

**BEAUTIFUL ASPECTS
OF
KEATS'S ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE**



A Thesis

**Presented to
The English Department
Faculty of Letters and Arts
SANATA DHARMA
Teacher Training Institute**

**A Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements of the
Sarjana Degree
(S1 Programme)**

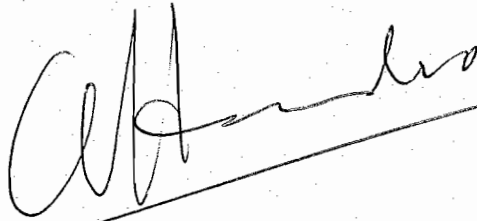
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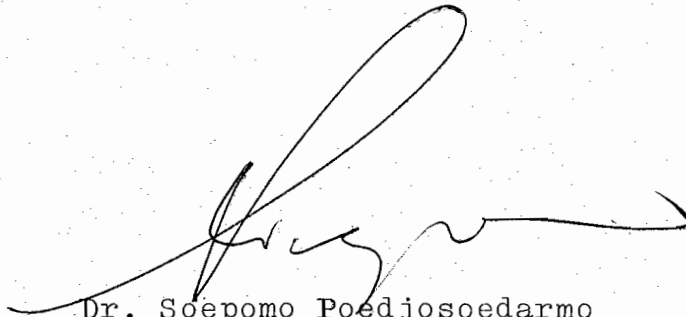


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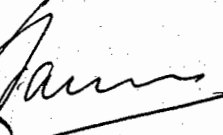
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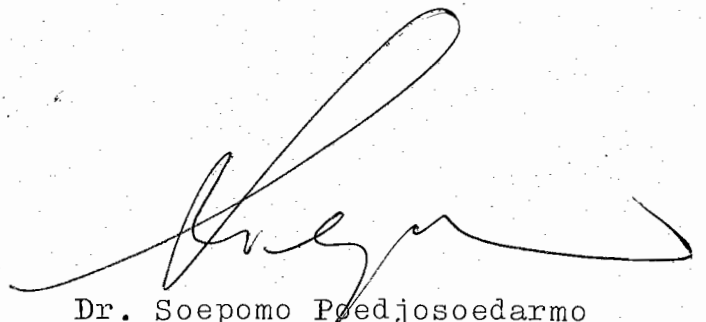
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is a great pleasure for me to express my deepest gratitude to the Teacher's Training Institute of Sanata Dharma and to the English Department and all its lecturing staff in particular.

I am really indebted to my poetry lecturer, Drs. W.Y. Hendrowarsito, who has helped and guided me in accomplishing this thesis. More than that, his kindness, understanding, patience, and suggestion have encouraged me to finish this thesis more in details.

My deepest gratitude is also conveyed to Mr. Soepo mo Poedjosoedarmo, Ph.D.. In his lecture, Educational Research, he has patiently guided me to make a small paper, talking about the steps to make a research. It certainly facilitates me in composing this thesis. He has also read my thesis and made the necessary corrections for the sake of this thesis.

I am also eager to thank Dra. M.I. Indriani Arief for giving any information I really need; Drs. J. Soegi arto for lending me some literary books; and everybody who has given any help and encouragement in accomplishing my thesis.

Last but not least, I am very grateful to my parents who have endlessly taken care of me with true love and affection. They are never bored to encourage me for the sake of my happiness.

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INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Literature of a people is the principal element of its culture. It contains the record of the people's values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts - their whole way of life, in short. And as a part of social sciences, literature covers some works of art. One of them is poetry.^{novel}

When the discussion is about poetry, most people sometimes start to say that poetry is nothing. It just gives us bewilderment, for there is no any fact to be talked about more deeply. It is, however, understandable if their attitude toward poetry is unfair. Indeed, it is very hard for one to love something he or she does not know well.

The title I choose for this thesis is "Beautiful Aspects of Keats's Ode To A Nightingale". What I mean by beautiful here is the beauty in the sense of meaning. In the poem there are lots of aspects that can be analysed so deeply that we can relate them with our lives. There are two reasons why I am interested in taking such a topic. Firstly, I want to make it clear that poetry is something meaningful for our lives. We can elicit values of the total experiences which enrich our experiences of life. Besides, poetry widens and

sharpens our contacts with existence. Secondly, since poetry was only given in one semester when I was in the seventh semester, the explication of poems was never deeply done. In this opportunity, therefore, I try to explicate a poem deeply based on the theory of poetry I have got. And as illustration in this thesis, I specially choose a poem entitled "Ode To A Nightingale" by John Keats.

Anyway, there are some benefits that may be useful for those who are interested in poetry. The first benefit is to give a kind of description in explicating a poem particularly to students who are interested in poetry. It may even help them in the framework of making a thesis or a paper, taking poetry as their topic. The second one is to contribute something useful to the teaching of poetry in the English Department of IKIP Sanata Dharma. Since poetry is an important part of literature that must be taught in this institute, it will be better if the students are asked to explicate a poem deeply. If it is possible the lecturer can ask them to make a small paper.

Since the time is limited, I realize that this thesis may not be worked out completely and perfectly. Therefore, any correction and criticism from the readers are warmly welcomed.

B. AIM OF STUDY

Talking about the aim of this study, I want to explain the message intended by the poet through the poem. The message that the poet conveys is sadness. To do that I analyse a poem in detail by communicating both others' and my own experiences.

C. SCOPE OF STUDY

There are six points in the scope of study. They are:

How is the background of Romantic Literature?

How is the biography of John Keats?

How is the general impression of Ode To A Nightingale?

How is the explication of Ode To A Nightingale?

How is the tone?

How is the imagery?

The reasons for the six scopes are as follows.

As we know, literature is a part of a people's culture. It certainly represents the life and the development of its people in such factors as the political situation of a country, the social and economic conditions, the industrial advance, the scientific movement, and the religious life. All these factors will together mould the background of literature of each period. As we know, poetry is a part of literature. Accordingly, it is important for us to know the background of a period of

literature to which a poet belongs. It will make us easy to analyse a poem in detail. Besides, we will have a description of the poet's attitude in writing the poem.

As important as the background of the period of literature is the biography of the poet. The life of the poet gives great influence to what he writes in his poems. By knowing it we can understand what kind of person he is, so that it is easier for us to analyse his poems.

Concerning the poem I analyse, the biography of its poet, John Keats is discussed here. And the great works that Keats has written are also mentioned. They enable us to be sure that there are certainly such beautiful aspects in them that they become the great ones.

Before coming to explication of a poem, a general impression of the poem is felt necessary. To know the general impression, the poem must be paraphrased. It means that the poem is retold in the form of prose. Relating to the poem "Ode To A Nightingale", the general impression is made stanza by stanza. It will be helpful to know what the poet says in every stanza. Furthermore, it facilitates us to explicate the poem.

If poetry is specifically taken as the subject in a thesis, the explication of the poem has an important

role. To explicate a poem means to explain and analyse the poem in detail. It is important because the poem has lots of values of life. More than that, we ourselves can communicate our own experiences of life through our intellect, our sense, our emotion, and our imagination. In this thesis the explication of Ode To A Nightingale is made stanza by stanza. The purpose of it is to avoid bewilderment. Moreover, the sequences of the message the poet writes are clear because he has certain intentions why he puts this message in stanza 1 and that one in stanza 2, et cetera. It is, however, undeniable that the stanzas are closely related.

Tone, in a poem expresses the writer's or the speaker's attitudes toward his subject, his audience, and sometimes toward himself. It is more difficult than in spoken language because we do not hear the speaker's voice. Since tone is very important in poetry, we have to recognize it by using the elements of poetry such as connotation, imagery, metaphor, irony, understatement, rhythm, sentence construction, and formal pattern. In analysing the Ode To A Nightingale, tone needs to be discussed so that Keats's attitude toward his subject and himself can be clearly seen.

Experience comes to us through the senses that consist of seeing, hearing, smelling, and feeling. Talking about imagery in poetry, it can be defined as a repre-

sentation of sense experience through language. It is very important because the emotions and the intellect of the readers can be swiftly evoked.

Imagery is specifically discussed, for Keats is a master of the English language, who has become the greatest in applying sensuous imagery. Besides, the poem itself contains lots of messages that stimulate our senses.

D. METHOD

The method I apply in making this thesis is Library Research. And the data are collected from books on literature and many kinds of dictionaries.

The poem Ode To A Nightingale is taken from the book "John Keats-Poems" that is written by Gerald Bullet.

To discuss Background of Romantic Literature and the life of John Keats I much use the book "Adventures in English Literature" written by Priestley and Spear. The reason is that it has lots of information about Romanticism. The sequences of the information have been written in a logical and specific category. It, of course, makes me easy to find the information I really need. Besides, the language is not so difficult that it facilitates me to comprehend the content of the book.

"A Book of English Literature" written by Snyder

and Martin is used in talking about the works that Keats has written. It is the one, among others, that mentions and explains Keats's great works completely.

As the theoretical basis to discuss Tone and imagery I take the books "Structure, Sound and Sense" by Perrine, and "Understanding Poetry" by Warren. Both of them are important because they contain information that completes one another.

E. PLAN

In order to make clear what I am going to discuss in this thesis, the sequences of each chapter will be briefly explained.

In Introduction I talk about background of study, aim of study, scope of study, method, and plan. Chapter I discusses Romantic Literature which is divided into three parts, namely: background of Romantic Literature, characteristics of Romanticism, and general view. There are three parts in the background, they are, the political situation, industrialism and agriculture, and religious thought. I deliberately discuss these things in Chapter I in order to make the readers easy in getting a description of whatever the poet has written, and the poet's attitude in writing the poem. In Chapter II I try to give a brief biography of John Keats that consists of his life and his work, as to understand what

kind of person he is, and to comprehend his work better. Chapter III presents the general impression of the poem "Ode To A Nightingale". What is actually meant here is the summary of the poem's content. It comes before the explication in order to help the readers to know the content of the poem briefly. In Chapter IV I try to go through the explication of the poem. It is intended to know and to analyse the explicit and implicit messages in the poem. Chapter V gives a description of Tone in order to know Keats's attitude, as the speaker, toward his subject or himself. It is from the explication that we will know how the poet has a certain attitude. That is why Tone is discussed after the explication of the poem. In Chapter VI I discuss Imagery as the subject that Keats greatly masters. At last, I give the conclusion of whatever I have discussed, and also some suggestions, concerning with the teaching of the poem.

CHAPTER I

ROMANTIC LITERATURE

Literature is a part of life for it describes and tells of human activity. It exists and develops along with the people who support it. Since it concerns with the development of mankind, literature of each period has its own characteristics. A period of literature is actually just a belief that is followed by a group of authors who has the same conception.¹⁾ Even though the conception is not the same, and every author brings out his own unique aptitude and personality, they, because of the general characteristics, can be categorized in a certain period of literature.

Since man's way of life is frequently changed because of the change of Era, there will be new periods of literature. And the change in society will be caused by such factors as the political situation of a country, its social and economic conditions, its industrial advance, its scientific movement, and its religious life.

