

VICTORIAN POETRY

The poetry of the Victorians presents a wide variety. While some of the Victorian poets were interested in the presentation of Victorian life in their poetry, others kept themselves away from the cross currents of the social, political and economic life of the age. Tennyson is a representative poet of the Victorian age. Tennyson tries to reflect it in his work. Browning is preoccupied with spiritual, philosophical and moral problems. But the poetry of the Pre-Raphaelites is quite different; it is an extension of the earlier romantic poetry.

The Victorian poets are the inheritors of a rich legacy from the romantics. They modify their such romantic inheritance in many ways. This romantic note in their poetry is best seen in their recurrent interest in the past. Arnold lived in habitual converse with the Greeks and derived his art and ideas from them rather than from any modern source. Browning

made the period of the Renaissance living and real. Tennyson's painstaking and sincere craftsmanship and the polished verbal music of his verse, have given some grounds for considering him as an 'anti-romantic' or classical writer. He is much closer to Keats than to Pope and Dryden.

Victorian poetry is pessimistic because the age is torn by science, the industrial revolution and religious revolution. Pessimistic poets like Tennyson, Hardy, Fitzgerald, Thompson and Arnold express the doubts and uncertainties of the age. Browning is a poet of robust optimism. His optimistic zeal finds better expression in his memorable lines - "The best is yet to be."