

Victorian poetry

Victorian poetry was more realistic and less idealistic contrary to the romantic ideals of the preceding era. It is characterised by conflict between science and religion, which not only baffled but also led to a certain degree of pessimism in the poetry of that period. It took upon itself the burden of social responsibility and focussed on the problems of the general masses in the wake of the industrialisation. It also engaged with medieval literature, and the medieval ideals of chivalry, valour and myths have found their place in victorian poetry,

Major Victorian Poets

Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) was arguably the most famous poet of the victorian period. He held the title of poet laureateship for over 40 years. His poetry ranged from romance to nature to criticism of political and religious institutions. His poetry is remarkable for rich imagery and descriptive writing. Some of his famous poems are **In Memorium**, **The Charge of the Light Brigade**, **Ulysses**, **Lotus-eaters**, **Idylls of the king**, **Tithonus** etc.

Robert Browning (1812-1889) was one of the foremost victorian poets chiefly remembered for his Dramatic Monologues. His poetry is characterised by for the use of irony, characterisation, social commentary, historical settings as wells as for his vocabulary and syntax. His famous Poetry collections ar ***Men and women*** (1855), ***Dramatis Personae*** (1864), ***The Ring and the Book*** (1868-1869).

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) started writing at an early age of eleven. Apart from poetry, she also produced translations and prose. She also campaigned for the abolition of slavery. Her later works embody political and social themes. Her famous poems are **Aurora Leigh** and **How do I love thee**.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) was a victorian poet, social and literary critic. His poetry instructed and often chastised the readers on contemporary social issues. Some of his famous poems are **Empodcles on Etna, Sohrab and Rustam** and **The Scholar Gipsy**. His important critical works are *Essays in Criticism* and *Culture and Anarchy*.