

should not surprise us therefore to find that his own circle of friends was so wide.

William Wordsworth was Whytehead's exemplar in poetry and was judged by him to be his pre-eminent influence, and 'the greatest master of the English language'. Whytehead no doubt met Wordsworth when, in the summer of 1837, he took a Cambridge reading party to Ambleside, only a short walk from Wordsworth's cottage at Grasmere. That summer he also shared the friendship of Frederick Faber from Oxford, another poet and great admirer of Wordsworth, and also a growing name in Tractarian theology. Wordsworth himself was increasingly sympathetic to the Oxford Movement by this time, and would have shared many of their sentiments. But Whytehead's strong evangelical upbringing did not allow him to dally with the pantheistic tendencies of the early Wordsworth. As he later wrote in the poem 'Freshwater', if he had once thought to 'ramble the tall cliffs' and commune with nature, he now hastened to the cottages of his parishioners for insight:

For I have learnt in human hearts
A deeper mystery lies,
Than e'en this wondrous earth imparts,
Or dwells in sea or skies.²²

His strong sense of supernatural revelation remained dominant, and if he harboured any naturalistic tendencies, they extended only to the human spirit, and not to 'mute and soulless things'.

From any point of view, his 'Installation Ode' for the induction of the Duke of Northumberland as Chancellor of Cambridge University—it was performed in the Senate House to the accompaniment of music composed by Thomas Attwood Walmisley—represents the peak of his attainment, and was, artistically, 'the finest of his poetical writings'.²³ But for sheer pathos it is difficult not to be moved by his lines in manuscript, simply headed 'To F.W.F. [Faber] Ship Tomatin. Ap^l. 1842':

Dreary and dark the sea around me lay,
The gleams of early sunshine all were gone,
And I bethought me of the visions gay
That from my heart had vanished, one by one:
And life, I said, henceforth will seem to me
All cold and cheerless, like the wintry sea.

Yet here the petrel and the albatross,
And the gray ice-bird, find their place of rest,
And sleep upon the billows as they toss,
Safe as the swallow in its warm-built nest
Beneath some English cotter's household eaves,
Deep hidden in the rustling ivy leaves.