

Nature in Robert Frost's Poetry

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Abstract

Modern mechanized era has captivated Human beings. Our country “Land of flora and fauna” is lost somewhere in magnetic materialistic Universe. Objects of nature do not enchant the shattered souls of Human beings. How to nurture “Human Values in Human beings” is really a burning issue. English Literature specifically the poetic universe can create wonders. Nature Poems of Robert Frost bring peace, joy and salvation for Human beings. He glorified even small objects of nature in his poems. We can create a paradise of our own maintaining Natural Laws. His poems have never isolated the nature scene from a human content. He serves as a serious artist as well as a serious moralist in his poems. He will always be an immortal figure in the vast galaxy of English Literature.

Key words: magnetic, enchant, universe, salvation, paradise etc.

Introduction

Modern Mechanized Era has captivated Human beings. Gone are the golden dawns when people used to worship Nature. Western blind race of Materialism has made Human Beings entirely deaf and dumb toward beautiful motivating resources. Our Country ‘Land of flora and fauna’ is lost somewhere in magnetic materialistic universe. Beautiful Landscape, Mountains, Lakes, chirping of birds, Flowers and so many other objects of Nature do not enchant shattered souls of Human beings. How to awaken the slumbering dead souls, how to nurture Values in Human beings through Nature, how to bring back the glory of Nature once again in this universe of Artificial Intelligence are the several burning issues which need positive discussion and solution.

Undoubtedly, English Literature particularly the field of poetry can create wonders. Nature has always played pivotal role in motivating poets. In expressing their feelings, thoughts and emotions in poetry, Poets have used Nature. William Wordsworth, John Keats, P. B. Shelley. Robert Frost and Walt Whitman glorified Nature through various aspects. A sound reading of ‘Nature Poems’ of these poets thrills us and for sometimes, we forget the anxieties, pains and shallowness caused by materialistic world. Entrance into the poetic world embedded with sources of Nature ‘Daffodils’ ‘Nothing Gold Can Stay’ ‘I Wandered Lonely As A cloud’ ‘Birches’ “The Tree at my Window” brings serenity, happiness and blissfulness in our mourning dark Lives.

Robert Lee Frost won high acclaim as the poet, the seer, the singer and the bard during his life time. American hailed him as a great nature poet and a truly national poet. He won four Pulitzer Prizes awards for his poetry. Roy Harvey Pearce stated:

“What finally gives the best poems (of frost) their tremendous effectiveness is a sense of Local detail so sharp, so fully controlled, so wholly the poet's own, as to make us know once and forever the gulf between his world and all others.”

Born in San Francisco, Robert Frost spent most of his time in countryside. His poetry is the poetry of a country man for the countrymen. He is really a poet of mountains and rivers, woods and gardens, pastures

and plains, fruits and flowers, seeds and bowers. He is an ardent lover of nature. His poetry is primarily of the earth, closely associated with what the average man considers to be everyday Life. Isidor Schneider appreciates his descriptive powers, “the descriptive power of Mr. Frost, is to me the most wonderful thing in his poetry. A Snowfall, a spring thaw, a bending tree, a valley mist, a brook, these are brought into the experience of the reader”.

Robert Frost always realized Nature not only as a source of happiness but also a motivation for human wit. Human beings will obtain illumination from observation. Nature is not only a background rather the heroic character in his poems. In “Birches”, the poet vividly describes the game that children used to enjoy in New England as they would swing on birch trees. The poet gives a picturesque description of Birches and the changes that wind, ice and storms bring upon them:

“Loaded with ice a sunny winter's morning
After a rain.... they click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turned many coloured
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.”

Soon the warmth of the sun makes them shed crystal shells-

“Shattering and avalanching on the snow crust
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen”

The poet shows as how through imagination, we can escape through harsh realities of life but one should have a respect for reality. The poem ends with a philosophical note that “swinging” is not such a bad thing.

Frost had an eye for all the objects of nature. He portrayed those objects of Nature which many poets had not paid attention. He described them beautifully with emotional attachment. He wrote:

“You ought to have seen how it looked in the rain,
The fruit mixed with water in layers of leaves,
Like two kinds of jewels, a vision for thieves.”

He glorified even small objects of Nature as ants, fire-flies and spiders etc. His tribute to the ‘Oven birds’ is really specific in itself. In its song, the bird sings melodiously of the changing seasons,

“There is a singer everyone had heard loud, a mild summer and mild wood bird who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.”

Another beautiful poem of Robert Frost is “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”. This poem celebrates the theme of obligations versus man's wish for calmness, rest for mind. when the narrator in the poem wishes to take rest for a little while and appreciate the universe around him, and the serenity, he explores in nature, the realizes very well at the same moment that he has obligations to keep to so he must tread on his journey. Mark the immortal lines of the poem:

“The Woods are lovely, dark and deep.
 But I have promises to keep,
 And miles to go before I sleep,
 And miles to go before I sleep.”

The poet gives a message to entire humanity that be honest towards one's responsibilities without ignoring the innocent objects of nature. We can create a paradise of our own following or maintaining these laws.

“Looking for a Sunset Bird in Winter” by Robert Frost is another heart capturing poem. In such a graphic poem, the poet picturises a bird which is not only unheard but also unseen. In the very beginning of the verse, it seems to be entirely pictorial but the poet adds music as well as meaning to the very silent picture:

“A brush had left a crooked stroke
 of what was either cloud or smoke
 From north to south across the blue
 A piercing little star was through.”

John Keats recorded the beautiful objects of nature, for him ‘a thing of beauty is a joy for-ever’. P.B. Shelley and Walt Whitman observed nature with society together. Poets like William Wordsworth and Thomas Hardy spiritualized nature. All these poets expressed themselves in nature poetry with philosophical reflections. But Frost's observation and expression was a beautiful assimilation of all these. Nitchie has pointed out:

“Frost is ultimately not very much concerned with developing a philosophically consistent concept of nature..... What really interests him is not definitions but attitudes, not what nature is in itself but how man responds to it in a world he never made.”

Really, Robert Frost's nature poems have never isolated the nature scene from a human content. The very poems ‘Reluctance’ and ‘My November Guest’ portray the bliss the poet achieves in communion with nature but it is in accordance with this conviction that-man should always keep in mind not to cross the “wall” and trespassing into the domain of nature.

“West Running Brook”, “The Tuft of Flowers”, “A Minor Bird”, “Mowing” and “The Tree at my Window” are some of the very famous nature poems of Robert Frost. Frost visualizes both positive and negative sides of nature. Nature always serves as the “Best Teacher”. The subject matter of his nature poems are the subject matter of the twentieth century poets-grimness, horror, isolation, loneliness etc. “Desert Places” is a very popular lyric of Robert Frost exploring the theme of loneliness. The poet feels that the desert places on this earth and in the sky between stars can not save him because the loneliness within this heart is more frightening than the loneliness of the physical world:

“They can not scare me with their empty spaces
 Between stars- on stars where no human race is

I have it in me so much nearer home

To scare myself with my own desert places.”

It is noteworthy that nature plays a dominant role in his poems. He sings about the communion of man with nature. In spite of darkness, helplessness and loneliness, Frost is in love with life and earth and he always desires to come back on earth:

“Earth is the right place for Love,

I do not know where it is likely to go better.”

Robert Frost's poetry is a promising bond between earth and heaven, between man and God. His poetry chants amazingly about natural and spiritual world. Frost's concerns are essentially human beings. He serves as a serious artist as well as a serious moralist. His hyper-sensitive lyrical presentation tuned with extraordinary intimacy with nature has raised his poetry to a glorious height. As a nature poet Robert Frost will always be an immortal figure in the vast galaxy of English Literature.

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