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WORDSWORTH'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS
CRITICS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE
TO THE POEMS OF 1807.

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WORDSWORTH'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS CRITICS WITH
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE POEMS OF 1807

by

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Introduction

A poet's contemporaries can make the only effectual criticism of his work. Criticism and the poet's attitude towards it signify much about the poet, his poetry and his world, as well as about his critics and their criticism. Ideally, the balanced reception of perceptive criticism demands that poet and critic exercise complementary degrees of intelligence, insight, and integrity. Actually, however, imbalance between real and ideal affects both criticism and attitudes towards it.

A lifelong reviser of his work, William Wordsworth (1770-1850) lived among outstanding figures of the age. Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, and Scott were prominent in the Wordsworth circle. Widening circumstances of that circle encompassed the poet's connections with the Beaumonts, Davy, DeQuincey, Hazlitt, Crabb Robinson, Mackintosh, Kenyon, Rogers, Taylor, and Isabella Fenwick. In current periodicals, Jeffrey, Lockhart, and Wilson reviewed Wordsworth's poetry. His satirists included Byron, Landor, and Hunt; and besides the author of the Simpliciad, his best-known parodists were Shelley, Keats, and John Hamilton Reynolds. Few poets associated with as many qualified critics as did Wordsworth. Fewer writers responded as continually as he to the criticism of his contemporaries.

From his early years, Wordsworth evinced interest in his own creative processes and sensitivity to the reactions of his critics. The poet's youthful literary efforts resulted in the publication of An

Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches (1793) of which he writes in 1794, "It was with great reluctance I huddled up those two little works and sent them into the world in so imperfect a state."¹ Wordsworth, who read an early draft of a fragment, "Guilt and Sorrow," to a friend, later comments that he has so altered the piece that it is now like another work altogether.²

From the Wordsworth-Coleridge annus mirabilis, 1797-1798, came the first edition of Lyrical Ballads. When this work was in press, Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy, with Coleridge and a neighbor embarked in September 1798 for a German sojourn, originally designed to prepare them for scholarly work. Returning to England in May 1799, the Wordsworths shared the home of their friends, the Hutchinsons. The brother and sister moved to Town End, Grasmere, on December 20, and entered upon the "Dove Cottage" period, rich in inspirational setting, poetic activity, and literary associations. Coleridge, who had remained in Germany until July 1799, settled his family in Greta Hall, Keswick, in August 1800, to be in the vicinity of the Wordsworths.

During the early Grasmere residence, the Wordsworth correspondence contains significant references to the poet's attitude toward his work.

¹ The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years, 1787 - 1805, ed. Ernest de Selincourt, rev. Chester L. Shaver (New York, 1967) #40, p. 120 (W.W. to William Mathews, May 23 [1794]) -- hereafter cited as EY.

² EY, #54, p. 159 (W.W. to the Revd Francis Wrangham, Novbr 20 [1795]).

To Coleridge's friend, Humphry Davy, whom Wordsworth had not yet met, the poet sent some poems which he planned to include in the 1800 Lyrical Ballads. In an accompanying note, Wordsworth asks Davy to proofread the material, and to attend particularly to punctuation.³ And in the Wordsworths' joint letter to Mary Hutchinson, Dorothy reports that whereas reworking a poem renders her brother ill, the act of fresh composition does not tax him so much.⁴

Between 1798 and 1807, years of poetic maturing, Wordsworth made successive replacements for the original "Advertisement" of Lyrical Ballads. He expanded the 1800 Preface to include, in the 1802 and 1805 editions respectively, a section beginning "What is a Poet?" and an appendix on Poetic Diction. There had been considerable criticism about the literary theory and practice in Lyrical Ballads. Much of this reached Wordsworth when he was attempting to express poetically the philosophical ideals envisioned for him by Coleridge. By 1805, Wordsworth had completed the first version of his long "Poem to Coleridge," and had written many of the 115 short pieces published in May 1807 as Poems in Two Volumes.

Wordsworth announced to Walter Scott on November 10, 1806: "I am

³ EX, #135, p. 289 (W.W. to Humphry Davy, [29] July [1800]).

⁴ Ibid., #160, p. 332 (D.W. and W.W. to Mary Hutchinson, April [29] [1801]).

going to the Press with a Volume which Longman will find easy to convey to you: it will consist entirely of small pieces and I publish with great reluctance; but the day when my long work will be finished seems farther and farther off and therefore I have resolved to send this Vol. into the world. It would look like affectation if I were to say how indifferent I am to its present reception; but I have a true pleasure in saying to you that I put some value upon it; and hope that it will one day or other be thought well of by the Public"⁵ That Poems in Two Volumes represents the work of an intensely creative period argues its poetical significance. This widely criticized 1807 work extended Wordsworth's reputation as a poet far beyond that of the experimentalist and innovator of Lyrical Ballads.

With particular reference to the Poems of 1807, the present study purposes to examine various attitudes which Wordsworth displayed towards his critics. In a description of the contents of Poems in Two Volumes (1807), Chapter I enumerates some reasons why the poems prove representative for such examination. Besides a general consideration of types of poems and techniques of style, this chapter cites some strengths and weaknesses in individual poems.

The second chapter, "Wordsworth's Appreciation of Coleridge's Criticism, Pre-Publication," indicates degrees to which the mutual

⁵ The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Middle Years, 1806 - 1820, ed. Ernest de Selincourt (New York, 1939) I, #280, 74 (W.W. to Walter Scott, November 10, 1806) -hereafter cited as MY.

interest between the friends influenced the composition of Poems in Two Volumes. The poet constantly sought the critical opinions of Coleridge, who, although he specifically criticized comparatively few of the works before their publication, showed continual interest in Wordsworth's "small poems." Pre-publication criticism by Coleridge inheres chiefly in his suggestions regarding poetic ideas and expression. Wordsworth's reactions to the suggestions indicate his friend's respect for Coleridge's criticism of the 1807 poems in process.

Chapter III, "Wordsworth's Reaction to the Criticism of Other Friends and Acquaintances," mentions critical pressures exerted upon the poet by casual acquaintances, old and new friends and enemies, inquirers, dissenters, and admirers. For example, Lamb's affection for Coleridge colors his critical opinions of Wordsworth's poetry; and Southey's respective roles as an original Pantisocrat, provider for the Coleridge family, and friend to Wordsworth variously affect his critical function. This chapter examines the poet's attitudes toward those whose personal, social, and professional connections sometimes occasioned and often conditioned his attitudes. These attitudes include the poet's love of his family, his early dependence upon the Beaumonts, his appreciation of Southey and Lamb, his affection for Crabb Robinson, and his ambivalence toward DeQuincey.

Chapter IV, "Wordsworth's Aloofness from the Criticism of Distinguished Contemporaries," outlines the connection between Wordsworth and members of the younger generation of poets, Shelley, Byron, and

Keats, and with the essayists, Landor, Hazlitt, and Hunt. It seems helpful that the reader be generally aware of family and friendly connections among Lamb, Hazlitt, and Landor, and among Keats, Reynolds, Hood, Haydon, Hunt, Shelley and Byron. It also seems paradoxical that despite the proximity of such distinguished contemporaries Wordsworth maintained a curious aloofness from them and an apparent indifference to their critical opinions of his poetry.

Chapter V, "Wordsworth's Sensitivity to Criticism in Periodicals," traces contemporary criticism appearing in periodical reviews of 1807 poems. Although Wordsworth vigorously protested the harsh reception of his works by reviewers, he and his family continually professed their contempt for periodical criticism. Nevertheless, the poet seems to have been unfailingly sensitive to criticism appearing in periodicals. He evinced this sensitivity by frequent references to reviews and by occasional concessions to the opinions of reviewers.

Upon occasion, Wordsworth alluded to contemporary parody, considered in Chapter VI, "Wordsworth's Response to Criticism in Parody." Virtually line by line, the poet replied textually to The Simpliciad, a parody appearing anonymously shortly after the publication of Poems in Two Volumes (1807). This chapter also contains a brief sampling of different types of parody and some indications of the poet's attitude towards parodies.

Chapter VII, "Wordsworth's Interest in Coleridge's Post-Publication

Criticism," begins with criticism in The Friend, 1808-1809, of fewer than a dozen among the poems of 1807. It also includes criticism in Biographia Literaria, 1817, which mentions thirty-four of the 1807 poems. Quantitatively restricted, the criticism in Biographia Literaria involves qualitative significance. In addition to textual emendations in the 1820 and subsequent edition of the poetry, Wordsworth's reactions appear in the form of general statements, later correspondence, and in the Fenwick notes.

A concluding section, reviewing trends and patterns of the poet's attitudes towards his critics, indicates the wide range of criticism to which the poet was exposed.

Appendix I contains the titles of the 115 poems of 1807 in the order of their appearance in the original volumes. Probable dates of composition, given as accurately as they have been determined, follow each title. A third column lists the topical category under which each poem has been classified from the 1850 edition on.

Appendix II lists in each of the Poems of 1807 Wordsworth's use of phrases showing direction. Enumerating occurrences of repetition and repetitive couplings in each poem, this section also records the poet's use of three or more parallels and series of words, phrases, clauses, and fragments.

To consider the attitude of Wordsworth toward his critics is to study various facets of the poet, his poetry, his critics, their criticism, as well as relevant aspects of life in the nineteenth-century literary world.

CHAPTER I

The 1807 Poems

The 1797-1807 decade witnessed some of the most significant events in the life of William Wordsworth. Raisley Calvert's legacy, in 1795, had enabled the poet to make a home with his sister, Dorothy, at Racedown in Dorsetshire. Wordsworth's meeting with Coleridge, also in 1795, culminated in their annus mirabilis, 1797-8, when the friends lived within three miles of each other in Alfoxden and Nether Stowey. While Lyrical Ballads was in the press, the two Wordsworths and Coleridge travelled to Germany. Some months after their return, the poet and his sister began, in December, 1799, an eight-year residence at Town End, Grasmere, in what was later known as Dove Cottage. Coleridge brought his family to Greta Hall, Keswick, thirteen miles from Grasmere, in August, 1800.¹ During the summer of 1802, preceding William's marriage to Mary Hutchinson, the brother and sister visited Annette Vallon, mother of Wordsworth's daughter, Caroline, in France.

In this year also, the new Lord Lowther signified his intention of settling his predecessor's long-standing debt to the Wordsworth family. William and Dorothy made a tour of Scotland in 1803; Coleridge departed, in 1804, for Malta, where he hoped to regain his health; and in February, 1805, the Wordsworth's brother, John, died at sea. The births of William

¹ Mary Moorman, William Wordsworth, a Biography, The Early Years 1770 - 1803 (Oxford, 1957), I, 478 -- hereafter cited as Moorman.

and Mary Wordsworth's three elder children, John (1803), Dorothy (1804), and Thomas (1806), occurred during these years. This decade also marked the poet's early association with Southey, Lamb, DeQuincey, Hazlitt, and Walter Scott, his exchange of literary opinions with these and other contemporaries, and his enjoyment of the beneficence of Sir George and Lady Beaumont, whom he met through Coleridge.

For approximately twenty years after their meeting, the lives of Wordsworth and Coleridge were so closely connected that it is virtually impossible to discuss either apart from their relationship. Coleridge, who had left England in April, 1804, returned and took up residence with Wordsworth during the winter and spring of 1806 - 1807, when the poet was preparing his Poems in Two Volumes (May, 1807) for the press. With few exceptions, the composition of these poems belongs to the significant 1797 - 1807 decade. The 1807 volumes, Wordsworth's first poetic publication since the fourth edition of Lyrical Ballads (1805), contain 115 of the "small poems" which Coleridge had feared might impede his friend's great work.² By March, 1804, at the urgent request of Coleridge, the Wordsworths had transcribed as many unpublished short poems as William had composed and sent them to their friend, then awaiting embarkation for Malta.³ These poems constituted more than one-half of

² Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford, 1956 -) II, #525, 1013 (To Thomas Poole, Oct. 14, 1803) -- hereafter cited as CL.

³ CL, II, #553, 1060 (To The Wordsworths, Feb. 8, 1804); #558, 1065 (To The Wordsworths, Feb. 16, 1804).

what later appeared in the 1807 volumes.

Whether, when, and how to publish these short poems had long been under discussion among the Wordsworths. Dorothy told Lady Beaumont, in November, 1805, that William had decided against publishing.⁴ On November 7 and 10, 1806, in letters to Wrangham, Scott, and Beaumont, the poet mentioned bringing out one volume of small verses.⁵ Only two weeks later, Dorothy wrote to her friend, Catherine Clarkson, "Wm is going to publish two smaller volumes and is to have 100 Guineas for 1,000 Copies."⁶ In November also, William informed Wilkinson, "I have in the press a poetical publication that will extend to a couple of small volumes, 150 pages or so a-piece;..."⁷

Poems in Two Volumes, 1807, includes many of Wordsworth's well-known titles and passages. Broader range of subject matter and freer form of expression characterize and distinguish these poems from Lyrical Ballads. The sixty-nine poems in Volume I are arranged in four groups: 1) Seventeen lyrics and short pieces; 2) Five 1802 "Poems Composed during a Tour, Chiefly on Foot"; 3) An 1802 "Prefatory Sonnet" introducing twenty "Miscellaneous Sonnets"; and 4) Twenty-six "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty".

⁴ EY, #283, p.636 (D.W. to Lady Beaumont, November 4, [1805]).

⁵ MY, I, #279, 72 (W.W. to Francis Wrangham, Nov, 7, 1806); #280, 74 (W.W. to Walter Scott, November 10, 1806); #281, 78 (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, November 24, 1806).

⁶ Ibid., I, #284, 86 (D.W. to Catherine Clarkson, November 24 [1806]).

⁷ Ibid., I, #285, 87 (W.W. to Thomas Wilkinson, November [1806]).

Four Sections in Volume II, containing forty-six poems, include: 1) Nine "Poems Written during a Tour in Scotland"; 2) Thirteen poems labelled "Moods of My Own Mind"; 3) "The Blind Highland Boy" followed by twenty-two poems; and 4) "Ode" on immortality. There are forty-eight sonnets in Volume I and five single sonnets, in addition to a four-part sonnet sequence, in Volume II.

The length of individual 1807 poems extends in Volume I from "I travell'd among unknown Men" (16 lines) to "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves" (128 lines) and "Resolution and Independence" (147 lines). Volume II pieces range from "My heart leaps up" (nine lines) to "The Blind Highland Boy" and the immortality "Ode" (205 and 206 lines, respectively).

The poet's juvenilia, An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches (1793), were long poems as was the "Poem to Coleridge" (1805), unpublished during Wordsworth's lifetime, and The Excursion (1814). Prior to 1815, the poet's short pieces appeared either among the thirty-seven poems in Lyrical Ballads or in the 115 Poems in Two Volumes. Writing to Coleridge in early May, 1809, Wordsworth enumerated categories for "my published Poems, and the arrangement which I mean to place them in if they are ever republished during my lifetime." These headings pertained to childhood, fraternal emotion, natural objects and their influence on the mind, the naming of places, social and civic duties, maternal, connubial, or parental feeling, and old age.⁸

⁸ MY, I, #375, 307-9 (W.W. to S.T. Coleridge [Early May, 1809]).

With his first collective edition, a two-volume work published in March, 1815, the poet introduced his system of topical classification. Among the twelve categories, nine covering the 1807 poems were Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood, Poems Founded on the Affections, Poems of the Fancy, Poems of the Imagination, Poems Proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection, Miscellaneous Sonnets, Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty, Poems Referring to the Period of Old Age, and Epitaphs and Elegiac Poems. Unclassified at the end of the edition was the immortality "Ode". No 1807 poem appeared under the remaining three 1815 headings, Juvenile Pieces, Poems on the Naming of Places, and Inscriptions.

Wordsworth extended his system of classification through subsequent collective editions: 1820 (four volumes), 1827 (five volumes), 1832 (four volumes), 1836-7 (six volumes), 1845 (one volume), and 1849-50 (six volumes). In a double column following the titles of the poems in 1815 and 1820 editions, tables of contents list both composition and publication dates. Despite such listing, identification of individual poems as to chronology or publication became increasingly complicated. The heading Juvenile Pieces was substituted in 1845 by Poems Written in Youth. In 1850, the fourteen classifications under which the 1807 poems were subsumed had been expanded to include Miscellaneous Poems, River Duddon Sonnets, Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803, and Evening Voluntaries, in addition to those above listed. The immortality "Ode" remained separate at the end of the poetical works.

For a consideration of "Wordsworth's Attitude toward his Critics with Particular Reference to Poems in Two Volumes, 1807," it is useful to note the poet's original (1807) and ultimate (1850) placement of the poems, their generally accepted composition dates, and their appearance in various topical categories between those dates. The order, arrangement, and rearrangement of the poems imply external revision, analogous in a sense to the textual alterations which constitute a significant element of the poet's response to criticism. A brief survey of the thematic and stylistic aspects of the 1807 poems also suggests why Poems in Two Volumes provides appropriate material for the study of criticism and attitudes towards it.

It is relatively easy to trace the textual development of Wordsworth's poems. Professor Ernest de Selincourt and Miss Helen Darbishire brought out a definitive edition in five volumes, 1940-1949 (revised from 1952-1958 and reprinted in 1963); and the deSelincourt 1926 edition of The Prelude was edited by Miss Darbishire in 1959 and contains facing texts of 1805 and 1850 versions.

Among other advantages, the definitive edition enables the student to survey the entire text and the apparatus criticus which traces complete textual variants. From 1815 on, the editions of Wordsworth's work were rendered increasingly unwieldy as a result of the poet's expanding system of classification. Generally accepted composition dates appear under the titles of all poems in the deSelincourt-Darbishire volumes. But the poems are grouped under topical classifications, an arrangement

rendering it difficult readily to locate a particular 1807 poem. Unless a reader knows the category under which a specific poem appears, he must consult the title index or the index of first lines at the end of each volume. To trace the development of individual pieces in Poems in Two Volumes from 1807 to 1850, one must first locate each poem published in 1807 and placed in one of the four volumes of the definitive text.

R. I. Brett and A. R. Jones edited a facsimile edition (1963) of Lyrical Ballads including successive 1800, 1802, and 1805 Prefaces. At present (1969) Mr. Jonathan Wordsworth, a collateral descendant of the poet, is editing the 1807 poems, republished for the first time as a unit in 1897 by Thomas Hutchinson. Hutchinson's edition provided detailed background commentary on the chronology and structure of the 1807 poems.

Miss Helen Darbishire brought careful study of the text to her 1914 edition of Poems in Two Volumes, reprinted in 1952.⁹ In conjunction with the definitive texts, this edition provides for close consideration of the 115 poems. In Miss Darbishire's 1807 edition, the editor's preface and the table of contents precede notes on the text (V-VI), a summary of Wordsworth's life (VII-XIX), and a comparison of Lyrical Ballads and Poems in Two Volumes (XXX-LII). Volumes I and II, bound together, appear in the form of a reprint of the original edition. Following the table of contents and the text in the first volume (pp. 6 - 160), the poet's notes

⁹ Poems in Two Volumes, 1807, ed. Helen Darbishire (Oxford, [1914] 1952, 2nd ed) -- hereafter cited as 1807.

appear (163 - 166). After the title page (169) in volume II, there are tables of contents (171 - 173), poems (177 - 332), notes (335 - 344), index of titles (346 - 348) and index of first lines (349 - 352). General notes (353 - 458), covering material in both volumes, precede Appendix I, "Wordsworth's text" (459 - 463); Appendix II, "Metres" (464 - 470), and Appendix III, "Transcripts from Sara Hutchinson's Notebook" (471 - 482).

As listed in Appendix I in this paper (pp. 284-8), the 115 poems published in 1807 underwent changes in classifications throughout the poet's years of revision. Among the first seventeen poems in Volume I, "The Horn of Egremont Castle," listed under "Poems of the Imagination" in 1815, was, from 1845 on, the only 1807 title included with "Miscellaneous Poems." "Among all lovely things my Love had been" or "The Glow-worm" was never reprinted by Wordsworth.¹⁰

The heading, "Poems Composed during a Tour, Chiefly on Foot," was discontinued after 1807. "With how sad steps....," among "Poems of the Fancy" in 1815, appeared thereafter among "Miscellaneous Sonnets." "Alice Fell," placed in 1815 with "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood," and omitted in editions from the 1820 through 1832, reappeared in 1836 among "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood."¹¹

¹⁰ The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire (Oxford, 1952) II, 466, 531 - 2 -- hereafter cited as PW.

¹¹ Ibid., I, 359

In 1815, there were twenty-three poems among the revised "Miscellaneous Sonnets." Besides the "Prefatory Sonnet" these included twenty of the original poems as well as the sonnet beginning "Degenerate Douglas," formerly listed under "Poems Written during a Tour in Scotland," and "Admonition," transferred from Volume II. But the three Michelangelo poems, "To Sleep" ("O gentle Sleep," "A flock of sheep," and "Fond Words") remained in the category of "Miscellaneous Sonnets" with the second and third poems interchanged after 1807. After 1815, "To the River Duddon" and "Written in very early youth" were removed from this section. "To the River Duddon" was included, in 1820, with a collection of "River Duddon Sonnets" published for the first time in that year; "Written in very early youth" was classified with "Miscellaneous Sonnets" through 1845, after which it was listed under a new heading, "Poems Written in Youth."

"Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty," originally numbering twenty-six poems, were reprinted in 1815 in their 1807 order. Between 1820 and 1850, however, these were listed as "Political Sonnets" and as "Poems Dedicated to Liberty and Independence." After 1820, "Six Thousand Men" or "Sonnet in the Pass of Killicranky," removed from "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty," was placed with "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803." Added to the remaining twenty-five poems were two sonnets, "To Thomas Clarkson" and "A Prophecy," formerly in Volume II.

Individual "Poems Written during a Tour in Scotland" appeared in various categories after 1807. "Rob Roy's Grave" and "Address to the

"Sons of Burns" were listed in 1815 and 1820 among "Poems Proceeding From Sentiment and Reflection." "The Solitary Reaper," "Stepping Westward," "Glen-Almain," "To a Highland Girl," and "Yarrow Unvisited" were labelled "Poems of the Imagination." "The Matron of Jedborough" was classified among "Poems Referring to the Period of Old Age," and the sonnet beginning "Degenerate Douglas" was placed among "Miscellaneous Sonnets." In 1827, along with "The Blind Highland Boy," commonly dated 1802, and "Sonnet in the Pass of Killicranky," the nine poems originally classified as "Poems Written during a Tour in Scotland," reappeared as "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803." This later heading also included the two 1805 compositions, "Rob Roy's Grave" and "Address to the Sons of Burns."

"Moods of My Own Mind" disappeared as a topical heading after 1807. The poet distributed the poems among the categories listed above (pg 1-3). Of thirteen titles in this group, "The Sun has long been set" was omitted until 1836 when it was the only 1807 poem classified among "Evening Voluntaries," and "The Sparrow's Nest," was included among "Poems Founded on the Affections" from 1815 until 1850 when it appeared among "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood."

"The Blind Highland Boy," listed under "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood" in 1815 and 1820, appeared from 1827 on among "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803." Included with "Poems Proceeding From Sentiment and Reflection" through 1832, "To A Young Lady" was afterwards placed with "Poems of the Imagination." After 1832, the third of the daisy poems, "Bright Flower," was classified with "Poems Proceeding

from Sentiment and Reflection." The sonnet beginning "Though narrow be that Old Man's cares," appearing in 1815 among "Poems Referring to the Period of Old Age," has since been listed under "Miscellaneous Sonnets."

The 1797 - 1807 decade, encompassing a dramatic period in Wordsworth's life, coincided with an important phase in his artistic development. Both difference and distance between the 1798 and 1807 publications measure the poet's growth during a significant time in his creative activity. Character presentation in Lyrical Ballads and in Poems in Two Volumes 1807 indicates Wordsworth's gradual shift in emphasis from observation to evaluation as well as his extensive use of functional characters to achieve varying poetic effects. Innovative characters in Lyrical Ballads testify to the plain man's place in poetry. However, in the individual poems, Simon Lee, Martha Ray, Harry Gill and Goody Blake, Ruth, and Michael appear rather than perform. As Wordsworth suggests in his notes on "The Thorn," the impact of such characters depends largely upon the role assumed by the poetic voice or the persona.¹² On the other hand, the poet's treatment of character in the 1807 poems tends to highlight the individuality of the characters. Parents, children, young girls, beggars, gipsies, and heroes of private and public life who people Poems in Two Volumes are significant, if not always central, elements in their respective poetic vehicles. In general, Lyrical Ballads invites observation of the colorful character pageantry. Poems in Two Volumes, 1807 frequently demands that the reader recognize the intrinsic dignity and particular functions of the characters.

¹² PW, II, 384, 513.

There is considerable repetition and variation of themes among the 1807 poems. Three poems introduce bereaved mothers; three are translations of Michelangelo's Italian poems; three poems each have as subjects dogs, sleep, the daisy, the celandine, and the butterfly. Poems mentioning birds specify the linnet, cuckoo, redbreast, skylark, nightingale, and the sparrow's nest. Seven poems deal specifically with travellers. Wordsworth's numerous heroes include private citizens like Wilkinson and Clarkson, public figures like Toussaint L'Ouverture and Fox, and general types like the happy warrior and the leech-gatherer. There are several references to "poet" and to "friend." The word "nun" appears in four 1807 poems: clouds are "Unhappy nuns," (5) in "With how sad steps..."; the "Prefatory Sonnet" begins "Nuns fret not..."; 'It is a beauteous Evening ...' refers to evening as "...quiet as a Nun/Breathless with adoration ..." (2-3); and "To the Daisy," ("With little here"), compares the flower to a "Nun demure of lowly port" (17). Variations of "pilgrim" recur. In "Resolution and Independence" the leech-gatherer appears "with feet and head/Coming together in pilgrimage" (73-4); ships are "like Pilgrims," (11) in the 1803 sonnet beginning, "Where lies the Land ...?"; the daisy ("To the Same Flower") is "A Pilgrim bold..." (2); and in "To Thomas Clarkson," the phrase "this pilgrimage sublime" refers to the anti-slavery cause.

In order to trace the occurrence of repetition in Poems, 1807, Appendix II (pp. 289-300) lists simple repetition as well as repetition in phrases and in series. Some of these effect continuity, others reinforce the original ideas. In any case, they are stylistically noteworthy.

Many of the poems involve complex subject-object relationships which penetrate reality to vision, deepen interest through interpretation, and explore in each man the meaning of man. The following examples, representing all sections from each volume, signify to some extent the range, depth, and variety of theme and treatment among the poems.

Among the first group of poems in Volume I, the "Character of the Happy Warrior" (1806), outlining the poet's ideal of greatness was written soon after the deaths of Captain John Wordsworth on February 5, 1805, and of Lord Nelson on October 21, 1805.¹³ Seventy of the eighty-five lines are in heroic couplets, and the remaining fifteen lines are arranged, at intervals, in five triplets. The initial couplet asks, "Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he/Whom every Man in arms should wish to be?" Lines 3-34, beginning, " - It is the generous Spirit, ..." and ending, "He fixes good on good alone, and owes/To virtue every triumph that he knows:" describe the hero's personal attributes. In the middle section of the poem, lines 35-64 mention his qualities of leadership: " - Who, if he rise to station of command,/Rises by open means: ..." (35-6). Lines 65-83 summarize the warrior's noble characteristics: "'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,/ ... / Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,/ Plays, in the many games of life, that one/ Where what he most dost value must be won;" (65,69-71). A concluding couplet responds to the opening question, with "This is the happy Warrior; this is He/Whom every Man in arms should wish to be." (84-5). Despite obvious generalizations and a certain ponderousness of tone, this poem exemplifies the poet's application of noblesse oblige.

¹³ PW, IV, 419.

"Resolution and Independence" or "The Leech Gatherer" (1802) contains twenty-one modified Spenserian stanzas, adaptable to occasional alterations of rhyme and rhythm. A psychological pattern includes observation of the morning scene (1-21) -- "All things that love the sun are out of doors;" (8); generalization evoked by the poet-persona's changing mood (22-49) -- "We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;/ But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness" (48-9); meeting with the leech-gatherer (50-91); dialogue (92-133); and the statement of the persona's resolution (134-147) -- "God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;/ I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor." (146-7). These intermingling currents of reflection, comment, conversation, and conviction illustrate a meeting of mood and mind, landscape and life.

Reflective calm underlies many "Miscellaneous Sonnets" in Volume I. In "To Sleep" ("A flock of sheep"), the beauty of the morning is implied in "Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?" (12). "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" contains an often quoted reference to morning: "This City now doth like a garment wear/ The beauty of the morning ..." (4-5). A sonnet about death's supremacy beginning with an allusion to majesty, "Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne," ends with the poignancy of "A lovely Beauty in a summer grave."

Numerous poems among "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty" emphasize nostalgia for the past. Among these, "On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic" opens, "Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee". In "Lines Written in London, 1802," this sentiment recurs, analogously, with "Plain living and high thinking are no more:/ The homely beauty of the good old

cause/ Is gone;..." (11-13). The sonnet "London, 1802", begins, "Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:/ England hath need of thee: ..." Another, "England, the time is come ...," contains the lines, "...we have seen/ Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been/ But for they trespasses; ..." (4-6). Often, nostalgia for the past combines with resolution in the present and hope for the future. On this note, "To Toussaint L'Ouverture" concludes, "Thy friends are exultations, agonies,/ And love, and Man's unconquerable mind" (13-14). Such affirmations occur in lines 11-13 of the sonnet beginning, "It is not to be thought of ...": We must be free or die, who speak the tongue/ That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold/ Which Milton held..." The poet addresses his country in another sonnet opening, "When I have borne in memory, ..." and ending, "What wonder, if a Poet, now and then./ Among the many movements of his mind,/ Felt for thee as a Lover or a Child" (12-4).

Among Volume II poems exemplifying thematic and stylistic range, variety, and poetic development, "To a Highland Girl", composed of twenty-eight octosyllabic couplets, mentions "dream and vision" (15), which appropriately assess the total impact of the poem. Sight, sound, and repetition recur in this poem in which a beautiful reality fades into a pleasantly remote dream. "To a Highland Girl" was among the original 1803 "Poems Composed during a Tour in Scotland." It opens with a description of an idyllic spot (1-19), and continues with specific praise of a highland girl (20-44). The poet-persona's admiration increases (45-59): "O happy pleasure! here to dwell/ Beside thee in some healthy dell;" (47-8). With "Thou art to me but as a wave/ Of the wild sea; and

I would have/Some claim upon thee, if I could,/ Though but of common neighbourhood," (53-6), admiration degenerates into uncertain sentiment and flawed expression, "What joy to hear thee, and to see!/ Thy elder Brother I would be,/ Thy Father, anything to thee!" (57-9). This emotion subsides into reminiscence in the final section (60-76): "In spots like these it is we prize/ Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:" (64-5). Repetition of "these" and "this" contrasts the vitality of the opening scene with the passivity of the closing scene: "And these gray Rocks; this household Lawn;/ These Trees, .../This fall of water, ..." (5-7); "This little Bay, ..." (9); "...this lonely place." (61); "In spots like these ..." (64); and "...this place ..." (67). A dreamlike figure in a real but remote setting, the highland girl becomes obscured in the process of poetic transformation.

The frequently-quoted 1804 composition, "I wandered lonely as a Cloud" or "The Daffodils," consists of three six-line iambic tetrameter stanzas. The sparseness of the first two lines gives way to a profusion of imagery in the unfolding scene (3-8). Unlike the first section, alive with color, motion, and variety, the second section is permeated with silence and solitude. Between lines 1-10 and 11-18, sharp contrasts record a psychological change in the persona. The swift pace of the first ten lines and the slow movement of the last eight lines intensify differences between sight and imagination, reality and recall. Following the time shift (11), memory recreates the vision of shimmering water, reflecting dancing flowers. Although the power of the poet's "inward eye" may reconstruct the once-dazzling scene for him, the reader is not sufficiently prepared

to share this experience. The closing lines, "And then my heart with pleasure fills,/ And dances with the Daffodils" (17-18), pleasing to the ear and imagination, remain intellectually unconvincing.

In the 1807 edition, an asterisk after the title, "To the Daisy" ("With little here"), calls attention to Wordsworth's statement, "The two following Poems were overflowings of the mind in composing the one which stands first in the first Volume."¹⁴ The second daisy poem (1802), "With little here" contains six eight-line iambic tetrameter stanzas. Five stanzas are filled with daisy metaphors. An exception occurs in the second stanza (9-16), a key to the poem's language. Here the persona, identifying himself as a poet, labels his imagery as metaphor-making. Among the frequent and varied daisy figures, the first is an apostrophe, "Thou unassuming Common-place/ Of Nature, ..." (5-6). Then follow, "A Nun demure of lowly port,/ Or sprightly Maiden of Love's Court," (17-18); "A Queen in crown of rubies drest,/ A Starveling in a scanty vest," (21-22); "A little Cyclops, with one eye" (25); "A silver Shield with boss of gold," (30); "...a pretty Star," (34); and "Sweet Silent Creature!" (44). This metaphoric assortment seems somewhat strained. Much of the rhyme is obviously contrived, like "ease" - "similies" (9-10) and "temptations" - "appellations" (20,24). In lines 41-43, the persona affirms his experimentation, "Sweet Flower! for by that name at last, / When all my reveries are past,/ I call thee, ..." These "overflowings of the mind" conclude with a personal application, "...repair/ My heart with gladness, and a share/ Of thy meek nature!" (46-48).

¹⁴ 1807, p.267

For the frontispiece of his 1815 edition, Wordsworth chose a reproduction of Sir George Beaumont's painting of Peele Castle in a storm. The poet wrote the fifteen "Elegiac Stanzas" evoked by this picture after the death of his brother, John, in 1805. In four-line iambic pentameters, these stanzas reflect the persona's past and present attitudes, directly toward the sea and obliquely toward life. Previously, says the poet-persona, "I could have fancied that the mighty Deep / Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things" (11-12). At one time he might have reproduced the scene, "Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;" (19), and have represented Peele Castle as "a treasurehouse, a mine / Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven:—" (21-22). But now, "'tis so no more;/ .../A deep distress hath humaniz'd my Soul." (33,36). It has been remarked that many years after the deaths of his children, Wordsworth's reminiscences about them had the immediacy of recent grief.¹⁶ In "Elegiac Stanzas," lines 39-40 seem to presage this statement: "The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old,/ This, which I know, I speak with mind serene." The last two stanzas express farewell to "the Heart that lives alone,/ Hous'd in a dream, at distance from the Kind!" (53-54); and the poem ends on a note of optimistic resignation, "Not without hope we suffer and we mourn." (60). Constant repetition throughout "Elegiac Stanzas" appears in "So like, so very like, was day to day!" (6); "Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things" (12); "Ah! then, if mine had been the Painter's hand,/ To express what then I saw; ..." (13-14);

¹⁶ Moorman, II, 219n.

"Such, in the fond delusion of my heart,/ Such Picture would I at that time have made;"(29-30); "Such happiness, ..." (55); and "Such sights, ... (59); "Amid a world how different from this!"(18); "This, which I know, I speak with mind serene"(40); "This Work of thine I blame not, but commend;/ This sea in anger,..."(43-44); "This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear;/ And this huge Castle, ..." (48-49).

In the scale of Poems in Two Volumes, the second daisy poem (1802), ranks low in poetic achievement; "Resolution and Independence," in the same year, reaches a high point. "To a Highland Girl" (1803) reveals promise later realized in parts of "The Solitary Reaper" (1805). "I wandered lonely as a Cloud" (1804) contains elements or recall, used earlier to better poetic effect in the compact lines of "My heart leaps up" (1802). The philosophical ideas in "Elegiac Stanzas" (1805) are reminiscent of the subtler tones in the immortality "Ode" (1802-4). The 1806 composition date of "Character of the Happy Warrior" places the poem as an occasional piece which explains, in part, the curious combination of eighteenth century style and pre-Romantic sentiment which praises the historical personage.

The foregoing selections provide a sampling of varieties of theme and style among Poems in Two Volumes, 1807. Characteristic similarities and differences among these poems involve close examination of Wordsworth's thought processes as well as his frequent and diverse use of repetition and metaphor. With the exception of "Character of the Happy Warrior," each poem cited employs the "I" persona, retrospect, and

personal application. Besides subject and technique, differences among these selections also relate to theme and emphasis. It may be said that in "To a Highland Girl," for example, a person is of first importance. In a certain sense, "To the Daisy" and "I wandered . . ." stress things; "Character of the Happy Warrior" exemplifies ideals; "Elegiac Stanzas" and "Resolution and Independence" describe attitudes.

Within the 1797-1807 decade, the poet's most prolific years are apparently 1802 and 1803, credited respectively with the composition of forty-four and twenty-six poems. Low points of creative output seem to occur during 1800, 1801, and 1804; whereas 1805 and 1806 constitute the plateau period. Apart from "Elegiac Stanzas" and "The Solitary Reaper," there are few outstanding 1805 compositions. Poems attributed to 1806 include "A Complaint" as well as the rather banal trio, "By their floating Mill," "Star Gazers," and "Power of Music." Among the few pieces composed during 1807 are "O Nightingale," an object of parody, "Gipsies," a subject of controversy, and "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle," in which a recurring sentiment, ". . . when evil men are strong/ No life is good, no pleasure long." (89-90, 106-7), is controverted in the lines, "Love had he found in huts where poor Men lie,/ His daily Teachers had been Woods and Rills," (165-6).

A contemporary periodical, reviewing the 1807 poems, comments on their variety: "The blank verse was the glory of his former volumes; in these there is not a trace of it. But songs instead we have, and sonnets, and stories, of every length and form of versification, and

of every style and character from sublimity to silliness" (Eclectic Review, IV, Part 1, January 1808, 39). The 1807 poems as a whole reveal the developing Wordsworth, steadily practising his craft and adapting various strains to his own genius. Thematically and stylistically, Poems in Two Volumes provides suitable material for examination of criticism and response.

From his early youth, the poet showed concern about his artistic inspiration, technique, and communication. Soon after the publication of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, a long passage from a 1793 letter of Dorothy to her friend, Jane Pollard, points up an early problem of criticism and response.

By this Time, you have doubtless seen my Brother Williams poems, and they have already suffered the Lash of Your Criticisms. I should be very glad if you would give me your opinion of them with the same Frankness with which I am going to give you mine.....
- I regret exceedingly that he did not submit the works to the Inspection of some Friend before their Publication, and he also joins with me in this Regret. Their Faults are such as a young Poet was most likely to fall into and least likely to discover, and what the Suggestions of a Friend would easily have made him see and at once correct. It is however an Error he will never fall into again, as he is well aware that he would have gained considerably more credit if the Blemishes of which I speak had been corrected. My brother Kitt and I,...amused ourselves by analysing every Line and prepared a very bulky Criticism, which he was to transmit to William as soon as he should have [ad]ded to it the [remarks] of his Cambridge Friends..... Pray tell Mrs. R. that I wish to hear from her and to have her opinion of my Brothers Poems. If she has already read them, I wish you would tell her what I have said of them - if not wait till she has formed her own judgment. I am sure you must think that there are some very glaring Faults but I hope too, that you will discover many Beauties, Beauties which could only have been created by the Imagination of a Poet.¹⁸

¹⁸ EY #28, pp. 88-90 (D.W. to Jane Pollard, February 16th [1793])

Wordsworth himself reveals sensitivity to criticism in a letter to William Mathews in 1794, when he expresses regret over the imperfect state of his early poems.¹⁷ In 1795, he reports to Wrangham that he has made material alterations and additions to "Guilt and Sorrow" since Wrangham first read the poem.¹⁸ For Lyrical Ballads, 1800, the poet asked Humphry Davy, then still personally known to him, to correct the punctuation and to read the proof-sheets.¹⁹

Generally, the criticism proffered by the poet's intimates was thoughtful and constructive, and Wordsworth's response was sensitive. In a letter to Mary Hutchinson on April 27, 1801, Dorothy mentions that her brother "is always very ill when he tries to alter an old poem"²⁰ William's portion of a letter, dated June 14, 1802, to Sara Hutchinson discusses Sara's reactions to "The Leech Gatherer," among other poems.²¹ Writing on November 21, 1803, to Catherine Clarkson, Dorothy confides, ". . . William is calling to me every instant to hear some lines he is writing --."²² From Portsmouth, aboard his ill-fated ship, the Abergavenny,

¹⁷ EY, #40, p. 120 (W.W. to William Mathews, Friday May 23 [1794])

¹⁸ Ibid., #54, p. 159 (W. W. to the Revd. Francis Wrangham, Novbr 20th [1795¹])

¹⁹ Ibid., #135, p. 289 (W. W. to Humphry Davy, [29] July [1800])

²⁰ Ibid., #160, p. 332 (D.W. and W.W. to Mary Hutchinson, Wednesday April [29th] [1801])

²¹ Ibid., #172, 366 (D. W. and W. W. to Mary and Sara Hutchinson, Monday 14th June [1802])

²² LY, III, #154a, 1346 (D. W. to Catherine Clarkson, 21st Nov. [1803])

Captain John Wordsworth wrote a last letter to his brother on January 24, 1805. After mentioning his favorites among Lyrical Ballads, he states, "I should have liked very much to have seen the poetry you have written (which I have not seen). ...Among those unpublish'd that I have seen my favorite is The Leech Gatherer, The Sparrows Nest, The Butterfly, and Cuckow [sic]. There is a harshness in many of the rest which I do not like. I think the 'Lyrical Ballads' taken all together far superior to the last poems."²³

While Poems in Two Volumes was in the press, Wordsworth informed Sir George Beaumont, on November 10, 1806, that he had instructed the printer to send him proof sheets right from the press. The poet adds, "There is no forming a true estimate of a volume of small poems by reading them all together; one stands in the way of the other. They must either be read a few at once, or the book must remain some time by one, before judgment can be made of the quantity of thought and feeling and imagery it contains, and what (and what variety of) moods of mind it can either impart or is suited to."²⁴

The literary world, in nineteenth century England, was a relatively compact society. The works of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, Scott, and their contemporaries were familiar to writers and readers. Widespread criticism of Wordsworth's poetry, on the part of professionals and non-professionals, extended over years when criticism most affected

²³ EY #242n, p.535 (John Wordsworth to W.W., 24 Jan. 1805)

²⁴ MY, 1, #281, 78 (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, Nov. 10, 1806)

the poet. Before and after publication, Wordsworth gave careful scrutiny and thoughtful attention to criticism of his work. His attitudes towards his critics vary according to circumstances of personal reaction, professional appraisal, and practical reassessment, and appear in explanation, defense, and textual amendment.

Of Wordsworth's extensive revisions, Miss Helen Darbishire stated in her edition of the 1807 poems, "His alterations were most frequently made in response to external pressure. . . . He patched his poems from the outside instead of reshaping them from within." Miss Darbishire grouped Wordsworth's alterations according to Artistic Motives, Revised View of Diction, Concession to Criticism, and Change in Outlook or Opinion.²⁵ Some of these reasons for revision are amplified in the following chapters of 'Wordsworth's Attitude toward his Critics with Particular Reference to Poems in Two Volumes, 1807."

Poems in Two Volumes, 1807, records Wordsworth's creative activity throughout an eventful decade. From the first moments of their composition, these 115 poems were frequently discussed and sometimes revised in the course of many conversations and much correspondence. Some of the poems had been sorted and transcribed in 1804; the entire collection was published only after prolonged consideration by the poet. For subsequent editions, over an extensive period and in various classifications, the poet arranged and rearranged these poems, which vary in aesthetic value

²⁵ 1807, pp. 459, 460, 461, 462.

from casual lyricism to near-masterpiece. Wordsworth's poems, compiled during the 1797-1807 decade, were subject to the conflicting opinions of Beaumont and Byron, to the unrecorded reactions of the poet's captive hair-cutter, and to the painstaking observations of his devoted household. Such a complex of criticism evoked a variety of attitudes in conversation, correspondence, and revision.

CHAPTER II

Wordsworth's Appreciation of Coleridge's Criticism, Pre-Publication

"Though Twins almost in genius and in mind!" (The Prelude [1805] IV, 263) was Wordsworth's description of Coleridge and himself; although, according to a modern critic, "Wordsworth and Coleridge do not accommodate us by being either heavenly twins or sworn enemies."¹ Nor, in the twentieth century, are clear distinctions always apparent among the literary characteristics of these poets. Many readers find it difficult to separate the personal from the poetical association of the two friends. For some, Wordsworth and Coleridge are the Gilbert and Sullivan of Lyrical Ballads. For others, the identity of each seems confused by subtle differences among their theories of imagination, poetic diction, the reconciliation of opposites, and the absorption of multitude in unity. Aspects of nineteenth century aesthetics and metaphysics tend to encumber considerations of critical interaction between Wordsworth and Coleridge, each of whom acknowledged his indebtedness to the other.

To explore Wordsworth's attitude towards Coleridge's criticism of the 1807 poems, before publication, is to trace the course of a mutually therapeutic relationship, to examine poetical reactions of critical opinions,

¹George Whalley, "Preface to Lyrical Ballads: A Portent," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXV (July 1956), 467.

and to indicate the significance of the interplay. The records of their own times specifically document the character of Wordsworth and the personality of Coleridge rather than the attitude of the one to the criticism of the other. For the purposes of this chapter, Wordsworth and Coleridge are read as poet and as critic, in which perspective their separate functions should emerge with some clarity. In order to consider the possible effects of the critic's insight on the poet's craft, it is necessary to review the simultaneous and shared activities of both writers and to assess the material which may constitute criticism and appreciation.

This chapter indicates evidences of Coleridge's keen interest in philosophy and literature and of his desire that Wordsworth become a great philosophical poet. Coleridge advised Wordsworth against the writing of "small poems." Prior to the publication of the 1807 poems, William, Dorothy and Coleridge sometimes mentioned the composition of specific poems; and in their correspondence the three often alluded to the poetry. Coleridge, however, referred directly to comparatively few of the poet's specific pieces, and his criticism is general rather than specific.

The Wordsworths transcribed William's poetry and sent it to Coleridge on his travels, which extended from January 1804 until December 1806. During this time, Wordsworth and Coleridge had virtually no literary contact. The active phase of their early association ended, for the purposes of this chapter, by 1804 when Coleridge became part of Wordsworth's

background, if not actually of his past.

Wordsworth altered several of the 1807 poems, according to a more or less consistent pattern, between MS and publication. On the part of Coleridge, implicit criticism, during the pre-publication years, may have only hypothetical significance, and Wordsworth's attitude towards such criticism may seem nebulous. Nevertheless, this chapter presents a survey of Coleridge's implicit criticism and of Wordsworth's appreciative response.

Early in the development of his comprehensive ideas, Coleridge evinced growing interest in the relationship between reason and imagination, intellect and heart, philosophy and literature. Wordsworth took his degree in January 1791 at St. John's College, Cambridge; two months later, Coleridge at Jesus College, composed an exercise entitled, "Prospectus and Specimen of a Translation of Euclid in a series of Pindaric Odes." His statement of purpose read, "That, though Reason is feasted, Imagination is starved: whilst Reason is luxuriating in it's proper Paradise, Imagination is wearily travelling over a dreary desert. To assist Reason by the stimulus of Imagination is the Design of the following Production."²

Wordsworth was involved in his relationship with Annette Vallon in France, late in 1792. At this time, Coleridge, in a letter from

² CL, I, #5, 7 (To George Coleridge, March 31st 1791).

Cambridge to Mary Evans, purported to have had a ghostly visitation from Thomas Gray. "And as for you, O Young Man (now he addressed himself to me) write no more verses - in the first place, your poetry is vile stuff; and secondly (here he sighed almost to bursting) all Poets go to -11, we are so intolerably addicted to the Vice of Lying!-"³ This concern with the dichotomy between reality and representation seems to persist through Coleridge's departure from college in 1793, and in 1794 and 1795 through the period of his and Southey's pantisocratic ideas, his political lecturing, and their publication of The Fall of Robespierre.

Wordsworth, having published An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches in January 1793, was tending the fatally ill Raisley Calvert late in 1794, when Coleridge diagnosed his own painful symptoms. In response to a remark made by Southey, Coleridge wrote, "How infinitely more to be valued is Integrity of Heart than Effulgence of Intellect --A noble sentiment and would have come home to me, if for 'Integrity' you had substituted 'Energy'." ⁴

The first meeting of Wordsworth and Coleridge has been placed in Bristol, late in August or early in September 1795, shortly before Coleridge's marriage, on October 4, the Sarah Fricker. The following spring, between March 1 and May 13, while he was editing the ten numbers

³ CL, I, #13, 27-8 (To Mary Evans, 13th Feb.[1792]).

⁴ Ibid., I, #75, 138 (To Robert Southey, Dec. 17th 1794).

of The Watchman, Coleridge brought out his first collection of verse, Poems on Various Subjects, April 1796. Among the fifty-one poems in this volume are thirty-six effusions, nine sonnets, five epistles, and the long piece, "Religious Musings."

Coleridge's first published criticism of Wordsworth's poetry occurs in the epistle, "Lines Written at Shurton Bars." Referring to his use of a phrase from An Evening Walk, Coleridge notes, "The expression, 'green radiance' is borrowed from Mr. Wordsworth, a Poet whose versification is occasionally harsh and his diction too frequently obscure; but whom I deem unrivalled among the writers of the present day in many sentiment, novel imagery, and vivid colouring."⁵

Varied allusions to Coleridge's literary and metaphysical interests recur in his notebooks as well as in his correspondence. In 1796, successive entries read, "Poetry - excited us to artificial feelings - makes us callous to real ones;" "Reason the Sun - Revelation the comet which feeds it."⁶ There are also passages mentioning three degrees of life and five stages of prayers. For his friend, Joseph Cottle, Coleridge lists, in an outcentured spirit of encyclopedism, what he considers requisites for the writing of an epic, "I would be a tolerable Mathematician, I would thoroughly know Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Optics,

⁵ The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. E. H. Coleridge (Oxford, 1912) I, 97n -- hereafter cited as CPW.

