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Author(s): Claud Howard

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THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE: ITS
ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT*

By

Claud Howard

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a partial requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT¹

I

INTRODUCTION

The present movement in literary study is especially characterized by intensive study of types. The old method of dividing the history of literature into chronological periods and studying each as a complete unit within itself is being superseded by a new method of treating each distinct form separately. The origin, development, and variations of each type are carefully studied. In this manner the literary species are disentangled from the mass of confused material which has obscured them for centuries, and, consequently, their independent histories are clearly understood. This method has a special advantage in that the essential continuity of literary development is emphasized.

Although this plan has been in use a comparatively short while, yet it has been successfully applied to several types of literature.² It has not been limited to the larger and more important forms, such as the drama, epic, and novel, but has been used in the treatment of many minor types, as the ballad, lyric, and short story. But one type which has failed to receive such comprehensive treatment is the dramatic monologue. The neglect of this form is due partly to its recent

1. A paper presented to the Faculty of the University of North Carolina as a partial requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

2. Besides many independent treatments by individuals, "libraries" are being published in which each volume is devoted to one type and written by an acknowledged specialist. Some of the most important of these are "The Types of English Literature," edited by W. A. Neilson, and "The Wampum Library of English Literature," edited by Brander Matthews.

development and partly to a lack of a proper appreciation of its significance.

So far only one book³ and a few articles have been written on this type, but none has done more than explain the use of its developed form.⁴ Its origin and development still remain obscure. It is my purpose here to give some suggestions which will throw light upon these phases and to present what I consider to be the contributions of the more important writers of this form. And finally, I wish to show how these separate contributions or elements were combined into a distinct form of poetry.

3. S. S. Curry, *Browning and the Dramatic Monologue*.

4. Dr. Curry devotes one chapter to the history of the monologue to show that it "was no sudden invention of Browning's." Suggestive as it is, it makes no attempt to trace the stages of development.

II

A CONCEPTION OF THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

In order to have, as a basis of treatment, a clear conception of this type, Browning's *The Patriot* is given below as a *typical* dramatic monologue. Like all monologues, this poem consists of three constituent parts: the occasion, the speaker, and the hearer.

The first, the occasion, can be best understood by considering the purpose of the poem. Browning's plan was to present in the most impressive way the fickleness of popular opinion. To do this, he selected a patriot who had been borne upon the crest of popular applause, but who has fallen into the trough of public condemnation. The time most suited to the expression of this contrast is that when the patriot is going to his execution. While suffering the greatest torture from unjust punishments, he recalls the incident one year ago,—when he was a worshiped hero. This state of lowest humiliation and degradation is given the boldest relief by being presented against the background of his memory of the most glorious moment he had ever experienced. Consequently, this occasion is the most suitable one for presenting the popular fickleness which had produced such a sudden and distressing change.

The second element of this dramatic monologue is the speaker. He was a patriot of the highest type. All his energies were devoted to the service of his people. He had left nothing undone that tended to their welfare. Although persecuted by his country, he remained true to his resolutions and ideals, and now "'Tis God shall repay". Thus the character of the speaker is clearly, though indirectly shown by his own words.

The third constitutional part, the audience, is of minor importance in this monologue. From the content of the

poem it appears that the hearers are doubtless the sheriff and the officers accompanying him to the execution. Although in the background, they are essential parts of the monologue. The patriot does not speak to them directly, since he is not the subject of individual caprice, but the victim of popular fickleness.

The three constituent parts are thus combined to produce the following monologue, which is quoted here, not because it is the best dramatic monologue, but because it is typical and is so short that it may be quoted entire.

THE PATRIOT⁵

AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,
 With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
 The house roofs seemed to heave and sway,
 The church spires flamed, such flags they had,
 A year ago on this very day.
 The air broke into a mist with bells,
 The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
 Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—
 But give me your sun from yonder skies"
 They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"
 Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
 To give it my loving friends to keep!
 Naught man could do, have I left undone:
 And you see my harvest, what I reap
 This very day, now a year is run.
 There's nobody on the house-tops now—
 Just a palsied few at the windows set;
 For the best of the sight is, all allow,
 At the Shambles' gate—or, better yet,
 By the very scaffold's foot I trow.

5. Cambridge edition of Browning, p. 251. This edition is referred to throughout this paper.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?"—God might question; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

This poem is an example of a new and distinct type of poetry. It cannot be placed in either of the three orthodox categories, although it sustains a vital relation to them. It belongs to a separate and well-defined *genre* and deserves recognition as such by students of poetry.

There is perhaps no better method of thoroughly understanding the essential nature of this type than by comparing it to other well known forms of poetry. The monologue differs more widely from the epic than from any other type. It is not only a contrast to the epic as to length,—the epic being a prolonged narration of events, the dramatic monologue a short presentation of one occasion,—but it is, in addition to this, its very antithesis in spirit. The epic is an expression of a national consciousness at a crisis in its history as embodied in one individual, the hero of the race. Here the emphasis is not placed upon the individuality of the hero, but upon the national or universal significance of his experiences.⁶ In contrast to this, the dramatic monologue is the most democratic form of poetry in existence. It is strictly individual. As Browning has done in the case of *The Patriot*, a poet may portray any characteristic of a state or individual, or he may even express his own opinions by selecting an appropriate character as a spokesman of his views. He is thus neither

6. See C. F. Johnson, *Forms of English Poetry*, p. 328 f.; also S. S. Curry, *Browning and the Dramatic Monologue*, p. 102 f.

interrupted by another person, nor limited by the conventionalities that he would meet in other types of poetry.

The dramatic monologue is much more closely related to the lyric than to the epic.⁷ They resemble each other in that they are, for the most part, short emotional poems. Both are organic units, every part of each contributing to a unified impression. They are alike also in being personal expressions of an individual. Naturally, however, the lyric is the more subjective, since it is always the outcome of the emotions. On the other hand, the dramatic monologue is often the product of intense emotions, as, for example, in *Tennyson's Clara Vere de Vere*, but not always so, for it may consist altogether of expressions of the intellect, as Browning's *My Last Duchess*. Another contrast is that in the lyric the poet gives direct expression to his feelings and thoughts, while in the dramatic monologue he expresses himself indirectly. In the case of the latter he puts his ideas into the mouth of a distinct individual who speaks on a significant occasion to a definite audience. Consequently, the thoughts of the speaker often bear the impress of the hearer, a characteristic altogether lacking in the lyric, where the thoughts proceed directly from the isolated individual. This subtle result of the contact of minds is not so marked in the lyric. So the main difference between the lyric and the dramatic monologue is that the former does not contain one of the essentials of the latter,—a distinct and determining audience.

The close relation of the dramatic monologue to the drama is denoted by the word *dramatic*. The word *monologue* denotes one speaking, but the term *dramatic* prefixed to it indicates one speaking in a dramatic situation. The dramatic elements are seen in its portrayal of individuals on such occasions, or rather by having them reveal their own motives and characters at a flash. The monologue differs from the drama,

7. For a discussion of the nature of the lyric, see Gummere, *The Beginnings of Poetry*, p. 420 f.; Johnson, *Forms of English Poetry*, p. 229 f.; Curry, *Browning and the Dramatic Monologue*, p. 14 f.

however, not only in form, but also in treatment of materials. The drama requires a plot, divided into acts and scenes, which presents an action or a series of closely related actions as the outcome of the volitions of a group of individuals.⁸ Through successive stages the rising action reaches a climax. Toward this, all preceding actions tend, and from it all subsequent actions flow, passing again into equilibrium. The dramatic monologue, on the other hand, has no plot. The highest form of it dispenses with all preliminary action leading up to the climax and all falling action resulting from it. This new dramatic form catches up an individual at a critical moment, which corresponds to the climax of the drama, and reveals his character by a flashlight. There is no need for stage devices. The attitude or the state of the speaker's mind, whether in a struggle or in a mood of complacency, is laid bare without the assistance of complex movements of human beings. It is not, however, to displace the drama, but to supplement it. The dramatic monologue possesses its own distinctive dramatic elements and portrays them according to its individual method.

The monologue is not only related to the drama as a unit, but resembles also some minor forms used in the drama. It is similar to the dialogue form in that its style is that of a conversation, not that of a platform orator. But it differs from the dialogue in having only one speaker. The impression of abruptness which a dramatic monologue often produces on the reader is that received by a person who suddenly overhears a conversation in an adjoining room which has been monopolized by one person. Nothing can be learned except through the words of the speaker. Thus the dramatic monologue may be considered a monopolized conversation.

Another form used in the drama which is closely related to the dramatic monologue is the soliloquy. In both there is

8. Elizabeth Woodbridge, *The Drama, Its Law and Technique*, Introduction and p. 76 f.

only one speaker. The speaker in the soliloquy is merely thinking aloud. His thoughts proceed freely and unmodified from his own individuality. In contrast to this, the speaker in the dramatic monologue is influenced more or less by the personality of the hearer. The soliloquy, then, differs from the monologue in that it does not imply an audience.

