

Novel means, "a long work of prose fiction containing characters and action portrayed in the form of a plot. Its aims to present a picture of real life in the historical period and society in which it is set"

The origin of the novel lay in the medieval romance, a fantastic tale of love and adventure, itself derived from the ballads and fragments of epic poems sung by the wandering medieval singer or musician.

In 1350 Boccaccio wrote a world-famous collection of love stories in prose, entitled the 'Decameron'. Such short stories are called in Italian 'novelle'. The term originally meant a 'fresh story', but gradually came to signify a story in prose as distinguished from a story in verse, which continued to be called a romance. It is more formally defined as "a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people"

It is the loosest form of the literary art, but its very freedom from all limitations allows it to give a fuller representation of real life and character than any

thing else can provide. It is a very effective medium for the portrayal of human thought and action.

A novel has a plot and to a great extent the characters reveal themselves and their intentions in dialogues. Story need not be made up of exactly similar parts facing each other or around an axis, showing the quality of being similar or equal in position exists and the final part of story in which matters are explained or settled.

The novel has no rigid framework, and authors have taken full advantage of the freedom this affords them. The modern novel has the tendency to subordinate action to psychology, to find the central theme in the mental and spiritual development of the characters rather than in their physical adventures. W. H. Hudson remarks - "the novel is the most <sup>flexible</sup> classic and irregular of all the great forms of literary expression".

Below are the characteristics of the novel.

Plot:

Plot and characters are the two most important elements of the

novel. It is a subject to debate whether plot is most important for the novel or character. Henry James says: "Character, in any sense in which we can get at it, is action, and action is plot, and any plot which hangs together, even if it pretends to interest us only in the fashion of a Chinese puzzle, plays upon our emotion, our suspense, by means of personal references. We care for people only in proportion as we know what people are."

E.M. Forster distinguishes between plot and story. A story according to him is a narrative of events arranged in their time <sup>21/11/11</sup> sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on <sup>21/11/11</sup> causality. The king died and the queen died is a story. The king died, and then the queen died of grief is a plot. It is in a story we say 'and' 'then'. If it is in a plot we ask 'why'. A story satisfies only <sup>21/11/11</sup> curiosity but a plot can be properly understood by intelligence and memory.

According to W.H. Hudson the <sup>21/11/11</sup> raw <sup>21/11/11</sup> material out of which a plot is made is life. The plot of a novel should possess a substantial value and genuine human meaning. The



historical novel. Sir Walter Scott began it in 18th century. The historical novel not only takes its setting and some characters and events from history, but makes the historical events and issues crucial for the central characters and narrative. Some of the greatest historical novels also use the protagonists and actions to reveal what the author regards as the deep forces that drive the historical process. Examples of historical novels are like Scott's 'Ivanhoe', Dickens's 'A Tale of Two Cities', George Eliot's 'Romola', Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' and so many are there. The novelist makes the skeleton of history alive by filling colour and imagination.

Psychological novel -

The credit for having written the first English novel of character or psychological novel is almost unanimously given to Samuel Richardson for his 'Pamela' or, "Virtue Rewarded". Pamela is the story of a sentimental but shrewd young woman who, by prudently safeguarding her harassed chastity, succeeds in becoming the wife of a wild young gentleman instead of his corrupted morally servant girl. The distinction between the novel of incident

novelist is not concerned with the mere trivialities which lie upon the surface of existence, but with passions, conflicts and problems which however their forms may change, belong to the essential nature of life.

The plot of a novel should result from growth and ~~from growth and~~ not from handling or controlling skilfully. There are two kinds of plot. The first one is the novels of loose plots and the second, ~~the second~~ one is the novels of organic plots.

In the novels of the first kind the story is formed of many detached incidents which have no necessary and logical connection among themselves. In such novels the story derives its ~~unity~~ unity not from the machinery of the action, but from the character of the hero who serves as the centre and binds the otherwise scattered incidents together.

In the novels of the organic plots separate incidents are not treated episodically; they are dovetailed together as integral components of a definite plot pattern. In writing a novel of this kind it is necessary to make an entire plan of the story ~~plot pattern~~ from

the beginning to the end before starting the work.

### \* Three Methods of narrating the story

\* The Direct Method: It is the most usual way of telling the story. The novelist <sup>and!</sup> <sup>etc</sup> assumes the role of a <sup>historian</sup> <sup>historian</sup> and narrates the story from the outside. He is <sup>omniscient</sup> omniscient who is believed to know everything that happens.

### \* The autobiographical method

In this method the novelist writes in the first person. He identifies himself with one of his characters and writes an imaginary autobiography. A few novels of this type are Robinson Crusoe, The Vicar of Wakefield and Jane Eyre.

### \* Documentary Method

In this method the story is narrated by means of letters.

### \* Characters:

Characters in a novel should be life-like. A good novelist succeeds in portraying his men and women as real live characters to us. There are two types of characters. The first one is round and the second one is flat. Flat characters were called 'humours' in the 17th century. A flat



Character is one centering around a single idea or quality. Lacking any complexity, such a character never does anything around a single idea or quality, unexpected. The really flat character can be expressed in one sentence such as "I never will desert Mr Micawber!" One advantage of the flat characters is that they ~~so conceal~~ are easily recognized whenever they come in. A flat character is delightful only in comedy. Tragic flat character is likely to become a bore.

A <sup>well</sup> round character must be capable of surprising the reader in a convincing manner. It has the incalculability of life about it. It must be accompanied by an organization of traits or qualities.

### Dialogue:

It should be an organic element and an inseparable part of the novel, and should really contribute, directly, either to the movement of the plot or to the elucidation of the characters in their relations with it. It

It should be really and fully effective, should be natural, appropriate and dramatic. The novelist should take care that the language employed in conversation is