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The element of experience in the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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THE ELEMENT OF EXPERIENCE IN THE POETRY OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Richmond in
Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Department of English

by

Bernard Marshall White-Hurst

University of Richmond
June, 1937

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TO

DR. CLEMENT TYSON GOODE

In
Appreciation of
His Kindly and Sympathetic
Guidance

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PREFACE

Coleridge is generally recognized as a highly imaginative poet. Students are too prone therefore to regard his poetry as directly the product of his active imagination. It is the object of this study to show instead that his poetry is based largely upon his actual experiences. I have attempted to demonstrate this fact by giving simply the facts of Coleridge's life, as fully in detail as I have been able to ascertain them, and by correlating them with certain references and materials in his poems. The selections have been grouped according to biographical chronology rather than sequences of composition, which often are not definitely known.

I have used Cottle's Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey advisedly as a source. I realize that his references are faulty, but his work contains personal anecdotes in the life of Coleridge which are not to be found elsewhere.

I wish to acknowledge the helpful suggestions of the Library Staff in the correction of this paper.

B.M.W.-H.

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I.

EARLY LIFE

From the beginning Coleridge's literary talent was moulded by his environment. The boy reading at his mother's Boyhood side, protected from the persecutions of his older and Christ's brothers and sisters, or absorbed in the Arabian Hospital Series Nights Tales, while lying under the garden wall, is the future poet of Kubla Khan and Christabel. The eight year old lad, being instructed in the fundamentals of astronomy and the nature of the universe by the learned Vicar of Ottery, later became the writer of the Sonnet To the Autumnal Moon.¹ Subjective as he was, and highly imaginative as he has been esteemed, his poetry is made up largely of autobiographical elements.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born October 21, 1772, at Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire.² His father was John Coleridge, the Vicar of Ottery, and Headmaster of the King's School. The Rev. Coleridge was a man of great learning, and of simple,

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1. Campbell, James Dykes, The Complete Poetical and Dramatical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Intro. pp. xiii - xiv.
 2. Gillman, James, The Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Vol. I p. 1, et als.

studious, and pious habits. His absent-mindedness gained for him the name, "the Absent Man".¹ Anne Bowden, his second wife and mother of the poet, offset the impractical character of her husband. She was industrious, shrewd, uneducated, and devoted to her family. Lacking those qualities which characterized the belle of her day, she resented them in other ladies.

Samuel was the youngest born. He was the tenth child by the same mother, the other children being John, William (died in infancy), James, William, Edward, George, Luke, Anne (his favorite, whom he called "Nancy"), Francis (who persecuted him), and himself.² At the age of three years he was able to read a chapter in the Bible.³ Being the youngest and precocious, he was petted and pampered by his parents, and disliked by his brothers and sisters. He became "fretful and timorous, and a tell-tale." His schoolmates at Ottery were unable to understand the Master's strange son who spoke a different language from them, and who never played their games. Their bewilderment at him changed to dislike and persecution until he sought solace in his father's books. In the notes on his childhood collected by Gillman he writes of this period:

I was driven from life in motion, to life in thought and sensation. I never played except by myself, and

1. Ibid. p. 2.

2. Ibid. p. 9.

3. Bayne, Peter. Essays in Biography and Criticism, Vol. II. p. 109.

then only acting over what I had been reading or fancying, or half one, half the other, with a stick cutting down weeds and nettles, as one of the seven champions of Christendom. Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child's habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child.¹

Before he was six years old he had read one of the volumes of the Arabian Nights three times over.²

The characteristics of the boy and his father were very similar. Each found sympathy in the other. The kind hearted Vicar took his inspired lad upon his knees and told him stories of the metaphysical world. Samuel did not wonder at these tales, for his fancy included the universe. The ties were soon to be parted, however, for the Rev. John Coleridge died on October 4, 1779, when the young Coleridge was but seven years old.³ He continues in his note to Gillman, "The image of my father, my revered, kind, learned, simple-hearted father is a religion to me."

One of the former pupils of the good Vicar, Judge Buller,⁴ secured a presentation to Christ Hospital for the orphan.

1. Gillman, p. 10.

2. Ibid., p. 10n. From the Friend, Vol. I. p. 212.

3. Gillman, p. 11. Other biographers of Coleridge, Charpentier, Faussat, and Campbell, place this date as October, 1781. This is more probably true. Coleridge was not always accurate in dating his childhood events.

4. This school had once been the home of a group of Franciscan monks. It became a charity school under the order of King Edward VI. Naturally it retained some of its monastical discipline and atmosphere. The monkish blue coats worn by the students is indicative of this fact.

The days in London, preceding his entrance into the Hospital, were novel ones for the boy. He spent ten weeks with his uncle, being feasted and carried about from tavern to tavern to perform as a prodigy before his uncle's friends. Soon the novelty wore off and he was placed in the Junior School at Hereford in July, 1782. After being well-fed for six weeks, he was removed to Christ Hospital where the reverse proved¹ true.

Being removed from his rural home and placed in the heart of an unfriendly city made an indelible impression upon the mind of Coleridge, and this tragedy became one of the important elements in his poetry.²

Lamb, writing as Elia, tells of this period in the young poet's life:

I (Coleridge) was a poor friendless boy, my parents, and those who should have cared for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates— O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early home-
stead! ³

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1. Fausset, Hugh I'Anson, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p. 20.
 2. See comments upon the Sonnet to the River Otter, Lines to Beautiful Spring in a Village, Lines on an Autumnal Evening, and To the Rev. George Coleridge.
 3. Lamb, Charles. The Essays of Elia. "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty years ago", p. 15. Everyman's Library.

But Coleridge was not entirely friendless, for it was at Christ Hospital that he formed a valuable friendship which was to last his lifetime. This friend was Charles Lamb, a boy several years younger than Samuel. Both were acutely sensitive to matters about them, but more than this, Lamb was afflicted with stammering and was willing to listen rather than talk himself. Coleridge, on the other hand, charmed with his monologue, but was not proficient in an exchange of conversation. The two were inevitably drawn together.

There were hours, however, when he was extremely lonely, homesick, and hungry, not being accustomed to the simple fare of the Hospital. During these periods he retired into the realms of his fancy and imagined himself "on Robinson Crusoe's island, finding a mountain of plumb-cake and eating a room for (myself) and then eating it into the shapes of tables and chairs".¹

In consequence of an amusing incident in the streets of London one day, he was allowed to borrow books at his will from a circulating library in Cheapside.² This gave him a new avenue of escape from his loneliness and induced him to

1. Gillman, p. 20.

2. Gillman, p. 14. While walking the streets of London, fancying that he was Leander swimming the Hellespont, S.T.C.'s waving arms brushed against the pockets of a passerby who mistook him for a pickpocket. Stopping to reprove him, he became attracted by the earnest face and surprised by the boy's intelligence. Learning of S.T.C.'s desire for books, he obtained permission for him to borrow volumes daily.

steal out upon occasions to obtain the two books allowed him. He read every book or pamphlet he could procure, crumpling himself into a corner and reading at the expense of food and bodily exercise. The result of this practice was later shown by the vastness of his intellectual possessions and the ill health which constantly beset him.

Without particularly desiring to do so, or without displaying an undue amount of energy, Coleridge continued to hold his place at the head of his routine of study. Between the ages of twelve and fourteen he might have been regarded as a prodigy, except for the fact that lads exhibiting promise were "flogged instead of flattered".

At the age of fourteen (1786) he wrote his first poem of any importance. It was by nature a love poem entitled Genevieve (Campbell, p. 1).

Maid of my Love, sweet Genevieve!
 In Beauty's light you glide along:
 Your eye is like the star of eve,
 And sweet your voice as seraph's song.
 Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
 This heart with passion soft to glow:
 Within your soul a voice there lives!
 It bids you hear a tale of woe.
 When sinking low the sufferer wan
 Beholds no hand outstretcht to save,
 Fair, as the bosom of the swan
 That rises graceful o'er the wave,
 I've seen your breast with pity heave,
 And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve!

Upon one occasion Samuel swam the New River, which was near the Hospital, with all his clothes on. Returning to the school, he allowed the clothes to dry on his back. Never be-

ing in good health, he contracted rheumatism and was confined in the school infirmary, where he lay for many months suffering with rheumatic fever and jaundice. He dedicated this poem to the daughter of the nurse who attended him. It was characteristic of him to appreciate deeply any kindness shown him, and this warmed his heart toward her. Note lines 13 and 14.

I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve!

With Coleridge, fancy and reality were intermeshed. The idealization of the "Maid of (his) Love" and his guardian nurse were moulded into one creature.

