**Poetry**

**(A) THE LYRIC**

**The lyric: Its Nature; Its Kinds**

The lyric is the commonest kind of the poetry of self-expression. Man has always liked to pour out his intensely-felt feelings and emotion, and hence the lyric is among the earliest forms of poetry to be written in the literary history of any people. When moved by some intense emotion, love, hatred, joy, sorrow, wonder, admiration, etc., man has always expressed himself in a poetic language, and this accounts for the early appearance of the lyric among all peoples.

In the beginning, the word ‘lyric’ was used for any song meant to be sung with the *‘lyre’,*a stringed musical instrument known to the Greeks. In course of time this musical accompaniment of the lyric was dropped and the word came to signify any short poem or song expressing the personal emotions and experiences of the poet. A lyric may embody any kind of emotion. Says Hudson in this connection, “a lyric is almost unlimited in range and variety, for it may touch nearly all aspects of experience, from those which are most narrowly individual to those which involve the broadest interests of our common humanity. Thus we have *the convival or bachanalian lyric;*The lyric which skims the lighter things of life, as in the so–called *verse de societe;*the *lyric of love*in all its phases, and with all its attendant hopes and longings,  joys and sorrows; the *lyric of patriotism;*the *lyric of religious emotion:*and countless other kinds which it is unnecessary to attempt to tabulate.” There is also *the reflective lyric*in which the element of thought becomes prominent, and the poet philosophises on human life and human experiences.

**(B) THE ELEGY**

**The Elegy: Its Nature**

An elegy is a special kind of lyrics. A lyric expresses the emotions of the poet, and the elegy is an expression of the emotion of sorrow, woe, or despair. *In short, the elegy is a lament, a lyric of mourning, or an utterance of personal bereavement and sorrow*and, *therefore, it should be characterised by absolute sincerity of emotion and expression.*Says Hodgson, “In common use, it is often restricted to a lament over the dead, but that is an improper narrowing of its meaning. There are laments over places, over lost love, over the past (which is never “dead”), over an individual’s misery or failure; there are laments over departed pet animals, and so forth.”

**(c)  THE ODE**

**The Ode: Its Nature**

The Ode is a special kind of lyric, more dignified, stately and elaborate than the simple lyric. Like the lyric, it also originated in ancient Greece. The Greek poet Pindar was the first to write Odes, and later on the form was practiced with certain modification by the Roman poet, Horace.

The word *‘ode’*is simply the Greek word for *‘song’.*It was used by the Greeks for any kind of lyric verse, i.e. for any song sung with the lyre or to the accompaniment of some dance. However, as far as English literature is concerned, the term is now applied to only one particular kind of lyric verse. An English *Ode*may be defined as, *‘a lyric poem of elaborate metrical structure, solemn in tone, and usually taking the form of address” very often to some abstraction or quality.*Edmund Gosse defines the ode as, “a strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyric, verse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing progressively with one dignified theme.”

**(D)  THE SONNET**

**The Petrarchan Sonnet**

The sonnet also is a form of the lyric, and of all its forms it is most carefully ordered and bound by definite, rigid rules.

The word *“Sonnet”*is derived from the Greek word *“Sonneto”,*meaning, *“a sound”.*It is a short lyric of fourteen lines and the Italian poet Petrarch was the first to use this form of the lyric to express his love for his beloved Laura, and its use “became the mark of Petrarchan love-poetry all over Europe in the 16th century.” Petrarch had divided his sonnets into two parts, *the octave*of eight lines and *the sested*of six lines, with a pause or ceasura after the eighth line. Its rhyme-scheme was *a b, b a, a b , b a,     c d e, c d e.*

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