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RESEARCH ARTICLE

UTILITARIANISM IN HARD TIMES: AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Dickens was a great social reformer. He was from first to last a novelist with a purpose. *Hard Times* published in 1848 is a Classic of Dickens, and has a great motif behind it. It has no single purpose but a number of motifs. But the chief purpose of the novelist was to attack the educational system of Manchester in the then England. Because of the advancement in science and technology, the Victorian man is proud of and negates the sentiments and emotions which are worse and futile. Dickens shows us the one sidedness of the Victorian conscience and their belief in advancement of their society. Dickens shows us that the Victorian society at his time was more towards the logic of mind and was far away from the sentiments of heart. This paper is the exploration of the impact of Utilitarianism on the educational system of the England in the mid-nineteenth century. This paper on a broad spectrum highlights the utilitarian philosophy of the educational system in England during the reign of Queen Victoria.

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Introduction:-

Utilitarianism, the core of which is, as John Burgess Wilson (1958) says, “the greatest happiness for the greatest number,” (234) is real and kind in identity. As Michael Goldberg has pointed out, “Carlyle remained a hero to Dickens throughout his life” (2). However, under the influence of Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, Charles Dickens thinks utilitarianism is relatively battered, and as Carter and Mcrae (2001) say, his *Hard Times* “calls into question Jeremy Bentham’s theory of utilitarianism” (253). The threefold structure of the novel is in symmetry with its tripartite theme and perhaps with the three aspects of the battered utilitarianism that Dickens attacks in it. Book the first entitled “Sowing” implies that an individual is to open a cultivation in which he is to disperse the seeds of life in the England of Queen Victoria. “Reaping”, suggests that the man is to harvest what he has already cultured. And in the last book of “Garnering,” the ranch hand brings together his freshly harvested products to take them home. The subject of *Hard Times* is harmed utilitarianism abused in different aspects. Firstly, it is the criticism on the English Educational System, secondly it is the criticism of the Victorian social system and thirdly it is the attack on English economic system. But *Hard Times* is further more a book on education, sociology or economics. It is a literary art. As Arnold Kettle (1963) states, “the greatest novels of the nineteenth century are all, in their differing ways, novels of revolt” (88). *Hard Times* is no omission to this affirmation. In it, as Martin Stephen (2000) says, Dickens “moves from the criticism of individuals to the criticism of the whole societies” (239).

Educational Utilitarianism:-

In *Household Words*, a magazine partially owned by Dickens, he wrote:

"I saw a Minister of State, sitting in his closet; and round about him, rising from the country which he governed, up to the Eternal Heavens, was a low dull Howl of Ignorance.. . . I saw 30,000 children hunted, flogged, imprisoned, but not taught, all joined in this cry. . . . The Minister said, Harken to this cry. What shall we do to stay (stop) it?" But in the end, the Minister shrugged his shoulder and replied, it is a great wrong, but it will last many a time.' "Seven years later Dickens rewrote it again in the same magazine: "I don't like that sort of school. . . where the bright childish imagination is utterly discouraged. . . where I have never seen among the pupils, whether boys or girls, anything but little parrots and small calculating machines." (Dickens, 1854: 10).

This image of children as "little parrots and small calculating machines" is greatly expanded upon in the first two chapters of the book "Sowing" from the novel *Hard Times*, published in 1854. The utilitarian educational system in Coketown has made a huge inducement and Dickens attacks it on the whole rigorously. Dickens thinks this system is overemphasizing the reason of the intellect at the expense of the sense of the heart. At the outset of the novel we see from the first chapter that three men stand in front of a class of young students, and the speaker wants that his students should "stick to Facts" (*Hard Times*: 7), only because facts alone are wanted in life. The facilitators should instill in the minds of their students nothing other than specifics and root out everything else. They should educate entirely on facts for anything else is pretty fruitless to their future prospects. The characterization of the speaker lays a lot of emphasis on the one-sidedness of his utilitarian educational philosophy and was helped by the square wall of his forehead, by his mouth, which was wide, thin and stiff, by his voice, which was rigid, dry and dictatorial, by his hair, which bristled on the skirts of his blunt head, by his adamant carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders and . . . so on so forth. Thomas Gradgrind, a man of specifics and realities, is the flinty owner of the model school run by him, who advocates for nothing but Facts, hard Facts as in the text:

'Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these Children. Stick to Facts sir!' (*Hard Times*: 3).