This poem is well polished, simple, and sentimental, entirely different from the poems printed in the Christ Hospital Book just a little afterwards.¹ Genevieve shows the influence of Bowles' Sonnets upon Coleridge, but Middleton did not give him a copy of Bowles until 1789, and the first appearance of this poem was a half year before.² Coleridge could not, therefore, have seen the sonnets before writing Genevieve, if his date of the poem is correct.³

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1. See comments upon Nil Pejus Est Caelibe Vita, Anthem for Children, Julia, and Quae Nocent Docent.
 2. Campbell, op. cit. p. xvii. Middleton had just left the Hospital for Pembroke, Cambridge. He later became S.T.C.'s closest friend at Cambridge. Many years after he was ordained the First Bishop of Calcutta.
 3. S.T.C. noted in the first edition, "This little poem was written when the author was a boy, age fourteen." But, as suggested before, S.T.C.'s early dates were sometimes wrong.

The incident of swimming the New River, without regard for health, may have been the cause of the chronic illness which later drove him to the use of opium.¹ This is another large element in his poetry.

Between the ages of fifteen and seventeen the young poet steeped himself in metaphysics. Charles Lamb gives us a picture of the young metaphysician, in his account of "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (While he weighed the disproportion between the speech and the garb of the young Mirandula) to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus, (for even in those years thou waxest not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar— while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the inspired charity-boy! Many were the "wit-combats"— between him and C.V. LeG(rice), which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English Man-of-War. Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performance.²

While under the spell of metaphysics Coleridge wrote several imposing classical poems, most of them having Latin titles, which the Rev. James Bowyer, Master of the school, caused to be written in the Christ's Hospital Book.³ This book was

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1. Dr. Gillman commented upon rheumatism in the young subject, saying that where a heart attack did not immediately follow, the disease left behind bodily suffering, which might be relieved, but would end in "a lingering dissolution". Gillman, p. 33.
 2. Fitzgerald, Percy. Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb, "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago", III, 163.
 3. Genevieve was not recorded in the Christ's Hospital Book.

reserved by the Master for those literary effusions of his pupils which he considered worthy of being preserved. The poetic works submitted by Coleridge (Nil Pejus Est Caelibe Vita, Progress of Vice, Monody On Death of Chatterton, Julia, and Quae Nocent Docent) are classical, metaphysical, and Augustan. They were written to please Bowyer and do not represent any autobiographical event. They are of value in that they are the stepping stones by which Coleridge learned metrical forms. Bowyer was severe master, he compelled his students to render good workmanship in themes and poetry. As a result of this, Coleridge's later poems, though written while the author was in the throes of various emotions, are couched in masterly form.

The young bard was cured of his passion for metaphysics by a severe application of Bowyer's cane, when he professed infidelity after reading Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, and by a present from Middleton of the sonnets of the Rev. William Lisle Bowles. In the poetry of Bowles Coleridge recognized a first-hand interpretation of nature. This marked the turning point in his career as a poet, for in pointing him to nature it revealed the poet to himself.

About this time Coleridge wrote the Sonnet to the Autum-

1. With the exceptions of the Progress of Vice and Monody on the Death of Chatterton, written in 1790, these poems were transcribed in the book in 1789. cf. later version of the Monody.

1

nal Moon (Campbell, p. 3). It had been over seven years since Coleridge had been removed from his home in Devonshire to the city of London. During these seven years there is no record of his having returned home. In being pent up in the city he missed those evenings spent with his father looking up into the heavens. To offset this loss he occasionally climbed upon the lead roof of the Hospital to obtain a better view of the evening sky. In this sonnet he hails the beauty of the moon as seen from the Hospital roof.

Mild Splendour of the various-vested Night!
Mother of wildly-working visions! hail!

Middleton's present of the copy of Bowles so affected Coleridge that he applied himself to making forty copies of the sonnets and giving them to his friends, whom he hoped to make proselytes.² Coleridge had not read Cowper or Burns, and Bowles was, therefore, the first to open to him the door to nature. Coleridge pays tribute to Bowles in the little poem To the Muse.³

Tho' no bold flights to thee belong;
And tho' thy lays with conscious fear,
Shrink from Judgement's eye severe,
Yet much I thank thee, Spirit of my song!
For, lovely Muse! thy sweet employ

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1. S.T.C. noted in the 1828 copy of Poems that this poem was written "set. 16".
 2. Coleridge, S.T., Biographia Literaria. Everyman Edition p. 7.
 3. This poem appeared in Poetical Works in 1834. The MS. is signed "S.T. Coleridge", but no date is appended. S.T.C. probably wrote it in 1789, the year he received a copy of Bowles' poems.

Exalts my soul, refines my breast,
 Gives each pure pleasure keener zest,
 And softens sorrow into pensive Joy.
 From thee I learn'd the wish to bless,
 From thee to commune with my heart;
 From thee, dear Muse, the gayer part,
 To laugh with pity at the crowds that press
 Where Fashion flaunts her robes by Folly spun,
 Whose hues gay-varying wanton in the sun.

Before the influence of Bowles Coleridge had been writing classical, rhetorical themes, afterwards he wrote more spontaneously as his emotions dictated. This would have come about inevitably, but the occasion hastened the development. (note lines 9, 10, 11).

While Coleridge was still in school in London, France was in the throes of revolution. The effects of this upheaval were felt in every nation, particularly just across the channel in England. But it represented more than a political upheaval. Certain principles were manifesting themselves, the most important of them being Freedom. Freedom, of which the Nature movement was a part, was being considered as an inalienable right of every individual and every nation. Suppression of, or disregard for, this right constituted a heinous crime deserving of severe punishment. This principle was perceived by men of letters all over the world, leaders among them being Goethe in Germany, and Wordsworth and Coleridge in England. Coleridge was so affected that his passion crowded out his art in The Destruction of the Bastille.¹ (Campbell, p. 6)

1. No date given. The MS. is signed "J.T.C.". First published in the 1834 edition.

The first stanza follows:

Heard'st thou yon universal cry,
 And dost thou linger still on Gallia's shore?
 Go Tyranny! beneath some barbarous sky
 Thy terrors lost and ruin'd power deplore!
 What tho' through many a groaning age
 Was felt thy keen suspicious rage,
 Yet Freedom roused by fierce Disdain
 Has wildly broke thy triple chain,
 And like the storm which earth's deep entrails hide,
 At length has burst its way and spread the ruins wide.

In 1789 Coleridge left the Hospital for the first time to visit his sister who was ill in Ottery. He writes of his joys at seeing his home country again in the poem on Life.¹ (Campbell, p. 2).

The first two stanzas show autobiographical elements.

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive plain
 Where native Otter sports his scanty stream,
 Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,
 The glorious prospect woke me from the dream.
 (ll. 1-4)

His favorite sister, Ann ("Nanny"), had taken ill and Coleridge had been called home. The sudden thought that he would see his home again after seven years in the city drove the sadness from his mind. The next stanza tells of his reactions upon seeing the familiar landmarks.

At every step it widen'd to my sight,
 Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary Steep.
 Following in quick succession of delight,

1. No date, but first printed in the 1834 edition. There are two manuscripts of this poem whose texts differ slightly. One of the early manuscripts of Life is entitled Sonnet Written Just After the author Left the Country in September, 1789, aetat. 15 (Campbell, p. 562). In 1789 the poet was seventeen years old rather than 15 years of age.

Till all— at once—did my eye ravished sweep!
(ll. 5-8)

In 1780 he again went home, this time during a holiday period. The accounts of this trip are given in the poems Inside the Coach, and Devonshire Roads.¹ In the former, he courts sleep to ease the monotony of the long trip, and in the latter, he pays his respects to the boggy roads in Devonshire, which was his home county.

It was probably during the same year that he wrote To the Evening Star.² (Campbell, p. 11). The students at the Hospital found little time to commune with nature, and the heavenly bodies, which even those pent in the city might observe, furnished a natural element for the young bard.

O meek attendant of Sol's setting blaze,
I hail, sweet star, thy chaste effulgent glow:
On thee ful oft with fixed eye I gaze
Till I, methinks, all spirit seem to grow.
(ll. 1-4)

Note lines 3 and 4. As a result of Coleridge's consideration of the stars, he was made conscious of the infinity of the universe and the insignificance of man in comparison with the Creator.

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1. No date. This was first published in the 1834 edition. Campbell adds this note to the above pair of poems: "I have seen no MSS. of these verses, which were all first printed in 1834. They belong doubtless to a holiday visit to Ottery in 1790." Campbell, p. 562. If this is so, it marks the poet's second visit home from London during the years 1781-1791. Cf. p. 10.
 2. First printed in the 1877-1880 edition of the Poetical and Dramatical Works.

