UNIT 14 DICKENS'S HUMANISM AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

Structure

14.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we shall define humanism as a doctrine that challenged perception in the Eighteenth Century and shall also look at **Charles Dickens** and his humanistic concerns in two of his works. We hope to have explained the concept of humanism (theoretical) as well as examined the way it works in an author like **Dickens** (practically).

14.1 INTRODUCTION

First of all we need to understand the nature of the term **humanism** – what it is and how it is relevant to our times. Let us begin by saying that humanism is a doctrine at the centre of which lies the interests of human beings in our world. This doctrine has its basis in the understanding that human beings have the capability of grasping the truth of their environment, both natural and social. Moreover, this doctrine believes that human beings can challenge, the state of affairs around them if they are convinced that it is not conducive to the principles of equality and dignity in society.

How is humanism pertinent to us today? Faced, as we are with rampant inequality, injustice and exploitation, humanism would put on us the responsibility of questioning the might of the ruling forces in our midst. We note today that a large number of countries in the world are driven by a small section of economically powerful men and women. We find it needless to mention that these countries are led by what we may call imperialist powers today. Having said that, let us trace the origins of humanism.

14.2 HUMANISM: THE BEGINNINGS

The doctrine of humanism emerged in Europe in a big way in the nineteenth century. Indeed, it had a long and inspiring history linked with the onset of capitalism much earlier. Do you know when capitalism struck roots in Europe? Of course, no one can give you a definitive date when capitalism began. Faint steps of approaching capitalism can be heard in English literature as early as the fourteenth century when

Geoffrey Chaucer wrote his *Canterbury Tales*. In this poem, he talks of the existence of certain social groups that have asserted their economic influence against medievalist notions of rigid hierarchy and religious stranglehold. These groups can be seen in *The Canterbury Tales* as stressing their individual importance against one and all, riding rough shod as it were over the ones who stand in their way. This also is the beginning of the humanist approach in Europe.

But these are only faint echoes of the phenomenon we are talking about. A couple of centuries later, however, England and other countries of Europe became witness to a strong class of merchants and traders who offered a great challenge to aristocracy and Kingship. The merchants and traders of Europe worked very hard at this time to produce goods and earn profit through their buying and selling. They also at the same time ran a mighty campaign against the ideology of orthodoxy and medievalist interests, giving the lie to the popular belief that aristocrats and kings were made of a different stuff, that they were superior to the rest of the people. **Shakespeare**, one of the greatest humanist writers, presented kings as given to pettiness, trickery and intrigue. One could hardly see any 'divinity' in their deeds and actions. At the same time, **Shakespeare** depicted in his plays the ups and downs of ordinary life and showed that the lowest of the low in society hid in their hearts great treasures of human experience. A large number of 'minor' characters in **Shakespeare**'s plays, particularly comedies, exhibit the trait of honesty, simplicity and goodness in face of the masters who usurp, cheat and kill. In fact, **Shakespeare**'s delineation of Kings as carrying ordinary traits of guile, trickery and double-dealing goes to prove that they were nothing more that ordinary mortals. This insight into human behaviour, irrespective of where men and women were born, in high class or low, soon gave rise to widespread criticism and rejection of the concept of high birth. As capitalism grew all over Europe from strength to strength, with the accompanying fall of the nobility on the wayside, conditions were created in society to pave the way for the realisation of true equality among human beings.

Exercise 1:

1. What do you understand by the term *humanism?*

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2. How is Shakespeare one of the greatest humanistic writers of all times?

14.3 THE AGE OF REASON AND HUMANISM

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought in the wake of their prosperity and increased productivity a new phenomenon of radical change. **Raymond Williams** in his *The Nineteenth Century Novel* has emphatically stated that such a change decisively occurred in the year 1848, the year of social upheavals, revolutions and the publication of **Karl Marx**'s *Communist Manifesto.* These happenings reflected the rise of the humanist belief that equality and classlessness could alone ensure a lasting happiness on the earth, and not any divine intervention from above. Humanism, in this sense, also indicated the likely fall of divinity and religion from the high pedestal on which they had been placed till then.

Two things have been said so far. **First**, the term 'humanism' dates back to the Renaissance in Europe. A derivative from 'human,' humanism stands for the common bond of humanity, a bond that exists among human beings. In this thought-system, the human occupies primary importance, not the divine. It places the bond of fellowship even above the filial bond. Hence, individual strength and will receive great stress in Renaissance humanism. **Second**, there is a specific kind of humanism emerging in the nineteenth century. Humanism in the nineteenth century has undergone a major change and due to the specific historical condition in the nineteenth century it acquires a different meaning in this period, far away from the sixteenth or seventeenth century sense of the word.