⁶ The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1794-1804, ed. Kathleen Coburn (New York, 1957) I, 87, G.81; 88, G.82 -- hereafter cited as CN. (Bellinghen Series LXXV)

and Astronomy, Botany, Metallurgy, Fossilism, Chemistry, Geology, Anatomy, Medicine - then the mind of man - then the minds of men - in all Travels, Voyages and Histories."⁷

Dorothy Wordsworth recorded her first impressions of Coleridge at his initial visit, probably on June 5, 1797, to Racedown. There Wordsworth read "The Ruined Cottage" to his visitor; and the two writers listened to each other's tragedies, The Borderers and Osorio, respectively.⁸ During this visit, Coleridge wrote of Wordsworth to Cottle, "I speak with heart-felt sincerity & (I think) unblinded judgement, when I tell you, that I feel myself a little man by his side; & yet do not think myself the less man, than I formerly thought myself.-"⁹ Upon their visitor's request, Dorothy transcribed some of William's lines which Coleridge forwarded to a friend.¹⁰ At this time also, in a letter to Southey, now his brother-in-law, Coleridge contrasted Wordsworth to "the London Literati . . . - a compost of Nullity & Dullity.-"¹¹

The appearance of Coleridge at Racedown was a prelude to the annus mirabilis of companionship and collaboration which occurred when the

⁷ CL, I, #184, 320-1 (To Joseph Cottle, [Early April 1797]).

⁸ EY, #70, pp. 188-89 (D. W. to Mary Hutchinson, [June, 1797]).

⁹ CL, I, #190, 325 (To Joseph Cottle, [8 June 1797]).

¹⁰ Ibid., I, #192, 327-8 (To John Prior Estlin, [10 June 1797]).

¹¹ Ibid., I, #197, 334 (To Robert Southey, [Circa 17 June 1797]).

Wordsworths moved to Alfoxden, three miles from the Coleridges at Nether Stowey. The period from July 1797 to July 1798 marked significant literary exchange. Coleridge, who instinctively publicized the attractions of his numerous friends, was especially sensitive to the variations of Wordsworth's thought and tone. Expansive and perspicacious at his articulate best, Coleridge seems to have supplied Wordsworth with sufficient confidence for the poet to define the objectives as well as to sound the depths of his creativity. As he parried, praised, quoted, and queried, Coleridge stimulated Wordsworth to assess his inspiration and to expand his poetical range.

During their first summer of companionship, Wordsworth and Coleridge welcomed John Thelwall, the Republican "radical," who spent some days with them.¹² By December 1797, Coleridge was writing for the Morning Post, edited by Daniel Stuart; and before the end of the year, the pottery manufacturers of Etruria, Josiah Wedgwood and his brother, Thomas offered Coleridge an annuity of 150~~£~~¹³ as material assistance in his writing career.

Early in their acquaintance, Coleridge, an avid metaphysician, was convinced that Wordsworth would be a great philosophical poet. At Alfoxden, having composed "The Recluse, or Views on Nature, Man and Society," Wordsworth alluded to it as a poem, "in which I contrive to convey most of the knowledge of which I am possessed."¹⁴ On the following

¹² CL, I, #200, 339n (To Josiah Wade, Aug- 1.[1797]).

¹³ Ibid., I, #214, 359n - 360n (To Robert Southey [7 December 1797]).

¹⁴ EY, #84, p.212 (W.W. to James Webbe Tobin 6th March,[1798]).

day, Coleridge remarked Wordsworth's "1200 lines of a blank verse, superior, I hesitate not to aver, to any thing in our language which any way resembled it."¹⁶ Coleridge wrote of Wordsworth, on May 18, 1798, "I have now known him a year & some months, and my admiration, I might say, my awe of his intellectual powers has increased even to this hour - . . . His genius is most apparent in poetry -- and rarely, except to me in tete a tete, breaks forth in conversational eloquence. -"¹⁶

With Lyrical Ballads in press, the Wordsworths, Coleridge, and a neighbor, John Chester of Stowey, sailed in September 1798 for Germany. At Goslar, where he remained until the following spring, Wordsworth wrote a few short poems and a part of the long work ultimately classified as neither distinctively philosophical nor completely biographical. A portion of a letter from Coleridge to Wordsworth in Goslar testifies to their friendship, "I am sure I need not say how you are incorporated into the better part of my being; how, whenever I spring forward into the future with noble affections, I always alight by your side"¹⁷

Following their return to England, the Wordsworths were guests from May 1799 in the home of their friends, the Hutchinsons, at Sockburn-on-Tees. For William this was an opportunity to become better acquainted with Mary Hutchinson, whom he married three years later. Coleridge.

¹⁶ CL, I, #235, 391 (To Joseph Cottle, [7 March 1798]).

¹⁶ Ibid., I, #248, 410 (To John Prior Estlin, May [18, 1798]).

¹⁷ Ibid., I, #268, 453 (To William Wordsworth, [December 1798]).

who left Germany in July, persisted in his belief that Wordsworth, the philosophical poet, should avoid writing any more short poems. During this summer, Wordsworth apparently considered the idea of an autobiographical composition to be dedicated to Coleridge.¹⁸ In a communication dated October 12, Coleridge refers eagerly to this, "the tail-piece of 'The Recluse!'" which he was anxious to see completed.¹⁹ Late in November, a visit at Sockburn marked the beginning of Coleridge's hopeless love for Mary Hutchinson's sister, Sara, the "Asra" of his poems and notes.

Dorothy and William moved into the Grasmere cottage at Town-end late in December 1799. Although Coleridge usually remarked his friend's superior talents, it was Wordsworth who wrote to Coleridge, shortly after the arrival in Grasmere, "take no pains to contradict the story that the L. B. are entirely yours. Such a rumour is the best thing that can befall them."²⁰ Before he sent the second edition of Lyrical Ballads to press, Wordsworth requested Humphry Davy, a friend of Coleridge, to check the corrections.²¹ This volume contained the Coleridge-inspired Preface, which the critic, at that time, described as "our joint opinions on Poetry."²²

¹⁸ William Wordsworth, The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind, ed. Ernest deSelincourt; 2nd ed. rev. Helen Darbishire (Oxford, 1959) xlvii-hereafter cited as The Prelude.

¹⁹ CL, I, #297, 538 (To William Wordsworth, Oct.12, 1799).

²⁰ EY, #126, p.28. (W.W. and D.W. to S.T. Coleridge, Christmas Eve,[1799]).

²¹ Ibid., #135, p.289 (W.W. to Humphry Davy,[29] July [1800])

²² Ibid., #354, 627 (To Daniel Stuart, [Circa 30 September 1800]).

Having established residence at Greta Hall, Keswick, about thirteen miles from Grasmere, in July 1800, Coleridge complained to various friends of his indispositions.²³ Both he and Wordsworth had been working on the second edition of Lyrical Ballads; nevertheless, Coleridge wrote in September, "I abandon Poetry altogether - I leave the higher & deeper Kinds to Wordsworth, the delightful, popular & simply dignified to Southey; & reserve for myself the honorable attempt to make others feel and understand their writings, as they deserve to be felt & understood."²⁴ In December, he stated, "As to Poetry, I have altogether abandoned it, being convinced that I never had the essentials of poetic Genius & that I mistook a strong desire for original power."²⁵ Two days later, Coleridge distinguished between Wordsworth and himself, "- He is a great, a true Poet - I am only a kind of a Metaphysician."²⁶ This mood prevails through Coleridge's illness during the winter of 1800-1801.

Apparently Coleridge was recovering both health and spirits by February 1801 when, remarking on the fact that Davy had referred to him as "Poet-philosopher," he expresses the hope that "Philosophy and Poetry will not neutralize each other, & leave me an inert mass."²⁷ To Godwin,

²³ CL, I, #338-9-40-41, 603 611 (To Stuart, Davy, Poole, Wedgwood, July 1800)

²⁴ Ibid., I, #351, 623 (To James Webb & Tobin, Sept. 17, 1800).

²⁵ Ibid., I, #369, 656 (To John Thelwall, Dec. 17th, 1800).

²⁶ Ibid., I, #371, 658 (To Francis Wrangham, Dec. 19, 1800).

²⁷ Ibid., II, #377, 668-9 (To Thomas Poole, Feb. 1, 1801).

Coleridge represents himself as "undergoing a process of intellectual exsiccation," laments that he has "forgotten how to make a rhyme-" and states "the Poet is dead in me-." In this letter also, Coleridge mentions that Wordsworth revealing to him the nature of true poetry convinced him that Coleridge was not a poet.²⁸ Even allowing for Coleridge's exaggerated turn of phrase, this seems a strange indictment of the friends' literary relationship.

At this time, Wordsworth, repeating Coleridge's epithet of five years before, characterized his own early poetry as inflated and "obscure" (See p.30).²⁹ In a postscript to a letter from Dorothy Wordsworth to Sara Hutchinson, the poet included "Harmonies of Criticism," juxtaposing conflicting opinions about Lyrical Ballads. Wordsworth forwarded these to Sara "for Coleridge's entertainment;" and despite the fact that he refers to the "Harmonies" in a light vein, the poet lost no time in sending them to Coleridge.³⁰ This interest in criticism is far different from that which he evinced prior to the publication of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches (see Introduction i - ii.)

Four early compositions, more or less independent of Coleridge's criticism, are "The Seven Sisters," "I travell'd among unknown Men,"

²⁸ CL, II, #390, 713, 714, (To William Godwin, March 25, 1801).

²⁹ EY, #159, p. 327 (W.W. to Anne Taylor, April 9th, 1801).

³⁰ Ibid., #155, p.319 (D.W. and W.W. to Sara Hutchinson, late February - early March 1801).

"Louisa," and "To a Young Lady." On August 17, 1800, according to Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, William, John, and Dorothy were returning from a visit with the Coleridges, when William read "The Seven Sisters" to his companions.³¹ The poet sent another early composition, "I travell'd among unknown men," to Mary Hutchinson in a letter dated April 27, 1801.³² Ernest deSelincourt notes that Wordsworth intended this to be among the 1802 Lyrical Ballads from which it was omitted by the printer.³³ Both "Louisa" and "To a Young Lady" appeared in the Morning Post on February 11, 1802, and deSelincourt states, were originally intended as one piece.³⁴

Ill-health preoccupied Coleridge for the remainder of 1801. During the summer, Wordsworth, considerably worried about his friend's physical and financial difficulties, applied to Poole for counsel and assistance in enabling Coleridge to live in a mild climate.³⁵ Although

³¹ Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals, ed. E[rnest] deSelincourt (London, 1952, rev., 1941) I, 55 -- hereafter cited as DW's JL

³² EY, #160, p. 333 (D. W. and W. W. to Mary Hutchinson, April [29]th [1801]).

³³ PW, II, 472.

³⁴ Ibid., II, 521.

³⁵ EY., #163, pp. 338-339 (W. W. to Thomas Poole, [early July 1801]).

he had already mentioned to Southey the possibility of moving to the West Indies, Coleridge professed both ignorance of and annoyance at Wordsworth's appeal.³⁶

Dorothy's Journal entries, early in 1802, reflect tension and anxiety at Town-end. On January 26, the sentence, "Wm. wrote to Annette," indicates a possibly critical issue.³⁷ There follow numerous references to walks, talks, headaches, sleeplessness, and disturbing letters from Coleridge. Meanwhile, William altered old poems and composed new ones, among them "The Pedlar" and "Peter Bell." Late in February, in a letter to his wife, Coleridge mentions Wordsworth's tentative plans for marriage.³⁸

During the spring of 1802, when the Wordsworths were deeply concerned about Coleridge and about their future plans, William composed about one-third of the 115 poems published in 1807. By the end of July, Coleridge estimated the number at thirty-two.³⁹ Gauged by Dorothy's records and by the friends' correspondence, early poems of

³⁶ CL, II, #406, 747-748 (To Robert Southey, July 25, 1801). See also CL, II, #411, 755-757 (To Thomas Poole, Sept. 7, 1801).

³⁷ DW's JI., I, 102.

³⁸ CL, II, #437, 788-789 (To Mrs. S. T. Coleridge, Feb. 24th - [1802]).

³⁹ Ibid., II, #449, 830 (To Robert Southey, July 29, 1802).

this period and probably dates of composition are as follows:

March	11-12	"The Sailor's Mother"
	12-13	"Alice Fell"
	13-14	"The Beggars"
	14	"To a Butterfly" ("Stay near me")
	16-17	"The Emigrant Mother"
	22-23-26	"To the Cuckoo"
	26	"My Heart Leaps up"
	27	"Ode"
April	12	"The Glow-Worm"
	16	"Written in March"
	18	"The Redbreast and the Butterfly"
	20	"To a Butterfly" ("I've watch'd you")
	26	"The Sparrow's Nest"
	28	"Foresight"
	30	"To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies")
		"To the Daisy" ("In youth")
		"To the Daisy" ("With little here")
		"To the Same Flower" ("Bright Flower")
May	1	"To the Same Flower" Celandine ("Pleasures")
	3-9	"Resolution and Independence"
	21	"Nuns Fret Not"
	21	"I griev'd for Buonaparte"
		"To a Skylark" ("Up with me")
June	8	"The Sun has long been set"

The heading, "Moods of My Own Mind," harshly criticized by reviewers of Poems in Two Volumes and discarded thereafter, covered thirteen poems in the second 1807 volume. Of the poems labelled "Moods of My Own Mind," seven date from the spring of 1802. According to their arrangement in 1807, they are "To a Butterfly" ("Stay near me"), "The Sun has long been set," "My Heart Leaps up," "Written in March," "The Sparrow's Nest," "To the Cuckoo," and "To a Butterfly" ("I've watch'd you"). Coleridge uses the phrase, "moods of mind," twice in one paragraph of an 1802 letter to Sotheby and once in a notebook entry in Sicily in 1804. To

Sotheby, he states his idea of the unification of the poet's mind and heart with nature and concedes that there is a place in poetry for something less - "these formal Similes - there are moods of mind, in which they are natural - pleasing moods of mind, & such as a Poet will often have, & sometimes express; but they are not his highest, & most appropriate moods . . ."⁴⁰ The notebook entry mentions a "restless & no-end-having mood of mind . . ."⁴¹ Nearly three years after the notebook entry, immediately following the publication of Poems in Two Volumes, Wordsworth discussed with Lady Beaumont the characteristics of the poem which he labelled "Moods of my own Mind,"⁴² (See Chapter III, pp. 85-86).

Coleridge visited Grasmere from March 19-21, within a week of the composition of five of the spring 1802 poems. His reading of this poetry is a matter of probability, not proof. Coleridge made very few specific allusions to Wordsworth's 1807 poems before publication; but between this period and that of his extensive criticism in Biographia Literaria (1817) stretch enormous possibilities for conjecture. There is a dearth of specific critical reference as well as specific poetical response during the pre-publication years.

⁴⁰ CL, II, #459, 864, (To William Sotheby, Sept. 10, 1802).

⁴¹ CN, II, #2218, 21.464 (October 17, 1804).

⁴² MY, I, #301, 127-8 (W.W. to Lady Beaumont, May 21st 1807).

Nevertheless, a fairly discernible climate of opinion testifies to the mutual interest and respect in which each writer held the other's thought and expression. Elements in their literary relationship at this time seem to foreshadow a pattern of later criticism and response between Wordsworth and Coleridge.

For the frequently amended "The Sailor's Mother" and "Alice Fell" (See Chapter V pp. 159), no versions predate the 1807 publication text. Years later after Coleridge had specifically criticized these two poems in Biographia Literaria, Wordsworth made revisions in both poems for his 1820 edition. (See Chapter VII pp. 235, 240-41).

A MS of "The Beggars" contains eight lines altered between composition and publication:

<u>MS</u>		<u>1807</u>
She had a tall man's height,	(1)(1)	She had a tall Man's height, <u>or more</u> ;
And while,'mid <u>April's noontide</u> <u>heat</u> ,	(2)(2)	No bonnet screed'd her from the heat;
A long <u>blue</u> cloak <u>the vagrant</u> wore	(3)(3)	A long <u>drab-colour'd</u> Cloak <u>she</u> wore,
No bonnet screen'd her <u>lofty</u> brow,	(5)(5)	What other dress she had I could not know;
Only she wore a cap as white as <u>new-fallen snow</u> .	(6)(6)	Only she wore a Cap that was as white as <u>snow</u> .
And <u>boldly urged a doleful plea</u> ,	(14)(14)	<u>Pouring out sorrows</u> like a sea;
With yellow flowers around, as <u>with a golden band</u> .	(24)(24)	Wreath'd round with yellow flow'rs, <u>the gayest of the land</u> .
Off to some other play the <u>thoughtless vagrants flew</u>	(42) (48)	Off to some other play they <u>both together flew</u> .

A comparison of underlined words and phrases above shows the MS version to be more specific than the 1807 text. Qualifying expressions in the earlier version render the imagery more definite, the sense more precise, and the impact more immediate than those in the generally allusive and less homely 1807 references.

Among the 1807 poems, Wordsworth placed two, "To a Butterfly" ("Stay near me" and "I've watch'd you"), usually dated March 14 and April 20, 1802, at the beginning and at the end of the Volume I section labelled "Moods of My Own Mind." Later that spring, Coleridge trans-⁴³cribed the first of these, "Stay near me," for Thomas Poole.

A MS of "The Emigrant Mother" contains four lines, originally inserted before line 8, as follows:

Oft with this Babe she to a grove withdrew
And her I there have overheard in part
While with love looks and words of language new
To help her foreign speech she eas'd her heart.

Wordsworth deleted these somewhat awkward lines before publication. In this poem he changed the following lines between composition and publication from:

⁴³ CL, II, #439, 800 (To Thomas Poole, May 7, [1802]).

MS to 1807

And I grow happy while I speak (81) Thine eyes are on me-they would speak,
Kiss, kiss me, Baby, thou art good (82) I think, to help me if they could.
Blessing upon that soft, warm face, (83) Blessings upon that quiet face,

And love and hope and mother's glee (87) Contentment, hope, and Mother's glee

My yearnings are allayed by thee
My heaviness is turned to glee (88) I seem to find them all in thee:
I seem to find them all in thee:

Between lines 86-87, the MS read, "A Joy, a Comforter thou art; Sun-
shine and pleasure to my heart," but these lines did not appear in 1807.

It will be noted (Chapter VII pp. 244 - 245) that years later
Wordsworth stated that he altered lines in "The Emigrant Mother" in
response to Coleridge's criticism. ⁴⁴ This may possibly have been
the case with early changes between composition and publication.

Coleridge left Grasmere on March 21, An entry in Dorothy's Journal,
on March 22, records, "We resolved to see Annette, and that Wm. should
go to Mary." ⁴⁵ This plan was already made two months before the death
of Lord Lonsdale, the Wordsworth's recalcitrant debtor, whose heir
would relieve their financial anxiety.

Lines in "To the Cuckoo," at which William worked on March 23,
evolved as follows with negligible revisions from

⁴⁴ LY, #829, 310 (W.W. to Barron Field, 24th Oct., 1828)

⁴⁵ DW's J1., I, 128.

MS	to	1807
I hear thy hollow shout:	(6)	I hear thy restless shout:
. . . .whom I	(18)	That cry
Look'd for a thousand	(19)	
thousand ways		Which made me look a thousand ways;

Miss Darbishire, noting that "My Heart Leaps Up" appeared first and the immortality "Ode" last in the 1815 edition, states that the two constitute "the key to Wordsworth's philosophy of life."⁴⁶ No changes occur in successive printing of "My Heart Leaps Up".

The putative history of the immortality "Ode" begins on October 13, 1800, when a poem entitled "The Mad Monk" appeared in the Morning Post above the pseudonym "CASSIANI, jun." This poem has been ascribed to both Wordsworth and Coleridge.⁴⁷ On March 27, 1802, according to Dorothy's record, Wordsworth began his "Ode" lines 9-16 of which are similar to the first stanza of "The Mad Monk."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ 1807, p.424.

⁴⁷ Stephen M. Parrish and David V. Erdman, "Who Wrote The Mad Monk? A Debate," BNYPL, 64 (April 1960), 209-237 (290); CPW, I, 347-49.

⁴⁸ DW's J1., I, 129.

Between composition and publication the poet made no textual alterations in the first four stanzas of the "Ode." A comparison of analagous lines in the "Ode" and in "Dejection" serves to indicate their poets' individual ideas and expression. The "Ode" opens on a May morning; the setting for "Dejection" is a spring evening. Both poets consider the beauties of nature. Wordsworth having cited rainbow, rose, moon, and star, states "The sunshine is a glorious birth;" (16). Coleridge, after describing clouds and stars, mentions "Yon crescent Moon, as fix'd as if it grew / In it's own cloudless, starless Lake of Blue-/"(39-40). Characteristic of each author, corresponding sections quoted in the following pages are from the 1807 text of the "Ode" and from the MS version of "Dejection," respectively:

"Ode"

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 glory and the freshness of a dream.
(1-5)

The things which I have seen I now
can see no more. (9)

To me along there came a thought of
grief;
A timely utterance gave that thought
relief,
And I again am strong.
The Cataracts blow their trumpets
from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the
season wrong; (22-26)

"Dejection"

There was a time when tho' my path
was rough,
The joy within me dallied with Distress;
And all Misfortunes were but as the Stuff
Whence Fancy made me Dreams of Happiness:
(232-235)

But oft I seem to feel, & evermore I fear,
They are not to me the Things, which once
they were. (294-295)

A grief without a pang, void, dark,
& drear,
A stifling, drowsy, unimpassion'd Grief
That find~~s~~ no natural Outlet, no Relief,
In word, or sign, or tear-(17-20)

. . . I see
 The heavens laugh with you
 in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel -
 I feel it all. (37-41)

-I see them all, so excellently fair!
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they
 are. (42-43)

[I too will crown me with a
 coronal, - (136)]

Wordsworth concludes the first section (stanzas 1-4, lines 1-57), of his "Ode" with key questions to which Coleridge responds in "Dejection:"

"Ode"

Whither is fled the visionary
 gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and
 the dream? (56-57)

"Dejection"

O pure of Heart! thou need'st not ask
 of me
 What this strong music in the Soul
 may be,
 What, & wherein it doth exist,
 This Light, this Glory, this fair
 luminous Mist,
 This beautiful & beauty-making Power!
 (309-313)

Mrs. Moorman advances January or March 1804 as composition dates for the later section (stanzas 5-11, lines 58-206), of the "Ode."⁵³ The Wordsworths apparently included the entire "Ode" with the poems sent to Coleridge at Portsmouth.⁵⁴ Stanzas 5-11 of the "Ode" constitute Wordsworth's counter-response to Coleridge's "Dejection," written two years earlier.

⁵³ Moorman, II, 20.

⁵⁴ CN, II, Appendix E. 425.

"Dejection"

Joy, innocent Sara! Joy that ne'er
 was given
 Save to the Pure, & in their
 purest Hour,
 Joy, Sara! is the Spirit & the
 Power,
 That wedding nature to us gives in
 Dower
 A new Earth & new Heaven
 Undreamt of by the Sensual & the
 Proud! (314-319)

"Ode"

O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!
 The thought of our past years in me
 doth breed
 Perpetual benedictions: . . .
 (132-137)

Each poet seeks to resolve the problem of mutability:

(1807 version)

"Dejection"

For not to think of what I needs
 must feel,
 But to be still & patient all
 I can;
 And haply by abstruse Research
 to steal
 From my own Nature all the
 Natural Man -
 This was my sole Resource, my
 wisest plan! (265-269)

"Ode"

What though the radiance which was
 once so bright
 Be now forever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the
 hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory
 in the flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through
 death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.
 (178-189)

Coleridge addresses the wind as an actor; for Wordsworth the actor
 is the child.

"Dejection"

Thou Actor, perfect in all
 tragic Sounds!
 Thou mighty Poet, even to
 frenzy hold!

"Ode"

The little Actor cons another part,
 Filling from time to time his
 "humorous stage" (102-103)

Each poet treats "calm" differently:

Cover her, gentle Sleep! with
wings of Healing
And be this Tempest but a Mountain
Birth!
May all the Stars hand bright above
her Swelling,
Silent, as tho' they watch'd the
sleeping Earth! (219-222)

Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
(164-168)

The poems end on contrasting notes:

"Dejection"

Thus, thus should'st thou rejoice!
To thee would all Things live from
Pole to Pole,
Their Life the Eddying of thy living
Soul-
O dear! O Innocent! O full of Love!
A very Friend! A sister of my Choice-
O dear, as Light & Impulse from above,
Thus may'st thou ever, evermore rejoice!
(334-340)

"Ode"

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the
setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms
are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and
fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows
can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep
for tears. (197-206)

In the letter to Poole on May 7 (See p. 42,43n) Coleridge acknowledged a verse letter, dated April 4, "but I thought it dull & doleful - & I did not send it" This probably alludes to "Dejection". Discussing the idea of a poet-philosopher with William Sotheby, Coleridge insisted that "a great Poet must be implicate if not explicate, a profound Metaphysician." Here also, Coleridge alluded for the first time to his and Wordsworth's differences in poetic theory: "In my

opinion, Poetry justifies, as Poetry independent of any other Passion, some new combinations of Language, & commands the omission of many others allowable in other compositions / Now Wordsworth, me saltem judice, has in his system not sufficiently admitted the former, & in his practice has too frequently sinned against the latter.-"⁵⁵

In that same week, Coleridge forwarded approximately one-third of "Dejection" to Sotheby. The transcription changes the words "Sara" and "love" to "William", to "Wordsworth," and to "Friend." Now admitting that he is in better spirits and hopes to continue rejoicing, Coleridge acknowledges that he is by nature more poet than metaphysician.⁵⁶

Later in this month, July, Coleridge wrote to Southey, indicating that both families might share Geta Hall. Discussing Wordsworth's Preface, Coleridge pronounces Wordsworth's short poems of 1802 as "very excellent compositions but here & there a daring Humbleness of Language & Versification, and a strict adherence to matter of fact, even to prolixity, that startled me . . ."⁵⁷ Then lamenting his failing poetic powers, he quotes eighteen lines of "Dejection."

⁵⁵ CL, II, #444, 812 (To William Sotheby, July 13, 1802).

⁵⁶ Ibid., II, #445, 813-819 (To William Sotheby, July 19, [1802]).

⁵⁷ Ibid., II, #449, 830 (To Robert Southey, July 19, 1802).

For Lord and Lady Beaumont, in the summer of 1803, Coleridge copied Wordsworth's The Leech Gatherer. With this he included ninety lines of "Dejection," described as ". . . such of my own verses as appeared to please you."⁵⁸ Later Coleridge records that when he was on the continent, he showed Wordsworth's "Ode" to Baron von Humboldt (See Chapter VII, pp. 221-222).⁵⁹

Dorothy refers to the "Ode" in an 1806 letter to Lady Beaumont.⁶⁰ Both "Ode" and "Dejection" typify their authors' poetic impulses and, in a sense, distinguish the thought processes and styles of Wordsworth and Coleridge. From the time of his illness, late in 1801, Coleridge was increasingly troubled by physical, psychological, and philosophical anxieties. As Wordsworth gave continued evidences of improving and increasing creativity, Coleridge, a prey to numerous vicissitudes, seemed preoccupied with intimations of his own failing powers. The dichotomy between poet and metaphysician is curiously reflected, not only in Coleridge's correspondence but also in his aesthetic and intellectual ambivalence. This particular crisis in the life of Coleridge seems to have rendered him more deeply aware and more keenly critical of his own and Wordsworth's literary theory and practice

⁵⁸ CL, II, #512, 966-972 (To Sir George and Lady Beaumont, Aug. 12, 1803).

⁵⁹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Friend, A Series of Essays To Aid in the Formation of Fixed Principles in Politics, Morals, and Religion With Literary Amusements Interspersed, ed. Henry Nelson Coleridge (London, 1844, 4th ed) III, 198-199n.-hereafter cited as The Friend.

⁶⁰ MY, I, #250, 20 (D.W. to Lady Beaumont, April 20th, 1806).

as well as the differences between them.

In the summer of 1802, Coleridge contrasts his and Wordsworth's abilities. His frequent quotations from "Dejection" record Coleridge's shifting self-analysis. By August 1803, he appears to have reached a conclusion about Wordsworth's aesthetic identity. Coleridge reports that as a result of the Beaumont's judgment of Wordsworth "as a profound strong-minded Philosopher, not as a Poet - I answered . . . that you were a great Poet by inspirations, & in the Moments of revelation, but that you were a thinking feeling Philosopher habitually - that your Poetry was your Philosophy under the action of strong winds of Feeling - a sea rolling high."⁶¹

The "Ode" and "Dejection" provide singular examples of comparison and contrast between Wordsworth and Coleridge. In this respect, the two poems furnish instances of implicit criticism and response. Coleridge, in "Dejection," answered Wordsworth's question, "Whither is fled the visionary gleam?/ Where is it now, the glory and the dream?" Two years later, Wordsworth completing the "Ode," comments not only upon his four original stanzas but also upon "Dejection." Within the context of stanzas 5-11, Wordsworth is no longer searching for answers. He has apparently found them in a determination to rely patiently on memory, to live gratefully with thoughts that "lie too deep for tears."

⁶¹ CL, II, #508, 957 (To William Wordsworth [23 July 1803]).

In his 1804 section of the "Ode," Wordsworth equates his personal impulses with universal experience. This may be considered the essence of the Wordsworthian sublime, the eye which having seen into the heart of things captures the vision of poetic reality.

The "Ode" and "Dejection" furnish outstanding examples of the aesthetic and poetic employed by Wordsworth and Coleridge; and it is possible to indicate significant reaction and interaction among the three sections of the two poems.

The 130 lines of the "Ode" form a fairly objective, if not clearly integrated, poem in which references to pre-existence support the general theme. The "Ode" reflects Wordsworth's treatment of the developmental power of the human mind. In dynamic tones, the persona considers far-reaching implications of the "Whither"? -- "Where"? questions. As he is himself experiencing, the persona proceeds psychologically towards the resolution of problems inherent in the human condition. According to the poet, man may maintain or regain his spiritual equanimity through memory which evokes thoughts which, in turn, develop thought.

In its original form (340 lines), "Dejection" is long, even for a verse letter. Diffuse and episodic, the poem vividly depicts turmoil both in nature and in human life. The highly individualistic persona, addressing "Sara" in dramatically impassioned tones, establishes a moralistic connection between merit and reward. For Coleridge, in this

poem, joy is the prerogative of the "pure of Heart;" whereas, from the first stanzas of the "Ode," Wordsworth seemed to regard joy as an ontological necessity.

Early in the "Ode" (i-iv), Wordsworth asks pivotal questions to which Coleridge responds in "Dejection." In the later stanzas, Wordsworth recognizes and transcends, without reconciling, his and Coleridge's differences of approach. With the 1800 Preface to Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth and Coleridge were in practical agreement. The two year span separating the composition of "Dejection" and the "Ode" (v-xi), however, found marked differences in the friends' poetic theory and practice.

Coleridge admits misgivings about some of the premises in the (April) 1802 Preface. When, during this spring, Coleridge determined to forego composing short poems, Wordsworth was writing many excellent short pieces. Also during this period Coleridge was clarifying his concept of Wordsworth as poet-philosopher.

Previously, during their German sojourn, Coleridge had stated that he could shout "Wordsworth!" in recognition of his friend's unsigned lines.⁸² In "Dejection," Wordsworth should certainly have been able to identify Coleridge, from his self-pitying depths to his shakily selfless heights. No such individualistic resolution of problems, personal or cosmic, typifies Wordsworth, who assesses the poetic experience of the "Ode" in intellectual and universal terms.

⁸² CL, I, #267, 453 (To William Wordsworth, Dec. 10, 1798).

Irrespective of how much or how little of himself either writer expressed in his poem, the two odes distinguish implicitly between the total aesthetic and poetic of their authors. The "Ode" and "Dejection" indicate a divergence which ultimately reveals kinds and degrees of mature literary development in Wordsworth and Coleridge.

After the composition of the "Ode" on March 27, Dorothy lists the poet's next poem as "Among all lovely things" or "The Glow-Worm," dated April 12. Dorothy transcribed this poem, which she sent along with lines "Written in March," an April 16 composition, to Coleridge.⁶³ "Among all lovely things" was never revised nor reprinted among Wordsworth's poems after 1807. According to deSelincourt, the sentiment which evoked this piece was "too personal." Changes between composition and publication appear below:

MS		to	1807
While I was riding on a stormy night	(5)	While riding near her home one	
Not far from her abode, I chanc'd		stormy night	
to spy	(6)	A single Glow-worm did I chance	
A single Glow-worm once; and at the		to spy;	
sight	(7)	I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,	
Down from my horse I leapt; great	(8)	And from my Horse I leapt; great joy	
joy had I.		had I.	
I laid the Glow-worm gently on a	(9)	Upon a leaf the Glow-worm did I lay,	
leaf			
And bore it with me through the	(10)	To bear with me through the stormy	
stormy night:		night:	
In my left hand without dismay or	(11)	And, as before, it shone without	
grief		dismay;	
Shining, albeit with a fainter	(12)	Albeit putting forth a fainter light.	
light.			
I led my Emma to the place	(19)	I led my Lucy to the spot.	

⁶³ EY, #168, p. 348 (W. W. and D.W. to S. T. Coleridge, [16 April, 1802]).

A simple poem, "The Glow-worm" has about it a genuinely extemporaneous quality. Throughout the twenty lines, there is much repetition; and the few changes between MS and 1807 seem to follow previous patterns toward direct word order and conversational tone.

Within the nineteen lines of "Written in March," the sole substitution occurs in lines 6-7, from:

MS	to	1807
The horse and his Marrow	(6)	The oldest and youngest
Drag the plow and the harrow,	(7)	Are at work with the strongest;

In the frequently mentioned May 7, 1802 letter to Poole (See pp.42,49) Coleridge copies thirty-eight lines of the two poems of Wordsworth and encloses them as filler. In this case, he chose for transcription not the two twenty-line pieces which he had so recently received, but the thirty-eight lines which include "To a Butterfly" ("Stay") and "The Sparrow's Nest," written earlier, on March 14 and April 26 respectively.

Line 3 in the text of "To a Butterfly" ("Stay") contains a discrepancy unremarked by Professor deSelincourt and Miss Darbishire. Coleridge transcribed "Much reading do I find in thee"; whereas the text reads "Much converse do I find in thee." (Italics mine). In the MS of "The Sparrow's Nest" (16), "little bed" becomes "sheltered bed" in 1807; while Dorothy (9) in MS is "Emmeline" in text.

It is vain to conjecture why Wordsworth chose to send "The Glow-worm" and "Written in March" to Coleridge and why Coleridge filled space in his letter to Poole with "To a Butterfly" ("Stay") and "The Sparrow's Nest." Nevertheless, these facts indicate that Coleridge read the four poems rather close to the time of their composition, after which they underwent only superficial changes. During spring 1802, Coleridge and the Wordsworths were together frequently. Coleridge labelled Wordsworth's small poems "pleasing"; but he apparently gives them neither the attention nor the consideration that he paid a long poem the "Ode."

Coleridge visited the Wordsworths again on April 20, two days after the composition of "The Redbreast and the Butterfly." This poem contains negligible changes, neither numerous nor salutary enough to obviate parodying in The Simpliciad (See Chapter VI, pp. 189, 191).

Coleridge arrived at Grasmere late on April 20, the day on which Wordsworth wrote the second poem "To a Butterfly" ("I've watch'd you"). According to Dorothy, this piece was a completion of "Stay near me," written on March 14, and transcribed by Coleridge. Both "Butterfly" poems are in the same meter, and both contain few revisions. It was on the day after his arrival that Coleridge "repeated the verses he wrote to Sara."⁸⁴

Wordsworth wrote "Foresight" on the morning of April 28, Dorothy refers to these lines which she was fond of as "the poem of Children

⁸⁴ DW's J1., I, 135-136.

gathering Flowers."⁸⁵

Between the composition of "Foresight" on the 28 and "To the Small Celandine" on April 30, Dorothy and William shared the experience which the poet mentions in the "Ode" (120-123). The brother and sister lay side by side in trenches in John's Grove, named after their sailor brother; and William "thought it would be as sweet thus to lie so in the grave, . . ."⁸⁶ In Biographia Literaria, Coleridge expressed his disapproval of this preoccupation with death. (See Chapter VII, p. 251).

The poet later testified that he composed the three poems to the daisy ("In youth," 80 lines; "With little here," 48 lines; and "Bright Flower," 24 lines) in 1802.⁸⁷ The daisy poems have an identical metrical scheme, and from internal evidence it appears that they were composed in the order indicated. "In youth" is the first poem in the 1807 volumes. The other two daisy poems appear consecutively two-thirds of the way through the second volume. There is no evidence that Coleridge criticized any of these poems to "the Poet's darling" (In youth," 32).

The two celandine poems, "To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies") and "To the Same Flower" ("Pleasures",) were composed on April 30

⁸⁵ DW's J1., I, 135-136.

⁸⁶ Ibid., I, 139-140.

⁸⁷ Ibid., II, 490.

and May 1. "Pleasures," in 1807, reads:

Often have I sigh'd to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sigh'd to think, I read a book
Only read perhaps by me; (25-28)

The idea of "reading" nature reappears on May 7, when Coleridge transcribing the butterfly poem "Stay near me," substituted the word, "reading" for Wordsworth's term, "converse." (See p. 56).

Readers for whom the lines to the celandine seem contrived in matter and manner may equate them with those to the daisy. "Small poems," perhaps in the least felicitous sense of Coleridge's term, these are, in general, bright, blithe, impromptu, and inconsequential. Like the daisy poems, "To the Small Celandine" and "To the Same Flower" employ repetition and padding ("Pansies": "up and down " 11; "high and low: 20; "Pleasures": "from week to week" 33). In "Pansies," having found the celandine, the poet compares himself to a great Astronomer (14-16). "Pleasures" ends, somewhat awkwardly in 1807:

Thou art not beyond the moon,
But a thing "beneath our shoon;"
Let, as old Magellan did,
Others roam the sea;
Build who will pyramid;
Praise it is enough for me,
If there be but three of four
Who will love my little Flower.
(41-48)

From the beginning composition date of the "Ode," March 27, 1802, to that of "The Leech-Gatherer" on May 3, Wordsworth wrote many "small poems" which, in a sense, qualify simply as poetic exercises. Of these,

Coleridge notices in his correspondence only the "two pleasing poems" which he sent to Poole. Ranking with the "Ode" among Wordsworth's best-known and most frequently quoted works, "The Leech-Gatherer" (147 lines in 1807) appears in Poems in Two Volumes, entitled "Resolution and Independence."

Wordsworth and Coleridge were together, according to Dorothy, on seven occasions between May 3 and July 4, 1802, from the beginning to the completion of "Resolution and Independence," and twice during this period Dorothy transcribed versions of the poem for Coleridge.⁶⁸ Before its publication, Wordsworth wrote more about this poem than about any other. It is generally agreed that the poet altered the piece after discussing it with his friend; although the subject of their consultations is unknown. It is apparent, however, that Coleridge's criticism influenced post-publication revisions.⁶⁹

A minor crisis within the Wordsworth Circle occurred in June, when William made a prose defense of "The Leech-Gatherer" in a letter to Sara Hutchinson. Explaining that he is describing the poet's recovery from dejection, Wordsworth says;

I am exceedingly sorry that the latter part of the Leech-gatherer has displeased you, the more so because I cannot take to myself (that being the case) much pleasure or satisfaction in having pleased you in the former part

My dear Sara, it is not a matter of indifference whether you are pleased with this figure and his employment; it may be comparatively so, whether you are pleased or not with this Poem; but it is of the utmost importance that you should have had pleasure from contemplating the fortitude, independence, persevering spirit, and general moral dignity of this old man's

⁶⁸ DW's J1, I, 142, 145, 146, 148, 149, 156, 163, 164.

⁶⁹ Poems in Two Volumes, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London, 1897) pp. 194-195. See also: 1807, p. 381; and PW, II, 511.

character. Your feelings upon the Mother, and the Boys with the Butterfly, were not indifferent: it was an affair of whole continents of moral sympathy. I will talk more with you on this when we meet -- at present, farewell and Heaven for ever bless you!

In the same letter, Dorothy chides Sara in a passage which retains its full flavor only when quoted directly:

When you happen to be displeased with what you suppose to be the tendency or moral of any poem which William writes, ask yourself whether you have hit upon the real tendency and true moral, and above all never think that he writes for no reason but merely because a thing happened -- and when you feel any poem of his to be tedious, ask yourself in what spirit it was written -- whether merely to tell the tale and be through with it, or to illustrate a particular character or truth etc. etc.⁷⁰

Whatever changes may have occurred previous to the MS form, the following appeared between MS and 1807:

MS	1807
And they who lived in genial faith found nought That grew more willingly than genial good; (38-39)	As if all needful things would come unsought To genial faith, still rich in genial good; (38-39)
He wore a Cloak, the same as women wear; As one whose blood did needful comfort lack: His face look'd pale as if it had grown fair: And, furthermore, he had upon his back Beneathe his cloak, a round and bulky Pack; A load of wool or raiment, as might seem; That on his shoulders lay as if it clave to him: (84)	

⁷⁰
EY, #172, pp. 366-67 (D. W. and W. W. to Mary and Sara Hutchinson, 14th June [1802]).

That 'twas his calling, better far than some Thought he had many hardships to endure: (101-102)	Employment hazardous and wearisome! And he had many hardships to endure: (108-109)
And said that, wheresoe'er they might be spied He gather'd Leeches, stirring at his feet (121-122)	And said, that, gathering Leeches, far and wide He travelled; stirring thus about his feet (128-129)
One he could meet with them on every side; But they had dwindled long by slow decay; And few could now be found and fewer day by day (124-126)	"Once I could meet with them on every side; But they have dwindled long by slow decay; Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."
Which he delivered with demeanour kind, (135)	Chearfully uttered, with demeanour kind, (142)

The poet apparently accepted Sara Hutchinson's criticism of "The Leech-Gatherer." Miss Darbishire mentions Sara's early transcription of the poem, extant in a mutilated form. And between the manuscript and the 1807 versions, Wordsworth substituted for a missing deleted stanza the felicitous lines 57-63, beginning, "As a huge stone is seen to lie."

According to Professor deSelincourt, "Many of the changes in the text were prompted by Coleridge's strictures."⁷¹ Miss Darbishire notes that the poet responded to criticism by deleting the leech-gatherer's reference to "his family losses, and some at least of his difficulties over the leeches."⁷² This textual background may elucidate an incident reported on December 17, 1802, by Tom Wedgwood. Coleridge was reading a manuscript

⁷¹ PW, II, 511

⁷² Ibid., II, 536

version of the poem to Miss Fanny Allen.⁷³ The young lady laughed immediately at a passage, "now I believe omitted," about the leeches not sticking to the old man's skin. Miss Allen's reaction irritated Coleridge who apologized for reading the selection to one who could not appreciate Wordsworth's genius.⁷⁴

The 1807 text of "The Leech Gatherer" reveals a trend toward conciseness and omission of detail. The positive form replaces the comparative (38-39), phrases supplant clauses (128-143), and repetition disappears (133). Although no specific documentation testifies to Coleridge's criticism, Wordsworth may have acceded to his friend's suggestions. Certainly the two discussed this poem on several occasions; and the Wordsworths kept Coleridge informed of subsequent versions of the poem.

Lacking the spontaneity and breadth of treatment of the earlier poem, aspects of "The Leech Gatherer" recall the lyricism of the "Ode" without its diffuseness. Chronologically, the composition of the poems overlap. For more significantly, the two seem related to each other and to "Dejection" in theme and tone. While "The Leech Gatherer" contains elements typical of content and form, Wordsworth's "Ode" differs formally from his other poems.

⁷³ Miss Fanny Allen was one of the eight daughters of John Allen of Crescally. Her sisters, Elizabeth and Jane, were Mrs. Josiah and Mrs. John Wedgwood, respectively; Catherine became the second wife of Sir James Mackintosh; and Jessie married the historian, Henry Sismondi.

⁷⁴ Richard B. Litchfield, Tom Wedgwood (London, 1903), p.125.

In general, "The Leech Gatherer" makes particular some impressions which are conveyed generally in the "Ode." Having stated in the "Ode" that wisdom may consist "In the faith that looks through death,/ In years that bring the philosophic mind" (185-189), Wordsworth then considers that the leech-gatherer may be "A Man from some far regions sent;/ To give me human strength and strong admonishment" (118-119). In both poems, Wordsworth compares reading nature with reading a book. He calls the child "Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep/ Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,/ That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep." He also states " . . . he the pond / Stirred with his Staff, and fixedly did look / Upon the muddy water, which he conn'd As if he had been reading in a book;" (85-88).

In "The Leech-Gatherer," Wordsworth expresses characteristic poetic response to moods which both he and Coleridge indicate in their odes. "The Leech-Gatherer," day-to-day Wordsworth with less of the abstract and general than appears in the "Ode," is a variation of day-to-day Coleridge with less of the intimate and volatile than appears in "Dejection." The "Ode" approaches the universal directly; "Dejection" alludes to the universal through the particular and personal; "The Leech-Gatherer" proceeds from the personal to the universal.

Among the twenty-one "Miscellaneous Sonnets" grouped in the first of the 1807 volumes, five apparently written between June and early October 1802 are "Nuns Fret not," "Journey across the Hamilton Hills,"

"Composed upon Westminster Bridge," "The World is too much with us," and "It is a beautiful evening." In addition to "Lines Written in Very Early Youth," variously dated between 1786 and 1799, seven among the twenty-one sonnets are generally undated. These are "How sweet it is," "These Words were utter'd," "With ships the sea was sprinkl'd," "To the River Duddon," "Beloved Vale!" "Methought I saw the footsteps," and "To the Memory of Raisley Calvert." Four are usually dated 1803: "Where lies the land?" and three pieces "To Sleep." The three sonnets translated from the Italian of Michelangelo are considered 1806 compositions; and the lines to Lady Beaumont, "Lady! the song of Spring," probably date from early 1807.

Before their publication in Poems in Two Volumes, Wordsworth's fifty-seven sonnets seem to have been virtually unnoticed by Coleridge. In his 1796 volume, Coleridge included nine sonnets. Wordsworth, however, having used the sonnet form in "Lines Written in Very Early Youth," did not return to it again until May 21, 1802. Then, hearing Dorothy read Milton's sonnets, William "wrote two sonnets on Buonaparte;" and on the next day, a Saturday, the brother and sister met Coleridge who remained with them until Monday.⁷⁶ The poem to Buonaparte appeared twice in the Morning Post, on September 6, 1802 and on January 29, 1803. Identifying it in a September 19 letter to Southey, Coleridge says, " - Did you see a very fine Sonnet on Buonaparte in the Morning Post of Wednesday or Thursday last-? It was written by Wordsworth - & comes upon my Feelings, as in the spirit of the best of

⁷⁶ DW's J1., I, 149

Milton's Sonnets." Having written these early sonnets, the poet was still occupied with "The Leech-Gatherer" when he wrote "The Sun has long been set" on June 8, 1802.⁷⁶ Two days later, Coleridge again visited the Wordsworths who left Grasmere on July 9, arrived in Calais on August 1, and returned to Dover on August 30.⁷⁷ Fourteen of Wordsworth's twenty-six "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty" were inspired and composed within a few months of this French journey.

Shortly after his marriage in October, 1802, Wordsworth praised Milton's sonnets and the "energetic and varied flow of sound crowding into narrow room more of the combined effect of rhyme and blank verse than can be done by any other kind of verse I know of."⁷⁸ The seven "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty" which appeared in the Morning Post during 1803 were:

"I griev'd for Buonaparte"	January 29
"Is it a reed?"	January 29
"To Toussaint L'Ouverture"	February 2
"September 1, 1802"	February 11
"Festivals"	February 26
"It is not to be thought of"	April 16
"When I have borne in memory"	September 17

An eighth sonnet, "Admonition," appeared in the 1803 Poetical Register and in the 1804 Anti-Gallican, both annuals.

Probably because of the structural requirements and possible

⁷⁶ CL, II, #460, 869 (To William Sotheby, Sept. 19th. 1802).

⁷⁷ DW's J1., I, 156, 173, 175.

⁷⁸ EY, #179, p. 379 (W.W. to an unknown correspondent, Nov 1802).

variations within the form, Wordsworth's sonnets underwent less revision than others of his poems. Having experimented with a fifteen line sonnet beginning with Sir Philip Sidney's line, "With how sad steps, O Moon," he reduced this poem to the traditional length after 1815.

In addition to the twenty-six "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty," Wordsworth included in Poems in Two Volumes, Volume II, five single sonnets: "Degenerate Douglas" (1803), "Admonition" (undated), three 1807 sonnets, ("Though narrow be that old Man's cares," "A Prophecy," and "To Thomas Clarkson") as well as the undated four-part sonnet sequence beginning "I am not one."

The composition date of "To a Skylark" is unknown. Many years later, Wordsworth mentions this poem to Barron Field (LY, #829, p. 311; October 1828) as one which Coleridge "used severely to condemn and to treat contemptuously." According to Ernest deSelincourt, this criticism may have been made before Coleridge's departure for Malta in 1804.⁷⁹

In "To H. C.," written to Coleridge's son, Hartley, in 1802, line 12 reads, "Thou art so exquisitely wild." Coleridge echoes this phrase in a letter, dated October 14, 1803. Having requested Poole, his addressee, to destroy this letter, Coleridge criticizes Wordsworth freely and at some length:

-I saw him more & more benetted in hypochondriacal Fancies, living wholly among Devotees-- having every the minutest Thing, almost his very Eating & Drinking, done for him by his Sister, or Wife-- & I trembled, lest a Film should rise, and

⁷⁹ PW, II, 491.

thicken on his moral Eye. - The habit too of writing such a multitude of small Poems was in this instance hurtful to him -- such Things as that Sonnet of his in Monday's Morning Post, about Simonides & the Ghost --/I rejoice therefore with a deep & true Joy, that he has at length yielded to my urgent & repeated-- almost unremitting-- requests & remonstrances -- & will go on with the Recluse exclusively.⁸⁰

Wordsworth did not publish "that Sonnet" mentioned above. Coleridge makes similar allusions in a notebook entry on another day in October, when he refers to the short poems and probably to the sonnets, some of which had recently appeared in the Morning Post.