III

ORIGIN OF THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

Ever since De Vries proposed the mutation theory as an explanation of the origin of species, our faith in accounting for the origin of all species as a result of a slow and a continual process of evolution has received a fatal shock. And this is especially true in the field of literature since Professor Manly has applied De Vries's theory to the origin of the drama.⁹ We no longer consider it necessary that a type of literature must have existed ages and slowly unfolded its different possibilities one by one until it finally reached perfection, but, on the contrary, we assign more importance to exceptional circumstances and powerful individuals. Types of literature may suddenly come into existence and develop by leaps. Still no type has been perfect at its birth; all have grown with varied rapidity.

In the case of the dramatic monologue DeVries's theory is particularly applicable. Although in its period of growth its elements were differentiated somewhat sporadically and independently, yet the term "process of development" is legitimate when used with certain limitations and it is certainly indicative of the nature of its growth. This process of development extended over several centuries. During the time in which the dramatic monologue was progressing toward perfection, it drew much of its material from other types and received many contributions from different individuals.

It is not only my purpose to show that this process of development took place, but also to preface this with an

9. "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species", *Modern Philology*, IV. p. 577.

account of its origin. Of course, an exhaustive treatment of the origin of this form would require an explanation of the origin of poetry itself. I shall not attempt to account for the origin of the different elements themselves, but to give the sources of these elements as they had been developed in other forms of poetry and to show how they were selected and combined into a new and distinct type by a natural process of development.

All types of literature have had their origin in the natural instinct of man to give expression in language to his thoughts and emotions.¹⁰ As experiences received their embodiment, they slowly and unconsciously crystalized into definite forms, varying according to their special fitness for conveying the spiritual content.¹¹ Thus the extended narration of events of national significance assumed the form termed epic. The expression of the poet's personal emotions naturally confined itself to the short lyric. So with all types of literature. They all arose to supply a demand for a certain form of expression.

As these types have developed they have passed through two stages.¹² The first was that of spontaneous expression in which the writer was completely absorbed in giving vent to his impulse. He was so lost in his material that he paid little or no attention to form. He was possessed with the impulse to write; his interest was in what he said, not in

10. Johnson, *Elements of Literary Criticism*, p. 2 f.

11. For the differentiation of the lyric, drama, and epic, see Gummere, *The Beginnings of Poetry*, p. 400 f.

12. See Gummere's chapter on "*The Two Elements of Poetry*, *ibid.* p. 116 f. Although his divisions of "communal" and "artistic" are more comprehensive than those indicated by conscious and unconscious art, yet they are based upon the same principle of development, namely, that "art,—thought and purpose, that is,—slowly took place of spontaneity" (p. 119). See also, Guyau, *L'Art au Point de Vue Sociologique*, p. 26. This is in harmony with Prof. Hoffding's position as to "the degree of express consciousness with which the imagination works", *Outlines of Psychology*, trans. by Mary E. Lowndes, V. B. 12 a. The first two forms correspond to the unconscious art of construction.

how he said it. His expression flowed freely, and only in so far as he was guided by his natural instinct for form did his productions fulfil the laws of structure. This was the period of unconscious art.

By constant use of the forms which he assumed instinctively, the writer becomes conscious of his vehicle of expression and its influence upon his content. Consequently, his attention is more and more directed to the structure of his composition. He develops a technique which is best adapted to the conveyance of his meaning and which is most capable of producing the desired artistic impression. He has learned the laws of construction and has entered upon a period of conscious art.

The short story, especially, illustrates these stages of development.¹³ From the earliest times in which peasants and travelers beguiled the time away by telling tales until 1835, the short story was groping toward its destined form. When it passed into the hands of Poe, he immediately recognized its possibilities and constructed its technique, so that now no one attempts to write a good short story without conforming to its constitution as written by Poe.¹⁴ He developed it into a conscious art with definite laws of construction.¹⁵

The development of the dramatic monologue may be divided into these two stages of unconscious and conscious construction. The first period of this development extends from its origin to its use by Browning; the second from its use by Browning to the present time.

A study of the first period of the dramatic monologue shows that it was not the invention of Browning,—not a mechani-

13. See S. C. Baldwin, *American Short Stories*, p. 2.

14. Poe's principle of "totality of effect" was first expressed in a review of Hawthorne, *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842; Stedman and Woodberry's edition of Poe, vol. VII, p. 30.

15. See Brander Matthews, *The Short Story: Specimens Illustrating Its Development*, p. 25

cal device originated by a single individual,—but that it was a result of a process of development as natural, though not so clearly marked, as that of the drama. It arose in response to a need for a new form of literary expression which would reveal more directly and forcibly the new phases of modern culture and experience.

The most essential characteristic of the dramatic monologue is the attitude of mind of the speaker. He not only expresses his own ideas, but inevitably permits his thoughts to be colored by the personality of the hearer. Doubtless the earliest form of literature in which this dramatic monologue attitude of mind appears is the letter. Besides keeping his reader in mind while expressing his thoughts, the writer will unconsciously let his composition and style be modified by his relations and bear the imprint of the personality of his correspondent.

When this attitude was first carried into poetry, if, indeed, it did not exist there first, it received its earliest expression in the lyric. Consequently to speak in terms of poetry, it is not likely that the germs of the dramatic monologue manifest themselves earliest in the lyric. Moreover, as was pointed out above,¹⁶ the lyric and the dramatic monologue are very closely related in that they are, for the most part, intense realizations of special occasions, implying deep emotions. In the lyric the emotion is of primary consideration, and this is wherein it differs from the monologue, for in it the emotion is of secondary importance. But the most significant consideration is that the emotional element or feeling was the motive force which made the transition from the lyric to the dramatic monologue.

In the pure lyric, which has no dramatic tendencies, the poet expresses his emotions without reference to others. The first step in the transition from this to the dramatic monologue is made when the emotions are directed toward an individual. When this is done, the poem is concerned with

16. See page 38.

two persons and their relations. As was natural, this transition was made in the love lyric. This is the form in which the first tendencies toward the dramatic monologue are found. It is here that the emotions become intense and personal. The feelings of the lover are directed toward one individual, and, in intensely realizing his intimate relations to his loved one, it was perfectly natural that he should employ the most direct and forcible form of expression, that is the form in which time and space are eliminated, and in which he can conceive himself in the presence of and speaking to his loved one. The emotions and the imaginations have demanded an external object for their vivid realization. As a result of this tendency, the object is visualized and spoken to directly.

One of the earliest examples of the love lyric in English in which this characteristic is discernible is Chaucer's *To Rosemounde*.¹⁷ This poem implies two distinct individuals.

Madame, ye beu of al beaute shryne
As fer as cerclid is the mappermounde;
For as the crystal glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekes rounde.

The speaker is the lover and the hearer is the lover's lady whom he is praising. In the first two parts of *Merciles Beaute*,¹⁸ Chaucer uses the same form. Both of these poems represent a speaker and a hearer, or at any rate a correspondent. The relations of these two are clearly portrayed and we may form a fairly clear impression of them. But this rudimentary form is the only element of the dramatic monologue, for its spirit is essentially that of the lyric.

This embryonic form, which is to be gradually developed until it becomes the framework of a new type of poetry, is extensively used during the reigns of Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth. This was the period in which the love lyric reached its climax. The greater part of the works of the

17. Skeat, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, I. p. 389.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

minor poets of this age consisted of lyrics and sonnets of lovers and their experiences. A few of these may be considered as illustrations of the embryonic form of the dramatic monologue.

Sir Thomas Wyatt's sonnet¹⁹ beginning—

Disdaine me not without desert:
Nor leaue me not so sodenly:
Sins well ye wot, that in my hert
I meane ye not but honestly,

portrays a lover praying to his mistress to be just and true to him. The speaker and hearer are distinct persons. This, however, is its only dramatic element. The lyrical expression might be put into the mouth of any lover. It is not even concerned with character portrayal. Its form is the only element of the dramatic monologue.

This form is even more distinctly marked in a lyric written by Marlowe and in another which is a reply to Marlowe's. In the former, *The Passionate Shepheard to his Love*,²⁰ a shepherd makes an ardent plea to a maiden:—

Come liue with mee, and be my loue
And we will all the pleasures pruuē,
That Vallies, groues, hills and fieldes,
Woods, or steepie mountaine yeeldes.

In *The Nymphs Reply to the Sheepearde*,²¹ attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh, the maid answers the shepherd—

If all the world and loue were young,
And truth in euery sheepearde's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me moue,
To live with thee, and be thy loue.

In both these poems, the individuals stand out distinctly.

19. Tottel's *Miscellany: Songes and Sonnetts*, Edited by Edward Arber, p. 58.

20. Francis Cunningham, *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*, p. 272.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 272.

Each in turn assumes the role of speaker and, by this means, the characters of both are clearly portrayed. Although the lyrical qualities are predominant, the dramatic monologue form gives objective realization to the loved one in each case and thus lends increased intensity to subjective states.

In George Turberville's *A Poor Plowman to a Gentleman*, interest in character becomes more manifest. The plowman meets his landlord and tells him of the perfect condition of his farm and requests the "pleasure" of tending it again.

Besides having the dramatic monologue form, this poem makes an advance towards the real dramatic spirit. The plowman is characterized not only as a type, but also as a distinct individual. He unconsciously reveals himself by his own words.

A much nearer approach to the spirit of the dramatic monologue is made in Suckling's *A Barber*. Here characterization becomes predominant. The barber, while waiting on his customer, contrives to—

So fall to praising his lordship's hair,
Ne'er so deformed, I swear 'tis sans compare,

The speaker is vividly portrayed. His character is of principal interest. But this poem lacks one essential element of the dramatic monologue, a distinct hearer. However, it marks an unconscious and decisive advance in character portrayal.

One of the first examples in which the three constituent parts of the dramatic monologue are combined is the following sonnet of Michael Drayton:²²

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part;—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands forever, cancel, all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,

22. Quoted from F. I. Carpenter's *English Lyric Poetry*, p. 98.

Be it not seen in either of our brows
 That we one jot of former love retain.
 Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
 When, his pulse fallen, Passion speechless lies,
 When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
 And Innocence is closing up his eyes,—
 Now, if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
 From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

Although this sonnet, on basis of chronology, should be placed before the example just quoted from Suckling, yet on basis of development it comes later. This fact within itself strengthens the applicability of DeVries's theory as to the development of the dramatic monologue. *A Poor Plowman* was first referred to to make complete the examples illustrating the independent development of each of the three constituent parts of the monologue.

In Drayton's sonnet, we not only find the addition of the third part,—the occasion, but the poem employs all the embryonic elements which are later developed into the dramatic monologue. The occasion or situation is one of dramatic intensity. At the parting of the lovers for the last time, the emotions cannot be inhibited, but well up and receive their most forcible expression in the form of the monologue. The speaker and hearer are distinct individuals, manifesting peculiar characteristics which are a part of their personalities. This is one of the first poems in which the three elements of the monologue are so skilfully combined.

Although it was the express purpose of this paper to give the beginnings and development of the dramatic monologue in English, yet the treatment of this form in the Elizabethan age would in no sense be adequate without giving some attention to foreign influences.

Evidently, the most popular form of literature in the Elizabethan age was the sonnet.²³ Through the influence of

23. See Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare*, Section IX of the Appendix.

Wyatt and Surrey, whose experiments were first published in 1557 in Tottel's *Miscellany*, the sonnet was brought directly from Italy and introduced into England. Not only was the form transplanted, but its spirit²⁴ also was retained. The sonnet was the principal vehicle for the expression of the enlightened thoughts and emotions of the renaissance. "Thus the world of Italian sentiment comes before us in a series of pictures, clear, concise, and most effective in their brevity."²⁵

Although the Italian was the ultimate source of the form and spirit of the sonnet, yet it was not the most influential of foreign literatures. Sidney Lee says,²⁶ "It was contemporary French, rather than older Italian, influence which first stirred in the Elizabethan mind a fruitful interest in the genuine sonnet." Since many of these sonnets were love sonnets, they correspond to the love lyrics in the development of the monologue. In the face of these facts, there is no doubt that French poetry exercised considerable influence over the dramatic monologue in its process of development.

At any rate, forms are found in the French poetry of the sixteenth century which possess all the undeveloped elements of the dramatic monologue. One example may be taken as an illustration. This poem, which fulfils the requirements of the dramatic monologue form and which is even a nearer approach to the real spirit of the monologue than any examples in English of the same period, is Charles Fontaine's *To His Son*.²⁷ The first stanza is quoted here to show its dramatic qualities.

24. For a discussion of the spirit of the Italian Sonnet, see Burckhardt, *The Renaissance in Italy*, p. 310 f.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 311.

26. *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. by A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller, III. 284. See *ibid.* ch. XII. for the French influence on the Elizabethan sonnet; also Lee's *A Life of William Shakespeare*, Section X. of the Appendix.

27. Given in H. Carrington's *Anthology of French Poetry*, p. 114.

My little son, who yet dost nothing know,
 This thy first day of life I celebrate.
 Come, see the world which floods of wealth o'erflow,
 Honors, and goods of value, rare and great;
 Come, see long-wished-for peace on France await;
 Come, Francis, see your king and mine renowned,
 Who keeps our France in safe and noble state;
 Come, see the world where all good things abound.

This poem contains all the essential characteristics of the dramatic monologue in an undeveloped form. But it is only one of the many productions in French which greatly influenced the English poetry of the Elizabethan era. Consequently, the dramatic monologue is indebted to French influence for giving it an additional impetus in its development.²⁸

From this period in which the dramatic monologue has received its final, though undeveloped, form, we may pass to the following period and trace the monologue's fortune until it emerges completely developed in the Victorian age.

28. A more extensive consideration of the French and Italian influence in the development of the dramatic monologue is reserved for future treatment.

IV

THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE FROM THE ELIZABETHAN TO THE VICTORIAN AGE.

The contribution of the Elizabethan age to the dramatic monologue was the independent development of the essential elements, and, finally, the combining of these into single productions which were the basis of future development. The characteristic mood of the Elizabethan lyric²⁸ which assumed the form of the dramatic monologue was one of enthusiasm, spontaneity, and elasticity. Expression was not confined to states of reflection and meditation, but, on the contrary, emotions were expressed with reference to persons and objects other than those of the writer. Interest was objective as well as subjective. Feelings were so spontaneous and altruistic that they naturally demanded outward direction. The individuals toward whom these emotions were directed were brought into close contact with the writer. No longer were the objects of these feelings considered apart from the production, but they were visualized, if not present and spoken to directly.

But in the century following, the attitude of the people and of the poets who expressed this attitude, was fundamentally changed.²⁹ After the intense enthusiasm, spontaneity, and activity of the Elizabethan period, a reaction set in. Dr. Carpenter, referring to this movement, says,³⁰ "The carnival of the Renaissance, the joyous bravado of the new awakening in England, was soon over. The Puritan undercurrent in the national character begins again to make itself felt. Life drunk

28. See F. I. Carpenter, *English Lyric Poetry (1500-1700)*, p. xlv. f.

29. See Barrett Wendell, *The Temper of the Seventeenth Century in English Literature*, p. 154 f. ; also F. I. Carpenter, *English Lyric Poetry*, p. xlv. f.

30. *English Lyric Poetry*, p. xlviii.

to the lees casts us back into remorse and revulsion of feeling. The lyric poetry of the new period reflects the entire process, just as the drama does." The poetry no longer retains its Elizabethan freshness and energy, but becomes intensely subjective and deeply self-conscious. Consequently, the lighter lyrics are superseded by the weightier ones, such as the ode and the elegy.

This was the natural outcome of the current of English history during this period. But this pendulum movement was reinforced by foreign influence.³¹ While the Elizabethans were stirred by French and Italian writers, the poets of the seventeenth century were greatly influenced by Latin authors. Especially was this the case with Jonson and his followers. But the spirit of classicism is the very antithesis of the spirit of the dramatic monologue. Classicism demands conformity and restraint, while the monologue demands elasticity and freedom. In so far as the classicists paid strict attention to form, they might have developed the form of the monologue, but since their attitude was not in harmony with the spirit of the monologue, they never employed it.

With these facts before us, we may readily see that it is unreasonable to expect to find much, if any, development of the dramatic monologue in the century and a half following the Elizabethan age.

Although the dramatic monologue received no marked development during this period, still it was occasionally used. Jonson's *Song To Celia*,³² beginning—

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine,

is characteristic of the poems of this age which assumed the form of the monologue. Its sentiment is similar to that ex-

31. *Ibid.*, p. 1. f.

32. Carpenter, *English Lyric Poetry*, p. 122.

pressed by Drayton in "Come, let us kiss and part", but the latter is a nearer approach to the dramatic monologue, since it has a dramatic occasion. Moreover, the latter demands a hearer, while Celia, in Jonson's lyric, may be a mere correspondent and not in the presence of the lover.

Another example which presupposes two distinct individuals, and which is similar to the preceding lyric, is Thomas Campion's *To Lesbia*.³³ The words are spoken by the lover to his beloved:

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the sager sort our deeds reprove
Let us not weigh them.

Robert Herrick's *To Dianeme*³⁴ also belongs to this class. It is so short that it may be quoted entire:

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes,
Which star-like sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich hair,
Which wantons with the love-sick air;
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone,
When all your world of beauty's gone.

Many other lyrics similar to these might be considered, but they all belong to the same class. These poems are typical and are illustrations of the stage of development of the dramatic monologue during this period. They make no advance over the Elizabethan love lyrics. They belong to the first stage of the development of the monologue,—the stage in which the altruistic emotions become so intense that the object of these emotions is no longer considered absent, but is visualized and spoken to directly.

