

poetry, and found in Wordsworth as nowhere else this side of psalmists or prophets. For Wordsworth, this divine life in nature manifested several distinct aspects, each of which is reflected from his poetry. The gladness which pervades nature seemed to him an emanation from God. Was he wrong in this view? The Psalmist surely has sung this strain: "He maketh the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice. Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name." No better expression of this thought in Wordsworth can be found than in his lines

"It was an April morning, fresh and clear," *

But it runs through all his poetry. He repudiated wholly the habit, not only of poets, but of many distempered minds, of reading into nature their own morbid feelings, feeding their melancholy fancies with unhealthy depressions, which they could gather only by distilling the joy of nature in the alembics of their own gloom. For Wordsworth, communion with nature was to be some restoration, or, to use Emerson's phrase, redemption. Hence we find pictured in all his poetry the tranquilizing, soothing, calm-giving influences of nature.

"Central peace subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation."

On this Hudson has beautifully spoken, and his words are well worth quoting. "Who of us, indeed, has not sometimes felt, nay, who of us does not often feel, what a blessed thing it is to be so at home with nature, and so attuned to her life, that she can speak her own deep peace into our souls?" Many are the times, in bright and vocal mornings, in hushed and sober evenings, and all day long in still and lonely places, when she "sends her own deep quiet to restore our hearts," and when her tranquilizing power seems to steal over us and melt into us, soothing and sweetening away our evil thoughts and unhealthy perturbations, our anger, impatience, discontent, and all our inordinate loves, and cares and fears, and along with these, also, "the fretful stir unprofitable and the fever of the world."

"To interpose the covert of her shades,
Even as a sleep, between the heart of man
And outward troubles, between man himself
Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart."

The most distinctive note of Wordsworth's poetry regarding nature is, as Mr. Stopford Brooke has pointed out, "his conception of everything in nature as having its own peculiar life—yet as bound up with all the others in a common life," and that "this endless interchange of life and joy was in reality not the type of, but actually the never-ceasing self-reciprocation of God." Let the reader turn to "The Excursion," †

* Poem on Names of Places.

† Book Second.