

laid on him to cry out against this and to call the dead to life. Listen first to his protest;—

“The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;—
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers;—
For this, for everything, we are out of time;—
It moves us not. Great God! I’d rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

And next, as to what he felt to be his work.* “The Sun,” he said, “was personified by the ancients as a charioteer driving four fiery steeds over the vault of heaven; he was called Phœbus, and was regarded as the god of poetry, of prophecy, and of medicine. Phœbus combined all these characters. And every poet has a similar mission on earth; he must diffuse health and light; he must prophesy to his generation; he must teach the present age by counselling with the future; he must plead for posterity; and he must imitate Phœbus in guiding and governing all his faculties, fiery steeds though they be, with the most exact precision, lest instead of being a Phœbus, he prove a Phæton, and set the world on fire, and be hurled from his car; he must rein in his fancy and temper his imagination, with the control and direction of sound reason, and drive on in the right track with a steady hand.”

This, then, was Wordsworth’s work;—to exalt the spiritual over the material, the eternal over the transitory, the future over the present. In Christ he himself found all truth; and in Christian education alone had he any faith, while he had no faith at all in highly-wrought religious expression in youth; and the essence of Christian education was a contemplating of the character and personal history of Christ. “Work it,” he said, “into your thoughts, into your imagination, make it a real presence in the mind.” What distinctive work was accomplished by Wordsworth as a religious reformer of his age? We pointed out that the Eighteenth Century had lost faith in God as the living God, and in human brotherhood. Now I believe that while Coleridge had most to do with restoring faith in God, Wordsworth had most to do with restoring faith in humanity. He has been accused of losing his own faith;—of beginning as a Democrat and ending as an Aristocrat. But stationariness is not consistency; and a man must sometimes change the form of his views if he would be true to the

* Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 7.