It is possible that Coleridge never loved any flesh-and-blood woman, but rather his idealizations of her as painted by his fancy. He loved "Genevieve" because she was a symbol of Pity, he loved Mary Evans as a sister, and he was called "Brother Coly" by the Evans family. He did not express any affection for her until he had gone off to Cambridge, and even then he did not ardently express his passions until he heard that Mary was about to marry someone else. He loved Sarah because she listened to his pantisocratic ideal and was willing to become a part of the plan. Later, when even Coleridge was forced to admit that Pantisocracy was an illusion, he loved her because she furnished him the refuge of a home. By this it is not meant that Coleridge was incapable of the love of man for woman, but that such love was always enshrouded with the beauty of his fancy.

In To the Evening Star, the second and third stanzas portray one of the fanciful pictures of the maid of his love.

O first and fairest of the starry choir,
 O loveliest 'mid the daughters of the night,
 Must not the maid I love like thee inspire
Pure joy and calm Delight?

Must she not be, as is thy placid sphere
 Serenely brilliant? Whilst to gaze a while
 Be all my wish 'mid Fancy's high career
 E'en till she quit this scene of earthly toil;
 Then Hope perchance might fondly sigh to join
 Her spirit in thy kindred orb, O star benign!

Illness and a frail body played prominent parts in keeping Coleridge from fulfilling many of his good intentions.

In fact, Dr. Gillman suggests that sickness was the real reason

for his seeming indolence.¹ In the poem, Pain² (Campbell, p.11) he laments the fact that illness kept the inspiration of poetry from him. From early childhood he experienced sickness from a feeble stomach. His supersensitiveness made him feel pain more acutely. In seeking his shoes in the shoe closet at the Hospital he became fatigued and overcome by the stuffy odor. Later, while in the Dragoons, he was unable to bend over to treat the hooves of his horse because of the acute pain in his stomach caused by stooping.³ Coleridge was unable to endure pain, it affected him both mentally and physically, finally driving him to opium for relief. He wrote in the Pocket Book, under the date of December 23, 1804, these words:

I have never loved evil for its own sake; no! nor ever sought pleasure for its own sake, but only as the means of escaping from pains that coiled around my body and wings of an eagle! My sole sensuality was not to be in pain.⁴

The following lines quoted from the poem illustrate his reaction toward pain:

-----not Music's self, nor fragrant
bower
Can glad the trembling sense of wan dis-
ease.
Now that the frequent pangs my frame as-
sail.

-
1. Gillman, p. 263 n.
 2. First printed in 1834. The earlier MS. is titled Pain: A Sonnet, and a later MS., Sonnet Composed in Sickness.
 3. To a certain degree, Coleridge's dislike of horses made him seek this excuse.
 4. Gillman, p. 246. Taken from the Pocket Book, "The History of my own mind for my own improvement." Dec. 23, 1804.

And seas of pain seem weaving through
 each limb—
 Ah what can all Life's gilded scenes
 avail?

(ll. 3-8)

Line 7, "And seas of pain seem weaving through each limb—" has reference to chronic rheumatism which he contracted as a result of swimming the New River with his clothes on.¹

The paralyzing effect of pain upon his creative ability is shown in the closing lines of the poem.²

-----I took could laugh and
 play
 And gaily sport it on the Muse's lyre,
 Ere Tyrant Pain had chased away delight,
 Ere the wild pulse throbb'd anguish thro'
 the night!

(ll. 11-14)

In the year 1791 Ann (the poet's favorite, Nancy) died at the age of twenty-five years. Coleridge was deeply affected and wrote On Receiving An Account that His Only Sister's Death Was Inevitable (Campbell, p. 13) to express his feelings.³ There were thirteen children in the Coleridge family,

1. See comments on Genevieve, p. 6.

2. Joseph Cottle, a bookseller and friend of S.T.C. in Bristol, was often confronted with delays by the Bard because of sickness. He received notes of the following sort from S.T.C. who had promised to provide copy:

"My dear Cottle,
 The Religious Musings are finished, and you shall have them on Thursday. S.T.C!"

Some Sickness interfered.

"Dear Cottle,
 A Devil, a very devil, has got possession of my left temple, eye, cheek, jaw, throat, and shoulder. I cannot see you this evening. I write in agony. Your most affectionate friend and brother. S.T.C!"

Cf. Cottle, Joseph. Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, p. 37.

3. Printed in the Poetical Works, 1834.

the three oldest being daughters of Rev. John Coleridge by his first marriage. These were so much older than Samuel that he considered Nancy, the only daughter by the Vicar's second marriage, as his only sister. The seventh son, Luke, a physician, whom Samuel had accompanied on medical tours in London, with the result that he almost decided for a medical career, died in 1790. Coleridge deeply felt the loss and was overwhelmed when he heard that he would also lose his sister.

The tear which mourn'd a brother's fate scarce dry—
 Pain after pain, and woe succeeding woe—
 Is my heart destined for another blow?
 O my sweet sister! and must thou too die?
 Ah! how has Disappointment pour'd the tear
 O'er infant Hope destroy'd by early frost!
 How are ye gone, whom most my soul held dear!
 Scarce had I loved you ere I mourn'd you lost;
(ll. 1-8)

The poet loved Nancy better than all other brothers and sisters. She died when he was only nineteen.

Fated to rove thro' Life's wide cheerless
 plain—
 Nor father, brother, sister meet its ken—
1
(ll. 10-11)

Coleridge could not conceive of a life in which there were no friends whom he might love and be loved by, and, for the moment, he thought that if his sister should die he would have lost all his friends in the world. Love was characteristic with Coleridge, and an outstanding element in his poetry.

1. The Rev. Coleridge died in 1781, Luke in 1790, and "Nancy" in 1791.

Gillman said :

he seemed but slightly connected with the things of the world, for which, save the love of those dear to him, he cared but little, living in this affection for his friends, and always feeling and acting in the same spirit of that humility he has so beautifully described.¹

On me thy icy dart, stern Death, be proved:—
Better to die, than live and not be loved!

(ll. 13-14)

Bowyer had determined that Coleridge should go to Cambridge. Consequently a scholarship of forty pounds was secured for him, and he left Christ's Hospital for Jesus College, Cambridge, where he was to prepare himself for the Ministry, September 7, 1790. Upon leaving the Hospital he wrote the Sonnet on Quitting School For College. (Campbell, p. 15)

Farewell parental scenes! a sad farewell!
To you my grateful heart still clings,
Tho' fluttering round on Fancy's burnish'd wings
Her tales of future Joy Hope loves to tell.
Adieu, adieu! ye much-loved cloisters pale:
Ah! would those happy days return again,

(ll. 1-6)

This is in marked contrast with his thoughts upon entering the school. During his nine years stay at the Hospital he had been home only twice, and the school had become his orphan home. It was here he made his first friends. Later he wrote these words, "With few exceptions, I can almost say, that till I came to H³____, I never found what Friends were."

1. Gillman, p. 313.

2. First printed in the 1834 edition. The early MS. was entitled, Sonnet On Leaving Christ's Hospital.

3. Gillman, p. 31.

Quite naturally he felt a few pangs at leaving his adopted home.

When 'neath your arches, free from every stain,
I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale!

(ll. 7-8)

Coleridge was as naive and as simple as a child. He had suspected no evil to exist and was severely disappointed when he discovered it. Thrown in with boys of all sorts, he was forced to realize the varying degrees of morality in his schoolmates.

Lingering I quit you, with as great a pang,
As when erewhile, my weeping childhood, torn
By early sorrow from my native seat,
Mingled its tears with hers— my widow'd
Parent lorn.

(ll. 11-14)

Coleridge felt a little of that sorrow in leaving the Hospital which he felt so strongly when he was taken from the side of his widowed mother in Ottery after the death of his father.¹

Shortly afterward he wrote a companion piece to the foregoing poem. This he entitled, Absence: A Farewell Ode on Quitting School For Jesus College, Cambridge² (Campbell, p. 15).

The ode was written in anticipation of going to the university. When he was first chosen as one of those students to be trained for the university, it was against his will.³ Now he looked forward with hope, and reflected upon his past days at the Hospital.

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1. The verse says, "with as great a pang". This seems doubtful.
 2. First printed in the Cambridge Intelligencer, October 11, 1794.
 3. Gillman, p. 22.

Ah me! too mindful of the days
 Illumined by Passion's orient rays,
 When Peace, and Cheerfulness and Health
 Enriched me with the best of wealth.

