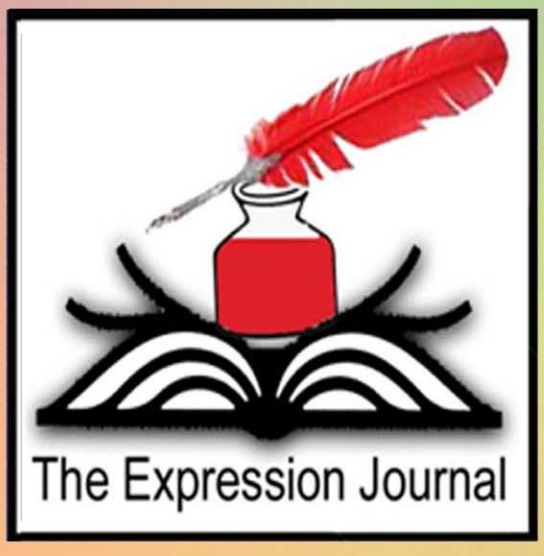
ISSN : 2395-4132

THE EXPRESSION

An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal

Bimonthly Refereed & Indexed Open Access e-Journal



Impact Factor 6.4

Vol. 11 Issue 1 February 2025

Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Bijender Singh

Email : editor@expressionjournal.com

www.expressionjournal.com

The Expression: An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal
(A Peer Reviewed and Indexed Journal with Impact Factor 6.4)
www.expressionjournal.com ISSN: 2395-4132

The Living Symphony: Ruskin Bond's Reverence for Nature in the Himalayas

Dr. Kulbhushan Sharma
Assistant Professor, Department of English
Government College Karsog, District Mandi (Himachal Pradesh)
E-mail: kaybee24.rj@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores the profound connection between Ruskin Bond and nature, particularly his intimate relationship with the Himalayas. It highlights how Bond's observations and experiences reflect a deep sensibility that aligns him with the Romantic tradition of celebrating nature. Influenced by his grandfather and father, his appreciation for the natural world extends beyond mere aesthetics; it embodies a sense of belonging and identity that shapes his literary voice. Bond's keen observation of the flora, fauna, and the lives of mountain dwellers showcases a rich tapestry of life in the Himalayas, filled with sensory details that animate his writing. His prose resonates with the emotional textures of nature—its beauty, its permanence, and its nurturing qualities—transforming the mountains into a maternal figure that provides solace in times of emotional isolation. Through vivid descriptions and recollections, he illustrates how the natural world becomes a refuge, a source of inspiration, and a space for reflection. Bond draws parallels between his personal experiences and those of the Romantic poets, encapsulating the essence of Romanticism in his celebration of the mundane and the extraordinary in nature. The article also discusses Bond's admiration for various plants and flowers, showcasing how his artistic sensibility finds delight in the smallest details of the natural world. By exploring themes of connectivity and the cyclical nature of life, the article presents Bond as not just a writer who observes nature but as one who embodies a philosophy that reveres the harmony between humanity and the environment. Ultimately, Bond's work invites readers to appreciate the beauty and significance of the natural world, fostering a deeper understanding of their own connection to it.

Keywords

Romantic, Mother Nature, Mountains, Rootedness, Flora, Fauna.

The Expression: An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal
(A Peer Reviewed and Indexed Journal with Impact Factor 6.4)
www.expressionjournal.com ISSN: 2395-4132

The Living Symphony: Ruskin Bond's Reverence for Nature in the Himalayas

Dr. Kulbhushan Sharma
Assistant Professor, Department of English
Government College Karsog, District Mandi (Himachal Pradesh)
E-mail: kaybee24.rj@gmail.com

