

A STUDY OF JOHN KEATS : WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS POETIC STYLE

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CHAPTER III

ODES

Keats' first ode is the *Ode to Apollo*, written in 1815, though de Selincourt regarded the 'Ode to Sorrow' in *Endymion* to be the first. The number of his poems which are specified as odes and which are written in the form of ode is thirteen, and they are the *Ode to Apollo*, the *Hymn to Apollo*, the 'Ode to Sorrow,' the *Ode to Maia*, the "Bards of Passion and of Mirth," the *First Ode to Fanny Brawne*, the *Second Ode to Fanny Brawne*, the *Ode to Psyche*, the *Ode to a Nightingale*, the *Ode on Melancholy*, the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, the *Ode on Indolence*, and *To Autumn*. As the 'Ode to Sorrow' is a part of *Endymion*, and as the *Ode to Maia* remains as a fourteen-line poem, namely a sonnet, Keats wrote eleven independent odes in the strict sense. And all of his odes except the first two odes to Apollo were written during that fruitful period from the autumn of 1818 to the next autumn. If it is possible to divide these odes into two kinds, experimental and mature ones, the boundary will be fixed between the *Second Ode to Fanny Brawne* and the *Ode to Psyche*. The number of odes of these two parts is in the ratio of five and six, and if the above two ode-like poems, the 'Ode to Sorrow' and the *Ode to Maia* are included, it is in the ratio of seven and six. This ratio clearly shows that Keats did not suddenly begin to write his great odes in the spring of 1819, but he experimented with this form throughout his poetic life.

The comparison between his experimental odes and great ones seems to

indicate that the difference in their verse forms causes the difference in their poetic style. All of his experimental odes except the *First Ode to Fanny Brawne* and the *Hymn to Apollo* are non-stanzaic, and their rhyme-schemes are irregular, sometimes including couplets. All of his great odes except the *Ode to Psyche* are, on the contrary, stanzaic, and all of them except *To Autumn* are written in ten-line stanzas. Keats' genius in the exclamatory and compressed expressions is generally considered to be found in his great odes, but it is found even in his experimental odes such as the 'Ode to Sorrow.' It would be of importance to trace the process of his effort to discover and create the most suitable verse form for his genius. As Garrod has pointed out, that kind of effort is clearly shown in his use of various rhyme-schemes and stanzas, both in his experimental odes and in his sonnets after *Endymion*.

One of his most successful experimental odes is the 'Ode to Sorrow' in *Endymion*, Bk. IV, in which an Indian maid tells Endymion how she came to see him after she left her home. This roundelay is non-stanzaic on the whole, but it has some kind of formal unity. The first three parts are stanzaic and their rhyme-scheme is aabccb, which is the same as that of the last part of his former poem, the *Ode to Apollo*, and which seems to be a variation of the Venus and Adonis stanza whose rhyme-scheme is ababcc, which is the basis of the *Ode to Apollo*. The next two parts are also stanzaic, and their rhyme-scheme is aabccbddb, which is the variation of that of the first parts. The next eight parts are written in couplets. The rhyme-scheme of the next fourteenth part is aabbccddeedffggg, which is almost a mixture of couplets and a triplet, and which is the variation of those of the preceding eight parts. The final three parts are again stanzaic and their rhyme-scheme is the same as the first parts, namely, aabccb. The use of short-lines at the opening and at the closing, and the use of couplets at the climax of this ode, are very effective, and in devising the rhyme-scheme, he seems to have taken the hint from the couplet. The style of this ode is concrete and compact while the other part of *Endymion* is rather prolix.

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?--

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To give maiden blushes
To the white rose bushes?
Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips? IV. 146-151.

The words and ideas are pure English and traditional, but their simple, urgent, and firm tone is effective.

“O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?--
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of May?
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play. IV. 164-172.

