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Enskying of Childhood in William Wordsworth's Ode: Intimations of Immortality from recollections of early childhood

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Abstract

Everything is product of Nature— nothing is possible without Creator— the Creator is the Nature and the Nature is the Creator; and the nature is covered under the celestial light during the childhood-days of a man. *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* is a glorification of the stage of the early childhood. Merriment of the child is a massive philosophy for us: the globe is a home of glee and ecstasy; and due to epicurean and avaricious freight, a man has demolished his own heirloom of Bliss. Changes of the state of a child into a boy, a youth and a man is indicative of the step by step decay of faith in the cognizance of the majesty of the Maker Who is all pervasive during childhood-days. Faith is persistent in the childhood that encloses this stage with heavenly-sunlit for the illumination of the Star whose ultimate gift is the Eternal-Bliss. Aim of the present article is to find theme of the enskying of childhood in Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. Immaculate brain of a child remembers but only engraved-script by the Father from the Heaven which dived into the depth of eternal delight.

Keywords: Childhood, Nature, Ode, Wordsworth, Bliss,

Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood is a peerless poem in the history of the 19th century Romantic School of Poetry of England by a Nature-Mystic poet, William Wordsworth (1770-1850). The present poem is a glorification of the stage of the early childhood revealing a mystic-love of Nature of the poet. Merriment of the child is a massive philosophy for us: the globe is a home of glee and ecstasy; and due to epicurean and avaricious freight, a man has demolished his own heirloom of Bliss. Wordsworth divulges in the poem the divine-consciousness of the childhood-stage of human-life. Natural changes of the body of the child is indicative of the step by step decay of

faith in the cognizance of the supremacy, splendor, dignity and majesty of the Maker Who is all pervasive during the days of childhood of human beings. Faith is persistent in the childhood that encloses this stage with heavenly-sunlit for the illumination of the Star whose ultimate gift is the Eternal-Bliss.

Immaculate brain of a child remembers but only engraved-script by the Father from the Heaven which dived into the depth of eternal delight. The present poem is against the 18th century poetry of Pope, Neo-Classical School of Poetry based on reason and good sense. It is an expression of the powerful personal feelings and emotions of the poet. The poet has glorified the childhood and opined the divinity in the childhood and that we are very close to God in this age. The philosophical poet has attempted to confirm that there is a proper communication between a new born child and that of Almighty. It is this childhood in which the sense of realization of the Supreme Power is complete and without any obscurity. In accordance with feelings and emotions of the poet, knowledge of divinity makes a child a great philosopher and a prophet.

Wordsworth's topmost poetry springs from his reminiscences of the childhood. In *My Heart Leaps Up*, a highly philosophical concept is presented by Wordsworth: the child is father of the man. Appearance of a child is always misleading in the sense that we see it as a baby. But behind it is the eternal pearl of consciousness in the eyes of the poet who tries to uncover before the reader as a child is directly connected with the Maker. It has vastly depth of meaning when Wordsworth metaphors a child as a father: father in the sense of realization of the Omnipotent who remembers all the time and not a single breath is taken by a child without the consciousness of the Omnipresent. Connection of a child is forever with the Omniscient Who guides for every affair of life. In *My*

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Heart Leaps Up, Wordsworth begins:

“The child is father of the man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.”¹

Wordsworth places the early childhood of man in a very lofty position: glorifying the child as the best philosopher, eye among the blind, mighty prophet and seer blest. He unfolds that the outward appearance of a child fails to reveal the immensity of his soul as he still retains his spiritual inheritance. Growing up child is gradually going far away from the celestial inheritance: as materially his physical development taking place, decaying realization of divinity has been noticing among the same. It is his childhood that reminds him of the splendor of the past, and the source where from he came.

The poet finds explanation of his imaginative power in the capacity of a child to generate and to visualize. While doing so, he has no sense of instance, or of the margins of our human state. He wishes to enlighten something extraordinarily particular and distinctive, and the best way in which he can make himself clear is to point out the example of the childhood. The critic explicates:

“Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep

Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,

Haunted forever by the eternal mind,—”²

There are three most celebrated mystic-poets in the 19th century English literature and Wordsworth is one

among them. The rest two are John Keats and P. B. Shelley. Keats realized the existence of Eternity in the “Beauty”, Shelley in the “Love”, and undoubtedly, Wordsworth in the “Nature”. Wordsworth sees the Super Power of the Universe in the Nature. For Wordsworth:

Everything is product of Nature

Nothing is possible without Creator the Creator is the Nature

And the Nature is the Creator.

In the landmark piece, i.e., *The Prelude: Book 1: Childhood and School-time*, Wordsworth explicates the supremacy and the splendor of childhood. Connection of a child is direct with the Heaven that is the home we came from in the world. All the prodigious obfuscates are trivial for a child as he offers a number of solutions which we cannot find till the end of life and suffering in the heat of pressure. Cheerfulness of a child is a massive philosophy for us that this world is a place of mirth and rapture; and due to epicurean and avaricious load, a man has destroyed his own inheritance of the Eternal-Bliss. Wordsworth divulges:

“Wisdom and Spirit of the universe!

Thou Soul that art the eternity of
thought! That giv'st to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion! not in vain, By
day or star-light thus from my first dawn

Of Childhood didst Thou intertwine for me”³.

A child is always very close to the nature who can see the divinity in it because he is far from worldly life of materialism. In the words of David Daiches: the poem “is a record of the profit and loss of growing-up”.