Ruskin Bond has a deep love for nature. His is an intimate co-existence with it and is foremost in his expression of the Himalayan sensibility. Bond associates with the natural sights, people, and even animals. He observes life in all forms in the hills. He enjoys his walks into the mountains and has vast knowledge about the variety and richness of the Himalayas. With the closeness with nature, Bond develops a better understanding of life. He believes that we have emerged from this natural world and we belong to it. Love for nature was instilled in him by his grandfather and father who introduced him to the spellbinding world of birds, serpents, tigers, and trees. Bond's predilection for nature is akin, in many ways, to the Romantics. Romanticism is deeply embedded in the works of Ruskin Bond, and his works ooze with a profusion of romantic enthusiasm. Similar to the Romantics, Ruskin Bond follows his own genius, and this independence leads him to see the beauty ingrained in common things. He invests nature and the life of common men and women of the Himalayas with glorious significance. William J. Long believes: "The essence of Romanticism was that literature must reflect all that is spontaneous and unaffected in nature and in man, and be free to follow its own fancy in its own way" (Long 372). Yet, Bond's love for nature does not rest in escapism. He desires freedom but not license. Perhaps the most characteristic feature in the Romantic aspect of Bond is his sensuousness. It is this keen feeling of each aspect of nature that places him in the lineage of the English Romantics. His youthful enthusiasm in ceaseless description and appreciation of the dizzy raptures of nature makes him heir to the great canon of Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. But he has none of the egocentrism and expansion attached to many exponents of Romanticism. He enjoys the gleams of sunshine; spends hours and hours facing the mighty mountains; wanders with the clouds; follows the brooks and streams like a child, intoxicated with the heady smell of the flowers on the way. His every sense is alive and revels in the great rewards of nature. He constantly witnesses the good and the beautiful in all that he sees and in all that surrounds him.

Bond has a profound love of sensuous beauty. His visual, aural, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory senses come alive whenever he is in close proximity with nature. He feels

delighted at the mere invitation of nature and spends some exquisitely wonderful time with it. His love for the mountains, sky, clouds, rain, etc., is respectively described at great length and intuitive comprehension. His deep love for the mountains is reflected in the title of the book Rain in the Mountains and is acknowledged in the chapter entitled, "Mountains in my Blood." There is no escape from the mountains for Bond. Even in the jostle and drizzle of London, the most vivid memories of the Himalayas beckon him. He remembers the blue and brown mountains, which nourished his blood, and although separated from them by thousands of miles of ocean, plain, and desert, he finds it difficult to get them out of his system. The emotive intensity for mountains is so strong in Bond that to him, in London, the March fog turns into mountain mist, and the boom of traffic becomes the boom of the Ganges emerging from the foothills of the Himalayas. He remembers a little mountain path which leads his restless feet to a cool, sweet forest of oak and rhododendron and then on to the windswept crest of a naked hilltop that he had named—'Clouds End.' This hill commands a view of the plains on one side, and it is covered with the snow peaks on the other. He listens entranced to the 'hoo-hoo-hoo' sound produced by the wind on the hill. Then he remembers some of the shepherd boys and girls. A boy plays the flute, and the sound of the rough, sweet, straightforward notes travels across the mountain air. The musician, with a nod of his head, greets Bond without taking the flute from his lips. The day-to-day activities of the mountains are expressed in explicit terms exhibiting the mountain sensibility. The shepherd boy lies in the sun and eats strawberries without any fear of losing his animals. Then he watches a girl cutting grass for fodder. The girl with a wide grin on her face wears heavy bangles on her feet and long silver earrings. The girl usually sings to herself, to the sheep, to the grass, or to the sickle in her hand. He also remembers a boy who carried milk into the town and holds a long conversation with him. This boy is a typical hill boy, who has never been away from the hills. The conversation is easy and rambling and revolves around making bread from maize, catching fish in the mountain stream, and pumpkin. In this manner, some little incident, some snatch of conversation comes back flooding his mind, again and again, in the most unlikely places. Small things remind him of the mountains and the activities of the mountain-folk: "A bear and a pumpkin—and there, between Goodge street and Tottenham Court Road stations, all the smells and sounds of the Himalayas came rushing back to me" (*Rain* 94).