(11. 5-8)

He left school for Cambridge, September 7, 1790, but his name is not listed in the College Books as entering until February 5, 1791.¹ The interim was spent in Devonshire.² While at home he wrote Happiness³ (Campbell, p. 17), telling of his ambition for college.

On wide or narrow scale shall Man
 Most happily describe life's plan?
 Say shall he bloom and wither there
 Where first his infant buds appear;
 Or upwards dart with soaring force,
 And tempt some more ambitious course?

(11. 1-6)

During these months his fancy painted a bright future.

While hope displays her sheering beam,
 And Fancy's vivid colourings stream,
 While Emulation stands me nigh
 The Goddess of the eager eye.
 With foot advanced and anxious heart
 Now for the fancied goal I start:—

(11. 10-14)

Even as Coleridge planned, he realized that his dreams were beyond actuality, and he feared disappointment.

Ah! why will Reason intervene
 Me and my promised joys between!

 To toil intense, yet toil in vain.

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1. Cf. Campbell, p. XVIII.
 2. First printed in the Poetical Works in 1834.
 3. Cf. Campbell's comments upon J.T.C.'s visits home from Christ's Hospital. Ibid., p. XVIII.

Pale Disappointment hangs her head
O'er darling Expectation dead!

(ll. 15-29)

Coleridge was never a wealthy man, and in later years, though he never out-and-out begged, yet he lived upon the beneficence of his friends.¹

Yet sudden wealth full well I know
Did never happiness bestow.
That wealth to which we were not born
Dooms us to sorrow or to scorn.

(ll. 32-35)

The poet had no desire for wealth, he wished only enough compensation to enable him to live and write in moderate circumstances. In fact, his necessities were very small. He spoke of wealth as leading to luxury and the gout.

On thee with harpy fangs they seize
The hideous offspring of disease,
Sworn Dropsy ignorant of Rest,
And Fever garb'd in scarlet vests
Consumption driving the quick hears,
And Gout that howls the frequent
 curse
With Apoplex of heavy head
That surely aims his dart of lead.

(ll. 58-65)

Likewise, he had no desire for fame or power. He wrote in the Preface to the Second Edition of his Poems, "I expect neither profit nor general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repayed without either. Poetry has been to me its own 'exceeding great reward'". He coveted only happiness, and that, at the time of the writing of this

1. Cf. Campbell, op. cit. p. LVI.

poem, he had.

Within, without, tho' all were health—
 Yet what e'en thus are Fame, Power, Wealth,
 But sounds that variously express,
 What's thine already— Happiness!

(ll. 68-71)

It was always a source of pleasure to him to walk off
 alone in the evenings and ponder in a mood of half melancholy.

'Tis thine with fancy oft to talk,
 And thine the peaceful evening walk:

(ll. 80-81)

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary left no impression
 upon him. "With my heart", he wrote "I never did abandon the
 name of Christ."¹ This Christian attitude is shown in the
 closing lines of the poem.

Once more to Heaven address the prayer:
 For humble independence pray
 The guardian genius of thy way:

 Till Death shall close thy tranquil eye
 While Faith proclaims "thou shalt not die!"

(ll. 95-105)

During his latter years at the Hospital he gathered under
 his protecting arms a younger boy, whom he often saved from
 persecution by the older students. Introduced to the mother
 of the boy, Mrs. Evans, a widow, he immediately captured her
 heart. She became a mother to him, and he spent much time in
 her home. Mrs. Evans had three daughters, the eldest of whom
 was named Mary. In the evenings he and Allen escorted the

1. Gillman, p. 23.

girls home from the milliner's, where they were employed. He began to whisper to Mary. There sprang up some affection between them, but with Coleridge it was primarily the love of a brother for a sister. He felt no deep passion for her, she merely lifted him from his inner contemplation, and made him conscious of the existence of love. He blossomed and developed in the radiance of her presence, and ceased to delve into the "unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysical depths". Years later, when he had again sunk into abstruse thinking, he looked back with longing upon those times when he "plucked the flower and reaped the harvest from the cultivated surface".

When he went up to Cambridge he wrote letters and poems back to Mary, and, mainly because of his absence from her,

Cambridge Series Poems Addressed To Mary Evans his love for her grew with his fancy. The poems addressed to her and written from Cambridge include: A Wish, An Ode in the Manner of Anacreon, A Lover's Complaint, With Fielding's "Amelia" Lewti, The Sigh,¹ and, On A Discovery Made Too Late.

In 1792 Coleridge wrote to Mary Evans from Cambridge and enclosed three poems, A Wish Written in Jesus Wood, Feb. 10,

1. A Wish, An Ode in the Manner of Anacreon, and A Lover's Lament were written Feb. 10, 1792, and published first by Campbell in 1893. With Fielding's "Amelia", (?) Lewti first printed in the Morning Post April 13, 1798, The Sigh first appeared in the 1796 edition of the Poems, and On A Discovery Made Too Late was dated Oct. 21, 1794, and was published in the 1796 edition.

1792, An Ode in the Manner of Ansareon, and A Lover's Complaint to his Mistress.

In the first two stanzas of the Wish (Cambell, p. 19) he describes the beauties of the Cam River, which flows near Cambridge. In the third stanza he demonstrates his disregard for wealth, elegance, and glory. Coleridge did not desire wealth as a reward for his poetry. Gillman, who perhaps knew him as well as did the closest of his friends, said of him, "Honours, titles, and distinctions had no meaning for him. His affections, so strong and deep, were likely to be his only stimulants in the pursuit of them".¹

He was a severe self critic. Upon one occasion he satirized his faults by three sonnets written for the Monthly Magazine under the name of Nehemiah Higginbottom.² In the third sonnet he criticized his use of "elaborate and swelling language and imagery". He expresses these opinions in the third stanza of the Wish:

Thus thro' its silent tenor may my life
Smooth its meek stream by sordid wealth
unlogg'd,
Alike unconscious of forensic storms,
And Glory's blood-stained palm!

(ll. 9-12)

He desired to meet death as quietly as the Cam met the icy hand of winter.

1. Gillman, p. 53 n.
2. See Biographia Literaria, p. 14.

And when dark Age shall close Life's
 little day,
 Sateiate of sport, and weary of its toils,
 E'en thus may slumbrous Death my descent
 limbs
 Compose with icy hands.

(ll. 13-16)

Coleridge was prophetic in this. When Life had had her way with him and had flung him aside, he became serene, all things seeming to him "reconciled and harmonized. . . . He articulated with the utmost difficulty, but his mind was clear and powerful, and so continued until he fell into a state of coma, which lasted until he ceased to breathe, about six o'clock in the morning."¹

An Ode in the Manner of Anacreon was written as a "love" poem. It shows his very mild passion for Mary at the time.

As late in wreaths of gay flowers I bound,
 Beneath some roses Love I found,
 And by his little frolic pinion
 As quick as thought I seized the minion,
 Then in my cup the prisoner threw,
 And drank him its sparkling dew;
 And sure I feel my angry quest
 Fluttering his wings within my breast.

Mary Evans seemed much more affected to Coleridge than he appeared to be to her. Had he declared himself, she probably would have accepted him, but Coleridge remained silent. With womanly craft she sought to force the issue. She insinuated that her hand was being sought by others, and she had not heeded them—yet.² When Coleridge heard this, A Lover's Com-

1. Wordsworth, Christopher. Memoirs of William Wordsworth II. 271.
 2. Cf. Charpentier, J. Coleridge, The Sublime Somnambulist, p. 50.

plaint To His Mistress was his probable answer.

And will you, cruel Julia! will you go?
 And trust you to the Ocean's dark dismay?
 Shall the wide wat'ry world between us flow?
 And winds un pitying snatch my hopes away?

Thus could you sport with my too easy heart?
 Yet tremble, lest not unaveng'd I grieve!
 The winds may learn your own delusive art,
 And faithless Ocean smile— but to deceive!

(ll. 5-12)

Mrs. Evans was considered by Coleridge as his second mother. He addressed the poem, With Fielding's "Amelia", to her and to her daughters. The following lines seem to bear out this hypothesis:

And sure the parent of a race so sweet
 With double pleasure on the page shall
 dwell,
 Each scene with sympathising breast
 shall meet,
 While Reason still with smiles delight to
 tell
 Maternal hope, that her loved progeny
 In all but sorrows shall Amelia's be!

About this time, he expressed a similar feeling in Lewti,¹ or The Circassian Love-Chant. (Campbell pp. 27). Before the Ballads were circulated Lewti was withdrawn, and the Nightingale substituted in its place. The earlier versions, though less polished, are more autobiographic.

