

in him is beautifully florid, if anything of his can be called so, may be outmatched by the beautifully simple. He may and does maunder in childish simplicity, but, at the same time, he can and does use the speech of children with unaffected majesty.

The next feature that these lines present is still more important. The images are selected from Nature. Wordsworth gives his reasons for following Nature in the Prelude, where lie the keys which unlock the secrets of his philosophy. Man and man's achievements pass away, but Nature abideth still; that was a cardinal belief of our poet, and it is, in essence, true. Fashion and fashionables die and are forgotten, together with those who pay them homage in verse. Violets and stars have long existed and are likely to remain long. People of many climes, of different habits of thought, of diverse modes of life, can be aroused by emotion which touches objects they all see. Wigs, powder, paint, patches, rapiers, and the voluminous literature of the eighteenth century are not near to our hearts now: they are viewed in distant perspective by those who will put on the spectacles of learning to behold them. What of humanity can be discovered there we yet honour, but we turn away from an "understanding age," which condemned the soliloquies of Shakespeare, as having less meaning and expression than "the neighing of a horse," or the "growling of a mastiff," because "correct" taste thus decreed. The practical geniality which the sixteenth century manifested now and again, when it looked on the face of Nature, the nineteenth caught in its own way, and used, in the case of Wordsworth, with different aim. But to return to the Prelude and its bearing on the point under discussion. Toward the close of Book XIII, the slow growing belief of the poet in regard to the stability of Nature and its effect on the mind is expressed in these lines:—

Also, about this time did I receive  
Convictions still more strong than heretofore,  
Not only that the inner frame is good,  
And graciously composed, but that, no less,  
Nature for all conditions wants not power  
To consecrate, if we have eyes to see  
The outside of her creatures, and to breathe  
Grandeur upon the very humblest face  
Of human life. I felt that the array