



Talking about the Text

1. 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world'.

Answer: Shelley in his famous essay, A Defence of Poetry, made the given statement. In his work, Shelley expressed his view on poetry and poets. The power of poetry and the beauty of it. It is true that poetry makes every thing immortal by arresting its enchanting beauty. It not just reflects, it has the power to ignite minds and bring change. Poetry inspires humanity. Like Shelley said, 'Poets are...the mirrors or the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. It is poetry that bears the future and inspire minds. It beholds the past and mirrors the present as well. Poets are the subtle revolutionaries of our society. In fact, not just poets but all the great authors as well. They are the force that drive the society to newness and are moral critics. They participate in the society not just as viewers, but they keep a watch and express their criticism or appreciation through their work.

2. Poetry and science are incompatible.

Answer: There are two perspectives to every issue. While poets like Wordsworth and Keats condemn man of exploiting nature and moving towards science, Shelley is a scientific poet, who even in his poems like his Cloud. Shelley loved science and expressed it in his poetry. It symbolised to him joy, and peace, and illumination. Charles Darwin, being such a great scientist was immensely fond of literature, especially in his youth. However, another scientist, Faraday, who was absolutely engrossed in his scientific experiments about electricity and made great invention. It is always difficult to conclude whether poets and scientists are compatible or not. There will be many such poets and scientists fond of science and poetry. While there will be many who are only concerned about their subject.

3. 'On reading Shelley's A Defence of Poetry, the question insistently occurs why there is no similar A Defence of Science written of equal endowment.'

Answer: A person who is passionate about her/his subject is bound to praise it profoundly. The only difference might be in the medium of expression. While a poet chooses words to praise his subject, a scientist may choose an invention to express his passion. This is natural. Thus, it is so that Shelley came up with a writing piece and Faraday discovering the laws of electromagnetic induction and his discoveries led him to formulate concepts such as 'lines of force' and 'fields of force'. It is not that scientists do not defend their subject, Faraday did defend his discoveries by answering Gladstone that there was every probability of the government taxing the electricity soon. Just the medium one chooses to defend their subject matters.

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