> jeers at what he <sup>dislikes</sup> detests and excels in exposing the absurdity of human life. As Emily Legouis remarks, his satire "instead of warming like a flame corrodes like an acid".

His prose-satire A Tale of a Tub (1704)

is a story of diverging tastes of three brothers <sup>different/separate</sup> who represents Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism and Calvinistic Dissent. The core of the narrative, however, presents an <sup>energetic</sup> effervescent attack on Catholic additions to, and Protestant detractions from the fundamental doctrines of the church, doctrines metaphorically expressed as a coat which the brothers alter according to the whims and fashions that they contortedly justify. Written from the point of view of an anglican who wished to show up the folly and wickedness of other religious communions, Swift ends up exposing the folly of Anglican church — and the end of the <sup>attack</sup> onslaught finds all <sup>truthfulness & religion</sup> theologies in ruin. As an ironic exposure of human <sup>though</sup> infirmities, The Tale of a Tub is a masterpiece, <sup>though</sup> its unrelieved cynicism makes it oppressive reading at times. To quote Compton Rickett, "There is no fiercer attack in the language than this attack on the churches."

The Battle of the Books, presents a satire on the pretensions of modern literature. It shows a fierce contrast between classical literature and its modern vernacular rival. The modern literature is metaphorically expressed a pro-'modern' spider who spins his dirty web from his own entrails and the pro-'ancient' bee who goes to nature, in order to produce "the two noblest of things... sweetness and light." Swift ridicules this futile academic controversy that had been a raging <sup>to</sup> topic debate in the England of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Gulliver's Travels, his most widely read book is a terrible satire on humanity. Swift, under the cloak of fantastic stories, satirized the politics of his day, the religious quarrels, the warm wars of ambition, the lucubrations of science and also the very nature of man and the whole human

species. It records the four voyages of a surgeon Lemuel Gulliver in four astounding countries.

The first book tells of his voyage and shipwreck in Lilliput, where the inhabitants are as tall as one's thumb. The littleness of humanity is exposed in the petty quarrels of these dwarfs. The two great parties of the dwarfs, the Little endians and the Bigendians who plunge their country into a ~~bit~~ civil war over a trivial question as to which end the egg is to be broken, satirizes the politics of his own day. The style is simple and convincing and as good as Defoe's masterpiece.

On the second voyage Gulliver is abandoned in Brobdingnag, where the inhabitants are giants and everything is done on a gigantic scale. The manners of humanity seems all the more <sup>strong/powerful</sup> stark in the face of these huge creatures. When Gulliver stoutly boasts on the history, institutions and ambitions of Great Britain, the Brobdingnag King <sup>implying</sup> disparagingly comment human beings to be "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the Earth".

In the third voyage Gulliver continues his adventures in Laputa, which is a fierce satire upon all the scientists and philosophers. It ~~is~~ is in this voyage, we encounter mental aberration and terrible anguish of the ~~St~~ Struldbruggs, condemned to an immortality of slow decay, "a mortifying light" which <sup>kills</sup> quells his "keen appetite for perpetuity of life".

The last voyage brings us

to the land of Houyhnhnms, a merciless satire is unleashed by Swift here. ~~Horses~~ Horses are the superior and the ruling animals but the Yahoos, having an appearance of men, live in unspeakable degradation. Though the Yahoos have all signs of a modern civilization, they lack passion. On this way back to England Gulliver <sup>avoids</sup> shuns all kinds of human company and prefers the stable as he claims "may horses understand me tolerably well". Mind, body, soul, reason and passion seem to be angrily disjointed.

Gulliver's Travels is perceived as a dark howl of rage against humankind, a howl which echoes the gloom of Swift's last years. It venomously projects this general hatred for "that animal called man". In the words of W. J. Long, "he often use his verse to ~~stoke~~ shock the new-born modesty by pointing out some native ugliness which his diseased mind discovered under every beautiful exterior."

The perfectly simple style has an incomparable exactness and precision. Vivid detail is punctuated with humour which presents the most improbable <sup>not true</sup> extravagances with such a gravity that <sup>acquire</sup> procures belief in them. Therefore it enjoys the privilege of amusing children while making men think.

Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent literary personalities of the 18<sup>th</sup> century England. Dr. Johnson was a man of numerous feathers in his hat — a poet, a critic, an essayist, a journalist, an editor and also a great human being.

whose writings are significant for their moral discourses.

Dr Johnson produced a bi-weekly called The Rambler the essays of which has essential moral themes. The morality preached by Johnson were practical and not merely theoretical.

Johnson contributed a series of weekly essays entitled The Idler to the Universal Chronicle. In these essays Johnson frequently attempted a somewhat lighter touch, as in his satirical account of their critic, Dick Minim. But the work does not bear the stamp of Johnson's spontaneous genius, but seems laboured.

Briefly mention Goldsmith.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of a great number of literary forms like the heroic couplet, classical imitation in the poetry of the times, rise of prose and also of satire. Satire formed an inherent part of the daily newspapers, periodicals, journals etc. The periodicals of Addison and Steele, The Spectator and The Tatler, make use of Satire to a great extent on the different classes of the society, bringing about their flaws for the public to realise, unlike Swift whose eyes were discerned only to dig out the ugly interior under every beautiful exterior.