33. Carpenter, *English Lyric Poetry*, p. 126.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

But directing our attention a little beyond the strict bounds of English literature, we find a simple but vigorous poet who used the dramatic monologue form and really made a contribution to it. This writer was not limited by the requirements of classicism, but expressed his thoughts and emotions freely and naturally. The style of this Scottish poet was so elastic that he could assume the attitude of another personality and express the ideas and feelings which were in perfect harmony with the character represented. Consequently, in this most sterile period of poetry in the history of English literature, it is refreshing to turn to the cherished poetry of Robert Burns.³⁵

None of his poems is a better illustration of his use of the dramatic monologue form than *John Anderson My Jo*.³⁶

John Anderson my jo, John,
 When we were first acquaint,
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonnie brow was brent;
 But now your brow is beld, John,
 Your locks are like the snaw;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson, my jo.
 John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither,
 And mony a cantie day, John,
 We've had wi' aue anither:
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 But hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson, my jo.

Here we find the sincere expression of conjugal love assuming the monologue form. The center of interest is character portrayal. And the characters are more than types. Espe-

35. See Edmund Gosse, *A History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 310.

36. *Burn's Complete Poems*, Globe ed., p. 201.

cially is this true of the speaker. The love of this old Scottish house-wife is not that of any lover, but that of the aged woman devoted to her husband. The hearer here is not merely visualized, but is actually present. The dramatic style of Burns clearly portrays this intimate relation. Although the lyric element is predominant, the poem still makes a near approach to the true dramatic monologue. It might be properly termed a lyrical monologue.

Another poem of Burns, in which the hearer is not only present but is evidently acting, is *My Bonnie Mary*.³⁷ The two common elements of speaker and hearer are present in this poem, but in addition to this there is an occasion of some significance. Just as the speaker is ready to sail to a foreign land to take part in a war, he speaks to his lady:

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie;
That I may drink, before I go,
A service to my bonny lassie.

In this poem, as in the preceding one, we may see the transition from the first to the second stage of the period of unconscious art. Of course, these two stages of development are based upon the speaker's attitude to the hearer. In the first the speaker merely visualizes his hearer,—or better, his correspondent,—but in the second the hearer is present and becomes a determining factor of the monologue.

Thus this valuable transition was not made by one connected with the national literary movement of England, but by one who was free from the current of classical influence, which was so powerful in England at this time.

Other poems in which Burns uses the dramatic monologue form are: *Whistle and I'll come to you, my Lad*; *Turn again, thou Fair Eliza*; *Come let me take Thee to my Breast*; and *Ane Fond Kiss*. Even *To Mary in Heaven* has the characteristic monologue attitude in that the speaker is addressing the departed spirit of his loved one.

37. *Burns's Poems*, London, n. d., p 211.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, before the opening of the Victorian era, we find a few examples of the dramatic monologue. The literature of this period is the outcome of a revolt against the standards of the immediately preceding age.³⁸ The new writers were freeing themselves from the classical influences and were finding a new field for their thoughts and imaginations. The productions are marked by a love of nature and a spirit of democracy.

Although this was the period that witnessed the beginnings of a new age, which was characterized by a new sympathy for nature and man and also by a new feeling of democracy, yet the time was not ripe for the highest development of these characteristics. The poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge not only embodied these qualities, but directed them to a considerable extent. Granting that these poets were in thorough sympathy with the spirit of the age that greatly influenced or rather accelerated the development of the monologue, still this is far from saying that they themselves contributed to the monologue's development. Their method was opposed to that of the monologue, for they not only expressed their own emotions, but expressed them *as* their own. They gave forth their thoughts and emotions directly and simply. They lacked the elasticity of style that was required to assume the personality of another individual and express his characteristic feelings in his characteristic way. Consequently, although the time was becoming ripe, yet the poet had not appeared who was fitted for the work of perfecting the monologue.

Yet in this period of preparation for the final development of the dramatic monologue, there was one poet who employed this form. The movement and freedom of his verse and the vigor of his expression enabled Byron to use the dramatic monologue effectively.

38. See Gosse, *Modern English Literature*, p. 334.

The forcefulness of *Jephtha's Daughter*³⁹ is certainly due to the monologue form. In this poem Byron employs the three constituent parts of the monologue. The occasion is a very dramatic one. The scene opens with the daughter upon the sacrificial altar. It is at the moment when the strong warrior hesitates before fulfilling his vow by sacrificing his daughter. She speaks words of consolation:

Since our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by the vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

Her character is nobly expressed in these words while she attempts to console her father. Instead of lamenting her fate, she assuages his grief by saying,—

I have won the great battle for thee.

The climax of her character revelation is reached in her closing words:

Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died.

Another poem in which Byron uses all the essential elements of the dramatic monologue is the *Maid of Athens*.⁴⁰ The occasion is the parting of the lovers.

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh give me back my heart!

The first verses of the last stanza indicate directly that the hearer is considered present:

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.

Other poems which illustrate Byron's different uses of the dramatic monologue are *When We Two Parted*, *Love and*

39. *The Works of Lord Byron*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, III. p. 387.

40. *Ibid.*, III. p. 15.

Gold, and *On Parting*. In most of these poems Byron employs all of the three dramatic elements, but, in addition to this, he makes the poems much more effective by using a dramatic style. In some cases he approaches the true dramatic spirit. But Byron contributes no new element; he merely combines harmoniously and forcibly the essential parts which were often used before his time. Byron's use of this form was not so much a result of a conscious device as it was a satisfaction of an instinctive feeling for a more forcible type of expression.

The foregoing treatment shows that the dramatic monologue before the reign of Victoria was the result of an unconscious art of construction. In this period of unconscious art, it passed through two stages. In the first we found the beginnings of the monologue in the most subjective type of poetry, the lyric. But when the altruistic emotions of the lyric poet became very intense and their objective tendency was satisfied by imagining the object of these emotions to be present, then we found the completion of the first stage of development,—that in which the hearer is merely a visualized person, but spoken to directly. Examples of this stage are found in the Elizabethan love lyrics, as, for instance, Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepheard to his Love*. The second stage⁴¹ of the unconscious period is that in which the object is not merely visualized, but is actually present, and becomes a determining factor in the monologue. An example of this stage of development is Byron's *Jephtha's Daughter*.⁴² In addition to these two stages, there was a minor contribution which received little attention before Browning. This was the dramatic occasion, as illustrated in *Jephtha's Daughter*. Thus the three elements of the dramatic monologue were developed independently and somewhat sporadically during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. In the eigh-

41. See p. 46.

42. See p. 57.

teenth century they were combined into single productions which constituted the final form of the monologue. This form, although crude and undeveloped, was the basis of its development during the Victorian age.

V

THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE IN THE VICTORIAN AGE.

It was in the Victorian age that the dramatic monologue received the development which entitles it to the rank of a new type of poetry. This development was not, however, entirely due to the work of the poets who employed it, but, like all natural forms of literature, it was fundamentally influenced by the age in which it was written. Since the literature of this age was the expression of the life of the people, some attention must be given to forces which were of consequence in the development of the monologue, the characteristic form of this age.

Of the various characteristics of the Victorian age, there are four essential ones⁴² which rendered the period especially congenial to the perfection of the dramatic monologue: (1) the central and "dominant influence of sociology", (2) "the preponderance of the subjective over the objective" in poetry, (3) restless rapidity and diversity of life, (4) the passion for democracy. All these characteristics were combined to make the Victorian age the most suited period for the final development of the monologue.

The interest in sociology gave a new impetus to the study of character portrayal and character development. This was reinforced by the subjective element in poetry. Subjective is used here in the sense that it pertains to the spiritual or psychical life, and does not have the meaning of being self-reflective and self-meditative. That writers' minds were occupied with attempts to discover and portray the sources and motives of human conduct is attested by the psychological novels of this

42. See Frederic Harrison's discussion of "The Characteristics of Victorian Literature", *Early Victorian Literature*, ch. I.

age. Moreover, the intense activity of the age demanded the most direct and effective method of portraying character. In connection with this, Mr. Arnold Smith says,⁴³ "One of the results of the complexity of life in the nineteenth century was a self-consciousness which, leading to minute introspection, produced a passion for mental analysis: the character of the individual became a subject of enthralling interest." As was pointed out above,⁴⁴ the dramatic monologue was especially adapted to the fourth characteristic,—the passion for democracy, since it is the most democratic form of poetry.

Consequently, to supply these demands, the dramatic monologue arose, with its ability to throw a flash-light upon the most intricate springs and motives of action and give a complete portrayal of a character without recourse to external means. From the characteristics which rendered this age especially congenial to the development of the monologue, we may pass to the consideration of the individual poets who directed this development.

As Stopford Brooke⁴⁵ remarks, there were two poets in the Victorian age who towered above all others. These two poets, Tennyson and Browning, were the writers of this age who employed the dramatic monologue extensively and made the final contribution to it. Of these two, Tennyson was the first to make use of the dramatic monologue. To anticipate conclusions, in many of his monologues Tennyson makes a distinct advance, especially in dramatic spirit, over the poets who preceded him. But, as is shown in the following treatment, he did not realize its full powers, and consequently he did not raise it to perfection. He was, however, the connecting link between what I have termed the unconscious and conscious art of constructing the dramatic monologue.

