

Christian ; and in the case of Wordsworth it was so held in check, the predominant tone of his poetry being that of cheerfulness and hope, though the melancholy, subdued into tenderness, is always there.

It will be observed in the passage first quoted, there is, mingled with the poetic sensibility, a keen and healthy sense of physical enjoyment. Wordsworth was a vigorous, clear-souled son of the hills, with nothing sickly in his constitution or morbid in his temperament. In this respect he presents a strong contrast to Shelley, Keats, and perhaps we may say Coleridge. To Byron he presents a strong contrast in the healthiness of his moral nature, the strength of his domestic affections, the purity of his tastes and of his life.

The same healthy tone appears in his conception of his own vocation. He feels that God has bestowed on him the faculties of a poet, and he deliberately chooses that calling and trains himself for it, as another man would train himself for law or medicine, without making a special fuss over the matter or giving himself the conventional airs of genius. He also thoroughly feels, and shows in every line of his poetry that he feels, the moral responsibility of the artist. It is the belief in some quarters that art is a religion in itself, and that if successfully pursued it discharges its ministers of all other responsibility. So thought not Wordsworth. In him is always present, sometimes, perhaps, even too palpably present, the conviction that poetry is a part of the service of God.

A singular and fortunate accident enabled him to devote himself to the high but unremunerative calling of his choice. His patrimony consisted mainly of some sums due from a very wealthy nobleman, whose agent his father had been, for professional service, which, though the orphan's claim was urged, were not liquidated for many years. His education he owed to the kindness of relatives, and it appeared that when it was completed he would have to give up poetry and go into some profession by which he could make his bread. But among his college friends at Cambridge was a young student named Raisley Calvert, the son of the steward of the Duke of Norfolk, who, though, it seems, not intellectual, or at least not poetic, himself,