

**CHAPTER VI**

**CONCLUSIONS**

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This chapter briefly states the findings of the in depth study of the selected works by Jim Corbett on the accepted ecological perspective under the branch of eco-criticism. The study is mainly based on the fieldwork study method of ecology. This study and the findings are confined to selected two major works of Jim Corbett *Jungle Lore* and *My India* and the available remarks on Corbett and his works.

The present age is known as the age of eco-crisis. Mankind is facing today the great environmental crisis. The ecological imbalance has become a serious concern all over the world. Considering the present environmental crisis it is necessary to re-evaluate literature from the ecological point of view. There is dire need to explore the ways in which contemporary literature depicts this problem of eco-crisis. Such type of study is of prime significance in the growing interest in environment and literary studies as a distinct discipline of eco-criticism in the recent times. Therefore, interpretation of literature with the help of ecological ideas is one of the acceptable methods of literary study.

The jungle literature in and outside India display broadly 'field-work' study approach of ecology. It records the writer's observations about interaction between the wild life and its environment. Jim Corbett is not exception to this. He has adopted unknowingly the same perspective with the sense of curiosity and deep interest in the environment.

Jim Corbett is a very successful writer and his works are very popular in and outside India. His writings are based on the facts of jungle but his sensibility is highly subjective and emotive. As such his writings come up to the merit of creative literature and some of his books are regarded as the world classics. So he has been accepted as a model for literature on jungle.

It is strange that Jim Corbett's fame mainly rests on his hunting stories of man-eating tigers. The present study reveals Jim Corbett's earnest desire for conversation, deforestation and preservation of wild life. The selected works show the deviation in his life from a hunter to the environmentalist. Though not an ecologist, his observations, records and approach to wild and tribal life display a remarkable eco-sensitivity. The present works unfold Jim Corbett's character, primarily as wild life lover and a lover of Nature. His views are so lofty that he appears to be a commentator, philanthropist and philosopher who read jungle, tribal and wild life in the eco-system. He is a committed writer for the cause of conservation and deforestation.

In fact, Corbett began to write jungle literature in his declining age of seventies, he aspired yet like a young man to retell and convey his jungle experiences of the past in nostalgic vein. He wrote in the trance of his retrospection but with an introspection.

His jungle experience is very novel, genuine and striking,. It is not in the form of merely a stereo type stale stories over written. He wrote ***Jungle Lore*** and ***My India*** not only to convey information and to entertain his readers but to create awareness of ecological balance and preservation of the jungles. These works therefore, have a great educational value and persuasive power. These

works impart wisdom and persuade readers to play an important role in preserving Nature.

Luck plays a very vital role in deciding and developing character of Jim Corbett as a writer of jungle books, he was fortunate enough to have his birth in a beautiful natural surrounding of Naini Tal and Kaladhungi and except some intervals of his life he spent his entire life in that environment, where the jungle and tribal life was at his threshold. So he developed deep love for Nature, wild animals, the flora and fauna of the jungle and the honest simple tribals of the area. Suppose he was not born and brought up in the same surroundings he would have different attitude towards Nature.

Jim Corbett's description of jungle topography is very precise and graphic. He portrays accurate topography of the jungle around Naini Tal and Kaladhungi and comments on the natural phenomena like hailstorm, forest fire etc. His vivid description of topography give the readers a sense of witnessing the landscape from the close quarters. The region and the land come to life in his works with its pictorial quality. The jungle topography is the significant background to the wild life and the tribal life recorded by him in the selected works.

Corbett's lifelong experience of jungles is an outstanding achievement. So he writes with an authority on wild life. He had deep interest in acquiring systematic knowledge of the wild life which offers to an ordinary reader the fascinating treasure. The present study reveal that Corbett explores the wild life with great curiosity to know more about it so as to end imaginary notions and misbeliefs existing in human mind. It is a proper ecological

perspective. Corbett observes and records the wild life to remove the prevailing ignorance and to present the facts related to it. Therefore, his approach is very rational but sincere and realistic.

