

## Victorian Poetry- 17/07/2022

Main trends and features of the Victorian poetry.

The poetry of the Victorian age presents a wide variety . While some of the Victorian poets were interested in presenting the Victorian life in their poetry, others kept themselves away from the cross currents of the social, political and economic life of the age. In the poetry of Tennyson we see the reflection of Victorian life, and he is the poet of the age representing the age in his works. His poetry is the epitome of the age. It represents the social, economic, political conditions of the age. Browning draws our attention to the deplorable state of industrial affairs of the age in Cry of Children and Tennyson refers to the progress achieved on the material planes in Locksley Hall.

In contrast to Tennyson, there stands th unique figure of Browning, who expresses another trend of Victorian poetry. It is about pre-occupation with spiritual, philosophical and moral problems of the age.

The Pre-Raphaelite poets strike another note in Victorian poetry. The poetry of Rossetti, Morris and Swinburne is far away from the materialistic problems of the age. It is a revival of the romantic spirit . In a way Victorian poetry is an extension of romantic poetry with its relation with the middle age, mysticism and supernaturalism.

The romantic spirit of the age of Wordsworth, Keats and Shelly is reflected in the pessimistic aspects in the Victorian poetry. The poetry of Mathew Arnold, Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and FizGerald is marked with pessimism and despair. In Victorian poetry we hear both optimism and pessimistic notes .



The moral note is sounded by the Victorian poets and most of them have a message to give through their poetry. The poetry of Tennyson, Browning, Mathew Arnold, Edward FitzGerald, Christina Rossetti is ridden by a message. All these poems have a superb faith in their message. Browning gives the message of struggle against heavy odds in life. Mathew Arnold has a message of stoicism and endurance of all the pains and inflictions. Tennyson gives the message of lawful living . Christina Rossetti of renunciation and resignation. The Pre-Raphaelite poets present the art for art's sake without any moral message. But theirs is not so impressive one.

We find several poetic forms cultivated by the Victorian poets. The lyric output was very large and varied. In descriptive and narrative poetry there was a great advance by Tennyson and Morris. Tennyson thought of reviving the epic. Browning perfected the dramatic monologue and made it his instrument of self-expression.

Different kind of poetic styles were cultivated by the Victorian poets. Tennyson developed artistic schemes of vowel music, alliteration and other devices. The pre- Raphaelite carried this scheme further. In diction they were simpler than Tennyson but their vocabulary was difficult. The style of Browning was a kind of protest against such use. Mathew Arnold was too classical in his style.

With its superb production , the Victorian age produced no supreme poet. It revealed no Shakespeare, no Shelley, nor Byron or a Scott. The age produced some technically accomplished poets.





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