

Wordsworth's Theory of Poetic Diction.

B. A. Part III (Hons) English
Paper V

Beston Grewentle has pointed out that there are distinct schools of poetic diction. One school pleads for the spoken language and the other for the special language of poetry. It was only in the latter half of the eighteenth century that the campaign for the special poetic ~~discretion~~ diction was launched by writers like Addison, Dr. Johnson and Gray. Dr. Johnson maintains that the noble action is degraded if expressed in the language of rustics. Gray says that the language of age is never the language of poetry.

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Wordsworth does not favour the use of poetic diction. He tries to bridge the gap of spoken and the language of poetry. As a matter of fact, Wordsworth evolves his view on poetic diction in the light of his own poetry. So the poetic diction that he objects is the diction of new classical poetry. The language that he favours is the language of his own poetry. Rejecting the "gaudiness and inane phraseology of the new-classical practitioners", he draws on the language of rustics who live in direct communion with Nature.

The important point that emerges is that Wordsworth has same contribution both for the subject and the language for his poetry. The

personages in his poetry are from "the humbled and rustic life", which is also the source of the language in which they are depicted. The leech gatherer is not merely a rustic character in "Resolution and Independence" but also of the language.

Wordsworth objects in the neo-classical poetic diction because he feels that it is divorced divorced both from external nature and human nature poetry natural to man. a poet sings like a bird and hence in poetry there is no room for pedantry, affectation and ^{1st Polish} poetry must be true to nature.

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He therefore wants to use the language of the "humble and rustic" in his poem because he feels that such a language is better suited for the expression of simple emotions. In his poems, "humble and rustic life" is generally chosen because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain maturity". He further says that "elementary feelings ~~pers.~~ persists in a state of greater simplicity".

To be continued

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