Coleridge loved to envision bodies of water. He wrote² several poems in which rivers afforded themes, but the sea

1. Published in Lyrical Ballads, 1798

2. Cf. Hym to the Sunrise in the Vale of Chamoini, Sonnet to the River Otter, and A Wish

gave him a sense of the Infinite, which he constantly sought. His reaction to the sea is shown in the following lines from the poem as they appeared in the Morning Post, April 13, 1798.¹

I saw the white waves, o'er and o'er,
 Break against the distant shore.
 All at once upon the sight,
 All at once they broke in light;
 I heard no murmur of their roar,
 Nor ever I beheld them flowing,
 Neither coming, neither going:
 But only saw them, o'er and o'er,
 Break against the curved shore:
 Now disappearing from the sight
 Now twinkling regular and white:

In the earliest form of the poem, Coleridge spoke of Mary directly. Later he changed the name to "Sara", which, in turn, was scratched out and "Lewti" substituted.

At the time of the writing, Coleridge had just been re-admitted into Cambridge after his short career as a Dragoon. Resolving to apply himself to his studies, he again prepared to compete for the prize given for the best Greek Ode. His recent folly, however, impressed itself upon his mind. He recalled his neglect of Mary Evans, and lapsed into melancholia. To avoid mental self persecution he retired into the harbor of his fancy. Lewti is the poem of another world away from reality, to which he fled as a refuge from mental anguish.

Coleridge's good intentions of studying were short-lived. He was formally reprovved by Dr. Pearce, Master of Cambridge

1. From Campbell, p. 568.

at that time, in the presence of the Fellows, and allowed to resume his college work under a mild penalty, April 12, 1794. Before the middle of June (12) he and a friend, J. Huoks, set out on a walking tour, which carried them to Oxford on the way to Wales. There, at Balliol College, visiting his friend, Allen, who had gone up to Oxford from Christ's Hospital, he met Robert Southey. At Wrexham, while standing at the window of an inn, two young ladies passed by. He recognized Misses Eliza and Mary Evans! He had been trying to overlook the passion growing in his heart, and had given himself over to a new ideal, not yet well-formulated, Pantisocracy. This incident gave his sensitive soul a violent shock. He screamed out Mary's name, and the two sisters looked up startled, and recognized him. Coleridge turned and hid himself, hoping that he had not been seen. He later wrote of this incident:

I sickened, and well-nigh fainted, but instantly retired. Had I appeared to recognize her, my fortitude would not have supported me. . . . God bless her! Her image is in the sanctuary of my bosom, and never can it be torn from thence but with the strings that grapple my heart to life. . . . But love is a local anguish; I am fifty miles distant, and am not half so miserable.¹

Returning to Cambridge, he wrote the Sigh (Campbell, p. 29), the dedication copy of which he sent to the Evans family with

1. Campbell, p. XXII from Huoks, J. A Pedestrian Tour through North Wales, in a Series of Letters, p. 160.

1
a letter. Coleridge's feelings are expressed in the first two stanzas.

When Youth his faery reign began
Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man;
While Peace the present hour beguiled,
And all the lovely Prospect smiled;
Then Mary! 'mid my lightsome glee
I heaved a painless sigh for thee.

And when along the waves of woe,
My harassed heart was doomed to know
The frantic burst of outrage keen,
And the slow pang that gnaws unseen;
Then shipwrecked on Life's stormy sea
I heaved an anguished Sigh for thee!

(ll. 1-12)

Realizing that Mary's practical nature would not favor Pantisocracy, which he felt himself honour-bound to carry out, he gave her up with a sigh.

I yielded to the stern decree,
Yet heaved a languid Sigh for Thee!

(ll. 17-18)

Thinking of the time when he and his party would be settled on the Susquehannah, he felt that even then his heart would be with Mary.

And though in distant climes to roam,
A wanderer from my native home,

Thy image may not banished be--
Still, Mary! still I sigh for thee.

(ll. 19-24)

It so happened that Allen had invited Robert Southey to his rooms at a time when Coleridge was to visit him. Perhaps

1. This copy was entitled, Song. Later the name was changed to the Sigh

Allen wished to see how the two poets would react upon each other.

At any rate, the impact was a powerful one. Each was instantly drawn to the other.

The outline of Coleridge's features were as vague as those of his ideals. His brow was as of marble.

A shock of black hair parted into ringlets falling to his shoulders, with a pair of especially magnificent grey eyes, he yet had the flabby, puffy face and blunt nose of the man whose mind is eternally waiting to be made up. His lips were thick, and gapingly revealed his upper front teeth. . . . Whenever his face was not lit up by eloquence, his expression was glum, and "expressive chiefly of in-expression".— He was of fair height, awkward in his movements, and shambling in his gait.¹

His whole appearance gave the effect of the idealist, which he was.

Southey, on the other hand, was shaggy, angular and pragmatic. He gave the impression of being the personification of Puritanism, Resolution, and Egotism. He had a keen intelligence, but lacked the inspiration of the genius. At the time of the meeting of the two, he was absorbed in the ideas of Rousseau as shown in the Emile.

Coleridge brought fanciful ideals, Southey contributed logical method to the diffusion of Coleridge's ideas, and the fusion of the two was Pantisocracy, which was put into form

1. Charpentier, pp. 62-63.

upon Coleridge's visit to Bristol soon afterwards.

The dream, for such it was, was that an expedition of a select group of gentlemen and their wives were to settle upon the banks of the Susquehannah (chosen because of its metrical name), somewhere "in the wilds of America". The men were to work only a few hours a day, all that would be necessary in a land so naturally fruitful, and spend the remaining hours in study. The children were to be taught the "knowledge and general refinements of European culture" without the attendant evils of the older society. "I dreamt", said Coleridge, "that in the sober evening of my life I should behold colonies of independence in the individual dale of industry."¹

To the fulfillment of this end all else was to be sacrificed. Southey was driven from the home of his wealthy aunt, with whom he had been living, and Coleridge was called upon to give up the girl whom perhaps he had grown to love, Mary Evans.

Southey was engaged to Edith Fricker, one of the daughters of a Bristol widow, and often took Coleridge with him to call upon a second daughter, Sarah. Coleridge was so fired with Pantisocracy that momentarily he forgot Mary Evans. Sarah was rather pretty, and best of all, seemed interested in hearing Coleridge speak about the Plan. Blinded by his fancy, the

1. Gillman, p. 69.

Bard believed himself to love Sarah because she listened to the Pantisocratic dream. Southey saw the advantage of a marriage between Coleridge and Sarah and impelled the poet to be attentive to the girl, reminding him of his duty to Pantisocracy. By this time, Mary had reclaimed her place in Coleridge's affections, and he was unwilling to ally himself with Sarah while yet he loved Mary. He framed a letter, supposedly from Miss Evans, asking him not to neglect her, and to give up his ideas of the Jusquehannah expedition. Southey was not to be deceived, however, and reproved Coleridge for his neglect of Sarah. Later an actual letter came to him from Mary. Upon receiving this he realized that Mary loved him, a fact that he professed not to have known before, and wrote to Southey complaining of having to marry someone whom he did not love, but promising to "do his duty".¹

Coleridge wrote a final letter to Mary dated December 24, 1794, in which he stated his surprise at discovering she loved him, and professed his lasting love for her. Two months before he wrote On A Discovery Made Too Late (Campbell, p. 34), expressing his sorrow at the belated discovery.

Thou bleedest, my poor heart! and thy
 distress
 Reasoning I ponder with a scornful
 smile

1. Fausset, p.91. Later it was Southey who, after forcing Coleridge to marry Sarah for the good of the Cause, gave up the idea of Pantisocracy.

And probe thy sore wound sternly, though
 the while
 Swoln be mine eye and dim with heaviness.
 Why didst thou listen to Hope's whisper
 bland?
 Or, listening, why forget the healing
 tale.

(ll. 1-6)

When Jealousy with feverish fancies pale
 Jarred thy fine fibres with maniac's hand?
 Faint was that Hope, and rayless!
 Yet 'twas fair
 And soothed with many a dream the hour of rest:
 Thou should'st have loved it most, when most
 opprest,
 And nursed it with an agony of care,
 Even as a mother her sweet infant heir¹
 That wan and sickly droops upon her breast!

