

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature has close relationship with the life of human being. The writer knows that learning literature is being human's life, basic manner or social environment, and their thought. Literature gives a free way in order to give human being to express their thought. According to Reeves in *An Introduction for Foreign Readers*, "Literature is work, which expresses and communicates thought, feeling, and attitude toward life" (1973:32). However, a human being wants to express their thought turn to the literature. The writer chooses the literature to discuss because it is very useful to improve readers' ability in appreciating life through the literature. Little (1966: 1) in *Approaches to Literature* says as follows:

The literature of people is the principle element of its culture. It contains that record of the values, their thought, their problems, and conflict in short their whole way of life. Whether transmitted through the spoken or the written word, literature may fairly be regarded as the chief of art of mankind.

Literature is also as the basic of education. Literature will support the education, which helps the development of literature. Little (1966: 1) in *Approaches to Literature* says in the following:

Whenever there is education, there is the study of literature. Men have always found it essential, from the most primitive stages of society to the most advanced, to teach their scripture, lore and legends to their children. The youth of ancient Greece learnt their Homer, the Jews, their Torah; the Aboriginal child the legends of his tribe, and the American child recite Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Hudson (1965: 10) in *An Introduction of Literature*. Also states, "Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspect of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us". Informative literature tells about facts, explanations, real great figures, life, et cetera. Imaginative literature has fuller and deeper sense than informative literature. The literature gives some entertainments. It should appears to be imagination rather than to be intellect, to the emotion rather than to the reason of the readers. Actually, the readers do not merely enjoy the poems but they may also know the events that happened in the society or social situation at that time.

Literature is generally divided into three groups, namely prose, poetry and drama. According to Dunton (1965: 65), "Poem is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language". Through Dunton's definition, the writer concludes that poem is a literary work that expresses poets' feeling and emotion and written in special ordered language. The writer prefers analyzing poetry to other forms of literary works because the writer's intuition and imagination can be used. It is proved by the following statement, "Poetry is the most intensively emotive of literary forms" (Little, 1966: 162).

Robinson's works are great expression that gives different thought for all of the readers. His poetry simply does not look enough the poetry they are used to. His poetry always describes the reality of life, civilization, satirical event though tells about his own life. His works show us a great expression in which he cleverly plays the words and characters that he uses in his poems so that they are as real

tells about his own life. His works show us a great expression in which he cleverly plays the words and characters that he uses in his poems so that they are as real history of Robinson's family and his environment. Therefore, Shaw (1972: 292) says, "Poetry according to Edwin Arlington Robinson is language that tells us through a more or less emotional reaction, something that can not be said".

Knickerbocker and Reninger in *Interpreting Literature* says, "Robinson, a failure in practical affairs himself for years, was unusually sensitive to personal failure and frustration". Robinson is treating his own problem in creating such figures, since he is a misunderstood and unhappy refugee from normal life, who often doubts his own genius and lives on the whole an unhappy existence. But when he puts pen to paper he transfers this personal attitude into figures who are not himself, who are outside his consciousness, who in fact are often based on eccentric persons Robinson has met in real life.

The writer takes two of Robinson's poems, namely *Miniver Cheevy* and *For Dead Lady*. *Miniver Cheevy* is known chiefly for the short epigrammatic characterization consider the following:

Miniver Cheevy was a "child of scorn" who regretted his life in the real world. He loved to dream of the past, especially the glorious and romantic past. He loved abstractions, like Art and Romance, but "cursed the commonplace" of everyday life. He "scorned the gold he sought. / But sore annoyed was he without it . . ." He couldn't DO anything in the world, so he "called it fate, / And kept on drinking", ([http://. www.english.uiue.edu](http://www.english.uiue.edu)).

*Miniver* is the portrait of the poet himself. *Miniver* is the heroic world living in the past. The poet keeps on escaping to a romantic world in which he lives. *Miniver Cheevy* is one of several thumbnail portraits of small town

wormwood. This effectively prevents him from making anything of him. The second poem is *For a Dead Lady* that deals with Mary Palmer Robinson and may deal with Robinson. Mary Palmer Robinson is a lovely, beautiful woman she has even known. She is a powerful creature who makes her mark on her husband and her sons.

The writer chooses the topic because poems are expression, which is used to communicate thought, feeling, and life. In addition, these poems are interesting to be analyzed because Robinson's failure of life, the causes, and the effects are implied in the two poems.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

The writer chooses the analysis of the failure of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems. The writer finds out three questions, which are formulated as follows:

1. What are the failures of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems?
2. What are the causes of failure of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems?
3. What are the effects of the failure of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the statements of the problem above the thesis are intends:

1. To find out the failures of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems.
2. To find out the causes of the failure of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems.
3. To find out the effects of the failure of Edwin Arlington Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* poems.

#### **1.4 Limitation of the Problem**

In analyzing Edwin Arlington Robinson's works, there are a lot of aspects of literature, which are possible to be discussed, such as the technical devices, the theme, imagery and the use figure of speech. However, the writer chooses to analyze the failure of Robinson's life as reflected in *Miniver Cheevy* and *For a Dead Lady* in order to make the analysis clearer and more specific.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

After analyzing this works, there are several things that are significant. It is hoped that the readers will be aware that failure may bring impacts on human beings. Failure is something that is never expected to happen in life, but it does not mean that people should be frustrated.

It is also hoped that the thesis will make the fellow students, especially those of Faculty of Letters in English Department of Widya Mandala University, appreciate literature better; and it will develop their ability in studying literature as

well. Thus, this study is hoped to encourage the students to analyze this poem in other aspects.

The writer hopes that the results of this analysis will give contribution to the other researchers who are willing to study about Edwin Arlington Robinson's poems. The analysis of those two poems can give the deeper meaning and become significant reference.