Wordsworth, “a worshipper of Nature”, expresses his powerful personal feelings and emotions on the childhood, and confirms that in his childhood he was well acquainted with the glory of the nature because everything

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in the nature seemed covered in a divine light. But it is a matter of regret that now he cannot see and realize the glory of the Supreme Power in the lap of the Nature. The first stanza of the poem discloses that the poet has a great longing for his childhood-days. Wordsworth asserts:

“There was a time when meadow; grove, and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,

To me did seem

Apparell’d in celestial light, ...

The things which I have seen I now can see no more”⁴

Anxiety, fever and pressure of the materialistic life of a growing up child: as a boy, youth and man make him far from the Home that was the origin. A child is always very keen to the native place where from he came, i.e. the Heaven. Being close to the heaven in the realization of a child makes him joyful all the time. This is the thirst of the poet for which he laments for the past glory and celestial power who have been in the capacity of a child. As a baby enters into childhood, there is no remarkable change but the changes take place when a child enters into the age of a boy, a youth and finally becomes a man.

A child is always able to enlighten himself under current of the consciousness of the celestial supremacy. The poet is “A lover of the meadows and the woods”, who reveals the beauty of divine-nature. The poet describes the rapturous beauty of “rainbow”, “rose”, “starry night”, “sunshine” and many thing of the nature. Wordsworth unfolds:

“The Rainbow comes and goes,

And lovely is the Rose,...”⁵

Beginning of the day is a glorious birth and the ending of the day is a symbol of death. Atmosphere is divine in the eyes of a child. Beauty of the month of May

is strangely magical in the experiences of a child. Children are enjoying beauty of the nature and harmonizing with the natural sounds and rhythms. Wordsworth remembers his past life of the childhood, and calls:

“Thou Child of joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd boy.”⁶

Mentioned lines remind us the narration of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, one of the best poets of the American literature when he reveals in the poem the glory and the power of the children. The poet explicates that children are the greatest source of the eternal joy. He compared children’s thoughts with “singing swallows” and “brooks of morning”. H. W. Longfellow unfolds:

“Come to me, O ye children!...

Ye open the eastern windows,

That look towards the sun,

Where thoughts are singing swallows

And the brooks of morning run.”⁷

Child is the recurrent theme of the present poem in which the poet sings of the glory of the childhood. Wordsworth misses his passed childhood-days, and expresses his madly love of it because it was glorious and the poet felt divinity in him during the experiences of those days. But he is disheartened because now in his manhood, he cannot enjoy such divine beauty of the nature as feelings of manhood pains him due to lack of the glory of the past days. Past days were full of the realization of the composition of the Creator in every inch of the creation.

Existence of human soul is one of the most important themes of the present metrical composition. Childhood unfolds the charismatic power of human Soul, and communicates properly with the existence of the Over-Soul, i.e., Nature. We all are children of God who can enjoy the divinity but most naturally in our childhood. The poet confirms:

“Heaven lies about us in our infancy!”⁸

Not only memory of the childhood is a great source of rapture for the philosopher but the centre of interest is affinity with divinity during the childhood stage

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of human life in which human beings are entirely aware of the Father, God Who is all powerful and source of mirth. Whole life and activities of a child is directed by the Almighty. He is unswervingly directed by the metaphysical power.

Five stages of the human life are described by the philosopher: the stages of a man's life of a "Babe", "Child", "Boy", "Youth" and "Man". Gradual progress of human Soul from the form of a baby to the form of a man has been disclosed by the prophet through the middle stages of a child, youth and boy.

Powerful personal feelings and emotions of the poet is impactful in which the philosophical prospect of the realization of the mystical vibration of childhood is the centre of interest in the present poem. Consciousness of divinity in all around the nature during childhood- days makes the poet keen to the passed days of the childhood that material progress into boyhood, adolescence and manhood have stirred the most for which the poet is nostalgic and longing for passed joyful days repeatedly.

At the time of the first stage of life of a baby, we are very much close to God and it is a period of complete awareness because we are far from sin, but last stage it is mentioned by the poet is the stage of manhood in which we are completely involved in the materialistic life of the world which is gradually far from divinity. We are busy in "dialogues of business", "love", and "strife".

The poem is an apt example of the Romantic School of Poetry which is against the Classical School of Poetry. Choice of diction is in accordance with the emotions and feelings. Language has a musical flow. It is an expression of the powerful feelings and emotions of the poet. It is simple and common which is easy to understand. Imagery is superb because the pictorial quality is remarkable. The poem is simple but the meaning is highly dignified and philosophical. Center of interest in the

poem is the childhood, and whole of the poem is the glorification of the childhood.

Mentioned lines, quotations, points and thoughts, and paragraphs speak of the glory of the child, and advocate that enskying of childhood in Wordsworth's Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood is the major theme of the poem. Entire phenomenal complications are trifling for the child as it offers endless solutions which we cannot find till the last breath of this life, and suffering from the hardships in the heat of the heaviness of unpleasantness of life.

Jollity of the child is an enormous philosophy for us that this planet is a place of delight and ecstasy; and due to epicurean and avaricious load, a man has destroyed his own inheritance of Bliss. Wordsworth divulges throughout the *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* the realization of the divinity during the childhood-stage of human-life. Gradual transformation of the body of the child is indicative of the step by step decay of faith in the realization of the power and the glory of the Maker Who is all pervasive during the days of the childhood of human beings. Faith is importunate in the childhood that envelops this stage with celestial light for the brightness of the Star whose ultimate contribution is the Eternal-Bliss.

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