(ll. 7-14)

A few days before the Michaelmas holidays Coleridge left Cambridge without a degree, not for Bristol, but to the comfort and genuine sympathy of Charles Lamb in London. "You came to town," said Lamb, "and I saw you at a time when your heart was bleeding with recent wounds. Like yourself, I was sore galled with disappointed hope." There with Lamb at the "Salutation and Cat" he spent many happy hours, drugging his sorrow with conversation, until Southey became impatient and fetched him off to Bristol, where Coleridge returned to Pan-

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1. An autographed copy of this poem is dated October 21, 1794. It was first called To My Own Heart. Finding that he still loved Mary, he wrote her asking if she loved her new suitor. Several sentences in this letter are almost identical with ones in the poem: "It was a faint and rayless hope! And yet it soothed my solitude with many a delightful day-dream. It was a faint and rayless hope! yet I nursed it in my bosom with an agony of affection, even as a mother her sickly infant. . ." Mary's answer was her profession of love for him.

tisocracy and Sarah, marrying her October 4, 1795.¹

In 1793 Coleridge accompanied his brother James in his visit to "Miss F. Nesbitt" at Plymouth.² She became the subject of several poems which have been supposedly dedicated to Mary Evans. Two of these were written in a copy of Langhorne's Collins, Friday, [July] 1793.³ The Rose was entitled, On Presenting A Moss Rose to Miss Nesbitt, and Kisses was written under the caption, Cupid Turned Chymist (sic.).⁴

The Rose (Campbell, p. 23) reminds the reader of An Ode In The Manner of Anacreon, written to Mary Evans from Cambridge, and presents the same general theme.

I softly seized the unguarded power,

On spotless Sara's breast.

(ll. 9 et seq.)

"Sara's" was substituted for "Nesbitt's", the original line reading,

On lovely Nesbitt's breast.⁵

Similarly, the last line of Kisses (Campbell, p. 23), reading,

And breath'd on Sara's lovelier lips

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1. Tslbourd, T.H. The Works of Charles Lamb, I. 16, Campbell, p. XXIV, and Cottle, p. 40.
 2. Campbell, p. 565.
 3. Ibid.
 4. First printed in Poems, 1796
 5. Campbell, p. 565.

the rest.

(1. 18)

was in the manuscript written,

And breath'd on lovely Nesbitt's lovely
lips the rest.

(Campbell, p. 56)

Coleridge spent his life in constant day-dreaming. His memory retained the content of the vast number of books which he read. His friends at Cambridge were delighted to hear him recite, almost word for word, in the evening, political pamphlets which he had read that morning.¹

Between the dates of 1792 and 1794, Coleridge wrote, To A Young Lady (Campbell, p. 6), and enclosed with it, "A Poem on the French Revolution".² The accompanying poem may have been the Destruction of the Bastille (Campbell, p. 6), written shortly before. Like the two preceding selections, this work was thought to have been inspired by Mary Evans, but Campbell³ believes it also was dedicated to "Miss F. Nesbitt".

To A Young Lady is more autobiographical than the preceding verses. The first part of the first stanza speaks undoubtedly of the poet's stay at the London school.

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1. LeGrice, C.V. "College Reminiscences", from the Gentleman's Magazine, December, 1836. A portion of this article is published in Carlyon, Clement, Early Years and Late Reflections, p. 279.
 2. Lowes, J.L. The Road To Xansdu (Mr. Lowes comments upon Coleridge's apparent inability to date his poems accurately), p. 415 n.
 3. Campbell, p. 562.

Much on my early youth I love to dwell,
(p. 6, l. 1)

Coleridge was still in Cambridge at the time of composition, hence, "early youth" must refer to his life before Cambridge.

Ere yet I bade that friendly dome farewell,
Where first, beneath the echoing cloisters pale,
I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale. (ll. 2-4)
1

These lines evidently speak of Christ's Hospital.

In the second stanza, Coleridge speaks of the opiate of sadness to which he subjected himself as a relief from loneliness and homesickness.

Thus to sad sympathies I soothed my breast,
Calm, as the rainbow in the weeping West:
(p. 7, ll. 15-16)

The poet underwent periods of melancholia, often experiencing a sense of pleasure from sorrow when nothing else would bring him relief.
2

Freedom was to Coleridge an ideal which the tyrant of France had trodden upon, and he rejoiced that the citizens had revolted in order that freedom and equality might be restored. He had not taken an actual part in the revolutionary politics of France, as Wordsworth had done,
3
but his spirit was just as

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1. cf. Sonnet On Quitting School for College, Campbell, p. 15.
Adieu, adieu! ye much-loved cloisters pale!
Ah! would those happy days return again,
When 'neath your arches, free from every stain,
I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale. (ll. 5-8)
 2. Pater, Walter. Appreciations, With An Essay On Style, p. 78.
 3. Wordsworth, Christopher. Memoirs of William Wordsworth, pp. 70-77.

affected, if not more so, and in his vivid fancy he fought side by side with the revolutionists. The last two lines in the stanza convey this sentiment:

Red from the Tyrant's wound I shook the lance,
And strode in joy the reeking plains of France!
(p. 7, ll. 23-24)

But Coleridge loved peace. Murder terrorized him. He rebelled against the disregard for ideals, not against men, and when he realized that men must suffer and die in the conflict, his sympathy went out to the oppressor as well as to the oppressed, "for to love and sympathize with mankind was¹ a necessity of his nature".

Fallen is the oppressor, friendless, ghastly, low,
And my heart aches, though Mercy struck the blow.
(ll. 25-26)

Near the end of the poem the poet's dedication is recorded.

Nor, Sara! thou these flowers refuse—
(l. 41)

"Nesbitt" was changed to "Sara" later, for at this time Coleridge had not met Miss Fricker.

About this time, 1793, Coleridge wrote the three nature poems centered around Ottery St. Mary in Devonshire. These were the Sonnet to the River Otter,² Lines to a Beautiful Spring in a Village, and Lines on an Autumnal³

Ottery Series

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1. Gillman, op. cit., p. 116.
 2. First printed in Poems, 1797.
 3. First published in Poems, 1796, entitled, An Effusion on Autumnal Evening Written in Early Youth.

Evening. These poems, and lines from the Gentle Look and Anna and Harland, were all embodied in Recollection.³ Separated, the first three poems form a triplet of nature poems.

The Sonnet to the River Otter (Campbell, p. 23), is the poet's tribute to the river upon whose banks he spent his childhood.

Dear native Brook! Wild Streamlet of the West!
How many various-fated years have past,
(ll. 1-2)

"Dear native Brook!" is, of course, the Otter, is the "West", Devonshire. At the time of writing, Coleridge had been from his home eleven years (1792-1793). During these years his literary career had been developing, and he had passed from the orphan school to the university.

What happy and what mournful hours, since last
I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
(ll. 3-4)

Coleridge had spent both happy and sorrowful years at the Hospital. There was always in his mind a resentment at being torn from his home and mother while he was still a child. He never grew quite accustomed to life in the Hospital, yet he spent some of his happiest days there. For it was there he met Charles Lamb, Thomas Middleton, and the Evans family. He left the Hospital with a sigh.²

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1. Printed in the Watchman V, April 2, 1796.
 2. See Sonnet On Quitting School For College.

Coleridge never forgot his parental home, and was not consoled until he moved to Clevedon with his bride, Miss Fricker, in October, 1795.

Visions of Childhood! oft have ye beguiled
Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs:
Ah! that once more I were a careless child!
(p. 24, ll. 12-14)

In Lines To A Beautiful Spring In A Village (Campbell, p. 24) Coleridge recalls the hours spent on the banks of the Otter during his schooldays at his father's school in Ottery.

With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
(p. 24, ll. 14-16)

In the third poem, Lines on an Autumnal Evening (Campbell, p. 24), Mary Evans' congratulations to Coleridge upon his winning the Browne Medal for the best Greek Ode, furnishes¹ the autobiographical element.

I came, with Learning's meed not unbestowed:
When as she twined a laurel round my brow,
And met my kiss, and half returned my vow.
(ll. 17-20)

Toward the end of the selection the poet's thought turned again to the Otter, where as a child he had visions of becoming a poet.

Dear native brook! where first young Poesy
Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream!
(p. 26, ll. 83-84)

1. The title of the Greek Ode was, Sors Misera Servorum in Insulis Indiae Occidentalis, Campbell, pp. 476-477, Appendix B.

In his idealism Coleridge did not realize that guilt existed until he became a student at the Hospital.¹ Compelled to admit that some matters were not above reproach, yet in fancy he retained the belief that his home locality was still virtuous and friendly.

Dear native haunts! where Virtue still is gay,
 Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a mellowed ray,
 Where Love a crown of thornless Roses wears,
 Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her tears:
 (ll. 86-89)

Coleridge went up to Cambridge with ambition, carrying with him a scholarship of forty pounds. He was met by his friend,

Occasional Poems
Written At
Cambridge

Thomas Middleton, who as a Grecian at the Hospital, had protected him and later presented him with a copy of Bowle's Sonnets.