The Ode to Maia is unfinished, and its form seems to be suggested by the sonnet form, because it remains a fourteen-line stanza. Its rhyme-scheme, ababccdedefgfg, recalls the Shakespearean sonnet whose rhyme-scheme is ababcdcd-efefgg. It is noteworthy that Keats came to take more interest in the Shakespearean form than the Petrarchan after *Endymion*, and that this ode was written at that time.

Keats wrote thirty-nine sonnets before *Endymion*, and all of them except one are Petrarchan, as stated in Chapter I. After *Endymion*, however, he wrote seven Petrarchan sonnets, twenty-three Shakespearean sonnets, and one sonnet in blank verse. It is clear that Keats came to prefer the Shakespearean form to the Petrarchan one after *Endymion*. And all of these sonnets except three were written before his great odes. It is also evident that he was dissatisfied with the regular Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets, because he came to try their variations in the course of his writing thirty-one sonnets after *Endymion*. This change began with this *Ode to Maia* which is clearly a variation of the Shakespearean sonnet. Instead of setting the couplet at the closing as Shakespeare did,

Keats set it after the Shakespearean first quatrain, namely ababcc. Because of the position of this couplet and of enjambement in the couplet, this poem is saved from being divided into two parts. Owing to the cross rhyme instead of the pouncing rhymed couplet at the closing, this sonnet-like ode has a calm and free tone. The technique of contrasting small things with big things as “a little clan” (1.8) with “great verse” (1.8) is effectively used to express his magnificent range of vision.

O, give me their vigour, and unheard
 Save of the quiet primrose, and the span
 Of heaven and few ears,
 Rounded by thee, my song should die away
 Content as theirs,
 Rich in the simple worship of a day. 11.9-14.

Keats alluded to the sonnet form twice in his letters. The first allusion to it appears in his letter to the George Keatses on January 2, 1819, after copying the ode “Bards of Passion and of Mirth.”

These are specimens of a sort of rondeau which I think I shall become partial to — because you have one idea amplified with greater ease and more delight and freedom than in the sonnet — It is my intention to wait a few years before I publish any minor poems — and then I hope to have a volume of some worth — and which those people will realish who cannot bear the burthen of a longer poem —¹⁰

Within a few months he actually wrote poems “of some worth,” great odes. It is of interest that the “Bards of Passion and of Mirth” was written in couplets which had also been used in his earlier poem *Hyperion*. Being trochaic tetrameter, it is very rhythmical. The non-stanzaic form is suitable for the flexible mood of this ode. He succeeds in making this ode sublime by using rhymed couplets. Being written on the blank page facing *The Fair Maid of the Inn* in his Beaumont and

¹⁰ *Letters, op. cit.*, II. 26.

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Fletcher, we may judge it to be addressed to these poets. The theme of this ode that in spite of their death, their spirits are still alive in their poems, is skillfully dealt with by repeating the first quatrain at the closing.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new? 11.1-4.

and by using images of nature such as “blue-bells” (1.13), “daisies” (1.14), “rose” (1.15), and “the spheres of sun and moon” (1.6). The “double immortality of Poets” is precisely expressed by the contrasting images of heaven and earth. And he gives exact expression to his sublime and uplifted spirit by means of couplets of trochaic metre.

The next two odes to Fanny Brawne were written around the same period as when he wrote his successful narratives, *The Eve of St. Agnes* and *The Eve of Saint Mark*. Keats could not discover a suitable stanza form of his own for an ode at that time. Although the *First Ode to Fanny Brawne* seems stanzaic, its rhyme-scheme differs in each stanza. The *Second Ode* is a good example of his various attempts to create an original ode form. This ode begins with such a rhyme-scheme as abbacc, which is the reverse of the rhyme-scheme aabccb which he mainly used in the ‘Ode to Sorrow.’ The rest of this ode is written in couplets, and the irregular length of each line seems to add some kind of change to this poem, though not so successfully as to cover its irregularity and his trite feeling.

His second allusion to the sonnet form appears in his letter to the George Keatses on May 3, 1819, which is preceded by the copy of the *Ode to Psyche*.

