

## Section - II

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### The Defence of Poetry by Philip Sidney.

Sir Philip Sidney lived an active life as a Courtier, Diplomat, and writer. He was an English poet, Scholar, a great Critic and Soldier. He was born at Penshurst place in Kent in 1554. His father Sir Henry Sidney, was appointed Lord President of the Marches of Wales by Queen Elizabeth in 1559. Sidney's mother Lady Mary Dudley was lady-in-waiting to the queen until she caught smallpox in 1562. His important works are . . . .

1. Astropella and Stella - 1580
2. Defence of Poetry - 1579.
3. Arcadia - 1593.
4. The Lady of May - 1578.

Sir Philip Sidney has written an essay on Defence of Poetry in 1579. It has been published in 1595. This essay was published by two different printers with two separate names. They are William Ponsonby by as "Defence of poetry" and Henry Olney as "Appology for poeciy". Thus this book becomes remarkable treatise as the first book/work of literary criticism in English. It opened the age of literary criticism. Gosson basically a literary critic. This essay is a reply to another essay to Sir Stephan Gosson's "The School of Abuse". (1579)



D D M M Y Y Y Y

Stephan Gosson basically a Critic, person. Who is writing same period Elizabethan period. He was the puritan basically. He is against the idea of the poetry and he was follower of Plato. He was basically questioned the morality of poetry in his essay "The School of Abuse". He is best known for his attack on Poetry, plays and other GENRE'S art forms in literature. He published "The School of Abuse" in (1579), indicating it Sidney without his acknowledgment. This leads to Sir Philip Sidney to write "The Defence of Poesy". The poetry was criticised on the basis of four

following charges.

1. Poetry is ~~waste~~ <sup>waste</sup> of time ✓
2. Poetry is mother of lies. ✓
3. Poetry is the nurse of Abuse: It is immoral.
4. Plato had rightly banished poets from ideal state.

According to Philip Sidney —

"Poetry is an art of imitation, A representing, Counterfitting or figuring fourth... A Speaking picture, with this end to teach and delights".

Sir Philip Sidney begins his essay taking about the earliest time and he said that Poetry has been held in high esteem since the earliest ~~it~~ times. He don't accept Stephan Gosson's four charges.



③ Charges against poetry & his refutation of the charges.

1) Poetry is waste of time :

Sidney responds and he says that how can poetry be a waste of time. It is superior than all other branches of Science. It is superior to history. It is superior to philosophy. Poetry gives happiness and prosperity in human life.

2) Poetry is mother of lies :

Sidney says that How can Poetry is mother of lies. Because Poets never <sup>affirms</sup> form anything. All the historians, all the philosophers. If you see them. They present certain facts. Poets just present something in front of your eyes. And they give you the opportunity to consider what is right and what is wrong for you. So Sidney says that Poetry is not mother of lies.

3) Poetry is nurse to Abuse: It is immoral

4) Plato had rightly banished poets from his ideal state :



Stephen Gosson Criticised poetry in his essay "The School of Abuse".

01] Poets are like pipers of Justice:

Stephen Gosson denounces poetry publicly. He criticizes poets as the Caterpillars of the Commonwealth all like; Enemies of virtue. He severely condemns other art forms.

02] He Criticises on Drama:

He Criticises to Drama. Drama is an incitement to "Popular debauchery". He again says that Plato had banished poets from his ideal Commonwealth. The Drama was denounced because of its origin and because males played female parts against the law of the nature.

03] He Criticises on Music:

He Criticises to music. He calls music as a debilitating and it undermines the virtues.

04] He Criticises tragedy:

Tragedies were packed with acts of cruelty, bloodshed and murder. While in tragedy men gave way to uncontrolled passion, and thus the moral fibre weakened.

05] He Criticises Comedy:

Comedies dealt with the love affairs of vulgar, degrading kind, Comedy evoked foolish laughter.



# 1. Nature and functions of poetry.

Sidney says that..



Philosophy always speak about abstract Principles, wisdom. It fails to actual relate of life. Poet and Poetry always greater than life Poetry is greater than History, Theology and Law also.

## 1) History :-

History is study of simple past. Historians speak always of earlier past life. But Poetry is Creativity. History teaches but Poetry moves universal and truth.

## 2) Theology :-

It is systematic study of ~~Spiritual~~ ideas and values. Theology is the spiritual life of ideas. And Philosophical foundation of those religions. But Poetry is part of life. Poetry Creates the space for divine thinking.

## 3) Law :-

Law means what is correct, set of rules to be rightful. It teaches to be right path. But Poetry has power of transformation - perfect human being.

Poetry is metrics. It is called mother of all knowledge. Poets are makers of the land, Poetry is more darkness of world. Poetry has been of light giver, Poetry is first nurse of ignorance. Sidney According to Sidney what are the types of Poetry.



## 2 Types of Poetry :

### 01) Pastoral Poetry —

He observes, "If severed they be good, the Conjunctions cannot be hurtful". He says that Pastoral poetry relates to the rural life and scenes. It refines, purifies the heart, and teaches patience, universal locus of all things.

### 02) Elegy —

Elegy teaches how intensely the heart can lament on another's death, they can be nothing faulty. It taps the springs of genuine pity and sympathy for fellow beings.

### 03) Comedy —

The Comedy is nothing but an imitation of the common errors of our life. It helps us to forget about grief and keeps us happy. It keeps us cherished.

### 04) Tragedy —

Tragedy is the greatest form from the Greeks. Passions of all kinds clash in tragedies and poetic justice prevail in the end.

05) Lyric ~~all been~~ The lyrics like Sonnets, ballads, ode etc. ~~have all been~~ <sup>popular type of poetry.</sup> Lyric is another important type of Poetry, which is perfected and projected as the vehicle of noble sentiments. It contains moral precepts presenting human problems and also extols God.

### 06) Epic —

Heroic Epic is the best and the most accomplished kind of poetry, it refers to the greatest stories of all times Aeneas, Achilles, Hector, Ulysses. and many more in elevated forms.



## Divisions of the Essay "The Defence of poetry."

- 1) The antiquity and Universality of Poetry.
- 2) Kinds of poetry and its usefulness.
- 3) Objections against poetry and Sidney's Defence
- 4) State of Contemporary English Drama and poetry.
- 5) Remarks on style and versification.

What is the structure of the essay.....

1. Occasion for writing the essay, nature, and functions of poetry.
2. Types of poetry, its merits and demerits
3. Objections / charges against poetry: Its refutations (rejections)
4. Condition of Poetry
5. Peroration: Conclusion of the Origin.

Functions of poetry:

1. To teach and Delite.
2. To affect readers about the level of earthly beauty. to that of Contemplation which is cherished. We should be Spiritual.
3. To use one's talent, humanist and order for Personal fame
4. To bring out poets nobility, Knowledge, eternity and Social well being.



## (v) State of Poetry :-

- \* Lack of Spirit in the age of 16<sup>th</sup> century  
Because 16<sup>th</sup> century was spirit of Drama.
- \* Lack inspiration not suitable for great noble poetry.
- \* Inferior man occupied with poor writing - they had minimum Scholarship
- \* Training, practice, application poetry is first class.
- \* These poetry was not natural it came artificial.
- \* The popularity of poetry went down
- \* He is great upto his own English produced only few good poets like Chaucer, Spenser and Surrey.
- \* English Language well suited for poetry most simplified Grammar.