

The Noteworthy Traits In Robert Browning's Poetry:

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ABSTRACT:

Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson, Mathew Arnold, Gerald Manley Hopkins were some of the well-known poets of the Victorian Era.

Browning's poems were especially meant for people. He was a very firm believer of God. He believed that there is life after one's death. Browning has his own way of conveying some principles of life in almost all his poems. He is an optimist and hopes that the world at large will provide useful answers to all the problems that man is faced with. Man is bound to live in peace discarding his sorrows and troubles. He believes in what we refer to in India as 'God's grace-'Devudidaya'. The concept of hell and heaven are the sub themes in most of his poems. When we read the poems of Browning, the feeling of immortality occupies our mind. Man is suggested not to wallow in human misery, disturbances and the sorry state of affairs. There is every chance of men realizing things in their next life, and those which men could not achieve in their present birth. There is a significant emphasis and focus on the human effort as evidenced through Browning's optimism, in order to reach the impossible. The idea of Victory and struggle is one of the hall marks of his poems. He expects men to slog as much as they can irrespective of what is achieved. There is a gulf of difference between the desire to achieve and achievement itself, which is the crux of humanity. The never-ending process of humans' expectation of immediate returns is in their very nature. Life becomes worthy only through one's attempts and not through their accomplishments. Our thinking reigns supreme over our mission of fulfilling the task of our achievement.

Keywords: *Concept, conveying, significant, accomplishments, evidenced, irrespective etc.*

1.INTRODUCTION

The noteworthy traits in Robert Browning's poetry

Browning believes that a man should not be judged by what he has achieved in life. A man is advised not to lose heart if his efforts go up in smoke and he remains unknown and unnoticed in this world. God is quite aware of the motivation such a man requires. Man's desire is to reach the zenith of perfection. His aims and ambitions and his unnoticed hard work is bound to be rewarded by the almighty in due course of time. There is an idea drawn from P.B.Shelley's 'Ode to a west wind' where the prediction of the poet is highlighted.

'If winter comes, can spring be far behind'.

Life loses its meaning and significance if it is a life without any efforts and hardships. Man is obviously expected to contribute something beneficial to mankind and that is the sole

purpose of our existence on earth. It is the duty of man to make the world a better place to live in. Browning opines that victory is not the same as self-satisfaction and gladness. Momentary happiness and success are always short lived. They are mere misnomers. Success or victory is not a measuring yard stick for assessing one's happiness. Success is based on several aspects of life. Man should continue surviving with his unstinted efforts without thinking of benefits. An inactive way of living becomes a burdensome life on this planet earth. One will be appreciated only if something done by him is good enough to mankind, instead of his remaining silent and a worthless spectator. Browning is a full-fledged optimist who advocates that man has to continuously put his best foot forward for a never-ending struggle for a life time. The human body is likened to a prison house and everyone is expected to contribute to the world positively through their hard work and everlasting efforts. Life is a cluster of compromises and a bundle of contradictions. Knowledge can be gained only through desire. Life is like a coin where one side represents evil and the other side represents goodness, likewise there is a contrast between beauty and detestability and hence have to be faced gladly. One should not be after the best choices of life but should face things in a normal way. Whatever task that is attempted should be done in a joyful manner irrespective of all odds that one is faced with. In one of the popular poems of Browning "The last ride together" achievement and success become obsolete words. Failure amalgamated with a ray of hope is always better than hopeless success as it is generally forgotten in a short span of time. In the present poem a beloved who was jilted in love still pines for the success of his affair. He wishes well for his lady love and is filled with a sense of hope to succeed in his love at least in the next life. He strongly believes that god creates love in order to make men be showered with love. The lover supports his own self and expresses in the poetic lines in an identical manner.

