

B.A - (English)

Subsidiary

Part - I

Paper - I

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The World is Too Much With Us! Critical Appreciation

'The World is Too Much With Us' is considered as one of the finest sonnets ever written by Wordsworth. Wordsworth was the leader of the Romantic school of poetry. He made a revolt against the 18th century poetic conventionalism. He discarded the artificiality of the 18th century manner and set up a new tradition in poetry. His poetry is well known for his new attitude to Nature. His eyes were wide open to the smallest change on the face of nature. Hardly any aspect of natural beauty ever escaped his notice. 'The World is too much with us' is one of his best poems. It reveals the poet's keen sensitiveness to every sight and sound of nature.

In this sonnet the poet slashingly attacks the grasping materialism of his age and the disgusting apathy and indifference of the people of his times to the beauties of nature. The poet condemns in very strong words the mercenary pursuits of the world. He points out that people of his times are engrossed in the amassing and accumulation

of wealth in and out of seasons without tending their
heart and soul for a moment to the beauties of nature.
The attitude of the people towards mercenary pursuits of
life appears nothing better than a 'sordid boon' and duty
game to the poet. He exhorts the people of his times to
give some time to the enjoyment of nature and find some
moments for appreciating the lovely and sublime aspects of
nature. In his attack on the worldliness of the people
of his time, Wordsworth anticipates Matthew Arnold who
made a scathing criticism of the materialistic tendencies
of his time in his 'Scholar Gipsy' and 'Thyrsis'.

The poem reveals Wordsworth's love
for the calm and quiet scenes of nature. The poet prefers
the calmness and peace in nature. In this poem he presents
the sight of the sea bathed in the soothing rays of the moon
in the night. He also gives us a picture of the silent
wind and waves of the sea that play like flowers in the
night. Both these pictures are of the mellowed and subdued
aspects of nature. Wordsworth never loved and liked the
strong and tumultuous aspect of nature, and everywhere
in his poems, we notice his love for calm and quiet
effects. Here, Wordsworth's love for the nature is seen -

"The sea that bears her bosom to the moon
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up gather'd now like sleeping flowers."

The poet's disgust with the Christian religion is also

poignantly presented in this poem. The poet does not like to follow a religion that sacrifices spirituality and love of nature at the altar of materialism. The rich variety and treasure of beauty present in Nature does not move us in any way. The poet feels exasperated at this mentality of men. He prefers to belong to the outworn creed of pagans to his present state. Pagans were non-believers in Christianity but they were lovers of Nature. The poet wishes to stand in a meadow in order to watch the glorious sight of Proteus rising from the sea. He imagines of Triton, the attendant of Sun-god, playing on his wreathed horn. The poem, therefore, presents Wordsworth's love for paganism and the classical gods of Greece. Wordsworth is not a Puritan like Milton to discard classical gods and goddesses as in *Paradise Lost Regained*.

The poet has borrowed words and images from the common speech. The poem is remarkable as it enables to know Wordsworth's attitude to Nature.