I am sincerely glad, that he has bidden farewell to all small Poems-- & is devoting himself to his great work -- grandly imprisoning while it deifies his Attention & Feelings within the sacred Circle & Temple Walls of great Objects & elevated Conceptions. - In these little poems his own corrections, coming of necessity so often, at the end of every 14, or 20 lines-- or whatever the poem might chance to be-- wore him out-- difference of opinion with his best friends irritated him / & he wrote at times too much with a sectarian Spirit, in a sort of Bravado,-- But now he is at the Helm of a noble Bark; now he sails right onward-- it is all open Ocean, & a steady Breeze; and he drives before it, unfretted by short Tacks, reefing and unreefing the Sails, hawling & disentangling the ropes. - His only Disease is the having been out of his Element-- his return to it is food to Famine, it is both the specific Remedy, & the condition of Health.⁸¹

Discontent with his domestic situation, depression, ill-health and hypochondria caused Coleridge to seek relief in a change of climate. On his farewell visit to the Wordsworths in December 1803, Coleridge became ill and had to delay his departure until January 14, 1804. At this time,

⁸⁰ CL, II, #525, 1013 (To Thomas Poole, Oct. 14, 1803).

⁸¹ CN, I, #1546, 21. 266 (October 1803).

Wordsworth may have been writing his "Ode to Duty." An entry in Coleridge's notebook reads

Is more gained by repeating to a beloved Housemate your Poem or Work, passage by passage, that is, by repeating each night after supper the work of the Day? - Or by storing it up a week or fortnight? - Till the whole Poem, if it be Ode or Tale/ or a whole Book, if a long Work/ or a complete Part, or Section, if in a Prose Work? - Ask William & Dorothy. Dorothy thinks it would be better to wait till some thing was finished, that could be repeated as a whole, Ode or single Book, or Chapter. - ⁸²

Whether, as Miss Kathleen Coburn suggests in her notes to the Notebook, this was the immortality "Ode" or the "Ode to Duty," Coleridge alludes later in 1805 to the "Ode to Duty": "I remember the having written a strong Letter to my most dear and honored Wordsworth ... in consequence of his Ode to Duty...."⁸³ There is no record of this letter. However, Mrs. Moorman states that Wordsworth could have written the "Ode to Duty" during the last visit of Coleridge, who may have suggested the adoption of a more positive sentiment in the third stanza between MS and 1807 text.⁸⁴ Nine lines in Coleridge's January 1804 notebook entry suggest the theme of Wordsworth's poem, "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves," ascribed to this period.⁸⁵

The separation of the two friends which began on January 14, 1804,

⁸² CN, I, 1830 16.213 (January 1804).

⁸³ CN, II, 2531 17.89 (7 April 1805).

⁸⁴ Moorman, II, 4-5.

⁸⁵ CN, I, 1813 16.197 (January 1804).

signalled the gradual severing of a relationship which had profoundly influenced the lives of Wordsworth and Coleridge. To Richard Sharp, on January 15, Coleridge testifies to the fact that

Wordsworth is a Poet, a most original Poet -- he no more resembles Milton than Milton resembles Shakespere -- no more resembles Shakespere than Shakespere resembles Milton -- he is himself: and I dare affirm that he will hereafter be admitted as the first & greatest philosophical Poet -- the only man who has effected a compleat and constant synthesis of Thought & Feeling and combined them with Poetic Forms, with the music of pleasurable passion and with Imagination or the modifying Power in that highest sense of the word in which I have ventured to oppose it to Fancy, or the aggregating power -- in that sense in which it is a dim Analogue of Creation, not all that we can believe but all that we can conceive of creation. Wordsworth is a Poet, and I feel myself a better Poet, in knowing how to honour him, than in all my own poetic Compositions, all I have done or hope to do -- and I prophesy immortality to his Recluse, as the first & finest philosophical Poem, if only it be (as it undoubtedly will be) a Faithful Transcript of his own habitual most august & innocent Life, of his own habitual Feelings & Modes of seeing and hearing.⁸⁶

Awaiting ship for Malta, Coleridge requested the Wordsworths to transcribe William's poems for him. Among the material forwarded were many of the poems published in 1807 as well as the completed portions of The Prelude.⁸⁷

During Coleridge's absence, the Wordsworths' brother, John, perished

⁸⁶ CL, II, #535, 1034 (To Richard Sharp, Jan. 15, 1804).

⁸⁷ CN, II, Appendix E, 425.

at sea on February 5, 1805. Alluding to this tragedy to Sir George Beaumont, Wordsworth refers affectionately to Coleridge: "I can say nothing higher of my ever dear Brother than that he was worthy of his Sister..., and of the friendship of Coleridge; ..."⁸⁸ Writing more frankly to another friend a few weeks later, Wordsworth mentions Coleridge, "...in connexion with whom we have many melancholy, fearful, and unhappy feelings, ..."⁸⁹

For a year and a half after Coleridge's embarkation for Malta on April 9, 1804, comparatively little was heard directly from him. For the major portion of his prolonged Malta sojourn he served as secretary to Sir Alexander Ball, governor of the island. During the long silence of 1805, Coleridge comments in a notebook entry about English as an appropriate vehicle for poetry. He states "...the English not by accidental Production of Genius, but by its natural constitution stands unequalled for all kinds of Poetry, in which the more complex and profounder Passions are united with deep Thought, ...for impassioned and particularized Description, (see Burns' description of a Brook, and Wordsworth's Poetry in a hundred places)..."⁹⁰ Meanwhile, sentiments like "...no news of Coleridge" and "We have lately had much anxiety about Coleridge. What can have become of him?" recur in his friends' correspondence in early 1806.⁹¹

⁸⁸ EY, #245 p. 541. (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, 11th Feb -05).

⁸⁹ Ibid. #256 p. 566. (W.W. to James Losh, March 16th 1805)

⁹⁰ CN, II, 2431, 17.5 f 5 (February 1805).

⁹¹ MY, I, #242, 4; (D.W. to Catherine Clarkson 27th January 1801); #244, 7 (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont February 11 1806).

When, at last, Coleridge's return to England was reported, the delay and uncertainty had caused his family and friends considerable anxiety, disappointment, embarrassment and annoyance. The traveller actually arrived in London on August 17, 1806, and on the following day he appeared at the home of Charles and Mary Lamb.⁹²

Residence abroad had not permanently improved Coleridge's health or spirits. When he returned, he feared to inquire about anyone lest he hear bad news. Despite promises to the contrary, he made no attempt to join his family nor to see Wordsworth until more than two months after his arrival in England. Avoiding those who had for so long anticipated his homecoming, he wrote of separating from his wife whom he did not meet until October 30, after an absence of two and a half years.⁹³

The Grasmere Cottage, which satisfactorily accommodated a small family, was utterly inadequate for the present household. According to Dorothy, "We are crammed in our little nest edge-full, ..." ⁹⁴ Hoping to ascertain Colridge's plans, the Wordsworths deferred moving.⁹⁵ However, by the time they met Coleridge at Kendal on October 26, the Wordsworths were en route from Grasmere to Coleorton, Leicestershire, where they were to spend the

⁹² The Life of Charles Lamb, ed. Edward Verrall Lucas, (New York, 1905) I, 339 - hereafter cited as Lucas, Life.

⁹³ CL, II, #635, 1199n. (To the Wordsworths [Circa 19 November 1806]).

⁹⁴ MY, I, #245, 9 (D.W. to Catherine Clarkson, March 2nd 1806); #272, 61; (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, August 21st, 1806); #275, 65 (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, Sept. 1806).

⁹⁵ MY, I, #272, 61 (W.W. to Sir George Beaumont, Aug. 21st, 1806).

winter at the Hall farmhouse on the Beaumonts' estate. There, Coleridge, with the ten-year-old Hartley, joined the family in time for Christmas.

Between the meeting at Kendal and Coleridge's arrival at Coleorton, William composed the lines of "A Complaint," sub-titled, "Suggested by a Change in the Manner of a Friend!"⁹⁶ In a letter to Lady Beaumont, Dorothy writes, "Coleridge is pretty well at present, though ailing at some time in every day."⁹⁷ Apparently, however, something beyond the physical appearance of Coleridge distressed his friends.

While Coleridge was away from England, the deaths of two of his friends occurred in 1805, that of John Wordsworth on February 5, and that of Thomas Wedgwood, on July 10. Coleridge's absence had removed him from the Wordsworth household, whose members subsequently developed in personality and increased in number. When Coleridge left England, John Wordsworth was the poet's only child. No longer an infant but an articulate individual, he was now the eldest of three. And although Coleridge had been reminded, in letters, of the existence of Dorothy, over two years of age, he had seen neither her nor the six-months-old infant, Thomas. By the time Coleridge returned, Sara Hutchinson, previously an occasional visitor, virtually made the Wordsworth home her residence. The Beaumonts and Wordsworths, whom Coleridge had introduced in 1803, were close friends. In 1805, Walter Scott

⁹⁶ PW, II, 473; Moorman, II, 94-95; 1807, 439n.

⁹⁷ MY, I, #292, III (D.W. to Lady Beaumont ...Jan. 27, 1807.)

and Humphry Davy visited with Wordsworth who during 1804-1805, engaged in correspondence with Dr. Quincey. At Coleridge's return, Wordsworth had become more involved in local events and more interested in public affairs than either friend could have imagined possible three years earlier.

When he arrived at Coleorton, the physical appearance and psychological attitude of Coleridge perplexed and saddened his friends. After their Kendal meeting in November, Wordsworth had written "A Complaint." The imagery in this poem has significant counterparts with that in "To Asra" and "Dejection! An Ode." Coleridge, in lines written "To Asra" in 1801, identifies happiness with love, and mentions love's transforming power in terms of a "well" and a "fountain":

This Love which ever welling at my heart,
Now in its living fount doth heave and fall,
Now overflowing pours thro' every part
Of all my frame, and fills and changes all,
(CPW, I, 361, 5-8)

The following year, in "Dejection," he uses the "fountain" figure;

I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.
(CPW, II, 1078, 46-47)

Also equating love with joy, he alludes to love's vitality:

Joy lifts thy spirit, joy attunes thy voice, 133
O lofty Poet, full of life and love, 137

In "A Complaint," Wordsworth, referring to love as a fountain and as a vital principle, alludes to mutability rather than to transformation:

There is a change - and I am poor;
Your Love hath been, nor long ago,
A Fountain at my fond Heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did; not taking heed
of its own bounty, or my need. (1807, p. 291, 1-6)

Wordsworth concludes "A Complaint" with:

Now, for this consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,
What have I? shall I dare to tell?
A comfortless, and hidden Well. (9-12)

Whereas, in "To Asra" and in "Dejection," Coleridge characterizes love as living, overflowing, and transforming, Wordsworth, in "A Complaint" laments the substitution of imperceptible elements, suggested by "A comfortless and hidden well" for "murmuring, sparkling, living love."

Although Wordsworth and Coleridge were poets and philosophers in the general sense of the terms, their poetry criticism as such, reflect no traditionally defined nor clearly discernible system of thought. Coleridge's perseverance as a poet was threatened by temperamental difficulties and by the demands of his diffuse interests which allowed him neither time nor inclination for the rigors of sustained poetic creation. More persevering a workman, if intellectually less inquisitive than Coleridge, Wordsworth continually explored and developed the range and depth of his own poetry. Attentive to form and expression, Wordsworth constantly reworked his material. While Coleridge was continually diverted by the intellectual resources of nineteenth century English empiricism and German transcendentalism, Wordsworth became less interested in ontological consideration which did not involve his poetic purposes. In their own character, Coleridge seems to have lacked Wordsworth's single-minded persistence, and Wordsworth seems to have lacked Coleridge's provocative insistence.

Of Coleridge, George Watson has written, "The most theoretical of great English critics, his criticism is not at its most excellent at those

moments when it is most particular."⁹⁸ Miss Darbishire succinctly stated a difference between Wordsworth and Coleridge, poet and critic, when she observed that "Coleridge makes Reason and Wordsworth makes Imagination the supreme faculty, the faculty of the infinite."⁹⁹

While such observations seem oversimplified they define and distinguish the functions of Wordsworth and Coleridge as poet and critic. Each performs an individual function contingent upon that of the other. Coleridge's pre-publication criticism of Wordsworth's 1807 poems appears in his attitude toward poetry in general and towards the individual poems in particular. Such criticism may consist in the tension, amidst, against, or despite which Wordsworth created the 115 poems, which serve to measure the poet's growth and development. Wordsworth's awareness of and sensitivity to criticism implies response. The pre-publication period which provided Wordsworth with opportunity for poetic experimentation and development provided Coleridge with material by which he tested and to which he applied his critical theory.

Throughout the 1797-1807 period, Wordsworth was exploring his creative impulses and expanding his literary theories. During these years, Coleridge gradually adjusted his concept of Wordsworth from poet-philosopher to poet-versifier. More and more, Coleridge came to consider Wordsworth's short

⁹⁸ George Watson, Coleridge the Poet (New York, 1966) p.6.

⁹⁹ Helen Darbishire, "Didactic Poetry in English Literature," in Somerville College Chapel Addresses and Other Papers, with a list of her published writings 1908-1961, ed. Vera Farnell (London, 1962) pp.82-83.

pieces as poems per se rather than as interim exercises. In "Dejection: An Ode" (1802) and "To William Wordsworth" (1807), Coleridge contrasted his waning inspiration with Wordsworth's increasing activity. The divergence of the literary paths of Wordsworth and Coleridge, indicated by the 1800 Preface, was now drawing toward inevitable estrangement.

It is generally conceded that Wordsworth approximated his full poetic stature with the 1807 publication. After this, the poet's compositions signifying extension and expansion of earlier poetic impulses and techniques, realize previously indicated promise. In a sense then, Poems in Two Volumes marks the emergence of Wordsworth as a mature poet and of his development as an assiduous reviser.

During the most sustained and most fruitful period of their relationship, Coleridge's influence upon Wordsworth was apparent when in 1802-1803 the poet was writing many of the 115 poems. To Wordsworth, Coleridge's criticism was unavailable during the 1804-1806 period when he was away from England. Poems in Two Volumes concludes the active period of the Wordsworth-Coleridge association. Any possible response by Wordsworth to Coleridge's pre-publication criticism belongs to the period preceding 1804 when Wordsworth was maturing as a poet and when Coleridge was functioning more actively as theorist than as poet.

The literary relationship of Wordsworth and Coleridge began after both had passed through crises of sorts - Wordsworth's experience in France, his nursing of Raisley Calvert, and the aftermath of these; Colridge's troubled

college career, his marriage, and the significance of both. Coleridge and Wordsworth gave to each other a measure of intellectual challenge and stimulation. Each provided for the other restorative effects which can be supplied only by an intelligent, respectful and appreciative auditor, who also lays claim on one's judgment.

Coleridge's enthusiasms were swift but shifting. Although his interest in Wordsworth developed rapidly, his concept of his friend as philosophical poet was comparatively short-lived. Coleridge's awareness and assessment of the differences between his and Wordsworth's literary convictions evolved gradually and, as indicated in Biographia Literaria, they were deep and penetrating. In their early association especially, Coleridge's image of Wordsworth constitutes a fairly accurate reflection of Coleridge's self-projection. Over the years, Coleridge maintained his role as critic in a collaboration which, however short its active existence, perdured throughout Coleridge's lifetime.

Wordsworth seems to have been able, from early in his poetic career, to recognize and appreciate the combination of personal affection and critical insight shown him by members of his family and by close friends. Wordsworth always regarded himself as a teacher. He replied to the criticism of Dorothy, their brothers, and the Hutchinsons as if he were speaking aloud to his alter ego.

With the Beaumonts, he carefully discussed his work in the convinced tones of a writer explaining his creative processes to intelligent but non-professional readers. He discoursed in more or less specialized terms with

Sir Walter Scott; with Lamb, he was sometimes inclined to be defensive. His literary exchange with Southey was general. With amateurs like Mrs. Permor and Miss Taylor he adopted an authorative and specific tone.

From the critical commentary of Coleridge, however, Wordsworth seems always to have received considerable impetus. Coleridge's more or less sustained influence was an integral part of Wordsworth's poetic development.

#

CHAPTER III

Wordsworth's Reaction to the Criticism of Other Friends and Acquaintances

William Godwin (1756-1836) names as "four principal oral instructors to whom I feel my mind indebted for improvement," Holcroft, Dyson, Fawcett, and Coleridge.¹ A generation later, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) mentioned Goethe, Sainte-Beuve, Wordsworth, and Newman as those from whom he had learned something special.² Godwin, an innovative theorist, cites his debt to the instruction of Coleridge, another original thinker; and Arnold, the intellectual syncretist, acknowledges the influence of the self-styled teacher, Wordsworth. There are vast personal and literary differences between these two nearly contemporary groups. Notwithstanding the disparities, it is significant that one group includes Coleridge, the other, Wordsworth.

Coleridge possessed intellectual characteristics reminiscent of the seventeenth century mind. An anatomist mentality, like that of Coleridge, demanded of his contemporaries keen sensitivity to metaphysics. The critical insights of Coleridge overlay psychological implications, larger and farther reaching than those generally acknowledged in the eighteenth century.

¹ Charles Kegan Paul, William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries (London, 1876) I, 17.

² Letter from Matthew Arnold to J. H. Newman, Mar. 28, 1872, quoted in Times (London) Literary Supplement (3 March 1921), 211.

It is understandable that a number among their nineteenth century contemporaries regarded the mind of Wordsworth as better suited than that of Coleridge to the literary temper of the time. Unlike Coleridge's universe of abstruse philosophical syntheses, Wordsworth's world of tangential relationships reveals a pattern of logical connection and steady accretion. Compared with Coleridge's approach to ideas, the attitude of Wordsworth seems simpler and more acceptable to many casual readers.

In fact, perhaps, even more than in theory, Wordsworth preferred the reactions of the "people," to those of the "public."³ In 1802 he had read "The Leech Gatherer" to Williams, his hair-cutter.⁴ After the publication of Poems in Two Volumes, he alluded to a coach companion, a grocer, who without recognizing the poet, confided to him that he found Wordsworth's poems "natural and true"⁵ despite their general condemnation by the critics.

Among Wordsworth's contemporaries, critics of the 1807 poems were the poet's friends, their friends, close and casual acquaintances, and general readers. Members of Wordsworth's circle included his and Dorothy's companions, like the Wranghams, Marshalls, and Clarksons.

³ MY, I, #301, 126 (W. W. to Lady Beaumont, May 21st 1807).

⁴ EY, #172, p. 364 (D. W. and W. W. to Mary and Sara Hutchinson, 14th June [1802]).

⁵ MY, I, #325, 187 (W. W. to Sir George Beaumont, April 8th [1808]).

Coleridge's school fellow, Charles Lamb, came slowly to friendship with Wordsworth, long the object of Lamb's shrewd appraisal. At the home of the Lambs, Wordsworth met Henry Crabb Robinson. Wordsworth had addressed himself as a friend of Coleridge to Humphry Davy in 1800. Southey, who brought his family to Greta Hall in 1803, moved almost imperceptibly into the Wordsworth circle; and Southey's friend, Walter Scott, subsequently became correspondent and friend of Wordsworth. In 1803, Coleridge introduced Wordsworth to Sir George and Lady Beaumont; and from 1804 to 1806, during Coleridge's absence from England, the influential Beaumonts became close friends of the Wordsworths.

Many critics among the poet's contemporaries were related to one another by ties of marriage, blood, or association. Frequently, such affinities affected the tenor and degree of contemporary critical appraisal of Wordsworth and of his poetic response. Specifically, interrelationships within and among the close literary groups of the nineteenth century caused a spiralling and spreading of Wordsworth's reliance upon the opinions of contemporaries.

Priscilla, sister of Charles Lloyd, became the wife of Wordsworth's youngest brother, Christopher. An influential friend, Daniel Stuart, owner of the Morning Post and later of the Courier, met Coleridge and subsequently Wordsworth through James Mackintosh, Stuart's brother-in-law. The second wife of Mackintosh was Miss Catherine Allen, whose three sisters were married to John and Josiah Wedgwood and Henry Sismondi (See Chapter II, p. 63).

There were numerous others among Wordsworth's acquaintances whose families criticized the poet. Cecilia Baldwin⁶ married James Losh, lawyer and first cousin to the Allen sisters mentioned above. In his notebooks, Losh made frequent and interesting if not critically significant⁷ allusions to Wordsworth and his poetry. Basil Montagu, lifelong friend of Wordsworth, represented Shelley in the litigation over the custody of his children. Montagu's stepson-in-law, Bryan Waller Procter ("Barry Cornwall"), was a critic and writer who underwrote the posthumous publication of Shelley's work. Through the Lambs, Wordsworth became acquainted with John Stoddart, whose sister, Sara, married William Hazlitt. Emma Isola, the Lamb's adopted daughter, was granddaughter of Wordsworth's tutor at Oxford and became the wife of Edward Moxon, successor to Longman as Wordsworth's publisher. Editor of the Quarterly Review (1825-6), Walter Scott's son-in-law, John Gibson Lockhart, criticized Wordsworth's work publicly and privately. The wife of Sir Henry Taylor was a cousin to Aubrey de Vere; and Taylor was related to Isabella Fenwick, friend, amanuensis, and unofficial editor of Wordsworth in his later years. Through Benjamin Robert Haydon, Wordsworth met Keats, whose friend, John Hamilton Reynolds, was the Peter Bell parodist and brother-in-law of Thomas Hood.

While the above relationships may seem incidental and poetically irrelevant, their possible implications point up problematic aspects of criticism and response regarding Wordsworth's poetry. Notes and letters

⁶ EY, #85, 213n (W. W. to James Losh) March 11th, [1798].

⁷ The Diaries and Notebooks of James Losh, ed. Edward Hughes (London, 1962).

from Wordsworth abound with requests for the good offices and intervention of friends with their friends on behalf of those needing or seeking employment, instruction, advancement or introduction. The recipient of many favors from his own associates, Wordsworth seems throughout his life to have been dependent upon benefactions from others. And from such a two-way passage or exchange, considerations of his poetry cannot have been excluded.

Chronologically, the 1807 poems represent the work of the maturing poet. When Wordsworth classified the material in his collected edition of 1815, he arranged the 1807 poems under numerous categories within the topical range. Over the years, quantitative revisions made by the poet occurred more frequently among the 115 pieces in Poems in Two Volumes than among his other works. Preeminently, the poems of 1807 signify the essential genius and mature power of Wordsworth, many of whose subsequent allusions, references, explanations, and defenses apply to these poems.

Upon their publication in May 1807, the 115 poems received much adverse criticism in periodical reviews. Allusions to the poems by the poet's contemporaries also revealed wide differences of opinion about the work. The biographer of Reynolds, Joseph Farington, R.A., who kept daily entries in his diary, notes on May 13, 1807: "Lawrence was at Sotheby's last night... Richard Sharpe [sic] expressed his disapprobation of Wordsworth's poems just published, saying He had carried his system of simplicity too far, and had proceeded to puerility. -- Sir George Beaumont after Sharpe was gone sd to Lawrence that He supposed the

Blood Hounds would now be upon Wordsworth" --⁸

Lady Beaumont⁹ was among the first to express deep concern over the poor reception of the new poems. In his response to her letter, Wordsworth incorporates a number of his poetic principles. He assures her that he never expected his work to be popularly accepted, and affirms as "awful" truth that "to be incapable of a feeling of Poetry . . . is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God." Wordsworth then outlines the "destiny" of his poems in terms of comparative beatitude: "to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier, to teach the young and gracious of every age, to see, to think and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous; this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform long after we (that is, all that is mortal of us) are mouldered in our graves."¹⁰

Regarding points which Lady Beaumont raised, the poet termed Samuel Rogers's criticism of Wordsworth's subject matter "trifling." Explaining that he had aimed at comprehensiveness, Wordsworth cites the twenty-six "Sonnets to Liberty" and the thirteen poems labelled "Moods of my own Mind" as pieces which, considered as topical entities, achieve a unified poetic

⁸
The Farington Diary, ed. James Greig (London, 1924) iv, 135 (May 13, 1807).

⁹
Lady Beaumont, née Margaret Willes (1753-1827), was the daughter of John Willes of Astrop and granddaughter of Chief Justice Willes. She was married to Sir George Beaumont in 1778. Her sister, Frances, married Henry Fermor, corresponded with Coleridge, and left Wordsworth a small bequest in her will.

¹⁰
MY, I, #301, 126 (W. W. to Lady Beaumont, May 21st 1807).

effect.¹¹ His poems, Wordsworth emphatically states, are not to be read cursorily nor simply to provide conversation.¹²

Lady Beaumont reported to Wordsworth the reactions of her sister, Mrs. Fermor, to the poems labelled "Moods of my own Mind" (See pp.98,99,108). In reply, the poet comments on "The Daffodils" and "Who fancied," which he and Mrs. Fermor admired. Wordsworth later made a few significant changes in "The Daffodils," and years afterwards, he told Isabella Fenwick that "The two best lines in it are by Mary [Wordsworth]." In 1807, those were lines 16-17.¹³ Subsequently, his only revision in "Who fancied" was a change in the adjective qualifying "maiden," from "lovesick" (1807) to "gentle" (1836). After 1807, he placed "The Daffodils" and "I Wandered" respectively under "Poems of the Imagination" and "Poems of the Fancy."

In the May 1807 letter, Wordsworth also considers the sonnets, "With ships the sea was sprinkled" and "To Sleep" ("Fond words"). Regarding poetic unity, he insists that one image or object predominates, either in an individual poem or within a group of poems on a certain subject. Wordsworth states that this principle applies to "With ships," when the poetic voice or the persona finally fixes his attention on a single ship. The poet reminds Lady Beaumont that in the sonnet, "Sleep," lines 13-14, which Mrs. Fermor admires, "had before been mentioned to me by Coleridge, and indeed by almost everybody who had heard it, as eminently beautiful." In

¹¹ MY, I, #301, 127.

¹² MY, I, #301, 130.

¹³ PW, II, 507.

this connection, Wordsworth also reminds Lady Beaumont of a principle stated by Coleridge that "every great and original writer, . . . must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished; . . ." ¹⁴ Comprehending the moral sentiment at which the poet aims, the reader will then, according to the poet, find himself "wiser, better, happier." Throughout this response to Lady Beaumont, Wordsworth maintains that thoughtful readers must discover in his poems the intellectual constitution governed by the "law of thought."

Another contemporary who expressed varied professional opinions about the poetry of Wordsworth was Anna Seward, the "Swan of Lichfield." She had previously written to a correspondent that she did not consider Wordsworth's poetry first-rate. ¹⁵ Upon the appearance of the 1807 volumes, she told Scott of her objection to the "dancing daffodils." Although she referred to Wordsworth as "this egotistic manufacturer of metaphysical importance upon trivial themes," Miss Seward praised the poet for his natural writing in "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves," "To the Spade of a Friend," "The Cock is Crowing," "The Sailor's Mother," three or four unspecified sonnets, and "The Leech-Gatherer." She described "Westminster Bridge" as "beautiful, unaffected, and grandly picturesque." Without citing specific lines, Miss Seward mentioned 1807 poems which she regarded as simple, straightforward personal lyrics or folk pieces. She termed the first stanzas of Wordsworth's "Ode" delightful and similar to

¹⁴ MY, I, #301, 130, 131, (W. W. to Lady Beaumont, May 21st 1807).

¹⁵ Letters of Anna Seward, written between the years 1784 and 1807 (Edinburgh, 1811) VI, 258 (To Rev. Robert Fellowes, May 31, 1806).

Coleridge's "Dejection," but found the last stanzas incomprehensible.¹⁶ Wordsworth may not have known of Miss Seward's criticism. He neither reacted to nor responded to it.

In correspondence following close upon the publication of the 1807 poems, Wordsworth expressed appreciation to Wrangham. ". . . I am indeed much pleased," the poet wrote, "that Mrs. Wrangham and yourself have been gratified by these breathings of simple Nature, the more so, because I conclude, from the character of the Poems which you have particularized, that the Volumes cannot but improve upon you." To Wrangham's mention of "The Daffodils," Wordsworth stated that the lines, "They flash upon that inward eye,/Which is the bliss of solitude" (1807; 15-16), ". . . if thoroughly felt, would annihilate nine tenths of the Reviews of the Kingdom, as they [the reviews] would find no Readers; . . .".¹⁷

Early in 1806, writing to Walter Scott that Wordsworth was correcting his poems, Southey praised "The Happy Warrior."¹⁸ After the publication of Poems in Two Volumes, Scott remarked to Southey the unfavorable notice in the Edinburgh Review. Despite this, he noted that Wordsworth's sonnets were praised by Jeffrey to whom Scott communicated his admiration of "The Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle." Nevertheless,

¹⁶ Letters of Anna Seward, VI, 366-367 (To Walter Scott, August 24, 1807).

¹⁷ MY, I, #311, 149 (W. W. to Francis Wrangham, Nov. 4th, [1807]).

¹⁸ Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, ed. Charles Cuthbert Southey (New York, 1851) p. 203 (To Walter Scott, Feb. 4, 1806) -- hereafter cited as Southey, Letters.

Scott described many 1807 poems as "caviare," concluding that some "ought to have been more cautiously hazarded."¹⁹

In answer, Southey proffers his "review:"

My own notions respecting the book agree in the main with yours, though I may probably go a step further than you in admiration. There are certainly some pieces there which are good for nothing (none, however, which a bad poet could have written), and very much which it was highly injudicious to publish. That song to Lord Clifford, which you particularize, is truly a noble poem. The Ode upon Pre-existence is a dark subject darkly handled. Coleridge is the only man who could make such a subject luminous. The Leech-gatherer is one of my favorites; there he has caught Spenser's manner, and, in many of the better poemets, has equally caught the best manner of old Wither, who, with all his long fits of dullness and prosing, had the heart and soul of a poet in him. The sonnets are in a grand style. /I only wish Dundee had not been mentioned. James Grahame and I always call that man Claverhouse, the name by which the devils know him below.²⁰

The "Dundee" reference applies to the 1807 "Sonnet in the Pass of Killicranky."

In another letter, Lady Beaumont forwarded criticism sent her by "a friend," whom Dorothy identifies as Lady Susan Bathurst.²¹ Writing soon afterwards to Sir George Beaumont, and acknowledging the "candour" of the stated criticism, Wordsworth proceeds to deal with it briskly. He concedes "a mighty difference" between the critic's mistaken allusion

¹⁹ The Letters of Sir Walter Scott, ed. H. J. C. Grierson (London, 1932-37) I, 390 (To Robert Southey, November 1807).

²⁰ Southey, Letters, p. 230 (To Walter Scott, December 8, 1807).

²¹ MY, I, #316, 168 (D. W. to Lady Beaumont, January 3d, 1808).

to the poem as "on a Daisy" and its accurate title, "on the Daisy." Affirming the precision of his language and the distinctness of his expression the poet quotes lines 5-8 of "The Daffodils," and takes exception to the critic's reference to these flowers as "reflected in the water." Wordsworth advises, "Why, let the Poet first consult his own heart as I have done and leave the rest to posterity; to, I hope, an improving posterity." The letter to Sir George Beaumont also contains Wordsworth's distinction between "public" and "people." Here, the poet protests that he has neither "written down" nor catered to the superficiality of the non-thinking. Admitting that the English public also errs respecting his poems, he declares, "Every great Poet is a Teacher: I wish either to be considered as a Teacher, or as nothing."²²

Wordsworth's analogy between the "great Poet" and the "great Teacher" keynotes his response to criticism in the light of his self-image. The tone of this letter is the deferential one which he consistently adopts when writing to the Beaumonts, whom the poet addresses as friends and also as patrons and benefactors. Painstakingly clear, at times almost admonitory in his response to their queries, he usually concludes on a note of moral affirmation and definition.

Again remarking the partisanship of the Beaumonts, Joseph Farington writes in his diary: "Wordsworth was cried up by Lady Beaumont in the most violent manner, -- calling him angelic & -- Sir George seemed to

²²

MY, II, #317, 170 (W. W. to Sir George Beaumont, Jan. or Feb. 1808).

be cooled. --"²³ Soon afterwards, Sir George attributes the lack of appreciation of Wordsworth's poetry to prejudice and traditionalism.²⁴ In the following year Farington noted, ". . . -- Lady Beaumont was enthusiastic in admiration of Wordsworth. She desired me to read His preface to His poems. Sir George was more moderate. He told me & warned me of the danger of not approving it, adding 'That Lady Beaumont was as intolerant in Her opinions as Bishop Bonner on religious matters.'²⁵"

From India, James Mackintosh wrote, on July 6, 1808, that Wordsworth's "new poems" abstracted him from "the petty reactions of the little world" and from "the horrible dangers of the great world." After quoting from the 1807 sonnet sequence, "Personal Talk," Mackintosh stated, "The Sonnets on Switzerland and on Milton are sublime. Some of the others are in a style of severe simplicity, sometimes bordering on the harshness and dangers of some of Milton's sonnets." Mackintosh mentions that it might gratify the poet to know that these patriot sonnets, in particular, affected him, a once-hostile reader, now far from home.²⁶ Richard Sharp forwarded this message from Mackintosh to

²³ The Farington Diary, v, 3 (January 12, 1808).

²⁴ Ibid., v, 51 (April 16, 1808).

²⁵ Ibid., v, 132 (March 28, 1809).

²⁶ Memoirs of the Life of James Mackintosh, ed. Robert James Mackintosh (Boston, 1853) I, 410.

Wordsworth, who in a letter of acknowledgement cites another 1807 poem, "Thought of a Briton," as his best sonnet.²⁷ Remarking George Crabbe's photographic representation in poetry, Wordsworth remarks, "After all, if the Picture were true to nature, what claim would it have to be called Poetry?"²⁸

In an after-Christmas letter, 1809, to Lady Beaumont, Dorothy alludes to the poet's widening circle of acquaintances, including John Wilson who "has from his very boyhood been a passionate admirer of my brother's writings;" and Thomas DeQuincey, who "has the utmost reverence for my brother."²⁹

From the above correspondence, it appears that it was the poet's desire as well as his inclination to please critics among his family and friends, from whom he could expect understanding. His deference to their opinions as well as his respect for their poetical judgment, instinctive or intellectual, conditioned his response in terms of defense, explanation, or revision.

In Poems in Two Volumes, perhaps with more grace and beauty than elsewhere in his poetic canon, Wordsworth is the teacher. As poet and teacher, Wordsworth selected his ideas discriminatingly, expressed them skillfully, and carefully assessed reactions to them.

²⁷ MY, I, #345, 241 (W. W. to Richard Sharp, September 27th [1808]).

²⁸ Ibid., I, #346, 244 (W. W. to Samuel Rogers, Septbr 29, 1808).

²⁹ Ibid., I, #395, 348, 349 (D.W. to Lady Beaumont, December 28th, 1809).

Thomas DeQuincey, to whom Dorothy alluded, was an encyclopedic author whose writings, in fourteen volumes, include among a variety of title, Confessions of an English Opium Eater (1821), Toilette of a Hebrew Lady (1828), The Logic of Political Economy (1842), and The Poetry of Wordsworth (1845). In his boyhood, DeQuincey listed twelve poets as the best of all time. The twelve were English, and after the last name, Wordsworth, DeQuincey had made three exclamation points.³⁰ The list and the punctuation characterize DeQuincey's opinion of the poet with whom he had corresponded from 1803 and did not meet until 1807.

DeQuincey was fifteen years Wordsworth's junior. In February 1809, as the poet's self-appointed agent, DeQuincey went to London where he anxiously superintended the publication, in May, of the Convention of Cintra. While DeQuincey was in London, Dorothy Wordsworth requested him to reply to an attack which Jeffrey had made on the 1807 piece, "The Happy Warrior."³¹ Although he assented immediately, DeQuincey, having decided that the remarks were inconsequential, never actually undertook the defense.

Returning to the Lakes in November 1809, DeQuincey made his permanent home in Dove Cottage, vacated since the previous March by the

³⁰ Horace Ainsworth Eaton, Thomas DeQuincey, a Biography. (New York, 1936), p. 93.

³¹ MY, I, #371, 295 (D. W. to Thomas DeQuincey, May 1st [1809]).

Wordsworths who had moved to Allan Bank. According to Henry Crabb Robinson, DeQuincey's grief at the death, in 1811, of the four-year-old Catherine Wordsworth, seemed almost to exceed that of the child's father.³²

DeQuincey's youthfulness, his desire to be of service to Wordsworth, and his attachment to members of the poet's household tend to disqualify him as a completely objective critic of Wordsworth's poetry. In 1814, Robinson could write of the younger man, "He talks about Wordsworth with the zeal and intelligence of a well-instructed pupil, ..."³³ But by 1816, DeQuincey, like Robinson, recognized the poet's habit of reacting irritably to anything but praise of his work.³⁴

When Wordsworth was preparing the preface to his 1815 edition, he acceded to DeQuincey's request to omit a retaliatory attack on Jeffrey.³⁵ Apart from this, there is no evidence that, after DeQuincey's assistance with the Convention of Cintra material, Wordsworth depended on, was affected by, or responded to the criticism of the younger man.

³² Henry Crabb Robinson, On Books and Their Writers, ed. Edith J. Morley (London, 1938) I, 103 (June 11th [1812]) -- hereafter cited as Books and Their Writers.

³³ Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson with Members of the Wordsworth Circle, ed. Edith J. Morley (London, 1938) I, 137 (Feb 7th 1814) -- hereafter cited as Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson.

³⁴ Ibid., I, 195 (Sept. 15th 1816).

³⁵ Books and Their Writers, I, 161 (Feb. 4th 1815).

Despite a coolness, aggravated by the unwillingness of the Wordsworth ladies to accept Mrs. DeQuincey, the poet aided DeQuincey, in 1818, in obtaining the editorship of The Westmorland Gazette, from which he resigned the following year.³⁶ DeQuincey's biographical and autobiographical articles in Tait's Magazine (1834, 1835, 1839, and 1840) contained personal allusions to Wordsworth, who refused to read, hear of, or acknowledge them.³⁷

Wordsworth's later attitude toward DeQuincey seemed to retain something of the condescension which an older man, recognized in his profession, might tend to display toward one who had first approached him as a hero-worshipping youth. The poet disapproved of his former friend's biographical disclosures and disregarded DeQuincey's literary opinions.

Among the oldest friends of Coleridge, Charles Lamb was to find a permanent place in the esteem of Wordsworth. At seven years of age, Lamb had entered Christ's Hospital where the ten-year-old Coleridge was a beginning pupil and where both were subsequently associated with Samuel LeGrice and John Matthew Gutch, whose names appear later in the lives of Wordsworth and Coleridge. In a sense, each of Lamb's numerous friends, including John Rickman, Thomas Noon Talfourd, Charles Cowden Clarke, Edward Moxon, Barron Field, Henry Crabb Robinson, Charles Lloyd,

³⁶ Eaton, DeQuincey, pp. 244-245.

³⁷ Moorman, II, 237n.

Robert Southey, Benjamin Robert Haydon and Thomas Hood, considered his relationship with Lamb unique. Describing the famous "Wednesday evenings" of later years, Bryan Procter ("Barry Cornwall") wrote, "It was curious to observe the gradations in Lamb's manner to his various guests; although it was courteous to all. With Hazlitt he talked as though they met the subject in discussion on equal terms; with Leigh Hunt he exchanged repartees; to Wordsworth he was almost respectful; with Coleridge he was sometimes jocose, sometimes deferring; with Martin Burney fraternally familiar; with Manning affectionate; with Godwin merely courteous, or if friendly, then in a minor degree."³⁸

Over the years, Coleridge and Lamb had become intimates, and Wordsworth's name first appears in a letter which Lamb wrote to Coleridge in June, 1796. Lamb's informal criticism of Lyrical Ballads (1800) caused Wordsworth to react strongly and defensively.³⁹ But when John Wordsworth's ship sank in February, 1805, Lamb's position in the India House enabled him to furnish the Wordsworths with factual reports of the wreck and eyewitness accounts of their brother's death. At this time, Mary Lamb, ingenuously compassionate, composed for Dorothy lines, ". . . much worse than they ought to be, . . ." beginning, "Why is he wandering on the sea?/ Coleridge should now with Wordsworth be."⁴⁰

³⁸ Lucas, Life, I, 507.

³⁹ Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb, ed. Edward Verrall Lucas (London, 1935) I, #99, 245-8 (To Thomas Manning, Feb. 15, 1801) -- hereafter cited as Lamb, Letters.

⁴⁰ Lamb, Letters, I, #168, 393 (Mary Lamb to Dorothy Wordsworth. [7th May, 1805].

When the wanderer finally returned in August, 1806, he stayed at the home of the Lambs.⁴¹

At the time of publication, Wordsworth's 1807 poems were unnoticed in Lamb's correspondence. Coleridge had joined the Wordsworths at Coleorton during the winter of 1806-7. At this time, his family situation, his poor health, and his projected lectures caused his friends anxiety which may have occasioned the tone of Lamb's reference to the poet "Wordsworth, the great poet, is coming to town; he is to have apartments in the Mansion House. He says he does not see much difficulty in writing like Shakespeare, if he had a mind to try it. It is clear, then, nothing is wanting but the mind. Even Coleridge a little checked at this hardihood of assertion."⁴² It was, nevertheless, at Lamb's invitation, that Henry Crabb Robinson met Wordsworth on March 15, 1808.⁴³ From then on, much of Lamb's criticism of Wordsworth is reported in the notes of Robinson.

In a long letter to Coleridge in 1808, Wordsworth continued a discussion begun in London. Concerning criticism of poetry in general, he maintains that Lamb's mind is unreasonable, incomprehensible, and unimaginative.⁴⁴ The criticism seems to have been mutual. By 1811,

⁴¹ Lucas, Life, I, 275.

⁴² Lamb, Letters, II, #207, 51 (To Manning 26th February, 1808).

⁴³ Lamb, Letters, II, #209, 55 (To Henry Crabb Robinson, 12th March, 1808).

⁴⁴ MY, I, #328, 198 (W.W. to S.T. Coleridge, April 19th, 1808).

Robinson notes Lamb's dislike of "The Leech Gatherer."⁴⁵ And in 1814, Robinson mentions Lamb's censure of Wordsworth's narrative.⁴⁶

With the publication of Wordsworth's 1815 collection, Lamb told the poet that he perused the volumes carefully, comparing them with earlier editions. He specifically mentions "Alice Fell" and "The Blind Highland Boy," 1807 poems which had been severely criticized by the reviewers. Defending Wordsworth's retention of Alice's "duffle-gray" cloak, Lamb says of the critics, " . . . I would not have given 'em a red cloak to save their souls." Nor, years later, did he approve when Wordsworth acceded to the suggestion, from Coleridge among others, to substitute a shell for a wash-tub in "The Blind Highland Boy." Lamb protests, "The tub was a good honest tub in its place, and nothing could fairly be said against it." In this letter Lamb also stated that recently published Latin verses which he was enjoying reminded him of Wordsworth's 1807 poem, "The Power of Music."⁴⁷ In additional criticism on April 28, 1815, Lamb mentioned the 1807 poem, "Yarrow Unvisited," which he contrasted unfavorably with the later "Yarrow Visited."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Books and Their Writers, I, 18 (January 8th, 1811).

⁴⁶ Ibid., I, 145 (July 3rd, 1814).

⁴⁷ Lamb, Letters, II, #267, 153-154 (To William Wordsworth, 7th April, 1815).

⁴⁸ Ibid., II, #268, 157 (To William Wordsworth [28th April, 1815]).

In an 1816 letter to Wordsworth, Lamb makes a jesting reference to the poet's nearly illegible handwriting. He concludes, "Well, God bless you and continue to give you the power to write with a finger of power upon our hearts what you fail to impress in corresponding lucidness upon our outward eyesight."⁴⁹

Writing of his poems to Barron Field in 1828, (see pp. 106-113) Wordsworth acknowledged Lamb's criticism about the Tub and the Shell. But years later, the poet wrote that notwithstanding his respect for the opinions of Field and Lamb, he could not change the work.⁵⁰ An interesting sidelight concerning reaction to criticism appeared when Henry Crabb Robinson became estranged in 1816 from William Hazlitt, who had unjustly and unbecomingly criticized Wordsworth. Mary Lamb said that unlike Robinson, she and her brother had few friends and so must accept them despite their faults.⁵¹

Lamb warmly acknowledged Wordsworth's dedication of The Waggoner.⁵² And when Lamb died in 1834, Wordsworth, deeply affected, composed a lengthy tribute entitled, "Written After the Death of Charles Lamb." Beginning "To a good Man, of most dear memory," the lines highlight

⁴⁹ Lamb, Letters, II, #286, 187-88 (To William Wordsworth, [9th April, 1816]).

⁵⁰ LY, I, #829, 308 (W.W. to Barron Field, 24th October, 1828).

⁵¹ Lucas, Life, I, 370.

⁵² Lamb, Letters, II, #322, 249-252 (To William Wordsworth, [7th June, 1819]).

characteristic qualities which endeared Lamb to his friends and placed society in his debt. The poet's testimony, containing sincere, if not always artistically expressed sentiments, indicates Wordsworth's response to Lamb, who possessed: "Firm independence, Bounty's rightful sire,/ Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;" (9-10) and "A power that never ceased to reside in him,/ Charity, . . ." (34-35). The final line reads, "O, he was good if ever good man lived!" (38). Wordsworth apparently heard Lamb's criticism with respect. When practically he chose not to heed it, he responded in the manner of an artist who considers particular criticism irrelevant to his creative impulse.

For Wordsworth, Charles Lamb performed the offices of an unique catalyst, a critic who instead of railing and ridiculing, smiles broadly but indulgently. In the opinion of Lamb, Wordsworth seemed to lack the quality of true humor necessary for accurate and artistic appraisal and expression. This humor, so much a part of Lamb, might have enabled Wordsworth to avoid certain pettiness and to render him a sharper and more perceptive self-critic. For Wordsworth, Lamb provided invaluable extra-critical services by introducing him to Robinson, Talfourd, Field, and Moxon, all of whom later featured in Wordsworth's personal and poetical affairs.

Shortly after the publication of Poems in Two Volumes, Henry Crabb Robinson, soon to become a permanent member of the Wordsworth circle, was introduced to the poet. Previously, he had written to his brother, " . . . You are And I rejoice at it a convert to Wordsworth's

poetry I would observe that the polit^l sentim^t of his Sonnets appears to be the best men can nourish at this moment. The quintessence of which is compressed in a line

'O grief that earth's best hopes
still rest on thee' . . . " ⁵³
("England the time is come" 1.14)

Because the writings of Henry Crabb Robinson provide prolonged commentary on Wordsworth and his contemporaries, it is impossible to confine Robinson's criticism of the poet to a particular period. In 1812, it was Robinson who directly effected whatever reconciliation was ever to exist between Wordsworth and Coleridge. It was this friend whom Wordsworth could address, in 1821, as " . . . kind after your own Robinsonian way . . . " ⁵⁴ It was Robinson who frequently visited the ailing Dorothy, who negotiated to transact "the French business" of Carolyn's marriage settlement, and who accompanied Wordsworth on the continental journey from March 19 to August 7, 1837. From his meeting with Wordsworth at Lamb's home on March 15, 1808, until April 23, 1850, when he wrote " . . . on this day died the greatest man I had ever the honour to call friend - Wordsworth." ⁵⁵ Henry Crabb Robinson noted,

⁵³ Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, I, #12, 50-51 (To TR, 12th February 1808).

⁵⁴ Ibid., I, #47, 98 (W.W. to H.C.R. [Mar 13, 1821]).

⁵⁵ Books and Their Writers, II, 696, (April 23rd [1850]).

annotated, described and defended the words, sentiments, and actions of William Wordsworth. Robinson's writings about Wordsworth constitute general commentary and particular criticism. Perhaps more than any other of Wordsworth's contemporaries Robinson established a favorable climate for critical opinions about the poet.

On his first meeting with the poet on March 15, 1808, Robinson attributed Wordsworth's cordial reception of him to their mutual friends, as well as " . . . to my perfect agreement with him in politics; and my enthusiastic and unconcealed admiration of his poetry" Robinson recalls the poet's specific mention, on this occasion, of the 1807 poems, "Once in a lonely hamlet," "Beggars" and "Thought of a Briton," as well as his allusion to "the connection of poetry with moral principles."⁵⁶

Somewhat later, Robinson reports that he considers his new friend the one writer "inspired by the true spirit of contemplation."⁵⁷ He refers to Wordsworth's self-criticism, to his belief that readers could be brought to appreciate his poetry, and to the fact that only a wise society would appreciate it.⁵⁸ Crabb Robinson also quotes the poet as alluding contemptuously to Scott's popularity, of citing the genius of Southey, and of stating that as a poet, John Wilson owed everything he had to Wordsworth.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Books and Their Writers, I, 10-11 (March 1808).

⁵⁷ Ibid., I, 47, (Oct. 7th) 1811.

⁵⁸ Ibid., I, 73-74, (May 8th) 1812.

⁵⁹ Ibid., I, 82, (May 13th) 1812.

Discussing Southey with Henry Crabb Robinson, Wordsworth, by implication, supplies insight into his own craftsmanship. Southey, he says, having settled on a poetic theme, then collects copious material which he carefully sifts and connects. With the total product, however, Southey conveys neither a strong intellectual impression nor one "recollected in solitude."⁸⁰

At the end of May, 1812, the poet told Robinson how he planned to classify the 1807 poems, "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves" and "The Highland Girl," "The Happy Warrior," "The Cuckoo," and "The Leech-Gatherer."⁸¹ A few days later, Robinson and Wordsworth discussed the sonnets, "How sweet it is..." and "Where lies the land" as expressive of fancy and delight.⁸² In May, 1815, Robinson noting the poet's word substitutions in "The Nightingale" ("ebullient" for "fiery" in line 2) and in "The Daffodils" ("jocund" for "laughing" in line 10) indicates that Wordsworth will restore the original.⁸³

At some length, Henry Crabb Robinson records Wordsworth's statements about the power of imagination which transforms fact into poetry.