It is proper, then to say that "the history of a national literature is part of the whole national

1) Hadimadja, Aliran-aliran Klasik, Romantik dan Realisma dalam Kesusastaan, Pustaka Djaya, Djakarta, 1972, p. 9.

story."²⁾ This statement indicates that one has to learn the whole history of a nation if he wants to know a certain literature deeply. Thus, literature can be best understood in the context of life and the development of its people.

To comprehend Romantic literature one has to know the elements that make up the Romantic Period. Before coming to the characteristics of Romantic literature, therefore, it is worthwhile to discuss the general view of the political situation, industrial and agricultural developments, and religious thought which together mould the background of Romantic literature.

A. BACKGROUND

Romanticism was a European movement that was seen first in Germany, then in England, and in Russia. It was also brilliantly developed in France in 1830. As a period in English literature, Romanticism started in about 1798. And Lyrical Ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge marked the appearance of Romanticism. It ended in the mid-1830's when Queen Victoria began her reign and most of the major Romantic poets had died.

The elements of Romantic literature that will be

2) Sampson, The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1959, p. 1.

sketchily presented here are political situation, industrialism and agriculture, and religious thought.

1. The Political Situation

England was very disappointed and furious when France and Spain seized its valuable colonial possessions. Since both England and France insisted to maintain power, chaos arose everywhere. As a further result, the French Revolution broke out in 1789. It made the aristocracy keep in power. Meanwhile, cries of liberty, equality, and individual freedom came from all parts of the world.

Napoleon Bonaparte was a commander of revolutionary France who was capable of organizing victory.³⁾ However, he failed to invade Britain because his navy was destroyed by Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar. In some respects Napoleon was still a man of the French Revolution. He tried hard to conquer most of Western Europe, and organized its resources to aid him in struggling against Britain. Seemingly, the Whigs recognized Napoleon's intensity, so that they were eager to make a relationship with him. The Tories, however, did not like him. Then, they allied with the cruel monar-

3) Priestley and Spear, Adventures in English Literature, Vol. 3. Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., The United States of America, 1963, pp. 125.

chies in Europe. They, finally, succeeded in defeating Napoleon in 1815 at the Battle of Waterloo. This great success showed that the reign of George III which had been started in 1760 was not useless.

Time went on but the political problems of Europe remained unsolved. Because of that, Congress of Vienna, consisting of European powers, was held. The real purpose was actually to restore monarchies and readjust territories throughout Europe. England, Russia, and Germany set up a "Holy Alliance", but it did not give any further reform. Furthermore, the congress was held in the grip of Toryism. And the situation became worse. Labourers who were overworked and underpaid got angry. They often held meetings, planning to struggle for the sake of their better lives. But the meetings were soon broken up by force. As the result, riots and much popular agitation for reform came up.

Under the reign of William IV England was getting better because the Whigs passed the Reform Bill in 1832. They helped by increasing the number of those who were eligible to vote. And further reforms such as lightening prison sentences, improving education, broadening freedom of the press, and abolishing the slave trade were also made.

2. Industrialism and Agriculture

From 1789 to 1832 England entered a revolutionary

period,⁴⁾ This, of course, changed the entire economy and social structure of the country. People worked hard to get new inventions in the framework of increasing their better lives. In this case, the making of cloth by mass-production methods was particularly carried out.

With the arrival of Industrial Revolution, a new and wealthy industrial class sprang up around the factories. Nevertheless, it could not be said that England was totally prosperous. There were still lots of people who cried for better life in factory.

Not only in industrialism did England get its problems, but in agriculture as well. New scientific methods of farming made large holdings increase and the number of small farms decrease. Small farmers received inadequate wages. They were forced to move to the industrial centres, and to allow their land to enlarge estates. As the result, poverty increased. Particularly around 1815 there was great distress that covered unemployment, bad harvests, heavy war debt, and disregard of the labourer's rights. Finally, the transition from an agricultural and commercial society to modern industrialism made the economic condition unbalanced.

4) Smith, English Literature After Neo-Classicism, Vol. 2, Littlefield, Adams & Co., New Jersey, 1969, p. 19.

3. Religious Thought

In the eighteenth century 'nature' was a controlling idea in Western thought. Likewise, religion in this century rested upon 'nature'. Archbishop Tillotson even said: "All the duties of Christian religion, which respect God, are no other but what natural light prompts men to, excepting the two sacraments, and praying to God in the name and by the mediation of Christ."⁵⁾ Thus, people had to take care of anything created by God, and take it as it was. And the most important thing was that our souls had to be clean, putting away bad thoughts that always disturbed to satisfy ourselves.

Anyway, new religious developments arose during the eighteenth century.⁶⁾ The official Church of England existed in a bad state. Many clergymen had several different and separated parishes. They managed this activity because they could not provide estates for themselves. Then, they took the incomes from their parishes. Sometimes they asked poor curates with small wages to do their work. Some of the bishops even did not live in their dioceses. Though they lived there, they did not devote for the Church. They were often

5) Willey, The Eighteenth-Century Background, Cox and Wyman Ltd., Great Britain, 1965, p. 11.

6) Priestley and Spear, Op. Cit, p. 6.

busy with scholarly research. Even worse, some of them did not really believe in the Christian faith at all.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMANTICISM

Romanticism arose as the reaction in opposing the rules of the Classic Literature which emphasized on Reason. Men consisted of brain and feeling. Therefore, Romanticism believed that the determination of the truth had also to be influenced by conscience.

Most of the Romantic authors took the ideals of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). He was a French philosopher who first brought the basics of sociology. In his opinion, man was born free. If he needed safety, he had to sacrifice his own freedom and would have some bounds. However, he had a right to release those bounds if the government could not fulfil the security he wished. Rousseau introduced the basics of progressive education as well. To his mind, children had to grow like plants in the universe. Teachers just took care of them in order that no disturbance came in the process of growth. It was in accordance with his motto "Return to nature."⁷⁾

Three points that are known as the characteristics of Romantic literature are interests in nature, in

7) Hadimadja, Op. Cit, p. 41.

humble life, and in the past.⁸⁾

1. Interest in Nature

The Romantics had a deep interest in nature, not as a centre of beautiful scenes, but as an informing and spiritual influence on life. They did this because they were afraid of the coming of industrialism which could make the society's moral decrease.

2. Interest in Humble Life

Humble life was the Romantics' attitude which became a keynote in this century. They preferred country-life to town-life. To them country-life had a purifying influence upon the human character, for it brought us into nature. In other words, they liked simplicity.

3. Interest in the Past

Most of the Romantics appeared to be always writing about the past. They were interested in using the Middle Ages. However, they were not so much turning to the Past. What they actually wanted was to explore and express their own inner world of dream and desire of mysterious hopes and fears. And to separate the inner world from the ordinary outer world, they used medieval dreamland. The reason was that the Middle Ages

8) Pooley, Farmer, Thornton, Anderson, England in Literature, Scott, Foresman and Company, The United States of America, 1953, pp. 258.

were very different from the industrial society around which they lived in. The earlier times were simpler and more picturesque.

To return to Rousseau, he could be categorized as such an unbalanced person that he was threatened by insanity. Automatically, the Romanticism he created became unbalanced too. It conformed to the general statement: "A balanced man looks neither entirely outward nor entirely inward; he considers both the outer world and his own inner world."⁹⁾ It could be said, then, that the Romantic authors were unbalanced because their attitudes of mind were too one-sided. They just wanted to express their own inner world.

C. GENERAL VIEW

The world of Romantic literature is a world of wonder. Romanticism in literature is a tendency to seek an ideal aesthetic world in fancy and imagination, and to express it in an individualized and sentimental form. Poetry, fiction, essay, and literary criticism are the fields of literature that are developed in Romanticism. In those 32 years we can see lots of talented writers who were busy with their ideas and forms in representing life. Most of them particularly ap-

9) Priestley and Spear, Op. Cit, pp. 123.

peared in England.

As a whole, we may say that Romantic literature flourished. In reality, however, not all fields of literature such as essay, novel, drama, and poetry, have satisfying developments.

In the field of essay, particularly in the personal essay, the Romantic Age was successful. It was William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, Thomas De Quincey and Leigh Hunt who became its masters.

Unfortunately, the age was not very successful in the field of novel. Indeed, lots of writers developed novels. However, none showed improvement until Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen came with the goodness in themes and character development.

In the Romantic Age drama did not have an admirable development although most of the Romantic poets tried to write it. The reason was that the middle-class' domination that spread over England society at that time, did not appreciate drama as an art.

In the field of poetry, the Romantic Age reached a great development. The style of Romantic poetry was simple. And the theme was a common one: the importance of man - the individual. Whereas its form and language still followed the Classical period.

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats were concerned with a very personal man and his feeling

and emotions, his reactions to nature, and his relations to his fellows and to God. These major Romantic poets were grouped into two generations. Wordsworth and Coleridge were included in the first generation. Their point of view was to seek justification and precedents in a nationalism idealism, where a sympathetic interest in the poor became an element. Whereas Byron, Shelley, and Keats were categorized in the second generation. They found a spirit of moral revolt when they got England impoverished and preoccupied with internal problems. They demanded an unlimited independence for every one, particularly for themselves, also a liberation from all rules that restricted a free utterance. Only with them the literature of emotion and imagination reached its height.

CHAPTER II

JOHN KEATS

(1795 - 1821)

John Keats is a major poet in the Romantic Period. He is the last born of the Romantics and the first to die. Some authors have discussed him because of the great success he achieved in his very young age. The story of his life presented here serves as a general picture of him and his work.

In the exposition of Keats's biography, we refer to two points, namely his life and his work. Both of them are needed, so that we can easily understand what kind of person he was.

A. HIS LIFE

Keats was born of a humble family in London in 1795. He was the eldest son of Thomas Keats, a livery-stable keeper in Finsbury pavement, London. When he was eight years old, he studied at Enfield. As an orphan at the age of fifteen Keats had to stop studying because the two successful merchants who took care of him withdrew him from school. They apprenticed him to a surgeon at Edmonton. Instead of not going to any public school or university, Keats went to St 'Thomas's Hospital in 1814 to continue his study in medicine. During his stu-

dy Keats much read Greek myths and Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. They gradually made him interested in literature, particularly in poetry. Indeed, he himself did not like a medical career. And with the encouragement of his literary friends he eventually devoted himself to poetry.¹⁾

During his life Keats often lived in lodgings. With little formal education and no family, however, he was proud enough of places in which he could live. Moreover, it became the inspiration of his poetry which eventually received world recognition. However, he only knew little about it, for during his life the critics often attacked his work.

Seemingly, Keats's life was full of anxieties. Besides his literary disappointment, he got other anxieties. He was very shocked at Tom's death, his younger brother to whom he was devoted. In the same year, in 1818 Keats fell in love with Fanny Brawne. Unfortunately, they could not marry because of Keats's poor health.

In February of 1820 Keats was threatened with tuberculosis, a disease that had killed his mother and brother. To have the warmer climate he went to Italy. And in the middle of September he sailed with his

1) Priestley and Spear, Op. Cit, pp. 221.

friend Severn, and reached Rome in December. Realizing that he was to die young, Keats made the epitaph for his own grave: "Here lies one whose name was rit in water."²⁾ It expressed his belief that his life would only be a passing ripple on the water's surface. In Rome, on February 23, 1821, Keats died, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery.