Utilitarianism begins in *Hard Times* with the utilitarian philosophised man, who once was a parliamentarian is at present, a man of "Facts" and "calculations". A man who proceeds upon the principle that two and two makes four, and nothing over, and who is not to be talked into allowing for anything over. The grand speech above at the beginning of the novel is to Mr. M'Choamchild, the teacher of this utilitarian school and the instrument in the hands of Mr. Gradgrind whose will is to "stick to Facts" (*Hard Times*: 3) only and avoid the fancy and emotions, and for the new teacher. Mr. Gradgrind has such a physical appearance which reinforces the impression of his severity of temperament. He explains his theory of philosophy to a new teacher and a visitor before a class of children. He regards children as so many vessels to be filled with facts only. He believes in the functionality of no sensical educational approach. In his system there is no need of fancy; only facts are sufficient; reason is to impoverish imagination. He only advocates factual sciences, the products of the human intellect and are worthy enough to teach the students for their future. This man goes about with a rule, a pair of scales, and the multiplication table always in his pocket, ready to weigh and measure "any parcel of human nature". Logical inductions and self evident truths are formative and reliable to make the students to achieve their goals. Whatever results from the heart of a man is unreasonable and untruthful and it should be eliminated from the school curriculum, because it is of no use to the students and it can ruin their future. The school masters to be employed must have in their brains facts and facts and facts only. They must emphasize facts and calculations while educating the children. The new teacher in the Gradgrind's school has a head crammed with facts pertaining to a score of sciences, and he has been made to study several languages. And the author's comment on this schoolmaster is "rather overdone". If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more. Mr. M'choamchild the school teacher, in this experimental school who is to teach these students the facts only needed in life, is the tool in the hands of Gradgrind, who by his factual teaching and experience will make choke-full of children with facts and principles. He teaches facts to his pupils as Morgiana searches for victims in "*Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*". He is one of the one hundred and forty school masters turned simultaneously, from the training college where he had studied at the same time. He is well-versed in orthography, syntax and prosody, biography, astronomy, geography, the sciences of compound proportion, algebra, land surveying and levelling, and vocal music. If he had only learned a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more-a significant ironic remark which hits at the excessive knowledge of many subjects. From the chapter two of the first book of *Hard Times* Mr Gradgrind mentally introduced himself whether to his private circle of acquaintance or to the public in general. 'Boys and girls', for sir,

Thomas Gradgrind now presented Thomas Gradgrind to the little pitchers before him, who were to be filled so full of facts. He seemed a galvanizing apparatus, too, charged with a grim mechanical substitute for the tender young imaginations that were to be stormed away.

Bitzer the leading light student of Gradgrind, who defines a horse scientifically, is scornful both in feat and in character. He is remarkable for his unwholesome parlour, as well as for his aptitude in the Gradgrind system, cites a large number of pompous and lifeless words, as phrase which confuses the girl, who has all along regarded the horses as a symbol of grace and movement. The fashionable sensual description Bitzer makes signifies that M'chockumchild's education of facts has crammed his head with the outcomes of orientation and he is therefore, completely devoid of human warmth and imagination. As in the chapter second of book first of *Hard Times* Bitzer's definition of horse is as:

Bitzer, said Thomas Gradgrind. 'Your definition of a horse'. 'Quadruped. Gramnivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty four grinders, four eye-teeth and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth. Thus (and much more) Bitzer. (6)