⁸⁰ Books and Their Writers, I, 87 (May 24th) 1812.

⁸¹ Ibid., I, 89-90, (May 31st) 1812.

⁸² Ibid., I, 94, (June 3rd) 1812.

⁸³ Ibid., I, 166, (May 9th) 1815.

The poet stated that he had actually met a leech-gatherer whom he had endowed with qualities which suited poetic purposes. Wordsworth explained that in "Fidelity" he had pondered the expression of the poetic narrator somewhat prosaic, the better to highlight the incident. He also indicated that he had intended to reveal powers of nature even in the motion described in "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves."

Robinson admits that although he cannot fully comprehend and express much of this theory, he understands the relationship of individual forms and abstractions as Wordsworth defines it in "She dwelt among untrodden ways," which Robinson considers "finely imagined."⁸⁴ Later, when Coleridge published Biographia Literaria, Robinson reported that neither the praise nor censure of Wordsworth expressed in this work pleased the poet.⁸⁵

Robinson recorded criticism of Wordsworth by literary figures as widely separated in taste and training as Procter and Blake. He describes Bryan Waller Procter ("Barry Cornwall"), as having a literary style modeled on the ancient dramatists and Wordsworth. Yet, Procter's esteem of Wordsworth never seemed sufficiently high to Robinson.⁸⁶

Concerning William Blake, Robinson reports that at their third interview, on December 24, 1825, he read to the older poet Wordsworth's

⁸⁴ Books and Their Writers, I, 191 (Sept. 11th) 1816.

⁸⁵ Ibid., I, 213, (Dec. 4th) 1817.

⁸⁶ Ibid., I, 238, (Feb. 5th) 1820.

Ode, the most obscure parts of which Blake preferred. On this occasion, according to Robinson, Blake stated, "I fear Wordsworth loves Nature, and Nature is the work of the Devil. The Devil is in us, as far as we are Nature."⁸⁷

Of all Wordsworth's friends, Henry Crabb Robinson lived to be the most devoted for the longest period of time. Robinson served as Wordsworth's counsellor and as the unofficial administrator of his affairs. An enthusiastic and appreciative reader of Wordsworth's poetry, Robinson professed himself unequipped to criticize technically. The voluminous writings of Robinson show him as an accurate reporter and an interested observer of persons. He considered the poetry of Wordsworth the expression and extension of an admirable man whose image Robinson would help to preserve for posterity.

Through his brother, Francis John Field, a clerk in the India Office, Barron Field met Charles Lamb. A lawyer, Field, who had written for Hunt's The Reflector in 1811, accompanied Leigh Hunt in February, 1813, when he went to begin his prison term in Surrey Gaol. From 1816 to 1824 Barron Field served as a justice in New South Wales. Field, the subject of Lamb's essay, "Distant Companions," apparently requested from Lamb an introduction to Wordsworth in September, 1824.

⁸⁷ Books and their Writers, I, 330-331 (Dec. 24th) 1825.

Barron Field read the third collected edition of Wordsworth's works published, in 1827, in five volumes. Field's criticism of the text evoked from Wordsworth what is possibly the most specific response and the simplest explanation of poetic practice on record. Only the poet's portion of this correspondence is extant. It appears in a letter to Field dated October 24, 1828, and apparently responds to Field's queries and commentary on the poems as they appeared in the 1827 publication.⁸⁸

In 1828, now more than two decades after composition, Wordsworth explains his creative processes and procedures in a long letter listing twenty of his poems, twelve of which originally appeared in Poems in Two Volumes. The explication, which seems pedestrian, is certainly minute. The poet responds in this letter to a comparative stranger, a prose writer, who had read the text closely and critically.

About specific poems, Wordsworth explains revisions made in the 1815 and 1820 editions. In the course of these revisions, Wordsworth acceded to the criticism of Coleridge on three occasions and of Lamb once. The poet admits that, in another case, he retained a stanza because of personal preference. He remarks difficulties caused by requirements of tone, of word choice, and of line, stanza, and poem placement. In this letter, the poet's interpretations reveal careful, close, and simple self-criticism. Although Wordsworth's problems concerning the use of poetic diction are

⁸⁸ LY, I, #829, 307-313 (W.W. to Barron Field, 24th Oct., 1828).

implicit here, the poet's explanations are remarkably free from abstruse psychological or philosophical overtones.

Beginning with "The Beggars," (PW, II, 222) the poet states that he removed from the text, "What other dress she had I could not know;" (5) which he considered "a villainous line, one of the very worst in my whole writings. I hope so at least."⁸⁹ He describes the second stanza of this poem as "bricklaying, formal accumulation of particulars;" and deletes in 1827, "In all my walks, through field or town," (7) which he labels "obtrusively personal." Other 1807-1820 lines: "Pouring out sorrows like a sea; Grief after grief; - on English land/ Such woes I knew could never be;" (14-16) were revised, in 1827, to read: "Forth did she pour, in current free,/ Tales that could challenge no respect/ But from a blind credulity;". In the matter of the 1827 substitutions, Wordsworth is still dissatisfied with "Nor claimed she service from the hood" (3) as "too pompous for the occasion." And he explains that he cannot replace the original first line because "She towered, fit person for a queen," (10) should precede rather than follow "She had a tall man's height, or more" (in 1807). Wordsworth cites line 42 (1807-1820) which reads, "Nay but I gave her pence, and she will buy you bread" and 1827, "I looked reproof- they saw- but neither hung his head." Concerning the 1827 version, the poet explains, "The boys could well understand 'looking reproof.' There is frowning, shaking the head, etc." Having changed line 44 (1807-1820)

⁸⁹ LY, I, #829, 307.

from "Sweet boys, Heaven hears that rash reply," (1827-1832), Wordsworth terms the substitution "somewhat too refined." He also notes the retention of line 45: "It was your mother, as I say," to express recognition of the boy's lie.

Wordsworth closes the explication of this poem by admitting his attempts to increase "elegance and dignity" so that "The Beggars" would be suited to the poem immediately following it in the 1827 editions. Cautioning Field to avoid repeating a word, Wordsworth invites his correspondent to revise the first stanza. The poet's remarks indicate his concern for poetic technique, his respect for the opinions of one who took pains to study the poems, and his willingness to make textual alterations which would improve content and form.

Wordsworth next listed for Field "The Blind Highland Boy" (PW, III, 88) with its much controverted substitution of the "shell" for the "wash-tub". Coleridge, says Wordsworth, suggested the change included in the 1815 edition. Lamb objected to this alteration and Field agreed with Lamb, but at this point Wordsworth decided to retain "shell."⁷⁰

Wordsworth indicates that in "The Sailor's Mother" the original 1807 line, "I had a Son, who many a day/ Sail'd on the seas, but he is dead;" (20-21) replaced the 1820-1827 revision, "I had a son - the waves might roar/ He feared them not, a Sailor gay!" (19-20). The poet told

⁷⁰ Lamb, Letters, II, #267, 153 (To William Wordsworth, 7th April, 1815).

Field that after 1807 he had changed the line because of its flatness. Wordsworth also chooses to retain the words "...And pipe its song in safety" (33), an 1827 revision, sustaining the image of the singing bird.⁷¹

On "The Emigrant Mother." (PW, II, 56), Coleridge had objected to lines 63-64 which Wordsworth changed in each subsequent edition. In 1807-1815, the lines read, "For they confound me; as it is,/ I have forgot those smiles of his,"; the 1820 version was, "For they bewilder me - even now/ His smiles are lost, I know not how!"; (1827): "By those bewildering glances crost/ In which the light of his is lost;" and (18), "For they confound me; where-where is/ That last, that sweetest smile of his?" Although Wordsworth stated to Field that he 1827 alteration should be retained, he again revised the lines rendering them similar to those in the 1807 version.

Line 34 in "The Green Linnet," (PW, II, 139) reads in 1807-1815, "A Brother of the Leaves he seems;"/ This became "A bird so like the dancing leaves.'" (1827) and "A Brother of the dancing leaves" (1832-1840). Contrary to Wordsworth's remark to Field that the line should read, "A brother of the leaves he seems," the final version is, "A Brother of the dancing leaves;". The poet criticizes the entire stanza and deletes the "train of withered leaves" (39-40) in 1827.

⁷¹ LY, I, #829, 310.

In the celandine poem, "To the Same Flower" (PW, II, 144) ("Pleasures newly found are sweet") line 43 (1807-1815) read "Let, as old Magellan did". This was changed in 1820 to: "Let, with bold advent'rous skill,". From 1827-1845 the line read, "Let the bold Adventurer thrid" and from 1845 on, "Let the bold Discoverer thrid". Although Wordsworth had advised Field that "Old Magellan shall be restored", this did not occur.

Wordsworth's personal preference caused him to retain lines 17-24 in the daisy poem, "To the Same Flower". (PW, IV, 67) ("Bright Flower"). Barron Field had apparently expressed a preference for the original 1807 version, removed from 1827-32, and the poet remarks, "It may either be restored, or printed at the end of a volume, among 'notes and variations', when you edit the fifteenth edition!" (311).⁷²

In 1827, lines 6-25 were omitted from "To a Sky-Lark" (PW, II, 141) ("Up with me") a poem, according to Wordsworth, "which Coleridge used severely to condemn, and to treat contemptuously."⁷³ The lines, inserted again in 1832, were retained thereafter. Field having expressed a wish to restore these lines, Wordsworth said, "I have no objection, as you have been pleased with it, to restore the whole piece. Could you improve it a little?"

The original line 8 in "To the Cuckoo" (PW, II, 207) read, "about,

⁷² LY, I, #829, 311.

⁷³ Ibid., I, #829, 311.

and all about." It became "At once far off and near," (1815-1820). From 1827-1843, the line was "As loud far off as near." However, in 1828, Wordsworth told Field that he wished to restore the 1815-1820 form which most closely expressed his meaning.

"Gipsies", (PW, II, 226) line 23 in 1807-1820 read, "The silent Heavens have goings-on;" in 1827, the text was amended to: "Life which the very stars reprove/ As on their silent tasks they move". Although Wordsworth had chosen "goings-on" carefully as a faithful expression of his meaning, he sacrificed this term to accommodate three additional lines, 25-28.

The 1807 piece which the poet referred to as "the second Cuckoo" (PW, II, 265) begins, "Yes! full surely 'twas the Echo," in the first version. Lines 21-23, from 1807 through 1820, read, "Such within ourselves we hear/ Oft-times, ours though sent from far;/ Listen, ponder, hold them dear;". The 1827 alteration reads, "Such rebounds our inward ear/ Often catches" . . . Signifying his displeasure, Wordsworth defends the functional use of "rebounds" in reviving the sense of the echo.⁷⁴

In "Peele Castle in a Storm," (PW, IV, 258), lines 14-16 read, 1807-1815 and 1832-1850, "To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,/ The Light that never was, on sea or land,/ The consecration, and the

⁷⁴ LY, I, #829, 311-312.

Poet's dream;" In 1820-1827, these lines were changed to, "To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,/ The light that never was, on sea or land." Somewhat peremptorily, at the end of such a detailed discussion, Wordsworth says simply that line 15 is to be restored, and that he will not now trouble Field with his reasons for the change.

The letter to Barron Field reveals what tedious line-by-line revision Wordsworth was willing to undertake in the interests of an improved text. The poet could so painstakingly discuss fine points of usage with Barron Field because he knew that Field shared his interest in the poetic processes. Occasionally, even here, Wordsworth gives the impression of making insignificant changes simply to please critics like Coleridge and Field whom he respects. However, in his response to Field's suggestions and queries, the poet generally emphasizes clarification of the text. Never does he indicate that he is re-interpreting an idea already expressed. Many of his contemporaries remarked Wordsworth's annoyance at censure of his work. None reported in him any lack of interest in or indifference to the improvement of his poetry.

Over the years, Barron Field unofficially undertook to prepare a critical memoir of Wordsworth. The plan caused the poet some uneasiness. Wordsworth, deciding that such a project was both ill-advised and purposeless, notified Field of his decision. After expressing his appreciation of Field's close attention, deep interest, and laborious work, Wordsworth stated axiomatically, "It is far better not to admit

people behind the scenes, as has been lately fashionable to do.⁷⁵ Field acceded to the poet's request, and his manuscript fragment is all that remains of the work which would have publicized some of Wordsworth's textual explication.

From the random comments of Mrs. Fermor and Miss Seward to the detailed analyses of Henry Crabb Robinson and Barron Field, the reaction of Wordsworth to the criticism of his contemporaries indicates the extent to which this criticism interested and influenced the poet. Wordsworth's attitudes toward the criticism of his friends and acquaintances reveal his reactions as man and as poet.

⁷⁵ LY, II, #1319, 998 (W.W. to Barron Field, January 16, 1840).

CHAPTER IV

Wordsworth's Aloofness from the Criticism of Distinguished Contemporaries

Shelley, Byron, and Keats as well as Hazlitt and Landor made sharp distinctions, in their critical appraisals, between Wordsworth as man and as poet. From the general disesteem in which he was held by "second generation" Romantic writers, Wordsworth kept surprisingly aloof.

If Henry Crabb Robinson was among the staunchest of the admirers of Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley was among the poet's most scathing critics. Late in December 1811, guests at Greystoke, the Duke of Norfolk's estate, fourteen miles from Keswick, included Percy Bysshe Shelley. Writing that he had met William Calvert, brother of Wordsworth's benefactor, Raisley, Shelley added, "I shall also see Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge there. I shall then give you a picture of them."¹ Soon after, Shelley transcribed lines from Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads piece, "A Poet's Epitaph," to which he appended, "It may give you some idea of the Man -- how expressively keen are the first stanzas. I shall see this man soon."² Shelley did not meet Wordsworth, but within the month, he ordered from his bookseller copies of the poet's works including Poems

¹ The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Frederick L. Jones (Oxford, 1964) I, #148, 201 (To Elizabeth Hitchener, 10 December 1811) -- hereafter cited as Shelley, Letters.

² Ibid., I, #156, 218 (To Elizabeth Hitchener, January 2, 1811 for 1812).

³
in Two Volumes.

Four years later in Geneva, during the summer of 1816 when he enthusiastically persuaded Byron to read Wordsworth, Shelley wrote the sonnet, "To Wordsworth", and a poem entitled "Verses Written on Receiving a Celandine in a letter from England." At this time, commenting to Peacock on man's love for his country, Shelley explained, " . . . -- like Wordsworth he will never know what love subsisted between himself & it, until absence shall have made its beauty heartfelt."⁴ According to a note in the Ingpen and Peck edition of Shelley's works, this is apparently a reference to lines in the 1807 poem, "I travell'd among unknown men."⁵

Shelley published "To Wordsworth" in 1816 with Alastor. The imagery in the sonnet is reminiscent of that which Wordsworth used in addressing Milton in 1802.

³
 Shelley, Letters, I, #218, 345 (Order follows letter to Thomas Clio Rickman, December 24, 1812).

⁴
Ibid., I, #348, 475, 475n (To Thomas Love Peacock, May 15, 1816).

⁵
The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck (New York, 1965) III, 325n. -- hereafter cited as Shelley, Complete Works.

"London, 1802"

Thy soul was like a Star and
 dwelt apart:
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound
 was like the sea;
 Pure as the naked heavens,
 majestic free, (9-11)

"To Wordsworth"

Thou wert as a lone star,
 whose light did shine
 On some frail bark in
 winter's midnight roar (7-8)

In honoured poverty thy
 voice did weave
 Songs consecrate to truth
 and liberty, (11-12)

In his sonnet, Shelley represented Wordsworth, the man, as departing from the high spirit of dedication which he evinced in his earlier poetry. From the beginning of their acquaintance, Shelley seems to have regarded Wordsworth as a notable poet but a negligible personality. "To Wordsworth" represents a theme recurrent in Shelley's criticism, with the younger poet alluding to the elder as to one who has failed to realize his promise.

This sentiment echoes again, somewhat analogously, in "Verses Written on Receiving a Celandine in a Letter from England." The composition of the "Verses" probably dates from early 1816. Omitted from the early editions, the poem was discovered and first published by Walter E. Peck.

Having already chosen to disregard the man for the poet in Wordsworth, Shelley now laments the loss of Wordsworth as man and poet. For Shelley, Wordsworth, having failed to respond effectively to the demands of his high destiny, is now simply a reminder of what he once was.

Wordsworth had included three poems on the celandine among his 1807 poems. Referring to Wordsworth in "Verses," Shelley, addressing the celandine as a type of "A deathless Poet whose young prime/ Was as serene as thing;" (27-28) then laments,

Oh, that thy bard were cold, but he
Has lived too long and late.
Would he were in an honoured grave.
But that, men say, must not now be,
Since he for impious gold could sell
The love of those who loved him well. (35-40)

Concerning the positive influence of the poet, Shelley writes

. Liberty
Justice and philosophic truth
From his divine and simple song
Shall draw immortal youth. (57-60)

And each, like thee, will aye betoken
Love sold, hope dead and honor broken (71-72)

Here Shelley exposes an idea later echoed in another context, in "The Sensitive Plant," (1820):

For love, and beauty, and delight,
There is no death nor change; their might
Exceeds our organs, which endure
No light, being themselves obscure. (138-141)

The first line of Shelley's "Mont Blanc," written in July 1816, sounds a Wordsworthian note with "The everlasting universe of things." This mood and tone are also sustained in the following lines:

Dizzy Ravine! And when I gaze on thee
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange
To must on my own separate fantasy,
My own, my human mind, which passively,
Now renders and receives fast influencings, (34-38)

Shelley, employing repetition like "from steep to steep" (58), and "Far, far above" (60), resorts to a familiar Wordsworthian figure of speech in the line, "Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, . . . (80).

On November 6, 1817, at the home of Godwin, Henry Crabb Robinson first met Shelley, who, in Robinson's opinion, referred insinuatingly to Wordsworth's sincerity.⁶ Within the year, Shelley wrote to Peacock, from Italy, of the Westmoreland elections in which Wordsworth had been active: "I wish you had sent me some of the overflowing villany [sic] of those apostates. What a beastly and pitiful wretch that Wordsworth! That such a man should be such a poet! I can compare him with no one but Simonides, that flatterer of the Sicilian tyrants, and at the same time the most natural and tender of lyric poets."⁷ In another letter, Shelley stated that "Milly discovered a comet." This reminded him of a line from Wordsworth's 1807 poem, "To the Small Celandine" ("She may make a stir, like a great astronomer").⁸ Shelley later wrote, "'There are two voices,' says Wordsworth, 'one of the mountains and one of the sea, both a mighty voice.'"⁹

Other similarities of expression occur in the poems of Wordsworth and Shelley. Six dedicatory stanzas prefaced Shelley's "The Witch of

⁶ Books and Their Writers, I, 212 (Nov. 6th [1817]).

⁷ Shelley, Letters, II, #472, 26 (To Thomas Love Peacock, July 25th, 1818).

⁸ Ibid., II, #502, 100 (To Thomas Love Peacock, July 6, 1819).

⁹ Ibid., II, #576, 212 (To Thomas Love Peacock, July 12, 1820).

Atlas," written in August 1820. In three of these there is mention of Wordsworth's Peter Bell. In "The Witch of Atlas" (1820) and in "With a Guitar to Jane" (1822), Shelley used the phrase, "diurnal round" (lines 479 and 76 respectively), found in Wordsworth's version of The Prelude, I, 460, in The Excursion (1814), 3, 613, and elsewhere. Shelley also makes use in "The Witch of Atlas" of repetitive pairs: "million after million" (460), "age after age" (609), and "mind from mind." (662). This device recurs in "The Sensitive Plant" (1820) with "field after field" (I, 31), "groan for groan" (III, 16), "Leaf by leaf" and "day after day" (III, 32), "hour by hour" (III, 70) and "from spray to spray" (III, 74).

The Wordsworth-Shelley relationship may have been affected by Shelley's reaction to Southey's criticism. As early as December 1818, Shelley had repeated to Hunt Southey's allegation that Shelley was "the blackest of villains."¹⁰

John Hamilton Reynolds had brought out Peter Bell, A Lyrical Ballad on April 15, 1819, less than a week before the publication of Wordsworth's Peter Bell: A Tale in Verse, which it parodied.¹¹ Having read reviews of both Peter Bell poems in The Examiner, Shelley wrote Peter Bell the Third and sent it to Leigh Hunt who subsequently forwarded it to Charles Ollier, the publisher. In the poem Shelley refers to "Mrs. Foy" as "Emma." In

¹⁰ Shelley, Letters, II, #489, 66 (To Leigh Hunt, Dec. [20], 1818).

¹¹ Reynolds became the brother-in-law of Thomas Hood in 1825.

1820, Shelley requested Ollier to change "Mrs. Foy's" name to "Betty" from "Emma," which Shelley recalled, was "the real name of the sister of a great poet who might be mistaken for Peter."¹² According to Shelley's editor, the last line of Peter Bell the Third, "How should it ever pass away?" (120) is echoed in Shelley's "Ode to Liberty" (1820), line 79, "It trembles but it cannot pass away," which in turn strongly resembles Wordsworth's line 8 in "Elegiac Stanzas" (1807), "It trembled but it never pass'd away."¹³

Other associates of Shelley and Byron made casual but frequently relevant comments about contemporary opinions of Wordsworth. For example, Maria Gisborne, celebrated by Shelley's "Letter," mentions Godwin's high regard for Wordsworth as a lover of mature.¹⁴ Godwin, according to Mrs. Gisborne, to whom he once proposed marriage, also thinks Wordsworth's poetry "cold" and his voice "worse than croaking."¹⁵ A later entry in

¹² Shelley, Letters, II, #566, 196 (To Charles Ollier, May 14, 1820).

¹³ Shelley, Complete Works, III, 348n.

¹⁴ Shelley's poem, "Letter to Maria Gisborne," was composed in July, 1820.

¹⁵ Maria Gisborne and Edward E. Williams, Shelley's Friends: ed. Frederick L. Jones (Norman, Oklahoma, 1951) 45 (London: Tuesday, 22 August 1820) -- hereafter cited as Journal of Maria Gisborne.

The Gisborne Journal records Hazlitt's quoting of the last two lines in Wordsworth's Ode.¹⁶ Mrs. Gisborne also notes that as he completed the couplets of his Lalla Rookh in 1817, Thomas Moore anxiously sent them to "be criticized by Byron, Southey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, &ca."¹⁷ Herself an admirer of Chantrey's bust of Wordsworth, Mrs. Gisborne repeats, more or less significantly, a craniologist's observation about the poet's prominent "organ of ideality."¹⁸

Shelley knew Wordsworth and his work well enough to incorporate into his conversation and references, many themes, sentiments, and stylistic devices used by Wordsworth. Nevertheless, the expostulation and lament, "That such a man should be such a poet," (See p. 118) seems to epitomize Shelley's estimate of the older poet and his poems.

There is something perplexing in the absence of mutual impact between these two great poets. The aging Wordsworth is quoted as having said of Shelley, "He is one of the best artists of us all: I mean in workmanship of style."¹⁹ Yet as late as 1829 Wordsworth told a correspondent that he never saw Shelley's "The Witch of Atlas," which contains allusions to Peter Bell.²⁰ In 1839, Wordsworth simply relays to Moxon, his publisher,

¹⁶ Journal of Maria Gisborne, 106 (Friday, Oct. 26, 1821).

¹⁷ Ibid., 115 (Pisa, Sat. Dec. 1, 1821).

¹⁸ Ibid., 77 (February 9, 1822).

¹⁹ Quoted in Moorman, II, 572.

²⁰ LY, I, #857, 355 (W.W. to William Rowan Hamilton, Feb. 12, 1829).

Dora's thanks for sending "Vols: of Shelley which she values much."²¹

For all practical purposes, this clause might express Wordsworth's personal detachment from Shelley's criticism.

Whereas Shelley had originally expressed eagerness about meeting Wordsworth, Byron seems to have regarded Wordsworth contemptuously from the beginning of their acquaintance.²² The first periodical review of Poems in Two Volumes appeared in the July 1807 issue of Monthly Literary Recreations (See Chapter V, pp. 153). Early in August, writing to Elizabeth Pigot, Byron acknowledged his authorship of this unsigned criticism.²³ Years afterwards, he again alluded to having "reviewed Wordsworth's trash of that time."²⁴ In English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (1809), Byron criticizes Wordsworth in a passage beginning, "Next comes the dull disciple of thy school," (235-254). Here besides indicating the "simple Wordsworth," who "by precept and example . . . confounded night with day" (241, 250), Byron makes other allusions to the older poet: "Yet let them not to vulgar Wordsworth stoop,/ The meanest

²¹ LY, II, #1310, 987 (W. W. to Edward Moxon, Novbr 1st [1839]).

²² Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron, ed. Ernest J. Lovell, Jr. (Princeton, 1966) p. 194 -- hereafter cited as Medwin's Conversations.

²³ Byron, a Self-Portrait, Letters and Diaries, 1798 to 1814, ed. Peter Quennell, (New York, 1950) I, 33 (To Elizabeth Bridget Pigot, August 2, 1807) -- hereafter cited as Byron, a Self-Portrait.

²⁴ Ibid., II, ('Detached Thoughts,' #86, Oct. 1821).

object of the lowly group/ Whose verse, of all but childish prattle
 void,/ Seems blessed harmony to Lamb and Lloyd." (903-906). " . . .
 Let simple Wordsworth chime his childish verse" (917). There is
 another passing allusion to Wordsworth in Hints from Horace (1811):
 "Write but like Wordsworth, live beside a Lake" (475).

Commenting on marriage, Byron notes, in 1813: "All my coupled
 contemporaries are bald and discontented. W[ordsworth] and S[outhey]
 have both lost their hair and good humour; . . ."²⁶ In a subsequent
 journal entry, Byron sketched a triangular Gradus ad Parnassum at the
 apex of which was Scott. Rogers occupied the top segment of the
 triangle. Moore and Campbell shared the second section, and Southey,
 Wordsworth and Coleridge appeared in the third section, below which
 all other poets are grouped in the base segment of the triangle.²⁶

Wordsworth, announcing the forthcoming Excursion in a letter to
 Samuel Rogers, mentioned the works of Scott and Byron, and remarked
 ". . . how can an honest Poet hope to thrive?"²⁷ In the summer of

²⁶ Byron, a Self-Portrait, I, 207 ('Journal,' November 14, 1813).

²⁶ Ibid., I, 220-221 ('Journal,' November 24, 1813).

²⁷ MY, II, #501, 598 (W. W. to Samuel Rogers, May 5th 1814).

1814, Byron told Thomas Moore that their isolation and provincialism spoiled "half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours."²⁸ He admits that the public is tired of his poetry and adds that neither is it "very enamoured of Wordsworth."²⁹

Specifically mentioning the recently published Excursion, Byron told Leigh Hunt that Wordsworth's poems after Lyrical Ballads have fallen far short of "the ability which lurks within . . . this arch-apostle of mystery and mysticism."³⁰ Hunt who had referred to Wordsworth and Coleridge as "asses" in the 1811 edition of The Feast of the Poets, dealt far more tolerantly with Wordsworth in the 1815 version and Byron took exception to the mitigation.³¹

Early in 1816, Wordsworth made a passing reference to the "bold bad Bard Baron B."³² And in almost scurrilous terms, the elder poet commented, a few weeks later, "Let me only say one word upon Lord B.

²⁸ Byron, a Self-Portrait, I, 296 (to Thomas Moore, August 3, 1814); See also Robinson, Books and Their Writers, I, 199 (1816).

²⁹ Ibid., I, 299 (to Thomas Moore, August 12, 1814).

³⁰ The Works of Lord Byron, Letters and Journals, ed. Rowland E. Prothero (New York 18 - 1901) III (1899), #552, 225 (to Leigh Hunt, Oct. 7, 1815) -- hereafter cited as Byron, Letters and Journals.

³¹ Byron, a Self-Portrait, I, 318 (to Leigh Hunt, September-October 30, 1815).

³² MY, II, #546, 712 (W. W. to John Scott, Feb 25th [1816]).

The man is insane; and will probably end his career in a mad-house.
 I never thought him anything else since his first appearance in public.
 The verses on his private affairs excite in me less indignation than
 pity."³³ Byron later remembered that when he met Shelley in Geneva
 in May 1816, the younger poet "used to dose me with Wordsworth physic
 even to nausea."³⁴

Among Byron's "Occasional Pieces," written in 1816, "Churchill's
 Grave" alluding to Wordsworth's subject matter and style, is parodistic
 (See Chapter VI, p. 183). By September 1817, Byron was writing to his
 publisher, John Murray, that he and contemporary poets, Scott, Southey,
 Wordsworth, Moore, and Campbell, "are upon a wrong revoluntary poetical
 system, . . . from which none but Rogers and Crabb are free; . . ."³⁵
 He continues this strain in the following year when he tells Thomas
 Moore that he disagrees with Hunt's "skimble-skamble about Wordsworth
 being at the head of his own profession, in the eyes of those who
 followed it." Byron protests, "I thought that poetry was an art, or an
attribute, and not a profession . . . in your eyes?" He continues that
 he would strongly oppose the supremacy of Wordsworth, whom he regards as
 "this new Jacob Behmen," practitioner of "soi-disant poetry."³⁶

³³ MY, II, #556, 734 (W. W. to John Scott, April 18th, 1816).

³⁴ Medwin's Conversations, p. 94.

³⁵ Byron, a Self-Portrait, II, 418-419 (to John Murray, September 15, 1817).

³⁶ Ibid., II, 431 (to Thomas Moore, June 1, 1818).

Byron includes general allusions to Wordsworth in the "Dedication" (1818) to Don Juan. Having charged the "Lakers" with being mercenary, Byron refers again to their baldness ("Dedication," viii, 1). He remarks Wordsworth's unintelligible "plan and Prosody;" (I, xc, 7-8), and includes the familiar sentiments: "Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey;/ Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,/ The second drunk,/ the third so quaint and mouthy:" (I, ccv, 2-4). At the end of Canto I, Byron, like Chaucer in the Troilus, sends forth his "little book" adding: "And, if, as I believe, thy vein be good,/ The World will find thee after many days/ When Southey's read and Wordsworth understood" (I, ccxxii, 3-5).

Writing from Ravenna, Byron contended that Southey and Wordsworth evoke nothing but contempt from him. Whatever is truly poetic in Wordsworth, according to Byron, is Miltonic. And from "Resolution and Independence," Byron interprets the line, "Over his own sweet voice the Stockdove broods;" (5) to mean that the bird, "in common with Mr. Wordsworth," is pleased to listen to himself.³⁷

Byron's references to his contemporaries in Canto III (published in 1821) are more specific than those earlier in the poem. Byron decries moralists, like the Pantisocrat, Southey, "Or Wordsworth unexcised, who then/ Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy" (III, xciii, 3-4). Despite

³⁷ Byron, Letters and Journals, iv, 484 (Ravenna, March 15, 1820).

such allusions, the poet tells his publisher Murray, that he has deleted from Cantos III and IV the half-dozen stanzas "about those imposters, Southey and Wordsworth."³⁸ Towards the end of Canto IV, Byron comments on Wordsworth's reaction to public opinion,

Why then I'll swear, as poet Wordy swore,
Because the world won't read him, always snarling,
That taste is gone, that fame is but a lottery,
Drawn by the blue-coat misses of a coterie (IV, cix, 5-8).

Summing up the supporters of his contemporaries, Byron states, "And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;" (XI, lix, 6).

Writing to John Murray from Ravenna about W. L. Bowles's "Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope," Byron indicates in "The Poetry of Art," that inherent in many commonplace objects are implicitly poetical qualities. In support of his theory, Byron says: ". . . Wordsworth, who made a poem about a washing-tub and a blind boy, may tell you so as well as I, . . ."³⁹ In September, 1820, to Octavius Gilchrist, Byron writes, "Those poor idiots of the Lakes, too, are diluting our literature as much as they can."⁴⁰ At this time he announces to Murray: "I have no patience with the sort of trash you send me out by way of books; except Scott's novels, and three or four other things, I never saw such work or works. Campbell is lecturing, Moore idling, Southey twaddling, Wordsworth driveling, Coleridge muddling,

³⁸ Byron, Letters and Journals, v, #794, 16 (To John Murray, April 23, 1820).

³⁹ Ibid., v, 546 (To John Murray, March 1821).

⁴⁰ Byron, a Self-Portrait, ii, 666 (To Octavius Gilchrist, September 5th, 1821).

Joanna Baillie piddling, Bowles quibbling, squabbling, and sniveling."⁴¹

Byron's The Blues A Literary Eclogue, (1821, 1823) is a satire on members of London's literary elite, including Lady Bluemount (apparently Lady Beaumont). She speaks with Tracy and with Inkel about the "Lakers" in general and about Wordsworth in particular. Tracy enumerates them as "There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and Wordswords and Co./With their damnable --" (7-9). "Eclogue the Second" finds Inkel addressing Lady Bluemount: "How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere treasure?/ Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,/ And their gatherers, as Homer sung warriors and kings?" (46-48). To Lady Bluemount's response, "He has just got a place" (49) Inkel inquires, "As a footman?" (50) and Lady Bluemount replies, "For shame!/ Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name" (50-51). Inkel protests: "Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;/ For the poet of pedlars 'twere, sure, no disaster/ To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not/ The first time he has turn'd both his creed and his coat" (52-55). Thereupon, Lady Bluemount: "For shame, I repeat. If Sir George could but hear -- " (56). Later, correcting an imprecise title given the poet's civil service position, Lady Bluemount says, "Excuse me -- 'tis one in the 'Stamps'/ He is made a collector" (61-62). Inkel and Lady Bluemount parry words about the poet's fame until Lady Bluebottle interposes. Lady Bluemount protests: "Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;/ And my Lord

⁴¹ Byron, a Self-Portrait, 11, 668 (To John Murray, September 12th, 1821).

Seventy-four, who protects our dear Bard,/ And who gave him his place,
has the greatest regard/ For the poet, who, singing of pedlars and
asses;/ Has found out the way/ to dispense with Parnassus" (116-120).
Such an attitude on the part of Lady Bluemount reflects that reported
of Lady Beaumont in The Farington Diary (See Chapter III, p. 91).

Wordsworth usually maintained some degree of equanimity in
the face of critical generalizations aimed against him. In a letter
tentatively dated 1822, to an unknown correspondent, he refers to Don
Juan as "that infamous publication;" and continues, "What avails it to
hunt down Shelley and leave Byron untouched? I am persuaded that Don
Juan will do more harm to the English character than anything of our
time,' not so much as a book, but thousands, who will be ashamed to have
it in that shape, will fatten upon choice bits of it in the shape of
extracts"⁴²

Wordsworth's more general reaction to the members of the Shelley
circle appears in a letter to Landor: "It is reported here that Byron,
Shelley, Moore, Leigh Hunt (I do not know if you have heard of all these
names) are to lay their heads together in some Town of Italy, for the
purpose of conducting a Journal to be directed against everything in
religion, in morals and probably in government and literature, which our
Forefathers have been accustomed to reverence, -- the notion seems very

⁴²
LY, I, #780a, 254 (W. W. to ? [ascribed by Knight to 1822]).

extravagant but perhaps the more likely to be realized on that account.⁴³

Shortly before the end of his life, Wordsworth summed up his attitude toward Byron: " . . . I never spoke with acrimony of Lord Byron, notwithstanding the noble poet's public poetical attacks -- perhaps the worst, because the most enduring of all. His review of my poems was a very serious one, but Lord B. laughed at it, and thus disarmed me if I had been inclined to be angry -- You say that Prof. Wilson declared 'that it was Wordsworth who first taught Byron to look at a mountain' -- but I must disclaim the honour of being his lordship's poetical guide -- notwithstanding the dictum of Christopher North."⁴⁴

Generally, the commentary of both Shelley and Byron on Wordsworth falls into two categories: he was a placehunter, ultimately surrendering to the pressures of a materialistic society; or he was a confused theorist who, in practice, occupied both the center and the periphery of his verse.

Wordsworth's reaction to this criticism is far more irenic than one would expect. Forebearing to respond directly to the attacks of either poet, he replies with temperate and considered judgments. Personally,

⁴³ LY, I, #679, 69 (W. W. to Walter Savage Landor, Ap. 20th [1822]).

⁴⁴ Ibid., III, #1634, 1306 (W. W. to ? , March 27, 1847).

he regards the Shelley Circle as incendiaries whose criticism apparently seems irrelevant. What Barron Field, Henry Crabb Robinson, John Kenyon, or Walter Savage Landor say of Wordsworth's poetry seems material to him. But he does not appear to credit Shelley and Byron with having read his work carefully. Acknowledging their general disapproval, he does little but deplore their attacks. From the beginning, Wordsworth seems instinctively to have recognized the criticism of Byron and Shelley, despite the sharpness of its invective, for what it was -- disapproval of his personality and impatience with him as an individual. With regard to Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron admired some of the poetry and nothing of the poet.

Although both Shelley and Byron evinced general dislike of Wordsworth as man and as poet, John Keats chose to criticize only the poet. This criticism Keats implied in his poetry and expressed in his correspondence. In imagery and style, there are numerous similarities between Wordsworth's 1807 poems and the poetry of Keats.

In April 1814, Keats wrote a sonnet, "On Peace," in which the Miltonic line, "Let the sacred mountain nymph thy favourite be," (8), echoes the sentiment which Wordsworth expressed in "Thought of a Briton," (3) citing the voices of sea and mountain as liberty's chosen music.

The two poets refer to "Lapland": Wordsworth in "To a Young Lady," line 17, "And lovely as a Lapland night;" Keats in an August 1814 piece

entitled "Fill for me a Brimming Bowl," lines 25-26 reading "Yet as the Tuscan mid the snow/ Of Lapland thinks on sweet Arno."

Wordsworth mentions Chatterton in "Resolution and Independence" (43ff). Keats refers to the young poet in a January 1815 sonnet addressed "To Chatterton" and also in the line, "And sit, and rhyme and think on Chatterton" (56) in the poem, "To George Felton Mathew," November 1815. The names of Sydney and Vane appear in Wordsworth's "Great men . . ." (3-4) and in Keats's "Anniversary of Charles II's Restoration" (5), written in May 1815.

Keats, in February 1815, composed "To Hope" in which "mind's eye" (3) resembles Wordsworth's "inward eye" (15) in "I wandered . . ." Echoes of the last two lines (17-18) of "I wandered . . ." also appear in "Specimen of an Induction to a Poem" (March 1816) in which Keats writes, "And always does my heart with pleasure dance," (51).

Both poets make copious use of the epithet, "sweet," and both employ coupling and interrogation as well as repetition of words, phrases, and sentences. Their poetry contains many allusions to natural objects.

The work of Keats was brought to the attention of Wordsworth by the

painter, Benjamin Robert Haydon, who had met the elder poet in 1815.⁴⁵
 To Wordsworth, in November 1816, Haydon forwarded Keats's sonnet beginning, "Great spirits now on earth are sojourning," lines 2-4 of which refer to Wordsworth as: "He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake!/ Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,/ Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing." When he learned of Haydon's disposition of this sonnet, Keats wrote, ". . . The Idea of your sending it to Wordsworth put me out of breath -- you know with what Reverence I would send my Wellwishes to him -- ."⁴⁶ Considerably later, acknowledging the receipt of the poem to Haydon, Wordsworth professed interest in Keats's lines which, he admitted, seemed promising and were "assuredly vigorously conceived and well expressed;"⁴⁷

Objecting to the sentiment which Wordsworth expressed in the 1807 poem, "Gipsies," Keats stated that the piece did not represent a "search

⁴⁵ Wordsworth agreed to become the godfather of the painter's second son, Frederick Wordsworth Haydon, born in 1827 and baptized in 1840. LY, II, #1361, 1042 (W. W. to B. R. Haydon, 23rd September 1840).

⁴⁶ The Letters of John Keats, 1814-1821, ed. Hyder Edward Rollins (Cambridge, Mass., 1958) I, #12, 118 (To Benjamin Robert Haydon, 21 November 1816) -- hereafter cited as Keats, Letters.

⁴⁷ LY, III, #577a, 1368 (W. W. to B. R. Haydon, Jan. 20th 1817).

after Truth."⁴⁸ This echoes Coleridge's criticism of "Gipsies" in
Biographia Literaria.⁴⁹

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In a letter to another friend, Keats, citing his acquaintances among writers -- Hunt, Horace and James Smith, Brown, Reynolds, Shelley and Byron -- states, "I am quite disgusted with literary Men -- and will never know another except Wordsworth -- no not even Byron."⁵⁰ Shortly thereafter, on December 28, 1817, the young poet had the opportunity to meet Wordsworth at Haydon's celebrated dinner party, of which there are far more accounts than there could have been guests to report them. Keats refers to the affair in a letter to his brothers.⁵¹ Of an 1807 poem, Keats wrote, "When I think of Wordsworth's Sonnet 'Vanguard of Liberty! ye men of Kent!' the degenerated race about me are Pulvis Impecac, Simplex -- a strong dose."⁵²

About this time, according to ambiguous testimony, Wordsworth termed Keats's "Hymn to Pan" (Endymion, I, 232-306) "a pretty piece of Paganism." As Mrs. Moorman perceptively puts it, such a comment need not indicate condescension on the part of the older poet.⁵³ Nor need it argue any lack of appreciation. A rereading of Keats's lines seems to affirm the validity of the statement attributed to Wordsworth. Against a traditional nature setting of woods, flowers, bees, butterflies, strawberries, eagles, lambs, and shepherds, the "Hymn" prays Great Pan, the Satyr king, to ". . . be still the leaven," (296) giving earth " -- a new birth" (298), and to "Be still a symbol of immensity:" (299). In context, the hymn emphasizing the concept

⁴⁸ Keats, Letters, I, #39, 174 (To Benjamin Bailey, 28-30 October 1817).

⁴⁹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions, ed. George Watson (New York, 1906; rev. 1960, Everyman's Library), xxii, p. 259 -- hereafter cited as BL.

⁵⁰ Keats, Letters, I, #38, 169 (To Benjamin Bailey, 8 Oct 1817).

⁵¹ Ibid., I, #41, 198 (To George and Thom Keats, 5 January 1818).

⁵² Ibid., I, #67, 241 (To Benjamin Bailey, 13 March 1818).

⁵³ Moorman, II, 316-318.

of a pagan deity besought by his worshippers may certainly be said to represent "a pretty piece of Paganism."

Keats begins to articulate distinctive poetic theory in his correspondence during 1818. Contrasting the poetry of Wordsworth with that of his contemporaries, Keats states, "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us -- and if we do not agree, seems to put its hand into its breeches pocket. Poetry should be quiet and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself, but with its subject." Later he continues, " -- I don't mean to deny Wordsworth's grandeur and Hunt's merit, but I mean to say we need not be teased with grandeur and merit when we can have them uncontaminated and unobtrusive."⁵⁴ The young poet later extends his axioms when he says, "I think Poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by Singularity -- That if Poetry comes not as naturally as the Leaves to a tree it had better not come at all."⁵⁵

At this time Keats evinces considerable interest in Wordsworth's poetic practice. Lines 105-106 in a March 25, 1818 composition entitled "Epistle to John Hamilton Reynolds," read ". . . -- Away, ye horrid moods! Moods of one's mind!" Perhaps coincidentally, thirteen poems in the second section of Volume II of Wordsworth's 1807 poems are headed "Moods of my own Mind." Late in the spring of 1818, Keats tells Reynolds that he has been considering Wordsworth's genius as well as his difference from Milton. Having enumerated separate "mansions of human life," the poet states his conclusion about Milton, " -- He did not think into the human heart, as Wordsworth has done."⁵⁶ When Keats and his friend, Charles Armitage Brown, visited Rydal Mount, they were disappointed to find the inhabitants away from home.⁵⁷ A few months later, Keats includes in his criticism the definition of the true poetical character distinguished from "the wordsworthian or egotistical sublime."⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Keats, Letters, I, #59, 224-225 (To J. H. Reynolds, 2 February 1818).

⁵⁵ Ibid., I, #65, 238-239 (To John Taylor, 27 February 1818).

⁵⁶ Ibid., I, #80, 280-282 (To John H. Reynolds, 3 May 1818).

⁵⁷ Ibid., I, #92, 302 (To George and Georgiana Keats, 27-28 June 1818).

⁵⁸ Ibid., I, #100, 327-328 (To John H. Reynolds, 10 July 1818).

Keats uses the figure of the "stock-dove," (to which Wordsworth alludes in "Resolution and Independence" (5) and "O Nightingale" (II), in the last couplet of a twenty-four line piece, "Hush! Hush! Tread Softly!" allegedly written for Charlotte Reynolds, sister of John Hamilton Reynolds in November 1818.⁵⁹ In a subsequent reference to Wordsworth, Keats links the poet with Hunt, and states that for both men, "Conversation is not a search after knowlege [sic], but an endeavour at effect." This idea confirms Keats in his resolve "never to write for the sake of writing or making a poem, ..."⁶⁰

Among his 1807 poems, in the second sonnet of the sequence beginning "Personal Talk," Wordsworth had prosaically paraphrased Collins's line, "In notes by distance made more sweet" (The Passions, 60) with his version, " -- sweetest melodies/ Are those that are by distance made more sweet;" (25-26). The second stanza of Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (May 1819) opens with the frequently-quoted lines, "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard/ Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;" (11-12).

In Poems in Two Volumes, 1807, two Dover Sonnets begin respectively, "Here on our native soil," and "Inland within a hollow vale, ..." By

⁵⁹ Walter Jackson Bate, John Keats (Cambridge, 1963) 103n -- hereafter cited as Bate, John Keats.

⁶⁰ Keats, Letters, II, #149, 43 (To B. R. Haydon, 8 March 1819).

June 1819, Keats had probably completed "The House of Mourning," a Petrarchan sonnet which Walter Jackson Bate terms "purposely trivial."⁶¹ This piece ends, "All these are vile, -- But viler Wordsworth's Sonnet/ On Dover: -- Dover! who could write upon it?" (13-14).

Contrasting his and Byron's poetic procedures, Keats declares that he describes what he imagines -- a more difficult task than that of Byron, who describes what he sees.⁶² As distinguished from Byron, who placed his contemporaries appropriately in a Gradus Ad Parnassum, Keats examining his own work, expresses the hope that subsequent poems may be for him a gradus ad Parnassum altissimum.⁶³ Keats's concern with Byron and Shelley, however, in no way approximates his interest in the theory and practice of Wordsworth, to whom he so consistently alludes.

Practical criticism by Keats of Wordsworth's poetry appears implicitly in the imitative patterns of the younger poet. These include a few general stylistic similarities, such as repetition, coupling, and recurrence of identical words and phrases in successive or alternate lines.

⁶¹Bate, John Keats, p. 298n.

⁶²Keats, Letters, #199, 200 (To George and Georgiana Keats, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27 September 1819).

⁶³Ibid., II, #211, 234 (To John Taylor, 17 November 1819).

Specifically, the younger poet's direct allusions to Wordsworth appear in two poems, "Great Spirits" (2-3) and "The House of Mourning" (13-14). Phrase and line analogies occur between Wordsworth's "Personal Talk" and Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," and between Keats's "Epistle to John Hamilton Reynolds" and Wordsworth's topical heading, "Moods of my own Mind."

Keats's theoretical criticism of Wordsworth is probably a more significant matter. Deeply reflective in nature, this criticism became a specialized tool which the young poet wielded for his poetic development. In his own poetry Keats applied the theory by which he had already tested the poetry of Wordsworth. Although he admired Wordsworth's poetry, Keats regarded it as somewhat obtrusive. For Keats, the "fine excess" of poetry did not come easily enough to Wordsworth; and proportionately Wordsworth's poetry seemed less artistic to Keats.

Until he heard that the death of Keats was imminent, Wordsworth does not appear to have even considered the younger man's poetry or criticism. Given a different chronology, Keats might have supplied for Wordsworth a formal aesthetic to contrast with the informal one which Coleridge had tried to provide for him. Ultimately, Wordsworth's lack of response to Keats's criticism seems to imply that for all practical purposes, Wordsworth disregarded Keats's critical theory, basically similar to although developmentally different from his own.

Writers who publicly reversed their critical positions regarding Wordsworth were Walter Savage Landor, William Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt. Landor and Hunt expressed their opinions of Wordsworth in prose and verse; Hazlitt evaluated the poet in essays and letters. Each of these critics emphasized facets of the poet's personality which seemed to be reflected in the subject matter and style of his poetry.

According to popular conjecture, Charles Dickens portrayed Landor and Hunt respectively as Lawrence Boythorn and Harold Skimpole, characters in Bleak House, published in September 1853. Here, the protagonist, John Jarndyce, describes his friend, Boythorn, as superlatively impetuous, loud, hearty and sturdy . . . "a tremendous fellow."⁶⁴ The fictional Boythorn's long-lived loyalty to Jarndyce may reflect the enduring friendship of the real Landor for Southey, whom he met in 1808. Wordsworth, who did not meet Landor until 1832, could have identified the author of Gebir (1798), by name at least, as subscriber to Coleridge's The Friend, and as classicist and eccentric who made his home in Italy. Southey dedicated Kehama (1810) to Landor; and when the two spent some time together at Como, Southey brought to his friend's attention the 1815 edition of Wordsworth's poetry. After this, the Wordsworth-Landor correspondence began; and in one of the early exchanges, Wordsworth described Landor as "a Poet who has written

⁶⁴

Charles Dickens, Bleak House (New York, 1956) p. 115.

verses of which I would rather have been the Author than of any produced in our time."⁸⁵

Landor changed his original plan of dedicating the first series of Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men (1823) to Wordsworth. Nevertheless, the early and late series of the Southey-Porson conversations contain considerable criticism of Wordsworth's poetry. Both originally appeared in periodicals, and in both the dialogues purport to be between Robert Southey and Richard Porson, Greek scholar and librarian of the London Institute (See Chapter V, pp. 172-174).