Middleton was a student at Pembroke, while Coleridge attended Jesus College as the best college to prepare him for the Church. The pair became earnest students, Coleridge often walking over to Pembroke to study with Middleton in his rooms. Middleton prepared himself for the University Fellowship. Coleridge won the Browne Medal and obtained the Rustat Scholarship, founded to aid sons of clergymen. The funds of this scholarship, added to those from the initial scholarship, paid all of his necessary expenses. In his second year he became a candidate for the University Scholarship. Only sixteen men qualified for

1. Cf. To A Young Lady and Sonnet On Quitting School For College.

examination. Of these sixteen, four were chosen for the final examination, Butler, who later became headmaster of Shrewsbury, Keats, later headmaster of Eton, Bethell, afterwards Bishop of Bangor, and Coleridge. The scholarship was awarded to Butler. Credit must be given Coleridge for the accomplishment of advancing to the final examination with three of the most brilliant men in Cambridge. Failure to obtain the fellowship "damped his ardour".

There were no classical stripes given by the University, the Classical Medal being the only mark of distinction. If a student failed to qualify for this Medal, he remained as one of the rank and file of students. One major requirement for the Medal was a knowledge of mathematics, which Coleridge cordially disliked. Realizing that he was ineligible for the award, Coleridge despaired of a fellowship, and what he had once desired, college honours, and college life.

Middleton, on the other hand, had studied mathematics, but failed to qualify for the Medal. Disappointed, he left Cambridge with a degree in 1792.¹ With the graduation of Middleton, Coleridge saw his best friend at Cambridge leave.

For a while the Bard amused himself ~~amused himself~~ by taking an active part in the political thought of the time. His

1. Campbell states that Middleton failed to qualify for Fellowship because of his "republicanism". Campbell, p. XIX, 2f.

room became the rendezvous of friends who assembled to listen to his discourse on the latest political pamphlets.¹ His reading became capricious. He took little exercise for its own sake, and was "ready at any time to unbend his mind in conversation".

Coleridge's wide reading, which his mind had not had time to assimilate, greatly influenced his religious views. His philosophy tended to push him, in spite of himself, toward Unitarianism. When William Frend, a Fellow of Jesus College, was tried at Cambridge for his Unitarian ideas and too liberal political philosophy, Coleridge committed an indecorum at the trial. The monitor pretended to mistake the culprit, and the poet's possible expulsion was avoided.

In October, 1793, Christopher Wordsworth, a brother of the Lake Poet, came up to Cambridge and met Coleridge. In November a Literary Society was formed which centered around Coleridge. The Poet repeated The Lines On An Autumnal Evening before this Society on November 7.

Soon after entering the University, Coleridge naively gave an upholsterer a free hand in the decoration of his room, and later received a bill for a hundred pounds, a sum far beyond his reach, for the service. His anxiety over this debt

1. LeGrise, op. cit., p. 283. The above and continuing references on the life of Coleridge at Cambridge were taken from LeGrise, "College Reminiscences," Cottle, op. cit., pp. 279-283; Campbell, pp. XVIII-XXII; and Gillman, op. cit., pp. 49-62.

is shown in the half-facetious poem, Philedon (Campbell, p. 16),¹
 which he wrote in 1791, shortly after his arrival at Cambridge.

The fervid sun had more than halved the day,
 When gloomy on his couch Philedon lay;
 His feeble frame consumptive as his purse,

The youth indignant seized his tailor's bill,
 (p. 16, ll. 1-7)

"Philedon" represented Coleridge, and the "tailor", his
 creditor, the upholsterer. Coleridge was not consumptive, but
 his body was frequently in pain. He had no money beyond his
 necessary expenses, and were insufficient to redeem his ob-
 ligations with the upholsterer.

Coleridge had no regard for wealth, honor, or pleasure.
 He desired only enough money to provide himself (and family
 later). He wrote for the simple pleasure of writing, and "never
 sought pleasure for its own sake."²

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1. First printed in Poetical Works, 1834. It must not be thought
 that Coleridge was always solemn and pensive, for he was often
 facetious and witty. The following epigrams, written by him
 at odd times, show anything but solemnity:

I

Thy lap-dog, Rufa, is a dainty beast,
 It don't surprise me in the leas't
 To see thee lick so dainty clean a beast.
 But that so dainty clean a beast licks thee,
 Yes— that surprises me. (Cottle, p. 288)

II

On A Bad Singer
 Swans sing before they die— 'twere no bad
 thing
 Should certain persons die before they sing.
 (Campbell, p. 447)

2. Gillman, p. 246, cf. pp. 13.

Wealth, Honour, Pleasure— what can ye
bestow?

Yet see, how high and low, and young and
old

Pursue the all delusive power of Gold

(ll. 12-14)

At the time of composition, 1791, the poet had left Mary Evans only a few months before, and thoughts of her may have prompted the line.

And what so sweet below as a woman's love?

(l. 15)

Coleridge fled from reality and painted facts with dreams. Whenever he was forced to acknowledge that life was not as rosy-tinted as his fancy, he became sad.

I curse Experience because he makes me wise:

(l. 56)

Seeing no possible way to procure money in reality, he imagined that it came from an unexpected source.

When as the Sun was hastening down the sky,
In glittering state twice fifty guineas come,—
His Mother's plate antique had raised the sum.

(ll. 67-69)

But the upholsterer would not accept money paid in fancy, and in desperation, Coleridge turned to the lottery. The drawings of the Irish Lottery closed November 26, leaving Coleridge with an unlucky ticket.¹ The following week he joined the 15th Light Dragoons. To Fortune (Campbell, p. 27)² expresses the poet's hope that his ticket might be the winning

1. Campbell, p. 567, 42 n.

2. First printed in the Morning Chronicle, November 7, 1793.

one.

But oh! if ever song thine ear
 Might soothe, O haste with fost'ring hand
 to rear
 One Flower of Hope! At Love's behest,
 Trembling I placed it in my secret breast:

Poor wither'd floweret! on its head
 Has dark Despair his sickly mildew shed!
 But thou, O Fortune! canst relume
 Its deened tints—

(ll. 19-30)

Fortune, however, did not favor the poet. Walking the streets in despair, he found himself standing before a bill on a wall in Chancery Lane, which read, "Wanted, a few smart lads for the 15th Elliot's Light Dragoons."¹ Having a natural repugnance to both horses and soldiery, he was tempted to enlist to prove to himself that he could endure them.² Shortly afterward, "overtaken by inward grief, the product of fear", and disregarding the pleas of the old Recruiting Sergeant, who tried to dissuade him, he enlisted under the name of "Silas Tomkyn Comberbache".³

Why should Coleridge have taken this step? There seems to have been no single reason. The poet was suffering under depression and melancholia. His failure to obtain the University Fellowship and his inability to qualify as a candidate

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1. Gillman, p. 57.
 2. Ibid., p. 58.
 3. Ibid.

for the Classical Medal made him despair of College honours. The graduation of his discouraged friend, Middleton, his dis-
 1
 ordered religious concepts, (his ethical code would not allow him to continue receiving aid under a ministerial scholarship since he thought himself no longer suited for the Episcopal ministry), and his debt to the upholsterer tortured his mind. Perhaps his fear that Mary Evans loved someone else also worried him. Coleridge was extremely sensitive and reacted strongly to disappointment and to mental, as well as physical, pain. Besides this, the poet's imagination magnified matters beyond their actual importance. He was subject to violent changes of mood, at one time being in black melancholy, and immediately
 2
 afterward, being sublimely happy. In depression he joined the Dragoons, discovering his mistake too late.

Coleridge's fellow soldiers soon discovered that as a Dragoon the poet was a sympathizing and tender nurse and an amiable conversationalist. His experiences with his brother, Luke, in London and his wide reading in medicine, along with

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1. Coleridge's religious views changed philosophically only. His intellect denied the Divinity of Christ, but his heart remained to the fact. He was orthodox in his faith, but his philosophy upset his belief. A mental conflict resulted. In later years, after he was broken, his orthodoxy triumphed.
 2. Cottle has remarked upon S.T.C.'s sudden changes of attitude. When Southey told Coleridge he had given up Pantisocracy, Coleridge became enraged. Cottle failed to immediately reconcile the pair. He was amazed to find them the best of friends the next time he saw them. Cottle, pp. 106-107.

his natural sympathy and benevolence, led the sick to seek him as a nurse. The able soldiers gladly performed his military duties for him in exchange for his conversation and his writing their more intimate letters.