Thus the definition of the horse as explained by Bitzer and his place in the classroom is strikingly giving us the idea of the utilitarian system of education in Coketown. From the beginning of the *Hard Times* Dickens makes Bitzer the purpose of our detestation. "The sandy freckles on his forehead and face" and his skin that is "unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge that he looked as though, if he were cut, he would white" (*Hard Times*: 5), make Bitzer a fine sufficient bump for our resentment. Bitzer also is a figure of satire in the hands of Dickens. He is the best product of the Gradgrind's model school. The author ironically describes him as having grown into an extremely clear-headed, cautious, prudent young man who is sure to rise in the world. His mind is so exactly regulated that he has no affections or passions. Bitzer is spying by nature. In the book second of chapter first of *Hard Times* Dickens mentions him as:

He held the respectable office of general spy and informer in the establishment, for which volunteer service he received a present of Christmas, over and above his weekly wage. He had grown into an extremely clear-headed, cautious, prudent young man, who was safe to rise in the world. His mind was so exactly regulated, that he had no affections or passions. All his proceedings were the result of nicest and coldest calculation; and it was not without cause that Mrs Sparsit habitually observed of him, that he was a young man of the steadiest principle she had ever known. Having satisfied himself, on his father's death, that his mother had a right of settlement in Coketown, this excellent young economist had asserted that right for her with such a steadfast adherence to the principle of the case, that she had been shut up in the workhouse ever since. It must be admitted that he allowed her half a pound of tea a year, which was weak in him: first because all gifts have an inevitable tendency to pauperise the recipient, and secondly, because his reasonable transaction in that commodity would have been to buy it for a little as he could possibly give, and sell it for as much as he could possibly get; it having been clearly ascertained by philosophers that in this is comprised the whole duty of man-not a part of man's duty, but the whole (115-16).

Bitzer therefore, is the element of curse and satire regarding the utilitarian education. The deceptive tales he tells Mrs Sparsit at the back of Bounderby and Louisa about their love affair and the lack of appreciation he does to Mr Gradgrind, when Gradgrind wants him to let Tom, the thief, free make him somewhat commendable our resentment. Tom Gradgrind is one of the clerks in the bank. When he mentions Tom by name he is rebuffed for disloyalty, but he is heard without attention when he refers without naming to a young man, an 'individual' who is an 'extravagant idler'. Bitzer luckily has developed the technique of avoiding all kinds of impediments from the paths of self-interest. In spiky distinction to Bitzer is Sissy Jupe whom Dickens makes a symbol of understanding, candour and loyalty. She is the daughter of the Circus Clown Signor Jupe. She on being deserted by her father grows up in the Gradgrind home. She acts as a companion to Louisa and the sick Mrs. Gradgrind. She is sensitive, loving, but she is a failure, when she is called upon to confront facts and figures as taught in Gradgrind School. Dickens mention in the first book of the chapter II of *Hard Times* when she is confronted by Mr. Gradgrind as:

Give me your definition of horse (Sissy Jupe thrown into the greatest alarm by this demand).

'Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!' said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general be hoof of all the little pitchers. 'Girl number twenty possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals! (12).

If she could not explain the definition of a horse, but still she is above facts. She believes in the life of fancy and imagination. She feels embarrassed when told by Gradgrind that her father should not call her “Sissy” but “Cecilia”. Her answers to a couple of more questions are found to be even more unsatisfactory. She is fond of flowers. She makes life more bearable for the Gradgrind’s when their mother, sick and impartial, she attends her, ails her and at the same time attends the school. Her progress at school is disappointing. She cannot give factional answers to any of the questions. And yet, it must be admitted, there is a core of truth in all her answers, however unsatisfactorily and ridiculous they may appear to be from the strictly academic point of view. Sissy is sincere enough to resist all difficulties; the nineteenth century civilisation imposes on her. The service she renders to the Gradgrind is weighty and valuable. Her relation to the Louisa is quite friendly in the beginning. In fact Louisa’s curiosity about the circus performance is traced by Gradgrind and bounded by her association with Sissy. When Sissy begins to stay under Gradgrind’s roof as her protégé, Louisa’s friendliness towards Sissy becomes even greater. Sissy tells the story of her life to Louisa and she speaks despairingly regarding the scanty progress that she is making at school. During the conversation between Sissy and Louisa in chapter IX of book first Dickens marks the words of Sissy as:

‘You don’t know’, said Sissy, half crying,
 ‘what a stupid girl I am. All through school hours I make mistakes.
 Mr. and Mrs. M’choakumchild call me up,
 over and over again, regularly to make mistakes.
 I can’t help them.
 They seem to come natural to me.’ (*Hard Times*: 11).

As Sissy could not go on the facts, still she is a good at heart. She has a courage with a brave initiative she tells Harthouse about the damage he has done to Louisa by having tried to win her heart and trying to prevail upon her to elope with him. She brings word from Louisa to him that Louisa will by no means see him again as long as he lives. She urges him to quit Coketown if you want to compensate the damage you have done. In another instant she rescues Tom from some of the retribution which he deserves. She sends Tom in a flash of inspiration from near the dying Stephen to take shelter in Sleary’s Circus. When she finds that the dying Stephen has given a clear indication that it was Tom who committed the robbery at the bank, she quietly whispers to Tom to slip away from the scene, advising him to go straight to Mr. Sleary’s Circus and take shelter there by mentioning her name. Subsequently, she accompanies Gradgrind to Mr. Sleary’s Circus and renders all possible help for dispatching Tom to some foreign land. Sissy is rather a heroine because she successfully performs the heroic actions she is expected to perform. What she does authenticates, as Wilber L Cross says, “a faith in the final outcome of human endeavour and a belief in immortality.” (187).

In chapter III of book first of *Hard Times* Mr. Gradgrind walks towards his model home from his model school. On going beyond the outskirts of the town he comes across the beautifully decked out travelling Circus Sleary’s Horse-riding, from which his new pupil happens to come. As he passed behind the booth of Circus, he sees as:

A space of stunned grass and dry rubbish being between him and the young rabble, he took his eye glass out of his waist coat to look for any child he knew by name, and might order off phenomenon almost incredible through distinctly seen, what did he then behold but his own meta-llurgical Louisa, peeping will all her might through a ceful equestrian tyro-lean flower act! (12).

This is an innermost outlook in the book, because it annihilates the authority of intellect by the elixir of conjecture and imagination. Gradgrind is startled to see his own daughter and his son doing the childish naughtiness. Dickens here creates the dramatic situation between Tom and Louisa so as to fulfil the requirements of human sense of right and wrong to accomplish true happiness. Because of the advancement in science and technology, the Victorian man is proud of and negates the sentiments and emotions which are worse and futile. Dickens shows us the one sidedness of the Victorian conscience and their belief in advancement of their society. So that is why Dickens creates a dramatic situation between Tom and Louisa so as to highlight the drawbacks of the Victorian society. Dickens shows us that the Victorian society at his time was more towards the logic of mind and was far away from the sentiments of heart. In chapter fifteen of the second book we see that Gradgrind tells Louisa that he is fully confident about her good sense, based on her sound education. But when actually Bounderby’s proposal of marriage is conveyed to her and blankness is similar to that of a deadened emotion. Mr. Gradgrind said to his daughter, “Louisa, my dear, you are the subject of a proposal of marriage that has been made to me” (*Hard Times*: 4). Gradgrind repeats it again and again but Louisa couldn’t give any answer to her father because of the inattentiveness to the

logic of the heart. Because Louisa was taught from childhood “Facts and Facts only” (*Hard Times*: 1) and she has not even the concept imagination or fancy and as well as of love and marriage. Because these things are connected to one’s sentiments or emotions of which Louisa is devoid of and right from her childhood she has never take the essence of emotions or sentiments, these are all worthless for her because she had born in the family of Gradgrind, who is the “man of realities” (*Hard Times*: 1). Louisa had never entertained in her life during the past twenty years and had never known the sentiments, what they are? Or what they must be? Emotion for her is a literal word not of any sense which human being bears. Gradgrind has no answer to the numerous questions that Louisa asks him about the identity of love and marriage:

‘Father,’ said Louisa, ‘do you think I love Mr. Bounderby?’