On his wedding trip, early in 1825, William Hazlitt visited Landor in Florence. Years later, recalling the occasion, Landor recounted Hazlitt's description of Wordsworth. "Well, sir, you never saw him then? You have seen a horse, I suppose, ..." Landor smiled, and Hazlitt resumed, "Well, sir, if you have seen a horse, sir, I mean his head, sir, you have seen Wordsworth!"⁸⁶

Landor and Wordsworth met in London in 1832; and between 1833 and 1863, Landor published about a dozen poems in which he mentions Wordsworth. On December 23, 1833, Landor sent to Lady Blessington an ode "To Wordsworth," which appeared in the Athenaeum on February 1, 1834. Referring

⁸⁵ LY, I, #671, 49 (W. W. to Walter Savage Landor, September 3d, 1821).

⁸⁶ Robert H. Super, Walter Savage Landor, (New York, 1954) p. 177.

in this 71-line poem to "Those who have laid the harp aside/ And turn'd to idler things," (1-2), Landor reminds his fellow-poet, for whom he seems to have lost some of the earlier enthusiasm, "But Memory is not a Muse,/ O Wordsworth! -- . . ." (7-8). He states that he and Wordsworth have lived long. "And other stars before us shine/ May they be bright and prosperous/ As those that have been stars for us!" (52-54). To all these, Landor wishes every joy, "Save one -- and that oo shall be theirs,/ But after many rolling years,/ When 'mid their light, thy light appears" (69-71).⁶⁷ Commenting on Wordsworth's reaction, Henry Crabb Robinson notes, on April 8, 1834, "He is, as I expected, not very well pleased with Landor's Ode"⁶⁸

Ernest deSelincourt describes Landor as a master of irony.⁶⁹ The occasion of the 355-line Satire on Satirists, and Admonition to Detractors, which Henry Crabb Robinson terms "Landor's sad Satire," reveals the satirist as a typical Boythorn, loyally reacting against "base ingratitude to Southey," for whose poetry Wordsworth said he would not give five shillings. Landor, Boythorn-like, superlatively loyal and impetuous, launched a counter-offensive against Wordsworth in more than a hundred lines of the Satire.

⁶⁷ The Poetical Works of Walter Savage Landor, ed. Stephen Wheeler (Oxford, 1937) II, 381-382 -- hereafter cited as Landor, Poetical Works.

⁶⁸ Books and Their Writers, I, 440 (April 8th [1834]).

⁶⁹ Landor's Imaginary Conversations, a Selection with an introduction by Ernest deSelincourt (Oxford, 1915 [1942]) xxix.

The Satire on Satirists, completed by December 8, 1836, contains general and specific criticism. After castigating reviewers as a class in the first section of the poem, Landor proceeds to reprove individual critics: "But O! to fulminate with forked line/ Another's fame or fortune, ne'er be mine!/ Against the wretch who does it, high or low,/ Against him only, I direct my blow" (153-156)⁷⁰

Alluding to Wordsworth's subject matter, Landor remarks, "No more on daisies and on pilewort fed,/ By weary Duddon's ever tumbled bed,/ The Grasmere cuckoo leaves those sylvan scenes," (236-238). The following passage offended Landor's readers and many of his and Wordsworth's acquaintances: "Tho' Southey's poetry to thee should seem/ Not worth five shillings (such thy phrase) the ream,/ Courage! good wary Wordsworth! and disburse/ The whole amount from that prudential purse" (284-287). The satirist concludes, "But, o true poet of the country! why/ With goatskin gloves an ancient friend defy?/ Should Gifford lead thee? Should Matthias? they/ Were only fit to flap the flies away," (311-314).⁷¹

When the Satire appeared, Wordsworth and Robinson were planning a continental journey, on the first lap of which they were accompanied by Edward Moxon.⁷² The Satire, as yet unseen by Wordsworth, occasioned

⁷⁰ Landor, Poetical Works, III, 384.

⁷¹ Ibid., III, 386, 387, 388.

⁷² Moxon, who published Wordsworth's works in 1836, married the Lambs's adopted daughter, Emma Isola, granddaughter of Wordsworth's Italian tutor.

several exchanges among members of the poet's circle, and Robinson advised Landor not to send a copy to Southey.⁷³ From London, where he first learned of the Satire from Edward Quillinen, Wordsworth wrote to Southey about Landor's allusions.⁷⁴

A twenty-two line piece, "Malvolio," printed in Ablett's Literary Hours, 1837, also contains Landor's references to Wordsworth's 1807 subjects: "Thou hast been very tender to the Moon,/ Malvolio! and on many a daffodil/ And many a daisy hast thou yearn'd until/ The nether jaw quivered with thy good heart." (1-4)⁷⁵

Henry Crabb Robinson had summarized the Wordsworth-Landor relationship in 1836, when he reflected that the two were generally agreed on poetry, ". . . and where Wordsworth finds conformity in this he will be tolerant even of religious and political differences."⁷⁶

⁷³ Books and Their Writers, II, 509 (Jan 16th [1837]).

⁷⁴ LY, II, #1207, 837-838 (W. W. to Robert Southey, [March 18, 1837]).

⁷⁵ Landor, Poetical Works, III, 237.

⁷⁶ Books and Their Writers, II, 492 (May 13th [1836]).

Shelley and Keats saw as unpoetical in Wordsworth's work what Landor found reprehensible in the man. Yet, throughout his criticism, Landor never seems to doubt that Wordsworth's poetical position is unique. The critic regarded the poet's work as an indication of the age rather than as significant literary development. In their later years, when Landor and Wordsworth were mutually out of sympathy, Landor considered Wordsworth's poetry unimportant; and Wordsworth, who no longer respected Landor's literary opinions, resented the critic's disapproval.

Perceptively, if somewhat generally, Hazlitt criticized Wordsworth, whose close acquaintance the essayist enjoyed briefly. The critic did not specifically analyze Wordsworth's poems; neither did he evoke specific literary reactions from the poet. Notwithstanding the nebulousness of the poet's response to Hazlitt, the criticism of the essayist reveals significant facets of Wordsworth's aloofness to criticism of his distinguished contemporaries.

The young Hazlitt was an aspiring portrait painter with literary and philosophical interests, when in 1798, he first met Coleridge, who introduced him to Wordsworth in 1799.⁷⁷ Between 1798 and 1803, when he met Lamb at Godwin's home in London, Hazlitt spent much time in the Lake

⁷⁷ Hazlitt's Complete Works, ed. P. P. Howe (London, 1934) -- (All references to Hazlitt's works, unless otherwise noted, are from this edition.)

country, where his individuality soon proved too unconventional to sustain the friendship of either Coleridge or Wordsworth. However, Henry Crabb Robinson, who had known him since 1799, acknowledged Hazlitt as an influence on his literary taste.⁷⁸

Hazlitt comments extensively on Wordsworth in two major works, Lectures on the English Poets ("On the Living Poets") given at the Surrey Institution in January and February 1818 and published in the same year, and The Spirit of the Age ("Mr Wordsworth"), published anonymously in January 1825. In the first of these, Hazlitt states, "Mr. Wordsworth is the most original poet now living."⁷⁹ Eight years later, he qualifies his judgment which reads, "Mr. Wordsworth's genius is a pure emanation of the Spirit of the Age."⁸⁰

Discussing Shakespeare and Milton in his lecture series on the English poets, Hazlitt observes that unlike the modern poets, the two masters do not indulge in "Moods of their own Minds."⁸¹ In a later

⁷⁸ Books and Their Writers, I, 6.

⁷⁹ Hazlitt, Lectures on the English Poets, "On the Living Poets," v, 156.

⁸⁰ Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age, "Mr. Wordsworth," xi, 86.

⁸¹ Hazlitt, Lectures on the English Poets, "On Shakespeare and Milton," v, 53.

lecture, "On the Living Poets," Hazlitt comments that Wordsworth is "the poet of mere sentiment." Here among other poems, he praises three 1807 pieces, "The Leech-gatherer," "To a Cuckoo," and "To a Daisy," as well as some sonnets. Members of the Lake school of poetry led by Wordsworth, says Hazlitt, are only concerned about their poetry and their reputations.⁸² Although Hazlitt gave considerable space to the discussion of Wordsworth in the 1818 Lectures on the Living Poets, the poet made no response to the work.

In his Table-Talk (1821), Hazlitt objected to those of Milton's and Wordsworth's sonnets which express patriotic rather than purely personal emotion. Sometimes, says Hazlitt, these poems of Wordsworth lack sufficient objectivity and detachment; sometimes they fail to reflect a balance between imagination and sentiment.⁸³

When in 1825 he published The Spirit of the Age, Hazlitt was sharply critical of Wordsworth and specifically referred in the poems of 1807 to the daisy, the cuckoo, the linnet's nest, the duffle-gray cloak, and the lichens on the rock.⁸⁴ Commenting also on Wordsworth's oversensitivity to some criticism, Hazlitt said, "He has gnawed too much on the bridle; and has often thrown out crusts to the critics, in mere defiance or as a point of honour when he was challenged, which otherwise his own good

⁸² Hazlitt, Lectures on the English Poets, "On the Living Poets," v, 156, 161, 163.

⁸³ Hazlitt, Table-Talk, "On Milton's Sonnets," viii, 176.

⁸⁴ Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age, xi, 89.

sense would have withheld."⁸⁵

Hazlitt describes Wordsworth in The Spirit of the Age as an originator of a system of poetry, an innovator, and a stylist. In general, this essay summarizes Wordsworth's poetic attraction, his contemporaries and his poetic inspiration, mentions his personal appearance, and compares his poetic position with those of others.

Having referred to Hazlitt in 1817 as a "miscreant," and "the most perverse and malevolent creature that ill luck has ever thrown in my way," Wordsworth ignored the criticism of 1818 and 1825.⁸⁶ Since the "Maga" attacked Hazlitt savagely and persistently, Wordsworth's censure was, perhaps, as unnecessary as it might have been unnoticed. At best, Hazlitt's criticism of Wordsworth served to draw attention to the poet's literary tendencies, preferences, and significance. At worst, Hazlitt's dislike was the type of personal criticism which Wordsworth, publicly and professionally, chose to disregard.

The occasions of Hazlitt's and Byron's social ostracism were somewhat similar. Hazlitt epitomized Byron's poetry in a typical sentence in The Spirit of the Age, " -- Lord Byron's verse glows like a flame, consuming every thing in its way; Sir Walter Scott's glides like a river, clear, gentle, harmless."⁸⁷ In view of Hazlitt's statement about Byron, it is

⁸⁵ Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age, xi, 89.

⁸⁶ MY, II, #586, 781, 782 (W. W. to Benjamin Robert Haydon, April 7th 1817).

⁸⁷ Hazlitt, The Spirit of the Age, "Lord Byron," xi, 69-70.

interesting to note Wordsworth's description of Hazlitt as "a person for whom I never had any love, but with whom I had for a short time a good deal of intimacy -- He was a man of extraordinary acuteness, but perverse as Lord Byron himself, ..." ⁸⁸ Both Byron and Hazlitt, temperamentally antipathetic to Wordsworth, appreciated what they considered the significance of his poetry.

"King of the Cockneys" was Lockhart's title for Leigh Hunt, whose life curiously and constantly impinged upon the dramatic. ⁸⁹ Dickens denied that Harold Skimpole in Bleak House portrayed Hunt, who was alternately blamed and admired, in public and in private. Hunt seems to have been as little affected, as was his fictional counterpart, by the strange events which befell him.

Hunt's near-doggerell, The Feast of the Poets, appeared in the Reflector, March 1811. The poem was described as a jeu d'esprit suggested by the Session of Poets of Sir John Suckling. Apollo gives the poets a dinner, and many verse-makers who have no claim to the title present themselves and are rejected. ⁹⁰ The god says, "What! think

⁸⁸ LY, I, #942, 511 (W. W. to William Rowan Hamilton, [September 26, 1830]).

⁸⁹ John Gibson Lockhart, "The Cockney Poets," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, II, (October, 1817) 38 ff.

⁹⁰ Autobiography of Leigh Hunt, ed. J. E. Morpurgo, (London, 1949) pp. 214-215 -- hereafter cited as Hunt, Autobiography.

ye a bard's a mere gossip, who tells/ Of the ev'ryday feelings of every one else,/ And that poetry lies, not in something select,/ But in gath'ring the refuse that others reject?" (305-308)⁹¹ Passages in The Feast of the Poets proved offensive to many readers, as Hunt later admitted, because he ridiculed Wordsworth, whom he knew at that time only through those who disparaged him.⁹²

In the early versions of this work (1811-1814) Apollo ordered "Laurels for four!" to be bestowed upon Campbell, Southey, Scott, and Moore. In the 1815 version, the deity specified "Laurels for eight" with Byron, Wordsworth and Rogers added to those honored. Here, the god addresses Wordsworth, " . . . 'Come, my dear Will, -- imperfections apart, --/ Let us have a true taste of our exquisite art;/ You know very well you've the key to my heart'" (335-337). The poets arrive wearing appropriately fashioned wreathes "And Wordsworth's with celandine, aloe, and pine" (437) (1815) became (from 1832 to 1857) "And Wordsworth's with all which the field walk endears,/ The blossom that counts by its hundreds of years."⁹³

With his brother, John, Leigh Hunt had written for the Examiner (1808). For seditious journalism, both Hunts were sentenced, on February 3, 1813, to two-year prison terms. Leigh Hunt's personal charm

⁹¹ The Poetical Works of Leigh Hunt, ed. H. S. Milford, (Oxford 1923) p. 152 -- hereafter cited as Hunt, Poetical Works.

⁹² Hunt, Autobiography, p. 223.

⁹³ Hunt, Poetical Works, p. 156.

and the wide-spread publicity of his "cause" were attested by numerous visitors throughout his term at Surrey Gaol.

According to Lockhart's article, mentioned above, Hunt is a Homer among the Cockney poets, and Hunt's friend, Hazlitt, is "the Cockney Aristotle." For a time Hunt influenced Keats, who soon progressed far beyond him. Benjamin Robert Haydon, "the Cockney Raphael," brought Wordsworth to visit Hunt in June 1815, some months after Wordsworth had sent Hunt his 1815 collected works.⁹⁴

Hunt subsequently took his large family to Italy in 1822, to join Shelley and Byron in a journalistic venture, the Liberal. On a July day designated for a meeting of the three, Shelley, enroute to Hunt, was drowned. The first number of the Liberal (October 1822) contained Byron's The Vision of Judgment. However Byron and Hunt were mutually unsympathetic, and in 1825 the Hunts were back in England.

Subsequently, the general tone of Hunt's periodical criticism of Wordsworth cooled. He wrote of the poet on June 4, 1831: "His politics and polemics will come to nothing, like the system that begat them. His beauties will be as immortal as the fields and the skies that begat them."⁹⁵ Within a fortnight, Wordsworth, who seems to have

⁹⁴ Books and Their Writers, I, 166 (May 9th [1815]).

⁹⁵ Leigh Hunt's Literary Criticism, ed. Lawrence Huston Houtchens and Carolyn Washburn Houtchens (New York, 1956) p. 393. ("Mr. Moxon's Publications," June 4, [1831])

respected Hunt professionally but not personally, told Moxon, "Mr. Leigh Hunt is a Coxcomb, was a Coxcomb, and ever will be a Coxcomb."⁹⁶

Hunt wrote Blue-Stocking Revels, or, The Feast of the Violets, a parodistic variation on the theme of The Feast of the Poets. This appeared in the Monthly Repository, July 1837, and, at one point, describes Phoebus directing autograph-seekers towards Wordsworth, keeper of the royal stamp, "with a kiss for his fee" (I, MS and 1837 between 224/225).⁹⁷ Leigh Hunt, who, in The Feast of the Poets, accused Wordsworth of "changing his harp for a whistle," (289-290), altered his estimate of the poet in the several versions of this long poem.

His general aloofness from the criticism of his distinguished contemporaries may surprise the readers of Wordsworth. But his various attitudes towards these contemporaries seems consistent with their criticism. To Shelley and Byron, whose attacks upon Wordsworth were frequently personal rather than literary, the poet's attitude was usually one of disapproval. Towards Keats, whose appreciation of the elder poet was real but impersonally objective, Wordsworth was condescending. For Landor, who expressed admiration of Wordsworth's poetry, Wordsworth reserved a distant dignity. Hazlitt and Hunt, both inconstant in their criticism of Wordsworth, seem to have been the objects of Wordsworth's personal mistrust. From each of these critics, however, Wordsworth remained aloof.

⁹⁶ LY, II, #972, 556 (W. W. to Edward Moxon, June 13th [1831]).

⁹⁷ Hunt, Poetical Works, p. 717.

CHAPTER V

Wordsworth's Sensitivity to Criticism in Periodicals

Early in his literary career, like the young Byron after him, Wordsworth was the target of periodical reviewers. Following the publication, in 1793, of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, Wordsworth announced that with only one or two exceptions, the periodicals appeared to be committed to sustain prejudice and to spread error.¹

Members of the Wordsworth Circle evinced innate distrust as well as shrewd evaluation of periodical criticism. According to one account, the young Coleridge, having written a review of which he was proud, read it to the Wordsworths. Dorothy wept, saying, "I was thinking how I must feel if I were ever to read such a review of a poem of yours or William's. And has not this poor man some sister or wife to feel for him?" After which, according to the report, Coleridge, who frequently contributed to periodicals, wrote no reviews.²

Evaluating periodical criticism years later in Biographia Literaria, Coleridge remarked that he owed two-thirds of his reputation and publicity to critics and satirists in reviews.³ And, by 1819, Wordsworth

¹ EY, #40, p. 119 (W.W. to William Mathews, May 23 [1794]).

² Alaric Alexander Watts, Alaric Watts, A Narrative of His Life (London, 1884), I, 247 (J. Anster to Alaric Watts, October 3, 1835).

³ BL, III, p. 28.

stated that his work had suffered through two decades of "Duncery" in periodicals.⁴

Wordsworth never expected that Poems in Two Volumes (May, 1807) would be a monumental work. His previous publication had been the fourth edition of Lyrical Ballads (1805); and it was obvious that the unpublished poem to Coleridge would be a long-range undertaking. Need for money as well as desire to publish urged him to prepare for the press his numerous "small poems" composed during the past decade. Coleridge, who theoretically disapproved of these poems, had nevertheless read them with great interest. Later, in the preface to The Excursion (1814), Wordsworth compared his short poems to "the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses" often found in a gothic church, a representation of his great work-in-progress.⁵

The June 1807 number of The Eclectic Review first noticed Wordsworth's 115 poems by three-and-a-half lines under "Poetry" in a "List of Works Recently Published," where Poems in Two Volumes was described only by the stock phrase, "elegantly printed."⁶ Monthly Literary Recreations, July, 1807, contained an unsigned review, which seems to have set the tone for popular criticism of the work. Subsequently

⁴ MY, II, #624, 848 (W.W. to Hans Busk, July 6th, 1819).

⁵ PW, V, 2.

⁶ The Eclectic Review, III (June 1807), 555.

acknowledged by Byron, this review obliquely praised the individual poems: "Though the present work may not equal his former efforts, many of them possess a native elegance, natural and unaffected, totally devoid of the tinsel embellishments and abstract hyperboles of several contemporary sonneteers."⁷

In a letter responding to Francis Wrangham's appreciative comment on the 1807 poems, Wordsworth attempted to offset adverse reviews. Since Wrangham was a close acquaintance of Joseph Mawman, editor of The Critical Review, Wordsworth sought through Wrangham, to prevent the magazine's regular contributor, Charles LeGrice, from reviewing Poems in Two Volumes. Stating that LeGrice's estimate could not affect the ultimate "destiny" of the poems, Wordsworth remarked that such a review might offend some readers and would almost certainly damage the sale of the work.⁸

LeGrice did not review the 1807 poems, although an account of them appeared in the August number of The Critical Review. Deploing the evil of a "silly book", the reviewer laments the fact that Wordsworth should so lower himself as to write of such subjects. Specifically quoting from eight 1807 poems,* the critic suggests that for inspiration

⁷ Quoted in Elsie Smith, ed, Estimate of William Wordsworth by his contemporaries, (Oxford, 1932), Haskell House, 1966, p. 70.

⁸ MY, I, #304, 134-135 (.W.W. to Francis Wrangham, July 12 [1807]).

*"The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly," "The Small Celandine," "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves," "The Glowworm," "To a Skylark," "Alice Fell," "Stepping Westward," and "To a Butterfly."

the poet refer more frequently to his library and less to the "moods of his own mind."⁹ Wordsworth, who described this incident as having a frying-pan-to-fire outcome, told Wrangham that although he had not seen the review, he regards its contents as "a miserable heap of spiteful nonsense." Thereupon, he quotes Southey as saying of critics, "they cannot blast our laurels, but they may mildew our corn;"¹⁰

In his first contribution to The Edinburgh Review, an 1802 commentary on Southey's Thalaba, Francis Jeffrey had attacked Wordsworth. By October 1807, The Edinburgh Review carried a long critique by Jeffrey, then the magazine's editor and outstanding critic. Indicating weaknesses, poem by poem, the reviewer challenged the readers to find worse poetry, even among the works of Southey. Typical of Jeffrey's criticism is his summary dismissal of the immortality "Ode", of which he writes, "This is, beyond all doubt, the most illegible and unintelligible part of the publication. We can pretend to give no analysis of it."¹¹

At this time the tone of Dorothy Wordsworth's correspondence echoes that of her brother in equating adverse criticism with material loss. Dorothy writes that although the Wordsworths do not usually see the periodicals, she read the review of the poem in the October Edinburgh.

⁹ The Critical Review, Series the Third, XI, (August, 1807), 399-403.

¹⁰ MY, I, #311, 148-149 (W.W. to Francis Wrangham, November 4th [1807]).

¹¹ The Edinburgh Review, XI (October, 1807), 214-231.

The account concerned her only because of a possible falling off in sales; otherwise, she states, unconvincingly, it made her laugh heartily.¹³ To Lady Beaumont, Dorothy describes the review as "very silly," and agrees with her correspondent that it is "ignorant."¹⁴

To the extent that they did not read periodicals, the Wordsworths were spared a succession of adverse criticism of the poetry between 1807 and 1815. The Satirist, or Monthly Meteor, for November 1, 1807, alludes to Wordsworth as a maker of poetic system. Although he admits that the poet possesses creativity, the reviewer claims that in the 1807 poems, Wordsworth steps outside his role. The critic disapproves specifically of "The Small Celandine" and "To a Skylark," praises some of the sonnets, and indicates strong points in "The Happy Warrior." Most of the poems he regards as "trash."¹⁵

According to a writer in an annual, "Than the volumes now before us we never saw any thing better calculated to excite disgust and anger in a lover of poetry." Also alluding to the poet as a system-maker, the critic laments that one of Wordsworth's ability should have written such unrepresentative pieces.¹⁶

¹³ MY, I, #315, 165 (D.W. to Catherine Clarkson, December 28 [1807]).

¹⁴ MY, I, #316, 168 (D.W. to Lady Beaumont, January 3 [1808]).

¹⁵ The Satirist or Monthly Meteor, I, (November 1 [1807]), 188-191.

¹⁶ The Poetical Register, and Repository of Fugitive Poetry for 1806-1807, IV, 540. - -

Through nearly eight full pages in the January, 1808, number of The Eclectic Review, a critic seeks to trace in several 1807 poems Wordsworth's application of the theory stated in his Preface.¹⁷ "It is remarkable," says the reviewer, "that we have not, among all the piebald miscellanies before us, a single example of that species of poetry, for which the author's theory of diction and his habits of thinking peculiarly qualify him."¹⁸ Citing "Alice Fell," "The Blind Highland Boy," and "Fidelity" as inferior, The Eclectic Review critic regards some sonnets such as "On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic," truly poetical and others as uneven. He finds the immortality "Ode" confusing and rates "Resolution and Independence" highest among the 1807 poems.¹⁹

Wordsworth was irritated by Jeffrey and complained of his criticism to Walter Scott, their mutual friend. After the reception of Poems in Two Volumes, by The Edinburgh Review, Wordsworth observes that Jeffrey is no gentleman. Then the poet continues, in somewhat ungentlemanly terms, "If Mr. J. continues to play tricks of this kind, let him take care to arm his breech well, for assuredly he runs desperate risque of having it soundly kicked."²⁰

¹⁷ The Eclectic Review, IV, Part I (January 1808) 35-43.

¹⁸ Ibid., (January 1808) 39.

¹⁹ Ibid., (January 1808) 41-2.

²⁰ MY, I, #316a, 458d (W.W. to Walter Scott) January 18 [1808].

Reviewing George Crabbe's Poems in April, 1808, Jeffrey remarks that while Crabbe's poetic subjects represent life experiences, Wordsworth and his associates treat of "beings whose existence was not previously suspected by the acutest observers of nature, . . ."²¹ Late in summer of 1808, Wordsworth, thanking Scott for sending him a copy of Marmion, states that he has seen neither Jeffrey's criticism of Scott's novel nor "the stupid nonsense which I am told he has written of me."²²

Jeffrey's long discussion of the Reliques of Robert Burns in The Edinburgh Review for January 1809 concludes with an exhortation to the "new" poets to consider the possible effects of a poem like "Alice Fell" upon the poetic sensitivity of a Burns.²³ Periodical critics often expressed dislike for "Alice Fell." Originally, Wordsworth wrote this poem about an incident reported to him, "for humanity's sake." Years later, the poet reported to Isabella Fenwick that "the humbleness . . . of the subject together with the homely mode of treating it" occasioned "a world of ridicule by the small critics." Therefore, he omitted the poem from the 1820 through 1832 editions but restored it in 1836 at the request of Edward Quillinan.²⁴

²¹ The Edinburgh Review, XII (April 1808) 133.

²² MY, I, #344, 240 (W.W. to Walter Scott, August 4 [1808]).

²³ The Edinburgh Review, XIII (January 1809) 276.

²⁴ PW, I, 359.

The ridicule of "Alice Fell" to which Wordsworth referred consisted of a disparaging allusion in The Eclectic Review, a listing among immature pieces printed by The Satirist, and considerably more space in The Critical Review and The Edinburgh Review. In 1807-1815 and its restoration in 1836-1843, "Alice Fell" remained unchanged. Alterations occurred, in the 1845 edition, specifically in lines (3-4, 15-18, 21, 23-24, 29-32, 37-39, and 51).²⁵ Without changing the meaning of the lines, these revisions represent a general tightening of the sense and simplification of diction as seen below:

"Alice Fell"

When suddenly I <u>seem'd to hear</u>	3	When, as we hurried on, <u>my ear</u>
A moan, a <u>lamentable</u> sound.	4	Was smited with a <u>startling</u> sound
<u>And soon I heard</u> upon the blast	15	<u>But, hearing soon</u> upon the blast
The <u>voice</u> , and bade him halt again.	16	The <u>cry</u> , I bade him halt again.
Said I, alighting on the ground,	17	Forthwith, alighting on the ground,
" <u>What can it be</u> , this piteous moan?"	18	" <u>Whence comes</u> ," said I, this piteous moan?"
"My cloak!" the first word was last,	21	"My cloak!" no other word she spake,
As if her <u>very</u> heart would burst;	23	As if her <u>innocent</u> heart would break;
And down from off <u>the Chaise</u> she	24	And down from off <u>her seat</u> she
leapt.		leapt.
'Twas twisted <u>betwixt</u> nave and	29	There, twisted <u>between</u> nave and
spoke;		spoke;
He help she lent, and with good	30	It hung, nor could at once be freed;
heed		

²⁵ PW, I, 232-234.

Together we released the Cloak;	31 But <u>our joint pains unloosed</u> the cloak,
A <u>wretched, wretched</u> rag indeed!	32 A <u>miserable</u> rag indeed!
She <u>sate</u> like one <u>past all relief</u>	37 <u>Insensible to all relief</u>
Sob after sob she forth did send	38 <u>Sat</u> the poor girl, and forth did send
In wretchedness	39 Sob after sob,
As if <u>she'd</u> lost her only friend	51 As if <u>she had</u> lost her only friend

A review for The British Critic, March, 1809, states that "The Happy Warrior" contains strong passages.²⁶ Wordsworth never altered this poem.

To DeQuincey in May, 1809, Dorothy Wordsworth mentions her brother's projected four-volume edition, published in 1815. She refers to the poor sales of the 1807 poems, reports having seen The Edinburgh Review, (January, 1809) at the home of John Wilson, and emphasizes the necessity of protesting Jeffrey's misquoting of the poems. Dorothy suggests that DeQuincey address Jeffrey in a letter to appear in Edinburgh and London papers.²⁷

In 1811 and 1812, reviewing respectively Southey's Curse of Kehama and John Wilson's The Isle of Palma Jeffrey expressed general disapproval of Wordsworth's poems.²⁸ Stating that passages in the poems of Wordsworth

²⁶ The British Critic, XXXIII (March 1809) 293.

²⁷ MY, I, #371, 295 (D.W. to Thomas DeQuincey, May 1 [1809]).

²⁸ The Edinburgh Review, XVII (February 1811) 429-465; and XIX (February 1812), 373-388.

and Southey frequently embarrass readers by their childishness, Jeffrey praises Wilson as a welcome addition to the Lakers.²⁹ Wilson, according to Jeffrey, writes of simple things without waxing ecstatic about spades, sparrow's eggs, leech-gatherers, duffel cloaks, and wash-tubs.³⁰

The 1815 edition of Wordsworth's poetry contained many revisions, some of which probably resulted from the frequent and detailed criticism appearing in his periodicals. In addition to "Alice Fell" and "Character of the Happy Warrior," critics frequently cited and often quoted from "The Blind Highland Boy," "Fidelity," "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," "Foresight" and "The Sparrow's Nest."

In October, 1807, The Edinburgh Review critic had expressed his opinion of "The Blind Highland Boy" as the nadir of absurdity and childishness.³¹ The Eclectic Review, January, 1808, termed the blind boy "younger brother to Mr. Wordsworth's own inimitable Idiot Boy, but very far below him in merits and accomplishments."³² Noting that the simplicity of his diction occasioned much critical comment, Wordsworth attempted to render the diction more acceptable to readers.³³

²⁹ The Edinburgh Review, XVII (February 1811), 437.

³⁰ Ibid., XIX (February 1812), 374.

³¹ Ibid., XI (October 1807), 224.

³² The Eclectic Review, IV, Part I (January 1808), 40.

³³ MY, I, #304, 1314 (W.W. to Francis Wrangham, July 12 1807).

"The Blind Highland Boy" underwent significant revisions, with changes in ten lines and the addition of six lines. These revisions involved the substitution and description of a turtle shell in 1815 for the original wash-tub (lines 111-115 in 1807), and lines 121-126 were added. The effect of the changes indicates a perceptible trend towards clarification and conciseness.

The poet mentions that householders treasure curios brought from afar. He describes one such curio as the green turtle shell which the blind boy launches (1815: "Following the fancies in his head" (140). In the earliest (1807) and the final (1827 on) versions, the boy steps into the vessel, "-his thoughts all free/ As the light breezes that with glee/ Sang through the adventurer's hair" (148-150). The 1815-1820 text, direct and concise, contrasts with the pleasant and digressive simile of the first and final text.

"The Blind Highland Boy"

1807	Later
Strong is the current; but be mild,	(106)
Ye waves, and spare the helpless Child!	(107)
If ye in anger fret or chafe,	(108)
A Bee-hive would be ship as safe	(109)
As that in which he sails.	(110)
But say, what was it? Thought of fear!	(111) (106) But say what bears him? Ye have seen
Well may ye tremble when ye hear!	(112) (107) The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
-A Household Tub, like one of those	(113) (108) Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;
Which women use to wash their clothes,	(114) (109) Gifts which, for wonder or delight
This carried the blind boy.	(115) (110) Are brought in ships from far. (1815 on)

1807

Close to the water he had found 116
 This Vessel, push'd it from dry ground, 117
 Went into it; and, without dread, 118
 Following the fancies in his head, 119
 He paddled up and down, 120
 (1807)

Later

And one, the rarest,
 was a Shell
 Which he, poor Child,
 had studied well;
 The Shell of a green
 Turtle, thin
 And hollow; - you might
 sit therein,
 It was so wide and deep.
 (1815)

121 'Twas even the largest
 of its kind,

122 Large, thin, and Light
 as birch-tree rind;

123 So light a Shell that
 it would swim,

124 And gaily lift its
 fearless brim

125 Above the tossing waves
 (1815)

136 Our Highland Boy oft
 visited

137 The house which held
 this prize; and, led

138 By choice or chance,
 did thither come

139 One day, when no one was
 at home,

140 And found the door
 unbarred.

141 While there he sate, alone
 and blind,

142 That story flashed upon
 his mind; -

143 A bold thought roused
 him, and he took

144 The Shell from out its
 secret nook,

And bore it on his head
 (1827)

He launched his vessel, - and in pride 146
 Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side, 147

And with the happy
 burthen hied,
 And pushed it from Loch
 Leven's side, -

1807		Later
Stepped into it - his thoughts all free	148	Stepped into it; and without dread
As the light breezes that with glee	149	Following the fancies in his head,
Sang through the adventurer's hair. (1827)	150	He paddled up and down (1815-1820)
A while he stood upon his feet;	(121) (151)	A while he stood upon his feet;
He felt the motion - took his seat;	(122) (152)	He felt the motion - took his seat;
And dallied thus, till from the shore	(123) (153)	Still better pleased as more and more
The tide retreating more and more	(124) (154)	The tide retreated from the shore,
Had suck'd, and suck'd him in. -	(125) (155)	And sucked, and sucked him in. (1827 on)

"Fidelity," censured for its simplicity, has four 1815 line changes. The substitution of 1815 lines 6-7 for the original lines 7-8 removed the inversion of subject and predicate and results in smoother structure. Lines 34 and 40 are rendered more specific in the revised forms.

"Fidelity"

(1807)		Later
From which immediately leaps out	(7) (7)	And instantly a dog is seen,
A Dog, and yelping runs about.	(8) (8)	Glancing through that covert green (1815 on)
There, sometimes doth a leaping Fish	25	
Send through the Tarn a lonely chear;	26	
The crags repeat the Raven's croak,	27	
In symphony austere;	28	
Thither the Rainbow comes, the Cloud;	29	
And Mists that spread the flying shroud;	30	
And Sun-beams; and the sounding blast,	31	
That, if it could, would hurry past,	32	
But that enormous Barrier binds it fast.	33	

(1807)		Later
Not knowing what to think, a while	34	Not free from boding thoughts, a while (1815 on)
Towards the Dog, o'er rocks and stones,	36	O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog (1837 on)
Sad sight! The Shepherd with a sigh	40	The appalled Discovered with a sigh (1815 on)
But hear a wonder now, for sake	50	But hear a wonder, for whose sake
Of which this mournful Tale I tell!	51	This lamentable Tale I tell! (1815 on)

Four one-worded changes in "I Wandered lonely as a cloud" result in a more definite and concrete 1815 text. Originally, lines 4 and 6 contained the word "dancing," for which the poet substituted "golden" in 1815 (4). Having also deleted the original "Ten thousand," he compounds the second "dancing" with "fluttering" (6). The somewhat noisy implication of "laughing" was replaced by the more precise word, "jocund" modifying "company." A six line stanza, added in 1815, supplies a simile and enlarges the picture of the daffodils by imagery of space and motion.

"I Wandered lonely as a cloud"

1807		1815
A host, of <u>dancing</u> Daffodils;	4	A host, of golden daffodils;
<u>Along</u> the Lake, beneath the trees,	5	<u>Beside</u> the lake, beneath the trees,
Ten thousand dancing in the breeze.	6	<u>Fluttering and</u> dancing in the breeze.
(NOT INCLUDED UNTIL 1815)		

- (7) Continuous as the stars that shine
- (8) And twinkle on the milky-way.
- (9) They stretched in never-ending line.
- (10) Along the margin of a bay;
- (11) Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
- (12) Tossing their heads in sprightly dance

1807

1815

In such a laughing company: (10) (16) In such a jocund company:

The 1815 change in "Foresight," noted below, represents an improvement with the deletion of the original lines 20-21. The early lines 23-24 with their incantatory effect are replaced by the straightforward 1815 lines. After 1807, "Foresight" remained in the category of "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood."

"Foresight"

1807

Violets, do what they will,
Wither'd on the ground must lie;
Daisies will be daisies still;
Daisies they must live or die:
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom
Only spare the Strawberry-blossom!
(19-24)

1815

Violets, a barren kind,
Withered on the ground must lie;
Daisies leave no fruit behind
When the pretty flowers die
Pluck them, and another year
As many will be blowing here.

The following lines placed at the beginning of "The Sparrow's Nest" in 1815, provide a composition of place for the poem, listed under "Poems Founded on the Affections" in 1815. This classification was unchanged until 1843, when it received its final listing under "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood."

"The Sparrow's Nest"

1807

1815

Behold, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
(1-4)

In 1815, Thomas Noon Talfourd, a lawyer and first editor of the works of Charles Lamb, wrote a long essay entitled, "An Attempt to Estimate the Poetical Talent of the Present Age, including a Sketch of the History of Poetry and Characters of Southey, Crabbe, Scott, Moore, Lord Byron, Campbell, Lamb, Coleridge and Wordsworth." This appeared in the Pamphleteer, a periodical circulated in both Houses of Parliament. Devoting the longest section, slightly over five pages (462-467), to Wordsworth, Talfourd writes, "He loves the bushes, and blades of grass, the humble daisies, and small celandines, because they have all given the first spring to a train of holy contemplation reaching far - far beyond the visible diurnal sphere."³⁴

Remarking the tendency of critics to underrate contemporary genius, Talfourd lists as three underlying causes for the unpopularity of Wordsworth his apparent indifference to praise, his use of weak expressions for conveying great thoughts, and the narrowness of his range. When he was not simply applauding but actually criticizing, Talfourd was perceptive. Wordsworth held him in esteem similar to that in which he held Barron Field. To some degree, the critical processes of legal minds, like those of Talfourd and Field, appealed to the poet, who as a result of their criticism undertook word, phrase, and line revisions with interest and enthusiasm. In his expressions, Wordsworth strove to convey thought with power and precision. The orderly approach to ideas and expression, which Talfourd and Field manifested, helped to render Wordsworth's task of revision somewhat smoother and more logical.

³⁴ The Pamphleteer, V (1815), 414-471. , quoted in Critical and Miscellaneous Writings of Thomas Noon Talfourd (New York, 1854) 3rd American edition.

In March, 1820, Talfourd, writing on "Living Authors," takes issue with critics who attacked Wordsworth in The Edinburgh Review. The critic quotes from "My heart leaps up," "To the Small Celandine," and "The Sailor's Mother." Having earlier indicated Wordsworth's faults, as critics saw them, Talfourd now lists ways in which "bare representation of common life may be made pleasant in words of a poetical cast." As the poet, says Talfourd, should be completely absorbed in his composition, so should the reader be intent upon the authenticity of the description. On the next level, the reader must also be virtually immersed in the ideas and emotions which the poet conveys. Finally, the pleasantness which the reader experiences leads to satisfaction. Talfourd regrets that, at present, Wordsworth seems to offset his preference for simple things by condemning heroic elements. According to the critic, the poet ought to discount whatever trivia attach either to the simple or to the heroic.³⁵

Talfourd's "On the Genius and Writings of Wordsworth," November and December, 1820, opens with lines from the 1807 sonnet, "Personal Talk," and also quotes approvingly from "Fidelity" and "Thoughts of a Briton," and to Talfourd, the Immortality "Ode" is a poem inspired by philosophy.³⁶ In 1838, writing to Moxon, Wordsworth alludes to Talfourd as "an interesting man-for talents, Genius, and energy of mind."³⁷ In his three major

³⁵ The London Magazine, III (March 1820), "Living Authors," 275-285.

³⁶ The New Monthly Magazine, XIV, no.82, November 1, 1820, 498-506: 502. 506: December 1, 1820, no. 83, 648-655.

³⁷ LY, II, #1265, 943 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, May 21, 1838).

commentaries on Wordsworth, in 1815, and early and late 1820, Talfourd contributes constructively to criticism of the poet's work, not so much by expressing original opinions as by organizing and arguing a case for the poet in a positive, rational, orderly manner.

Although he denied first-hand knowledge of periodical reviews, Wordsworth was certainly informed about criticism of his poetry. He consistently charged reviews and reviewers with ill-will, if not with actual malice.

Introducing Thomas DeQuincy to Daniel Stuart, editor of The Courier, Wordsworth mentions DeQuincey's projected refutation of "the stupidities, the ignorance, and the dishonesties of The Edinburgh Review; and principally as it relates to myself, whom perhaps you know, the Editor has long honoured with his abuse."³⁸ Actually the DeQuincey letter never materialized. Shortly afterwards, Wordsworth described Jeffrey as "a depraved Coxcomb; the greatest Dunce, I believe, in this Island, and assuredly the Man who takes most pains to prove himself so."³⁹ Again the poet states that in the few cases when favorable reviews of his work were sent to the periodicals, these were either rejected or edited beyond recognition.⁴⁰

³⁸ MY, II, #516, 630 (W.W. to Daniel Stuart, [early 1815]).

³⁹ Ibid., II, #517, 633 (W.W. to R.P. Gillies, Feb. 14 1815).

⁴⁰ Ibid., II, #548, 716 (W.W. to C.W. March 12th 1816).

An article on "Modern Poets, Mr. Southey" in The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Politics, etc. for the year 1817, states somewhat facetiously that for a putative poetical monument to the memory of Waterloo, Wordsworth and Coleridge could "describe the unsophisticated death of an aide-de-camp's horse."⁴¹ In the issue following, a letter to the editor defending Coleridge, "all energy and fire", protests linking him with Wordsworth, "all imbecility and ice."⁴² A notice appearing the next week and signed "J.E." argues that the previous statement presents a false image of Wordsworth's genius.⁴³ A later summation accuses contemporary poetry of falling prey to "that most disgusting of all pedantries - affected simplicity."⁴⁴

The first contributions of John Gibson Lockhart to Blackwood's were the 1817 articles on the Cockney poets and on the recently published Biographia Literaria.⁴⁵ Wordsworth seems to escape censure in the article on the Cockneys only by default in statements like, "How such an indelicate writer as Mr. Hunt can pretend to be an admirer of Mr. Wordsworth, is to us a thing altogether inexplicable."⁴⁶ Protesting

⁴¹ The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Politics, etc. for the year 1817, XXIV (Saturday, April 26, 1817), 211.

⁴² The Literary Gazette, XV (May 3, 1817), 227.

⁴³ Ibid., XVII (May 17, 1817), 257.

⁴⁴ Ibid., XXVI (July 19, 1817), 40.

⁴⁵ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, II (October 1817), "On the Cockney School of Poetry, No. 1", 38-41; (November 1817); "On the Cockney School of Poetry, No. 2", 194-201; "Observations On Coleridge's Biographia Literaria", 318.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 40.

to Wrangham that he found the personal tone of the Blackwood articles thoroughly distasteful, Wordsworth specifically takes exception to the remarks about Coleridge.⁴⁷

Thomas Love Peacock, in his essay, "The Four Ages of Poetry," terms the phrase, "return to nature," a misnomer. According to Peacock, Wordsworth regarded by some of his contemporaries an outstanding exponent of the "return to nature" movement, cannot write nature description without resorting to moods of his own mind. Later in this essay, Peacock refers to Wordsworth as "a morbid dreamer."⁴⁸

After 1820, a discernible shift in critical emphasis may be observed in the periodical criticism of Wordsworth. Ridicule, scorn, and contempt were gradually replaced by attempts at time-tested appraisal, objective evaluation, and fair appreciation. Some critics now began to consider the poems in philosophical contexts.

Wordsworth acknowledged receipt of The Leeds Intelligencer, November, 1824, sent him by Alaric Watts and containing adverse criticism of two 1807 poems, "The Small Celandine" and the "Daffodils." Countering such criticism, Wordsworth writes, "Some will say, 'Did you ever know a poet who would agree with his critic when he was finding fault, especially if on the whole he was inclined to praise?' I will ask, 'Did you ever

⁴⁷ MY, II, #620, 843 (W.W. to Francis Wrangham, February 19th, 1819).

⁴⁸ Thomas Love Peacock, Four Ages of Poetry, ed. Herbert Francis Brett Brett-Smith. (Boston, 1921) p. 17.

know a critic who suspected it to be possible that he himself might be in the wrong?' In other words, who did not regard his own impressions as the test of excellence?"⁴⁹

Both versions of Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversations between Southey and Porson appeared first in periodicals, The London Magazine (1823) and Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1832). Commenting on critics and criticism in the first version of Imaginary Conversations, Porson remarks, "Adverse as I have declared myself to the style and manner of Wordsworth, I never thought that all his reviewers put together could compose any thing equal to the worst paragraph in his volumes."⁵⁰ The dialogists concur in their disapproval of critics; whereupon, Porson tries to persuade Southey to agree that in the poetry of Wordsworth, there is "occasionally, a little trash."⁵¹ However, Southey defends his friend; and Porson concedes that there are no scales with which to measure "new" poetry like Wordsworth's.⁵² Criticizing Wordsworth's verbosity, Porson tells Southey, "...Good men may utter whatever comes uppermost, good poets may not."⁵³ In the words of Porson, Landor graphically describes what many of Wordsworth's critics considered

⁴⁹ LY, I, #722, 159 (W.W. to Alaric Watts, November 16, 1824).

⁵⁰ Walter Savage Landor, Imaginary Conversations, with bibliographical and explanatory notes by Charles G. Crump, 6 vols., (London, 1891) III - subsequent references will be made to this edition and will hereafter be cited as Imaginary Conversations.

⁵¹ Ibid., 192.

⁵² Ibid., 198.

⁵³ Ibid., 199.

the poet's besetting fault, his often labored and sometimes indiscriminate preference for the lowly. "Wordsworth goes out of his way to be attacked: he picks up a piece of dirt, throws it on the carpet in the midst of the company, and cries, This is a better man than any of you."⁵⁴

In exception to this, a typical Southey reply to Porson is: "You admire simplicity in Euripides; you censure it in Wordsworth; believe me, sir, it arises in neither from penury of thought -- which seldom has produced it -- but from the strength of temperance, and at the suggestion of principle."⁵⁵ Contrasting the patience of Southey with the impatience of Wordsworth, Porson affects to be amused at Wordsworth's resentment of criticism.⁵⁶

During the course of the second conversation between Porson and Southey, Landor alludes specifically to six of Wordsworth's 1807 poems: "Great men have been among us," "To a Skylark," "Resolution and Independence," "Gipsies," "The Blind Highland Boy," and "To the Small Celandine" ("Pleasures"). Quoting the first four lines of "Great men," Porson states that compared to these, ". . . tripe au naturel is a dainty."⁵⁷ Then, explicating each line of the sonnet, the critic indicates what he considers illogical ideas and imprecise expressions.

⁵⁴ Imaginary Conversations, III, 200.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 200.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 222.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 226.

For example, of line 11: "Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change," Landor questions, "How could the change be unceasing if the emptiness was perpetual?"⁵⁸ Porson reports finding "in these two small volumes, more than seventy spots of sterility or quagmire." Quoting the last two lines of "To a Skylark," he asks, "In what other author do you find such trash?" He also challenges Southey to find in the work of the worst poet anything to equal line 126 of "Resolution and Independence."⁵⁹

Accusing Wordsworth of sometimes lacking sympathy, Porson cites lines 19-22 of "Gipsies" as a case in point. Porson argues against Southey's championship of Wordsworth, and terms "philanthropy of poets . . . a matter of moonshine."⁶⁰ In contrasting the allusions made by the ancients with the simple references which Wordsworth makes, Porson mentions the wash-tub of "The Blind Highland Boy" and ridicules each line of "To the Small Celandine" ("Pleasures"). Scathingly he concludes, "Really, is there any girl of fourteen whose poetry, being like this, the fondest mother would lay before her most intimate friends?"⁶¹ The critic then charges Wordsworth with employing only the pronoun "I" throughout his poetry.⁶² Wordsworth, in Porson's judgment, owes much to the support of Southey, who maintains that the "beauties of Wordsworth "

⁵⁸ Imaginary Conversations, III, 229.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 234.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 234-235.

⁶¹ Ibid., 235.

⁶² Ibid., 240.

are found "like primroses, amid dry thistles, rank grass, and withered leaves."⁸³

To this specific criticism of the 1807 poems, Wordsworth made no direct response. Some months after the publication of the second Southey-Porson conversation, Wordsworth wrote to William Rowan Hamilton of Landor, "His character may be given in two or three words: a madman, a bad-man, yet a man of genius, as many a madman is."⁸⁴

Among many miscellaneous critical essays, one, "On the Genius and Poetry of Wordsworth," regards the outstanding characteristics of the poet as combining the simplicity of the child, of the man, and of the philosopher.⁸⁵

The poet reaffirmed his awareness of the vagaries of periodical criticism in a letter to Henry Crabb Robinson. "My own Poems," he says, "have been thirty years struggling uphill, and are yet crossed in their way by [] see an instance in the last Quarterly, the article Sotheby's Georgics-...."⁸⁶

⁸³ Imaginary Conversations, III, 255.

⁸⁴ LY, III, #1484, 1164 (W.W. to William Rowan Hamilton, April 1843).

⁸⁵ The Literary Magnet, III (1825), 67-72.

⁸⁶ LY, I, #841, 337 (W.W. to Henry Crabb Robinson, Dec. 18, 1828).

