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## The Harp of India. Eng. H-3 P. 74

The Harp of India is a beautiful Sonnet, composed by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio. Derozio is the founder of the Indo-English school of Poetry and is widely applauded for his historicity. He is a great nationalist and his poems are full of patriotic motives and delicate sentiments for India and its people. Though he is greatly influenced by the Romantics, the theme of his Poetry is essentially Indian in its spirit. In the present poem, like my Native Land' he expresses his sincere love and deep feelings for his motherland. He laments the inactivity of her poetic genius. But, he seems to be determined to revive it. The poem is remarkable for its delicacy of thought, simplicity of expression and command of language as well as metre. Let us see it in a brief.

The given poem begins in the form of an emotional address. The poet feels that the Harp of India was touching the highest summit of its glory in the past days. But, now it has almost withered away. It has been rendered useless, for there is none to play on its strings. It is haplessly hanging on a withered branch of a tree. Once, it was vibrating with sweet and pleasant music, but now it is heard no more. The poet is very much grieved at this sad condition of the harp or the poetic genius of his motherland. Even the gentle breeze expresses its deep grief, while it passes through the withered harp, but it is of no use -

"Why hang'st thou lonely on yon withered bough?

Unstrung for ever, must thou there remain,

Thy music once was sweet who hears it now?

Why dost the breeze sigh over thee in vain?"

The poet opines that the melodious Harp of India has been fettered in silence with her fatal chain. It has been left uncared, mute and desolate. In fact, the poetic genius of India is forced to keep mum by some unfriendly forces acting against its growing excellence. That is why it is like a ruined monument on a desert plain.

"Silence hath bound thee with her fatal chain

Neglected, mute, and desolate art thou,

Like ruined monument on desert plain.

However, it does not mean that the poetic genius of India has lost its energy and vitality. As a matter of fact, it has only been made a victim of the unfavourable situation and circumstances.

The poet, further, says that the great poets used to handle the Harp of India in its glorious past. They had been enjoying all fame and glory through out the world. But, now, they are silently lying in their graves. However, flowers are still blooming on their graves. This speaks of their great achievements and unmatched creative quality. Hence, the poet implores the goddess of Poetry to inspire the cold hands of the sleeping poets once again so that they may handle the withered Harp. If the goddess inspires the poets with her divine power, they will again bring of the past glory and thereby they will certainly bring about the same in future. The poet is confident and wants to strike the strain again.

"These hands are cold - but if thy notes divine

May be by mortal wakened once again

Harp of my Country, let me strike the strain!"

Thus, this sonnet throws ample light on the glorious past as well as the wretched present condition of India. In the by gone days, the poetic genius of India was at its creative zenith (and was commanding by the world. But, now, it has been neglected and its wings of imagination are finally chained down by the foreigners who cannot tolerate its achievements. However, the poet is not desperate or hopeless, for he knows that it still possesses its matchless vitality. He seeks help from the goddess of Poetry and is quite confident of gaining the past glory of his motherland.

Thus, this sonnet reveals Derogio's patriotic feelings for India. He reckons the past glory of the poetic genius of his motherland and points out the reasons of its present

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inactivity. However, he is determined to reactivate it with the blessings of the goddess of Poetry. The artistic beauty of the Sonnet is also superb. There is proper arrangement of every word and phrase. The images of 'withered bough', 'breezes Digh', 'fatal chain', 'revined monument' and 'cold hands' impart aesthetic beauty to the poem. Really, it is a great creation of Derogio!

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