Mr. Gradgrind was extremely discomfited by his unexpected question. Well, my child, he returned, I really cannot take upon myself to say.’

“Father, pursued Louisa in exactly the same voice as before, do you ask me to love Mr. Bounderby?”

‘My dear Louisa, no. no I ask nothing.’

‘Father she still pursued, ‘does Mr. Bounderby ask me to love him?’

‘Really, my dear, said Mr. Gradgrind, it is difficult to answer your question.’ (*Hard Times*: 129).

A sensible decision on her part will not allow emotion to play any part in it. Being habitually reticent both are not able to give vent to what wells up in their hearts. Louisa in her remarks about the chimneys of Coketown which emit smoke by day and fire by night does throw in a hint at hidden passions, but her father is not able to catch the implication of her remark. In chapter eight of the book Charles Dickens wrote about the sentiments as:

Young Thomas expressed these sentiments sitting astride of a chair before the fire, with his arms on the back, and his sully face on his arms. His sister sat in the darker corner by the fireside, now looking at him, now looking at the bright sparks as they dropped upon the heart (*Hard Times*: 66).

When Louisa was a child she was full of fervour, but as she grows older her aspirations metamorphosed into ashes because of preventing her from any type of entertainment or any type of emotional activity that could give birth to feelings. Her mind was prepared by facts, figures, and arithmetical calculations right from birth-hood and was forbidden from taken any pleasure in life. Dickens repeatedly in the novel identifies Louisa with fire so as to dramatize the repressed associations. When she looks at the fire she wonders about Tom and herself. As to Tom fire is only a stupid and blank, but for Louisa it is the replication of the implications. Louisa looks into the fire rather abstractedly and enquires if she is happy to go into the house hold of Mr. Bounderby. And with the passage of the time later on, fire becomes a motif in the life of Louisa. As in another paragraph of the chapter eight of book first, Dickens wrote:

Their shadows were defined upon the wall, but those of the high presses in the room were all blended together on the wall and on the ceiling, as if the brother and sister were overhung by a dark cavern. Or, a fanciful imagination- if such treason could have been there- might have made it out to be the shadow of their subject, and of its lowering association with their future (*Hard Times*: 19).

And the last paragraph of this novel reads Dear reader! It rests with you and me, whether, in our two fields of action, similar things shall be or not. Let them be! We shall sit with lighter bosoms on the hearth, to see the ashes of our first turn gray and cold (*Hard Times*: 298). From the chapter fourteen of the first book of *Hard Times* we see the novel approaches to be metaphorical. Louisa, subtle in the body and spirit, has become pretty a woman. Her father now thinks that the time has come to reveal his tactics for her future. She is to meet him for a sessions talk in the next morning. Tom who visits his father’s house rarely sees her gazing into the fire rather abstractedly. In the time, “that greatest and longest- established spinner of all” (*Hard Times*: 126), kind and a sufficient amount to Louisa to weave her into a suitable yap. Time passes and the young people Louisa, Thomas and Sissy grows towards adulthood. Tom’s fine suggestion to Louisa, that he will see much more of her if she will fall in with the policy at present being discussed by Mr. Bounderby with their father is significant. Mr. Bounderby is a fellow of facts, who is now to marry the little and delicate Louisa. The inappropriate patterns that are fixed on to Louisa is the fact that her father, “a man of realities, a man of facts and calculations” (*Hard Times*: 3), is so infatuated with facts and statistics that it seems to the reader his head has become a mere piece of flush which is of no use to get the sensual belief. A supplementary illustration of the undue patterns is the brother of Louisa ‘Tom’, who is a hypocrite, who is the easy prey to James Harthouse, a seducer and a braggart. Louisa’s desolate position comes in the chapter two of the third book when Harthouse speaks about taking benefit of Louisa’s brother, a whelp, her father, and of her husband. All of three Mr. Gradgrind, father to young Louisa, Tom, brother to Louisa, and Mr.

