

Whether this design was duly punished by death is a question for political casuists. It is certain that in England no king would have been forgiven who had sought to recover his throne by the use of foreign armies. Wordsworth undoubtedly held and maintained that the coalitions formed before the time of Napoleon for the armed restoration of the *ancien régime* ought not to have received the help of England. But if Wordsworth expected the redemption of the world from the triumph of justice and entertained an unquenchable faith in freedom as understood in England, and as he believed it to be practised in Switzerland, he had in 1802, and probably earlier, adopted a great part, and one may fairly say in every sense the best part, of the teaching of Burke.¹ The influence of Burke, reinforced by the bloody injustice of which the Girondins were victims, had impressed once and for all upon him the futility and the folly of the attempt to introduce a reign of righteousness by defying the ordinary rules of public justice and of moral obligation. Nor can one doubt that from the same teacher he had also derived the conviction that a nation was not a mere agglomeration of individuals, and that human progress must throughout the whole world be closely connected with respect for national history and traditions.

To this union of ideas, which few men of Wordsworth's generation could easily combine, is due a great deal of his statesmanlike strength. His early republicanism enabled him to see that the French Revolution conferred, in spite of the tremendous evils with which it was accompanied, some real blessings upon mankind. The

¹ For Wordsworth's discriminating appreciation of Burke, see p. 68, *post*.