

divinity, is what we wish to insist upon. We are now upon the age of the apotheosis of mere knowledge, of the deification of the intellect, and the consequent eclipse of faith; the age when refined literature, and even the most sacred arts, it is asserted, must conform or languish; the age when faith must be suspected as credulity, when sentiment, fancy, feeling are to be suppressed and abandoned, as fit for the infancy only and not the manhood of the world. This means, to some, that the loftiest faculties of our nature are to be ignored, to their perishing; and that things we should know as most real are to be discredited as venerable hallucinations that should deceive our fondness no more. If a man cares for this better part of his nature, above all poets let him attend to Wordsworth, for, if Tyndall and the scientists will teach him to open eye and mind,—very needful powers to secure,—our poet will teach him to lay open heart and soul, for the coming of still higher knowledge. In the domain of spirit, and of religious faith, we have accepted "Experience" as the decisive factor. Conviction lives where the God-life has entered. So it is not a brilliant aphorism our poet gives us. He rises with a light upon his brow; he says,—

"I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

Therefore he loves this "mighty being," this noble organism of Deity,—

"Well pleased to recognize,
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my mortal being."

In the greatest of his works he portrays the character of a soul, animate, sincere, receptive. To the outward eye the man is a wandering pedlar, homely, unromantic; to the poet's discernment he is a seer, capable of inspiration. From his childhood God through nature has been his teacher. Tending cattle on the hills,—

"He, many an evening, to his distant home
In solitude returning, saw the hills
Grow larger in the darkness, all alone
Behind the stars come out above his head,
And travelled through the wood, with no one near,
To whom he might confess the things he saw.
In such communion, not from terror free,
While yet a child, and long before his time,
He had perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness."