

And common face of nature spake to me,
Rememberable things.

His desire to see nature in her every mood and phase, led him out into the fields at night that he might watch the stars, and listen to the awful voice of the coming storm as it strikes on the distant rock. Yearning to have a sight of the sublime and the beautiful, he climbed the mountains that he might "behold the sun rise up and bathe the world in light." As he looked down on the solid frame of earth and ocean's liquid mass; as he touched the clouds, and in their faces read unutterable love, he felt inspired, and needed not the help of man to enable him to understand the scene. In his own words:

Sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his life.
In such access of mind in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired,
No thanks he breathed, he proffer'd no request,
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him; it was blessedness and love!

Born at Cocker-mouth, in Cumberland, Wordsworth's early years were spent amid scenes lovely, wild, and inspiring. Many a time this tender and thoughtful boy wandered along the picturesque rivers of the Derwent and the Cocker, and watched them meeting and mingling their waters near the spot where the ruins of an ancient castle look down on the quaint old town. Deeply did the scene impress him. Speaking of the Derwent he says:

One, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And from his ford and shallows sent a voice
That flow'd along my dreams.

At the age of eight he was sent to school at Hawkshead, and thus brought into contact with the other ex-

tremity of the Lake scenery. Whether he is setting springs for woodcock, hanging on the naked crags of the rock in his efforts to reach the raven's nest, following the path of the solitary eagle so rarely seen, plunging into the woods in quest of nuts, or hissing "along the polished ice in games confederate," he is ever drinking deeper and deeper draughts of nature's fountain. In later days Wordsworth recognizes the healthful influences of nature in developing what was truest and best in his life, and restraining him from evil.

Yet were I grossly destitute of all
Those human sentiments that make this earth
So dear, if I should fail, with grateful voice,
To speak of you, ye mountains and ye lakes,
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds,
That dwell among the hills where I was born.
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have
lived

With God and nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires,
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown;
If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
And wicked exultation when good men
On every side fall off, we know not how,
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
On visionary minds; if in this time
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
Despair not of our nature, but retain
A more than Roman confidence, a faith
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
The blessing of my life; the gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts; 'tis yours,
Ye mountains! Thine, O nature! Thou
hast fed

My lofty speculations; and in thee
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest passion.

Even in his student life at Cambridge, love of nature is the ruling passion. In going up to this ancient and illustrious seat of learning, he felt his heart rising as he neared the enchanted ground.

As near and nearer to the spot we drew,
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's force.