

problem worked out years before with great satisfaction. The intellectual process is gone through, and the feeling of pleasure is instantly revived. The problem is then read over to renew a fragment of pleasurable experience. This is imaginative pleasure which lies at the root of all poetic activity. Too often Browning forgets that all poetry must be emotional. H's work is stimulating but the poetry of abstract ideas will not live. There must be something more than philosophy in a poem. It must be concrete and beautiful to become immortal. Browning's beautiful pieces will live. Andrea del Sarto shows his eccentricities least.

Andrea was a real personage and lived from 1487 to 1531. Browning got his material from Vasari's "Lives of Painters," but did not stick to the facts as he found them. He makes the wife worse than in the pages of Vasari. From the point of view of art, it does not matter about the origin of the material. The treatment is all important. It must be true to human nature. The "Lost Leader" was suggested by Wordsworth, but has no connection with him. Browning embellished the ideas received to suit himself. In the same way he was not content with the life of Andrea but studied his art. The poem was suggested by a picture of Andrea and his wife, supposed to be painted by himself. He could not get this painting for a friend so wrote the poem to give an idea of the effect the picture had on him. The main idea running through the poem is that perfection is not really a sign of the highest excellence. In Rabbi Ben Ezra, this idea is applied to life in general; in Andrea del Sarto to art. Browning was not perfect himself, and he would consider it an excellence. Andrea was called the "Faultless Painter." His technique was perfect, but this was a defect in the soul, because the man was not striving for something higher. There is progress only in striving. There was

a lack of strenuous ardor in Andrea. There was a consistency in this fact with his moral life. He was defective in morality as he was in art.

The poem itself is full of force, beauty and charm. The blank verse suits the thought exactly. We find here perfection of form. Browning represents a bit of human life beautifully and melodiously. But this bit does not appeal to everyone. Shakespeare was universal, Browning limited in aspect. Here a character affected by art is examined. This poem was not intended for popular delectation. A knowledge of art is necessary in order to fully appreciate the poem.

It is written in the form of a monologue. Andrea and his wife have been quarrelling. He is in deep depression. In conversation with his wife, he is yielding and apologetic, even abject. There is a lack of force in his character, and a pathetic tone runs all through the poem. His wife does not appreciate art. She is interested in his painting only as it brings in money. They are sitting together by the window "all in the twilight," and she allows him to study her physical beauty, because in so doing she serves as a model. She is utterly selfish and heartless. The twilight suits his mode. His youth is gone, his hope gone and he lives as a disappointed man.

The fatalism shown in "Love, we are in God's hand," is a sign of weakness. In Rabbi Ben Ezra there is a different way of being in God's hand. Browning makes Andrea confess his view of art in a certain way. He is perfect, but others that strive are greater than he. A man is not to be judged by his work but by his aspirations. Andrea has no ardor, no enthusiasm. "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a Heaven for?" is characteristic of Browning. Rafael's painting was not faultless, but there is soul, intention, conception in it too high to render.

In line 118 Andrea is stirred up to reproach Lucrezia, but soon apologizes.