I have been endeavouring to discover a better sonnet stanza than we have. The legitimate does not suit the language over-well from the pouncing rhymes—the other kind appears too elegiac—and the couplet at the end of it has seldom a pleasing effect —¹¹

This bears witness to his various experiments, both in his sonnets and in his odes,

¹¹ *Letters, op. cit.*, II. 108.

one of which is the *Ode to Psyche*. The above “legitimate” may mean the Petrarchan sonnet and “the other kind,” the Shakespearean. Keats does not seem to have been pleased with the closing couplet of the Shakespearean sonnet, and he wrote only three odes, each of which ends with a couplet : the “Bards of Passion and of Mirth,” the *First Ode to Fanny Brawne*, and the *Second Ode to Fanny Brawne*. All of his other odes including this *Ode to Psyche* are relieved of the closing couplet.

The *Psyche* ode has interesting devices in its rhyme scheme besides a couplet at the closing. The non-stanzaic form is properly used here. Its first part is made up of the three types of rhyme scheme, such as the cross rhyme which seems to be suggested by the Shakespearean sonnet, and the enclosing rhyme which may be suggested by the Petrarchan sonnet, and the couplet, and finally the cross rhyme again. These four groups of rhyme scheme correspond with the development of the poem respectively : the first cross rhyme corresponds with the dedication to Psyche, the second cross rhyme with the process by which the poet came to see Psyche and Cupid, the next enclosing rhyme, with his discovery of Psyche and Cupid, the couplet with their circumstances, and the cross rhyme with his acknowledgement of the two. The second part of this ode is shortened to twelve lines, about half of the first part. In these lines of simple cross rhyme, the poet briefly praises the beauty of Psyche and then grieves over people’s disregard of her, by the effective use of the repetition of the word “no.” As the poet gets excited, the number of lines in the next part of this ode also increases into fourteen, and this part is no longer a mere repetition of the cross rhyme but it includes the enclosing rhyme in the middle of it, still beginning and ending with the cross rhyme. In the first cross rhyme the poet takes pity on her “latest” birth. Then the rhyme scheme changes into the enclosing rhyme, because the story changes from his lament to his confession that he admires Psyche. The rest of this third part of the cross rhyme is applied to his prayer to the goddess to permit him to be her priest. The final part of this poem consists of the same types of rhyme scheme as the first part. The first cross rhyme begins with his declaration that he will be her “priest,” and the rest of this part is a list of what he has determined to do for the goddess. He proclaims that he will “build a fane” (1.50) in his quiet “mind” (1.51) where his thoughts grow like trees. His imagination

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gradually extends with suitable and harmonious imagery in accordance with the changes of rhyme scheme.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
 In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,
 Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind : 11.50–53.

Keats succeeds in using iambic pentameter to make this ode grand. The final quatrain has perfect style.

And there shall be for thee all soft delight
 That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
 To let the warm Love in!

The words “delight” (1.64) and “night” (1.66), “win” (1.65) and “in” (1.67) are rhymed with effect. The final couplet decisively suggests the love between Cupid and Psyche by the image of open “casement” (1.66) at night. Although this ode is apparently unsuccessful because of its non-stanzaic verse form, it is successful after all because he used that form freely and thoroughly with suitable rhyme schemes which are born of the compromise between two traditional sonnet forms and the couplet form.

His most regular ode is the *Ode to a Nightingale*, which has eight stanzas, and whose rhyme scheme is ababcdcedde, which is the basic rhyme scheme of the rest of his great odes. This rhyme scheme is clearly the combination of the first Shakespearean quatrain and of the last Petrarchan sestet, and it has no couplet at all. And it is worthy of note that he still kept resisting the verse form of the heroic couplet. The blank verse, Spenserian stanza, ballad quatrain, and ode, which he successively tried after *Endymion*, are all in opposition to the heroic couplet.

Odes can be classified into three great divisions according to their forms :

Pindaric, Cowleyan, and Horatian odes. The Pindaric ode consists of the repetition of three basic parts, strophe, antistrophe, and epode, and the first two parts have the same form. Keats did not write this regular ode. The Cowleyan ode is called an irregular ode because the length and number of lines of each stanza vary. Keats' six non-stanzaic odes are Cowleyan. The rest of his odes, seven in all, is Horatian odes, in other words, stanzaic odes.

The *Ode to a Nightingale* is one of his Horatian odes, and it is written in ten-line stanza which consists of a quatrain and a sestet. Owing to this division of lines of each stanza at the ratio of four to six, this ode has a sublime and solemn tone, which is in harmony with his passionate and ejaculatory tone which he seems to have learned from Collins, whose successful odes are Horatian.

The first stanza is the prelude to this ode. The poet confesses the ecstatic state of his mind in its first quatrain where such images as "hemlock," "opiate," and "Lethe" as well as the technique of enjambement are used with effect.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk : 11.1-4.

He is successful in rhyming such important words as "pains" and "drains," and "drunk" and "sunk." In the next sestet he explains the reason why he is so ecstatic. The enjambement from the seventh line to the ninth helps the sestet to avoid a split. Being enchanted with the sweet song of a nightingale, in the second stanza, he expresses his wish to escape from this world with the help of "vintage" which is a traditional symbol of "mirth" and imagination in connection with Bacchus and "Hippocrene." The following expression of "a beaker full of" wine is very compact and concrete, and the alliteration of [b] is effective.

O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stained mouth ; 11.15-18.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades : 11.75-78.

The passionate and ejaculatory tone and the concrete and compact style of his great odes seem to be suggested by Collins' odes, for example, the *Ode to Simplicity*.

O thou, by Naquire taught
To breathe her genuine thought
In numbers warmly pure and sweetly strong :
Who first on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe and Pleasure's, nursed the pow'rs of song! 11.1-6.

But the concentrated and rich style of the *Nightingale* ode is Keatsean and the concentration and richness of his style are helped by sensuous imagery.

A suffocative denseness fills up the opening stanza of the *Ode on Melancholy* whose subject matter is his idea that melancholy does not co-exist with ominous things and death but with beauty and pleasure. The subject of this ode develops through three ten-line stanzas. In the first stanza, the poet presents his view that melancholy is not found in death or ominous things, then he explains the grounds for his view. The effective listing of the imagery of the ominous seems to cover his rather poor rhyming in this stanza.

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine ;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine ;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl

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A partner in your sorrow's mysteries ; 11.1-8.

This passage is filled with images which appeal to the senses. In the second stanza, he maintains that melancholy suddenly grips his mind when he is impressed by beautiful girls and nature. This taste is common to that of his early poems which reflects Hunt's influence on him. In the final stanza, he concludes his view of melancholy that she shares her existence with transient beauty, joy, pleasure, and delight. Not only this idea but also its expression is Keatsian, though the technique of personification may be hinted by the eighteenth century English poetry.

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must die ;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to Poison while the bee-mouth sips : 11.21-24.

He conceives that melancholy originates in delight,

Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ; 11.27-28.

In his opinion, a man who descend to the depths of pleasure becomes truly melancholy. He expresses this idea by using the imagery of the grape which is symbolic of pleasure, and that of eating it which is symbolic of experiencing pleasure. This neat ode of only thirty lines shows his skill in concise and compressed expression with sensuous imagery, though it is not so ejaculatory as the *Ode to a Nightingale* because it is dedicated to melancholy, which is essentially tranquil.

Another ejaculatory ode is *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, whose subject matter is the praise of an urn which has survived since old times. This ode consists of five ten-line stanzas, whose basic rhyme scheme is also the combination of the first quatrain of Shakespearean sonnet and the variation of the final sestet of Petrarchan sonnet. Supposing that the basic rhyme scheme, ababcdedce, A, and its

variations B and B', ABB'B'A is the rhyme scheme of this ode. It reflects the development of its subject matter.

The first stanza is divided into two parts. In the first quatrain, the poet expresses his impression of the urn, defining it as follows :

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme : 11.1-4.