He also hears the murmur of the brook at the bottom of the hill. This sound is an integral part of him, and he has grown so used to the constant music of water that when he leaves it behind, he feels naked and alone, bereft of his moorings. Thus, a mountain stream becomes a part of him. Below his house is a forest of oak and maple and rhododendron. The path twists its way down through the trees over an open ridge where red sorrel grows wild and then down steeply through a tangle of thorn bushes. He vividly recalls this path that leads to the stream: "At the bottom of the hill the path leads on to a grassy verge, surrounded by wild rose. The stream runs close by the verge, tumbling over smooth pebbles over rocks, worn yellow with age on its way to the plains and to the little song river and finally to the sacred Ganga" (*Rain* 95).

Bond is also drawn to the fairy, Hill or 'Pari Tibba' as the Paharis call it. The lonely uninhabited mountain to the east of Mussoorie at a height of about 6000 feet attracts Bond and he has visited it many times. He also likes the narrow path leading up to it because it has been made naturally by goats and the small hill cattle. He normally

stays at the top of the hill till the sun sets. Finally, Bond believes that the mountains are kind to writers because he finds a strong affinity with them: "...when I look back to the time of my first coming here, it does seem like yesterday. That probably sums it all up. Time passes and it does not pass; people come and go, the mountains remain. The mountains are permanent things. They are stubborn; they refuse to move. You can blast holes out of them for their mineral wealth; or strip them of their trees and foliage, or dam their streams and divert their currents; or make tunnels and roads and bridges, but no matter how hard they try, humans can not actually get rid of their mountains. That's what I like about them; they are here to stay" (*Rain* 197).

Bond feels one with the mountains so much that like them, he incessantly observes the way of life of the hill folk and finds them of absorbing interest. The old houses and old families of Landour, Mussoorie attract him. He enjoys walks into the mountains and along the pilgrim trails where he meets the occasional passerby and sometimes takes his little nap at a roadside tea shop or a village school. He rejoices in the lasting existence of trees and mountains: "Never mind. Men come and go; the mountains remain" (*Our Trees* 94). To express his deep bonding with nature, Ruskin Bond quotes Rudyard Kipling, who said: "Who goes to the Hills, goes to his mother" (*Himalayan* 12). To Bond, living in the hills is like living in the bosom of a strong, sometimes proud, but always comforting mother. And every time Bond went away, it was difficult for him to leave his motherland. Bond was denied the constant love of his mother and missed the experience of motherly affection. Thus, his own absent mother is replaced by Bond's love for nature. He treats nature as the mother. According to Erich Fromm, motherly love gives the child the care and responsibility which is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the child's life and his growth, and the mother instills in her child the love for life: "...the relationship of mother and child is by its very nature one of inequality, where one needs all the help, and the other gives it. It is for this altruistic, unselfish character that motherly love has been considered the highest kind of love, and the most sacred of all emotional bonds" (Fromm 46).

But Bond misses motherly love completely, and he naturally associates himself with nature. It helps him overcome loneliness, bewilderment, despair, anger, etc., which can infect a child who is emotionally abandoned by his mother. So, the 'mother-mountain' becomes the psychic locale of the writer. He is bound by the love of the mountains and the freedom which he believes only the mountains can give, and he never wants to leave the borders of 'heaven'—the mountains. He feels the magic of the mountains, and so he lives at Landour in Mussoorie and enjoys his life in the Himalayas. In the "Hill-Station," he avers:

There is nothing to keep me here,
Only these mountains of silence
And the gentle reserve of shepherds and woodmen
Who know me as one who
Walks among trees Madman, misanthropist?
They make their guesses, smile and pass slowly
Down the steep path near the cottage
There is nothing
To keep me here, walking
Among old trees. (Rain 218)

He continuously sings the glories of the Himalayas. For him, the mountains carry an eternal, everlasting joy. Bond believes: "In a thousand ages of the gods I could not tell thee of the glories of Himachal," so confessed a poet at the dawn of Indian history, and no one since has been able to do real justice to the Himalayas. We have climbed their highest peaks, but still, the mountains remain remote, mysterious, primeval" (Book 49). One of the reasons for his choosing to live in the Himalayas is because, aesthetically, the mountain slopes and valleys present remarkable contrasts in elevation, humidity, and temperature. Bond states that he loves the attractions of tramping to 'nowhere in particular'—the finding of 'somewhere in particular,' the striking up of friendships, the discovery of new springs and waterfalls, unusual plants, rare flowers, and strange birds. To him, trekking in the Himalayas is a joie de vivre. Bond says: "In the hills, a new vista opens up at every bend in the road. That is what makes me a compulsive walker—new vistas, and the charm of the unexpected" (*Rain* 121).