Between these two, it is the second variety of humanism that is significant in **Dickens**'s case. Taking this up, we see that among many, there are *two major* conflicting forces in nineteenth century Europe – forces of commercialism and those of humanism. In such a state of affairs, there would be no escape, as indeed there wasn't, for the individual who was caught in this conflict as if this were a condition of one's life. Life in the nineteenth century is subsumed by the new phenomenon threatening the domestic sphere. In fact, gradually or fast, all bonds belonging to the private sphere of the individual are corroded by the effect of commercialism. As a consequence, humanism appears to be in a state of crisis in the nineteenth century, locked as it finds itself in a life-and-death struggle with the governing forces of the day.

How do individuals respond to this new 'condition of life' that on the one hand promises prosperity and on the other devastates human efforts? This is precisely the dialectic of nineteenth century Europe. The age is dynamic, yet it offers no constructive vision since the ruling forces of the day constantly check the urge to realise equality in life. This problem is the root cause of the crisis in Europe in the nineteenth century. It is not strange that one finds this issue at the centre of **Dickens**'s novels.

14.4 HUMANISTIC CONCERNS IN DICKENS

It is not for nothing that **Dickens** portrays a gloomy world in almost all of his novels. It is the actual living condition of people that **Dickens** captures in his fiction. There really are 'hard times,' there really is a 'bleak house' coexisting with 'great expectations. ' One can witness in **Dickens** an awareness of this dialectic of his age. The author is also acutely aware of the crisis fast approaching and destroying the life supporting systems of the day. **Dickens** sharply responds to this phenomenon through his novels, with a variety of characters – good and bad and mixed. *Great Expectations* would be an adequate example to bring out the truth of the above statement. What one confronts in this novel are a whole range of characters belonging to almost all streams of life. What is interesting is that the distinction between the good and evil is consciously blurred in the text. This deliberate act of the author aims to reject the canonised conventional notion of good and evil. The state machinery is no longer benevolent/good and the criminals no longer evil or malicious. We get a Magwitch in the text who, if a criminal is also one of the most humane characters portrayed by **Dickens**. It is more than evident in the text that people involved in the existing affairs have lost faith in the newly emerged social trends. *Great Expectations* turns out to be a political statement against industrial England. Thus we see **Dickens** as a major writer of broader concerns in the nineteenth century – we are face-to-face with the fact that he struggles to restore faith in humanism through strong literary effort.

Whether this humanism is evolved in the course of action or works as an overarching presence in the text is a difficult question to answer. Here is an author who is constantly haunted by the idea of a mechanised life, devoid of feelings and emotions. In the beginning of *Great Expectations*, the reader finds it difficult to grasp the intention of the author. What should one do to connect meaningfully the countryside and the marshes with a character like Joe? It is only later, that this side of the world shines bright when contrasted with the city life of London. With these two contrasted worlds one actually gets a view of the time – from the countryside to the main city; from personal to an entirely professional relationship at work; from the early social relations to the ones presented later. Pip's movement in the text is precisely a movement towards a new tempting and corrupting age from the warm domestic corners of an old one. It is in this perspective offered to us that we witness **Dickens**'s attitude towards his society, an attitude informed by **Dickens**'s deep humanism.

In his novels, **Dickens** directly addresses the issues and questions related with humanism in the nineteenth century. There seems a plan behind what **Dickens** attempts in his fiction. This explains the overarching presence of humanism in **Dickens**'s works. Wedded as **Dickens** is to the bond of love and fellowship in life, he skips no effort to assert their significance in his representation. More importantly, humanism evolves in **Dickens**'s novels as a positive vision for the future. In addition to being a statement of purpose made through one's writing, as it were, it is a creatively worked-out phenomenon, built in as it is in the fabric of the text – in the pattern of events, episodes and situations. Thus, there is no conflict between the authorial intention and actual rendering, with the author ever succeeding to depict the crisis inherent in nineteenth century society. **Dickens** clearly notes that endangered by the progressive commercialism of the day, there is hardly any scope left for the survival of human feelings. **Dickens**'s world stands completely overpowered by the market forces. This 'professional' (as against natural and spontaneous), narrow and self-seeking way of life demands revision, if not the extinction of the humanist ideals in the social environment. Nineteenth century Europe/England witnessed this inevitable crisis and it is this inevitability of circumstances that introduces in **Dickens**'s novels a strong streak of sentimentalism. The latter arises from the pessimism inherent in the age itself, where humanism becomes almost unachievable and remains a vision of the writer. The loss of a clear closely-knit familial life and the fear of the fast devouring market forces make the atmosphere grim, the situations and characters sentimental in **Dickens**'s novels. Hence, humanism stands as a dream difficult to realise or only possible of partial fulfilment in **Dickens**.

Humanism is not static, it grows and it develops. It learns from social experience and is aware that people imbibe as much from the world they live in as they contribute to it. Humanism also faces tough challenges from those in society whose conduct it critiques and counters. The process of doubt and self-doubt within humanism equips it with the power to examine and analyse itself. Such a process is at work in **Dickens**'s fiction. Let us have a look at this process to grasp the nature of humanism in evolution in **Dickens**'s fiction next.

Exercise 2:

1. Write a short note (250 words) on Dickens's humanism.

Since we have already read discussed *A Tale of Two Cities* at great lengths in the earlier units (8-13), I shall take up two of his other novels *Oliver Twist, Great Expectations* and a short story to discuss a few aspects of **Dickens**'s humanism.

14.4.1 *Oliver Twist*

Here, the young child Oliver finds himself thrown into the company of petty thieves – their planned activity overseen and supervised by Fagin. **Dickens** does not spare any effort to show these criminals as the most crooked and insensitive in the world. They encircle Oliver to make him understand that he has no option but to work as a member of their team. Oliver's misery is further compounded by the fact that he remains ever the target of their ridicule. Gradually, this pack of cut purses/snatchers assumes proportions of well-managed social endeavour with its own laws of governance, profit making and hierarchy. For a time we forget the specific operation of the crime-machine run by Fagin and wonder whether **Dickens** is pointing an accusing finger at the larger goings-on in the city of London. There appears in *Oliver Twist* a close similarity between Fagin the criminal and an entrepreneur pursuing his business of profit making with meticulous care. The more we watch the doings of Fagin's associates, the more we realise that they represent a ruthless chain of activity extremely harmful to the majority of simple and honest members of English society. In this novel, we see **Dickens**'s humanism in a number of layers.

The first layer is that of Oliver's oppression by a small group of people. Here, our sympathy lies with the child Oliver who is physically as well as mentally unequal to the rest of the people at Fagin's place. We relate well with a child who is helpless before a cynical band of robbers and pickpockets. At a few places in this depiction, however, we become conscious of the relative helplessness of the second rung of the gang before Fagin. We start thinking that some time in the past, the present members of the group were also brought here as young children and made to undergo the fate Oliver is now facing. This implies that Oliver also at a later date might become a burglar efficient in his job of robbing people. By placing ourselves in the position of these gang-members, we might even appreciate the compulsions of the trade Fagin's followers finally joined.

14.5 HUMANISM AND THE PORTRAYAL OF POVERTY IN DICKENS

Dickens presents poverty with a seriousness not generally witnessed in the writing of his contemporaries. It comes across as a large phenomenon in which all the people of England, rich and poor, the powerful and the weak, are actors. They are depicted by **Dickens** as interlinked, one responsible for the position of the other. It is interesting to see in **Dickens** a passionate involvement with the fate of the deprived – he is sympathetic towards them and identifies himself with their cause. For **Dickens**, the poor are born to circumstances beyond their control, the circumstances being seen as strong structures of social life with entrenched codes of loyalty, obedience and fatalistic acceptance of the ways of existence.

Depiction of poverty in **Dickens** is actually a depiction of the English reality. This aspect of the English life is captured in **Dickens** from almost all angles. Poverty becomes a reality in **Dickens**'s novels, more so because **Dickens** focuses it from the perspective of the rich as well as the poor. This is what makes **Dickens**'s depiction of poverty a reality as if the characters were real living men under real circumstances, hence, **Dickens**'s realism.

It is precisely from this point of **Dickens**'s realism that the depiction of English life becomes approachable, specifically the portrayal of society's underbelly. The way **Dickens** portrays the underpinning community points towards the author's special concern for this part of the society. There are innumerable cases in **Dickens**'s novels where the countryside, the lower quarters are focused and are brought in sharp comparison with the city and the mainstream sectors of the society. When contrasted,

one can clearly grasp the nature of life in the 'dingy' areas and in the highly affluent ones. What is visible through **Dickens**'s depiction of these two life-styles, poles apart from each other, is the author's tender concern towards the poor and his abhorrence for the rich. In **Dickens**, the tendencies related to commercialism are associated with the well-to-do class and in the same manner in which the values of humanism are clearly a part of the commoner's way of life.