A minor poet, Chauncey Hare Townshend, was the author of four unsigned articles about the poet in Blackwood's in September, October, November, and December in 1829.⁶⁷ To Quillinan, early in 1830, Wordsworth complained of these attacks which he regards as particularly reprehensible because the critic, a friend of Southey, has been a house guest of the Wordsworths. The poet concludes his remarks in a sentence which seems to summarize his opinions about all periodicals: "Who that ever felt a line of my poetry would trouble himself to crush a miserable maggot crawled out of the dead carcass of the Edinburgh review."⁶⁸

Somewhat ambiguously referring to criticism in The Edinburgh Review, the poet wrote of Rogers's poetry the year after the Townshend attack, "Fools! I believe that yours have suffered in the common blight (if the flourishing of a Poet's Bays can fairly be measured by the sale of his Books or the buzz that attends his name at any given time),-..."⁶⁹

Writing of "Literary Characters," a contributor to Fraser's Magazine approvingly quotes a stanza (33-36) from the 1807 poem, "The Power of Music." Misinterpreting line 37, "There's a Cripple who leans on his Crutch; like a tower," the reviewer says, "It would be a great curiosity to see a cripple leaning on a crutch like a tower." Actually,

⁶⁷ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XXVI (Sept-Dec., 1829), 453-63; 593-609; 774-881; 894-910.

⁶⁸ LY, I, #904, 448 (W.W. to Edward Quillinan, 4th Feb. 1830).

⁶⁹ Ibid., #924, 484 (W.W. to Samuel Rogers, June 5th 1830).

the line must be read in relation to the one following it: "...like a tower/ That long has lean'd forward, leans hour after hour!-" (37-38). This writer considers Wordsworth great in some ways, small in others. Smaller still, he says, are the poet's "indiscriminating and raving admirers."⁷⁰

An unknown contemporary, Nicholas Mitchell, sharply criticized Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey in Poets of the Age. Quillinan defended Wordsworth, who wrote, "I ought to thank you for flogging Mr. Mitchell so openly. Who is he?"⁷¹

Among the well-known reviewers, Thomas Carlyle commented late in 1832 on Wordsworth's Poetical Works. Referring to an 1807 poem, "Personal Talk," Carlyle compares Wordsworth, a poet of intellect, speaking from knowledge, with Burns, a poet of feeling, speaking from sensation.⁷² In the following years, another of Wordsworth's younger and eminent contemporaries, John Stuart Mill, published an article entitled, "The Two Kinds of Poetry," in The Monthly Repository, (October, 1833). Here, Mill contrasts Wordsworth and Shelley, stating perceptively of the older poet, ". . . his poetry seems one thing, himself another."⁷³

⁷⁰ Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country, III (June 1831), 557, 561.

⁷¹ LY, II, #1010, 618 (W.W. to Edward Quillinan, April 22, 1832).

⁷² Fraser's Magazine, VI (November 1832), 618.

⁷³ This distinction is discussed in M.H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, (New York, 1958), pp. 21-26.

And within a decade, Wordsworth admitted to another young critic, Aubrey de Vere, that he had mistakenly regarded de Vere as author of a disparaging article in The Quarterly. Although he has not nor will he ever read The Quarterly, the poet states, " . . . the only disparaging notices which I have ever cared the least for, unfortunately have ever come from persons with whom I have lived in close intimacy. And this occurred in several remarkable instances."⁷⁴ Whether these notices concerned Wordsworth more because of their nature or their source cannot be determined. Nevertheless, in this revealing statement, the poet points up a significant problem about his response to criticism.

When the 1807 poems were published, Wordsworth feared adverse criticism. This, he knew, could prejudice prospective readers against the poems and impair the sale of the work. According to a modern student of nineteenth century periodical criticism, " . . . the critical reception of this work is one of the most disgraceful in the annals of reviewing."⁷⁵ Since the poet recognized the spirit of animus which so frequently characterized this criticism, he could seldom either respect or accept the stated opinions of the reviewers. Toward early criticism of his Poems in Two Volumes, Wordsworth often responded with contempt or irritation.

⁷⁴ LY, III, #1464A, 1385-6 (W.W. to Aubrey de Vere, Nov.16, 1842).

⁷⁵ John Olin Hayden, "Romantic Criticism in British Periodicals, 1802-1824," Unpublished doctoral dissertation (New York, 1965), p.131.

A few perceptible changes, noted above (see pp. 162-66) appear in the text of the 1807 poems in the 1815 collection. Since Biographia Literaria, with its specific criticism, did not appear until 1817, it seems reasonable to assume that some 1815 revisions were effected by periodical criticism. The poet testified that he removed "Alice Fell" from his works after 1815 precisely because of the ridicule of critics.⁷⁶

Nineteenth century contemporaries of Wordsworth generally recognized the lack of objectivity among periodical critics. An essayist in Blackwoods¹ (1818) stated, ". . . the English Reviewer does not much care what the merit of the author is. The author is a mere puppet in the hands of the critic."⁷⁷

Even in the forties, when criticism of his work was more favorable than it had been for years previous, Wordsworth expressed his dislike and mistrust of the periodicals.

In a series of letters to his publisher, Edward Moxon, the poet expresses his sentiments about reviews and reviewing. Having directed Moxon to admit of no exception in the matter of preventing copies of his work from being sent to the periodicals, the poet repeats this injunction.⁷⁸ Apparently, Moxon remonstrated with the poet on this

⁷⁶ PW, I, 350.

⁷⁷ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, II (March 1818), "On the Periodical Criticism of England," 671.

⁷⁸ LY, III, #1434, 1117-1118 and #1435, 1118 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, March 23 and March 27, 1842).

matter, because in the following week, Wordsworth writes again to the publisher. Mentioning that his neighbor, Frederick William Faber, sent no copy of his recently published work to the periodicals, Wordsworth writes, "I cannot tolerate the idea of courting the favour (or seeming to do so) of any critical tribunal in this country, the House of Commons not excepted. . . ." ⁷⁹

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, December 1842, carried Walter Savage Landor's article criticizing Wordsworth. In his measured response, the poet simply stated that he neither could nor would spend his eyesight reading periodical literature. ⁸⁰ Although four months later Edward Quillinan replied to Landor's attack, the poet then stated that he did not approve of condescending to reply. ⁸¹ Wordsworth writes about a projected American review of his poems that he never reads reviews and adds that if indicated fault be just, "I am too old to mend, and praise I care nothing about." ⁸² At the close of January, 1845, the poet again laments to Moxon that publishers are victims of periodicals. ⁸³

⁷⁹ LY, III, #1438, 1121 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, April 3, 1842).

⁸⁰ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, III (December 1842), 687-715.

⁸¹ LY, III, #1484, 1164 (W.W. to William Rowan Hamilton, April 1843).

⁸² Ibid., #1558, 1239 (W.W. to Samuel Crompton, Jan. 3rd 1845).

⁸³ Ibid., #1560, 1242-1243 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, 23rd Jan. 1845).

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the general tone of contemporary periodical reviews was not usually distinguished by objectivity, literary taste, or journalistic decorum. Technically, the anonymous reviewers were unknown to the public. However, many were recognizable by their critical principles or prejudices, their style, and their positions on respective editorial staffs. Jeffrey, Lockhart, Gifford, for example could usually be identified by the prominent placing of their articles and by the perceptiveness apparent in their content.

Extremely sensitive to the opinions of his family and friends, Wordsworth adopted toward criticism from others a policy as apparently valid as it was actually unsound. He carefully weighed the critical opinions of his intimates; he responded painstakingly to the queries of correspondents; and he argued reasonably, if sometimes vigorously, with those who would not or did not comprehend his meaning and style. Nevertheless, he met with indifference or with occasional irritation the objections, ridicule, and abuse as well as the constructive comments of periodical reviewers, whose opinions so powerfully influenced the reading public.

Of the fairly well-known periodicals publishing reviews and critiques of Wordsworth's Poems in Two Volumes, two qualify as usually favoring the poet. In general, The British Critic and The New Monthly Magazine contained articles consistently expressing appreciation of the poet and his work. Somewhat measured in their judgments were The

British Review, Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country, The Literary Magnet and The London Magazine. Periodicals which usually adopted a censorious tone against Wordsworth's choice of subjects and his style were Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, The Edinburgh Review, The Eclectic Review, The Literary Gazette, The Poetical Register, and The Satirist or Monthly Meteor; often the critics who wrote for these journals indulged in personal ridicule.

Wordsworth was far more sensitive to the opinions and judgments of his intimates than he was to those of strangers, even when the strangers were professional literary men. His response to the criticism of his 1807 poems in periodicals was generally as negligible as his attitude was usually negative to these journals.

Chapter VI

Wordsworth's Response to Criticism in Parody

A poet of Wordsworth's personality, character, and reputation is inevitably the target for ridicule; and Wordsworth was ridiculed publicly and privately. Byron subtly parodies Wordsworth in "Churchill's Grave" (1816) with an allusion to his penury.¹ Years later, Edward Fitzgerald referred to the poet as "Old Daddy Wordsworth," an epithet vaguely reminiscent of "Nobodaddy," a name coined by William Blake in 1793.²

Essentially imitative, parody extends beyond the ridicule of imitation and allusion. Adapting methods used in the material imitated, the parodist frequently disparages the original subject matter, often applies the imitated style to less significant subjects, and sometimes does both. By his seemingly ambivalent attitude toward the original material, the parodist compliments the work by imitation, at the same time detracting from it by understatement. Of parody as a

¹ Benjamin Robert Haydon, the painter, requested a money loan of Wordsworth who refused it on the ground that he never lent what he could not conveniently spare. The persona in Byron's poem gives to a sexton money which, he announces, he "could spare but inconveniently" (36-36).

² Letter of Edward Fitzgerald, ed. J. M. Cohen (London, 1960) (To C. E. Norton, Feb. 7/76, p. 205; and To Frederick Tennyson, August 15/50, p. 75).

form of criticism, Coleridge wrote in his early notes, "Parodies on Poems are a Ridicule, on old ones a Compliment."³

Critics among Wordsworth's contemporaries took exception to the poet's choice of subject matter and his use of certain stylistic devices. These his parodists also imitated. As early as 1803, Wordsworth told Walter Scott that "The Idiot Boy" was parodied by "a somebody Bayley Esqr.,"⁴ whom the poet later mentioned to De Quincey.

Especially adaptable to parody among Wordsworth's 1807 poems are the subject matter suggested by a naive persona who states his preference for and kinship with birds, flowers, and insects -- and stylistic elements like assonance, repetitive coupling, rhetorical questions, alliteration, hyphenated expressions, and parenthetical interpolation. (See Appendices I and II, pp.284-300).

Reactions, responses, and refutations to criticism in parody occur in Wordsworth's conversations and correspondence, sometimes inaccurately and incompletely recorded. His poetic attitude to parody takes the form of textual revision or retention. The following sampling

³
CN, I, #1231 21.244, August-September, 1802. In CN, I, #463, 5.5, September-November 1799, a notation reads, "Of new Poems Parodies a ridicule, but compliments to old Poems."

⁴
EY, #194, p.413 (W.W. to Walter Scott, October 16th, 1803);
EY, #208, p.255 (W.W. to Thomas DeQuincey, March 6th 1804).

of parody, ranging over various types and through five decades, provides a close examination of criticism and response.

Although there are numerous extant parodies of his poetry, Wordsworth responded positively and specifically to The Simpliciad (1808). On several occasions, the poet explained textual revisions and retentions according to the implicit criticism in this parody. Written in 368 pentameter lines, on fifty-one pages of an anonymously published quarto volume, The Simpliciad parodies a few poems from Lyrical Ballads and many pieces from Poems in Two Volumes. Attributed, years later, to Richard Mant, Bishop of Connor and Down, this parody takes the form of a dialogue between P (Poet) and F (Friend).⁵ Dedicating the work "To Messrs. W--ll--m W-rds-wrth, R-b-rt S--th-y, and S.T.C-l-r-dg-," the parodist states, ". . . I do truly affirm my belief, that in attempting to excite ridicule, I have employed no unfair exaggeration; that the school is incapable of caricature; and that, if a smile be raised by my illustrations, it will be heightened by a perusal of the originals whence they are drawn."⁶ These remarks conclude with the parodist's personal assessment of the Lake poets, "I acknowledge and admire your talents: but I lament the degradation of your genius, and deprecate the propagation of your perverted taste."⁷

⁵ The Simpliciad; A Satirico-Didactic Poem Containing Hints for the Scholars of the New School, suggested by Horace's Art of Poetry, and Improved by a Contemplation of the Works of the First Masters. (London, 1808) v,vi.-Hereafter cited as The Simpliciad.

⁶ The Simpliciad, v.

⁷ Ibid, vi.

On each page of The Simpliciad, a list of "authorities" refers to the original lines of Wordsworth which occasioned the parodies. Sometimes, Latin lines from Horace are cited. On forty occasions, The Simpliciad alludes to twenty-seven titles among the 115 Poems in Two Volumes.

The columns below list the 1807 lines and their parodied forms in The Simpliciad. Indications of Wordsworth's response to the criticism implied in the parody follow the column listings. Volume and page listings in 1807, in Poetical Works, and in The Simpliciad, are also listed.

"Yes, full surely . . . " (1807, p.297) (II, 265)		<u>The Simpliciad</u> (p.11)	
This the Cuckoo cannot tell;	(6)	Echo, whose birth the cuckoo cannot tell,	(88)
.....		Tho' that 'tis sound the bird must know	
As the Bird must know full well;	(8)	full well;	(89)

The 1807 stanza above (lines 4-8) was deleted in 1815 and in subsequent editions. Ernest deSelincourt notes that Wordsworth may have omitted the stanza as a result of criticism by Jeffrey and that in The Simpliciad.⁸

⁸
PW, II, 518

"The Sparrow's Nest" (1807, p. 227)
(I, 227)

The Simpliciad
(P. 13)

Look, five blue eggs are
gleaming there! (1)
Few visions have I seen
more fair, (2)
Nor many prospects of
delight (3)
More pleasing than that
simple sight! (4)

Poets, who fix their
visionary sight (94)
On Sparrow's eggs in
prospect of delight, (95)

In 1815, Wordsworth changed lines 1-4 to:

Behold, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight

Revising the above lines, Wordsworth qualifies "sight" as "chance-discovered," and compares it to a "vision of delight." Ernest deSelincourt makes no mention of The Simpliciad in his notes to "The Sparrow's Nest."

"Among all lovely things"
(II, 466) (1807, p. 74)

The Simpliciad
(P. 13)

I gave a fervent welcome to the
sight, (7)
.....
And left the Glow-worm, blessing
it by name, (15)
Laid safely by itself, beneath
a Tree. (16)

With fervent welcome greet
the glow-worm's flame, (96)
Put it to bed and bless it
by its name; (97)

After 1807 Wordsworth never reprinted "Among all lovely things." Commenting on ridicule in The Simpliciad, deSelincourt notes, "W. may have dropped it from his collected editions because he was peculiarly sensitive to ridicule directed against a poem of which the setting and feeling are so intimately personal."⁹

"Louisa" (1807, p.15)
(II,28)

The Simpliciad
(P.14)

To hunt the waterfalls,	(24)	Hunt waterfalls, that	
		gallop down the hills:	(98)

Despite the parodistic allusion to the phrase, "hunt waterfalls," the expression was retained.

"I wandered lonely..."
(II, 216) (1807, p.223)

The Simpliciad
(P.14)

A host of dancing Daffodils;	(4)	And dance with dancing	
.....		laughing daffodils;	(99)
In such a laughing company:	(10)		
.....			
And dances with the Daffodils	(18)		

From 1815 on, the poet substituted "golden" and "jocund" respectively for the parodied terms, "dancing, laughing." Although neither Wordsworth nor deSelincourt mentions any connection between the parody and the revision, such a connection seems probable.

⁹
PW, II, 532.

"The Redbreast and the Butterfly"
(II, 149) (1807, p. 24)

The Simpliciad
(P. 15)

All men who know thee call their
Brother (10)

And flutter with half-
brother butterfly; (105)

A brother he seems of thine own:
(39)

Line 10 (above) was unchanged; and line 39, which deSelincourt mentions
as being parodied, was deleted after 1807.¹⁰

"To the Same Flower" (1807, p. 271)
("Bright flower" IV, 67)

The Simpliciad
(P. 17)

Thy function apostolical (23)
.....
In peace fulfilling. (24)

Of apostolic daisies learn
to think, (108)

The poet retained lines 23-24 above, justifying the use of "apostolical,"
for etymological reasons: "I have been censured for the last line but
one - 'thy function apostolical' - as being little less than profane.
How could it be thought so?"¹¹

"To the Daisy" ("In youth")
(II, 135) (1807, p. 9)

The Simpliciad
(P. 17)

Without some feeling, more or less, (63)
Of true devotion,

Draughts from their urns of
true devotion drink: (109)

With the deletion of the two 1807 lines above, Wordsworth removed the
phrase parodied in The Simpliciad.

¹⁰ PW, II, 492.

¹¹ Ibid., IV, 417.

"Tribute to the Memory of the Same Dog"
(Iv, 79) (1807, p.276)

The Simpliciad
(P. 18)

I pray'd for thee, and that thy
end were past; (13)

Pray for their Spaniels;...
(111)

In 1837, the poet changed the offending "pray'd" to "griev'd."

"To the Spade of a Friend"
(IV, 75) (1807, p.299)

The Simpliciad
(P. 18)

Thee a surviving soul shall
consecrate, (28)

...consecrate their
spades (111)

For the parodied line above, Wordsworth substituted, in 1837, "No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate." Ernest deSelincourt comments that the changes in this line and in line 13 in "Tribute to the Memory of the Same Dog" may have been effected by the parodist's line, "Pray for their Spaniels, consecrate their spades."¹²

"Alice Fell" (1807, p.92)
(I, 232)

The Simpliciad
(P. 19)

...her grief grew strong; (47)
.....
And all was for her tatter'd
Cloak (48)

Whine over tatter'd
cloaks... (112)

Despite an allusion to this phrase in The Simpliciad, Wordsworth retained the "tatter'd cloak."

¹²
PW, IV, 417.

"Resolution and Independence"
(II, 235) (1807, p.97)

The Simpliciad
(P. 19)

"God," said I, "be my held and
stay secure; (146)
I'll think of the Leech-
gatherer on the lonely
moor." (147)

And moralize with gatherers
of leeches (113)

The poet neither revised the above lines nor modified the didactic tone
of the poem.

"The Redbreast and the Butterfly"
(II, 149) (1807, p.24)

The Simpliciad
(pp. 21-22)

The Bird, whom by some name or
other (9)
All men who know thee call their
Brother, (10)
.....
.....
Could Father Adam open his eyes (12)
And see this sight beneath
the skies, (13)
.....
He'd wish to close them again, (14)

They cannot sing how by
some name or other, (134)
All men who know him call
Cock Robin brother, (135)
Then bid old Father Adam
ope his eyes, (136)
And shudd'ring see this
sight beneath the
skies, (137)
How Redbreasts hunt and feed
on Butterflies (138)

"To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies")
(II, 142) (1807, p.30)

The Simpliciad
(P. 23)

I will sing, as doth behove (63)
Hymns in praise of what I love! (64)

Tis not for them to hymn
the pring-day praises (141)

"To the Same Flower" ("Pleasures")
(II, 144) (1807, p.35)

The Simpliciad
(P. 23)

While the patient Primrose sits (35)

Of patient primroses and
dauntless daises; (142)

In the poems cited above, none of the quoted lines was changed in subse-
quent editions.

"To the Daisy" ("In youth")
(II, 135) (1807, p.9)

The Simpliciad
(P. 23)

Thou art not daunted, (20) Of patient primroses and
dauntless daisies; (142)

In 1835, the poet changed line 20 above to a slightly less direct
version, "Yet nothing daunted."

"To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies")
(II, 142) (1807, p.30)

The Simpliciad
(P. 24)

Pansies, Lillies, Kingcups, Daisies,
..... (1) Blessings on celandines,
Let them live upon their praises; on king-cups curses; (144)
(2)

"To the Same Flower" ("Pleasures")
(II, 144) (1807, p.35)

The Simpliciad
(P. 25)

Blithe of heart, from week to week (33) While others blithe of
..... heart from week to week (147)
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek; More arch and wily play (148)
(34) at hide-and-seek;

"To the Cuckoo" ("O blithe
newcomer")
(II, 207) (1807, p.231)

The Simpliciad
(P. 25)

No Bird; but an invisible (15) To bless mysterious
Thing, (16) cuckoos;... (149)
A voice, a mystery. (16)
O blessed Bird!... (29)

Despite the reference in The Simpliciad, Wordsworth retained the original-
ly quoted lines in the above poems.

"The Green Linnet"
(II, 139) (1807, p.253)

The Simpliciad
(P. 25)

And then a Bird will be the
toy (7)
That doth my fancy tether. (8)

...; and to sing, (149)
With fancy tether'd to
a Linnet's wing, (150)

The first stanza (1-8) of "The Green Linnet," concluding with the above lines, was deleted in 1815. Ernest deSelincourt attributes this alteration, in part, to the ridicule in The Simpliciad.¹³

"Song at the Feast of
Brougham Castle"
(II, 139) (1807, p.302)

The Simpliciad
(P. 27)

High in the breathless Hall
the Minstrel sate, (1)
And Emont's murmur mingled with
the Song.- (2)
The words of ancient time I
thus translate, (3)
A festal Strain that hath been
silent long:- (4)

And such when Wordsworth (173)
bade the Minstrel raise
His festal strain to "Good
Lord Clifford's" praise (174)

Wordsworth retained the above lines.

In his reference (p. 27, l. 178) "To poets musing in their fitful mood" the parodist may allude to Wordsworth's thirteen 1807 poems grouped under "Moods of My Own Mind," the first of which is "To A Butterfly" ("Stay near me").

¹³
PW, II, 491.

"The Sparrow's Nest"
(I, 227) (1807, p. 227)

Look, five blue eggs are
gleaming there!
.....

The Simpliciad
(P. 27)

See! with blue sparrow's
eggs each hedge is
gleaming; (180)

Having deleted the above line (1) in 1815, Wordsworth then changed line 4 (1815) to "Gleamed like a vision of delight." By introducing "like" the poet effects verisimilitude in the line.

"The Green Linnet"
(II, 139) (1807, p. 253)

Behold him perch'd in
ecstasies, (27)

The Simpliciad
(P. 27)

Ecstatic birds, whose thoughts
no bard can measure; (181)
Blossoms that breathe, and
twigs that pant with
pleasure. (182)

Despite the parodist's ridicule of the practice of attributing human characteristics to birds and flowers, Wordsworth retained the above line.

"Beggars"
(II, 222) (1807, p. 85)

"Sweet Boys, you're telling me
a lie;" (38)

The Simpliciad
(P. 31)

Beggars, on lies and im-
pudence who thrive, (197)

In this line, Wordsworth substituted "Hush" for "Sweet" in 1845.

"The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"
(II, 170) (1807, p. 58)

The Simpliciad
(P. 31)

Here, for neither Babe or me, (43)
Other Play-mate can I see. (44)

Play with your cat, ... (200)

This poem remained virtually unchanged.

"To the Spade of a Friend"
(IV, 75) (1807, p.299)

The Simpliciad
(P. 31)

...apostrophize your
spade: (200)

Wordsworth used sentimental allusions throughout this poem. To the five apostrophes appearing in these lines in 1807, the poet added another, in 1837, with the revision of line 26 to: "The, his loved servant, his inspiring mate!" Wordsworth disregarded the implicit criticism in The Simpliciad concerning his direct address to the spade.

"Foresight" (1807, p.289)
(I, 227)

The Simpliciad
(P. 35)

Strawberry-blossoms, one and all, (3)

Yon children, 'mid the
strawberries at play; (243)

Wordsworth retained the above line.

"Beggars" (1807, p. 85)
(II, 222)

The Simpliciad
(P. 35)

Before me begging did she stand, (13)
Pouring out sorrows like a sea; (14)

Yon lieing gipsey with
her sea of tears; (245)

The poet deleted the hyperbolic "sea" of tears in 1820.

"The Small Celandine" ("There is...")
(IV, 244) (1807, p.221)

The Simpliciad
(P. 38)

When hailstones have been falling
swarm on swarm, (5)

A hailstone swarm;... (260)

"Elegiac Stanzas" (1807, p.315)
(IV, 258)

The Simpliciad

The light'ning, the fierce wind,
and trampling waves. (52)

...; the rivers trample
to the deep, (263)

"Ode" (1807, p.321)
(IV, 279)

The Simpliciad
(pp.38-9)

The Cataracts blow their trumpets
from the steep, (25)

The cataracts blow their
trumpets from the
steep;, (264)

.....
I hear the Echoes through the
mountains throng, (27)

Awaken'd echoes through
the mountains throng,
(265)

"Personal Talk" (1807, p.293)
(IV, 73)

The Simpliciad
(P. 39)

Or kettle, whispering it's faint
undersong (14)

And kettles whisper their
faint undersong. (266)

Despite the close similarity between original and parodied forms,

Wordsworth retained the 1807 lines in the four poems above.

"The Green Linnet" (1807, p.253)
(II, 139)

The Simpliciad
(P. 40)

When in a moment forth he teems (35)
His little song in gushes: (36)

Yours be the linnet's note,
teem'd forth in gushes (281)

In 1845, Wordsworth substituted "Pours" for "teems".¹⁴

¹⁴
PW, II, 491.

"To a Sky-Lark" (1807, p. 88)
(II, 141)

The Simpliciad
(P. 40)

Drunken Lark!...	(20)	And yours the drunken
.....		lark's, as up he rushes;
		(282)

The poet retained the epithets.

"O Nightingale!" (1807, p.216)
(II, 141)

The Simpliciad
(P. 41)

A Creature of a fiery heart-	(2)	And yours the fiery
.....		nightingale's, that
		sings (283)

Ernest deSelincourt comments that the poet, having changed "fiery" to "ebullient" in 1815 because of the "jibes" of the parodist, restored it from 1820 to 1836. To indicate the fact that he had taken the phrase, "fiery heart," from Shakespeare's Henry VI, i, 4, 87, Wordsworth encloses the words in quotation marks from 1845 on.¹⁵

"The Blind Highland Boy"
(III, 88) (1807, p239)

The Simpliciad
(pp. 44-45)

A Highland Boy!-why call him so? (11)	Or the blind Highland
Because, my Darlings, ye must	boy who went to sea, (309)
know, (12)	
In land where many a mountain	High land 'tis called,
towers, (13)	because
Higher hills than these of	it is not low, (310)
ours; (14)	

According to deSelincourt's notes, the 1837 change in line 13 to:

"That, under hills which rise like towers," resulted from ridicule in The Simpliciad.

¹⁵
PW, II, 506

-A Household Tub, like one of those	(113)	He went, and how? in Household Tub, like	(312)
Which women use to wash their clothes	(114)	those	(313)
		Which washer-women use to wash their clothes.	(313)

A note by deSelincourt states that as a result of considerable contro-
versy over the household tub (See Chapter III, pp. 98,99,108),
Wordsworth substituted a "turtle shell" in 1815.¹⁶

"Alice Fell" (1807, p. 92)
(I, 232)

The Simpliciad
(P. 45)

		Now "shrill your colours forth" for Alice Fell, (314)	
		The little girl in Durham, who doth dwell; (315)	
		Wretch! as behind a bard's post-chaise she rode, (316)	
		Loose in the wind her tatter'd garment flow'd: (317)	
I saw it in the wheel entangled, (26)		She saw it not, till in the wheel entangled (318)	
.....		Like any garden scare-crow	
From any garden scare-crow dangled. (28)		there it dangled. (319)	
		But in the chaise, the child, good man! he took (320)	
And I gave money to the Host, (55)		Drove to the inn, and of	
To buy a new Cloak for the old (56)		the host bespoke (321)	
"And let it be of duffil grey, (57)		For her of duffil grey another cloak, (322)	

Although the parody closely imitates the 1807 form, the original lines
were retained.

¹⁶
PW, III, 448.

"Resolution and Independence"
(II, 235) (1807, p. 97)

The Simpliciad
(P. 46)

Motionless as a Cloud the		Let deeper tones the grey-	
Old Man stood;	(82)	hair'd man deplore,	(323)
That heareth not the loud winds		The old leech-gatherer on	
when they call;	(83)	the lonely moor!	(324)
.....he the Pond	(85)	See! motionless he stands,	
Stirred with his Staff, and		and like a cloud,	(325)
fixedly did look	(86)	That heareth not the winds	
Upon the muddy water, which he		which call so loud,	(326)
conn'd,	(87)	And now upon the water he	
As if he had been reading in		doth look;	(327)
a book;	(88)	And readeth there as if he	
...; stirring thus about his		read his book;	(328)
feet	(129)		
		And stirreth now the pond	
		about his feet,	(329)
		And tho' with not a leech	
		he there can meet,	(330)
		He smiles so sweetly on	
		his state forlorn,	(331)
		That gazing bards may	
		laugh themselves to	
		scorn.	(332)

The 1807 lines above were virtually unchanged.

The Simpliciad contains forty allusions to Wordsworth's 1807 poems. In addition to a general reference to "Moods of my own Mind," thirty-nine references apply to twenty-seven titles in Poems in Two Volumes. In line with, possibly in response to, criticism implied in the parody are textual revisions in fifteen poems, eight of which Ernest deSelincourt cites as possibly evoked by The Simpliciad. Seven other emendations, noted by neither poet nor editor, strongly suggest the influence of the parody. These revisions seem to constitute the poet's response to criticism. Unchanged in the text are twenty-four

additional instances of parody, of which deSelincourt mentions two.¹⁷

Wordsworth reacted to the criticism of The Simpliciad with considerable objectivity, revising intelligently and reacting to and commenting upon the criticism with equanimity. As shown above, the words, phrases, lines, and sentiments parodied and subsequently revised may be generally categorized as containing: repetition ("I Wandered lonely . . . "); animism ("Yes, full surely", "I Wandered lonely . . . ") "The Redbreast and the Butterfly," and "To the Daisy" ("In youth")); generalizations ("The Sparrow's Nest" and "Beggars"); sentimentality ("To a Sky-Lark," "Tribute to the Memory of the Same Dog" "To the Spade of a Friend," "The Green Linnet," and "Beggars"), and infelicitous word choice ("O Nightingale!" and "The Blind Highland Boy").

Wordsworth defends himself against charges of "profane" usage in the daisy poem, "To the Same Flower" (Bright flower"); and he justifies his word choice in this poem.¹⁸

Despite critical disapproval, the poet retains the following words and sentiments to which the parodist alludes specifically and generally: "moralize with gatherers of leeches" (113) - "Resolution and Independence" (146-147); "hide-and-seek" (21) - "To the

¹⁷
PW, IV, 414 ("To the Same Flower" (Bright flower")):
PW, I, 359 ("Alice Fell"). See pp.189-190 above.

¹⁸
PW, IV, 414.

Cuckoo" (148): "play with your cat" (200) - "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves" (44); "apostrophize" (200) - "To the Spade of a Friend" (throughout the poem).

Reviewing The Simpliciad, an article in The British Critic indicates what might be considered the ultimate result of effective parody:

...Of this new school the chief teacher was Mr. W. Wordsworth, who in pursuit of an object laudable in judicious use, went so far into the familiar and even infantine style, as to become frequently ridiculous. Against an extravagance so opposite to the former, this new Baviad* is directed, and may be considered as a judicious blow struck on the contracry side, to drive back the offenders, if possible, into the middle line of taste, judgment, and good sense.¹⁹

In Biographia Literaria, Coleridge makes a perceptive observation about parodies: "... the attempt to ridicule a silly and childish poem by writing another still sillier and still more childish can only prove (if it prove anything at all) that the parodist is a still greater blockhead than the original writer, and what is far worse, a malignant concomb to boot."²⁰ Exception might be claimed for the Simpliciad, which is notably constructive in its criticism.

¹⁹ The British Critic: xxxiii (February 1809), 180.

²⁰ BL, iv, 45n.

*Written in 1796 by William Gifford, the satire of the Baviad was "directed against the wrteched taste of the followers of the Cruscan school, without the slightest reference to their other qualities, moral or political" (xvi 8th ed. 1811, John Murray).

In 1830, Wordsworth alluded to the author of The Simpliciad: "B_p Mant was also present at Mr. B's; he was said to be the Author of a forgotten Poem called the Simpliciad -- the principal butt of which was to ridicule me, so that I was somewhat drolly placed in such company."²¹

Anonymous lines headed by the initials of Lake poets and entitled "Bards of the Lakes" appeared in The Satirist or Monthly Meteor in 1809.²² Among poems headed with the initials of the Lake poets, "The Hermit and the Snail" under "W" does not allude specifically to any one 1807 poem. Nevertheless, it generally imitates and understates the simplicity of subject matter and contains stylistic characteristics similar to those of the poet, as follows:

W:

The Hermit and the Snail

A hermit walk'd forth from his cell one day,
And he met a snail across the way,
And thus to the snail did the hermit say,
 'Silly snail!'

Is it thy love thou goest to meet,
To woo her in her green retreat?
No-thou hast horns upon thy head,
Thou art already marriet,
 'Silly snail!'

In the poet's frame of reference, the hermit and snail are as inconsequential as the statements predicated of them. Wordsworth apparently never responded to this doggerel which neither levels serious

²¹ LY, I, #941, 510 (W.W. to Edward Quillinan, Sept. 10 1830).

²² The Satirist or Monthly Meteor, v (December 1, 1809) 549.

criticism nor attributes any significance to the poet's use of the lowly.

A poem published by James and Horace Smith in the volume, Rejected Addresses (1812), contains "'The Baby's Debut' by W.W." Alluding generally to Wordsworth's poetry, these lines are "Spoken in the character of Nancy Lake, a girl eight years of age, who is drawn upon the stage in a child's chaise by Samuel Hughes, her uncle's porter."²³ Comparing the theater building to her father's house, Nancy addressed the audience:

My father's walls are made of brick,
But not so tall and not so thick
as these; and, goodness me!
My father's beams are made of wood,
But never, never half so good
As these which now I see

"The Baby's Debut" contains characteristics similar to those in Wordsworth's poetry, including repetition (in every line) and negatives (lines 2,5), as well as innuendoes and pseudosophistication alien to the poet's verses. "The Baby's Debut" also parodies the presence of the child as a key figure in poetry.²⁴ The poem may be classified, in tone, with non-sense verse like "The Hermit and the Snail." Once, in his correspondence,

²³ Rejected Addresses or The New Theatrum Poetarum, with an introduction, notes and a bibliography, ed. Andrew Boyle, (London, 1929).

²⁴ Barbara Garlitz writes perceptively about this parody in "The Baby's Debut: the Contemporary Reaction to Wordsworth's Poetry of Childhood," Boston University Studies in English, 10, n. 1 (Spring 1960) 85-94; and in "The Immortality Ode: Its Cultural Progeny," SEL vi, no.4 (Autumn 1966) 639-649.

Wordsworth mentions James and Horace Smith, but he takes no notice of the parody which they published.²⁵

John Keats's first poem was "An imitation of Spenser," (1816). In September, 1817, the young poet enclosed in a letter eighteen unpublished lines in comic imitation of Wordsworth. Mrs. Moorman terms Keats's lines, "The Gothic looks solemn, -" as "inimitable doggerel."²⁶ Keats's poem parodies the rhythmic scheme, rhymes, repetition, and word order found in Wordsworth's lines beginning "The Cock is crowing," and entitled "Written in March."

Dorothy Wordsworth mentioned this piece on April 16, 1802, as "a poem descriptive of the sights and sounds we saw and heard."²⁷ Keats compared Wordsworth's lines with school exercises "though in a fine way." Then, he introduced the parody by stating, "Now, I think this is an excellent method of giving a very clear description of an interesting place such as Oxford is -"²⁸

²⁵ LY, I, #776, 250 (W.W. to Lupton Felfe, 25th July 1826).

²⁶ Moorman, II, 315-316.

²⁷ DW's JL, I, 133.

²⁸ Keats, Letters, I, #31, 151-152 (To J. H. Reynolds, September 1817).

"Written in March"²⁹

The cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,

 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun; (5)
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising;
 There are forty feeding like one!
 Like an army defeated (10)
 The Snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill;
 The Plough-boy is whooping-- anon --anon:
 There's joy in the mountains; (15)
 There's life in the fountains;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing;
 The rain is over and gone! (20)

In Wordsworth's lines, four qualifying adjectives pertain to size ("small" 3, 18) and to color ("green" 5, "blue" 19). Many predicates end in "ing" ("crowing" 1, "flowing" 2, "grazing" 8, "raising" 9, "feeding" 10, "whooping" 15, "sailing" 18, and "prevailing" 19). In his idyllic scene, Wordsworth presents simple objects involving sight, sound and action. With notable consistency, the cock crows, birds twitter, streams flow, the lake glitters, the field sleeps in the sun, laborers work, cattle graze and feed, snow retreats, and the plough-boy shouts. The scene describes a peaceful but far from static pastoral.

²⁹ 1807, pp. 219-220.

"The Gothic looks solemn"³⁰

The Gothic looks solemn,--
 The plain Doric column
 Supports an old Bishop & crosier;
 The mouldering arch,
 Shaded o'er by a larch,
 Lives next door to Wilson the hosier
 Vice--that is, by turns--
 O'er pale visages mourns
 The black tassel trencher, or common hat:
 The Chauntry boy sings,
 The steeple bell rings,
 And as for the Chancellor--dominat,
 There are plenty of trees,
 And plenty of ease,
 And plenty of fat deer for parsons;
 And when it is venison,
 Short is the benison,--
 Then each on a leg [&] thigh fastens.

The tone and language of Keats's lines differ completely from those of Wordsworth which they parody. Keats's qualitative adjectives connote considerably more involved concepts than do Wordsworth's. Examples of these are "solemn," 1; "plain," 2; "old," 3; "mouldering," 4; "pale," 8; "black tassel," 9; "common," 9; and "fat," 15. Keats also uses connotative predicate forms: "looks," 1; "supports," 3; "shaded," 5; "lives," 6; "mourns," 8; "sings," 10; "rings," 11; "dominat," 12; and "fastens," 18. The younger poet repeats "plenty" 13, 14, 15, and alternates in his use of simple and sophisticated allusions like "Gothic" 1; "Doric," 2; "Bishop," and "Crosier" 3; "arch," 4; "larch," 5, and "Wilson the hosier," 6.

³⁰ Keats, Letters, I, #31, 52.

Second stanzas in both poems are atypical. Wordsworth compares melting snow to a retreating army; Keats parenthetically defines the word "Vice." Keats's unpublished lines were apparently never seen by Wordsworth, whose theory, language, and style they parodied.

Sometimes considered a clever hoax by students of Wordsworth, fifty-two lines entitled "The Cursed Tree" were allegedly sent by the poet to the student editor of the Brighton Magazine at Cambridge. Appearing in the May, 1822, issue of the magazine, the poem follows a note to the editor which reads: "I have just received and carefully perused, the four first Numbers of what I may venture to call your University Magazine; and, though it is long since I quitted for ever the walks and cloisters of St. John's, I have still enough of the Cantab about me, most heartily to wish you success. As a small proof of my good will, I send you the following lines, which I trust, will be found not entirely unworthy of a place in your poetical department. I am, Sir, faithfully yours, W.W."³¹

As a matter of policy, the poet rarely made literary contributions to journals, and it is doubtful that he would send unsolicited lines to a college publication. There is no evidence to support what may, after all, have been a facetious claim that Wordsworth composed or submitted "The Cursed Tree" to the Brighton Magazine.

³¹ The Brighton Magazine, V (May 1822), 482-484.

The poem's title immediately reminds readers of "The Thorn" in Lyrical Ballads. As an imitation of Wordsworth's verses, the lines contain phrases appearing in four 1807 poems, "My Heart leaps up," "Degenerate Douglas," "Elegiac Stanzas," and "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle." In the course of the fifty-two lines, twenty-two derivatives of "it" appear. The parodist uses Wordsworth's common allusions: nature (1,10), breeze (13), ash (23), leaves (32), hedge-row and root (36), and storm (24,42). These lines also include parenthetical expressions (10, 41, 44, 45). No references to "The Cursed Tree" appears either in Wordsworth's or his contemporaries' correspondence.

Attempts at Simplicity, signed J.J. Stivers, Esq., in The Monthly Repository, January 1838, consisted of three poetical pieces labelled "parodies of Wordsworth," and ascribed to Walter Savage Landor. These were entitled, "Beck, a Tale," "An Eclogue of Canton," and "I found a little flower."³² From the parodist's viewpoint, Wordsworth's simplicity seems to have consisted of the use of questions, frequent repetition, parenthetical interpolation, and dialogues between the poet and representatives of humble life. "Beck" and the "Eclogue" are reminiscent of the Lyrical Ballads poems, "We are Seven" and "Anecdote for Fathers." Characteristic Wordsworthian references in "Beck" are "bush," (3) "thrush," (6) and "cuckoo" (12). Under the title, "An Eclogue of Canton," the parodist notes, ("The idea of this Eclogue was supplied by the Captain

³² The Poetical Works of Walter Savage Landor, ed. Stephen Wheeler, III, 220-222. -- hereafter cited as Landor, Poetical Works.

of an East Indiaman."). In "I found a little flower," a falling bit of blue sky, transformed into a flower, parodies "To a Small Celandine" ("Pansies"). Wordsworth never indicated awareness of the parodies in Attempts at Simplicity.

Included with Landor's works are parodies patterned on classical poems. First printed in The Foreign Quarterly Review, October, 1842, these are introduced by the following note: "Suppose a modern disciple of Wordsworth, for example, to have taken up such a subject as the Hive-Stealer of Theocritus..., and how dull the moral that would be our best relief at the close of a dull story!"³³ The twelve-line parody contains minutiae and irrelevance written in a manner apparently considered similar to that of Wordsworth. These lines, as well as those in Attempts at Simplicity, emphasize the fact that critics and readers recognized Wordsworth's subject and style as distinctive enough to be extensively parodied and readily recognized in the parodied forms.

As late as July, 1964, a manuscript letter, found in Christ Church, Oxford, and dated September 22, 1807, transcribed a 113 line poem attributed to Wordsworth.³⁴ In the opinion of some students of Wordsworth, these

³³ Landor, Poetical Works, III, 223.

³⁴ An article in the New Statesman (July 31, 1964) 156-157, entitled "An MS of Mr. Wordsworth," states that Mr. Peter Clark, then engaged in research at Christ Church, Oxford, discovered "The Barberry Tree," transcribed in a letter from Charles Abraham Elton to his sister, Julia, bride of Henry Hallam. Elton wrote, "...I mean to fill up the sheet with a curiosity, entrusted to me; an MS of Mr. Wordsworth, never published which you can shew to Hallam, and this will perhaps awaken his dormant intention of writing." After transcribing the poem, Elton continues, "If you see any of the Bowles'es they would certainly be gratified by a sight of this original MS poem; as they much admire Wordsworth." (156)

lines, entitled "The Barberry Tree" qualify as parody. They contain lines and phrases which appeared in many of Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads and in ten of the Poems in Two Volumes. Specific titles containing parodied material range in composition dates from 1802 to 1806. Columns below list Wordsworth's 1807 lines and similarities in "The Barberry Tree." For example, references to "hill or valley" and "hill or vale" in "The Barberry Tree" also appear in the four 1807 poems.

"To the Cuckoo"
(II, 207)

From hill to hill it seems to pass (7)
.....
At once far off, and near, (8)
Though babbling only to the Vale. (9)

"The Barberry Tree"

In hill or valley,
far or near. (8)
No tree that grew
in hill or vale (9)

"The Daffodils"
(II, 216)

That floats on high o'er vales
and hills, (2)

"The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"
(II, 170)

If you look to vale or hill, (80)

"Rob Roy's Grave"
(III, 79)

And far and near, through vale and
hill, (117)

"Star-Gazers"
(II, 219)

The silver moon with all her vales,
.....
and hills of mightiest fame, (15)

"To the Small Celandine"
("Pansies" II, 142)

I have seen thee, high and low, (20)

"The Green Linnet"
(II, 139)

Hail to Thee, far above the rest (11)
.....
In joy of voice and pinion! (12)
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array, (13)
Presiding Spirit here to-day, (14)
Dost lead the revels of the May; (15)
And this is thy dominion. (16)

"To the Daisy"
("In youth" II, 135)

In shoals and bands, a morrice train, (17)

"The Blind Highland Boy"
(III, 88)

For, was she here, or was she there, (28)

"The Barberry Tree"

In hill or valley,
far or near: (8)
No tree that grew
in hill or vale (9)

"The Barberry Tree"

And still they danc'd,
now high, now low (14)

"The Barberry Tree"

The breezes brush on
lusty pinion (35)
Sportive struggling
for dominion; (36)

"The Barberry Tree"

Do in their leafy
morris bear (31)
Mirth and gladness
thro the air: (32)

"The Barberry Tree"

That never here, that
never there, (47)
Around me, aloft,
or alow; (48)
Nor here nor there,
nor anywhere (49)

"To a Butterfly"
(I, 226)

I followed on from brake to bush; (16)
.....

"The Barberry Tree"

But when the wind
 rushes (95)
Thro brakes and
 bushes; (96)

"The Barberry Tree" may be a hoax, random jottings of the poet, a parody by Wordsworth or by someone else. Nevertheless, in subsequent versions of the ten 1807 poems parodied, the poet retained all original forms, despite their repetition and general felicity. Internal evidence in "The Barberry Tree" indicates that the author of the piece was thoroughly familiar with close details of the poet's subject matter, word usage, and style. But, Wordsworth never adopted towards his poetry a tone of ridicule such as pervades these lines.

Jonathan Wordsworth has written a comprehensive analysis of "The Barberry Tree."³⁵ Despite Mr. Wordsworth's extensive knowledge of the poet's work, I believe that this poem is a parody by someone other than the poet. Nowhere in the poet's contemporary documents is there any reference or allusion to the lines enclosed in Elton's letter. However, it is sufficient to state here that in "The Barberry Tree" are found substantially the same parodistic elements as appear in each parody mentioned in this chapter.

The eight parodies surveyed above represent broad classifications extending over each decade from the publication of Poems in Two Volumes

³⁵ Jonathan Wordsworth, "The New Wordsworth Poem" College English, Vol. 27, no. 6 (March 1966), 455-465.

to the poet's death. Book length, The Simpliciad (1808) proffered specific textual criticism in parodies so close as to lend themselves to precise application. "The Hermit and the Snail" (1809), inconsequential verse, parodies the subject matter of Wordsworth's poetry in general. Sophisticated lampooning of the poet's simplicity, thematically and stylistically, seems to be the aim of "The Baby's Debut" (1812). Keats's nonsense rhymes beginning "The Gothic looks solemn" (1817) is a line-by-line parody of a single Wordsworth poem, "Written in March." Accepted as a student hoax, "The Cursed Tree" (1822) seems to incorporate and criticize, implicitly, every exaggerated element of style which the poet ever exhibited. Attempts at Simplicity (1838) ridicules what is often considered Wordsworth's outstanding philosophical and poetical characteristic, simplicity. In 1842, a parody which imposed Wordsworthian style on classical poetry of Theocritus reinforces the idea that some critics and their readers regarded dullness as essentially Wordsworthian.

The foregoing selection and survey of parodies emphasize the fact that both the poetry and the popular reputation of Wordsworth were conducive to imitative ridicule and implicit criticism in parody. This sampling of various types of parody reveals critically interesting if not always significant evaluation of Wordsworth's poetry and indicates the poet's possible reaction.

CHAPTER VII

Wordsworth's Interest in Coleridge's Post-Publication Criticism

When, early in January, 1807, Wordsworth was reading his "Poem to Coleridge" to an admiring household, his audience included the returned traveller, Coleridge himself. Almost three years earlier, when Coleridge embarked for Malta, he carried with him what is known as MS M, containing material transcribed by the Wordsworths. In addition to sixty-one of William's then unpublished short poems, this manuscript included the first four books of the unfinished "Poem to Coleridge."

Between April, 1804 and May, 1805, Wordsworth's life was significantly eventful. A second Dorothy, the poet's daughter, was born on April 16, 1804; and the Wordsworth's brother, John, captain of the East Indiaman, Earl of Abergavenny, perished with his ship on February 5, 1805. The fourth edition of Lyrical Ballads also appeared in 1805; and by mid-May of that year, Wordsworth had completed the first version of the "Poem to Coleridge," which Dorothy transcribed probably between December, 1805 and March, 1806.¹

On January 7, 1807, Coleridge responded to his friend's poem with 119 lines, originally entitled "To W. Wordsworth" and sub-titled, "Lines Composed, for the greater part of the Night, on which he finished the recitation of

¹ The Prelude, LIII.

his Poem (in thirteen Books) concerning the growth and history of his own Mind."² The opening line in the original version of his "To W. Wordsworth" reads, "O Friend! O Teacher! God's great Gift to me!" From Coleridge, now perhaps more than at any other time in his life, the connotations of "Friend" and "Teacher" seem especially poignant. Both offices imply services which Coleridge sorely required and continually rejected.

Before attempting to examine Wordsworth's interest in Coleridge's post-publication criticism, it is useful to consider the opinion of Coleridge towards Wordsworth and his work. An attitude is indicated in "To W. Wordsworth," in the first section of which (1-39) Coleridge praises his friend, who sings of the human spirit (6), of fancies (17), of hope (21), of society (27), and of duty (37).

The next portion of the poem, lines 40-81 in the original manuscript, begins significantly: "Ah great Bard!". Coleridge then described his personal reaction to Wordsworth's genius which "Makes audible a linked song of Truth," (51). He further characterizes this quality, "Dear shall it be to every human Heart,/ To me how more than dearest!" (54-55). Although resembling that of "Dejection," the tone of "To W. Wordsworth" reflects more obvious stylistic control and more apparent psychological

² CPW, II, 1081.

insight than does the earlier poem. In "To W. Wordsworth," Coleridge reckons his past experiences, even those of the annus mirabilis as, "but Flowers/Strew'd on my Corse, and borne upon my Bier,/ In the same Coffin, for the self-same Grave!" (79-81).