Bond continuously relays his experience in the hills. In Landour Days, Bond records: "The 'adventure wind' of my boyhood I felt it again today. Walked five miles to Saukholi, to look at an infinity of mountains. The feeling of space—limitless space—can only be experienced by living in the mountains" (*Landour* 138). Bond expresses his reasons to settle down in a hill station in *The Tribune*: "Yes, my decision to settle down in Mussoorie has a lot to do with my inspiration from the mountains and mining material from there for my work. The hills have been kind to me" (Wattas 1). This kindness is gratefully received and, in turn, disseminated by the writer who values compassion over all else. The romantic recluse of the mountains still retains his innocence and a sense of peace with the world. Bond's vast knowledge of nature is not only sympathetic, but it is also minutely precise. Not only can he keep narrating the snows and the windy music of the Himalayas, but he can also tell for hours and hours the stories of his experiences with the smaller streams, trees, and every littlest flower. Only those who have spent some time among mountains can feel his strong conviction of thought and feeling about the natural world. Rajnish Wattas asserts: "Bond's writings carry the fragrance of the Garhwal hills, landscaped with pine knolls, gurgling streams, and wildflowers. And his words flow with the ease of a mountain stream. Sometimes rapid like a torrent; sometimes languorous like a river" (Wattas 1).

Bond has sharp senses, and nature reveals herself unstintingly to his keen observant eyes. Bond loves the different colours of the sky. He believes that its canopy is never the same even when it is cloudless. The colours of the sky are kaleidoscopic. The morning sky, the daytime sky, the starry sky, the evening sky, the moonlit sky, these are all different. The sky is inhabited by the birds, eagles flying high, mountain swifts doing acrobatics, cheeky mynah birds meeting under the eaves of the roof, sparrows flitting in and out of the room at will. Sometimes, a butterfly floats in on the breeze. He likes the sky in all its colours with all kinds of creatures freely moving in it. He finds the sky extremely fascinating in the monsoon. In the month of October, the birds sing beautiful songs. Bond lies in the sun on the sweet-smelling grass and gazes up through a pattern of oak leaves into a 'blind-blue heaven': "And I would thank my god for leaves and grass and the smell of things, the smell of mint and myrtle and bruised clover, and the touch of things, the touch of grass and air and sky, the touch of the sky's blueness" (*Rain* 96).

In the winter, he finds that the sounds of the stream and the sight of the grey skies come clutching at his heart, and the rain and sleet drive him indoors. At times, he loves to lie on the cot under a sky brilliant with stars. Sitting at his desk, he gleefully watches the clouds advancing across the valley, rolling over the hills, ascending the next range. The raindrops patter against his window panes. And when the rain stops, the clouds open up and the sky appears like the heavens—a deeper, darker blue. These lines evoke the same magic as Keats: "Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn" (Ridley 230). Bond also feels and sees the sky: "Truly magic casements these… for every time I see the sky I am aware of belonging to the universe rather than to just one corner of the earth" (*Rain* 204). About Barsaat, Bond states: "The onset of the monsoon has always been my favourite time of the year. Like every Indian, I am more keenly alive to the monsoon than to any other season. This is as true of me today as it was in the fifties when I was a young boy" (Book 173).