B. HIS WORK

Keats was the first and last artist among the others in the Romantic Period. He was very sensitive to beauty, and unaffected by the changes that came over Europe during his life time. Since all his work was based upon beauty, he always said that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever."³⁾

It was proper to say that Keats was the one who was greatly thirsty for knowledge. His great success in poetry was also inspired with the works of the great English authors such as Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, of whom he was proud. And through reading he much knew the Classics that finally became the source in writing his works.

2) Van De Laar and Schoonderwoerd, An Approach To English Literature, Third Edition, L.C.G. Malmberg, Hertogenbosch, 1963, pp. 226.

3) Entwistle and Gillet, The Literature of England, Longman, Green & Co., London, 1952, pp. 112.

Even though without studying poetry formally, Keats was able to produce some works that made his name noted in the history of world literature. In 1815 Keats wrote some sonnets, but the excellent one was On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer.⁴⁾ His first volume of poems, Poems By John Keats appeared in 1817, containing the sonnet on Homer and Sleep and Poetry.

After the first book of poems, came Endymion in 1818. It was a poetic romance in four books. In this work Keats used an allegorical meaning that consisted of human sensations of love and sorrow.

The next great work was Hyperion. It was begun six months after Endymion was completed. When Keats felt that he was being influenced by the spirit of Milton's Paradise Lost, he deliberately ceased writing it. Then, he started it again in 1819, and remodelled as The Fall of Hyperion. In this work there were some poems of great volume of 1820. First was Lamia. Here Keats showed his mastery of a new kind of beauty - the beauty that had evil in it. Following Lamia came Isabella - a tale of horror that was full of beauty. The last one was The Eve of St Agnes.

After The Eve of St Agnes, came the group of Odes: To a Nightingale, On a Grecian Urn, To Psyche, To

4) Snyder and Martin, A Book of English Literature, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934, pp. 232.

Autumns, On Melancholy; and fragments: To Fancy, Bards of Passion, The Mermaid Tavern, and Robin Hood. The Odes were the most perfect examples of English romantic poetry.⁵⁾ Indeed, they were the greatest of his poems, among the greatest in English literature. They were loaded with emotion and melody.

5) Van De Laar and Schoonderwoerd, Op. Cit, pp.223.

CHAPTER III

KEATS'S ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

A. THE POEM

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South!
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan:
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.



Away! away for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
 Already with thee! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain-
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
 The same that ofttimes hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: - do I wake or sleep?

B. GENERAL IMPRESSION

John Keats was in a very bad mood when he wrote this poem, and in his sadness he heard a Nightingale, the best singing bird that sings night and day.

Stanza 1

Keats's heart aches very much so that nothing around him can make his heart cheerful and happy. What happens to him is just the inability of his deep heart to feel something beautiful and pleasant. Not only is his heart painful, but his capacity of thinking is too. His brain is too dull to be active. He really cannot think about what is going on to himself. Moreover, he may not be able to find out the best way to run away from the heavy burden of his confusion. In such a condition it is as if his sense is full of poison of hemlock he has drunk. What he is facing is of course something different from his real life. It is as if he were in another world where he could have the beauty and happiness he could not get in real life. It is also possible that he not only drinks a little of that poisonous substance, but also a lot of opiate, without leaving a drop of it. This seems more terrible. However, the more opium he drinks the happier he will be, and the easier it would be for him to relieve of his distress.

Talking about opiate, it works quite fast in his body. It does not take one day not even one hour to work, but just one minute. Then his mind soon flies into a fantastic world where only happiness is to be found. And the happiness he gets there is when he sees a nightingale - a small reddish-brown migratory bird that sings sweetly at night as well as by day. His heart will dance more happily when he hears the bird sing beautifully.

Keats likes the nightingale very much, not because he is jealous of him, but because the bird has been lucky, indeed. The nightingale always gets happiness in his life, not like Keats who meets with sadness that makes him frustrated. And because of that, Keats also wants to share happiness with the nightingale. He is going to join with the bird that is perching on a tree, then jumping up charmingly from one tree to another by flapping his light wings.

The nightingale is compared with a dryad - a nymph which has light wings, and which usually lives in trees. Likewise, the nightingale has light wings which are reddish-brown. He is also small like the dryad. And trees are the shelter where he lives. Just as any bird, the nightingale settles around place which is full of plants with their fresh green leaves, and of other birds. In such a beautiful place the nightingale keeps

singing happily in high spirits. He can even become the immortal sign for all people for the approaching summer so that they can welcome and enjoy the warmth of the season happily with him.

Stanza 2

In imagining the nightingale, Keats makes a comparison with a draught of very good wine. The taste of wine is usually strong, but if wine is kept in the earth for a long time, the taste will be more alcoholic. And the more he drinks of it the more vivid his imagination is and the more creative he will be in writing poetry.

By keeping it in the deep earth, wine becomes fresh and natural. This can be compared with plants growing in the ground. They are pure and fresh because they grow well in fertile soil. Vintage is very good wine, and it equals the country-green. The country-green here is described as a country which has fertile lands so that all plants can grow well. Then this country will become very beautiful in the world because green leaves and colourful flowers cover it. All in all, when Keats drinks such fresh wine, he uses his strong imagination, and finally, he will feel the freshness of the country. The country here is Provence. It is an area in Italy which possesses lots of valuable works of arts that are highly appreciated by well-known

artists. And when he wants to enjoy the beauty of art works, he has to travel to the city. Then in this southern area, his life will be full of joy which can make him happier.

A beaker is a glass used for drinking wine - the warm substance that can stimulate our imagination. Keats has tried to compare the beaker with the warm South, that is, the most ideal place for northern people. People in the North are fond of going to the South because there they can enjoy the warmth of sunshine they never get.

The wine that Keats means here is the warm substance which has a red colour like the blushful Hippocrene. And the hippocrene reflects something which is full of inspiration and imagination. Thus, it can be said that the warm South contains sources of inspiration and imagination that make one's mind wider and richer. Not only are inspiration and imagination found in this area, but bright colourful hopes like what are possessed by the nightingale as well. Those hopes make Keats's mind wide open to be filled with any idea that comes from happiness. All these, actually, describe the bliss of drinking wine that finally makes his mind fly away to get inspiration to praise the beauty and the happiness of the nightingale. And Keats also wants to enjoy happiness with the nightingale he is very

proud of.

Stanza 3

The nightingale flies far away, becoming one with the grandeur of the world. He flaps his beautiful wings charmingly as if he forgets all things that cause his life sad. Indeed, among the leaves that become his house, he has never met with weariness or boredom that makes life hard to bear.

If somebody gets fever, usually he will quiver, just as when he is afraid of something that worries him self. He will be trembling in facing the frightening things. However, what the nightingale faces is different from what somebody gets in his life. The bird always steps forward without fear to work hard. The only thing the nightingale knows is happiness, indeed.

According to Keats, almost all people who find sad ness and hopelessness in this world will groan. Their souls are shaken because they are not strong enough to bear sufferings. Palsy always worries their lives so that their hair falls off. Not only do old people worry about their lives, but young people as well. They grow pale day by day, and their bodies become thinner and thinner like living skeletons which have no hope to live longer. And finally they die, taking along any bur den they got when they were alive. Perhaps they are happier in their new world, free from sorrow and des-

pair. But then, they cannot see the beauty found in the nightingale's bright eyes any more. Moreover, they are not able to think about what will happen to them in the future.

Stanza 4

Keats really undergoes something terrible with his mind. His capacity of thinking is seriously dull. As a poet who is usually able to open his mind and heart in finding out something beautiful, he also undergoes brain and emotional confusion. It occasionally looks normal in daily life. However, the way we try to overcome it will depend on ourselves. It appears that Keats begins to be able to destroy the numbness that attacks upon him. The only way he can take after is to go far away to meet the beautiful bird he adores - that is, the nightingale. He comes to the bird neither with an honourable man nor his close friends, but he just uses his words of poetry. Words are the only wealth he possesses. And only with words can he express freely his feelings of anything he finds around him.

Keats does not care what makes his brain puzzled and dull any more. The only thing he wants to do now is to come together with the nightingale, for when he meets the bird through his words, the night he faces will become tender. It actually implies that the darkness of his mind is not truly dark. On the other hand,

it is merely a small disturbance that can be easily overcome. Then Keats represents the bird with the Queen Moon who is gracefully sitting on her throne. He imagines that the nightingale is perching gracefully upon the tree. The bird certainly can live peacefully, for only cheerfulness he faces in his life. Perhaps he is predestined not to have complicated problems. Exactly, it is he who makes other people happy with his charming appearance and golden voice.

Stanza 5

Keats is not able to see beauty and happiness which appear in front of him. He thinks that he will never find out any kind of beauty and enjoyment which can amuse him. It appears that foolishness has really upset his way of thinking. He even does not realize that sweet hopes have come to him for a long time.

He believes, however, that in darkness there is still something sweet and joyful. Moreover, it encourages anyone whose soul is weak in struggling against unpleasant reality.

Talking about those who are always highly spirited or spiritless, some symbols in the form of plants can be taken. Grass is a kind of wild and low-growing plants. It is so weak that it can do nothing whenever people trample on it, or when animals eat it. Thus, grass can be represented as persons who have no strong

spirits in facing their lives, especially when they face something unpleasant. Likewise, thicket is described as persons who face lots of complex problems that make them only see darkness. The description is made like that because thicket is a mass of trees, shrubs, undergrowth that grows thickly together. The description of wild fruit-tree is presented to picture a person who feels lonely. If the tree is wild, though having lots of fruits, it will not be much paid attention to. Thus, these all describe people who are frustrated because of the unpleasant reality they find.

Concerning with such a condition, both sweetness and joyfulness will certainly help someone solve some problems one faces. They not only excite somebody who gets numbness, but also those who have a strong personality and wisdom. They will make these people have a stronger soul, personality, and wisdom so that high spirits and self confidence will remain intact. In this instance, persons who have a strong personality and wisdom are described as white hawthorn and pastoral eglantine. White hawthorn is a thorny shrub with white blossoms which is often used for hedges. If it is used for hedges, it means that the hawthorn is strong enough to grow and to protect other plants. The hawthorn here has white blossoms. And white usually describes something tender, clean, and calm. The pastoral eglantine is a

kind of a rose that can be found in pastures. The eglantine can blossom long so that it is often used in the church.

Furthermore, joyfulness can be seen when spring time comes in mid-May. People will joyously welcome the pretty season with cheerful hearts and faces. During the season all flowers will blossom with bright colours and fragrant smells. And people enjoy them very much because such a beautiful chance only happens once a year. They also feel at home during the season for the air is so cool and fresh that they feel nice body and soul. However, the situation will change in the beginning of summer. People start moaning because of the hot days. This, of course, makes them restless both mentally and physically.

Stanza 6

At night when everything is getting dark, Keats often hears the voice of death. Indeed, he himself is imagining death. The voice is echoing as if it reminds Keats that death exists near him. Nevertheless, Keats may not be worried if death is really coming to pick him up, because he somehow belongs to it. It seems that the death he is going to face is not harsh, but tender and kind. It is always calling Keats's soul so gently that the voice following it causes Keats to muse. He dreams about an honourable death. Indeed, the soft

voice comes by whispering tenderly again and again. Then it will bring him into another world which can make him live more peacefully. Moreover, Keats certainly has immortal peace there, and no sadness or no dullness will attack him any more.