43. *The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry*, p. 3.

44. Page 37.

45. *The Poetry of Robert Browning*, p. 1.

The following poems of Tennyson are selected as illustrations of his different uses of the monologue and for the purpose of showing that even in his best monologues he failed to utilize the high possibilities of this form. One of his earliest monologues is *The Miller's Daughter*. The old man, in a calm and retrospective mood, reviews, in the presence of his aged wife who is the miller's daughter, his life's experiences. The characters are clear and distinct. They are of the type of devoted husband and wife whose fortunes have always been happy and prosperous. No great struggles or griefs have marred their calm and even flow of life. Such a condition of life is presented in this poem.

The elements of this dramatic monologue are the speaker and the hearer just described. But when these are named the dramatic qualities are practically exhausted. The spirit of the poem is in no sense dramatic. It is essentially that of a reflective lyric. In its beauty, simplicity, and rhythmic movement, it is far superior to any preceding dramatic monologue. The characters are much more clearly conceived and elaborately portrayed than any so far discussed. But the poem is lacking in one of the most important elements, the dramatic occasion. The review of life is not expressed at some critical moment, as in Browning's *Fra Lippo Lippi*, but it is merely an evening reflection. It lacks the dramatic intensity which can only be produced by a single dramatic occasion.

In his *Northern Cobbler*, Tennyson makes an advance over *The Miller's Daughter* in directness and intensity. The poem is not a review of a whole life, but an explanation of a single event. As the curtain rises, a naive cobbler is seen with his brother-in-law, who has just returned from a voyage. The cobbler is so interested in what he has to say that he requests him to "Waait till our Sally comes in, fur thou muna' sights to tell". We learn, through the repetition of his words by the cobbler, that the sailor is "sa' 'ot", and that he wants "summat to drink". The cobbler replies, "I 'a nowt but Adam's

wine". The sailor seeing a bottle on the mantle asks, "What's i' the bottle stanning theer?." The cobbler answers, "Gin," and proceeds to tell him why it is there. In his simple, unaffected style he tells how he had been a drunkard and had fallen into the depths of poverty and disgrace until he was brought to his senses by his cruel treatment of his wife. He is now reformed, and as to his bottle, "theer 'e stands an' theer 'e shall stan to my dying daay."

Little is learned of the character of the sailor or hearer, but the individuality of the cobbler is skilfully portrayed. He is more than merely a reformed drunkard; he possesses individual traits, for he alone would say of his bottle, "I'll have 'im a-buried wi'mma an' take 'im afoor the Throan." The dramatic force of this monologue is greater than that of *The Northern Farmer*, for here the interest is centered upon character portrayal and not upon a narration of incidents. By no other method could the character of the cobbler be more vividly and forcibly depicted than by the use of the dramatic monologue.

A poem of much greater dramatic intensity still is *Rizpah*. Here Tennyson has concentrated his attention upon one individual and one state of mind. The monologue opens with the wailing of an aged mother for her only son, who had been hanged for robbing the mail. In the midst of her unspeakable woe and grief, she hears "Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me!'" But she cannot while "the full moon stares at the snow", but must wait for the dark stormy nights when she can creep, unseen to the place where his bones were hanging and where, one by one as they fell, they were gathered up by the loving mother and buried in the churchyard.

This poem has all the essential parts of the dramatic monologue. The hearer is a missionary woman who has come to pray and read the Bible to this suffering mother. With all her good intentions, she does not have the least understand-

ing of the situation. We learn of the character of this missionary through the words of the speaker.

The speaker, of course, is the mother. The narration of her son's death and the passionate expression of her grief reveals her character with a clearness and effectiveness which has caused her to be designated as the supreme type of suffering motherhood.

The dramatic occasion, though not at its greatest intensity, is one of the most effective of all of Tennyson's dramatic monologues. The main character is caught up at a point of greatest grief, and at this climax she pours forth her soul in her afflictions. Her character stands out in a strong contrast to that of the missionary.

Thus the three elements of the dramatic monologue are used in this poem. Two of them are very effective,—the speaker and the occasion. But the hearer, however, is merely a foil to the speaker.

A poem in which Tennyson gives a more proportional emphasis to the three constituent parts is *Clara Vere de Vere*. The speaker in this monologue is a young but intelligent countryman. He is indignantly rebuking Clara Vere de Vere, a proud coquette from the city, for having charmed and deceived his country friend. This deceit had resulted in the man's committing suicide. Accusing her of his friend's death, the young countryman says,

But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Then he speaks of the influence upon the young man's mother:

Indeed, I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear:
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the cast of Vere de Vere.

The characters of both speaker and hearer are equally portrayed. The interest of the poem is centered in character. The change of the attitude of the hearer is indicated by the

speaker's breaking away from the conventional method of repeating the formal name of his hearer and assuming a more intimate style of expression. This in itself denotes a lack of dramatic style. The greatest dramatic effect and the nearest approach to a conversational style would not tolerate this lyrical device.

Perhaps these examples will illustrate clearly enough Tennyson's different methods in his use of the dramatic monologue. He was the first to make an extended use of it. Preceding him the elements were developed somewhat sporadically. His contribution was the bringing of these together into single productions and the developing of these into a harmonious and unified production. Stopford Brooke says,⁴⁶ that he did not invent this type, but wrought his poems "into forms so especially his own, that they stand apart from work of a similar kind in other poets."

Tennyson's characteristic love of the simple, beautiful, and artistic limited his powers to produce dramatic monologues.⁴⁷ His style was not flexible enough to adjust itself to dramatic expression. His one long, six-accented line, continually resolving itself into a rhythmical harmony, was suited to the expression of a gradual rise and fall of lyrical emotions, but not to the rapid turns of thought and feelings demanded in the dramatic monologue. Not only was Tennyson limited in his style, but he was also handicapped by his narrow range of characterization. His characters are not taken from widely different ages and conditions of life, but are types that we meet in everyday life.

One of Tennyson's greatest defects, so far as the dramatic monologue is concerned, was his inability to appreciate the full value of the dramatic occasion. For the dramatic monologue to have the greatest effect, the character must be

46. *Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life*, p. 431.

47. Cf. E. C. Stedman's discussion of Tennyson's limitations, *Victorian Poets*, rev. ed., p. 188 f.

caught up at the supreme moment, and in such a state be permitted to pour forth his soul. In *The Miller's Daughter* there is no dramatic occasion,—only a quiet, peaceful evening when the aged husband and devoted wife review the incidents of their life. This is not an occasion for dramatic effectiveness, though an excellent situation for a lyric. Such occasions are never found in Browning. To have given it the greatest possible intensity, doubtless, Browning would have portrayed the old man as making his last review of life while on his death-bed,—an occasion similar to that of *Any Wife to Any Husband*. This would have given a convincing effectiveness to the last words of the experienced character which could not otherwise be obtained. But, it may be said, this is not Tennyson's purpose; he wanted to express the happy, peaceful experience of the old man who in the evening of life reflects upon his past. Certainly, this is highly characteristic of Tennyson, but this is the reason he did not perfect the dramatic monologue. Even in *Clara Vere de Vere*, in which Tennyson made a marked advance in the selection of a dramatic occasion, the situation would have been more forcible had the mother herself, instead of a friend of the young man, met Clara Vere de Vere and expressed her wrath while face to face with the coquette. Though this latter situation, which Browning would probably have selected, might have been foreign to Tennyson's purpose, yet the absence of it illustrates his inability to realize the vast importance of the dramatic occasion.

Besides having a significant occasion, *Clara Vere de Vere* is exceptional in another respect. In it a great part of the interest is directed to the hearer. Contrary to this, in the greater number of Tennyson's dramatic monologues, as in *Rizpah*, *The Flight*, *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, the hearer is of minor importance, being merely a foil or an occasion for the words of the speaker. Consequently, in Tennyson's typical monologues, there is not that close and intimate relation of characters, the subtle influence of the presence of

one mind upon another, that is most conducive to character portrayal.

Although Tennyson's style was essentially lyrical and although he was limited in his power of characterization and his selection of dramatic occasion, yet many of his dramatic monologues are far superior to any of his predecessors. He formed the connecting link between the unconscious and conscious art of construction. Doubtless he was conscious of his form and especially of his style, yet he was not conscious of the possibilities of this special form. He was too much of a lyric poet to make the contribution to the dramatic monologue which was to constitute its final development. We may pass from him to the poet who performed this work.

In passing from Tennyson to Browning, although they were contemporaries, we come for the first time to the second stage of the development of the dramatic monologue,—the period of conscious art. The poet no longer selects his material merely according to an artistic instinct, but he analyses the complete production and determines the relative value of each element. The rank of each of these is fixed according to the effect it gives to the whole. Form is no longer secondary, but vital. It is the polishing of the gem that reveals the beauty of the stone to the best advantage. The dramatic monologue is now an artistic production in whose construction there must be no extraneous elements. It has become an organism subject to definite laws of structure. The poet is now conscious of material, conscious of form, and conscious of their relations. To this plane of conscious art Browning raised the dramatic monologue.