In the poem "Rain in the Hills," Bond is all alone, and he is brought into silence by the rhythm of the rain. His senses come alive when the raindrops trickle from the leaves and from the roof. The poet is sad as his friend has left, and the place has become lonely and very quiet. And then the sounds and the sight of the rain embrace him as he catches: "The steady drift of water on leaves, on lemons, on roof, drumming on drenched dahlias and window panes, while the mist holds the house in a dark caress. As I pause near a window, the rain stops. And starts again" (*Rain* 204). During the rain on the mountains, Bond inhales deeply the aroma of the washed leaves. The dust settles down, and Bond loves the heady moist smell. He also describes how: "During the rains, when the neem-pods fall and are crushed underfoot, they give out a strong refreshing aroma which lingers in the air for days" (*Rain* 148). In the poem, "The Wind and the Rain," the poet wishes to be like the wind, the rain, the leaves, the earth, and wants to attain their characteristic features or rather he represents them in his activities and by doing so follows God's will: "Like the wind, I run; Like the rain, I sing; Like the leaves, I dance; Like the earth, I am still; And in this, Lord, I do thy will" (*Rain* 144). About a drop of water, he believes: "Each drop represents a little bit of creation—and of life itself" (*Rain* 105).

Thus, for Bond, the microcosm is not mean or lowly; it rather encapsulates the immense beauty of the effulgent universe. With the advent of monsoon, the earth opens its pores and quenches its thirst with a sip of ecstasy. The dry, dusty, cracked earth is renewed with new grass springing up. There is renewal everywhere, and the damp earth releases a sweet fragrance. Bond loves rain; he opens the window of his room wide and allows the fragrance of the rain and freshened earth to waft into his room. In the poem "Rain," the poet welcomes the rain and in an ecstatic mood witnesses the transformation and exhilaration brought by it to the earth, leaves, plants, trees, birds, lizards, etc.: "After weeks of heat and dust How welcome is the rain It washes the leaves, Gives new life to grass, Draws out the scent of the earth" (*Rain* 107). He also describes how beautiful the night looks after the rain: "At night we look through the branches of the cherry tree The sky is rain-washed, star-bright" (*Rain* 107).

Bond not only loves the rain but also the sound of the rain, which he finds quite spirit-elevating. He finds it a good sound to read by—the rain outside and the quiet within. He feels a communion with the rain. He loves the drumming sound on the corrugated tin roof as well as the steady swish of the tropical downpour. This sound

keeps him company as he lies awake, but at the same time, it does not keep him from sleeping. The sounds of rain simply draw his attention to the companionship he feels with them. The author also likes the wind. The sounds of the wind that come from a distance are beautiful because they are far away. Bond describes these voices wafting on the winds evocatively: "They walketh upon the wings of the wind" (*Rain* 110). Bond says that he also loves the more earthly sound of frogs croaking from the rainwater pond behind the house. After the shower of rain, the whole air murmurs and tinkles with the voices of crickets and grasshoppers and little frogs. And there is one melodious sound that mesmerizes him with its sweet repeated trill but he finds himself unable to trace its source. He conjectures it to be a little frog or a small green cricket, but he is not sure, and he humbly avers: "...it is good to be left with one small mistake, a mystery sweet and satisfying and entirely my own" (*Rain* 111).

He describes the spring rain in glowing terms. The leaves are presented as fresh and pale green. He uses two sets of adjectives to describe the leaves. This shows his minute observation of every speck of nature during the rains. Then he describes the spring season with dark clouds in the sky. The sky is lighted up by the bolts of lightning which flash on the mountains as well. Interestingly, to Bond, this particular phenomenon looks somewhat like a child switching the bulb on and off playfully. Bond also feels quite excited under the spell of such an environment: "The clouds grow very dark, then send bolts of lightning sizzling across the sky, lighting up the entire range of mountains" (*Rain* 8). Bond's fascination for the rains is akin to Kalidasa, the great Indian poet. Kalidasa also describes the monsoon in Urvashi and Puraravas in exquisite detail: "The monsoon has begun. Clouds envelop the skies. The east wind blows. With billows raised like gesturing arms And breakers breaking upon the shore Like hands that keep time, her lord, The sea performs a graceful dance. Seagulls gleam against his chest like conch shells. And red breasts like sandal paste while sharks and whales glisten Like dark blue flowers" (*Kalidasa* 147). With the rains, creatures like scorpions, snakes, etc., are driven out of their rocks and crevices. The rain also heralds the arrival of some seasonal visitors—like a leopard, and several thousand leeches. At times, however, the rain is not welcomed by Bond because with it comes the monsoon mist, which covers everything as if it were blocking out all nature: "The first day of monsoon mist. And it's strange how all the birds fall silent as the mist comes climbing up the hill" (*Rain* 20). The rain brings new life and new vigour to everything that subsists on the Himalayas. The rain makes everything green and bright. And Bond loves his excursions across a patch of lush green grass: "Early in summer the grass on the hills is still a pale yellowish green, tinged with brown, and that is how it remains until the monsoon rains bring new life to everything that subsists on the stony Himalayan soil. And then, for four months, the greens are deep, dark and emerald bright" (*Book* 65).

