

SYNOPSIS

Ivy Compton-Burnett is one of the most accomplished English women novelists of the mid-twentieth century. In her novels she depicts varied human activities. For this, she selects 'Family' as a unit, and, then goes on analyzing various relationships existing amongst the varied components of the unit. Her novels project family as a unit representative of the contemporary society. Hence Ivy's novels pose a serious concern about the existing social evils. Ivy's characters are symbolic of human passions and motives. Some of them seem to be obvious victims of the prevailing social systems. Ivy's novels depict everything of this sort quite vividly but with objectivity. The present dissertation attempts to study Ivy Compton-Burnett as a novelist with special reference to her novels - *MEN AND WIVES*(1931), *DAUGHTERS AND SONS* (1937), and *PARENTS AND CHILDREN* (1941).

The present study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter consists of two sections - i- The Biographical Sketch of Ivy Compton-Burnett, and ii- Ivy Compton-Burnett's Fictioinal World. Ivy's novels are full of biographical details. Hence the first section deals with some of the important events in the life of Ivy

Compton-Burnett. Her experiences like singleness, her devotion to her brothers, her mother being a tyrant, a large size family caught in economic crisis, are depicted faithfully in her novels. The second section takes a survey of the twenty novels Ivy has produced in her career. The second chapter deals with Ivy's novel, *Men and wives* (1931). The novel depicts Lady Harriet's tragedy for which her own greedy, tyrannical nature is responsible. It is a heartbreaking truth she realizes that her absence in the family is not cared for. The third chapter of the study discusses Ivy's another novel, *Daughters and Sons* (1939). It is again a family suffering in the hands of two tyrants-

Sabine, the mother and Hetta, the daughter. The entire family functions on the whims of these two female tyrants. Ivy points out how these apparently invincible tyrants become victims of petty passions. The fourth chapter tries to analyse the novel *Parents and Children*(1941) . Ivy depicts here how human frailties result into family disasters. Fulbert, while going to South America to save his family from financial crisis, leaves his wife, Eleanor, in the care of his dear friend, Ridley. Ridley, selfishly, decides to deceive his friend and marry his friend's wife. The fifth chapter will sum up the discussion made in the previous chapters and try to note certain observations made on Ivy's three major works.