It appears more clearly now that his breath is approaching the immortal sound sleep. Then with no pain it will cease at a quiet moment. He may be very happy now for neither dullness nor pain disturbs his life any more. Only a graceful smile adorns his pale face.

Keats returns to praise the nightingale again. While the bird is practising his art, that is, singing, to make people happy, his soul keeps strong in such a great joy. He never feels tired, but even keeps producing melodious tunes instead. Unfortunately, however, Keats hears his golden voice in vain. He is no longer able to listen to the nightingale that always sings prettily because he is in the deep earth. According to him, the requiem sung by the nightingale is useless. It just becomes sad because the song is presented to the dead body which is buried in the deep ground. Now everything is over. The body is invisible now, only the tomb is.

Stanza 7

Keats's admiration for the nightingale is considerably high. The feeling of satisfaction arising

from what he has seen is maintained. He is proud of the bird that was not born for death. The nightingale is considered as a bird that lives forever without having lots of uncomfortable experiences of life. It is as if he is created to be a lucky creature which can amuse all human beings who suffer from deep sorrow. Also, no hungry generations will break him down. On the other hand, they will praise him with great awe.

As the night comes, an old fancy unexpectedly appears in Keats's mind. He remembers an emperor and clowns who lived in ancient times. In the era of empires, people were usually forced to obey all the emperor's desires. Certainly, almost all of them hardly enjoyed the so-called freedom. They felt oppressed because their rights were strictly circumscribed. The only thing that could excite them was the clowns. Clowns always displayed foolish tricks and antics that made people laugh. By watching the funny action people would forget for a moment everything which pressed their souls. All this actually describes the picture of Keats's own life. The emperor represents pains that disturb him; the clown represents the nightingale which always amuses him; whereas the people represent his own figure.

The heart restless Keats has been facing is perhaps the same with what Ruth had experienced. Ruth, the

daughter in law of King Naomi worked in the field that belonged to King Boaz who was very rich. Ultimately, she became his wife. Ruth seemed unhappy with her marriage. She was so sad and homesick that her drops of tears often flew through her face. She frequently cried in her new place amid people who seemed strange to her although wealth remained around her. The similar thing also frequently happens to other people, including Keats himself. Perhaps he has got lots of good achievements, but he cannot be satisfied with those things. The thing that is always present in his mind is only grievance. Indeed, wealth and success do not always make people happy during their lives.

Stanza 8

Keats, who is getting sad, thinks that this uncomfortable feeling is like a bell. A bell usually describes something strong which will ring if the clapper strikes it. It will keep ringing unless the clapper stops striking. Furthermore, the bell can be looked upon as Keats himself - his appearance, whereas the clapper as his feeling. The sadness which comes to him is actually caused by his own feeling, not something else. It seems that Keats has been exaggerating. Such a feeling will lose or never appear unless Keats himself tries hard to kick it out from his fancy.

Seemingly, Keats gradually begins to realize that

things bad he ponders on deeply are merely a fancy. Also, they always deceive all human beings whenever and wherever they are. The important thing he must do then is to try hard not to care about fancy, but to become a man who has full self-confidence. And by having such an attitude, it will be easier for him to make progress so that he can enjoy happiness during his life.

Keats tries to think that not only does the nightingale get happiness, but he does, too. The forlorn song sung by the nightingale fades from his mind. He not only forgets that song but also the very sadness that has ever come to his quiet mind for some time. The terrible thing which almost makes him mad is now deeply buried. And what he is facing is just cheerfulness and joy. He is so happy that he gets confused whether the event he experienced was a vision or a dream. He does not know either whether he really experiences the change of mind or whether it is only a dream.

CHAPTER IV

EXPLICATION OF ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Ode to a nightingale is a title that Keats considers suitable for his poem. Before coming to the content of the poem, it is important for us to discuss the title first. Ode is actually a lyrical poem which is made to express noble feelings, and to be addressed to a person or a thing. Whereas a nightingale is a small bird that sings sweetly, especially at night. Keats uses "Ode" because he wants to praise the bird he is greatly proud of. He considers the bird as something noble because it can make his life happy. It is particularly the bird's song that brings Keats into the world of happiness. Thus, the ode used here is a lyrical poem that is addressed to a bird - a nightingale.

To come to the first stanza of this poem, it is worthwhile to include what J.B. Priestley and Josephine Spear have mentioned in their book. They explain that Keats wrote this poem in the Spring of 1819 when a nightingale was building her nest next to his house. The inspiration that Keats finds in writing this poem may come from another nightingale which accompanies the first one. It can be said that the latter one is male because Keats is very interested in the bird's song. And in general, it is a male bird which has a melodious

voice. Indeed, the nightingale is not a beautiful one, but his voice is quite melodious.

Stanza 1

Keats is in a bad mood when he writes this poem. His heart aches and his feeling is painful. The reason is that he gets numb. He has no longer any power to feel the beauty of life. There are some anxieties that come and make him sad. Since his parents's deaths, he does not have any house to live in. He is also very shocked at Tom's death - his younger brother. Moreover, he suffers from tuberculosis at a very young age. It really worries him. He feels very sorrowful and disappointed, for his duty as a poet has not finished yet. Keats thinks that he is unable to devote his life fully to poetry because of his bad health. What he greatly wishes is good health, so that he can make lots of poems until he becomes old, and then dies. Indeed, it is very difficult for him to run away from the heavy burden of his confusion. Keats is so upset that he expresses what he is feeling:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:

Keats is no longer sad when he hears the nightingale's song. On the other hand, he is most joyful. He

compares himself with a condition when he drinks hemlock. Hemlock is a plant with finely divided leaves and small, white flowers, from which a poison is made. The use of the word "hemlock" actually aims at expressing the intoxicating substance he has got. Everyone will definitely find something beautiful after he drinks hemlock. And the beauty becomes his happiness. Keats also feels that he has as though emptied some opiate. Actually, opiate is not far different from hemlock. Both of them are poisonous. Obviously, opiate is a drug that contains opium, and is used to relieve pain. Keats does not drink a little only, but he really empties and drains the substance without leaving a drop of it. It shows how delicious the substance is to Keats. It is also very useful for him because it can relieve his pains. This is at least what he imagines.

Talking about hemlock or opiate, Keats states that it works very fast. It just takes one minute to infiltrate and work in his body. He tries to compare it with something that can be found in Greek Mythology from which "Lethe-wards" is taken. It functions to describe how hemlock or opiate reacts upon his body. Lethe is a river of forgetfulness, flowing through Hades, whose water produces loss of memory in those who drink of it. And Hades is the underworld - a place where the spirits of the dead go. Thus, "Lethe-wards" means people who

drown themselves into the river of forgetfulness. Seemingly, Keats's comparison is clear. The hemlock or opiate he has drunk works in his body as fast as people who get drowned in a river.

Keats is very excited in the nightingale's song. While listening to it, his imagination comes up, then he is absorbed in vision which brings along happiness he greatly wishes. The vision of happiness is then represented in words by praising the nightingale. In Keats's opinion, it is only the nightingale which has happiness in the world. Such a pride is expressed not because he is filled with envy of the bird's good fortune. Indeed, the nightingale is predestined to be cheerful and to make at once other people happy. He likes the bird very much because the bird is always happy. The bird's happiness is shown in his ability to sing songs. As far as someone has an opportunity to sing, he certainly gets happiness. What Keats faces, however, is quite different. He cannot find it out, for he is unable to sing any more. His feeling is painful. Because of that, Keats himself yearns to be happy together with the nightingale. Then, his happiness is expressed in soft and beautiful words:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,

The use of "'Tis" here functions to give a sense of

soft emphasis. Indeed, it sounds softer and more artistic than the real expression "it is". Also, "thy" is used as a variation to express "your". The purpose of it is that Keats is eager to honour the nightingale. He considers him as something very high and sacred like a god because he gives him happiness. Because of that, "thy" is a proper word to use in mentioning the bird.

Talking about the nightingale's appearance, Keats compares it with a Dryad.

That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
 Dryad is any nymph which has light wings, and which lives in trees. Since its body is tiny, it can fly charmingly with its light wings. Likewise, the nightingale is a small bird which uses his light wings to fly, and which has trees to live in. That is why Keats takes Dryad as the comparison with the nightingale. Another reason is that dryad - a tree nymph is included in a group of nature goddesses. Thus, it is considered as something sacred and honourable just as Keats honours the nightingale. Anyway, it is also important to know why Keats uses "thou" to express "you". Just as what has been mentioned above, the nightingale is considered as something high and sacred. In this regard, he uses "thou" because he thinks that he has to honour the bird which gives him happiness.

It appears that the nightingale is never sad. He

keeps singing wherever and whenever he is, especially at night. Such a condition is supported by the following lines:

In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

The nightingale always sings in some places that are enlivened by the waves of green beeches. A beech is a forest tree with smooth bark and shiny dark-green leaves and small triangular nuts. Beechen green here symbolizes the leaves of the beech which have dark-green colour. The reason why Keats chooses this word is that the nightingale generally lives in the forest where lots of beeches grow.

The time when the bird usually sings is described in "shadows numberless". The word "shadow" in plural means partial darkness. It is proper, then to say that shadows here refer to nights. Thus, the nightingale does not only sing in one night, but every night unless he dies. And in the quiet nights he keeps singing just as what Keats puts in the line:

Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

The song the nightingale sings is summer song, for it can bring happiness to those who hear it. Indeed, people, especially those who come from the North will come to the South to enjoy the warmth of summer, and it

becomes their happiness. More interesting, the bird sings in increasing loudness. There is no need for him to work under tension. On the other hand, he will do it relaxedly. That is certainly possible because his own soul is indeed free. He does not face lots of problems of life just as what Keats finds out.

Stanza 2

In thinking about the nightingale's happiness Keats acts as if he has drunk vintage. Vintage is very good wine of a particular region in a specified year. He deliberately invokes the help of wine to attain the bird's felicity. Keats applies this way, for he realizes that by drinking wine he can freely imagine anything that makes him happy.

There is no need for Keats to drink a great deal of wine. A gulp is enough because the wine is really good, and able to encourage his spirit. Although he just drinks a gulp of it, it gives him extraordinary influence. And as an alcoholic drink, the wine produces an exhilarating effect. It can make him dream that life is beautiful. Therefore, Keats feels very enthusiastic to be grateful to the wine by praising it in the following lines:

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,

The wine is good because it is kept cool under the ground. And it will be fresher and more delicious if it is kept longer. The longer it is stored up the more alcoholic its taste will be. It can certainly make Keats more passionate in his imagination and more creative in making poems. The place that Keats describes here is "in the deep-delved earth", meaning under the ground. In this regard, he returns to nature. In Keats's opinion, nature presents something peaceful to human beings. If they devote their lives to nature, meaning that they accept anything as it is, they will not have wicked thoughts to satisfy their own importance only. Similarly, if the wine is kept underground, it will be pure because it gains fresh coolness of the earth. And its taste will be as fresh as any plant which grows fruitfully. Certainly, the plant can grow well, for its roots get fresh air to live.

