

Name :- Dr Madhvi Kumari

College :- H.D. Jain College, Ara.

Sub :- (M.A, CC-7, Unit-3) Sem - II

Topic :- Biographia Literaria : Coleridge

Q) What does Coleridge say about Wordsworth's Style?

Ans) Friendship of Coleridge and Wordsworth is well known in the history of English literature. In 1797 Coleridge met Wordsworth and that was the beginning of their long friendship. Coleridge collaborated with Wordsworth for comparing poems for the Lyrical Ballads according to a plan. As he explains in his Biographia Literaria, Wordsworth's object was to "give the charm of novelty to things of every day," while his own "endeavours should be directed to ~~perfect~~ persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitute poetic faith." In short they both are truly aware of their poetical power.

According to Coleridge the most

Important characteristics of Wordsworth's style is 'uniform adherence to genuine logical English. "Laying the main emphasis on the word uniform," says Coleridge, "I will dare add that, of all contemporary poets, it is his alone --- to me it will always remain a singular and noticeable fact; that a theory, which would establish the lingua communis, not only as the best, but ^{as} the only commendable style, should have proceeded from ~~the~~ poet, whose diction, next to that of Shakespeare and Milton, appears to me of all others the most individualised and characteristic."

A person of any taste who has studied only three or four of Shakespeare's principal plays will not fail to recognize a quotation from any other play of his. Wordsworth's style is as easily recognizable as Shakespeare's. "Who, having been previously acquainted with any considerable portion of Mr. Wordsworth's publications," says Coleridge, "and having studied them a full feeling of the author's genius, would not at once claim as Wordsworthian the little poem on the rainbow, or lines from Lucy Gray or the Idle Shepherd-boy?" From Wordsworth's more elevated compositions, whether in rhyme or blank verse, it would be difficult and almost superfluous to select instances of a diction peculiarly his own, of a style which cannot be imitated without its being at once recognized as originating in Wordsworth. It would not be easy to open on any of his loftier strains

that does not contain example of this.

Wordsworth's diction is simple, but his expressions are essentially poetic. They are not employed by men in everyday life. His style is not such as is used in the ordinary intercourse of spoken words. Could anyone but a poet have described a bird singing aloud as, "The Thrush is busy in the wood; or have spoken of boys with a string of club-men round their rusty hats as the boys, "with their green coronal; or have translated a beautiful May-day into, "Both earth and sky keep jubilee; or have brought all the different marks and circumstances of a sea loch before the mind, as the action of a living and acting power; or have represented the reflection of the sky in the water as, "That uncertain heaven received into the bosom of the steady lake?" Even the grammatical construction of sentences is not unfrequently peculiar, for instance, The wind, the tempest roaring high, the tumult of a topick sky, might well be dangerous food to him a youth to whom was given etc.

Another marked feature of Wordsworth's style is the abundance of striking lines and passages. "The pleasure received from excitement of curiosity or the rapid flow of narration, the striking passages from a larger proportion of their value. I do not adduce it as a fair criterion of comparative excellence, nor do I even think it such; but merely as a matter of fact. I affirm, that from no contemporary writer could so many be