It is significant to note that **Dickens** in his novels attaches the qualities of sentiment and the faculty of imagination with the 'unimportant' insignificant people. On the other hand, the rich and wealthy are portrayed in **Dickens** as people of 'palpable facts' and nothing more. Here again, one can notice the mechanical life of a class fast emerging and consolidating itself, threatening at the same time the life of imagination and fiction which belongs to the oppressed in society. In this sense, one can gauge **Dickens**'s affiliation with the poor in his novels. This special concern for the author comes across through the very phenomenon that **Dickens** attempts to delineate in his works – the clash of two perspectives in nineteenth century England and the author's own position in this whole affair. As mentioned before poverty is a major issue in **Dickens**. It is a living reality of the time – one that the author tries to confront in his novels. While representing in his works this aspect of English life, a class of people getting crushed under the new way of life, which appears glorious and tempting but which only devours their person and their set of people. This is the hard reality, which **Dickens** projects in his writings. As a consequence, one witnesses an obvious sentimentalisation in **Dickens**. It also speaks of the writer's own fails to alter situations. In the next sections me shall examine Diocken's humanistic concern in one of his short stories – *Branch Line 1: The Signal Man.*

Dickens knows poverty and deprivation quite closely, to the extent in fact that he presents its disorienting and distorting ways in the realm of social life – he reveals a number of shocking features and characteristics of the behaviour of the poor folk, linking them up with broader trends of society. But does he, in his fiction, offer evidence of grasping the manner in which poverty is produced as a necessary consequence of individually controlled economic growth? Does he establish an unmistakable connection between the workers who collectively produce wealth and the individual entrepreneur who takes away the surplus produce? In answer to this, one can say that **Dickens** has a workable knowledge of this phenomenon in which the gap between the rich and the poor is shown as gradually increasingly. Also, **Dickens** puts the blame of unequal economic distribution squarely on the greed of the rich, their narrow vision of life and limited value system. In this phenomenon, however, the potentiality of a class vision on which a strong social resistance to counter developing trends, either among the entrepreneurs or the working masses, is overlooked.

The poor in **Dickens** are shown as kind, tolerant, sympathetic and humane, but not as struggling to make a unified sense of the world surrounding them. The hardworking individual among the deprived lot is shown as more or less isolated from the general developments in the environment. Still more, even the general developments in question have a kind of static character about them, they emerge in a similar manner across the breadth of his fiction as if the author had recognised it in terms of a given, Fate-like condition. In the latter fiction, **Dickens** appears more and more 'helpless,' finding, as it were, the emerging scenario too complex to rationally handle. There is that overarching capitalism which leaves no scope to the weak and wretched for ease and comfort. The different structures – legal, bureaucratic and social – that English capitalism has evolved over a couple of centuries become in later **Dickens** still more daunting than before. Why?

Is it since **Dickens** depicts them as somewhat neutral, outside the pale of social endeavour, or that the growing menace has the dimension of inevitability about it? In front of these structures in **Dickens**'s fiction, the innocent hardworking multitudes get projected as beings not constituting the human collectivism of a strong potential

easy victims of the social machinery. Where is the solution in, if any, in this scenario? **Dickens** the humanist would not accept the idea of Fate that controls peoples and societies in modern times. He finds the desired solution, an adequate answer to the challenge, outside capitalism, rejecting capitalism as inhuman, value-free and deeply individualistic. Capitalism reduces everything to the level of a dead entity, to be explored and manipulated for individual gain. Trading in death and destruction, capitalism becomes in **Dickens** synonymous with wealth that devours all.

We notice that it is beyond **Dickens** to grasp the truth of wealth as the product of human labour that is to be regulated along lines of needs and requirements of society at a given time. Thus, poverty for **Dickens** becomes one of the means of escaping capitalism. **Dickens**'s humanist concerns have a streak of transcendence and romanticism under which wealth becomes associated with evil and conversely poverty becomes the repository of virtue. **Dickens** understands the prevalent trends quite intimidating but in a sociological sort of a way where only the present is a matter of a realistic visualisation. One sees a great of sincere engagement with the issues in **Dickens**. However, **Dickens** looks neither at the past which contributes to the present trends nor to the future which the present contains in its embryo. **Dickens**'s vision is not historical. In fact, there is little in **Dickens** that indicates the possibility of replacement of the current trends with radically different ones in the approaching times.