Keats thinks that the wine has such a fresh and delicious taste that he is finally able to find the beauty of nature. In this case, the beauty is represented in the beauty of flowers and of the country which is full of green plants. "Flora" is the word that he chooses to express the beauty of flowers. It is actually taken from Roman Mythology which means the goddess of flowers. A goddess is generally described as such a beautiful creature that she can bring happiness to

those who admire her. Concerning with the happiness in the nightingale, Keats assumes that flowers are anything beautiful around which he lives. Whereas the goddess is associated with the nightingale - the most beautiful one among others which relieves him from pain and sorrow. Although both goddess and nightingale are described as something beautiful, there is still a difference between them. The beauty of the goddess is focussed on her face, but that of the nightingale on his voice. The main point that Keats emphasizes here, however, is that both of them are considered as something high, sacred, and which can make people cheerful. Thus, by drinking wine Keats feels that he can really find happiness in the nightingale. Besides that, he gets happiness in the form of "the country-green". "Green" here represents plants that grow so well that their leaves become fresh and look green. A fertile place is definitely covered with lots of plants. And the green plants will make Keats's eyes fresh. More than that, however, his heart feels peaceful and joyous. Therefore, Keats associates "the country-green" with a peaceful world which gives freshness in his deep heart, so that he can release pain and sorrow.

Having drunk the wine, Keats feels as if he is dancing, accompanied with Provencal song. It is stated in the following line:

Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth!

The act of dancing here shows the condition of Keats's soul. As far as one can still dance, he is certainly happy. His mind and heart are peaceful. Thus, it can be described here that Keats's soul is peaceful, and his happiness is obtained by hearing the Provencal song. Provence is an area in Italy which possesses lots of valuable works of arts that are highly appreciated by well-known artists. And those who want to enjoy the beauty of art works have to travel to the city. Then, in this southern area their lives will be full of joy that can make them happier. Since Provence provides beauty, the Provencal song means a beautiful song that brings them into the world of happiness. And Provencal song that Keats means in this poem is referred to the nightingale's song which makes his life happy. Besides that, the southern area will provide the warmth of sunshine for those who come there. And it also becomes their happiness. With the peaceful soul of the bird's song Keats's mind is then full of imagination. It certainly becomes his topmost happiness, for he can express his feeling by praising the bird.

Seemingly, Keats really realizes how helpful the wine is to him. He does not express gratitude to the wine only, but also to the glass of the wine. It encourages him to flatter by writing:



O for a beaker full of the warm South!
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stained mouth;

A beaker is a glass that is used for drinking wine - the warm substance which can stimulate our imagination. Keats tries to compare the warm South with the wine. Anyway, it is important for us to know why Keats takes the word "South". In general, people in the North travel to the South to enjoy the warmth of sunshine. In deed, it becomes the happiness they never get in their own country. From this description it is clear, then, that the South here deals with something exciting and amusing. Likewise, the wine gives the warmth to Keats's soul, so that he becomes joyful and enthusiastic.

Furthermore, the beaker is compared with the night ingale; whereas the warm South with his song. The night ingale is really a bird whose song makes Keats realize that life is beautiful. Besides that, the nightingale possesses something precious, and it gives Keats the sources of inspiration and imagination to write poems. The symbolism for inspiration and imagination that he takes is Hippocrene - a fountain on Mt. Helicon that is sacred to Muses.

It is also in the nightingale where Keats finds bright hopes to live with strong spirits. And the hopes are associated with bubbles at the edge of the glass.

Bubbles are tiny balls of air or gas in liquid, as in glass, et cetera. They usually come up when there is a liquid in the glass. In this case, the bubbles come up because there is wine in the beaker. Relating to life, the wine illustrates life itself. Whereas the bubbles describe hopes that become a part of life. Thus, they constitute a unity. Undoubtedly, the bubbles can be associated with hopes of life because if someone drinks wine that makes him happy, he will also drink the bubbles. Thus, in addition to the main life, there are still lots of events that give hopes to live happily. Anyway, if we are trying to be fair, we know that life is basically good. If one thinks, however, that he has a bad life, it is actually that is to be blamed.

After drinking wine, Keats's mouth becomes purple - the mixture of red and blue colours. It shows that he starts being stimulated by the poisonous substance. Then, he soon gets unconscious, feeling the world around him dark and living in another world that gives him happiness. It conforms with the following lines:

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away in the forest dim:

Keats feels very happy whenever he is together with the nightingale. All these actually describe the bliss of drinking wine that makes Keats's mind full of inspira-

tion in praising the bird whose song brings joy in his life.

Stanza 3

The nightingale's song has a double effect. It makes Keats's heart joyful as he says in line 6 "being too happy in thy happiness". The song, however, can also make Keats sad, as discussed in stanza 3. This stanza is written when Keats remembers his brother, Tom, who dies of tuberculosis.

It appears that Keats is really passionate in the nightingale's song. With the song his mind gradually flies away. And he feels as if he goes together with the nightingale to enjoy the beauty of life. In such a condition Keats is able to really forget anything that makes him worried - anything that the nightingale never knows during his life. Keats tries to express it in these lines:

: Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret

In Keats's opinion, the nightingale is always happy. He never gets sad. On the other hand, he always sings cheerfully every night without ever feeling tired. He never gets fever either. It can be associated with some one who is afraid of something that threatens his life. Generally, one will quiver if he has fever. Similarly,

he will be nervous when he finds something uncomfortable and which disturbs his safety. Yet, what the nightingale faces is different. He never feels uneasy about his life. On the contrary, he accepts his life with great pleasure day after day. Besides that, the bird never finds the fret, meaning to be restless. Joy always looks in his face. In his opinion today is today, and tomorrow is tomorrow. What happens today must be faced cheerfully. Thus, he does not think about what will happen tomorrow. Anyway, all those uncomfortable conditions are certainly never experienced because the nightingale's soul is indeed free.

Actually, Keats wishes that he can be happy with the nightingale's song. What he finds, however, is completely different. It makes him express his feeling:

Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs;

Keats's heart aches when he is listening to the nightingale's song. He can feel that Tom would also be sad if his brother were alive. Tom would feel anxious at his health because of the tuberculosis he suffered from. "Men" here refers to Tom and Keats himself. He imagines that he is sitting together with Tom, hearing their own groans. They groan because of the bad fate that comes to them at the time they are very young, and when most

of the youth are pursuing success. Particularly, Keats himself cannot devote his whole life to poetry because of the disease he is suffering from. Both Keats's and Tom's souls are shaken, for they are not strong enough to bear sufferings. They feel quite disappointed because as young men they are not able to enjoy the beauty of life. The only reason is that frightening illness that harms their health and that causes their bodies to become thinner and thinner until they are all skin and bones.

Keats thinks that what happens to old people will happen to him as well though he is very young. In this stanza he associates old people with "last grey hairs" in line 25. Generally speaking, the hair of all those who are getting old will change. It will become grey. The older they are the greyer their hair will be, and it finally turns white. Some people who are getting old feel quite afraid of palsy, that is, paralysis of any muscle as a result of some disorder in the nervous system. And since they are afraid of the paralysis that may come to them, their souls become shaken. They do not try to accept the reality and to take today's life as it is. As a result, grief always comes to them. It will definitely quicken the coming of palsy, for their souls are not peaceful.

What happens to Keats is also the same. He is al-

ways haunted by his disease. The nightingale's song actually makes him yearn to escape from a world shaded by death. Yet, when he approaches closest to the nightingale's world, what he can conceive of is to die. Actually, he does not need to think about death, for whether he likes it or not it will finally come to him, to all of us. Keats knows that the nightingale is a bird which is always happy during his life. The more he enjoys the bird's happiness, however, the more painful his heart is. He always thinks why he must have an unfortunate life at a very young age. It is very difficult for him to accept reality. Whenever and wherever he is, he always worries about his condition. His mind is only full of sorrow he himself makes. He easily gets such "leaden eyed" despair - heavy despair, that there is no effort in him to acknowledge that life is actually beautiful. Worry does not help him to cure his disease. On the contrary, it will make his health worse. As the further result, he grows pale, and his body becomes thinner day after day like a living skeleton which has no hope to live longer. Even worse, he will die, taking along any burden he has when he is alive.

Covered with worry and despair, Keats is not able to see the beauty of life any more. He tries to write this reality in the following lines:

Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

In line 29 Keats describes that beauty has lustrous eyes. Lustrous eyes are supposed as the ability to see those who admire her, and to make them happy. It actually refers to Keats himself. In this case, it is not the beauty - the nightingale's song that cannot make him happy, but he himself refuses the beauty provided by the bird. When he tries to listen to the song which becomes the bird's happiness, comparing it with his own life, he feels that he is unlucky and unhappy. He thinks that the bird's life is full of happiness because he can still sing. What happens to him is different. There is no happiness in him, for he cannot devote his life to poetry - being unable to write lots of poems. Besides that, it is impossible for him to find another new beauty in the future, for his life is always darkened with worry and despair. It means that there is not any hope in him to see that life is actually beautiful if he himself is not willing to accept and enjoy life as it is.

Stanza 4

Keats is really impressed by the happiness of the nightingale. He does not care where the bird will fly to. The important thing for him is to go together with the bird. His eagerness to enjoy something joyous is expressed by exclaiming:

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,

Keats is willing to go far away with the nightingale, for it is the bird that can cheer up his heart. "I will fly to thee" here is actually intended to explain that Keats will be near the nightingale, then listen to his song. And the closeness to the bird is expressed by his intention to praise the nightingale - a bird whose song presents something cheerful to Keats's life. To come to the bird Keats is not influenced neither by vintage - the very good wine he has described in stanza 2 nor by any other wine, for its real meaning is an ancient Greek and Roman god of wine.

Anyway, Keats has something precious that brings him to the world of the nightingale. He uses "the viewless wings of Poesy" which are associated with words of poetry. Generally speaking, wings are the two feathered forelimbs of a bird or an insect that is fully developed for flying. What Keats applies in this stanza is proper enough. To express that he likes the nightingale he shows his pride neither by telling it to other people nor by acting in front of them. What he does is to praise the bird by using words which are focussed on the field of poetry. Just as we have discussed above, wings function to fly anywhere. Likewise, words are means to express whatever exists in our mind. Indeed,

they are words that become his only wealth. And by words he can freely express his own feelings.

It appears that Keats is excessive when he finds such an interesting thing that makes him passionate. In this case, he considers the nightingale as something very high and sacred like a god. He realizes that his brain is so dull that he is unable to solve his own problems. And the only thing that can make his life enthusiastic is the nightingale. It is described in the following lines:

Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
 Already with thee! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;

Keats feels quite peaceful when he is together with the nightingale. The night is not a frightening thing to him. And there is no problem although he lives around darkness. On the other hand, the night becomes tender. As we know, the night represents a dark atmosphere. Then, it can be associated with the condition of Keats's brain that is always covered with lots of problems of life. Relating to the night that becomes tender because of the bird, Keats's mind changes. Though his brain is dull, he is still able to overcome it. With the nightingale he can forget anything that always worries his life. In the condition of dull brain which is represented with the night, Keats imagines that the

Queen Moon is gracefully sitting on her throne. It is equaled to the nightingale that he respects highly. In his imagination the bird is the only one whose fate is lucky. He never gets anxious about his life. Moreover, he can make other people happy.