These definitions of the urn are perfect, because it can not make a noise unless it is smashed, and because it is carved so skillfully as to leave a deep impression upon his mind. But this kind of personification of inanimate things seems to have originated in the eighteenth century English poetry such as Gray's *The Progress of Poesy*,

O Sovereign of the willing soul,
 Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
 Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
 And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul. 11.13-16.

or Collins' *The Passions*,

O Music, sphere-descended maid,
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
 Why, goddess, why to us denied,
 Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside? 11.95-98.

In the next sestet, he presents the sources of his ecstasy in the form of interrogative sentences. The next three stanzas have different rhyme schemes, namely BB'B', from that of the first stanza. He describes engravings on the urn, such as pipers, lovers, people gathering at the sacrifice, and a town without any sign of inhabitants, stating that these sculptures are as symbolic of their eternity

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as the urn, because both of them will survive unless they are broken. The following passage shows the subtlety of his idea, as well as of its expression.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on ;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone : 11.11-14.

The cool and serene tone of this poem is Keatsean, and this poem owes its tone to such alliterative words as “silence,” “slow,” “sweetly,” “sweet,” “soft,” “sensual,” and “spirit.” The following passage is another example of his subtle ideas and their expression.

Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve ;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! 11.17-20.

These lovers are symbolic of eternal love, because they love on unless the engraving is scraped off the urn. The ejaculatory tone arrives at the climax in the third stanza, in which he uses the word “ever” and “for ever” repeatedly to express his uplifted spirit. The tone becomes calm as he turns his eyes upon the solemn sacrifice and the desolate town. The alliterative sound of [s], which occurs twenty times in this fourth stanza, is completely effective. And the stillness of the town reminds him of the stillness of the urn which is emphasized in the final stanza.

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity : Cold Paptoral ! 11.44-45.

He identifies the urn with eternity, because the urn is symbolic of eternity, which he seeks for in vain. He again presents the same romantic irony that men wish to be immortal but they cannot be so. Being inanimate and being unable to help

him to become immortal but merely to suggest “eternity” to him, the urn is called “Cold Pastoral,” and this expression is concrete and effective. As he concludes his idea in this stanza, its rhyme scheme changes into the same A type as that of the first stanza, to give this ode unity. He maintains that the urn which is now symbolic of art will keep comforting human minds by its beauty.

When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. 11.46–50.

He seems to insist on a kind of optimism that though a man can not grasp eternity nor be eternal, he should be satisfied with the knowledge of truth that he should live in the scope of human life and enjoy all pleasures and beauties in the world.

The concrete and compressed style is also apparent in the *Ode on Indolence*, which consists of six ten-line stanzas. On the assumption that its basic rhyme scheme, ababcdecde, is A, and that its variations ababcdec and ababcdecde are A' and B respectively, the rhyme scheme of this ode is AABAAA'. And this change of rhyme schemes does not seem to be suitable to the development of the subject matter in this ode. But he succeeds in describing his indolent mind by the imagery of the dull weather of summer, and in personifying love, ambition, and poesy, and he seems to owe this personification to eighteenth century English poetry, such as Collins' *The Passions* and Gray's *The Bard*. Keats is more skillful than Gray and less skillful than Collins in personification, but he is most skillful in the expression of human psychology by the imagery of nature. His ingenious personification is seen in the following passage.

One morn before me were three figures seen,
 With bowed necks, and joined hands, side-faced ;
 And one behind the other stepp'd serene,
 In placid sandals, and in white robes graced ; 11.1–4.

The indolent mood is continued on into the next third stanza, with its rich expression suggested by natural phenomena.

My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er
 With flowers, and stirring shades, and baffled beams :
The morn was clouded, but no shower fell,
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of May ;
 The open casement press'd a new-leav'd vine,
Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay ; 11.23-28.

Compared with these, the personification of the three figures, Love, Ambition, and Poesy in the fourth stanza is too trite. He is more skillful in the use of the imagery of nature than that in using personification.

