



Philosophy Of Resilience In The Poems Of Robert Browning

DR. Rashmi Dubey

Assistant Professor- Department of English, D.B.S. College, Kanpur (U.P.) India

Received- 07.08.2020, Revised- 12.08.2020, Accepted - 16.08.2020 Email : aryavart2013@gmail.com

Abstract: Robert Browning's reputation in academia is a well-known fact and we often discuss him as a master of dramatic monologues. Sometimes he is discussed as a part of optimism, realism, spiritualism and mysticism. He is an original poet known for his obscurity. There is a psycho-analytical approach in his poems. There is love for nature and love for mankind. W.J. Long comments, "There is nothing oriental, nothing doubtful, nothing pessimistic in the whole range of his poetry. His is the voice of Anglo-Saxon, standing up in the face of all obstacles and saying, .I can and I will."

Key Words: development, renewal, reconstruction, significant, problem, exclusively, material.

But the purpose of this research paper is to add one more characteristic to his poems. This is the doctrine of human resilience scattered throughout his poetry and this gives a relevance to his poems in the present times. Human resilience is nothing but only a change in outlook and perception. Teachings of Lord Krishna in Bhagwad Geeta are nothing but only the headings of this human resilience. And life of mostly all the epic heroes preach this creed of resilience. All of us have need about emotional intelligence or emotional quotient. This human resilience is something similar to Emotional Intelligence.

According to the theories of Emotional Quotient, we can attain this emotional well being with the help of various objects and going through literature for all times is one of them. We can get a proper training of emotional imbalance through such literature. Books like „Ramayana., „Mahabharata. and „Gita. are mentioned to be read. Theory of equilibrium taught in „Gita. is suggested to be practised. And as says Matthew Arnold poetry is an application of ideas to life." Poetry should answer the questions like „how to live. and according to Arnold this is a moral idea. The poems of poets like Robert Browning render/answers to various problems of life and we need to read this Victorian Era poet. Robert Browning is not merely a poet but he was prophet, a seer. His poetry gives a solution to the problems of life. We can say that there is a Therapeutic potential in his poetry. It means that his poems work as medicines

whenever we suffer with the problems of life.

Life throws on us various negative, distressing and fermenting events that may make us emotionally perturbed for a time being, but we all have a power of resilience with which we can remain optimistic and continue to struggle with the situation that makes us more strong and more experienced. The adverse situations render human beings as strong as ever and now they can challenge their fate also because they no longer consider traumas and sufferings as tools to crush them but those experiences of adversity make them even more powerful.

In the present scenario this human resilience has been a key requisite in psychology and psychiatry. It is not only important for our health and well being but also for all the policies regarding sustainable development.

Life is full of imperfections but according to Browning hope lies hidden within these imperfections. As the words of Lord Krishna worked like nectar and support to the bewildered Arjuna and he could work in the right direction, in the same manner the words of Browning may be of some hope to all of us. Though I am not comparing Browning with Lord Krishna, but in some of his dogmas Browning seems to be impressed by the teachings in Bhagwadgeeta. That's why I am mentioning all this.

We can understand his viewpoint through his poems. As his poetry deals with the optimistic



philosophy of life. Though formally Browning belongs to No Church, no philosophy”, in the technical sense.. But whatever he writes brings us close to the brighter aspect of life and therefore seems to deal with human resilience. We can understand this by analysing his poems as his poetry is expressive of this.

Robert Browning was living in an age of scepticism. People were loosing their faith in God and religion. It was an age when scholars like Professor Richet made some empirical conclusions like:

God.s Not in this Heaven

All.s Wrong with the world;

Living in such an atmosphere Robert Browning was such a poet who says in Pippa Passes :

God.s in His Heaven

All right with the world.

Rylands commenting on such faith of Browning says, “**Browning never questions the existence of supreme authority of God, controlling the manifold energies of the world.**”

Browning is thankful to God for all the pleasures and joys that he has conferred on humanity. In his capacity as a man he can make a full appraisal of God.s mercy and gifts. He has full faith in God and believe that whatever God will do will be to his own advantage.

Perfect I call thy plan;

Thanks that I was a man!

Makes, remake, complete,

–I trust What Thou Shall do!

He considers the world to be good and real with which he is in love and interest as Chesterton has said, “He thought the world good because he had found so many things that were good in it – religion, the nation, the family etc. “As is „The Last Ride Together., he asks, “earth being so good, would heaven seem best.”