Bounderby, husband to Louisa are of no avail to personal characteristic to Louisa's because all of them are a mere puppet in the hands of factual materialisation that is they are the facts obeying persons. The educational system of the Victorian England is applying a single set of rules on all the students that is the reason why Dickens devaluates the educational system of his own society and also satirizes and ridicules their one-sidedness.

The calamity of *Hard Times* is the tragedy of Mr. Gradgrind and is the refutation of the individuality of the English Victorian man. The people about Dickens wrote could only be measured through numbers and statistics. It is the tragedy of Thomas Gradgrind that is most prominent in the novel. His wife dies; his own metallurgical Louisa under his philosophy of facts ruins her life by marrying an old man and there after breaking away from him and his own 'mathematical' Tom turns out to be a thief. James Harthouse can perhaps be considered the man behind the Louisa for denying her individuality. In order to start his flirtation with Louisa he takes his brother Tom whom Louisa loves very much. He invites Tom to his hotel room entertains him with liquor and tobacco, gets all the information that would help him, and then bundles him out of his room. The next straight gum he employs in the pursuit of his design is that he first makes Louisa conscious of Tom's ingratitude towards her in spite of her generosity towards him in giving him money whenever he needs it, and then coaxes Tom into showing some sort of sign in acknowledgement of the favours that Louisa has been doing to him in giving him money to pay back his gambling debts. By this device he, acquires a soft corner in the heart of Louisa, who has always felt that, in spite of her affection and love for Tom, her brother has not been reciprocating it. Thus gradually he catches the hand after the finger. Since her marriage she has seldom been to her father's home, but when, in chapter nine of the second book, Bitzer informs her that her mother is lying very ill and Louisa rumbles to Coketown, Dickens set the scene as:

Her remembrances of home and childhood were remembrances of the drying up of every spring and fountain in her young heart as it gushed out. The golden waters were not there. They were flowing for the fertilization of the land where grapes are gathered from thorns, and figs from thistles (*Hard Times*: 263).

Louisa became additionally discomfited, when she discovers that her Jane is too close to Sissy than to her, and Sissy cares more for her mother. Mrs. Gradgrind at her death bed supposes her children have been devoid of no education. The Victorian society has filled the brain of Louisa with rules and figures and has removed the sentiments of her life. She has mourned her sentiments under the tutelage of the materialism of the ill facts and figures of Victorian society. Dickens in the chapter XII of the second book of *Hard Times* wrote the frustrated sayings of Louisa about her destiny as:

'Father, you have trained me from my cradle?

'Yes, Louisa'

'I curse the hour in which I was born to such a destiny.'

He looked at her in doubt and dread, vacantly repeating:

'Curse the hour? Curse the hour?

'How could you give me life, and take from me all the inappreciable things that raise it from the state of conscious death? Where are the graces of my soul? Where are the sentiments of my heart? What have you done, O father, what have you done, with the garden that should have bloomed once, in this great wilderness her! (287).