Bond's description of the clouds is somewhat similar to Kalidasa. In Meghaduta, Kalidasa describes the cloud as: "O cloud, soar into the sky, with your face turned to the north, from this place, full of wet Nichulas, with your flutter gazed at with great astonishment by the simple-minded wives of the Siddhas, with their faces turned up to see if the wind was bearing away the peak of the mountain, and avoiding in your journey the blows from the tossing of the huge trunks of the quarter-elephants" (*Kalidasa* 35). Bond's senses are sharply alive to every change in nature, his emotional signifier and mainstay. In Book of Nature, Bond talks about the rain, the cloud, and the

hail together as an apt setting for his creative activity: "The blackest cloud I've ever seen squatted over Mussoorie, and then it hailed marbles for half an hour. Nothing like a hailstorm to clear the sky. Even as I write, I see a rainbow forming" (*Book* 186).

Uttarakhand is a perfect example of unity in diversity for which India is so widely known. Different cultures, religions, languages, and lifestyles are blended in harmony with its natural landscape, climate, fauna, flora, and soils that vary from the high elevation ranges to the low-lying river valleys. This area of the Himalayas is known for its biodiversity. The Alpine meadows of this place are the home of herbs and flowers. The entire Alpine zone displays pockets of flowering valleys during the spring and autumn seasons. The lush green grassland, evergreen coniferous forests of the high altitude, pine trees in the middle ranges, and almost all varieties of fruit plants in all the zones make Uttarakhand unique in its diversity. Bond has minutely witnessed these zones of herbs, plants, trees, fruits, and his works are replete with the description of varieties of flora. He has delineated this particular aspect of nature by especially writing a book on it. Besides the detailed exposition in Book of Nature, he has dealt with the flora of the Himalayas in all his books. Bond has a profound bonding with nature. About this relationship with nature, he says: "This is a relationship that has grown stronger and more meaningful than ever since I came to live in the hills over forty years ago" (*Book* viii).

In the description of the flora, the flowers take center stage: "To me, flowers are the most sensual of living things, or perhaps it's just that they appeal to the sensuality in my own nature. A rose in bud, the heady scent of jasmine, the unfolding of a lily, the flaunting colours of dahlias and giant marigolds, the seductive fragrance of the honeysuckle, all these excite and entice me" (*Landour* 63). Bond always had a desire to own a garden. Wherever he went and lived, the garden was with him in his heart. He describes the utmost importance of flowers in his life: "I do not think I could have got through life without the company of flowers. They sustain and stimulate. … When I step out for one of my walks, I look for wildflowers, even the most humble of flowers hiding on the hillside. And if I do not know their names, I invent their names, because it's nice to know someone by his or her name…" (*Book* 152). He is an avid admirer of flowers. In his Book of Nature, he ascribes to each month its own special flower. The dandelion growing on the retaining wall fascinates him enough to enthrone it as the flower of the month. He finds that it rightly belongs to that particular place in the wall. There is a strong feeling of brotherhood with this flower. Bond learns from and admires the tenacity of the flower braving adverse circumstances. It survives and blooms against all odds. Thus, Bond admires this flower as he learns many qualities from this flower. It is so strongly embedded between two stones as it grows strong and flourishes without any care and nourishment. When the dandelion is not in bloom, then he admires another ignored flower, the poppy. Bond finds the plain white poppy extravagantly beautiful. He likes all types of poppies, but the plain white is his favorite. His choice of flowers also keeps changing according to the seasons. In rainy August, it is the geranium that becomes his favoured flower. Bond likes the smell of each flower. He admires all the flowers with their own distinctive fragrance. In the rose, he finds joy and opens it petal by petal, inhaling its powerful fragrance, which he thinks to be the most lovely and elusive. The scent of the delicate snapdragon also attracts his attention: "…if I walk past a bed of these flowers, or even a single plant, the gentlest of fragrances is wafted to me,

Zephyr-like. And if I stop to try and take it all in, it goes again! I find this quite tantalizing, but it has given me a special regard for this modest flower" (*Book* 166).

Bond's in-depth study of flowers is not academic but a result of the extended time he spends with them. He talks about almost each and every flower in Book of Nature. He indulgently terms the carnations as 'the great show-offs' because of their strong scent of cloves. He writes about the overpowering, seductive appeal of the jasmine and its charming spell in "Jasmine Time": Jasmine flowers in her hair

Jasmine scents are everywhere
Languid summer days are here;
There's sweet longing in the air. (Himalayan 83)

The honeysuckle with sweet and cloying fragrance drifts through the study window of his cottage in the hills. And he has to close the window so that he can give attention to other, less intrusive smells—the soft scent of petunias near his doorstep and the pine needles on the hillside. The petunias delight him with their unexpected scent: "Petunias Petunias I must praise— Their soft perfume Takes me by surprise!" (*Himalayan* 82). He is alive to the gentler, softer beings just as much as he is to the more visible and attention-gaining plants. Similarly, Bond closes the doors to the more mundane affairs regularly and turns within to know himself more with the aid of introspection and self-reflection. Although Bond extensively brings out the sensuous appeal of the flowers, he does not yet sacrifice precision in the process. His observation goes deeper than the external aspects of nature—colour, form, appearance, etc.—that have been so far illustrated. He probes into the manifold processes of nature that are so common as to pass unnoticed generally, but have great significance for him when rendering them in images establishing the relationship of nature with human behaviour. Then, there are certain flowers which have no scent at all. But when Bond touches them and runs his fingers gently over the leaves, he feels a great sense of being touched by the most delicate of aromas. Then he talks about the plants with an absence of floral display but with strong fragrant leaves. When these are crushed, they produce a refreshing fragrance. Bond loves the smell and the scent of the flowers around him: "When I lie on summer grass in the Himalayas, I am conscious of the many good smells around me—the grass itself, redolent of the morning's dew; bruised clover; wild violets; tiny buttercups…" (*Book* 167).

Bond has great respect and love for nature. Some critics fondly call him India's Wordsworth. Most of his writings are about India's flora and fauna. His racy narratives about nature are exquisitely beautiful, wherein Mother Nature comes alive in all her splendour. He brings out everything in nature with fidelity of expression. His description of nature springs from deep proximity with the natural world. According to him, there is a sacred design behind nature and he looks at it with adoration. Bond is acutely aware of his surroundings, of the animate and inanimate both. Thus his works can easily be viewed as a writer's tribute to his fellow creatures who live in the Himalayas together with him.

Works Cited

Blake, William. *The Complete Poems*. Ed. W.H. Stevenson. London: Longman, 1977.
Bond, Ruskin. *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1991.
___. *Rain in The Mountains*. 1993 rpt. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1996.

___. *Ruskin Bond's Book of Nature*. New Delhi: Viking by Penguin Books India, 2004.
___. *Landour Days*. 2002 rpt. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2005.
___. *The Rupa Book of Ruskin Bond's Himalayan Tales*. 2003 rpt. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2005.
Coleridge, Earnest Hartley. Ed. *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. 1912 rpt.. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.
Fromm, Erich. *The Art of Loving*, 1957 rpt. London: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1988.
Kalidasa. *The Plays of Kalidasa*. Trans. K.V.R. Sundaram. New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1988.
Long, William J. *English Literature: Its History and Its Significance*. 1977 rpt. New Delhi: Kalyani Publications, 1988.
Ridley, M.R. *Keats' Craftsmanship: A Study in Poetic Development*. London: University Paperbacks, 1963.
Wattas, Rajnish. "Bond with Ruskin." Interview. *The Tribune*. Chandigarh edition. 13 May 2006.