

Now speaking particularly with reference to Book and II, the central theme is a record of the poet's life from childhood to early middle age. Book I opens with his escape from London where he is 'a discontented sojourner' to Nature where he is 'free as a bird to settle where I will'. In Nature, he finds joy, peace liberty, 'trances of thought'. 'The sweet breath of heaven' gives him inspiration to write fresh and lofty poetry. His mind is filled with fancy and thoughts. Nature becomes a source of creative impulse - a fertile ground for creative



activity. In the company of Nature, his soul has a 'fair seed-time' in which he grows up alike by beauty and fear. Thus the poet owes a debt to Nature for his poetic inspiration. The poet, now, thinks to write some philosophical songs out of inspiration —

"My last and favourite inspiration mounts with yearning towards some philosophical songs of truth that cherishes our daily life."

The poet now describes how in his childhood his attachment to Nature is only a healthy boy's love for open air sports and pastimes. When he is a five-year old child, he loves bathing and basking. He plays upon the fields, leaps through the flowery groves and walks up and down the rocks, hills and woods.

But these sports do not go in vain. These are the fair seed-time. These enable him to gather and garner impressions and experiences. Now he grows up 'fostered alike by beauty and fear'. He indulges in games of rowing by boat and stealing of eggs of birds and is smitten by the feelings of guilt. His guilt feelings lead him into a belief that Nature ~~watches~~ watches him threatening —

the grim shape

Towered up between me and the stars still for so it seemed, with purpose of its own



And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me ”

The sight often troubles him in his dreams and sobers him. Thus turning from the coarser pleasure of his boyish days, he becomes grave and alike to the 'Presences of Nature.'

His initial sports and passion turn into his abiding love for Nature —

How Nature by extrinsic passion first
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,
And made me love them ”

Finally Nature begins 'to impregnate and to elevate the mind.' Thus Book I closes with his abiding faith in the unfailing guidance of Nature.

Again in Book II, Wordsworth tells us how instead of admiring Nature passively, he begins to look at Nature through the modifying powers of his mind. Now the sun seems to him enveloped with heavenly splendour. He experiences with his visionary eyes — "An auxiliar light / Came from my mind which on the setting sun / Bestowed new splendour." He is now seventeen years old and realises divine in Nature — " . . . I am content / With my own modest pleasures and have lived / With God and Nature communing."

After this brief analysis made above, it is now clear that Wordsworth



says all about himself, about his growing and deepening love for nature and about the gradual poetic growth of his mind. 'The Prelude' traces a gradual poetic growth of his mind from sensuousness to serious reflection, from a poet of description of beauty, colour, joy and rapture to a seer, visionary and mystic. To quote J.C. Grierson and J.C. Smith — "The Prelude is not Wordsworth's confessions; it is what it professes to be a record of growth of a poet's mind."