Seemingly, Keats is so passionate with his own imagination about the bird that it is difficult for him to accept reality. As a result, he often feels restless. Then, it makes him say:

But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes
blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

It is clear enough, then, that Keats considers himself as one who has a bad fate during his life. He is not able to find anything beautiful that can make his heart joyful. It is far different from the nightingale's life. The bird always sings at night so that the night does not become something mysterious that generally makes people worried. On the contrary, the night becomes a beautiful atmosphere. In Keats's opinion there is nothing beautiful that comes from heaven. What he experiences is tuberculosis - a disease that makes him shocked. He thinks that he will not be able to devote his life fully to poetry because the disease weakens his health day after day. Moreover, the disease comes when Keats faces a succession of events which provokes

the feelings of sadness and hopelessness. It is also unfortunate that the disease attacks him at the time his spirits are decreased.

"The breezes" that Keats means here refer to the disease he suffers from. A breeze is a soft and gentle wind. If it is compared with a disease, in this case, the disease comes gently to Keats's body. It, however, makes him suffer more. And the use of "s" to indicate plural noun here has a specific aim as well. It indicates that the disease does not come and go quickly. However, it will continuously and slowly weaken his body from time to time until it cannot maintain its existence.

To some extent, "ways" can be compared to the conditions of the soul. In general, one will easily arrive at his destination if he follows the right road. If the road is in a bad condition, however, it will hamper his plan. Likewise, the conditions of the soul have an important role to determine our life now and in the future. If our soul is bad, it will obstruct our plan to get success. What Keats experiences has a negative effect to his own life. The disease comes to him when his soul is in a bad condition just as he himself mentions in line 39 "winding mossy ways". It can be said, however, that it happens because of Keats himself. If he tries to accept life as it is, his life will certainly

be peaceful so that it is easy for him to pursue great success.

Stanza 5

Weariness of tuberculosis always disturbs Keats's mind night and day. It certainly makes him unable to see beautiful things around him. He always thinks that during his life he will never enjoy happiness like what the nightingale has. If he tries to open his mind widely, actually, there are lots of beauties near him that can provide happiness for his life. His inability to see beauty is specifically expressed by saying:

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,

As we know, flowers are a kind of plants that are cultivated for their blossoms. Since flowers are decorative, they certainly have an element of beauty so that people love them very much. It is proper enough, then, if flowers are associated with beauty. Keats says that he cannot see what flowers are at his feet. Feet are one of our organs that support our body. It means that they are always with us whenever and wherever we are. Thus, what Keats means is that he is unable to see beauty and new hopes though they always come to him every moment.

Keats is, indeed, unable to see beauty and hopes near him. He believes, however, that there is still

something sweet and joyous in the darkness. And it will help anyone who has no strong spirit to live a life of ease when he finds unpleasant things. Also, it always comes and cheers up when someone really needs its presence. The following lines will make the above and the next descriptions clearer to us:

But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree
 wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And Mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of sewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Keats uses plants to symbolize those who have weak and strong spirits. The grass, thicket, and wild fruit-tree are symbols representing people who do not have strong spirits in facing life. Grass is a kind of common, wild, and low-growing plant. Since it is wild, people will not pay attention to it. Moreover, it is so weak that it surrenders itself when people trample on it, or when animals come and eat it. Thicket is also compared with those who always worry about their lives because of the complex problems they face. The reason of such a description is that thicket is a mass of small trees or shrubs which grow thickly together. It is slightly clear that this plant pictures something dark. Because of that, thicket represents someone whose brain is dull and puzzled. The last description is the wild fruit-

tree. It pictures a person who feels lonely among the crowds. If the tree is wild though having lots of fruits, it will not be paid attention to. Likewise, if someone is too one-sided, or self-centred, it will be difficult for him to adapt with other people. As a result, he will be lonely though he lives in society. And the society itself feels awkward to make a close relationship with him.

Talking about sweetness and joyfulness of life, they will make all people, without exception, happy. Not only do they excite ones who get numbness, but those who have strong spirit and personality as well. Indeed, one who is open-minded will accept reality more easily. There is no problem of whatever happens to him. Failure is not considered as something fatal. It is, on the other hand, good for him because through it he can learn much of the problems of life. Exactly, it encourages him to work hard to pursue what he wants to achieve. Moreover, if a strong spirit and personality are always with him, his soul will be stronger. As a further result, he will have self-confidence to do anything he wants to, and to accept life as a beautiful and precious thing. Keats uses the white hawthorn and pastoral eglantine to describe those whose will and personality are strong. The white hawthorn is a thorny shrub with white blossoms. It is usually used for

hedges because it is strong enough to grow and protect other plants. Thus, it can be said that the characteristic of the hawthorn equals that of a person who has a strong will and personality. What we find in the pastoral eglantine is almost the same. An eglantine is a European rose with hooked spines. Spines are the only means that is used to take care of itself, so that it feels safe. If an eglantine is compared to man, its spines can be associated with man's strong soul. It is the strong soul, indeed, that can make one's life peaceful. "Fast-fading violets" indicates that joyfulness will also come to people who are always doubtful in their lives. It is the declining spirit.

Specifically, furthermore, joyfulness can be enjoyed in mid-May when spring time comes. During this season all people will be joyous. And they certainly welcome it with cheerful hearts and faces. The happiness they get during the season is more glorious with the blossoming of various flowers in bright colours and fragrant smells. Such a beautiful occasion is greatly enjoyed, for it only happens once a year. Anyway, it is undeniable that their hearts will be really peaceful. They can breathe fresh air, gaze at beautiful flowers, and smell their fragrance all at once. Certainly, they feel at home during the season because the air is so cool and fresh that their body and soul feel nice.

The situation, however, will change as soon as summer time comes. There will be no fresh and cool air any more around them. They begin to moan because hot air stinks their bodies. It, of course, disturbs their activities in doing their work. They become restless both mentally and physically. And in carrying out their work they easily get tired; and their mind and emotion feel disturbed as well. Even worse, they will easily give up and get angry when they face a complicated problem.

Stanza 6

In the condition of dull brain and numbness Keats often hears the voice of death. He feels as if death is ready to pick him up and bring him to another world - a beautiful world that gives him happiness. Indeed, Keats himself is deliberately imagining death. It is an interesting thing because it is nice for him to die. In his opinion, he will be peaceful when he is dead. There will be no complicated problems that can disturb his life any more. The death he imagines as something easeful is expressed in the following lines:

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;

Darkling pictures darkness. And in this case, darkness is represented as the dull and puzzled brains of Keats.

It appears that the voice of death always echoes as if it reminds Keats that death is approaching. The voice comes so gently that Keats really believes that death is not a frightening thing. It is, on the other hand, beautiful. In reality, indeed, Keats may not worry about death because all human beings belong to it. And all of us, without knowing the exact time, will experience the so-called death. We have to be willing to surrender our lives when death really comes to us, for there is still another life that provides happiness for us. If we die, it is only our bodies that have no function. Our souls, however, remain alive in another world.

The death Keats is going to face is not harsh, but tender and kind. The more he muses on it, the more confident he is that it provides him an immortal life. He dreams that as soon as he goes from a perishable to an imperishable world he will live peacefully. There will be no sadness and dullness attacking him any more. And his confidence to leave the world is undoubtedly expressed:

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

It is clearer now that Keats is ready to leave this perishable world when death suddenly comes. His soul becomes stable, and his heart calmer, for by the time the breath stops, it will be some death without suffering.

"The midnight" is compared with a quiet moment, for it generally describes the middle of the night where almost all people take a rest in their sound sleep. Since the situation becomes very quiet, the midnight is equaled to the moment when death comes and picks us up. Death does not give any sign when it will pick somebody up. It comes and goes very quickly.

While imagining death, Keats's mind returns to the nightingale he is very proud of. It is clearly written in the following lines:

While thou art pouring thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in
 vain-
 To thy hight requiem become a sod.

Again, Keats praises the nightingale whose song makes him happy. Whenever he practises his art, that is, singing, his soul is always cheerful. Art is associated with the activity of singing, for singing is a part of arts that displays the beauty of one's voice. More specifically, singing is included in music. According to Keats, the nightingale has had a great delight in his life. He never feels tired though he always sings night and day. He keeps producing melodious tunes instead. Exactly, singing is the only happiness he possesses.

In general, when someone dies, his family and friends will offer condolences by presenting a requiem. It is a hymn for the repose of the dead. If Keats dies

and stays underground, he hears the golden voice of the nightingale in vain. And the nightingale himself believes that a requiem is nothing. It just becomes a sod, meaning something useless. A sod is a square of upper layer of grassland. If we try to discuss more deeply, grass is a wild and low growing plant. Since it is wild, people will not treat it well. They will trample on it at will, for they think that it does not give anything very useful to their lives. That is why a requiem is equaled to a sod. It is useless to sing, for the dead will not hear it.

Stanza 7

Keats's soul really clings to the nightingale. He does not find anything bad at all in the bird. Therefore, his admiration for the bird is considerably high. He always thinks that the nightingale is the only creature that has a good fate in the world. Then it makes him keep praising the bird by writing:

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;

Keats believes that the nightingale is one that is never born for death. In other words, the nightingale is an immortal bird. He is created to live happily for ever and ever, so that he can expend his whole life to console all human beings. He is also considered as a

bird that does not have any uncomfortable experiences of life. More than that, no hungry generations will tread the bird down. It means that no one will disturb and hurt the bird though he cannot find any pleasant things during his life. He is not jealous of the luck the bird has. Hungry generations here can be associated with people who fail to get happiness in their lives. Thus, they are not hungry for food, but for anything that brings them to the world of happiness. They feel proud of and grateful to the bird, for there is still a creature that is willing to amuse them when their feelings are painful. What they do, then, is to praise the nightingale with great awe.

As the night comes, Keats's mind returns to an old fancy. Concerning the nightingale's song, he tries to remember what happens in the era of empires. What Keats knows and finds now is that the nightingale always sings at night. He believes, however, that the bird's song he is listening to now is also sung in the era of empires. It gives a kind of evidence that the nightingale is an immortal bird because he keeps singing in the past, now, and in the future. Anyway, there are two descriptions of the nightingale's appearance in the era of empires. The first description relates to the nightingale himself. The bird's song is heard not only by Keats, but also by the emperor in the ancient

time. It indicates that the nightingale is an honourable bird just as the position of the emperor.

The second one is concerned with the people who are governed by the emperor. During the era of empires people are usually compelled to obey whatever the emperor wants them to do. It means that their rights are very limited. They feel oppressed, for they have no freedom to do their desires. In such a condition where people get sorrowful because of unlucky fate, the nightingale consoles them by producing his golden voice. It certainly makes their hearts joyous.

The nightingale also appears at the time a clown is created to amuse people. A clown is a person who makes a living by performing amusing or foolish tricks and antics. All in all, the bird has actually appeared among us for a long time. It is not quite proper, then, if people say that they find the bird at the present moment. The problem is that they are less sensitive to see natural beauties around them. And what Keats thinks dreamily about the appearance of the nightingale in the ancient time is expressed in the following lines:

The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for
home,
She stood in tears among the alien corn;

Seemingly, sorrowful people are more sensitive in

hearing the nightingale's song. It happens to Ruth, the daughter in law of King Naomi who works in the field of King Boaz - a very rich King. King Boaz is eager to take Ruth his wife, and ultimately he can fulfil his desire. Ruth, however, feels unhappy with her marriage. It is actually not her own will to get married with the King, but the King's. As a result, Ruth is so sad and homesick that her drops of tears often flow through her face. She cannot feel joyous in her new place although the King loves her very much. On the other hand, she feels so strange amid the wealth the King provides for her that her heart is painful. However, she becomes happy when she hears the nightingale's song. His golden voice gives new special air in Ruth's heart.

The song of the nightingale is particularly listened to by those who are in a bad mood. It seems that they easily get sensitive to anything beautiful near them. In this situation the nightingale's melodious voice has a special place in their hearts. These sorrowful people can be compared to magic casements as Keats writes:

The same that ofttimes hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

The concept of casement here is a cage that surrounds a bird in order that the bird cannot go far away. To a certain extent, casement can be meant as a bird that

lives alone - far from his friends that live freely in the open air. Therefore, it is proper enough if case-ments are associated with people who live alone. They are not open-minded in accepting the reality. Their mind is only shackled by the unreasonable sadness. As a result, they feel lonely. Fortunately, the nightingale's song often gives pleasure to them. And the nightingale himself is never bored to come and comfort them although he knows that what they worry about is, in fact, far from their real lives. He comes particularly to those whose lives are often haunted by useless things. Those simple things, however, can be dangerous to their lives because their capacity of thinking will be disturbed.

Stanza 8

During his life Keats feels uneasy. It, of course, disturbs his concentration in thinking what he must do. In his fancy that is only full of unpleasant things it is as if he hears vaguely a strange sound. The sound is very far from where he exists as what he says:

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!

The sound is like a bell - a round hollow metal vessel, which makes a ringing sound when struck. When the bell is struck, its sound usually keeps echoing everywhere.

That is why Keats equals the sound he hears to the bell. Seemingly, the sound ultimately changes his mind. It is as if he hears that it is time for him to leave the fancy which is concerned with the happiness in the night-ingale's figure only. The bird just makes his life more anxious. Although he is not jealous of the bird's luck, he, at least, compares the bird with his own life of why he cannot get happiness as well. The only thing he must do now is to return and become he himself. Referring to himself, Keats writes "To toll me back from thee to my sole self!". This exclamation indicates that it is very important for him to stand on his own feet. He has to realize that there is no one perfect in the world. Everyone has his own weakness and goodness. Thus, Keats must be confident of his own life. Indeed, none of us will always find pleasant things during our lives. We sometimes get disappointed. The final result, however, only depends on our own efforts to overcome those unpleasant things.

Anyway, it is the proper time for Keats to say goodbye to the fancy that always makes him feel uneasy. Realizing that fancy is nothing, Keats feels confident to become he himself. He believes that the fancy will not be able to cheat him any more although it is known as something deceitful. It is clearly repeated in the following lines:

Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades:

When Keats says "Adieu! adieu!", his purpose is actually to indicate that he is ready to leave the world of the nightingale. According to him the bird's song just causes his feeling to be painful. And it certainly discourages his spirit to work seriously. Now, however, the sad song fades. It gradually goes far away from his mind. In the past, indeed, when Keats was sitting near grassland to enjoy the quiet of the day in a cool atmosphere, he often listened to the bird's song. This, of course, made his heart joyous because the bird sounded happy. It is clearly seen in his routine activity, that is, singing night and day. This time, however, Keats does not want to listen to it any more, for the happiness he gets in the nightingale's figure is just an exaggerated feeling. What he is going to do now is to become an open-minded man who is willing to accept himself with his own goodness and weakness. Glades are represented as one's open mind that always accepts and appreciates whatever he gets during his life. In the real meaning a glade is a clear and open space in a forest. And it is free for anyone to settle.

It appears that Keats gets confused with what he



is thinking about now. He even asks to himself:

Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: - do I wake or sleep?

He does not know whether the change of his mind really happens to him or not. Also, he is upset whether it is just his own vision or waking dream. Relating to the poem he writes, that is, Ode To A Nightingale, it can be said that what happens to his mind is only a vision. In reality Keats is listening to the bird's song, and it makes him very happy. It at once encourages him to praise the bird by creating the poem. Thus, he does not sleep, but really wakes. The bird flies far away, leaving Keats alone, so that he cannot hear the bird's song any more. It does not mean, however, that Keats is really able to change his mind. He is still upset and worried about his life.

CHAPTER V

T O N E

Tone, in literature, may be defined as the writer's or speaker's attitude toward his subject, his audience, or himself.¹⁾ In spoken language, tone is indicated by the inflections of the speaker's voice. Therefore, we shall know what is actually meant by the speaker. In ordinary life, a great part of our basic attitude toward the what and the whom of any transaction is indicated by the tone.²⁾ It also happens in a poem. The poet, however, must choose and arrange his words so that the poem will suggest the reader the desired tone.

Tone, in a poem, expresses attitudes. It gives us a sort of a description that every poem, is, in one sense, a little drama. A poem is an utterance. There is someone who utters as well as an audience. And the audience can be either the reader or the writer himself. The audience, however, does not have to be a person at all. In "Ode To A Nightingale", for example, Keats is addressing a bird - a nightingale.

In some poem, there is actually a certain identity

1) Perrine, Structure, Sound and Sense, Third Edition, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York, 1969, pp. 695.

2) Warren, Understanding Poetry, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., New York, 1960, pp. 181.

of the speaker. A personality of an "I" indicates that the attitude of the speaker becomes a very marked feature of a poem. It may be important to know that the degree of autobiographical identification is not necessarily important. We are, however, only concerned with the fact that the speaker of the poem, whether historical or fictional, is expressing an attitude through his particular use of language.

In poetry tone is very important. But the correct determination of tone in literature is much more difficult than in spoken language, for we do not have the speaker's voice to guide us. Therefore, we must learn to recognize tone by other means. The elements of poetry that go into indicating its tone are: connotation, imagery, and metaphor; irony and understatement; rhythm, sentence construction, and formal pattern. Ultimately, the best we can do is illustrate.³⁾

Application of the theory of tone in the poem

Having talked a little about the theory of tone, we now come to the application of the theory in relation to the poem the Ode To A Nightingale. In this poem, the remarkable attitude shown by Keats is addressing

3) Perrine, Op. Cit, pp. 696.

himself and the nightingale all at once. The use of 'I' (stanza 1, line 2) indicates his attitude so that it becomes a very marked feature of his poem. Keats is weak mentally and physically. He becomes sensitive because of the tuberculosis he suffers from. He is also pessimistic. It is as if there are no efforts he takes to overcome his problems. Life looks nothing for Keats. It just gives him sadness that causes him to be frustrated. He thinks that he is the only creature who is born for death. It is also undeniable that Keats is unwilling to accept reality.

As the compensation of his frustration he comes to deal with a nightingale - a beautiful bird with his melodious voice. The 'you' ('thou' - stanza 1, line 7) he uses is obviously addressing the nightingale he considers luckier than himself. Keats is not jealous of the bird (stanza 1, line 5). On the other hand, he is very proud of the nightingale as a bird that is born to live forever, and to enjoy happiness (stanza 1, line 6). It is not like himself who gets only pain. The reason of such a pride is that the bird never feels sad. Happiness always comes to him. It is indicated by his activities in perching charmingly from one tree to another, and in singing night and day.

Keats is mad at the bird so that he uses beautiful words to praise him. Also, he manages to give a vivid

sense of the bird. As it has been explained above, the nightingale seems to be predestined as a creature that can live forever. He is not born for death, but for happiness (stanza 7, line 1). The only thing he does is to sing to amuse all people, especially the ones who get sorrowful.

Keats's attitude toward the bird is positive and natural. Naturally, indeed, all people will always praise something they like very much. It is also good because Keats talks about the reality of the bird. The nightingale is charming. He frequently jumps up from one tree to another by flapping his light wings. It certainly gives a pleasant view to Keats. When it is related to the attitude toward himself, it is undeniable that his attitude toward the bird can be said extravagant. In one hand, he extols the nightingale as the only creature which has joyfulness throughout his life. On the other hand, he considers himself meaningless. According to him, the only thing he finds is grievance.

Seemingly, Keats is an unstable person. First, he realizes his limits and weaknesses so that he is unable to bear or to solve problems that come to him. Finally, however, he knows that consideration of himself as a person who is born for death is just a fancy. And it must be broken off for it is nothing at all.

In describing the nightingale, Keats also uses met

aphores. The nightingale, in the first stanza, line 7, is compared with a dryad. The dryad is taken as the comparison, for it has light wings, and customarily lives in trees. The similarity of the dryad can be found in the nightingale. His wings are reddish-brown, and light, too. Like the dryad, the nightingale is small, and trees are the place where he lives.

In the fifth stanza, metaphores can still be found. Grass is compared with persons who have no strong spirits in facing their lives (stanza 5, line 5). They easily give up, and totally accept all things that come to them. If they have problems, they think that they are really weak. Such thought makes them do nothing. They are not willing to struggle to find out the best way in solving their problems. The reason why grass is used as the comparison is that such a plant always grows low. It is weak, for whenever anyone tramples on it, it is unable to fight against him. Thicket, in this case, is also compared with persons. But what the persons are experiencing is somewhat different. Thicket is a mass of trees, shrubs, undergrowth that grow thickly together. It creates something dark. Thus, the thicket can be described as persons who face lots of unsolved problems. It is as if their mind were dark.

Another form of comparison Keats uses is simile. It can be seen in the first line of the eighth stanza.

"Forlorn! the very word is like a bell". The word 'forlorn' is compared with a bell..A bell, in this instance, is described as something strong for it is made of metal. The bell will keep ringing unless the clapper stops striking. In order to be factual and conceivable, however, the bell is looked upon as a whole thing - the outer part that consists of crown, waist, sound bow, and the inner part which is called clapper. More specifically, the outer part represents Keats's body - that is, something visible. Whereas the clapper reflects his own soul. Sadness always comes upon Keats's mind. It is actually just his fancy. Such a useless thing will keep existing in his life unless he himself undertakes to break it off.

There are also some connotations that Keats has poured on his poem. The word 'wings' in line three of the fourth stanza does not mean the two feathered forelimbs of a bird, being used for flying. On the other hand, it connotes words - words of poetry, in this regard. When a bird goes to anyplace, its wings are always visible at the time it is flying in the sky. What happens to Keats is different. He is so proud of the nightingale that he is eager to be nearer the bird. What he is doing then is that he does not really come to the bird. But he uses words of poetry. He pours his feelings on a poem. More clearly, it can be found in

the third line of the fourth stanza 'But on the viewless wings of poesy'. In his poem he expresses his feeling of pride toward the nightingale.

Still, more connotation can be found. The first line of the stanza five states 'I cannot see what flowers are at my feet'. What is meant by flowers here is not true flowers, but something else. A flower is generally described as something beautiful with its various colours. And the connotation of flowers here is happiness. Keats's mind is so numb that he cannot feel happiness that is nearest his life.

Imagery is also obviously seen in the poem. Keats expresses his feelings both toward himself and the nightingale. All of the feelings have actually been implied above. In order that the description of imagery is clearer, however, it will be better if the feelings are retold.