Exercise 3:

1. How does Dickens portray poverty or the poor in his novels?

14.5.1 *Humanistic Concerns in No. 1 Branch Line : The Signal Man*

In order to explain another dimension of **Dickens**'s humanism, I take an example from a short story written by him. Look at the following quotation to have a view of the peculiar aesthetic and experience-related representation in **Dickens**'s fiction:

> *Had he much to do there? Yes, that was to say, he had enough responsibility to bear but exactness and watchfulness were what was required of him and of actual work – manual labour – he had next to none. To change the signal, to trim those lights and to turn this iron handle now and then, was all he had to under that head. Regarding those many long and lonely hours of which I seemed to make so much, he could only say that the routine of his life had shaped itself into that form, and he had grown used to it. He had taught himself a language down here – if only to know it by sight, and to have formed his own crude ideas of pronunciation, could be called learning it. He had also worked at frachons and decimals, and tried a little algebra; but he was, and had been as a boy, a hand at figures. Was it necessary for him when on duty always to remain in that channel of damp air, and could he never rise into the sunshine from below those high stone walls.*

"Had he much to do there" refers to the signalman by the narrator. "There" is used for the Branchline where the signalman works. The description of the line in the story makes it appear as a dark, dingy, gloomy place. Here, too, it is described as "that channel of damp air". In such an atmosphere, the narrator finds the signalman looking as ghostly as the place itself. The dead atmosphere is created from the very beginning. A correlative can be found between the environment that is decaying and the life of the Signalman. There is a sense of deterioration in both. The surroundings in which the Signalman lives are withering and so is his life. What constitutes the life of this man is his routine work of "exactness" and "watchfulness." One witnesses a

total isolation of the man from society. In course of time, he seems to have developed his own "crude ideas of pronunciation." The only association he seems to have with society is through the narrator, who in turn becomes a contrast to the signalman. The narrator seems to represent society confronting unsocial alienated life of the signalman. The question is: What causes this 'alienation' in the signalman's life?

As it is indicated in the passage, it is his duty that keeps him away from 'sunshine.' Sunshine here almost becomes symptomatic of the bright progressive society. What is significant to note here is that this world of sunshine thrives on the efforts and the duty of people like the signalman. This set of society lives in "damp air" and performs its dull mechanical work with exactness, in order to provide an enriched society. It is unfortunate that because they remain at the periphery, their efforts are hardly ever acknowledged.

Dickens deals extensively with the issue of dehumanisation in this short narrative. The mechanical way of life is focused in this story, which in turn speaks volumes of the lack of the humanistic way of life. What the narrator tells us is one story and what we read ourselves in the text – if we keep in mind the context of dehumanisation – is totally another. At the surface level, there is an enormous amount of the supernatural in the story. However, these abstract and unknown happenings become utterly real when read from a particular perspective that delves deep into the matter of the story. This transformation from the supernatural to the essential makes reality offered in the story grave and hard to bear. Another way of saying it would be that a first reading of the story acquaints us with the aspects of suspense and to the element of Gothic in it, whereas a second reading brings us to the more real aspects of the story that somehow go unnoticed in an initial reading of the narrative.

It is given, for instance, that the branch line "below" the post of the signalman is "a solitary and dismal place." On either side, there are huge walls that offer no view except for a strip of sky. The description of the signalman himself is no less grisly. The narrator is close to thinking him a spirit rather than a man. All these observations of the narrator help in the building of an environment for the events about to take place as the story proceeds. Nevertheless, they become concrete examples of dehumanisation of the lower masses in society. Obviously, the cause is nothing but the sheer commercialisation that is taking place in society at the time.

Dickens in his writing projects a mechanical world. A mechanical world inhabited by mechanical beings. The technique of dehumanisation is too frequently found in **Dickens**. This is because the life of the time shows almost no trace of living-feeling individuals. It is by showing the dehumanisation of individuals that **Dickens** is able to point towards the lack of humanism in his surroundings. Such instances are common in **Dickens**. Wemmick in *Great Expectations* and the signalman in *No. 1 Branch Line: The Signalman* are the case in point.

In the next section we shall examine the issue of dehumanisation in Dickens. We shall begin by looking at *Great Expectations* and then go on to talk about *No. 1 Branch Line: The Signalman.*

14.5.2 Dehumanisation in Dickens

What one gets in *Great Expectations* is a grave scenario of the city of London. Situated in the city are characters without any sense of fellow feeling. What binds individuals together is the personal interest in profit. It is a society based on values of profit and self-centeredness. Here, we come across a peculiar character – Wemmick who is everything that symbolises commercialism. However, these traits in him are limited to the place of his work in the city. His home is away from the city. Wemmick is a transformed identity. He characterises all humanistic traits in his place of living. Hence a double life led by Wemmick.