... Poesy! — no, — she has not a joy, —
 At least for me, — so sweet as drowsy noons,
 And evenings steep'd in honied indolence ; 11.46-47.

But the following passage proves that he was ingenious in ironic expression.

For I would not be dieted with praise,
 A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce! 11.53-54.

Although he was once enchanted by love, ambition, and poesy for which youth craves, he recognizes their transience and returns to indolence again.

His final ode *To Autumn* bears witness to his ingenuity in the description of scenery rather than of the movement of things, in which Shelley showed his skill. *To Autumn* is a short ode of only three stanzas, but the lines of each stanza are eleven, the longest of all his stanzaic odes. And its rhyme scheme is regular, that is, ABB. He seems to have mastered the iambic pentameter in his odes, and his style reaches maturity in this ode *To Autumn*.

The opening lines of this ode are characteristic of his ingenuity in concrete expression by the use of the imagery of nature,

phonic songs of creatures, such as “gnats,” “lambs,” “crickets,” “red-breast,” and “swallows,” which seem to sing in chorus as a token of gratitude for fertility. Owing to his elaboration of the most suitable sensuous imagery, sound effects, and concise and rich expressions, Keats has become a fine craftsman in his poetic style in this ode *To Autumn*.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing it will be seen that Keats attained maturity in his poetic style while he was writing odes. His poetic style developed with practice in writing poems in three main verse forms, sonnet, narrative verse, and ode, which roughly correspond to Keats' three chronological stages. In other words, he achieved complete mastery of his poetic style through these successive stages of his devotion to the sonnet, anti-sonnet, and a compromise between the two forms.

Each verse form is precisely selected so as to suit the subject matter of each poem. And the change in his verse forms faithfully reflects his spiritual and aesthetic development. It should not be concluded, however, from what has been said above, that Keats achieved intellectual mastery in youth. On account of his incurable disease, he seems to have been too eager to become mature both in his thought and in his poetic style. He positively became a man of artistic craftsmanship within the narrow scope of his youthful thoughts, but death suddenly cut short of the life of his promising career as a poet. Keats' mature style in his successful poems, whose characteristics are conciseness and richness, bears comparison with even that of Shakespeare. But Keats' thoughts expressed in his poems, compare unfavorably with Shakespeare's or Milton's.

In his early poems, mainly in his sonnets, he cherished a special interest in the superficial Spenserian world of aestheticism, that is to say, the praise of the beauties of nature, under the influence of Leigh Hunt. Keats' poetic style in sonnets is concrete and lively, with rich sensuous imagery of nature, and he seems to owe these characteristics to Chatterton. He gradually becomes dissatisfied with a simple description of nature, and he is charmed by longer narrative verse forms. The range of his practice in poetry extends in rapid succession, from allegory to epic, romance, and ballad. As their subject matters become more

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philosophical, his poetic style generally becomes grander, though often prolix in his non-stanzaic narrative verse. Owing to his experiments in rhetoric by using alexandrines, triplets, and enjambement, which are suggested by such great poets as Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden, his style steadily became richer than before. And the style of his narrative verse, whose subject matter is romance compares with that of his great odes. The stories are speedily narrated without any useless decorative descriptions when they are successful. As he discovered that his genius was not suited to writing poems in blank verse, he directed his attention to lyrical forms again, first the sonnet stanza, then the ode. As the subject matter of his poems became more philosophic and meditative than before, he could not be satisfied with the mere sonnet form. He seeks for the most suitable verse form for his subject matter, combining and mixing the two traditional sonnet stanza, Petrarchan and Shakespearean. Finally he creates his own characteristic ode form which is basically a combination of the Shakespearean quatrain and Petrarchan sestet, whose rhyme scheme is ababcbdecde. The verse forms being discovered, he expresses his ideas and meditations in a mature poetic style, which was partially attained by him during the period when he wrote narrative verse. His aesthetic view and sensibility are now so subtle that he creates masterly poems, especially great odes whose style is compressed, concrete, and whose tone is sometimes ejaculatory and sometimes serene.

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