In the final section (82-119) of the poem, Coleridge sounds an enigmatic note. Even as he urges his friend, "Nor let my word import more blame than needs" (92), he states, ". . . Peace is nigh,/ Where Wisdom's Voice has found a list'ning Heart" (93-94). Addressing Wordsworth as "Strong in thyself and powerful to give strength!" (103), he concludes, "I sate, my Being blended in one Thought,/ (Thought was it? or aspiration? or Resolve?)/ Absorb'd yet hanging still upon the sound:/ And when I rose, I found myself in Prayer!" (109-112). Characteristically Coleridge here avoids a precise analysis of his inner turmoil. He emphasizes the emotional impact by alluding to expiatory implications. Admiring Wordsworth's creativity, Coleridge reflects, in successive moods of melancholy, quiet, and prayer, upon the wisdom of his friend. Without identifying his ultimate reaction, Coleridge ponders, "Thought was it? or aspiration? or Resolve?" (110).

Coleridge's tone in "To W. Wordsworth" seems to indicate that only his circumstances have altered during his absence. He implies that his friends share a treasured intimacy from which he is excluded as, " . . . one cast forth, .../ A Wanderer with a worn-out heart," (64-65).*

* These lines appeared in MS B and not in the 1807 printing of the poem.

In an early version, MS B., of his poem to Wordsworth, Coleridge inserted among lines 5-13, a line reading, "Thoughts that obey no mastery of words." Printing the poem for the first time in Sibylline Leaves (August, 1817) after corresponding about it with Wordsworth (See p.227), Coleridge altered the line in the published version to read, "Thoughts all too deep for words!" (11), similar to the last line in Wordsworth's "Ode", which reads, "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" (204).

While Coleridge's physical and psychological distress was causing anxiety in the Coleorton household during the winter of 1807, Wordsworth was busy with the proofs of his Poems in Two Volumes, then in the press. Neither Wordsworth nor Coleridge specifically alludes to these poems. Coleridge's extended and substantial criticism of Wordsworth's work appears in Biographia Literaria (July, 1817), to which Wordsworth could not have responded, textually, any earlier than the 1820 edition, next to appear after Coleridge's publication.

Robert Southey, summarizing the literary relationship of Wordsworth and Coleridge as he saw it in 1807, wrote: "The one thing to which Wordsworth would sacrifice all others is his own reputation, concerning which his anxiety is perfectly childish - like a woman of her beauty: and so he can get Coleridge to talk over his own writings with him, and criticise [sic] them, and (without amending them) teach him how to do it, - to be in fact the very rain and air and sunshine of his intellect, he thinks. Coleridge is very well employed and this arrangement is a very good one."³ If

³ Robert Southey, New Letters, I, 449 (To John Rickman, mid-April, 1807).

Southey is correct about the two friends "talking over" Wordsworth's poetry, some of Coleridge's oblique criticism and Wordsworth's implicit response are certainly traceable in the 1807 text.

In the middle of April, 1807, Wordsworth and Coleridge left Coleorton for London. Wordsworth went to make final arrangements for his forthcoming publication; Coleridge with Hartley was en route to Bristol, where his wife had taken Derwent and little Sara. Before he returned to Coleorton on May 6, Wordsworth met Henry Crabb Robinson, barrister-turned-literary-enthusiast, for the first time. Coleridge, having lingered in London, arrived in Bristol about May 9; and both Wordsworth and Coleridge were in their Lake Country homes during the summer of 1807.

Poems in Two Volumes appeared in mid-May, 1807. Wordsworth had frequently referred to the publication in letters to Wilkinson, Wrangham, Beaumont, and Scott during the 1806-1807 winter and spring (See Chapter I, p. 3). Coleridge never mentioned the work, although he had corresponded with mutual friends, Godwin, Stuart, Sotheby, Wedgwood, Cottle, Poole, and Davy, between April 30 and November 3, 1807.⁴

In the beginning of September, Coleridge returned to London to prepare for a course of lectures. From here, he complained to Humphry Davy of his loss of hope.⁵ In a letter to Dorothy Wordsworth, he expressed his

⁴ CL, III, #645-659, 12-34.

⁵ Ibid., #656, 28 (To Humphry Davy, 9 September 1807).

intention of returning in March and residing at Allan Bank, which Wordsworth was arranging to lease. To Dorothy also, Coleridge denies that Scott's "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" seems an imitation of "Christabel." He notes, nevertheless, that he has observed "very, very strong imitations of your Brother's Poems."⁶ In December, 1807, Coleridge wrote in a long letter to Southey: "--As to reviewing W's Poems, my sole objection would rest on the time of their publication of the Annual Review." Then, he explains that, his lectures having been postponed until mid-January, he wishes to avoid reviewing these poems before mentioning them to his lecture audience. Here he also tells Southey that in such a review of Wordsworth's poems, he would evaluate the "faults & defect[s]" of the Poems & System, as plainly as of the excellencies."⁷ References to "defects" and "excellencies" recur in criticism in Biographia Literaria.

Testifying to Wordsworth's interest in what Coleridge says of his poetry, Dorothy says that before publishing the recently completed "White Doe of Rylstone," her brother will send it to Coleridge lecturing at the Royal Institution from January 15 to May 10, 1808.⁸ In February, when Coleridge became ill, Wordsworth joined him in London. Most perceptively and almost prophetically, Coleridge wrote in March of Wordsworth, "His friendship and that of his Sister Dorothy's are the only eminent Events, or Passages, of my Life, (among those, wherein my Happiness has been involved) in which I have not been cruelly deceived or deluded:

⁶ CL, III, #662, 39 (To Dorothy Wordsworth, 24 November, 1807).

⁷ Ibid., #664, 42 (To Robert Southey, 14 December 1807).

⁸ MY, I, #319, 174 (D.W. to Catherine Clarkson, February 5, 1808).

taking however a full Share of the Blame to myself."⁹

Wordsworth's Convention of Cintra tract appeared in May, 1808; and he moved his family into the house at Allan Bank at the end of that month. His half of a correspondence with Coleridge, still in London, reveals tension between them. Coleridge accused Wordsworth of having resented a remark about Coleridge's superiority as a poet. Attempting to explain his present position, Wordsworth replied: "...I am wonderfully improved since that day, for such a sentence from the mouth of a jury the choice of all the poets from Homer and Isaiah to Cowper and Burns, confirmed by my own understanding, would have given me the highest pleasure."¹⁰

On September 1, 1808, Coleridge joined the Wordsworths in their new home where Catherine Wordsworth was born on September 6. During the following May, when Coleridge was again away from Allan Bank, Wordsworth sent him the scheme for classifying material in any subsequent edition of his poetry.¹¹ Ever since the discontinuance of The Watchman which he edited in 1796, Coleridge had been determined to launch another periodical. After numerous delays, he brought out the first of twenty-eight numbers of The Friend on June 1, 1809.

During the course of this journalistic venture, Coleridge was subjected to pressures which he found difficult. For some readers, The Friend

⁹ CL, III, #685, 79 (To Mrs. Thomas Clarkson, 9 March 1808).

¹⁰ MY, I, #337, 219 (W.W. to S.T. Coleridge late May or early June 1808).

¹¹ Ibid., #375, 307-309 (W.W. to S.T. Coleridge, early May 1809).

proved unsatisfactory. Southey expressed himself categorically: "Coleridge has vexed me by his Friend -- the affectation of humility even to downright canting, is to me insufferable, and the folly of talking as he does about his former principles is still worse."¹²

Eleven times in The Friend, Coleridge refers to seven 1807 poems. Twice he quotes from "The Character of the Happy Warrior," lines 45-54 of which introduce an essay in The Friend, where the editor titles the poem, "The Christian Warrior,"¹³ Coleridge connects the sentiments in this piece with his character sketch of Sir Alexander Ball, who, as governor-general of Malta, had employed Coleridge.¹⁴ Also in The Friend, other allusions to 1807 poems include a general and a specific mention of Wordsworth's "Ode," references to "My heart leaps up," and "Resolution and Independence," and special approbation for three sonnets beginning, "Thoughts of a Briton," "GreatMen," and "Another year!" On his return voyage from Malta, Coleridge, in Rome in 1806, read Wordsworth's "Ode" to Baron Nicholas Von Humboldt, then Prussian minister to the Papal court. Coleridge writes,

¹² Southey, New Letters, I, 511, (To Charles Danvers, June 15, 1809).

¹³ The Friend, III, 247, 253.

¹⁴ Ibid., 226 ff.

I can only say, that I know few Englishmen, whom I could compare with him in the extensive knowledge and just appreciation of English literature and its various epochs. He listened to the ode with evident delight, and as evidently not without surprise, and at the close of the recitation exclaimed, "And is this the work of a living English poet? I should have attributed it to the age of Elizabeth, not that I recollect any writer, whose style it resembles; but rather with wonder, that so great and original a poet should have escaped my notice." -- Often as I repeat passages from it to myself, I recur to the words of Dante:

Canzon! io credo, che saranno radi
Color che tua ragion intendan bene:¹⁵
Tanto lor parli faticoso ed alto.

Concerning Wordsworth's sonnets, in particular "Thought of a Briton," Coleridge states, "Well, and in the spirit of genuine philosophy, does the poet describe such beings as men/ Who being innocent do for that cause/ Bestir them in good deeds --"¹⁶

The criticism of "My heart leaps up" follows an essay containing commentary on the relationship of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Describing as ungrateful those who cannot reflect happily on their former selves,

¹⁵ The Friend, III, 198-199n.

¹⁶ Ibid., II, 146n.

Coleridge writes:

A contemporary poet has expressed
and illustrated this sentiment
with equal fineness of thought
and tenderness of feeling: -

["My heart leaps Up" is here
transcribed]

I am informed, that these
very lines have been cited, as a
specimen of despicable puerility.
So much the worse for the citer.
Not willingly in his presence
would I behold the sun setting
behind the mountains, or listen
to a tale of distress or virtue;
I should be ashamed of the quiet
tear on my own cheek. But let
the dead bury the dead! The poet
sang for the living. Of what value
indeed, to a sane mind, are the
likings of dislikings of one man,
grounded on the mere assertions of
another? Opinions formed from
opinions - what are they, but
clouds sailing under clouds, which¹⁷
impress shadows upon shadows?

Wordsworth never altered "My Heart Leaps Up."

John Wilson ("Christopher North"), author of The Letter from Mathetes,
in the December, 1809, issue of The Friend, made a significant observation:

¹⁷ The Friend, I, 46n.

...of one such teacher who has been
 given to our own age you have described
 the power when you said, that in
 his enunciation of truths he seemed
 to speak in thunders. I believe that
 mighty voice has not been poured
 out in vain; that there are hearts
 that have received into their inmost
 depths all its varying tones; and
 that even now, there are many
 to whom the name of Wordsworth
 calls up the recollection of
 their weakness and the consciousness
 of their strength.¹⁸

Complaining, about this time, of physical and psychological debility, Coleridge asserted that his condition was aggravated by the "unworthy Reception" of Wordsworth's 1807 poems.¹⁹ Wordsworth wrote Essay on Epitaphs for the February 22, 1810 issue of The Friend, which ceased publication with the March 15 number. After a restless summer, Coleridge decided to consult a physician. He accepted an invitation, in October, 1810, to go to London with Basil Montagu and his third wife, the former Mrs. Skepper.²⁰ Apparently with good intentions Wordsworth mentioned Coleridge's drinking and opium-addiction to Montagu, whom he advised against taking their friend into his home. Upon their arrival in London, Montagu, who found Coleridge an erratic travelling companion and a disquieting house-guest, repeated to him Wordsworth's allegations.

¹⁸ The Friend, III, 17-18.

¹⁹ CL, III, #762, 203 (To Thomas N. Longman, [27 April 1809]).

²⁰ Grandmother of the poet, Adelaide Ann Proctor.

Either he prefaced these with a remark to the effect that Wordsworth had deputed him to convey them to Coleridge, or Coleridge thought he did. With this incident, the long and painful estrangement of Wordsworth and Coleridge became an open breach.

After more than a hundred and fifty years of history, the entire situation appears both unfortunate and understandable. To Coleridge, in the winter of 1810, the impact was cataclysmic. Incensed and outraged, he magnified the circumstances, brooded over the background, and made unwarrantedly harsh and highly dramatic judgments against Wordsworth.

Montagu reported the disclosure to Dorothy. He cannot, however, have told her precisely what he intimated to Coleridge of Wordsworth's disgust, condemnation and hopelessness. Although he informed others of the insult, Coleridge wrote to no member of the Wordsworth household. And the Wordsworths, long accustomed to "No word from Coleridge," were not unduly concerned over his silence.²¹

Coleridge gave a series of lectures, including some on Shakespeare, between November 18, 1811 and January 27, 1812. Meanwhile, members of the Wordsworth circle were making concerted efforts to bring the former friends together. In April, Wordsworth went to London with the express purpose of settling the difficulty. He attended some of Coleridge's

²¹ CL, III, #809, 296-298n. (To John Monkhouse, [1 November 1810]).

current lectures, and authorized Henry Crabb Robinson to act as their intermediary. Early in May, Robinson wrote of Wordsworth's reaction to criticism of his own work.

The approbation he has met with from some superior persons compensates for the loss of popularity, though no man has completely understood him -- Coleridge not excepted, who is not happy enough to enter into his feelings.
Wordsworth, with no faint praise, then spoke of Coleridge's mind, the powers of which he declared to be greater than those of any man he ever knew. From such a man, under favourable influences, everything might be looked for. His genius, he thought to be great, but his talents still greater, and it is in the union of so much genius with so much talent that Coleridge surpassed all the men Wordsworth ever knew. ²²

It was Henry Crabb Robinson, with his legal training, his sensitivity, and his respect and affection for both men, who brought about a nominal understanding between Wordsworth and Coleridge early in June, 1812.

Within the next year, Wordsworth's four-year-old daughter, Catherine died in June, 1812; and her six-year-old brother, Thomas, died the following December. The poet, who received the post of Stamp Distributor for Westmoreland in March, 1812, had moved his family into Rydal Mount in May.

²² Books and Their Writers, I, 73, 76 (May 8, 1812).

During his estrangement from Wordsworth, Coleridge forwarded to Lady Beaumont the lines, "To W. Wordsworth," as an indication of his regard for the poet.²³ In 1815, having decided to reprint most of his poems, Coleridge described his plan to Lord Byron: "A general Preface will be prefixed, on the Principles of philosophic and genial criticism relatively to the Fine Arts in general; but especially to Poetry:...."²⁴ Then he requested Lady Beaumont to return the copy of "To W. Wordsworth," which he had sent her in 1811. Informed of this, Wordsworth asked Coleridge not to print the piece lest it be prejudicial to his own still unpublished poem which had occasioned Coleridge's lines.²⁵ Although Coleridge responded that he did not intent to include the lines, he published them in Sibylline Leaves, August 1817.²⁶

The projected "Preface," mentioned to Lord Byron, never materialized as such. However, out of this and earlier plans evolved Biographia Literaria, July, 1817. As early as 1800, Coleridge had told Humphry Davy that he meant, one day, to write "An Essay on the Elements of Poetry."²⁷

²³ CL, III, #836, 343n. (To Henry Crabb Robinson, Nov. 8, 1811).

²⁴ Ibid., IV, #963, 561 (To Lord Byron, Easter Week, 1815).

²⁵ MY, II, #529n, 669-670 (W.W. to S.T. Coleridge, 22nd May, 1815).

²⁶ CL, IV, #969, 572 (To William Wordsworth, 30 May 1815).

²⁷ Ibid., I, #356, 632 (To Humphry Davy, 9 Oct. 1800).

Now, fifteen years later, Coleridge restates his reasons for publishing Biographia Literaria. To John M. Gutch, editor of Felix Farley's Bristol Journal, Coleridge outlines his idea:

First, then, in consequence of information received from various Quarters I concluded, that a detailed publication of my opinions concerning Poetry & Poets, would excite more curiosity and a more immediate Interest than even my Poems. --Therefore instead of Poems and a Preface I resolved to publish 'Biographical Sketches of my LITERARY LIFE, Principles, and Opinions, chiefly on the Subjects of Poetry and Philosophy, and the Differences at present prevailing concerning both: by S.T. COLERIDGE.' . . . Secondly, as the Biographical Sketches are not a Preface or any thing in the Nature of a Preface, but a Work per se: I would fain have it printed in Chapters.²⁸

Shortly afterwards, Coleridge informed Daniel Stuart, "I have sent to the Printer at Bristol (Mr. Gutch, an old Schoolfellow) two Volumes, the first, Biographical Sketches of my literary life, & opinions (with the principles, on which they are grounded, & the arguments by which they were deduced) on Politics, Religion, Philosophy, and Poetry-- (the latter in the hope of settling the controversy on the nature of poetic diction. I fear, that my reasonings may not please Wordsworth; but I am convinced, that the detection of the faults in his Poetry is indispensable to a rational appreciation of his Merits.)"²⁹

²⁸ CL, IV, #974, 584, 585 (To John M. Gutch, [17 September 1815]).

²⁹ Ibid., IV, #977, 591 (To Daniel Stuart, 7 October 1815).

By July 1815, Coleridge undertook an extended introduction to the work, and in September he had submitted all the material. Overestimating the amount of space required, Gutch printed three paginated volumes, one ultimately used for the poems entitled Sibylline Leaves, and two for Biographia Literaria. Some months later he notified Coleridge that the prose material was insufficient to fill more than half the space in the second of the two volumes allotted. Although Coleridge had already dealt comprehensively with all that he intended to write on the subject, he was under the necessity of supplying additional copy. After disappointment, frustration, and delay, he expanded Chapter XXII, probably by including the treatment of Wordsworth's characteristic defects and excellencies.³⁰ Chapter XXIII, as well as Satyrane's Letters, originally printed in The Friend, also filled out the excess pages.

Aware that the work would prove unsatisfactory to many, Coleridge wrote: "I anticipate, that my Criticisms will not please or satisfy Wordsworth, or Wordsworth's Detractors; but I know that a true philosophical Critique was wanting, & will be of more service to his just reputation than 20 idolators of his mannerisms."³¹ Coleridge sent the three presentation copies of Biographia Literaria to his family, to Southey, and to Wordsworth.³² A month before the official publication date, responding to Gillies's inquiry as

³⁰ BL, Introd., xvi

³¹ CL, IV, #993, 620 (To William Sotheby, [31 January 1816]).

³² Ibid., IV, #1095, 800-801 (To Francis Wrangham, 10 January 1818).

to whether he had read a certain periodical review, Wordsworth commented obliquely: "I have not read Mr. Coleridge's 'Biographia,' having contented myself with skimming parts of it; Indeed I am heartily sick of even the best criticism, of course cannot humor an inclination to turn to the worst --,"³³

According to George Watson, who dates Coleridge's first statement of purpose to a notebook reference of September-October, 1803, Biographia Literaria is more than Coleridge's reply to Wordsworth's Preface.³⁴ The first volume of Coleridge's work consists of thirteen chapters, three of which (I, IV, and XII) refer significantly to Wordsworth. Coleridge sets forth in Chapter I "The motives of the present work" Chapter IV covers "The Lyrical Ballads with the Preface -- Mr. Wordsworth's earlier poems -- On fancy and imagination" Material in Chapter XII includes "Requests and premonitions concerning the perusal or omission of the chapter that follows."

Seven of the nine chapters in Volume II contain fairly extensive criticism of Wordsworth's poetry (in XIV, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, and XXII). There is a consideration of the "Occasion of Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed -- Preface to the second edition . . ." in Chapter XIV, Coleridge conducts an "Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth" in Chapter XVII, and one on the "Language of metrical composition . . . Origin and elements of metre . . ." in Chapter XVIII.

³³ MY, II, 591, 791 (W. W. to R.P. Gillies, June 19th 1817).

³⁴ BL, Introd. ix; CN, I, 1515, 4.86

Chapters XIX and XX include continuations of this subject. Chapter XXI develops "Remarks on the present mode of conducting critical journals;" and Chapter XXII outlines "The characteristic defects of Wordsworth's poetry -- . . . Their proportion to the beauties."

Concerning criticism of Wordsworth in the second volume of Biographia Literaria, Coleridge wrote to his son: "Of one thing I am distinctly conscious, viz. that my main motive and continued impulse was to secure, as far as in me lay, an intelligent admiration to Mr Wordsworth's Poems -- and while I frankly avowed what I deemed defects, and why I deemed them so, yet to evince how very trifling they were not only in importance but even in the proportional space occupied by them;" ³⁵ According to Henry Crabb Robinson, Coleridge pleased Wordsworth neither by the praise nor the censure of his poetry. ³⁶

In the first two chapters of Biographia Literaria, Coleridge quotes incidentally from Wordsworth's sonnet beginning, "It is not to be thought of" and from "Rob Roy's Grave," both 1807 poems. ³⁷ Neither of these direct references has critical significance. However, in a general comment also in Chapter I, Coleridge describes what may well be his attitude toward Wordsworth: "Our genuine admiration of a great poet is a continuous undercurrent of feeling; it is everywhere present, but seldom anywhere as a

³⁵ CL, IV, #1071, 756 (To Derwent Coleridge, July 1817).

³⁶ Ibid., IV, #1072, 757n (Quoted from Books and Their Writers, I, 213).

³⁷ BL, I, p. 6; II, p. 17.

separate excitement."³⁸

Describing the superiority of Wordsworth's style over that common in the eighteenth century, Coleridge states: "It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere and with it the depth and height of the ideal world, around forms, incidents and situations of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up all the sparkle and the dew-drops."³⁹

Coleridge then comments on the variety of critical opinion concerning Wordsworth's "Alice Fell," and posits his frequently-quoted distinction between fancy and imagination. He explains that in Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth considered, in kind, the diversity of manifestations of poetic fancy and imagination; while he, Coleridge, having examined the principle, proceeded from kind to degree.⁴⁰

In Chapter XII, quoting the adage, "Until you understand a writer's ignorance presume yourself ignorant of his understanding," Coleridge indicates the difference between his and Wordsworth's definitions of imagination. Coleridge concludes that Wordsworth may have "mistaken the co-presence of

³⁸ BL, i, p.12.

³⁹ Ibid., iv, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁰ Ibid., iv, pp. 50-51, 52.

fancy with imagination for the operation of the latter singly." There follows, in Chapter XIII, Coleridge's ambiguous distinction between primary and secondary imagination, and reminiscences of Coleridge's first meeting with Wordsworth.⁴¹

Coleridge next states his definitions of poem and poet: "A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object proposed. . . . A poem is that species of composition which is opposed to works of science by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having this object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the whole as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part. . . . The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity."⁴²

Wordsworth had stated in his 1802 Preface: "Poetry is the image of man and nature. . . . The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of Science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his

⁴¹ BL, xii, pp. 134, 160; xiii, p. 167.

⁴² Ibid., xiv, pp. 171-172, 173-174.

solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion."⁴³

Speaking in Chapter XVII of Wordsworth's critical tenets, Coleridge objects to the poet's rule that metrical diction ought to be "from the mouths of men in real life." This, he argues, applies only to some classes of poetry Even in these instances, it does not wholly apply, according to Coleridge; and since the rule is unsound, it should not be held.⁴⁴

In the next chapter, Coleridge considers Wordsworth's identification of the language of prose and poetry as nearly synonymous. He compares the distinction between the language of prose and that of conversation to that between reading and talking. Coleridge names the 1807 poems, "Alice Fell," "The Beggars," and "The Sailor's Mother" as pieces which might, more felicitously, have been written in prose.⁴⁵

This leads him to a discussion of meter as to definition ("a stimulant of the attention"), question ("Why is the attention to be thus stimulated?"), response ("I write in metre because I am about to use a language different from that of prose"), condition (" . . . whatever else is combined with

⁴³ PW, II, 395, 396.

⁴⁴ BL, xvii, p. 189.

⁴⁵ Ibid., xviii, pp. 203, 209.

metre must, though it be not itself essentially poetic, have nevertheless some property in common with poetry as an intermedium of affinity . . ."), organic principle ("all parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more important and essential parts"), and conclusion ("there may be, is and ought to be, an essential difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition").⁴⁶

Years later, Wordsworth told Isabella Fenwick that "the small critics" had ridiculed him for the subject matter and treatment of "Alice Fell." He removed the poem from his collected works after 1815, restoring it in 1836 at the request of his son-in-law, Edward Quillinan (See Chapter V, p.158).⁴⁷ As variants in "Alice Fell" indicate, Wordsworth made some rather obvious attempts to render the later text clear and precise. There is economy of expression in lines 3-4, 18, 23, 29, and 32. Wordsworth achieves an approximation to Coleridge's definition of metrical diction in the revised lines 15-16, where he changes the indirect word order to direct. While sustaining indirect word order, he clarifies the expression by the interposition of "Said I" (18) and by the removal of "sob after sob" (38) to the following line. (See Chapter V, pp. 159-60).

In the 1828 letter to Barron Field (See Chapter III, pp. 107-108), Wordsworth also discusses "The Beggars," a poem which Coleridge would have preferred to read in prose as a moral treatise or a travel piece. Here frequently revised lines 2-6 tend, subsequently, to present a picture rather

⁴⁶ BL, xviii, pp. 209-211-212.

⁴⁷ PW, I, 359n.

than an account of the woman. Changes in lines 5, 7 and 8 remove unnecessary personal references from the original text. Before 1820, the poet altered the text up to line 30. Later and less material changes, principally those occurring in lines 31-38, appeared in 1827. Revisions in "The Beggars" seem to represent concessions to Coleridge's criticism in Biographia Literaria, especially to his idea of the functions of language and meter.

"The Beggars"

1807		Later
She had a tall Man's height, or more;	1	Before me as the Wanderer stood,
No bonnet screen'd her from the heat;	2	No bonnet screened her from the heat;
A long drab-colour'd Cloak she wore,	3	Nor claimed she service from the hood
A Mantle reaching to her feet:	4	Of a blue mantle, to her feet
What other dress she had I could not know;	5	Depending with a graceful flow;
Only she wore a Cap that was as white as snow. (MS., 1807-1820)	6	Only she wore a cap pure as unsullied snow. (1827)
	1	Before my eyes a Wanderer stood;
	2	Her face from summer's noon-day heat
	3	Nor [No 1836-1843] bonnet shaded, nor the hood
	4	Of that [the 1836-1843] blue cloak, which to her feet
	5	Depended with a graceful flow;
	6	Only she wore a cap as white as new-fallen snow. (1832-1843)

- 1 She had a tall man's
height or more;
- 2 And while, 'mid April's
noontide heat,
- 3 A long blue cloak the
vagrant wore,
- 4 A mantle reaching to her
feet
- 5 No bonnet screened her
lofty brow,
- 6 Only she wore a cap as
white as new fallen
snow (MS-C)

- 1 She had a tall man's
height or more;
- 2 Her face from summer's
noontide heat
- 3 No bonnet shaded, but
she wore
- 4 A mantle, to her very
feet
- 5 Descending with a grace-
ful flow,
- 6 And on her head a cap as
white as new-fallen
snow (1845)

"The Beggars" (2)

1807

In all my walks, through
field or town,
Such Figure had I never
seen:
Her face was of Egyptian
brown:
Fit person was she for a
Queen,
(MS., 1807-1820)

Later

- 7 Her skin was of Egyptian
brown:
- 8 Haughty as if her eye
had seen
- 9 Its own light to a
distance thrown,
- 10 She towered, fit person
for a Queen
(1827 on)

Before me begging did she
 stand,
 Pouring out sorrows like
 a sea;
 Grief after grief: --
 on English land
 Such woes I knew could
 never be;
 (MS., 1807-1820)

13 Her suit no faltering
 scruples checked;
 14 Forth did she pour,
 in current free,
 15 Tales that could challenge
 no respect
 16 But from a blind
 credulity;
 (1827)

13 She begged an alms;
 no scruple checked
 14 The current of her
 ready plea
 15 Words that could challenge
 no respect
 16 But from a blind
 credulity;
 (1832-1843)

13 Advancing, forth she
 stretched her hand
 14 And begged an alms
 with doleful plea
 15 That ceased not;
 on our English land
 16 Such woes, I knew,
 could never be;
 (After 1843)

Two Brothers seem'd they,
 eight and ten years old;
 And like that Woman's face
 as gold
 is like to gold.
 (MS., 1807-1815)

29 In their fraternal features
 I could trace
 Unquestionable lines of
 that wild Suppliant'
 face.
 (1820 on)

"The Beggars" (3)

1807

Later

- 31 Yet they, so blithe of heart,
 seemed fit
 32 For finest tasks of
 earth or air:
 33 Wings let them have,
 and they might flit
 34 Precursors to Aurora's
 car,
 35 Scattering fresh flowers;
 though happier far,
 I ween,
 36 To hunt their fluttering
 game o'er rock and
 level green
 (Added in 1827)

They bolted on me thus,
 and lo!
 (MS., 1807-1820)

- 31 They dart across my path --
 but lo!
 (1827 on)

"Nay but I gave her pence,
 and she
 will buy you bread."
 (MS., 1807-1820)

- 36 I looked reproof- they
 saw -- but neither hung
 his head.
 (1827 on)

"Sweet boys, you're telling
 me a lie;
 (MS., 1807-1820, 1836-1840)

- 38 "Sweet boys, Heaven hears
 that rash reply"
 (1827-1832)

- 38 "Sweet boys! you're
 telling me a lie;
 (1845)

Off to some other play
 they both together flew.
 (MS., 1807-1820)

- 42 Off to some other play
 the joyous Vagrants
 flew!
 (1827 on)

Also in "The Sailor's Mother," Wordsworth seems to accede to Coleridge's opinions about the appropriateness of language and meter: "Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting however the reflections are that are capable of being drawn by a philosophic mind from the thoughts or incidents of the poem, the metre itself must often become feeble."⁴⁹ Wordsworth revised lines 14-16 in 1820, and he again altered these lines for the 1836 and subsequent editions. Having changed lines 19-21 by 1820, he replaced the original 1807 lines for the 1832 and later editions. Of the three 1807 stanzas (lines 19-36) which Coleridge quoted and criticized in Biographia Literaria, Wordsworth considerably altered the text, but retained one stanza (lines 25-30) in which he changed only line 30. Lines 23, 30, 33, and 36 possibly changed as a result of Coleridge's criticism, were revised not in 1820 but in the 1827 edition. This is the case with each of the three 1807 poems which Coleridge criticized as prosaic in theme and language.

"The Sailor's Mother"

1807	Later
With the first word I had to spare I said to her, "Beneath your cloak What's that which on your arm you bear?" (Also 1815)	14 "What treasure" said I, "do you bear 15 Beneath the covert of your Cloak, 16 Protected from the cold damp air? (1820-1832)

⁴⁹ BL, xviii, p. 209.

1807	Later
I had a Son, who many a day Sail'd on the seas; but he is dead; In Denmark he was cast away; (Also 1815, 1832 on)	19 I had a son-the waves might roar 20 He feared them not, a Sailor gay! 21 But he will cross the waves no more; (1820)
And I have been as far as Hull, to see What clothes he might have left, or other property.	22 And I have travelled far as Hull, to see 23 (1815) 23 And I have travelled weary miles to see 24 If aught which he had owned might still remain for me. (1827 on)
As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind. (Also 1815, 1820)	30 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind. (1827 on)
Till he came back again; and there (Also 1815, 1820)	33 And pipe its song in safety; -there (1827 on)
I trail it with me, ... (Also 1815, 1820)	36 I bear it with me, ... (1827 on)

Having concluded his considerations of meter, Coleridge states that while Wordsworth did not achieve the language "taken from the mouths of men in real life" as prescribed in his Preface, the poet attained a "most individualized and characteristic" diction.⁴⁹ Coleridge regards as typically Wordsworthian lines from the 1807 poem, "My Heart Leaps up;" and he quotes five stanzas (lines 46-70) of "The Blind Highland Boy," terming this passage "exquisite description."⁵⁰ Wordsworth altered these lines.

⁴⁹ BL, xx, p. 229.

⁵⁰ Ibid., xx, pp. 230-231.

As an example of the poet's typical language in "more elevated compositions," Coleridge cites lines 138-164 of "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle," which Wordsworth left unchanged, except for the following:⁵¹

<u>1807-1836</u>		<u>1845</u>
Alas! the fervent Harper	(157)	Alas! the impassioned
did not know		minstrel did not know
That for a tranquil Soul the	(158)	How, by Heaven's grace,
Lay was framed,		this Clifford's heart
.....		was framed:
Who, long compelled in humble		How he, long forced in
walks to go,	(159)	humble walks to go,

Among felicitous passages, Coleridge refers again to the description of the sea-loch in "The Blind Highland Boy." Even out of context, some of Wordsworth's single lines and passages are eminently beautiful, according to Coleridge, who seeks positively to evaluate Wordsworth's poetic characteristics.⁵²

Mention of "unraised and naked" language in "Fidelity" points up a disparity between Wordsworth's poetic theory and practice. In sharp contrast with the homeliness of theme are the "great objects and elevated conceptions" of lines 25-33 which Wordsworth never altered.⁵³ Compared with the three preceding lines (58-61) lines 62-65 indicate to Coleridge that the poet is here "out of his element."⁵⁴

⁵¹ BL, xx, p. 234.

⁵² Ibid., xx, p. 25.

⁵³ Ibid., xxii, p. 246.

⁵⁴ Ibid., xxii, p. 247.

Dated 1806, "Fidelity" did not appear in MS M. Thirty-two lines in this poem were deleted between the MS and the 1807 text. These originally appeared as follows: sixteen between lines 41-2; eight after line 49; and another eight between lines 57-8.⁵⁵

First among occasional, although characteristic, defects in Wordsworth's poetry, according to Coleridge, is stylistic inconstancy, involving abrupt instances of "anticlimax" or "hyperclimax." As cases in point, Coleridge here mentions "The Blind Highland Boy," "The Emigrant Mother," "To a Sky-Lark," and "Resolution and Independence," which Wordsworth discussed in the long critical letter to Barron Field (See Chapter III, pp. 106-12).⁵⁶

From "The Blind Highland Boy," Coleridge unfavorably contrasts lines 116-125 with other passages which he previously cited as "exquisite description" (p. 241). He also objects to Wordsworth's choice of a household tub, and for this the poet later substituted a turtle shell (1815).⁵⁷ Charles Lamb criticized the substitution of the shell (See Chapter III, p. 98).⁵⁸ And in a letter to Barron Field, Wordsworth admitted misgivings at having altered the original.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ PW, IV, 81-82n.

⁵⁶ BL, xxii, p. 249-50.

⁵⁷ LY, I, #829, 308-309.

⁵⁸ Lamb, Letters, I, 283, April 7, 1815.

⁵⁹ PW, III, 447-448.

Coleridge, who insisted that a poet prepare his readers for the language of emotion or excitement, believed that Wordsworth had not entirely achieved this in "The Emigrant Mother."⁸⁰ Wordsworth altered comparatively few passages in this long poem (ninety-five lines). After 1807, three passages (lines 9-12, 63-65, and 71-72) underwent successive changes, each apparently indicating the poet's attempts to maintain more effective dignity of tone. For the 1820 edition, the poet altered lines 55 and 64, of which Coleridge had specifically disapproved.

"The Emigrant Mother"

1807

Once did I see her clasp
the Child about,
 And take it to herself;
 and I, next day,
 Wish'd in my native tongue
 to fashion out
 Such things as she unto this
 child might say:

Later

9 Once did I see her take
 with fond embrace
 10 This infant to herself;
 and I next day,
 11 Endeavoured in my native
 tongue to trace
 12 Such things as she unto
 this Child might say:
 (1820)

9 Once having seen her take
 with fond embrace
 10 This infant to herself,
 I framed a lay,
 Endeavouring...
 (1827-1836)

9 Once having seen her
 clasp with fond embrace
 10 This Child, I chanted to
 myself a lay,
 11 Endeavouring, in our
 English tongue, to
 trace
 (After 1836)

⁸⁰ BL, xxii, p. 248-49.

1807	Later
'Tis gone-forgotten-let me do My best-there was a smile or two.	55 'Tis gone-like dreams that we forget; 56 There was a smile or two- yet-yet (After 1815)
For they <u>confound</u> me: <u>as it is,</u> <u>I have forgot those smiles</u> <u>of his.</u>	63 For they <u>bewilder</u> me- <u>even now</u> 64 <u>His smiles are lost</u> - I <u>know not how!</u> (1820) 63 For they <u>confound</u> me; where-where is 64 That last, that sweetest smile of his? (After 1827)
My Darling, she is not to me What thou art!	71 But to <u>my heart</u> she cannot be 72 What thou art! (1836)
	71 Yet does <u>my yearning</u> <u>heart</u> to thee 72 <u>Turn rather,</u> (After 1836)
Blessings upon that <u>quiet</u> face,	83 Blessings upon that <u>soft,</u> <u>warm</u> face, (After 1820)

Wordsworth expanded the twenty-nine lines in "To a Sky-Lark" (Up with me!") to thirty-one in 1827, when he altered the 1807 ending. The poet wrote, "...I became indifferent to this poem, which Coleridge used severely to condemn and to treat contemptuously. I like, however, the beginning of it so well that, for the sake of that, I tacked to it the respectably-tame conclusion."⁸¹

⁸¹ PW, II, 491n.

Coleridge notes lines 18-25 and 28-31 as incongruous passages preceding and following "two noble lines" (23-24).⁸² Despite the criticism, Wordsworth eventually removed only lines 25-26.

In 1820, the poet lightly altered the repetitive line 14, and in 1827 he used more specific terminology in lines 26 and 27.

"To a Sky-Lark"

1807		Later
With all the heav'ns about thee ringing,	5	With clouds and sky about thee ringing, (1827 on)
I have walk'd through wilder- nesses dreary,	8	With
And today my heart is weary;	9	
Had I now the soul of a Faery,	10	
Up to thee would I fly.	11	
There is madness about thee,	12	
and joy divine	13	
In that song of thine;	14	Lift me, guide me, high and high (After 1820)
Up with me, up with me, high and high,		
.....		
To thy banqueting-place in the sky!	15	
Joyous as Morning,	16	
Thou art laughing and scorning;	17	
Thou has a nest for they love and thy rest:	18	
And, though little troubled with sloth,	19	
Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth	20	(LINES 8-25 Omitted: 1827; Restored: 1832)
To be such a Traveller as I	21	
Happy, happy Liver!	22	
With a soul as strong as a mountain River,	23	
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,	24	

⁸² BL, xxii, p. 250.

Hearing thee, or else some
other,
As merry a Brother,

26 Alas! my journey,
rugged and uneven,
27 Through prickly moors
or dusty ways must
wind:

(After 1820)

I on the earth will go plodding
on,
By myself, cheerfully, till the
day is done

(1807-1820)

28 But hearing thee, or
others of thy kind,
29 As full of gladness
and as free of heaven,
30 I, with my fate con-
tented, will plod on,
31 And hope for higher
raptures, when life's
day is done.

(1827 on)

Although Coleridge lists "Resolution and Independence" or "The Leech Gatherer" among Wordsworth's poems in which he observes instances of "matter-of-factness", the second characteristic defect, he also observes that the poem contains specimens of practically every defect and excellence in the poet's writing.^{a3} This defect "contravening the essence of poetry," implies unnecessary minuteness and superfluous details. Coleridge praises lines 43-46 of "Resolution and Independence," at the same time lamenting "but one Burns among the shepherds of Scotland, and not a single poet of humble life among those of English lakes and mountains;"^{a4}

^{a3} BL, xxii, pp. 250-251.

^{a4} Ibid., xxii, pp. 251, 255.

Wordsworth's revision of line 29 possibly represents an attempt to avoid matter-of-factness. He avoided repetition in the altered lines 53-54, and omitted lines 57-63 which Coleridge considered indicative of inconstancy of style. Nevertheless, the poet retained lines 89 and 95, of which the critic had also disapproved.

To an "undue predilection for the dramatic form in certain poems," Wordsworth's third characteristic defect, Coleridge attributes "incongruity of style" and a "species of ventriloquism."

The 1807 poem, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle," seems characteristic of the fourth defect which Coleridge cites in the poetry of Wordsworth as "an intensity of feeling disproportionate to such knowledge and value of the objects described as can be fairly anticipated of men in general."⁸⁵ The few changes which Wordsworth made in this poem constitute a shift from general to more definite words as indicated in the underlined sections below.

" Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle"

1807		Later
And all old <u>sorrows</u> now are ended.-	14	And all old <u>troubles</u> now are ended.- (1815)
Though she is but a lonely Tower!	37	Though lonely, a <u>deserted</u> Tower, (After 1843)

⁸⁵ BL, xxii, p. 258 and note.

Silent, deserted of her best, Without an Inmate or a Guest, (1807-1815)	(38) (37)	To vacancy and silence left;
	(39) (38)	Of all her guardian sons bereft (1820-1843)
Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee, And a cheerful company,	(118) (116)	Yet lacks not friends for <u>simple</u> glee,
	(119) (117)	Nor yet for higher sympathy (1845)
That learn'd of him submissive ways;	(120)	
And comforted his private days. (1807-1843)	(121)	
They moved about in open sight, To and fro, for his delight. (1807-1832)	(130) (126)	And glancing, gleaming, dark, or bright,
	(131) (127)	Moves to and fro, for his delight. (After 1836)
He can whisper words of might.	(141) (137)	<u>He could</u> whisper words of might (1827-1836)
		<u>His tongue</u> could whisper words of might (1840)
Alas! the <u>fervent</u> Harper did not know That for a tranquil Soul the Lay was framed, ...	(161) (157)	Alas! the <u>impassioned</u> <u>minstrel</u> did not know
	(162)	How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart was framed:
Who, long <u>compell'd</u> in humble walks to go,	(163)	How he, long <u>forced</u> in humble walks to go, (After 1845)

Coleridge lists "thoughts and images too great for the subject" or "mental bombast" as the fifth defect sometimes apparent in the poetry of Wordsworth. As an instance of these "thoughts and images too great for the subject" Coleridge cites lines which Wordsworth never changed,

"And then my heart with pleasure fills,/ And dances with the daffodils"
(17-18) from "I Wandered. . . ." ⁶⁶

Another poem which, in the opinion of Coleridge, bore too heavy a weight was "Gipsies," originally a twenty-four line piece. Coleridge had specifically criticized lines 9-11 and 13-24 of this poem; and although Wordsworth substantially retained the lines mentioned, he relieved the harsh sentiment in line 22 and simplified the awkward wording in lines 23-24. ⁶⁷ In 1820, the poet added to "Gipsies" four additional lines, 25-28.

			"Gipsies"	
	1807			Later
-Twelve hours, twelve		9	(LINES UNCHANGED)	
bounteous hours,				
are gone while I				
Have been a Traveller		10		
under open sky,				
Much witnessing of		11		
change and cheer,				
Yet as I left I find		12		
them here!				
The weary Sun betook		13		
himself to rest,				
-Then issued Vesper		14		
from the fulgent West,				
Outshining like a		15		
visible God				
The glorious path		16		
in which he trod.				

⁶⁶ BL, xxii, p. 259.

⁶⁷ Ibid., xxii, pp. 259-260.

And now, ascending,	17	
after one dark hour,		
And one night's diminution	18	
of her power,		
Behold the might Moon!	19	
this way		
She looks as if at them	20	
but they		
Regard not her:-oh better	21	
wrong and strife,		
Better vain deeds or evil	22	(By nature transient)
than such life!		than such torpid life!
		(1820)
	22	(By nature transient)
		than this torpid life
		(After 1820)
The silent Heavens	23	Life which the very stars
have goings on;		reprove
The stars have tasks -	24	As on their silent tasks
but these have none.		they move!
(Also 1815)		(1820 and after)
	25	Yet, witness all that stirs
		in heaven or earth!
	26	In scorn I speak not;-
		they are what their birth
	27	And breeding suffer
		them to be;
	28	Wild outcasts of
		society!
		(After 1820)

Observing instances of "mental bombast" in Wordsworth's "Ode," Coleridge objects to the poet's references to the child as "Thou best Philosopher" (110) and "mighty Prophet!" "Seer blest!" (114). The critic also disapproves of the doctrinal and ascetical implications of lines 120-123 which he regards as "the frightful notion of lying awake in the grave!"⁶⁸

⁶⁸ BL, xxii, p. 262. There is also an allusion to this notion in Dorothy's Journal (See Chapter II, p.).

"Ode"

1807		Later
Thou best Philosopher,	(110) (111)	
who yet dost keep	(111) (112)	
Thy heritage, thou Eye	(111) (112)	
among the blind,		
That, deaf and silent,	(112) (113)	
read'st the eternal		
deep,		
Haunted for ever by	(113) (114)	
the eternal mind,-		
Mighty Prophet!	(114) (115)	
Seer blest!		
On whom those truths	(115) (116)	
do rest,		
Which we are toiling	(116) (117)	
all our lives to find;		
	(118)	In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy	(117) (119)	Thou, over whom thy
Immortality		Immortality
Broods like the Day, a	(118) (120)	Broods like the Day, a
Master o'er a Slave,		Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not	(119) (121)	A Presence which is not
to be put by;		to be put by;
		(1820 on)
To whom the grave	(120)	
Is but a lonely bed	(121)	(OMITTED AFTER 1815)
without the sense or		
sight		
Of day or the warm light,		
A place of thought where	(123)	
we in waiting lie;		
Of untam'd pleasures, on	(125) (123)	Of heaven-born freedom on
thy Being's height,		thy being's height,
Of Childhood, whether	(140) (138)	Of Childhood, whether
fluttering or at rest,		busy or at rest,
With new-born hope for	(141) (139)	With new-fledged hope still
ever in his breast:-		fluttering in his breast:-

Having concluded his examination of the characteristic defects apparent in the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge described six characteristic excellences, beginning with "austere purity of language . . . a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning;" ⁶⁹ He mentions no specific examples of this quality.

As a second characteristic excellence, Coleridge notes "a correspondent weight and sanity of the thoughts and sentiments -- won . . . from the poet's own meditative observation." ⁷⁰ According to Coleridge, lines 9-24 of "Star Gazers" express such valid poetical insights. ⁷¹ Wordsworth left these lines virtually unchanged.

"Star Gazers"

1807		Later
Yet, Show-man, where	9	
can lie the cause?		
Shall thy		
Implement have blame,		
A Boaster, that when he	10	
is tried, fails,		
And is put to shame?		
Or is it good as others	11	
are, and be their		
eyes in fault?		
Their eyes, or minds?	12	Their eyes, or minds? or,
or, finally, is this		finally, is yon resplendent
resplendent Vault?		vault?
		(1832 on)
As nothing of that	13	
radiant pomp so good		

⁶⁹ BL, xxii, p. 263

⁷⁰ Ibid., xxii, p. 265.

⁷¹ Ibid., xxii, p. 266.

as we have here?		
Or gives a thing but	14	
small delight that		
never can be dear?		
The Silver Moon with all	15	
her Vales, and		
Hills of mightiest fame,		
Do they betray us when	16	Doth she betray us when
they're seen? and		they're seen? or
are they but a name?		are they but a name?
Or is it rather that Conceit	17	
rapacious is and strong,		
And bounty never yields so much	18	
but it seems to do her wrong?		
Or is it, that when human	19	
Souls a journey		
long have had,		
And are returned into	20	
themselves, they		
cannot but be sad?		
Or must we be constrain'd	21	
to think that these		
Spectators rude,		
Poor in estate, of manners	22	
base, men of the		
multitude,		
Have souls which never yet	23	
have ris'n, and		
therefore prostate lie?		
No, no, this cannot be-	24	
Men thirst for power		
and majesty!		

Also mentioned in connection with the second poetic excellence which Coleridge remarked in Wordsworth's work is the final stanza of "The Small Celandine." Coleridge approved of the reflective quality of this stanza, unchanged by Wordsworth.⁷²

⁷² BL, xxii, p. 267.

"The Small Celandine"

To be a Prodigal's Favorite - then,
 worse truth,
 A miser's Pensioner -
 behold our lot!
 O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
 Age might but take the things
 Youth needed not (21-24)

Although Coleridge discussed Wordsworth's sonnets in connection with the sixth characteristic excellence (see pp.261-4) he named "I griev'd for Buonaparte" as another indication of the poet's second excellence.

"Eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry" is the third excellence which Coleridge describes as "the sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs."⁷³

Quoting from "The Green Linnet," Coleridge lists as the fourth characteristic excellence of Wordsworth's poetry "the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions as taken immediately from nature."⁷⁴ Despite the critic's praise of "The Green Linnet," Wordsworth changed the position as well as the text of lines 2-4 (1807) to 6-8 (1815) and deleted the lines in 1820. Successive revisions of lines 33-34 may have been occasioned, to some extent, by the earlier criticism of Richard Mant who parodied these lines in The Simpliciad (See Chapter VI, p.196).

⁷³ BL, xxii, p. 268.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

After 1820, Wordsworth rearranged the word order and clarified the meaning in lines 35-36 and simplified the clause pattern in lines 37-40.

"The Green Linnet"

1807		Later
The May is come again: - how sweet To sit upon my Orchard-seat! The Birds and Flowers once more to greet, My last year's Friends together: My thoughts they all by turns employ; A whispering Leaf is now my joy, And whispering birds will be the toy That doth my fancy tether.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 d (7)	Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed Their snow-white blossoms on my head, With brightest sunshine round me spread Of spring's unclouded weather, In this sequestered nook how sweet To sit upon my orchard- seat! And birds and flowers once more to greet, My last year's friends together. And Flowers and Birds once more to greet, (1815-1820)
While thus before my eyes he gleams, A Brother of the leaves he seems;	33 34 (34) (33) (34)	My sight he dazzles, half deceives, A bird so like the dancing leaves (1827) A Brother of the dancing leaves (1832-1836) The Bird my dazzled sight deceives, A Brother of the dancing leaves. (1840)
	(33) (34)	My dazzled sight he oft deceives, A Brother of the dancing leaves;

When in a moment forth	35	Then flits, and from the
he teems		cottage-eaves
His little song	36	Pours forth his song
in gushes:		in gushes;
As if it pleas'd him	37	As if by that exulting
to disdain		strain
And mock the Form	38	He mocked and treated
which he did feign,		with disdain
While he was dancing	39	The voiceless Form he
with the train		chose to feign,
Of leaves among the	40	While fluttering
bushes		in the bushes.
(To 1820)		(1845)

Commenting further on the fourth characteristic excellence of Wordsworth's poetry, Coleridge mentions "The Kitten and the Falling Leaves," virtually unchanged by the poet. Coleridge's notebook entry of January, 1804, containing a résumé of some images in this poem, is mentioned above (See Chapter II, p. 69). In "To the Cuckoo," another title which Coleridge includes in his listing of poems exemplifying the fourth excellence, Wordsworth made few and insignificant changes between the 1807 and later versions.

