

When I look forth at dawning, pool, Field, flock, and lonely tree, All seem to gaze at me
 Like chastened children sitting silent in a school;
 Their faces dulled, constrained, and worn, As though the master's ways Through the long
 teaching days
 Had cowed them till their early zest was overborne.
 Upon them stirs in lippings mere (As if once clear in call,
 But now scarce breathed at all)— “We wonder, ever wonder, why we find us here!
 “Has some Vast Imbecility, Mighty to build and blend, But impotent to tend,
 Framed us in jest, and left us now to hazardry?
 “Or come we of an Automaton Unconscious of our pains? . . . Or are we live remains
 Of Godhead dying downwards, brain and eye now gone?
 “Or is it that some high Plan betides, As yet not understood,
 Of Evil stormed by Good,
 We the Forlorn Hope over which Achievement strides?”
 Thus things around. No answerer I. . . . Meanwhile the winds, and rains, And Earth's old glooms
 and pains
 Are still the same, and Life and Death are neighbours nigh.

Notes:

What's the point of existence?

The voice of nature

Probably not about industrialization

But there's reference to a decline in nature

What's the relationship between nature and children

Nature seems worn out

Uses a weakened voice of nature to ask who made us?

No sense of immortality or salvation

Turns out he doesn't have answers; a common theme in this time period

After Apple Picking

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree Toward heaven still,
 And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
 Beside it, and there may be two or three
 5 Apples I didn't pick upon some bough. But I am done with apple-picking now. Essence of
 winter sleep is on the night, The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.
 I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight 10 I got from looking through a pane of glass
 I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough And held against the world of hoary grass.
 It melted, and I let it fall and break.
 But I was well
 15 Upon my way to sleep before it fell, And I could tell
 What form my dreaming was about to take. Magnified apples appear and disappear, Stem end
 and blossom end,
 20 And every fleck of russet showing clear. My instep arch not only keeps the ache,
 It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.
 I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend. And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
 25 The rumbling sound
 Of load on load of apples coming in.
 For I have had too much

Of apple-picking: I am overtired
Of the great harvest I myself desired.
30 There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch, Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
For all
That struck the earth,
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
35 Went surely to the cider-apple heap As of no worth.
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is. Were he not gone,
40 The woodchuck could say whether it's like his Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.

Notes:

A job left unfinished
The speaker could be a religious leader
Kind of resembles Neitzche's ideas of God
The word heaven being used might show that it has something to do with death (1)
Hoary- grey hair; frost
What does the sleep have to do with the poem?
A haunted sleep
What kind of sleep is he having?
A sense of decline: things falling, him going to sleep
a sense of anxiety or unrest
The ladder may have reference to Jacob's ladder in the bible
If the apple touches the earth it's done? The apple may have connotations to adam and eve?
What's the distinction between the sleeps?
Ones done really quickly. Can I really let go of this thing or will i just wake up and go back to work?

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre 1 The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall
apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, 2
5 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
10 Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi 3
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert A shape with lion body and the head of a
man,
15 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it

Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds. The darkness drops again; but now I know That
twenty centuries of stony sleep
20 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle, And what rough beast, its hour come round at
last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
–William Butler Yeats (1920)

Notes:

Relativism- what's good depends on where you're coming from?