Browning thinks all those to be fools who believe in enjoying present worldly pleasure only and think life to be mortal and momentary. Though the wheel moved by him sometimes runs fast, at other time stops, the God and the soul endure still eternity, unaffected and untouched by the change of time

and space. He believed that our souls are unto eternity. He says in his Rabbi Ben Ezra What entered into thee, That was, is, and shall be Times Wheel runs back or stops : Potler and clay endure.

In the same poem he says Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure, Here we feel the direct impact of Indian philosophy particularly of the holy book „Gita. on Browning. The whole of Gita tells about the immortality of God and soul and not to be afraid of mortality.

Browning is optimistic upto that extent that he not only agree with the facile optimism of Pope and Bolingbroke that „whatever is, is right, but rather he believes that if there is anything wrong, it is wrong for the excellent purpose so that we may put it right. We should welcome all trials and tribulations that make the cause of life rugged and thorny and give a jolt to the complacency and placidity. Every kind of pain and trouble, disappoint and suffering that robs man of his rest, forces him to make advance on the course of life and make heroic efforts for his improvement.

Welcome each rebuff

That turns earth.s smoothness rough

Each sting that bids us nor sit nor stand but go.

Poet is not insensitive to pain when he teaches us to face trails and difficulties. But he has realized the reality when he says that the earth with its gloom, dijection and failure is the best training ground for man. He has realized the power of resilience that we human beings have to face the hardships of life with courage and determination otherwise we would become victims of our weaknesses and follies. Only after knowing this he has known the importance of pain and he wants to communicate it to others too therefore he says –

Be our joys three parts pain!

Strive and hold cheap the strain,

Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never

Grudge the throe!

Browning believes that body is as divine as the soul. We should not always complain that our body is standing in the way of our spiritual salvation. A man should not boast that he has suppressed the natural urges of body and has come out successful



in the war between body and soul. He should follow the example of a bird. Just as a bird sings while soaring, in the same way, a man should also enjoy the pleasures of the body while aiming high at spiritual values of life. Without renouncing the pleasures of the senses he should march ahead towards spiritual progress.

**As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry „All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now,
then flesh helps soul.**

Browning says that if a man wants to touch the infinite, he can do so only through love because love is common to both God and Man.

**God, Thou art love I built my faith on thee
And further,
„So the All Great were loving too..
This world is so beautiful and life in this world is
worth living only because both are the
expressions of Divine Love :
„O, world as God has made it, all is beauty,
And Knowing this, is love, and love is duty..
Love is the only principle that harmonizes and
unites all living beings.
And Browning seems to endorse the same though
when he says that –
We and they are his children
One family here.**

And considering whole of the world as one family is possible only with the power of love. Browning believes that there should be value of intentions and efforts also not only of achievements. Apparently, it is a mockery to say that failures ought to be counted as success. The high ideals and ambitions proclaim the divinity in man. But he should not adopt all means to fulfil his desires.

This word judges a man on the basis of achievements but only God can judge the unrealized thoughts, ambitions and unfulfilled dreams of a man. He says –

**All I could never be, All, men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God,
whose wheel the pitcher shaped.**

Browning.s approach regarding old age is

optimistic. Nearly all of us are afraid of old age. Regret for lost youth and terror for the old age work as great fears in the psychology of man. But Browning tells old age to be the best age of life. He says :

**Gow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.
..... Youth shows but half; trust God!
See all nor be afraid.**

Browning has written a poem named „Prospice. on the theme of death and he tells his readers not to be afraid of death because death is not an end of life rather it is a beginning as he says in another poem „A Gramnarian.s Funeral. :

**Actual life comes next?
Patience a moment
Death is a Gateway to Heaven.
He considers death to be a battle as he says :
I was ever a fighter, so-one fight more,
The best and the last!**

In this way it can be said that Browning.s message was one of invincible faith and optimism. He has made the world to recognise and follow him. His optimism, as says G.K. Chesterton, “was not founded on any arguments for optimism, nor on opinions, but on life which was the work of God.

REFERENCES

1. Chesterton G.K., Robert Browning, London : Macmillan, 1906.
2. Cohen, J.M. Robert Browning.
3. Long William, J. – English Literature : Its History and Its Significance for the life of the English speaking World. Fiftths Publishers, 2003.
4. Mohanty Jatindra Mohan and B. Das, Literary Criticism : A Reading, Calcutta Oxford University Press, 1993.
5. Sharma Dr. B.R., Robert Browning Selected Poems, Meerut : Sahitya Bhandar, 2001.
6. Silincourt Aubrey, Six Great Poets.
7. Tilak Dr. Raghukul, Studies in Poets, Robert Browning. Delhi : Rama Brothers, 1997.
8. Walker Hugh, Literature of the Victorian Era.