So far in this treatment of the development of the dramatic monologue, not only has the germ of the origin of the monologue been found in the lyric, but all of the elements up to this time have been derived either directly or indirectly from the lyric. At first the speaker in the monologue was the lyric poet expressing his own personal emotions. Later on there were cases in which the poet found he could make his

ideas and feelings more forcible by presenting them not as his own, but as those of another individual in whose mouth they would be more natural and characteristic. The element of hearer was also derived from the lyric. This constituent part was the result of the objective tendency of the altruistic emotions to visualize their object. The third constituent part, the dramatic occasion, was very little used by the poets so far considered. It was here that Browning made his greatest contribution to the dramatic monologue. Coming to the study of this poet, we meet an influence from another source. The dramatic occasion was not derived from the lyric, as were the speaker and hearer, but was taken directly from the drama. Browning did not change the form of the monologue, but he replaced its lyrical emotions with a dramatic spirit which was infused into the old form of dramatic monologue.

The genius of Browning was remarkably suited to this work, for he was essentially a dramatic poet. In explaining this Mr. Arnold Smith remarks,⁴⁸ "For however poor his dramas, his dramatic monologues and lyrics as he called them, are beyond comparison; and, indeed, the vast body of his work is permeated with the dramatic principle and wrought in the dramatic spirit." It was here that Browning and his age were in perfect harmony, for the Victorian period demanded the portrayal of the hidden sources of action, and it was for this that Browning had a passion.

The period of conscious art of constructing a type of literature is marked by attempts to discover an underlying principle which can be made the basis of the structure of each individual composition. When the short story reached this stage its constitution was expressed by Poe in his review of Hawthorne.⁴⁹ Parallel to this, and practically at the same time, Browning formulated the central principle of the dramatic monologue in his "Advertisement" to *Paracelsus* (1835). As he expressed it, his purpose was "to reverse the method usu-

48. *The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry*, p. 8.

49. See p. 43.

ally adopted by writers whose aim it is to set forth any phenomena of the mind or passion, by the operation of persons and events instead of having recourse to an external machinery of incidents to create and evolve the crisis I desire to produce, I have ventured to display somewhat minutely the mood itself in its rise and progress, and having suffered the agency by which it is influenced and determined, to be generally discernable in its effects alone, and subordinate throughout, if not excluded."

Browning's central object, then, is the revelation of the activities and conceptions of the soul of a character. Instead of doing this by a series of incidents, in which the individual is brought into contact with other characters, leading up to a catastrophe, he catches up his character at a pinnacle moment of his life and reveals his very nature by letting him express his own thoughts and emotions to another. In the drama we form a conception of a character inductively, putting together different characteristics displayed under different circumstances; but in Browning's dramatic monologues, character is revealed by turning a flash-light upon a soul in a great crisis, illuminating the subtle meshes of thought and emotion which are too elusive to be couched in action. As Mr. Symons expresses it,⁵⁰ "He selects a character, no matter how uninteresting in itself, and places it in some situation where its vital essence may become apparent—in some crisis or conflict." Mr. Arnold Smith, in comparing Browning's method with the impressionistic movement in painting, says,⁵¹ "A scene is flashed upon us in glaring colors; we receive a vivid impression of one or two things only; we come into touch with life at its supreme moments; we receive the shock of a sudden sensation."

Thus it is seen that Browning did for the dramatic monologue what Shakespeare did for the drama. He took its old form and gave it a new spirit. He saw its dormant possibilities and

50. *Introduction to the Study of Browning*, p. 7.

51. *The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry*, p. 7.

brought every available influence to bear upon it which would develop it into a perfect art form and into a distinctive type of poetry adapted to modern needs.

A few of Browning's dramatic monologues may be selected to show his methods of combining the different elements of the monologue into compositions which may be termed subjective dramas. The poems selected illustrate his contributions to the dramatic monologue and show how his dramatic genius raised this form to a distinctive type of poetry.

My Last Duchess, one of Browning's earliest dramatic monologues (1842), is illustrative of his method of having the speaker reveal his character in his own words. The Duke is a wealthy gentleman with a "nine-hundred-year-old-name" who thinks only in terms of merchandise. He is now a widower and is preparing to marry the daughter of a Count. He takes the Count's deputy into his picture gallery to excite the Count's envy, and shows the deputy the picture of his last Duchess. In surprise and admiration, the companion turns as if to ask,—

How such a glance came there.

The carefully devised answer is,—

Sir, 'twas not

Her husband's presence only, called the spot
Of joy into the duchess' cheek.

She was too courteous and obliging to confine every kindness to his selfish sphere.

She had

A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad.
Too easily impressed.

He should receive all the profits on his investements. She smiled at him, but at others also.

This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together.

Into these few words Browning has compressed a life's tragedy. While passing down the stairs, the Duke calls attention to

the statue of Neptune taming a sea-horse,—a symbolism of the absolute submission which he demands. By this indirect method the speaker indicates that if he accepts the Count's daughter she will become his personal property, subject to his will, and must not share his dividends of smiles and thanks with others.

In this drama of the subjective, the curtain rises without any introduction, and we discover the Duke and the deputy. We are even held in suspense as to who the hearer is until the very last. The Duke's character becomes the center of interest at once. The workings of his soul, as of a watch whose faces are crystals, become perfectly clear. The main spring of his actions is selfish interest. A human soul to him is so much merchandise under the absolute control of the owner.

It is clearly seen that in this poem the lyric spirit of the earlier monologues is superseded by the dramatic. The words of the Duke have the directness of dramatic phrasing. They proceed from his real character and are in perfect accord with his attitude and disposition. As far as the dramatic monologue is concerned, this monologue makes a marked advance over the preceding dramatic monologues.

Moreover, the dramatic occasion is of considerable importance. This dealer in human souls has just disposed of his last Duchess and is selecting another to succeed her. The Count's deputy has just come to arrange for a suitable dowery. The occasion was one in which the Duke could be and was perfectly frank in the expression of his commercial spirit in selecting his future Duchess.

The hearer in this monologue is merely an occasion for the words of the speaker. On the other hand, the character of the Duke is the principal interest of the poem. Other poems in which character interest is centered in the speaker are *A Woman's Last Word*, *The Partiot*, and *Fra Lippo Lippi*.

Leaving *My Last Duchess* and considering *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St. Praxed's Church*, we find that the latter differs from the former in that the audience consists of

several persons instead of one. The licentious art-for-art's-sake Bishop of the Renaissance lies dying, and instead of preparing for death he is giving instructions to his natural sons about his tomb, which he desires them to erect. He has been deprived by old Gandolf of his favorite niche in the church, but hopes to make up for his loss by having a more artistic monument and a better classical inscription. He promises his sons to pray for horses and "brown Greek manuscripts" for them if they will pledge themselves to make his tomb of jasper.

John Ruskin said of this poem,⁵² "I know no other piece of modern English prose or poetry in which there is so much told as in these lines of the Renaissance spirit—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all I have said in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's also being the antecedent work." Such compression, effectiveness, and character interest give it a strong dramatic cast.

As in *My Last Duchess*, the main interest of this poem is in character. But in contrast to it, the occasion is very different. The Bishop is on his death bed. It is an occasion in which the vital essence of the individual reveals itself. His highest ambitions and his greatest hopes receive their final expression. Browning realized the dramatic importance of such an occasion and employed it in *The Patriot*, *Any Wife to Any Husband*, and *Pompilia*. Not only is this poem illustrative of Browning's genius in selecting the most important occasion, but it is also an example of a dramatic monologue in which the audience is composed of more than one person.

In attempting to show how Browning reflected the spirit of his age, Mr. Arnold Smith writes,⁵³ "Another feature of the intellectual movement of the Victorian period was the critical

52. In *Modern Painters*, IV. p. 277-79.

53. *The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry*, p. 5.

spirit which, as applied to history, strove to re-establish the atmosphere of the past and realize imaginatively the conditions of a more remote period. The spirit is notably present in Browning's poetry." Not only may this spirit be seen in *Andrea del Sarto*, but it is an example in which both speaker and hearer are portrayed equally well.

Although Browning doubtless meant the character of the speaker, *Andrea del Sarto*, to be the main interest of the poem, yet he has very clearly portrayed the character of *Lucrezia*, the hearer. From a few historical facts concerning the personages of *Andrea del Sarto* and his wife, Browning has constructed his greatest art poem. Speaking of the rank of this poem, Mr. Berdoe says,⁵⁴ "As *Abt Vogler* is his (Browning's) greatest music-poem, so this is his greatest art-poem."

The dramatic occasion of this poem is of unusual significance. The artist is seated in his studio at twilight, weary from his day's toil. His wife has entered and their quarrel has just ended when the curtain rises. The artist has been striving to his utmost capacity to put into execution his ideals. His prolonged concentration and pains-taking efforts have exhausted his strength. He now wished to relax himself and be strengthened by the encouragement and kind words of his loved one. It is at this period of his work that he assumes the most intimate relations, and it is the most suited occasion for complete self-revelation.