Corbett's classification of birds, animals and the crawling creatures in the jungle on the basis of the role they play in the environment shows his awareness of their significant presence in the eco-system. He shows the interrelationship of living creatures to one another and to their environment. Corbett depicts the social pattern of wild animals with the help of pug marks and calls of the animals which is part of their eco-system. His conclusions on animal behaviour are based on very minute observation and own experiences.

Corbett comments on the wild life with a conviction without paying any heed to the public opinions. Therefore his works throw light on the age-old primitive beliefs, superstitions and myths about the wild life.

Corbett's informative approach is very remarkable. Especially he records the skill of the predators and their actual movements at the time of hunting the prey. Corbett gives very important and realistic information about the hunting by carnivorous animals. He has provided very interesting and useful information of the number of rare species in the jungles such as barking deer, leopard, tiger, serpent eagle, hornbills etc. While commenting on the wild life he thinks from human point of view but occasionally he thinks from animal view of the jungle life. It is very remarkable approach showing his eco-sensitivity. His works unfold the social system of the animals living in the groups or herds. His sensational jungle detective stories in *Jungle Lore* reveal his

sense of exploration and adventures. His surprising jungle detective stories place them as the timeless archetype of jungle literature to come in future. He has given vivid accounts of the natural phenomena like forest fire, hailstorm and their effects on the birds and animals in the jungle.

Corbett depicts birds of Northern India successfully. His views on birds in the nature is the outcome of his systematic and detailed study. Therefore he is able to present the life-cycle of birds in the region like a naturalist who maintains record of the events. His records of flights of the birds, their habits and habitats is rather study of ecology. He discovers interrelationship between the wild animals and the birds in the jungle. Corbett interprets their co-existence as a vital ecological pattern.

In order to retain the curiosity and strangeness of wild animals Corbett avoids any exaggeration and glorification. He aspires to present wild animals and birds in their natural habitat. He advocates significance of preserving wild life in the eco-system.

Corbett had close relationship with peasants in Kumaon region and at Mokameh Ghat. It resulted in writing his *My India*. Corbett records in *My India* details of various castes, tribes, their lifestyle, provinciality, domestic life and social ethos as witnessed by him during his longer stay in the region. His accounts of the tribal life encompasses domestic and social conventions, customs and practices, beliefs, individual attitudes, economic conditions, social conduct, marriage system and superstitions. Corbett passes critical remarks on the tribal traditions, marriage system and life style. He refers to the marriage conventions, the hard work of

married women in their husband's home, their family cares and responsibilities.

Corbett depicts tribals as reliable informers of jungles. A few character-sketches in *My India* reveal that tribals are more happy in the jungles than in their home. Some of them became his close friends because of their involvement in the jungle life. Corbett's works show that despite their poverty the tribals live simple, honest and contented life in the midst of the nature. His involvement in the tribal people and traditions become very important factor in assessing his literature on Indian jungles. In *My India* he recounts man's encounters with the wild animals. Occasionally there are some interesting friendly exchanges. He gives real accounts of adventures of the tribals in the jungles. His stories cover all the possibilities of man-beast encounters. Corbett's accounts of the tribal life show that the tribals are not hostile to the wild animals. Living on the fringe of the jungle, man-beast conflict is unavoidable. However, Corbett shows that majority of such incidents are accidents and the tribals are not professional hunters. They live on cultivation and cattle rearing.

The present study reveals that Corbett is not a passive observer of the tribal life. He had an earnest desire to improve their life conditions in all aspects as a bosom friend of the tribals. He had philanthropical attitude to them. Like Naini Tal and Kaladhungi he had good rapport with the native people at Mokameh Ghat as he had it with tribals in Naini Tal and Kaladhungi. His intimacy with the tribals exhibits his ecological perspective. He insists on the peaceful co-existence that is highly essential to maintain the ecological equilibrium.

Corbett's relationship with the tribals shows his humanistic concern. He has genuine sympathy for the poor tribals. The in depth study of *My India* brings out his great affinity and possessive love for the tribals in Kumaon. He conveys to readers the rare uncommon qualities of the obscure common tribals. The personal experiences recorded in his works convey that he is not giving imaginary world of tribals and wild life.

The selected works display gradual development of his creed of the jungle life. His modesty is well expressed in his statement that the book of Nature has no beginning and no end. He also says that one cannot acquire the complete knowledge of jungle life. His creed of jungle life is correlated to his conservationist idealism. So he firmly states that the jungle life is the source of his happiness resulted from his observation that all wild life is happy in its natural surroundings. His 'Theory of absorption' is a very revolutionary approach towards jungle life. Thereby he appears as a committed ecologist. His concept of 'jungle sensitiveness' is not based on his imagination and superstitious mind but lifetime experience.

Like a learned ecologist, Corbett believes in the scheme of Nature. So he appreciates harmony in the Nature. He is conscious of the role of a particular species in nurturing the environment. He proves successfully that nothing in the jungle is deliberately aggressive. This is very significant effort by him in harboring eco-sensitivity among the readers. Corbett's perception of 'The law of the jungle' explains his faith in ecological balance. According to him, the law of the jungle allows extreme freedom to each individual to live his own life. It keeps every individual alert but



never makes him deprived of the joy of living. In other words, this is very basic assumption of ecology.

The theme of preservation, conservation and retention of forestry occurs repeatedly in his works. They display his urge of conservation and protection of the environment.

Corbett's ecological considerations are clearly reflected in his criticism of the upper classes who considered presence of the wild animals for their sports and amusement. Corbett realized the subsequent changes in the attitude of European and Indian upper classes. They began to hunt tigers for recreation and trophies rather than for self-protection. Corbett has expressed his grave concern for the wounded tigers by sportsmen. Not only he has criticized other people but his own action of killing the tiger. Therefore, Corbett is sincere and practical ecologist. He emphasizes the co-ordination in Nature by giving number of examples. His depiction of struggle and competition among the birds to obtain food in the environment reminds readers Charles Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution'. Corbett successfully discovers the base of co-existence between the wild animals and human beings. He has condemned human interference in the eco-system. Corbett is very sensitive about preserving eco-system and therefore, reacts vehemently against the efforts of deforestation, poaching and ecological imbalance.

The present study reveal that Corbett had natural inclination for observation and maintaining the record of jungle life with his subjective interpretation. His jungle literature is a spontaneous and original work. He has evolved his own methods of observation of

wild and tribal life in their natural conditions. It is indirectly the study of ecological system.

It is noteworthy that during Corbett's life time ecological crisis was not so acute or apparent. However, Corbett foresaw the impending crisis. As such, he is a visionary ecologist. He has mentioned the effects of population pressure on the forested areas in his works. In *Jungle Lore*, Corbett has expressed his luck factor. He considers himself a very fortunate person to be born in the age when there was enough jungle and it was teeming with the wild life.

His popular stories of jungle life are stories of all people and at all times. The readers learn lessons about the laws of the jungle, meet various animals in their natural habitat and also come to know about man-beast encounters. In some places Corbett appears as a conservationist, who is looking for where he truly belongs either the human world or animal world. His jungle experience is rational and touching.

At present, more jungles are shrinking due to socio-economic pressure the more is aspiration for preservation of ecological balance in the Nature. This has inspired a few writers in the recent times to write with an ecological perspective. Jim Corbett is the leading pioneer of this type of literature. He recommends his readers to take more interest in the environment and interact with the Nature. The ecological sensitivity and environmentalist ideas are reflected through out in his selected works. Hence his works are the effective medium of creating the ecological awareness among the readers.

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