To Coleridge, "A meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; . . ." constitutes Wordsworth's fifth characteristic excellence. Specifically, Coleridge finds this combination of elements in "The Affliction of Margaret," which he describes as "the most affecting composition," one which " . . . no parent can read without a tear."⁷⁵

As the sixth excellence found in the poetry of Wordsworth Coleridge mentions the poet's "gift of imagination in the highest and strictest sense

⁷⁵ BL, xxii, p. 270.

of the word."⁷⁶ Comparing Wordsworth's imaginative power with that of Shakespeare and of Milton, Coleridge transcribed lines 131-140 (1807), 127-130 (1850) of "Resolution and Independence."⁷⁷ Wordsworth changed none of these lines.

"Resolution and Independence"

"Once I could meet with them on every side; (131)
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place, (134)
The Old Man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seem'd to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed. (140)

Coleridge mentioned "Elegiac Stanzas" as illustrating Wordsworth's imaginative gift. The poet made comparatively few alterations in the poem.

"Elegiac Stanzas"

1807		Later
The light that never was, on sea or land,	(15)(14)	Of lustre, known to neither sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream; (Also 1832-1850)	(16)(15)	But borrowed from the youthful Poet's dream; (1820)
Thou should'st have seem'd a treasure-house, a mine (1815)		Thou shoul'st have seemed a treasure-house divine (1845)

⁷⁶ BL, xxii, p. 271.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Of peaceful years; a	22	
chronicle of heaven:-		(LINES 21-24 NOT
Of all the sunbeams that	23	INCLUDED 1820-1843)
did ever shine		
The very sweetest had to	24	
thee been given.		
A faith, a trust, that	32	A steadfast peace that
could not be betray'd		might not be
		betrayed.
		(After 1837)

Virtually unchanged between the original and the final versions were stanzas v and ix of the "Ode," which Coleridge also considers as revealing Wordsworth's "gift of the imagination."⁷⁸

"Ode"

(v) Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:	(58-1807)
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,	
Hath had elsewhere its setting,	
And cometh from afar:	
Not in entire forgetfulness,	
And not in utter nakedness,	
But trailing clouds of glory do we come	
From God, who is our home:	
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!	
Shades of the prison-house begin to close	
Upon the growing Boy,	
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,	
He sees it in his joy;	
The youth, who daily farther from the East	
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,	
And by the vision splendid	
Is on his way attended;	
At length the Man perceives it die away,	
And fade into the light of common day.	(76)
.	

⁷⁸ BL, xxii, pp. 272-273.

(ix) O joy! that in our embers (132-1807)
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhoos, whether fluttering or at rest,
 With new-born hope for ever in his breast:-

Not for these I raise
 The songs of thanks and praise;
 But for these obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings,
 Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realiz'd.
 High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surpriz'd: (150)

But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish us, and make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never:

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!

 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore. (170).

Wordsworth and Coleridge shared interest in the sonnet form.

Among the 1807 sonnets which Coleridge names as exemplifying the "gift of imagination" on the part of Wordsworth, 'Methought I saw the foot-steps of a throne" reflects some changes. The poet chose "sit" (93) in place of the archaic form, "sate," after 1807; yet, in 1840, for 'mount" (9) he substituted "clomb" which he retained in the 1845 edition.

'Methought"

<u>1807</u>		<u>Later</u>
Nor view of him who sate thereon allow'd;	3	Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed; (After 1820)
	9	Those steps I mounted as [1837]/ while the vapours gave (1838)
I seem'd to mount those steps the vapours gave	9	Those steps I clomb; the opening vapours gave (1840)
	9	Those steps I clomb; the mists before me gave (1845)

Coleridge praised as "imaginative" the 1807 sonnet beginning "It is a beauteous evening." In 1837 and 1840 Wordsworth substituted different opening lines, although he reverted to the original line in 1845. From 1836, the poet replaced "is on" (5) with "broods o'er;" and in 1837, he used the expression, "But list," ~~(6)~~ instead of the 1807-1832 form, "listed," to which he returned from 1840 on. Wordsworth altered line 9 in 1840, and changed line 10 three times in 1837, 1838, and 1840 before reverting to the original form.

"It is a beauteous Evening"

<u>1807</u>		Later
It is a beauteous Evening, calm and free; (1807-1832, 1845)	1	Air sleeps, -- from strife or stir the clouds are free, (1837-1838)
	1	A fairer face of evening cannot be, (1840)
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea (1807-1832)	5	The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea: (1836 on)
Listen! the mighty Being is awake (1807-1832, 1840 on)	6	But list the might Being is awake (1837-1838)

Dear Child! dear Girl! that	96	Dear Child! dear happy Girl!
walks't with me here,		if thou appear
If thou appears't untouch'd by	10	Heedless -- untouch'd with awe
solemn thought,		or serious thought
(1807-1832, 1845 on)		(1837)
	10	Heedless -- unawed, untouch'd
		with serious thought
		(1838)
	10	If thou appears't untouch'd
		by serious thought
		(1840)

Coleridge also names as exemplifying Wordsworth's sixth characteristic excellence four other sonnets from the Poems of 1807 -- "Where lies the Land," "To the River Duddon," "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," and "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland." These sonnets remained practically unchanged.⁷⁹

According to Kathleen Coburn, Wordsworth noted in the preface to his 1815 edition that Coleridge "publicly reprehended" George Steevens for his "flippant insensibility" to Wordsworth's sonnets.⁸⁰ This alleged reprimand supposedly occurred during Coleridge's lectures at the Royal Institution in 1808.

⁷⁹ BL, xxii, p. 272.

⁸⁰ CN, II, 2428, 17.2.

Biographia Literaria, Chapter XV, concerning Shakespeare, concluded with four lines from Wordsworth's 1807 sonnet, "It is not to be thought of."⁸¹ By 1827, Wordsworth had simplified the diction and the word order in this sonnet as follows:

<u>1807</u>	Later
Road by which all might come and go that would, And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands (Also 1820)	Roused though it be full often to a mood Which spurns the check of salutary bands, (1827 on)

The Friend, September 21, 1809, contained a reprint of Wordsworth's sonnet, "November 1806," in which the poet made only a single word change in 1820, when he substituted "servile" (12) for "venal."

Wordsworth never altered "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland," which he described in a letter to Richard Sharp as the "best sonnet I have ever written" (See Chapter III, p. 92).

In the 1829 edition of his poems, Coleridge headed "Poems occasioned by Political Events" with Wordsworth's sonnet opening, "When I have borne in memory."⁸²

Chapter XXII of Biographia Literaria indicates two aspects in the critical genius of Coleridge. He had an extraordinary ability for accommodating his critical faculties to the creative impulse of the poet whose work he was discussing; and he could express his critical insights clearly and convincingly with his rare gift of language.

⁸¹ BL, xv, p. 180.

⁸² 1807, pp. 408-409.

Nevertheless, although his critical approach was primarily intuitive, his broad range did not provide for precision of detail. Therefore, while Coleridge's critical impulses was seldom faulty, he rarely achieved the degree of precision commensurate with his soundness of judgment.

Because Coleridge deals, in Biographia Literaria, with general theory and specific instances, he can quote one poem or single parts of one poem to illustrate both defects and excellences. This ambiguity seems to argue, not so much ambivalence on the part of the poet or the poem as overaccommodation and too comprehensive an appreciation on the part of the critic.

Coleridge's listing of Wordsworth's defects and excellences seem less a scientific critical evaluation than a sound statement of individual critical preference. The defects which Coleridge lists may be said in a sense, to spring from Wordsworth's constitutional faults. While the poetic excellences, as Coleridge states them, apply to Wordsworth at his most felicitous, they constitute generalities covering types and seldom specifically proportioned to individual examples.

In 1817, a review of Biographia Literaria appeared in the Literary Gazette or Journal of Belles Lettres, Art, Politics, and Fashion. The reviewer objected strongly to Coleridge's prolonged consideration of Wordsworth's defects and excellences in the second volume. He said, "One volume expunged,--the other would be highly instructive and enter-

taining; but, as there are two, we must repeat our astonishment that the extremes of what is agreeable and disgusting can be so intimately blended by the same mind."⁸³

Coleridge explained his critical position in Biographia Literaria in an 1819 letter: "The writer, ought (as a man, I mean) to recollect, that Mr. Wordsworth for full sixteen years has been assailed, weekly, monthly, and quarterly, with every species of wanton detraction, and contempt--that my 'Literary Life' was the first Critique which acknowledging and explaining his faults (as a Poet) weighed them fairly against his Merits (and is there a Poet now alive, who will pretend to believe himself equal in Genius to Wordsworth?), that during all these years Mr. Wordsworth made no answer, displayed no resentment...."⁸⁴ In a lecture "On the Schoolmen and Scholastic Philosophy" in 1819, Coleridge concludes that it is a mistake to idolize the past and an even more serious mistake to condemn it. In this respect, he comments, "Wordsworth has beautifully said, 'The Child is Father of the man,' and I would wish men to be taught to be, 'Bound each to each in natural' charity."⁸⁵

Wordsworth and Coleridge made a continental journey together in

⁸³ Literary Gazette, xxix (Saturday, August 9, 1817), 85.

⁸⁴ CL, IV, #1195, 938 (To Taylor and Hessey; [22 April 1819]).

⁸⁵ The Philosophical Lectures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed, Kathleen Coburn (New York, 1949) p. 284. (Lecture IX, February 22, 1819).

1828, and in 1832 Wordsworth wrote to William Rowan Hamilton in retrospective praise of Coleridge: "It gives me much pleasure that you and Coleridge have met, and that you were not disappointed in the conversation of a man from whose writings you had previously drawn so much delights and improvement. He and my beloved sister are the two beings to whom my intellect is most indebted, and they are now proceeding, as it were, pari passu, along the path of sickness, I will not say towards the grave, but I trust towards a blessed immortality."⁸⁶

Despite the fact that Wordsworth's interest in Coleridge's post-publication criticism of the 1807 volumes is neither extensive in range nor dramatic in poetic impact, it seems careful, sometimes calculated, Wordsworth was indebted to Coleridge for positive assistance during their early association, when the inspiration and encouragement of Coleridge has drawn out poetic power and tapped the springs of poetic genius in Wordsworth. Frequently in Biographia Literaria and occasionally in The Friend, Coleridge's post-publication criticism seemed that of an editor who must now read with the eyes of many and will comprehend only what is thoroughly comprehensible. In Biographia Literaria, Coleridge criticised Wordsworth's best-known 1807 pieces. His commentary in this work was far removed in spirit and in acumen from the spontaneous commentary which sprang from personal interest at the time of their earlier association.

Wordsworth's emendation of the text, after publication, was in

⁸⁶ LY, II, #1024, 625-626 (W.W. to William Rowan Hamilton, June 25 1832).

direct proportion to the general type of criticism levelled against the poems by Coleridge. Wordsworth's usual revisions of the poetry dealt primarily with word choice and word order. Seldom does he, in effect, extend or expand his original conceptions. Apparently recognizing his friend's appreciation of the poems, Wordsworth eagerly received, seriously considered, and frequently heeded the criticism of Coleridge.

According to Samuel Rogers, Wordsworth once remarked: "What is somewhere stated in print -- that I said, 'Coleridge was the only person whose intellect ever astonished me,' is quite true. His conversation was even finer in his youth than in his later days for, as he advanced in life, he became a little dreamy and hypermetaphysical."⁸⁷

On the other hand, Coleridge stated his own opinion of criticism when he wrote, "Show me any one made better by [[?]blunt/blank] Advice, and I may abate of my Dislike to it. But I have experienced the good effects of the contrary in Wordsworth's conduct to me; & in Poole & others have witnessed enough of its ill-effects to be convinced that it does little else but harm both to the Adviser & Advisee."⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers, ed. Alexander Dyce, (London, 1887), p.206

⁸⁸ CN, II, 2032-2033 21.432f99 (April 1804). See also CL, II, #598 (To James Webb Tobin, April 19th, 1804).

Conclusion

At seventy-two years of age, Wordsworth wrote to Aubrey deVere, "Rogers says of me, ... 'I read no poetry now but my own.' In respect to myself, my good old friend ought to have added that if I do read my own, it is mainly, if not entirely, to make it better... ." ¹ Referring to his most recently published edition, the poet continued, "It has called out a good deal of sorry criticism, as in truth happens to all my publications in succession and will do as long as anything of mine comes forth." ² The facts that his poems were constantly criticized and that he continually sought new insights for improving them are basic to the matter of the criticism of Wordsworth's poetry and of the poet's attitudes towards his critics.

Wordsworth's earliest published work failed to impress the public. The poet looked to his sister, his brothers, and a few close friends, like William Mathews, for acceptance and appreciation. These members of his immediate circle did not disappoint him.

Despite a separation following the death of their parents, the young Wordsworths had maintained a strong bond of unity and a keen sense of family. Understandably, William's poetic efforts were important

¹ Samuel Rogers, who prompted Lord Lonsdale to suggest that Wordsworth receive the Stamp Distributorship, declined the laureateship at Wordsworth's death.

² LY, III, #1464A, 1386, 1387 (W.W. to Aubrey deVere, Nov.16, 1842).

to Dorothy Wordsworth, whose affection and imagination were stirred by her gifted brother. As administrator of the Wordsworth finances, Richard, the eldest, maintained a somewhat detached attitude toward William's poetry; but John and Christopher shared Dorothy's enthusiasm for An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, their brother's first publication. Critical comments on these poems elicited immediate reaction from the poet (See Chapter I, pp. 21-22).

Although diffident about mentioning his poetry among strangers, Wordsworth earnestly discussed the poems with those who seemed genuinely interested in them. As a publishing poet, Wordsworth required appreciative readers for his works. As a practicing craftsman, he demanded that intimates listen to successive versions of his poems. Because his poetic consciousness was integral to his intellectual life, Wordsworth could satisfactorily share ideas only with those who heeded him in his poetic role.

With the appearance of Coleridge in the lives of the Wordsworths, the poet no longer had to sound and probe for commentary on his poetry. During the first year of their friendship, Coleridge helped to challenge and channel the poetic expression of Wordsworth, and it was on the advice of Coleridge that Wordsworth seriously explored his own literary aims and achievements.

When Lyrical Ballads appeared, a cyclic pattern of criticism of the poetry of Wordsworth began to emerge. From the first, there was an apparent lack of understanding of the poet and his poetry on the part of the critics. Later, compounded by confusion arising from disparity between prose theories and poetic applications, this lack of understanding spiraled from simplistic underestimation into extremes of philosophical complication.

In the case of Wordsworth's poetry, the direction of criticism was from abstract, general principles to concrete, specific practice. After the publication of Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth had to re-examine his text against charges of inanity and childishness. Then, heeding the advice of Coleridge, Wordsworth undertook to incorporate explanatory poetic theory in Prefaces to successive editions of these poems.³

The Prefaces to Lyrical Ballads contain Wordsworth's recollections of ideas which he and Coleridge may or may not have shared during their annus mirabilis. For Wordsworth, Coleridge provided much of the perception, assurance, and appreciation which the struggling poet needed at the time. From Wordsworth, Coleridge continually sought and never found an ideal poem produced by the inspiration and energies of an ideal poet. Such cross-purposes between poet and critic pre-figure problems later apparent between criticism and response.

³ LY, II, #1244, 910 (W.W. to William Rowan Hamilton, Jan. 4, 1838).

Much has been written about the relationship of Wordsworth's literary theories as stated in prose and applied in poetry. Many readers find it difficult to reconcile what the poet says in his poems and what he says of them in his prose. Whether they object to or favor certain characteristics of the poetry, readers vainly search the Prefaces for satisfactory explanations of these characteristics. Nevertheless, theories stated in the Prefaces do not adequately interpret the poetry; neither does the poetry satisfactorily correspond to prose theories. Wordsworth remarked, late in his life, that it was Coleridge who conceived the idea of the Prefaces (See p.27L). And in the light of his statement, the poetry which the Prefaces purport to explain must be examined on its own merits.

So should Wordsworth's response to criticism of his poetry be evaluated chiefly from the poet's viewpoint, insofar as this viewpoint may be ascertained. Incremental in development, the poet's response to criticism began with his attempts to explain his poetry and continued with the expanded 1800, 1802 and 1805 editions of Lyrical Ballads. During the course of these editions, Wordsworth raised problematical issues by failing to relate the theories in the Prefaces to the text of the poems.

Between the publication of Lyrical Ballads and that of his five volume (1820) edition, Wordsworth seemed to reserve for himself the position of an isolated artist, relying heavily on his own convictions and on those of his intimates. Although a perceptive and discriminating

craftsman, sensitive to criticism, the poet, often didactic, frequently showed himself to be stubborn and defensive. Usually disposed to react to all specific criticism of his poetry, he was inclined to accept even the personal and non-literary judgments of close friends and to disregard the opinions of others.

The history of the 1807 poems indicates that if Wordsworth revised his poems to any notable extent in deference to another's opinion, he did so at the behest of Coleridge whose poetic ideas he valued and whose literary opinion he respected.

Criticizing Wordsworth's "small poems" prior to their publication in Poems in Two Volumes, Coleridge specifically urged the poet to adopt precise terminology. Among his general critical remarks on Wordsworth's poetry, Coleridge commented in the Friend on the lack of "a true philosophical Critique."⁴

Some revisions among individual 1807 poems in the 1815 edition apparently resulted from periodical criticism which had come to Wordsworth's attention. Specifics of this criticism closely resemble points which Coleridge later codified in his remarks in Biographia Literaria. When Biographia Literaria appeared in 1817, Wordsworth was already at work on the preparation of his 1820 edition. This may have focused his attention on and heightened his sensitivity about the poems. In any case,

⁴ The Friend, V, p. 14.

criticism in Biographia Literaria evoked considerable textual response from Wordsworth.

In Biographia Literaria, Coleridge praised the conciseness and simplicity of his friend's poetry and lamented any diffuseness and ornamentation. He recommended that Wordsworth's references be direct and realistic rather than oblique and fanciful. As mentioned in Chapter VII above, Wordsworth responded positively to some of these critical strictures, for example in "Alice Fell," "The Sailor's Mother," "Beggars," and "The Blind Highland Boy." This response indicates that the poet was alert for, appreciative of, and attentive to specific points of criticism. In cases where he could not satisfactorily explain or defend his original choice, Wordsworth carefully pondered and frequently adopted individual recommendations (See Chapter III, pp. 106-13).

Wordsworth classified his poems in the 1815 edition, and later continued to add poems to the poetic canon and to distribute individual poems among various groupings (See Chapter I pp. 8 - 10). By enlarging upon this system of classification in subsequent editions of his work, the poet was obviously attempting to shift the impact of his work from immediate to topical emphasis. He thus chose to include emphases and to recognize norms implicit in such headings as "Poems of the Imagination," "Poems from Early Childhood," and "Poems of the Affections."

Except for occasional notice of the heading, "Moods of my own Mind," which appeared only in the original 1807 edition, critics seem to give

little heed to classification. An examination of the apparatus criticus in the standard text of the poet's work reveals that between 1807 and 1815, numerous minor revisions occur within poems. However, these in no way reflect the classification system, which seems to have occasioned more comment among later readers than among the poet's contemporary critics. The trend toward classification seems rather to indicate the poet's intention that the poems be read in broad contexts. It is as if Wordsworth calls the reader's attention to distinctions among the poems by topically grouping and labelling them. This, in turn, may incline critics to consider the poems as parts of a whole rather than as individual entities.

Markedly sensitive to criticism, Wordsworth responded to criticism in patterns contingent upon the person of the critic and the type of the criticism. In general, the poet may be said to react with sensitivity to any criticism of his poetry made by intimates. He usually responded in positive and literary, if not always poetic terms, to criticism expressed by poets and to specific criticism.

To Wordsworth, Coleridge's criticism proved significant and evocative. Besides reacting positively to the opinions of this friend, whose approval he wished to obtain and strove to maintain, Wordsworth sought criticism from Southey, Scott, and Lamb for whose benefit he often interpolated and explained his work. The poet also indicated interest in receiving the criticism of Crabb Robinson, Field, Rogers, and Kenyon.

Wordsworth reacted unfavorably to, ignored, or defended himself against personal invective. He paid interested attention to the opinions of a notably non-literary critic, Lady Beaumont's sister, Frances Willes Fermor, to whom he patiently explained practical points of his composition. Assuming his role as teacher, Wordsworth informed Mrs. Fermor that he believed his poems to be "destined" to do good. He then made point by point rejoinders to specific issues raised by the lady and her friends. This attitude contrasts sharply with his apparent disregard of non-literary attacks levelled against him by Byron, Shelley, and Keats, for example, with whom he might have exchanged creative insights and poetic procedures. According to these "second generation" poets, the egotism and Toryism of Wordsworth were among his more obvious and most execrable characteristics. Implicit in such criticism is an approximation, if not an identification, of Wordsworth's poetic faults with his personal failings.

Eager to know what others thought of his work, Wordsworth generally reacted to the person of the critic and to the type of the criticism. If the critic possessed literary qualifications, the poet considered his opinions carefully, except in the few but notable instances when the criticism was decidedly, if not exclusively personal.

In the case of Mrs. Fermor, Wordsworth painstakingly explained and interpolated his poetry; whereas, in another case the poet also gave the benefits of what was perhaps his most detailed explication to Barron Field,

whose amateur literary efforts brought him to the notice of Wordsworth. Mrs. Fermor's relationship to Lady Beaumont rendered criticism personally interesting to Wordsworth; and the interest indicated by Barron Field's examination and inquiry of Wordsworth's poetry evoked detailed comment from the poet.

In addition to ample textual revision, Wordsworth stated his general reaction to criticism in correspondence and conversation. Wordsworth tended to react as a professional technician to criticism of his craftsmanship. Among his revisions, Wordsworth frequently deleted offensive terms, limited repetitive phrases, simplified complicated expressions, substituted active for passive verb constructions. He also rendered general terms specific by qualifying adjectives and adverbs and by supplying concrete nouns and exact pronoun references.

Wordsworth's acute sensitivity to criticism accounts for his inveterate hostility to periodical reviews, many of which were unfavorable.⁶ Critical reviews of his poetry were frequently general rather than literary; many of the reviewers wrote anonymously; and usually they were journalists and occasional writers as distinct from poets. It seems inconsistent with the general pattern of Wordsworth's

⁶ In an unpublished doctoral dissertation, John Olin Hayden, "Romantic Criticism in British Periodicals, 1802-1824," (N.Y., Columbia University, 1965, 453) writes, "The unfavorable reviews of Wordsworth's poetry represent the most flagrant errors committed by his own contemporary critics, but the errors are confined principally to critiques of the Poems in Two Volumes."

attitude toward his critics that, repelled even by the mention of periodicals, Wordsworth continually feigned ignorance of and contempt for such criticism.

In the poetry it is impossible to trace textual response directly evoked by periodical criticism. At times, however, the poet's general allusions to newspaper and magazine reviews of his work reveal his concessions to recommendations or objections. (See Chapter V, pp. 158, 161 ff.)

Edward Quillian's reaction to periodical criticism of Wordsworth in 1829 elicited a mild reproof from the poet (see Chapter V, p. 176), and Wordsworth customarily maintained a detachment from even the strongest attacks, provided that they were not aimed at his attention by those whom he respected, personally or professionally.

This relative objectivity applies also to contemporary parodies of Wordsworth's poetry. He scarcely appeared to notice Byron's ridicule and satire in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers and later in Don Juan. He made no more than passing allusions to John Hamilton Reynold's Peter Bell and to Shelley's Peter Bell the Third. However, Wordsworth carefully considered, closely evaluated, and specifically accepted recommendations implied in a parody, The Simpliciad (See Chapter VI, pp. 186-199).

Occasional remarks by Wordsworth and by his friends concerning the reception of his work also indicate the poet's sustained interest in criticism. He states in 1830, for example, that having been criticized for three decades, his poetry is still disputed and read more than ever.⁶ In a letter to a well-wisher, the poet implies that it is his custom to express thanks for messages of appreciation of his work.⁷ To another, he denies that he is either a critic or one who values criticism highly.⁸

Edward Moxon, Wordsworth's publisher, was engaged in assembling the correspondence of Charles Lamb for publication in 1835. At this time, Wordsworth announced his intention of withholding letters in which Lamb criticized his poetry. The poet here stated what he many times contradicted in practice -- that he placed little value on informal criticism rendered by one's friends. In any case, he continued, he had no wish to publicize Lamb's praise of his work.⁹

Associates of the later Wordsworth represented a kind of middle-class ascendancy in persons of literary taste like John Kenyon, Isabella Fenwick, Henry Taylor, and Samuel Rogers who regarded Wordsworth as a great poet, capable of exercising strong influence by his conservatism.

⁶ LY, I, #922, 481 (W.W. to John Gardner, May 19th, 1830).

⁷ Ibid., I, #944, 514 (W.W. to Edwin Hill Handley, Oct. 4th, 1830).

⁸ Ibid., I, #955, 537 (W.W. to John Abraham Heraud, Nov. 23rd, 1830).

⁹ Ibid., II, #1131, 761 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, Nov. 20th, 1835).

The name of John Kenyon appears in several references in the correspondence of Wordsworth to whom he was introduced in 1819. Years later, the poet mentioned Mrs. Kenyon's objections to a word in the 1807 poem, "Composed upon Westminster Bridge." She had remarked on the incongruity of describing "bare" morning wearing a "garment" and Wordsworth agreeing with her, enclosed a possible amendment which however he never adopted.¹⁰ In this letter also, Wordsworth remarked his satisfaction that readers were praising his work, not "for pleasure bestowed, but of gratitude for moral and intellectual improvement received."¹¹

The devoted friend of the Wordsworths and their intimate in the later days was Isabella Fenwick related through marriage to Henry Taylor who married the daughter of Thomas Spring-Rice, Baron Monteagle.¹² Among the accomplishments of his bride, Taylor listed the fact that "She has Wordsworth at her fingers' end" His father-in-law, Taylor reports, "filled his daughters as full of Wordsworth as they could hold, and after coming from church turned to 'The Happy Warrior' and said it is worth a thousand sermons."¹³

¹⁰ LY, II, #1185, 812 (W.W. to John Kenyon, late Autumn 1836).

¹¹ Ibid., II, #1185, 813 (W.W. to John Kenyon, late Autumn 1836).

¹² The second wife of Thomas Spring-Rice was the former Miss Mary Ann Marshall, daughter of the Wordsworths' old friends, John and Jane Pollard Marshall.

¹³ Autobiography of Henry Taylor (London, 1885), I, 210.

Wordsworth's mutual respect for Samuel Rogers developed somewhat late in their respective careers. Remarking on the suitability of the sonnet form as a check for Wordsworth's prolixity, Rogers amended, "Don't imagine from what I have just said that I mean to disparage Wordsworth: he deserves all his fame."¹⁴

From their reminiscences of Wordsworth, members of the Watts family supplied some insight into the poet's critical attitude. Mrs. Alaric Watts, remembering the poet, said, ". . . I could not forbear the impression that his sympathies were rather with his predecessors than his contemporaries in the gentle art. I observed that he rarely left a commendation of the latter unqualified; so that the effect of his criticism seemed to be rather to qualify mercy with justice than as I should rather have preferred, to temper justice with mercy."¹⁵

Somewhat later, referring to a statement supposedly made by Harriet Martineau who said that his poems "are in the hearts of the American people," Wordsworth expressed a wish that they find such a place among his own countrymen.¹⁶

¹⁴ Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers, to which is added Porsoniana, ed. Rev. Alexander Dyce. (London, 1887), p. 210.

¹⁵ Alaric Alexander Watts, Alaric Watts, a Narrative of His Life, I, 239-240.

¹⁶ LY, II, #1246, 915 (W.W. to Edward Moxon, Feb. 5, 1838).

This attitude displayed by Wordsworth toward his poems and toward their reception by his contemporaries reveals a simplicity inseparable from his innate egotism. Only a combination of simplicity and egotism could leave the following statement any dignity and save the sentiment from brashness: "I am not at all desirous," the poet announced, "that any one should write an elaborate critique on my poems. There is no call for it. If they be from above, they will do their own work in course of time; if not, they will perish as they ought."¹⁷

The personal and petty tenor of some of the criticisms levelled against Wordsworth indicates the vastly subjective state of literary criticism in the early nineteenth century. To this type of criticism Wordsworth was inclined to react defensively and seldom responded poetically. He usually succeeded in disregarding whatever threatened seriously to interfere with his pride and perseverance in craftsmanship.

Reflective, perceptive, and discriminating as a receiver of criticism, Wordsworth was seldom required to explain or explain away any poetical "philosophy" in his work. Contemporary critics of Wordsworth customarily assailed his choice of subject matter and what they considered his stylistic infelicities. The criticism which he regarded seriously, to which he responded constructively, or against which he sought to defend himself pertained exclusively to craftsmanship. His extensive editing and revising, occupying at least three-quarters of his lifetime, involved improved stylistic technique and clearer, fuller poetic expression.

Despite the dearth of specific response to criticism throughout William Wordsworth's eighty years, the patterns of the poet's attitudes clearly outline his constant preoccupation with the improvement of craftsmanship. He attempted neither to change nor to alter his poetic ideas but rather to clarify, refine, and reinforce his expression of ideas. Wordsworth spent his years after the publication of the 1807 poems, his largest body of significant poetry, in working vigorously to elicit such responses as would indicate vitality in poet and reader. Perfecting his craftsmanship as the teacher he always professed to be, Wordsworth continually tested the response of his readers by his response as poet.

APPENDIX I

The following list indicates the order of the poems, their original, and their ultimate classifications.

Volume I

1807		1850
"To the Daisy" ("In youth")	1802	Poems of the Fancy
"Louisa"	1801	Poems Founded on the Affections
"Fidelity"	1805	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"She was a Phantom of delight"	1804	Poems of the Imagination
"The Redbreast chasing the Butterfly"	1802	Poems of the Fancy
"The Sailor's Mother"	"	Poems Founded on the Affections
"To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies")	"	Poems of the Fancy
"To the same Flower" ("Pleasures")	"	"
"Character of the Happy Warrior"	1806	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"The Horn of Egremont Castle"	"	Miscellaneous Poems
"The Affliction of Margaret..."	1800	Poems Founded on the Affections
"The Kitten and the falling Leaves"	1804	Poems of the Fancy
"The Seven Sisters . . ."	1800	"
"To H. C. . . ."	1802	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"Among all lovely things . . ."	"	Never Reprinted by Wordsworth
"I travell'd among unknown Men"	1799	Poems Founded on the Affections
"Ode to Duty"	1804	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"Poems Composed during a Tour, Chiefly on Foot":		
"Beggars"	1802	Poems of the Imagination
"To a Sky-Lark"	"	Poems of the Fancy
"With how sad steps . . ."	"	Miscellaneous Sonnets
"Alice Fell"	"	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"Resolution and Independence"	"	Poems of the Imagination

Volume I

(Continued)

1807	Composed	1850
"Prefatory Sonnet" ("Nuns fret not . . .")	1802	Miscellaneous Sonnets
"Miscellaneous Sonnets":		
"How sweet it is . . ."	Undated	Miscellaneous Sonnets
"Where lies the Land . . . ?"	1803	"
". . . Journey . . . Hamble- ton Hills"	1802	"
"These words were utter'd..."	Undated	"
"To Sleep": ("O gentle sleep")	1803	"
("A flock of sheep")	"	"
("Fond words")	"	"
"With Ships the sea was sprinkled"	Undated	"
"To the River Duddon"	Undated	River Duddon Sonnets
"From the Italian of Michael Angelo: ("Yes! hope may . . .")	1805	Miscellaneous Sonnets
("No mortal object . . .")	"	"
("To the Supreme Being")	"	"
"Written in very early youth"	1799	Poems Written in Youth
"Composed upon Westminster Bridge"	1802	Miscellaneous Sonnets
"Beloved Vale!"	Undated	"
"Methought I saw the footsteps . . ."	"	"
"Lady! the Song of Spring..."	1807	"
"The World is too much with us . . ."	1802	"
"It is a beauteous Evening . . ."	"	"
"To the Memory of Raisley Calvert"	Undated	"
"Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty"		Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty
"Composed by the Sea- side, . . ."	1802	"

Volume I
(Continued)

1807	Composed	1850
"Is it a Reed . . . ?"	1802	Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty
"To a Friend, . . ."	"	"
"I griev'd for Buona- parte . . ."	"	"
"Festivals have I seen . . ."	"	"
"On the . . . Venetian Republic"	"	"
"The King of Sweden"	"	"
"To Toussaint L'Ouverture"	"	"
"We had a fellow- Passenger . . ."	1803	"
"Composed in the Valley near Dover . . ."	"	"
"Inland within a hollow Vale"	"	"
"Thought of a Briton"	1806	"
"Written in London, Sept. 1802"	1802	"
"London, 1802"	"	"
"Great Men have been among us"	"	"
"It is not to be thought of. . ."	"	"
"When I have borne in memory..."	1803	"
"One might believe. . ."	"	"
"There is a bondage. . ."	"	"
"These times . . ."	"	"
"England! the time is come. . ."	"	"
"When looking on the present. . ."	"	"
"To the Men of Kent"	"	"
"Six thousand . . ."	"	"
(" . . . Killicranky")	"	Memorials of a Tour in Scotland
"Anticipation"	"	"
"November, 1806"	1806	"

Volume II

"Poems Written during a Tour in Scotland":

"Rob Roy's Grave"	1805	Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803
"The Solitary Reaper"	"	"
"Stepping Westward"	"	"
"Glen Almain"	1803	"
"The Matron of Jedborough"	"	"
"To a Highland Girl"	"	"
"Degenerate Douglas"	"	"

Volume II
(Continued)

Composed

1807		1850
"Address to the Sons of Burns"	1805	Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803
"Yarrow Unvisited"	"	"
"Moods of My Own Mind":		
"To a Butterfly" ("Stay near me")	1802	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"The Sun has long been set"	"	Evening Voluntaries
"O Nightingale!"	1806	Poems of the Imagination
"My heart leaps up"	1802	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"Written in March"	"	Poems of the Imagination
"To the Celandine" ("There is . . .")	1804	Poems Referring to the Period of Old Age
"I Wandered lonely as a Cloud"	"	Poems of the Imagination
"Who fancied what a pretty sight"	1803	Poems of the Fancy
"The Sparrow's Nest"	1801	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"Gipsies"	1807	Poems of the Imagination
"To the Cuckoo"	1802	"
"To a Butterfly" ("I've watch'd you . . .")	"	Poems Founded on the Affections
"It is no Spirit"	1803	Poems of the Imagination
"The Blind Highland Boy"	1802-1806	Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1803
"The Green Linnet"	1803	Poems of the Fancy
"To a Young Lady"	1801	Poems of the Imagination
"By their floating Mill"	1806	Poems of the Fancy
"Star Gazers"	"	Poems of the Imagination
"Power of Music"	"	"
"To the Daisy" ("With little here")	1802	Poems of the Fancy
"To the Same Flower"	"	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"Incident"	1805	"
"Tribute"	"	"
"Admonition"	Undated	Miscellaneous Sonnets
"Though narrow be . . ."	1807	"

Volume II
(Continued)

Composed

1807		1850
"A Prophecy"	1807	Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty
"To Thomas Clarkson"	"	"
"Once in a lonely hamlet"	1802	Poems Founded on the Affections
"Foresight"	"	Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood
"A Complaint"	1806	Poems Founded on the Affections
"I am not One . . ."	Undated	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"Yes! full surely . . ."	1806	Poems of the Imagination
"To the Spade of a Friend"	"	Poems of Sentiment and Reflection
"Song, at the Feast of Brougham"	1807	Poems of the Imagination
"Lines, Composed at Grasmere"	1806	Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces
"Elegiac Stanzas"	1805	"
"Ode"	1802-1804	(Placed at the end of the Poems)

APPENDIX II

Often, Wordsworth used simple prepositional phrases of direction in his poems. The following list indicates occurrence in 1807:

"The Redbreast and the Butterfly"	"In and out, . . ." (19)
"To the Small Celandine" ("Pansies")	"Up and down . . ." (11) ". . . , high and low," (20)
"The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"	"Now and then . . ." (115)
"With how sad steps . . ."	"Now up, now down," (13) (Repetition deleted, 1820) ". . . up and down," (53) (Repetition deleted after 1820)
"Resolution and Independence"	". . . far and wide" (128)
"Where lies the Land . . . ?"	". . . , here and there" (11)
"To Sleep" ("O gentle")	". . . up and down" (6)
"With Ships the sea was sprinkled. . ."	". . . far and nigh," (1) ". . . up and down," (4)
"Rob Roy's Grave"	". . . , far and near," (117)
"The Matron of Jedborough . . ."	". . . to and fro" (54)
"The Blind Highland Boy"	". . . up and down" (120) (Repetition deleted after 1820)
"The Green Linnet"	". . . up and down" (19)
"Song at the Feast of Brougham. . ."	"To and fro," (131)

Among the 1807 poems, repetition and repetitive couplings also occurred:

Volume I

"To the Daisy" ("In youth. . .")	". . . from-rock to rock . . ." (1) "From hill to hill . . ." (2)
"The Redbreast and the Butterfly"	". . . flower to flower. . ." (30)
"To the Same Flower" ("Pleasures . . .")	". . . , week to week" (33)
"Character of the Happy Warrior"	". . . more; more. . ." (24) ". . . good on good. . ." (33)
"The Horn of Egremont Castle"	"Side by side. . ." (41) "Long, and long . . ." (97) ". . . , Heirs of heirs," (110)
"The Affliction of Margaret . . ."	"Thou, Thou . . ." (55)
"The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"	". . . round and round . . ." (9) ". . . now -- now . . ." (21)
"The Seven Sisters"	"Sing, mournfully, oh! mournfully, (10-11) The Solitude of Binnorie!" (21-22) (32-33) (43-44) (54-55) (65-66) ". . . side by side," (45) ". . . let us die, And let us die. . ." (47-8)
"Among all lovely things . . ."	". . . hoped, and hoped . . ." (17)
"I travell'd among unknown Men,"	". . . more and more," (8)
"Beggars"	"Grief after grief: . . ." (15) (Repetition deleted after 1820) "Come, come! . . ." (41)
"To a Sky-Lark"	"Up with me! up with me into the clouds!" (1, 3)

Volume I
(Continued)

	"Singing, singing," (4)
	"Up with me, up with me, high and high," (14)
	"Happy, happy . . ." (22)
	(Repetition deleted after 1820)
"Alice Fell"	". . . and more and more:" (6)
	". . . wretched, wretched . . ." (32)
	(Altered after 1836) (32)
	"Sob after sob . . ." (38)
	". . . never, never, . . ." (40)
"Resolution and Independence"	"From Pond to Pond, . . . from moor to moor," (110)
	". . . word from word . . ." (115)
"How sweet it is . . ."	". . . link by link" (11)
"Where lies the Land . . . ?"	". . . time to time, . . ." (11)
"To Sleep" ("A flock . . .")	"One after one; . . ." (2)
	". . . day and day," (13)
"September, 1802"	"The Coast of France, the Coast of France. . ." (3)
"Thought of a Briton . . ."	". . . age to age . . ." (3)
	". . . cleave, O cleave . . ." (110)
"There is a bondage . . ."	". . . self-reproach, reproach . . ." (8)
"England! the time is come . . ."	"Far, far . . ." (11)
"To the Men of Kent"	". . . Shore to Shore: -- " (13)

Volume II

"Roy Boy's Grave"	" . . . peace, and peace . . ." (36)
	" . . . land to land . . ."(79)
"Glen Almain"	"In this still place, . . ." (1, 3)
"The Matron of Jedborough . . ."	" . . . o'er and o'er;" (63)
"Address to the Sons of Burns"	"Then, then . . ." (Removed 1827) (10)
"To a Butterfly"	" . . . pleasant, pleasant . . ." (10)
"O Nightingale! . . ."	" . . . pierce, and pierce;"(3) " . . . coo'd -- and coo'd;"(15) " . . . the Song, the Song . . ." (20)
"My heart leaps up . . ."	" . . . each to each . . ." (9)
"Written in March"	" . . . anon -- anon:" (15)
"The Small Celandine" ("There is . . .")	" . . . swarm on swarm," (5)
"I wandered lonely as a Cloud"	" . . . gaz'd -- and gaz'd . . ." (11)
"To the Cuckoo"	" . . . hill to hill . . ." (7)
"The Blind Highland Boy"	" . . . hand in hand . . ." (35) " . . . house to house . . ." (42) " . . . long, long . . ." (58) " . . . more and more" (124) " . . . suck'd, and suck'd . . ." (125) " . . . let him, let him . . ." (141) " . . . , more and more . . ." (Removed 1827) (157) " <u>Lei-gha</u> -- <u>Lei-gha</u> . . ."(161-2)
"Star Gazers"	"No, no, . . ." (24) "One after One . . ." (31)
"Power of music"	"An Orpheus! An Orpheus! . . ." (1)

Volume II
(Continued)

"Incident"	" . . . pasture after pasture," (3)
"Tribute"	"Brother to Brother, . . ." (8)
"Admonition"	" . . . melt, and melt . . ." (14) (Removed 1838)
"Once in a lonely Hamlet . . ."	" . . . long, long . . ." (27) "Good, good . . ." (33) " . . . no, no, no;" (43)
"I am not One . . ."	" . . . day to day . . ." (49)
"Yes! full surely . . ."	" . . . Sound for Sound." (4) " . . . of God, of God . . ." (24)
"Song, at the Feast of Brougham . . ."	"From Town to Town, from Tower to Tower," (5) "Joy! joy . . ." (15) "My own, my own, . . ." (86) " . . . rest thee, rest," (87) " . . . hill to hill:" (113) " . . . more and more:" (174)
"Elegiac Stanzas"	" . . . day to day!" (6) "Farewell, farewell . . ." (53)
"Ode"	" . . . I feel -- I feel . . ." (41) "I hear, I hear, . . . I hear!" (50) " . . . time to time . . ." (103) " . . . sing . . . , sing, sing . . ." (171) " . . . heart of hearts . . ." (192)

The poet also used three or more parallels or series of words, phrases, clauses, and fragments. Examples of such enumerative elements follow:

Volume I

"To the Daisy" ("In youth . . .")

"Some apprehension;
Some steady love; some brief
delight;
Some memory that had taken
flight;
Some chime of fancy wrong or
right;" (44-47)

"Louisa"

"That she is ruddy, fleet, and
strong;" (4)
(Altered, 1845)
"Do spread, and sink, and rise;"
(9)

"She was a Phantom . . ."

"Praise, blame, love, kisses,
tears and smiles." (20)
"Endurance, foresight, strength,
and skill;" (26)

"To the Small Celandine"

"Pansies, Lilies, Kingcups,
Daisies," (1)
"On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane -- . . ." (45-46)

"Character of the Happy Warrior"

". Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, ..." (12-13)
"Controls them and subdues,
transmutes, bereaves" (17)
"For wealth, or honors, or for
worldly state;" (42)

"The Horn of Egremont Castle"

"Ancient Castle, Woods, and
Mountains" (83)

"The Affliction of Margaret . . ."

"Ingenuous, innocent, and bold;"
(18)

"The Kitten and the Falling Leaves"

"Wither'd leaves, one, two, and
three." (5)
". starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and
darts;" (17-18)

Volume I
(Continued)

- "(In the sun or under shade
Upon bough or grassy blade)"
(47-48)
- "Alice Fell" "But neither cry, nor voice,
nor shout," (11)
- "Resolution and Independence" "Solitude, pain of heart,
distress and poverty." (35)
". . . his body, limbs, and
face," (78)
(Reversed, 1836)
"Cold, pain, and labour, . . ." (122)
- "How sweet it is . . ." "Tall trees, green arbours, and
ground flowers . . ." (4)
- "Journey . . . Hamilton Hills" "With Grecian Temple, Minaret,
and Bower;" (6)
(Altered, 1827)
- "These words were utter'd . . ." "The Grove, the sky-built Temple,
and the Dome," (9)
(Altered, 1827)
- "To Sleep" ("A flock . . .") ". . . the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers,
winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of
water, and pure sky;" (2-4)
- "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" "Ships, towers, domes, theatres,
and temples . . ." (6)
". . . valley, rock, or hill;" (10)
- "Beloved Vale!" "I looked, I stared, I smiled,
I laughed; . . ." (13)
- "Methought I saw . . ." "Sick, hale, old, young, . . ." (7)
- "To the Memory of Raisley Calvert" "If there be aught of pure, or
good, or great," (10)

Volume I
(Continued)

- "Composed by the Sea-Side"
—
- "Fair Star of Evening, Splendor
of the West,
Star of my Country! . . ."
(1-2)
". one hope,
one lot,
One life, one glory! . . ."
(11-12)
- "Is it a Reed . . . ?"
- "Lords, Lawyers, Statesmen,
Squires . . .
. . . Sick, Lame, and Blind, . . ."
(3-4)
- "To a Friend"
- ". . . songs, garland, play,
Banners, and happy faces, . . ."
(7-8)
(Altered, 1845)
- "Festivals . . ."
- ". Pope,
Consul, or King, . . ."
(12-13)
- "On the Extinction of the
Venetian Republic"
- ". . . those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that
strength decay," (9-10)
- "To Toussaint L'Ouverture"
- ". . . , air, earth, and skies,"
(10)
"Thy friends are exultations,
agonies,
And love, . . ."
(13-14)
- "Written in London . . ."
- ". . . mean handywork of
craftsman, cook,
Or groom! . . ."
(4-5)
". . . Rapine, avarice, expence,"
(9)
- "London, 1802"
- ". . . altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, . . ."
(3-4)
"And give us manners, virtue,
freedom, power." (8)
- "Great Men . . ."
- ". . . Sydney, Marvel,
Harrington," (3)
"No single volume paramount,
no code,
No master spirit, no determined
road;" (12-13)

Volume I
(Continued)

"There is a bondage . . ."

". . . by roof, and floor,
and wall," (2)

"These times touch money'd. . ."

"To fear, to change, to
cowardice, . . ."(14)

"England! the time is come . . ."

"If for Greece, Egypt, India,
Africa," (7)

"November, 1806"

"Wise, upright, valiant; . . ."
(12)

Volume II

"Rob Roy's Grave"

"Then rents and Factors,
rights of chace,
Sheriffs, and Lairds . . ."
(69-70)

"For Robin was the poor Man's
stay
The poor man's heart, the
poor man's hand;" (109-110)
(Altered, 1815)

"The Solitary Reaper"

"For old, unhappy, far-off
things," (19)
"Some natural sorrow, loss,
or pain," (23)

"To a Highland Girl"

"The Lake, the Bay, the
Waterfall;" (75)

"Degenerate Douglas"

"For shelter'd places, bosoms,
nooks, and bays," (12)

"Address to the Sons of Burns"

"Be independent, generous,
brave!" (20)

"Yarrow Unvisited"

"On Yarrow's banks let herons
feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!"
(13-14)

"My heart leaps up . . ."

"So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a Man;
So be it when I shall grow old,"
(3-5)

"Written in March"

"The cock is crowing,
The steam is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,"(1-4)

"The Sparrow's Nest"

"And love, and thought, and joy."
(20)

"Gipsies"

"Men, Women, Children, . . ."(3)

"To the Cuckoo"

"In bush, and tree, and sky."(20)

Volume II
(Continued)

"The Blind Highland Boy"

"The sun, the day; the stars,
the night;
Or tree, or butterfly, or
flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in
bower,
Or woman, man, or child."
(17-20)

"Nor mount the mast, nor row,
nor float" (83)

"Alone, and innocent, and gay!"
(142)

"The Green Linnet"

"White Birds, and Butterflies,
and Flowers" (17)

"Power of Music"

"From the Old and the Young,
from the Poorest; . . ." (27)

"Admonition"

". . . -- Roof, window, door,"
(10)

"The Emigrant Mother"

"Thy looks, thy cunning, and
thy wiles," (51)

"Foresight"

"Make your bed, and make your
bower;
Fill your lap, and fill your
bosom;" (14-15)

"A Complaint"

"Of murmuring, sparkling, living
love," (10)

"I am not One . . ."

"Sons, Mothers, Maidens . . ."
(6)

"To sit without emotion, hope
or aim," (11)

"Smooth passions, smooth discourse,
and joyous thought;" (48)

"Yes! full surely . . ."

"Solitary, clear, profound," (2)

"Slaves of Folly, Love, or
Strife," (15)

"Listen, ponder, hold them dear;"
(23)

Volume II
(Continued)

"To the Spade of a Friend"

"Health, quiet, meekness,
ardour, hope secure,
And industry of body and of
mind;" (9-10)
(Altered, 1827)

"Song at the Feast of Brougham
Castle"

"They came with banner, spear,
and shield;" (24)
"Our Fields rejoice, our
Mountains ring,
Our Streams proclaim a
welcoming;
Our Strong-abodes and Castles
see" (32-34)
"Without an Inmate or a Guest,
Knight, Squire, or Yeoman, Page,
or Groom;" (39-40)
(1. 39 removed after 1815)

"To the Caves, and to the Brooks,
To the Clouds of Heaven she
looks;" (67-8)

"Ode"

". . . meadow, grove, and stream,"
(1)
"To dialogues of business, love,
or strife;" (98)
"And oh ye Fountains, Meadows,
Hills, and Groves,"
(190)

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