The opening line,⁵⁵—

But do not let us quarrel any more,—

strikes the keynote of the poem. The speaker is a "faultless painter" in the execution of his art, but he is immoral in character. He had loved *Lucrezia* while she was another man's wife and is now content that she should love other men. He demanded from this woman, who had neither heart nor

54. *The Browning Cyclopaedia*, p. 17.

55. *Cam. ed.* p. 346.

intellect, only a portion of her affections. He was a genius who could have coped with Rafael had he not dwarfed himself by a parasitic dependence upon a soulless woman. He could execute with ease models which the greatest artists could scarcely equal after years of toil.

The artist, sitting with wife on the window-seat, experiences one of the pinnacle moments of his life. He expresses himself thus to the woman:

I often am much wearier than you think,
 This evening more than usual, and it seems
 As if—forgive me now—should you let me sit
 Here by the window with your hand in mine
 And look a half-hour forth on Fesiole,
 Both of one mind, as married people use,
 Quietly, quietly the evening through,
 I might get up to-morrow to my work
 Cheerful and fresh as ever.

When she smiles he sees the very picture he has been trying to express in colors.

You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,
 There's what we painters call harmony!
 A common grayness silvers everything.

Browning's purpose in this poem was to explain why *Andrea del Sarto* was "faultless but soulless", as he was pronounced by his critics. This is done, not by developing different characteristics drawn out by different persons and situations, but by letting us see him at a dramatic moment—at a moment when his weakness reveals itself most vividly. *Andrea's* love for the immoral woman is not the explanation of his being soulless, but is only an occasion of its manifestation. He makes his fatal defect clear by saying that his achievements have reached his ideals.

I can do with my pencil what I know,
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—

Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps.

No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
—Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing.

Speaking of his companion painters whom he so easily surpasses, he says,—

There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed, forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop downward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me.

Then summing up his whole defect, he says,—

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?

In portraying the character of Andrea del Sarto, Browning has also depicted the character Lucrezia, the hearer, who is the occasion of Andrea's weakness. The supreme expression of her indifference and lack of appreciation of her husband's genius is her characteristic interruption, "What he?", when Andrea speaks of the highest eulogy ever given him,—the pride of his life, Michel Angelo's praise of him. This one touch reveals her whole character.

For dramatic intensity, character interest, and a significant explanation of a life's failure, the poem is unsurpassed. All the elements of the dramatic monologue are harmoniously and most effectively combined. *Andrea del Sarto* is one of Browning's best dramatic monologues, and it was in this poem that the monologue's development received its perfection.

Not only did Browning use the dramatic monologue in his minor poems, but he also employed it in what is often considered his masterpiece, *The Ring and the Book*. This poem,

twice as long as *Paradise Lost*, is composed of the same story told ten different times by as many different persons. Consequently, interest in plot cannot possibly be sustained. Our interest passes from the external to the internal. Plot development is sacrificed for subjective interest. This book is a social organism made up of various personalities, each looking at the same thing from a different standpoint. Here Browning called the dramatic monologue to his aid, since it was the most appropriate form of poetry for the presentation of personal views.

Of the twelve books, ten are pure dramatic monologues. Each of these monologues possesses the three constituent parts,—speaker, audience, and occasion. By using this form he gives the fullest play to individuality. Each speaker's personality colors the common truth and gives it an altogether different appearance. At the first glance it might seem that such separate and distinct poems would deprive the book of unity. But there is a broader and more fundamental unity than form which underlies it and unites it into an organic whole. *The Ring and the Book* is a masterpiece of poetry which moulds the most diverse and individual views into an artistic and unified whole by employing the dramatic monologue. A democratic interpretation is the keynote of this book, and without the most democratic form of poetry, the dramatic monologue, the great success of the masterpiece would never have been possible. Hitherto the dramatic monologue had been confined to short poems, but Browning now proved its adaptability to poems of great length.

Browning's contributions to the dramatic monologue were fourfold. The first was the infusion of the dramatic spirit into the old monologue form. This, as all his other contributions, was principally due to his conception of a "new drama". As Poe formulated the laws of the short story according to one central and dominating idea,—a "preconceived effect",—so Browning derived his laws of the dramatic monologue from one central

principle,—that was, “to create and evolve the crisis” without “recourse to any external machinery of incidents”. He transferred dramatic intensity from the drama to the dramatic monologue. This was, perhaps, his greatest contribution to the monologue, and from it were derived the other laws which he gave this new form of poetry.

As a natural result of his purpose to reveal vividly the intricate meshes of the thoughts and emotions of character, he placed his individual in the most revealing dramatic situation. He selects moments of such great intensity that the character will call to his aid all of his resources; and the essence of his soul is brought to light. Such is the occasion in Book VII of the *The Ring and the Book*. Pompilia is on her death bed telling to the nuns the tragic story of her life. She realizes that she is giving the final expression to the truths which she wishes to survive her. Without this occasion which demands unreserved revelation of character, no one would have thought that this girl of “just seventeen years and five months” was such a pure and noble woman, one who had passed through the greatest trials of life. On account of its natural dramatic significance, Browning often selected a death bed scene. Such is the dramatic occasion of *The Patriot*, *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St. Praxed's Church*, and *Any Wife to Any Husband*.

But Browning did not confine his occasions to death bed scenes. His dramatic situations are practically as varied as they are in real life. He was very fond of ecstatic moments. This is illustrated by *Abt Vogler* and *The Last Ride Together*. In *Saul* he traces minutely the psychological state of Saul's soul as it was restored by David's music from a state of melancholia to its normal condition. Moreover, in *Fra Lippo Lippi* he gives a life's history of a monk. Thus his dramatic occasions are widely varied and are of unusual significance. In this respect he was far superior to Tennyson and all the writers of the monologue who preceded him.

Browning's second contribution, then, was the dramatic occasion.

His third contribution was his style. By no means is this saying that the styles of preceding poets were inferior in other respects, but that in the case of the dramatic monologue Browning's style, was much better adapted to this form than the styles of his predecessors. Tennyson's unvarying, six-accented line was admirably suited to lyrical expression, but was not flexible enough to adjust itself to the sudden changes of thoughts and feelings essential to dramatic phrasing. Browning's style, though at times abrupt and lacking in musical qualities, was always direct and forcible. He did not choose words for their melody, but for their fitness for expressing the exact state of the hearer's mind. His style is perfectly suited to the dramatic monologue. His metre varies from the short trochaic line in *A Woman's Last Word*, expressing abrupt outbursts of intense feeling, to the anapestic pentameters of *Saul*, expressing freedom and joy with slight reserve. Often in the same poem, as in *Herve Riel*, he changes the metre to suit the shifting of subjective states. Thus Browning's style was thoroughly adjusted to the direct and forcible expression of the dramatic monologue.

A fourth contribution made by Browning to the dramatic monologue was also dramatic. It was characterization. As in the cases of his other contributions, Browning did not originate the element of characterization, but accepted it as he found it and then began to appropriate it to his own use. In practically all of the dramatic monologues before Browning, character portrayal was of minor importance. Browning made it paramount. So great was his influence in this contribution that the idea of characterization is always associated with the dramatic monologue. The greater distinctness and life-likeness of Browning's characters when compared with those of his predecessors is due, for the most part, to the influence of the crisis in which he places them. In no other situations than those selected by Browning could his

characters have been more vividly portrayed. Such characters as the Duke in *My Last Duchess* and Rabbi Ben Ezra are so real that we often speak of them as we do of Hamlet. Moreover, Brownings's method was that of the flash-light, in contrast to the slow inductive method of the drama. As in *Andrea del Sarto*, we are allowed to see the workings of the character's mind directly.

Not only are Browning's characters life-like, but they are selected from a wider range than are those of Tennyson. Browning's array of characters includes individuals from all classes and from all ages. When he wishes to present a view or an ideal of an age, he selects the most typical person for expression. This he very forcibly does in *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St. Fraxed's Church*. Browning's creations range from the brute nature of the sprawling, non-self-conscious Caliban in the "cool slush" to one of the noblest and purest characters in literature,—that of Pompilia. This ability to portray all types of characters gave a spontaneity and variety to his dramatic monologues that kept them from becoming monotonous. Instead of presenting truths abstractly he gave them artistic and vivid force by making the proper individuals their spokesmen.

These contributions of Browning to the dramatic monologue enabled this form to reach the climax of its development, as the drama did in the hands of Shakespeare. Browning was the Shakespeare of the dramatic monologue. He saw within it its potential powers and with his dramatic genius he developed it into a type of poetry peculiarly adapted to modern times. He raised it to the stage of conscious literary art and gave it its laws of construction.

VI

THE DECLINE OF THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE IN THE PRESENT AGE

Although the dramatic monologue attained its highest point of perfection in the hands of Browning, yet it was by no means discarded afterwards; but, on the contrary, it has been used more extensively in the present age than ever before. This period following Browning may be appropriately called the decline of the dramatic monologue. But this decline is not an indication that the monologue is of less importance than it formerly was, as the decline of the drama after Shakespeare was not an evidence of its lessened importance. Nor was this decline caused by less interest being taken in the form, but was brought about because there was no poet to hold it up to the former plane of excellence. A few of the monologues of this period, however, may be considered to show the importance of this form in our present age.

