

DAFFODILS

About the poet:-

William Wordsworth (1770-1850): Wordsworth was an English Romantic poet. He and S.T. Coleridge together published “Lyrical Ballads” in 1798 and helped launch the Romantic Age in English Literature. “The Prelude” is considered to be his magnum opus. It is a semi-autobiographical poem of his early years. Wordsworth was Britain’s poet laureate from 1843 until his death.

Basic theme of the poem: - The poem “Daffodils” is about how a field full of the daffodil flowers takes away the poet’s breath leaving him awestruck. It was published in 1807 , inspired by an event in which he and his sister came across a field of daffodils. It depicts the beauty of Nature and how it affects the poet’s loneliness leading to his happiness.

The text:-

Daffodils

-William Wordsworth

I wander’d lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretch’d in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves I glee:
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to be had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie.
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

About the poem :-

The poet encountered a field of daffodils beside a lake when he was wandering in the hills and valleys just like a cloud which wanders in the sky. The dancing and swaying flowers outdid the waves of the water and seemed to be merrier. The poet seems to be immensely happy at the sight of the bright yellow flowers, evident from the term 'golden', used to refer to the appearance of the flowers. In his loneliness or pensive mood he thinks about this memory and it instantly succeeds in making him happy. The flowers are stretched alongside the bay just as stars line up the Milky Way; the poet claims to have watched about ten thousand at one glance—such great is the number.

But, this number is most probably an exaggeration created in the poet's mind by the beauty of the flowers.

The poet could not help but be overjoyed and considers it a 'wealth' because, even in future, whenever he thinks of the magnificence of the sight, he forgets his sorrows and becomes happy anyway. The memory is enough to fill his heart with pleasure and he feels like swaying with the flowers.

The structure of the poem is an easy one. There are four stanzas, each comprising of six lines. The rhyme scheme for each stanza is ABABCC. A number of figures of speech have been used in the poem like simile, personification and hyperbole.

Glossary of words from the poem :-

1. Vales -- valleys
2. Host -- great number
3. Daffodils -- yellow, cup-shaped flowers
4. Fluttering -- quickly moving from side to side
5. Sprightly -- lively
6. Jocund -- cheerful, joyful
7. Vacant -- idle
8. Pensive -- serious, thoughtful
9. Inward eye -- mind that reflects back to past events
10. Solitude -- a state of being all alone

