

v THE SUN RISING

"The Sun Rising" is a dramatic love lyric written by John Donne, a great metaphysical poet. He is a poet of religious sensibility. This poem is in the form of a dialogue between the poet and the sun, and the poet's beloved is the silent listener.

The poem opens in an abrupt, colloquial manner. Conventionally, the sun has been glorified and exalted as a god, but Donne's attitude is different. He addresses the sun as 'busy old fool'. He is angry with the sun because it disturbs him in peeping through the windows and curtains of ~~the~~ his bedroom where he and his beloved are making love. It must realize that lovers are not bound to adjust their seasons according to its movement. The poet angrily calls it 'saucy, pedantic wretch'. It should chide those boys who are being late to school and apprentices who are unwilling to work. It should tell the couriers ^{who have} ~~who~~ to accompany the king during his hunting: ~~so it~~ It should tell the busy farmers to collect their corns. It should leave the poet and his beloved alone. It should not disturb them because love knows no seasons, no climates and no hours, days and months. These are the sub-division of time. True love is above time and space.

ii In the second stanza the poet challenges the sun. The sun thinks that its rays are ~~so~~ effective and worthy of respect. The poet tells the sun not to feel proud of its power and purity. He can deprive the sun of its lustre and darken it by closing his eyes but he cannot do so because he does not like to lose sight of his beloved even for a moment. If the brightness of her eyes has not dazzled it, it should again visit them the next

day at a later hour. The East Indies is known for its spices and the West Indies, for its gold mines. Both East and West Indies are still lying in his bed chamber. His beloved is as fragrant as the spices of the East Indies and as rich and invaluable as the gold mines of the West Indies. It will not find them there, for they have contracted into that bed in which he is lying with his beloved. Similarly, if ~~it~~^{he} searches for the kings ~~it~~^{he} saw yesterday in different parts of the world, it will find that all of them have come together in his bedroom.

(ii) The poet's bedroom represents the whole world. His beloved represents all the states and kingdoms of the world. The poet is all the princes of the world. They are all in all to each other and nothing else matters today. The princes of the world play their roles and try to be as happy as they are. All other glory is mere imitation and all other wealth is false and deceptive compared to the glory of their love. The sun is not so happy as they are because it does not have a beloved like his own. The whole world is reduced to his little bedroom. The sun grows old and requires rest. Its duty is to give light and heat to the world. Its duty will be performed if it warms his little bedroom. This bedroom is the centre round which the sun revolves and these four walls are its orbit. The lyric ends with the thought that the spheres of the visible world - order have been superseded by the equally spherical - because infinite, perfect and indestructible - world of love. Donne's wit is seen in the way in which the East and the West Indies and the kings of the world are all 'yoked together' to illustrate the all-sufficient nature of true love. The use of the images 'school-boys', 'our apprentices', 'court-huntsmen' and 'country ants' indicates the sixteenth century English

life.

In expressing his contempt for the sun, the poet displays all his learning and metaphysical wit and extravagant conceits are employed in glorifying his beloved. Recent geographical discoveries supply him with the images of "both the Indias of Spice and mine". The poem is remarkable for its boldness of thought and originality of execution. The way in which the sun is made to appear as an unwelcome guest and the way in which he is finally allowed to stay in the bedroom of lovers, are the most striking examples of Donne's poetic inventiveness and ingenuity.