What is at issue here is the contrast between the machine-like society and an idealistic way of life. **Dickens** is able to present this through the character of Wemmick. Wemmick is equated to a post office in the text. This emphasises the lifelessness of English society of which **Dickens** is sharply critical.

Again, in the short story discussed above, **Dickens** attempts to convey a similar kind of lifelessness that exists at the meanest level. The range of commercialism and its consequences and effects are what **Dickens** focuses upon in the story. Just as Wemmick is equated to a post office by Pip in *Great Expectations,* the narrator also equates the signalman to a spirit. As a result, these characters cease to come across as human beings. They are seen as anything but living individuals. When people turn into objects, the situation automatically becomes grim. It is just the case in the short story where the signalman stands as just another dead part of the dead system. He contributes to society just as much as a machine does. That is all he is worth in the contemporary social system.

The signalman views death on its way taking lives and causing miseries. It is the horror of helplessness and impending disaster that makes the story so grim. One finds an exact parallel of this helplessness in the life of nineteenth century Europe, particularly England. The signalman becomes symbolic of a nineteenth century individual viewing death in the commercial way of life that is fast devouring people. A sense of helplessness is evident in **Dickens** himself who as a writer is faced with the calamity caused by Industrialism that has made life horrifying. It is precisely this that **Dickens** seems to convey through this story of the signalman. In this sense, **Dickens** seems to relate himself with the painful and distressing circumstances faced by the signalman in '*No. 1 Branch Line: The Signalman.*' The author's sensibility comes across in this story more so through the character of the signalman than the narrator. **Dickens** is not an observer but a co-sufferer.

Exercise 4:

1. Examine the issue of dehumanisation with reference to *No. 1 Branch Line: The Signalman.*

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2. Does the narrator share the humanistic concerns of Dickens?

14.6 LET US SUM UP

Finally, what is at issue in **Dickens** is the very fact of his time, the corrosive effect of commercialism over the striving forces of humanism. **Dickens** confronts this state of affairs through his writing. Even his short stories are compact with the hardcore problem of how to sustain a humanistic way of life, when everything around including one is turning into dead objects. There is a reversal of values in the nineteenth century where the profit motive overpowers all. When circumstances offer no rescue, when efforts yield nothing productive, there remains only remorse, pathos, horror and fatalism. Such emotions are common in **Dickens**. The problematic

question is: Is it a weakness in a writer to be sentimental and fatalistic in times that offer no constructive vision? There are problems indeed with **Dickens**'s humanism, particularly with respect to the way he relates to the society of his time.

Placed in the context of nineteenth century England, **Dickens** comes out as a powerful voice of Humanism that negates capitalism. But the problem of a realistic grasp of social forces remains – **Dickens** falls short of meeting the requirement of visualising sections of people as forces and classes. In consequence, his response remains subjective, idealistic and emotional. A social historian of England in fiction to an extent, **Dickens** falls short of approaching those humanistic heights reached by his literary counterparts in French, American and Russian fiction.

14.7 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Exercise 1:

1. Refer to Section 14.1
2. Refer to Section 14.4

Exercise 2:

1. Refer to Section 14.6

Exercise 3:

1. Refer to Section 14.6.1

Exercise 4:

1. Refer to Section 14.5.3
2. Refer to Section 14.5.3

SUGGESTED READING

You may like to consult the following books if you are interested in further reading on the novel.

1. Cross, John, *A Tale of Two Cities* in Tyson, A.E, ed., *Dickens; Modern Judgments*, London; Macmillan, 1968.
2. Fido, Martin, *Charles Dickens*, London; RKP, 1968.
3. Fielding, K.J. *Charles Dickens*, London: Longmans, 1958
4. Hobsbaum, Philip, *A Reader's Guide to Charles Dickens*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1972.

For material on the French Revolution, you may like to look at:

1. Cobban, Alfrecd, *Aspects of the French Revolution*, London: Paladin, 1971.
2. Rude', George, *Revolutionary Europe 1783-1815*, London: Fontana, 1964.

Other Background Material:

1. Goldberg, Michael, *Carlyle and Dickens*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972.
2. Lukacs, Georg, *The Historical Novel*, London: Merlin, 1962.