While Browning, in England, was coming into full possession of all his powers in the production of the dramatic monologue, Bret Harte, in America, was beginning to employ the same form. Although Bret Harte's greatest work as spokesman of the "forty-niners" was in the field of fiction, yet he found the dramatic monologue especially adapted to his needs. All of his monologues are written in dialect, and these constitute some of his best poems. Reference may be made to some of these poems, which are typical of his use of the dramatic monologue.

In *Dow's Flat*, Bret Harte gives expression to an experience common to hundreds who went to California to seek gold. The speaker in this poem is an experienced Westerner who is thoroughly acquainted with his locality. He is talking to a stranger, explaining how the place in which they were receiv-

ed the name of Dow's Flat. He says that it was named after a gold-seeker who had come there several years before when the place was noted for its gold. Instead of "striking a streak of good luck" as he expected, he soon fell into poverty. He was assisted a while by his companions, but the work became unprofitable in a short time and he and his family were left there alone. His wife soon died, and he and his children were at the point of starvation. He decided, however, to make one more trial. Accidentally he struck gold. His fortune was won. Immediately the place became again the centre of activity. Then the speaker who was telling the experience says like a flash, "That's me." Thus he identifies himself with the person after whom the place was named.

Aside from its characterization, this dramatic monologue is interesting on account of its forcefulness. In no more effective way, perhaps, could the uncertainty of fortune be presented. It is the personal experience of a man who was at the point of starvation one moment and who became a man of wealth the next.

Another poem in which Bret Harte uses the dramatic monologue form very effectively is *Jim*. This monologue is a masterpiece of its kind. The dialect is that of a rough Westerner. Hunting for his chum whom he had known years ago, he approaches a crowd of men who are drinking and asks them if they know his friend.

Say there! P'r'aps
 Some on you chaps
 Might know Jim Wild?
 Well,—no offence:
 Thar ain't no sense
 In gittin' riled!⁵⁶

When he inquires of the barkeeper, in whom he sees some resemblance to his friend, he is told that Jim is dead. But the

56. Quoted from Warner's *Library of the World's Best Literature*, XII, p. 6988.

barkeeper's insinuation that Jim was not in his class is immediately resented by the inquirer. A wrangle between the two follows, and, after it is over, the barkeeper says that he himself is "Jim". His old companion immediately recognizes him and explains,—

Derned old
Long-legged Jim!

Both characters are clearly drawn and are distinct types of "forty-niners".

Jim and *In the Tunnel* are Bret Harte's greatest dramatic monologues. The dialect of these poems possesses a directness and force in depicting the Western characters which could never be equaled by the use of the lyrical style and method.

As interesting as these poems are, they illustrate the decline of the dramatic monologue. They do not possess the dramatic spirit, flexible style, and poetic qualities of Browning. Yet their directness is superior to that of Tennyson in most of his monologues. They are worthy of attention on account of their intrinsic value, as well as on account of being one of the means of bringing a new section of country into literature.

Another American poet who uses the dramatic monologue, in a more or less modified form, is James Whitcomb Riley. He is the poet laureate of the plain, unlearned class of Western farmers. His sympathy may be seen in his own words:—

The tanned face, garlanded with mirth,
It has the kingliest smile on earth;
The swart brow, diamonded with sweat,
Hath never need of coronet.

Many of Riley's poems, as *Griggsby's Station* and *Knee-Deep in June*, have only one constituent part of the dramatic monologue, that is, the speaker. Although they are the supreme expression of the rustic's attitude toward life and although the characters of the speakers are reinforced by the

use of their native dialect, yet they are not true dramatic monologues and, consequently, deserve little attention.

Nothing to Say, however, contains all the constituent parts of the dramatic monologue. An old farmer is speaking to his daughter just before her marriage. He is opposed to it at first, but after reflecting that his wife married him against her parent's will, he says,⁵⁷

Nothing to say, my daughter! Nothing at all to say!
Girls that's in love, I've noticed, giner'ly has their way!
Yer mother did, afore you, when her folks objected to me—
Yit here I am and here you air! and yer mother—where is
she?

The close relation of hearer and speaker in this monologue is indicated by the answer to the father's question.

And now yer—how old air you? W'y child, not "twenty"!
When?

All of the elements of the dramatic monologue,—speaker, hearer, and occasion, are significant in this poem. These elements are also used in *Tradin' Joe*, *A Life's Lesson*, and many other poems written by Riley.

All of these dialect monologues are similar to Bret Harte's in construction, but are superior to them in pathos and sympathy. The poems that have been selected from both, however, may be considered as typical of the present use of the dramatic monologue in America.

Turning our attention to England again and for the last time, we find that the monologue is still extensively used. Rudyard Kipling employs a form which is a near approach to the dramatic monologue and is sometimes confused with it. This form, however, is the *monologue* in the strict sense of the word, and is not the *dramatic* monologue. The poems written in this form have only one element of the dramatic monologue,—the hearer. These monologues presuppose an audience, but the hearers are in no case distinct. We learn nothing of them through the words of the speakers. How-

57. *The Works of James Whitcomb Riley*, VII. p. 6.

ever, these monologues are well suited to Kipling's purpose. He simply gives voice to persons and inanimate objects and lets them speak for themselves, revealing their experiences and characteristics.

The Song of the Banjo is one of Kipling's poems in which he gives speech to inanimate objects. The banjo speaks from its own standpoint and gives a new revelation of its significance. It is "the war-drum of the White Man round the world!" *The Bell Buoy* is another monologue of this class. The buoy contrasts its mission of saving lives on the stormy sea, surrounded with "smoking scud", to that of its brother, sheltered in the church belfry. The poems make no contribution to the monologue, but employ a method far more effective than that of having the poet speak for the objects.

All of Kipling's ballads are written as dialect monologues. *Tommy*, one of the most noted of these, expresses from the soldier's standpoint the English disrespect for the private soldier when he appears as a citizen and their praise of him while he is protecting them. Other monologues of a similar nature are *Mulholland's Contract* and *M'Andrew's Hymn*.

In a few poems, as in *The Mary Gloster*, Kipling uses the regular dramatic monologue form. The speaker is an unlearned man who has risen from the class of laborers to a man of wealth. The hearer is his son who is careless of his father's advice. The occasion is the death bed scene of the old man. All of these elements may be seen from the first few verses.⁵⁸

I've paid for your sickest fancies; I've humored your
crackedest whim—
Dick it's your daddy, dying; you've got to listen to him!
Good for a fortnight, am I? The doctor told you? He
lied.
I shall go by morning, and—Put that nurse outside.
'Never seen death yet, Dickie? Well, now is your time
to learn.

58. *Collected Verse of Rudyard Kipling*, p. 45.

And you'll wish you held my record before it comes to your turn.

Here both father and son are clearly drawn and the dramatic tone of the poem is determined at once. But since this poem is an exceptional one, Kipling can not be classed as a writer of regular dramatic monologues. However, he uses a form similar to the dramatic monologue which is well suited to his purpose.

One other example of the English dramatic monologue deserves brief attention. It is Mr. Alfred Noyes's *The Lovers' Flight*.⁵⁹ Although the tone of this poem is lyrical, yet the form is that of the dramatic monologue. The speaker is the lover, while the hearer is the loved one. The first stanza may be sufficient to illustrate these elements of the monologue.

Come, the dusk is lit with flowers!
Quietly take this guiding hand:
Little breath to waste is ours
On the road to lovers' land.
Time is in his dungeon-keep!
Ah! not thither, lest he hear,
Starting from his old gray sleep,
Rosy feet upon the stair.

It is interesting to note that practically all recent dramatic monologues are written in dialect. This use of the individual's own peculiar language is a great help to character portrayal, revealing the character's method of thought and expression. It is absolutely essential for the conveying of a correct conception of a speaker in this form of poetry. But this may partly account for the inferior quality of poetry in the more recent dramatic monologues, for dialect can hardly serve as the vehicle for the highest reaches of poetry.

The preceding examples illustrate the origin, nature, and use of the dramatic monologue and show that this form of expression is the result of a slow and unconscious process of

59. Appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Sept. 1909, p. 434.

development. Its origin and contributions to its development of form up to the time of Browning were derived from the lyric. But in Browning we found a contribution from a different source, the drama. The work of Browning was the final perfection of the monologue, brought about by infusing the dramatic spirit into the old form of lyric origin; the dramatic monologue came to be a hybrid of two types of poetry, the lyric and the drama. The distinctive qualities of this form justify its classification as a new type—*genre*—of poetry.

That it is adapted to modern needs is seen not only from its nature, since it is the most democratic form of poetry, but also from its extensive use. This new type of literature, which has proved so adequate to present needs and which possesses so novel and so penetrating a method of revealing character, may be considered a permanent contribution to forms of poetical expression.

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