

Ch-4      The Brook

Lord Alfred Tennyson is one of the most popular English poets. His poems have a musical quality because of his effective use of sound words.

'The Brook' has been written in the form of an auto-biography by Lord Alfred Tennyson. 'The Brook' describes the journey of a stream from its place of origin to the river that it joins. It originates in the high mountains; then flows down many ridges, valleys and passes by many villages. It flows under many bridges and finally joins the brimming river.

The poem is full of symbolism. This poem represents the life of a man. From birth till adulthood man's life is full of activities; similarly the brook is quite active and noisy from birth till it joins a river and becomes quite peaceful and flows quietly. Similarly, after becoming mature and adult man also becomes calmer and more composed. In spite of the similarities

between man and the brook there is one stark dissimilarity also, which the brook keeps telling the readers frequently in the refrain 'For --- ever'. This refrain contrasts man's mortal existence with the brook's immortal life.

The brook emerges suddenly and flows down a valley with a lot of noise. During its journey it passes by thirty hills, twenty villages, fifty bridges and a little town. The brook makes strange and loud noises as it flows over stony paths and rocks. The brook moves in a zig-zag manner. Here and there one can see flowers floating on its surface. Foam-ing flakes are also seen. The brook flows silently by lawns and grassy plots. It takes the sweet forget-me-not flowers for happy lovers. It slips, slides, gloms and glances merrily while flowing. The brook passes through thorny wildernesses at nights. Then it murmurs. It loiters round the pungent leaved plants like creases. It then curves and flows to join the brimming river. It says that men may come and men may go but

it goes on for ever.

The brook teaches us the lesson of perseverance, flowing energetically despite all obstacles and never giving up.

In 'The Brook', the refrain "From men - - - ever" describes the poem's central idea that human life is short-lived and insignificant, while nature is powerful and enduring.

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