

Q.1 Define Literature and discuss the chief characteristics of it. - OR

સમજાવો ગુણવત્તાઓ

Explain the qualities of literature. OR What is literature? Discuss the main features of literature.

1] Introduction/Preface/Introductory

To ask "What is literature?" is very wide question. It is just like to ask "What is God?" The shapes of literature are as differentiated or variegated as the forms of God. In this respect, to define literature is a very difficult task, but it is easy to recognise it, when we come across it.

2] The General View of Literature

In English, we use the word literature at least in two different ways. Very often it simply means anything that is written; time-tables, catalogues, news papers, magazines, text-books and so on. For example, if someone is thinking of buying a bicycle or a motor car, he will probably want to see the literature about it. In this broad sense, literature may be anything that is written, but professional advertisements cannot be called literature.

વ્યાખ્યાનો અલગ

3] Different Definitions & Views for Literature:

There are many definitions and views of the word "literature" but no definition can fully explain the term "literature".

A] St. Augustine has rightly said that literature is like, "If not asked I know but if you ask me, I know not."

B] According to R. S. Rees,

"Literature is writing which expresses and communicates thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards life."

C] We care for literature, primarily on account of its deep and lasting significance.

D] Literature lives by virtue of life which it embodies or illuminates or highlights.

પ્રકાશન કર્યું

[E] It has ^{सामान्यतः} generally been thought that "Literature should hold the mirror up to nature" i.e. literature is only the mirror which shows us different cultures of vivid ages or eras.

[F] "Literature is a criticism of human life" i.e. it should be life enhancing related to the age. Literature is thus basically an expression of life through the medium of language. It describes passions and emotions of human nature.

[4] The Main Parts of Literature :
There are mainly two parts of literature

- (i) Literature of Knowledge
- (ii) Literature of Power.

Literature of knowledge provides us only information while literature of power has the capacity of moving and transformation. Moreover in literature of power we see feelings, hatred and passions of human life. In this sense literature of power can affect the readers deeply than literature of knowledge. Thus, literature of power can make the people to weep as well as to laugh. i.e. both the aspects, tragic and comic are archivable in literature of power while they are totally absent in literature of knowledge. For this we can say that literature of knowledge is the dry record or collection of informative writing.

[5] Various Forms of Literature :
Different Shapes of Literature :

Literature has its many forms like poetry, prose, novel, drama, short-story, autobiography, philosophy, essay etc. All these forms communicate the writer's feelings, attitudes and opinions towards the contemporary human life of his own age. The prose, autobiography and novel forms are lengthy while poetry, drama, short-story and essay are short forms. In poetry exaggeration and vivid comparisons can be seen while short-story may be imaginative & real.

6] The Characteristics of Good Literature :->

(i) Literature is the Mirror of Life :->

As we know literature must be the faithful reflection of human life. So, all good literature should reflect life in an easy and systematic way as it exists in society. The feelings expressed by the writer should be identical to the feelings, ideas and attitudes of life in general. e.g. Dramas like 'Every man Out of His Humour', 'Every Man in His Humour' and 'The Alchemist' of Ben Jonson reflect the contemporary life of the people of that age.

According to Matthew Arnold, "Poetry is a criticism of human life". The poet directly or indirectly describes his own experience as well as the contemporary life of any particular society - their likes & dislikes, good habits and bad habits and the way of passing their own life.

(ii) Originality :-> The second characteristic of good literature is originality. Every writer must have a capacity to treat a subject in a unique and original way. The writer can select a traditional theme but he should be original in his treatment. Originality thus lies not in the selection of themes but in their treatment. In this sense, every piece of work should be original through and through. - e.g. William Shakespeare's Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth and Othello were real characters.

Good writing is not only a matter of ideas and inspiration but also of technique and practice. Alexander Pope reminds us by saying that "True ease in writing comes from art not by chance". As those move easily who have learned to dance.

Alexander Pope has also said of poetry that "Poetry is mere mechanic art, and Every singer has his tune by heart". Thus, it must be remembered that the central theme of all literature should be life, love and death.

iii) Sense of Permanence :-> स्थायी मूल्य।

The third quality of good literature is the sense of permanence. A good piece of literature must have the permanent value. So, the newspaper, articles or news reports are not called literature. Such writings have only limited context and meaning. e.g. William Shakespeare wrote his dramas in 16th century but still they are existed in library. Even they are taught at college & university level. All they have long lasting permanent value.

iv) Craftsmanship :-> शिल्पकर्म

The fourth requirement of good literature is craftsmanship. Every writer should be capable of handling different types of themes. He should have good techniques to handle vivid themes. He should select and use proper words and sentences.

"the right word at the right place". Thus, literature can only come alive through the creative imagination.

v) Moral Consciousness :-> नैतिक जागरूकता।

All good literature must have moral values. The author or poet through his literature should show the difference between good and evil. The writer should defend good and oppose evil. This sense of what is good and what is evil is called moral consciousness. i.e. the good should be rewarded and the bad should be punished. e.g. The works of Sophocles, Milton, Dante, Ibsen & Hardy remind us of moral values.

7 Conclusion :->

In this way, all writers are interested to say others what they think & feel. And we, the readers are also interested to study the great dramas of life & action. In short, for literature we may say that it is permanent expression in words of some thoughts, feelings, passions about life & the real & imaginative world. Literature may be good, bad or indifferent.

But good literature must have above-mentioned five qualities. Above all literature is an old wine in a new bottle. - Isn't it?