

Beauty of nature as appreciated by Wordsworth



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Poetry, which came much before prose in human history, has been a vehicle for the spiritual and social progress in man. The natural world with its great beauty and mystery has long been a source of inspiration to poets. The Romantic poets like Wordsworth and Keats, who were active in the nineteenth century, experienced the most inspiration through nature, which they captured in their poetry. William Wordsworth, especially, in his poetry, uses descriptions of nature to raise the mind to mystic heights. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the attitude of people changed - from an awe of nature to a desire to harness everything natural for the benefit of man, which the Romantic poets viewed with concern.

In his poems "The World is Too Much with Us" and "Nutting", William Wordsworth makes use of the portrayal of the beauties of nature to deplore the greed of man who is mindlessly exploiting nature.

Written in Germany, the poem "Nutting" evokes Wordsworth's remembrance of turbulent feelings he had when he had gone 'nutting' as a boy. William Wordsworth writes about a beautiful, pristine wood whose beauty and purity he had destroyed by his greed to gather the nuts. Continuing in the same vein, in "The World is too much with Us", the poet laments the heartlessness of humankind, which has come under the sway of unfathomable avarice, and which no longer is moved by the beauty of nature.

Wordsworth describes the secret, unexplored place he went to after clambering over rocks and stepping over tangled ferns in "Nutting". It is a

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place of perfect peace where the poet's heart experiences great joy. He describes the nook where he sits down among the flowers under the trees. The poem conveys a deep sense of peace and meditation attained by man by connecting with nature. The final lines of the poem convey the spiritual feeling that the beauty of nature inspired in the poet.

The symbolism of the plentiful hazelnut clusters which cover the trees alludes to the bounty of nature. The tattered old clothes the boy wears symbolizes the poverty of spirit of man. The poet describes how the unsullied nook is ravaged by the violent acts of the boy. Although he is now rich with the nuts he came to gather, he feels a twinge of guilt and pain when he gets a final glimpse of the virgin nook he has destroyed. The symbolism of the earth being exploited mercilessly and violently by man is evident in this poem. He tells us to cultivate a 'gentleness of heart' and exhorts us to be gentle with nature so that we are in harmony with it.

Wordsworth continues to regret the crass, materialistic attitude of man in his Petrarchan sonnet, "The World is too much with us." He cries out that we waste our resources by consuming too much. He states that we are not in tune with nature any longer as we have become too insensitive. Using the powerful imagery of howling winds which are gathered up like flowers, the poet conveys a sense of urgency in his poem. By portraying the sea as laying bare its bosom to the moon, he alludes to the connectedness of every great and small thing in nature.. He feels angry that the beauty, mystery and force of nature have no effect on the insensitive soul of man, who is out of harmony with nature. The mercenary goals of man disgusts him so much

that he wishes he were born as a pagan, who would have had a better communion with the sea and the land.

For Wordsworth, nature is not something to be consumed and exploited, but nature is something that leads man to the universal soul. He makes use of his great descriptive talents to portray that humanity is losing its connected feeling with nature by following the materialistic ideals of getting and spending.