'Fail I alone in words and deeds? Why all men strive and who succeeds'. The end result of any work is what gets the credit than what is huge and left undone. Browning reiterates that mere brooding over failures and disappointments will not serve any purpose. A man cannot realize all his dreams and hopes. The hope of man to stay attached with his beloved and be united in a wedlock remains an unfulfilled wish in his last ride together. Just like the slip between the cup and the lip, there is a gulf of difference between his desires and achievements. However, it should not deter him from forging ahead in his love life. There is no need even to think of the tactics employed by him to woo and win the heart of his lover, trying to realize whether it was right or wrong. A man can work ceaselessly and leave the rest to god. Man has to use the gift bestowed on him by god as a potential talent in order to achieve something. In the poem 'Rabi Ben Ezra, failures are treated as stepping stones to allow one to move ahead. Any amount of disappointment, pangs of suffering and bouts of failures that one faces are challenges that allow man to achieve victory in the end. Browning advocates a few principles in order to become strong. Man is mortal and he is not God himself. Man is destined to commit mistakes. It is a known fact that man makes mistakes but the lessons learnt through those mistakes makes him a better being.

Man's life is one continuous struggle. A man is always known by his hidden motives which show his aspiration to project a noble expression. Pious attempts always act as motivations irrespective of any hurdle that we face. A man does not get recognized by god for having valuable possessions or for achieving unheard of records. Browning emphasizes that a man is bound to be presented with rewards in his next birth by god himself but for that he has to remain a stoic. Man's struggle will always be rewarded and never goes waste. Whatever that man does may be reckoned without any success but they duly get noticed by god. Man should never yield to struggles and sufferings meekly. Here Browning emphasizes that man must stand alone against all odds without losing heart. The way in which the world treats us

should not border anyone's life with disappointment. God knows everything about us. God is ever unbiased in his judgement about man with all his hopes, ambitions and aspirations.

The poet expresses his opinion that the advent of good days is bound to follow suit. Goodness and evil are the two ends of the same rope. Goodness prevails all time as its value gets enhanced against the opposite forces of evil. The poet compares the world to that of silence and to the world of sounds and unbearable noises; how they stand in contrast to one another while elevating the joy of harmony.

In the poem 'AbtVogler' Browning says 'The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound; what was good, shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more'. The poet stresses that human life is far away from being perfect in spite of god showering his benevolence on man. The only thing we need to keep in mind is to have faith in our struggle. It is not always true that only successful achievements get their due recognition but even failures and defeats at times add to man's development in life. Evil and failures are our permanent adversaries and so success keeps eluding us till such time we brush aside evil. However, it is one of the rungs of the ladder that hinders our progress to the next level. Attainment of perfection is an ideal thing but to realize it to the fullest possible extent is next to impossible. The word heaven, loses its significance if one can attain perfection in this evil world. Life is like a training ground for reaching the level of perfection but sooner or later one realizes that it could be achieved only in heaven.

In another popular poem of Browning titled 'Evelyn Hope' an old man who is around 48 years of age is deeply in love with a sixteen-year-old girl. He never expressed it before the girl and kept his feelings for himself. When Evelyn Hope died, the old man sat beside the corpse of the girl for a long time. He was a total stranger to the girl even when she was alive. It really sounds absurd that an old man is in love with a teenaged girl. The poet presents the picture of the old man's faith in divinity and expects that his undying faith in his love will be rewarded ultimately in the generations to come.

He says 'Delayed it may be for more lives yet, Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few: Much is to learn, much to forget Ere the time become for taking you'

Generally, the readers find it rather gross with such an argument especially with their doubts and skeptic attitude. The poem only presents it as a case of pacification when one has undergone the pangs of pain because of the loss that one suffered. Browning projects the picture of man's attempt to attain perfection and reach a stage which is near to perfection, which is clear from the beloved's trust, that through various lives he may have to live it could be achieved.

There is no question of repentance or regret for failure through Browning's poetry.

"Oh, if we draw a circle premature, headless of far gain, freely for quick returns of profit, sure, Bad is our bargain!"

Poets like Mathew Arnold and Tennyson were bemoaning over the destroyed values of human life and loss of faith, as it was an age full of doubts without any clarifying note. Browning assumes the role of a preacher sharing his philosophical ideals suggesting humans' different ways of living life gladly and peacefully, devoid of hurdles and barriers. He advocates man to be a theist and follow his actions following the strict doctrines of god as there is a possibility of being rewarded sooner or later. This philosophical nature in Browning's poetry is quite remarkable with intrinsic values of life. Browning teaches us the way and how to live life.

2. REFERENCES

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