



The World is Too Much With Us

By William Wordsworth

POET'S INTRODUCTION

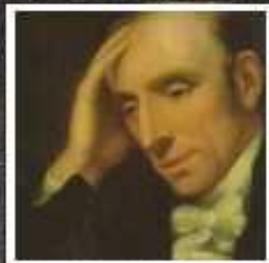
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (7 April 1770 - 23 April 1850) was an English Romantic poet. Wordsworth's magnum opus is generally considered to be The Prelude, a semi-autobiographical poem of his early years that he revised and expanded a number of times. It was posthumously titled and published by his wife in the year of his death, before which it was generally known as "the poem to Coleridge".



POEM'S INTRODUCTION

This poem was written by Wordsworth in the backdrop of the Industrial Revolution. He was so put off by the increasing industrialization that was taking place. The whole process of urbanization had a huge cost involved. The cost was nature. The rich kept becoming rich, and they gave no heed to growing deforestation. Wordsworth was a passionate romantic poet of his time and most of his writings were inspired by his love for nature.

William Wordsworth says that instead of living in a high-society, modern world, with up-to-date technology (blooming at the cost of nature), he would rather choose to be a low-born or 'pagan-born' and enjoy the scene of Proteus (the moon of the sea) rising from the sea.



The world is too much with us; late and soon,
getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
little we see in nature that is ours; we have
given our hearts away, a sordid boon! The sea
that bares her bosom to the moon; the winds that
will be howling at all hours, and are
up-gathered now like sleeping flowers; for
this, for everything, we are out of tune.

'THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US'

**The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our
powers;—**

**Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!**

The material world—that of the city, our jobs, our innumerable financial obligations—controls our lives to an unhealthy degree. We are always rushing from one thing to the next; we earn money one day just to spend it the next. The result of this is that we have destroyed a vital part of our humanity: we have lost the ability to connect with and find tranquillity in nature. In exchange for material gain, we have given away our emotions and liveliness.



'THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US'

**This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;**

This ocean that reflects the moonlight on its surface, and the peaceful, momentarily windless night, which is like flowers whose petals are folded up in the cold—these natural features still exist, but we just can't appreciate them. Our lives have nothing to do with the rhythms of the natural world. As a result, those rhythms have no emotional impact on us. My God, I wish that I were raised in a culture that worshipped many gods, though that religion is now outdated.



**Reflection
of Moon
in the Sea**

**Folded up
Petals of
the Flowers**



'THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US'

**So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.**

That way, standing on this pleasant patch of grass, I might be calmed and heartened by the image of the ocean before me. I might see the Greek god Proteus taking shape before my very eyes, or hear another Greek god, Triton, blow his legendary, spiral-grooved conch shell.

Proteus

The Greek sea god, Proteus, was (like the sea) capable of changing form in an instant.



TRITON: A GREEK GOD



IMPORTANT WORDS

‘Sordid Boon’ emphasizes the grossness of the blessings that mankind had received due to the emergence of technology. We were losing nature at the cost of automation that was taking place.

‘Pagan’ is a person born in low caste or creed. The one who has little or no religion and who delights in sensual pleasures and material goods, a hedonistic person.

‘Lea’ is an arable land used temporarily for grazing.

‘Proteus’ is a god of the sea as per Greek mythology. Some who ascribe a specific domain to Proteus call him the god of “elusive sea change”

‘Triton’ is a son of Poseidon described as a demigod of the sea with the lower part of his body like that of a fish.