

And justice labours in extremity—
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny! (1811.)¹

Wordsworth himself makes it his first title to fame as a poet and a patriot that he never shrunk from hope in the worst moment of those evil days of Napoleon's glory, and he links hope with the love of virtuous liberty and with a solemn curse on those who gazed on prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye. And he is assuredly right. From the years between the Peace of Amiens to the battle of Waterloo (1802-1815) the one thing needed by all Englishmen was the hope which is an absolute necessity for the maintenance of national strength.² And Wordsworth has shown his deep insight into human nature by terming hope neither a pleasure nor a relief, but the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays for its own honour on man's suffering heart. Herein he differs from most religious preachers even at their best. They have often attempted to guide men into paths of righteousness by an appeal to their fears, whilst Wordsworth appeals to the most sacred hope. That the duty of hope was difficult to perform during the Napoleonic wars is certain. It is at this moment, in spite of many encouragements, as arduous a duty as it was during the triumph of Napoleon. It is possible that we may have to practise this duty more and more carefully as year follows year. No one can say how long the war will last. It is clear 'at each party to this terrible conflict has found the strength of his opponent greatly beyond what seemed reasonable expectation. One may venture to say that one reason why the United Kingdom and the firmly allied Dominions have not achieved all that

¹ Hutchinson, p. 321.

² See Scott's language, p. 75, *ante*.