Dickens employs Mrs. Sparsit to scout on Louisa as James Harthouse continually urges her to elope with him, so as to show the philosophy of utilitarianism in the educational system of the Victorian England. The ill-education she has received as a daughter and becomes an easy prey to the flirtation of James Harthouse, so as to elope almost with him. Gradgrind's utilitarian education is as inapplicable in the thoughts of Dickens and is portrayed in the character sketch of Mrs. Sparsit's spying of Louisa's illegal relation with James Harthouse. The extended metaphor of the staircase depicts the present educational regime in England is really inadequate to produce happy and self-sufficient human beings. Mrs. Sparsit is the most wonderful woman for prowling about the house and is also full of hypocrisy, watching every movement of Mrs. Bounderby like a hawk. She overhears the amorous words of Harthouse to Mrs. Bounderby and jumps to the conclusion that she is going to elope with Harthouse. It is due to her spying nature that she is fired. Having failed in her duty as a spy over Louisa, she follows another course of action. This time it is the pursuit of the mysterious old woman, Mrs. Pegler. She brings Mrs. Pegler forcibly into Bounderby's drawing room and to her great shock and consternation learns that she is no other than Bounderby's mother and that contrary to his boast, she has not abandoned him in the gutter. Through these means Dickens maintains poetic justice in the novel. In book one chapter two of *Hard Times* Thomas Gradgrind, the school owner tells his pupil:

You are to be in all things regulated and governed,' said of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact. You don't walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. You don't find that foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your Crockery; you cannot permitted be to paint foreign birds and butterflies upon your crockery. You never meet with quadrupeds going up and down walls; you must not have quadrupeds represented upon walls. You must use, 'said the gentleman, 'for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact. This is taste. (8)

By these words Dickens shows us how utilitarian system of education of the Victorian England is adequate to smother Tom the junior as well. Thomas Gradgrind believes that imagination or fancy is a constraint to the progress of students and romance should not be taught to them and irrespective of this, figures and facts only should reign in the school curriculum. This utilitarian school has the parallels in the Victorian society of Dickens times and which by facts and figures have destroyed the creative or innovative faculty of the pupil, and has made them self-centred, pessimistic and disobedient and so on so forth.

In book second chapter six Dickens shows us how Tom as a gangster has planned for the robbery of the Bounderby's bank by making a strategy to trap Stephen Blackpool by saying him to "just hang about the bank an hour or so" (214). With the fake key Tom robbed the bank and the cast of suspicion of theft goes on to the Stephen Blackpool. Dickens set up a conversation between Tom and Louisa so as to illustrate the utilitarian system of education has its ill-effects on the life of Tom converts him into Cinder and also becomes an easy prey to the wrong deed he commits by the failure of his brain, which could only sustain facts and figures and couldn't understand anything behind it. Because of the ill-education Tom suffers a lot in his life, he becomes a robber, monster, braggart, as well as a target of instrument in the hands of James Harthouse, who takes all information necessary for him about her sister Louisa. On the verge of the death, when Stephen Blackpool says to Gradgrind to "clear me an' make my name good wi'am" (364), at that time Tom in a furious immediately disappears, and it becomes clear that Tom is the thief not Blackpool. Tom is to be persuaded from the punishment, Gradgrind arranges for him the Circus owner, Mr. Sleary with the help of Sissy Jupe Tom escapes from Bitzer, who was sent by Bounderby so as to arrest Tom. Dickens here wants to show us the anti-humanitarian type of elements present in the English Victorian law, so is the result of disobedience and corruption.

Conclusion:-

Hard Times is a social novel with a well defined cluster of themes. It is the indictment of Victorian society in general and some of its evils and abuses in particular. Since Dickens is considered as the novelist with a purpose, so is the *Hard Times*, which is full of the battered utilitarianism in all the three aspects of society such as on the educational system, social system and economical system. But *Hard Times* mainly shows the utilitarian educational system of the England and the mind set up of the educational commissioners who propounded the theory of utilitarian philosophy regarding the education and is the followers of Jeremy Bentham's theory of Utilitarianism. The main attack of Dickens is on the utilitarian theory of education based on facts, figures and calculations. This novel on the whole conveys that if the educational system is one sided the young generation of the nation will also be one sided. This novel shows the society of the Victorian era and how it is completely battered by the utilitarian philosophy of Bentham and Smith. Only factual and logical is considered in the educational system of the then England and the emotions and fancies are completely neglected.

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