

effort to interpret her moods and being, while Wordsworth's whole history of the soul is tinged with and interpreted by the philosophy of Nature. Wordsworth thus may be said to have inaugurated a new departure in English poetry; thoughtful observation, careless of expression, is sometimes noble, but often rude; and studied seclusion tended unduly to self-exaltation. Poets *need* an external world, real and vivid; and the recluse is sure to be one-sided. So much for Wordsworth's theory and method. There is a modern and fatal restriction, precluding the possibility of such keen, excited, and exultant vision as Spenser's.

At Cambridge, Wordsworth naturally dreamed of those great poets who had there been received and nurtured in youthful days. As his spirit felt the beauty of the place he thought that

"Scarcely Spenser's self
Could have more tranquil visions in his youth,
Or could more bright appearances create
Of human forms with superhuman powers,
Then I beheld loitering on calm clear nights
Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth,"

an early indication of his intelligent affection (if we may so speak) for Spenser, whom, indeed, in after years, he and Coleridge read together with as much enthusiasm as Homer inspired in the hearts of Keats and Cowden Clarke.

The stanzas written in his pocket-copy of Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* are noteworthy as both a self-revelation and a remarkably successful imitation of the Spenserian style and stanza. *Artegal and Elidure* shows similarity in subject, tone and treatment. But the preface to *The White Doe of Rylstone*, in point of feeling, appreciation and sympathetic imitation is Wordsworth's best recorded tribute to Spenser. We quote the first stanza :—

"In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, Mary ! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's lay,
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, born of heavenly birth,
To seek her knight went wandering o'er the earth."