The most remarkable feeling of experience Keats has is numbness (stanza 1, line 1). He feels that his life is full of grievances. Life for him is meaningless so that he becomes pessimistic. Being unable to make himself happy, he comes to the nightingale. In his opinion, the bird is much luckier than him. Because of that, he is eager to be near the bird, to enjoy happiness together. Thus, a feeling of pride toward the bird appears obviously in this concern.

In another case, however, feeling of consciousness comes to him. He begins to realize that anything which causes him to be sad, frustrated, useless is just fancy. And by using a strong will, he is going to break off the fancy. Indeed, it is the only best way to make himself happy.

CHAPTER VI

I M A G E R Y

As normal persons we will certainly get experience in our lives. And the experience comes to us largely through the sense. The way we express our experience is varied. One of them is through poems. Poems constitute something pleasant for those who know their content. They are not merely pleasant nonsense, however. They "mean" something. And their meanings are not expressed through abstractions, but through concrete particulars.¹⁾

The senses consist of SEEING, HEARING, SMELLING, and FEELING. Then, the poet has to present these sense-impressions very lively to the readers, so that the emotions and the intellect of the readers can be swiftly stimulated. Therefore, his language must be more full of imagery. Imagery in poetry can be defined as a representation of sense experience through language.

Image is actually a mental picture, something seen in the mind's eye. And in poetry Visual Imagery frequently occurs. However, an image also represents a sound, a smell, a taste, a tactile experience (feeling) such as cold, hunger, thirst, et cetera. After all it

1) Warren, Op. Cit, pp. 268.

can be said that imagery is a comparison between an object or a situation and an experience that is taken through the senses.

One of most poets who master the sensuous imagery is John Keats. In appealing to the senses, Keats does not describe an object, but he actually presents it. He is thus able to stimulate our senses in interpreting the poem. The following description of imagery concerns with his "Ode To A Nightingale".

Keats feels anxious about his life (stanza 1, line 1). However, he is able to put away the anxiety when he listens to the nightingale's song. It is compared to the condition after he has drunk hemlock - a poisonous plant (stanza 1, line 2). The influence of the poisonous substance in Keats is that his mind feels so quiet that he becomes very happy (stanza 1, line 6).

Keats considers the nightingale as something high. It is compared to 'light-winged Dryad' (stanza 1, line 7). A dryad is a tree nymph that has light wings to fly charmingly. Her body is tiny just as the nightingale's. Since it is included in a group of nature goddesses, it is considered as something sacred and honourable. Likewise, Keats greatly honours the nightingale, for his life is happy because of the bird - of the bird's song, particularly.

Another thing that Keats uses as the comparison to

the nightingale is a beaker - a glass for drinking wine. It is expressed in the poem: 'The beaker is full of the warm South'. People from the North often come to the South to enjoy the warmth of sunshine. It certainly makes their souls joyous, for they do not find such a pleasant atmosphere in their own country. Thus, the beaker whose image concerns with Seeing is compared to the nightingale. Whereas the South that relates to Feeling is compared to the bird's song. 'South' has also the connotation of delicious wine from the South (southern Europe).

The sadness and numbness that Keats feels are shown in the action of groaning (stanza 3, line 4). Usually people will groan when they get something unpleasant that cannot fulfil their ideals only. And Keats's own figure is compared to 'last grey hairs', meaning old people whose hair is getting white (stanza 3, line 5). And old people who are shaken by palsy will gradually grow pale. It also describes his own health. The tuberculosis that he suffers from makes his face pale because of the pain he bears. And his body becomes thinner and thinner like a living skeleton.

In enjoying happiness Keats is going to fly away with the bird (stanza 4, line 1). It actually means that he wants to praise the nightingale he admires very much. And the viewless wings of Poesy (stanza 4, line 3)

he uses to fly are compared to the words - poetic words he is going to use in his poem. Thus, he does not really go together with the bird, but just praises him in the poem.

In stanza 5 Keats presents concrete objects to describe the evening. He expresses it by writing 'I cannot see what flowers are at my feet'. It describes that the situation is so dark that he cannot see the flowers he treads down.

In musing over his life in the evening it is as if Keats hears his name being called again and again, reminding that it is time for him to face death (stanza 6, line 1). Indeed, Keats himself thinks about and considers death as something easeful (stanza 6, line 2). The death that is approaching him and ready to take him out of the perishable world can be seen in stanza 6:

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;

Ultimately, Keats realizes that the happiness he finds in the nightingale is just his own fancy. He is ultimately able to put his fancy away. And it is described in line 5 of stanza 8 'Audieu! audieu! thy plaintive anthem fades'. Anthem is compared to the bird's song that finally makes him sad. It gradually disappears from Keats's ears.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Firstly, I come to my aim of study which states that I want to explain the message intended by the poet through the poem. The message that Keats has conveyed is sadness. Before relating tone and imagery to the message, I am going to clarify briefly what tone and imagery actually mean. Tone, in poetry indicates the writer's attitude toward his subject, his audience or even himself. Concerning the message Keats conveys, we know it clearly from his attitudes toward himself and his subject, that is, the nightingale. Because of some anxieties he always considers himself as a person who only gets sadness during his life. His attitude toward the bird, however, is different from that toward himself. He is proud of the nightingale as a lucky bird that can enjoy happiness during his life.

Imagery is the expression of sense experience through language. Thus, it concerns with all of our senses such as hearing, seeing, smelling, and feeling. To convey his message, Keats uses imagery in order to stimulate the emotion and the intellect of the readers. Thus, it will be easier for the readers to know the message if it is as if they themselves experience whatever the poet does. After all, I conclude that tone and imagery that I have talked about clarify and support the

message intended by Keats, that is, his sadness.

Based on the description in most books of literature and on the analysis of the poem that I have made, I finally come to the conclusion that Keats is a romantic poet. It seems that what Keats is interested in is the features of Romantic literature. His interest in nature is indicated by the inclusion of natural things in his poem such as weather, plants, and many other things. Keats is a humble man. This attitude is shown by expressing that he is not jealous of the nightingale's happiness, but he wants to be happy with the bird. He even considers the bird as something high like a goddess. It can also be said that Keats is unbalanced because his attitude of mind is too one-sided. He just wants to express his own inner world. He thinks that what he gets in his life is just sadness. Ultimately, the clearest feature in him is his imagination. He is able to use his imagination so strongly that his poems become beautiful ones. In this case, he can describe something in terms of something quite different. Thus, he does not express his feeling directly and frankly. In "Ode To A Nightingale", for example, Keats gets happiness in the nightingale. The feeling of happiness is then expressed by a condition after he has drunk wine. Everyone will feel happy after he has swallowed this poisonous substance.

Anything that Keats expresses in his poem shows us that he is a man who easily gives up in facing life. He always worries about his inability to devote himself fully to the poetry he loves very much. Actually, such a feeling comes as the result of tuberculosis he suffers from. It seems that he is not able to accept the reality. From all these we can have a new experience taken from someone else's experience - Keats's experience of life, in this case. It is indeed, very meaningful and useful for our own lives. Generally speaking, everybody finds pleasant and unpleasant things during his life. It is normal, indeed. There is no problem if we get pleasant things. The problem, however, comes when we experience something unpleasant. It may be good if we have self-confidence and strong personality in facing the reality. They can help to overcome any problem which may come to us. Also, we can try to take ourselves as we are. It does not mean that we must surrender our lives to fate. But we can try to accept the reality and to control our lives at the same time.

Anyway, what Keats says can be applied to our own lives. When we experience unpleasant things, it is good to look at nature around us. We have to be well alert because there is nothing eternally beautiful except natural beauty during our short life in this perishable world. Nevertheless, we may not be dominated by our own

fancy, for it is useless. Thus, we have to accept the reality logically.

Talking about death, Keats is also right. We may not be afraid of death that comes to us. If we are dead, it is only our bodies that have no function. Our souls, however, remain alive in another world. Thus, we have to take life as it is, so that we have self-confidence to face anything that comes to us. It, of course, can make our souls peaceful as well.

Besides, we can also take something useful from what he has experienced, concerning with his success in poetry. Although he never gets higher education in university, he finds another way to progress himself. He always reads lots of books of literature. He never stops studying both from books and other people. From this way he, then, tries to write some works of art. And ultimately he gets great success. Thus, it will be meaningful and profitable if we can carry out what Keats has done in the framework of developing ourselves. We may not stop studying though we do not study at school any more.

Talking about imagery, we can relate it with Keats as a romantic poet. We know that imagery in poetry can be defined as a representation of sense experience through language. Whereas the senses consist of seeing, hearing, smelling, and feeling. In writing his poems

Keats uses lots of words that are related to the senses. His purpose is to stimulate the emotions and the intellect of the readers. We also know that most of Romantic poets love nature because it can make them peaceful. Certainly, they use their senses in enjoying natural things. They use their eyes to see beautiful flowers around them; their ears to hear or listen to birds' songs; their noses to smell the fragrance of flowers; their feeling to feel peace or happiness, et cetera. I conclude that the imagery I discuss here conforms to Romanticism. Keats is a romantic poet. Therefore, it is logical if he uses imagery in writing his poems.

The study of poetry is certainly needed in colleges, for it makes the students more human. However, it is not easy to do because it needs the intellectual, the sensuous, the emotional and the imaginative dimensions. And the students have to approach those dimensions by applying such resources as denotation, connotation, imagery, metaphor, symbol, paradox, irony, illusion, sound repetition, rhythm, and pattern. Despite its difficulty, poetry offers us worthy and profound experiences to enrich our lives. It makes us see the world and its various problems with wider outlook and greater understanding. And we can choose which one is good and applicable for us. In short, poetry does not provide the intellectual improvement of the students

only, but the spiritual one as well.

Considering the small number of time allocation for English in SMA and the students' low ability in English, it is impossible to give poetry to them. We know that their vocabulary is very limited though they have studied English for almost six years. Their mastery of grammar is still poor as well. Besides, we also know that poetry is not easy to do. It uses words that sometimes have completely different meaning with the meaning of words in dictionaries. The poets use ungrammatical sentences. It, of course, makes them get difficulties in analysing a poem. They just get confusion. Thus, it will be improper to teach poetry to SMA students. However, poetry is useful if it is given to college students, particularly those who study literature. In studying poetry, it is not enough for the students to analyse the poem only. They, however, should also pay attention to the wider contexts that are needed to comprehend the message sent by the poet. The contexts here are: background of a certain period of literature, biography of the poet, paraphrase of the poem, explication of the poem, and other aspects that may support the beauty of the poem.

Regarding the values which can enrich our experiences of life, I feel sure that poetry is very helpful and useful in language teaching - English, in this case.

Poetry can help the students to increase their vocabulary. By giving poems as material in vocabulary teaching, boredom that may come to the students can be avoided. Thus, poems are intended to attract the students' interest both in vocabulary and in literature. Likewise, poetry is very useful in teaching pronunciation that covers such aspects as rhyme, rhythm, intonation, stress. Last but not least, poetry can also improve the students' ability in writing skill. The students are invited to practise the skill by analysing a poem, then pouring it in prose in their own words. After all, we can say that poetry will help both the teacher and the students to appreciate English and its literary works.

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