Fully convinced of his folly, the Dragoon began to contrive his release. He wrote to a schoolmate of his condition, who informed another friend at Cambridge, who, in turn discovered him to his captain, Captain Ogle. Through the influence of George Coleridge and the head of the family, Captain James Coleridge, his discharge was procured. He returned to Cambridge on April 10, 1704.¹ On the 12th he was admonished by the Master of Cambridge, Dr. Pearce, in the presence of the Fellows, assigned extra work in translation, and confined to the College for a brief period. He seemed truly penitent and again diligently set to work.

He wrote for the prize again that year, but it was deservedly awarded to Keats for his ode, entitled, "Laus Astronomae".²

Coleridge considered the decision a just one.

Peems Written
On The
Welsh Tour

He became interested in classical odes and repeated them with pleasure.³ His desire for

scholarship, however, soon waned, and about the middle of June he set off with Hucks in the journey to Wales. While on this

1. Campbell, p. XX.

2. LeGrice, "College Reminiscences", from Carlyon, op.Cit., p. 283.

3. Ibid. LeGrice believed that a Classical Tripos (Fellowship) would have changed Coleridge's destiny. p. 283.

tour, or soon after, he composed a trio of poems, Lines Written¹
At The King's Arms, Ross, Formerly the House of the Man of Ross,
On Bala Hill,² and Imitated From The Welsh.³

Lines Written At The King's Arms (Campbell, p. 33), exhibits one of the periods of the poet's melancholy. He still reproved himself for his folly, and his fault of conceiving things beyond their normal proportion, caused him to think life a dismal thing, and to believe his soul apart from all good.

But if, like me, through life's distressful
 scene

Lonely and sad thy pilgrimage hath been:
 And if thy breast with heart-sick anguish
 fraught,

Thou journeyest onward tempest-tossed in
 thought:

Here cheat thy cares! in generous visions
 melt,

And dream of goodness, thou hast never felt.

(p. 33, ll. 14-20)

On Bala Hill (Campbell, p. 33) illustrates the effect of⁴
 physical exertion upon Coleridge's weak body. Since child-
 hood the poet had suffered with rheumatism, shortness of breath,
 and pains in his chest.⁵

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1. Published in Cambridge Intelligencer, September 27. The original was written on the shutter of the inn. J.D.C. found a copy among Evans' papers.
 2. This poem appeared with above in the Evans papers, dated July 11, 1794. It was first printed in Campbell, op. cit.
 3. First printed in Poems, 1796.
 4. At times, however, the poet's body seemed comparatively strong. Dorothy Wordsworth made note in her Journal of the many long walks which Coleridge took during the Wordsworth's stay at Grasmere. Knight, W. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I. pp. 111, 120, 124, 134, etc.
 5. Gillman, p. 260.

With many a weary step at length I gain
 Thy summit, Bala! and the cool breeze
 plays
 Cheerily round my brow— as hence the
 gaze
 Returns to dwell upon the journey'd plain.
 'Twas a long way and tedious.

(ll. 1-5)

Later, in 1809, while climbing Old Skiddaw with his son,
 he was seized with violent chest pains also.¹

The third in the group, Imitated from the Welsh, (Campbell, p. 33) is a love poem, presumably to Mary Evans as it was composed at the same time as the other two, which were found among the Evans papers. This selection contains no particular references to the life of Coleridge, and, therefore, it seems unnecessary to study it further.

After completing the tour with Hucks, Coleridge went to Bristol, where he saw Southey and the pair talked over Pantisocracy, making more definite plans than
Pantistocratic
Poems had been made at their meeting at Oxford.
 Later they walked to Somersetshire to see Burnett and to interest other recruits in the plan. While on this trip he met Thomas Poole, who was later to provide the means for Coleridge to move to Stowey.² Returning to Bristol.

1. Ibid.

2. T. Poole was self-educated and well read. He loved liberty and democracy, and was interested in pantisocracy, but was too practical to believe it more than a dream. He loved S.T.C. because he saw in him genuine benevolence and realized him a genius. Fausset, op. cit., pp. 82-87.

Coleridge became engaged to Sarah Fricker as part of the plan of Pantisocracy. At the close of the summer vacation Coleridge returned the university. October 24, he wrote the Monologue to a Young Jackass in Jesus Piece,¹ and in November, after the death of a friend, he composed an elegy, Lines on a Friend Who Died of a Frenzy Fever.²

The Monologue to a Young Jackass (Campbell, app. C, pp. 477-478) was inspired by Pantisocracy in the fullest meaning of the term, universal brotherhood for all beings. It is said that every poet has a vulnerable spot upon which the critics pounce. This is Coleridge's. Lamb considered the poem trivial.³ It was the poet's nature to flee from reality. As a child he sought refuge in poetry, later he absorbed himself in metaphysics, at this time he lost himself in a Utopia where Love reigned supreme and evil of any sort was totally lacking. Lost in fancy of the fulfillment of Pantisocracy, Coleridge wrote this poem, which borders on the humorous. The early version is more revealing than the later ones which he revised. Universal brotherhood is portrayed in lines 25-26.

Innocent Foal! despised and Forlorn!
I hail thee Brother— spite of the fool's
scorn;⁴

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1. First printed in the Morning Chronicle, December 30, 1794.
 2. Published in Poems, 1796.
 3. Ainger's Letters, I. p. 62. From Campbell, p. 573.
 4. It seems that the poet did not claim the same relationship with all lower animals, for in a letter to Thelwall, he speaks of feeding "a couple of snouted and grunting cousins from the refuse." Campbell, p. XXXI.

The subsequent lines show the poet swept away by visions of the new order of things established by the Susquehanna colony.

And fain I'd take thee with me to the Dell
 Where high-soul'd Pantisocracy shall dwell!
 Where Mirth shall tickle Plenty's ribless
 side
 And smiles from Beauty's Lip on sun-beam
 glide,
 Where Toil shall wed young Health that charming
 Lass!
 And use his sleek cows for a looking-glass—
 Where rats shall mess with terriers hand-in-
 glove,
 And Mice with Pussy's Whiskers sport in Love!
(ll. 27-34)

Many of the poems of Coleridge are almost wholly subjective.¹ Lines on a Friend (Campbell, p. 35) is one of these poems. This selection upon the death of the son of the Vicar of Ottery can almost be used as an index to his erratic career. Thinking of his departed friend who had passed from an unkind world, after much suffering, into final rest, the poet's thought turned upon himself.

As oft at twilight gloom thy grave I pass,
 And sit me down upon its recent grass,
 With introverted eye I contemplate
 Similitude of soul, perhaps of— Fate!
(ll. 35-38)

To Southey Pantisocracy was a plan of colonization fash-

1. Other poems in this class include: On Receiving An Account That His Only Sister's Death Was Inevitable; On Seeing A Youth Affectionately Welcomed By His Sister; Reflections On Having Left A Place of Retirement; Sonnet series on the birth of his son, Hartley; To The Rev. George Coleridge; and others.

ioned under the influence of Rousseau's Emile. To Coleridge it was the sum total of everything that mattered, and in his enthusiasm he marshalled logical arguments in his favor. His zeal and inspiration, plus his natural charming discourse, overwhelmed his listeners. He practiced on his travelling mate, Hucks, who listened interestedly for hours. Upon one occasion he harangued two burly fellows until they danced about with agitation and pledged a toast to the plan.¹ This convinced Coleridge that his persuasive powers lay in his reason. Something of the pathos is presented in the fact that the poet, recognizing himself to be a failure in many things, considered his one true gift from Heaven to be a logical and reasoning mind. Not by the rarest stretch of imagination could Coleridge really be considered a rational man. Perhaps Coleridge himself was not deceived in his deepest sincerity, but clutched at anything that might lessen his great sense of personal failure. He spoke of his endowment of reason in the following lines from the poem:

To me hath Heaven with bounteous hand
 assigned
 Energetic Reason and a shaping mind,
 The daring ken of Truth, the Patriot's
 part
 And Pity's sigh that breathes the gentle
 heart—

(ll. 39-42)

Coleridge was the victim of indolence which he was un-

1. Charpentier, op. cit., p. 67.

able to shake off. He fully realized himself indolent yet seemed able to do nothing to improve his habits. He wrote of himself, "As to my shape, 'tis a good shape enough if measured, but my gait is awkward, and walk of the whole man indicates indolence capable of energies."¹ Gillman perceived this trait in his friend, but softened his analysis by observing that most of his failures to keep his appointments were due to illness rather than sheer indolence.² Coleridge had spent many weeks in visits and lectures in order to obtain subscriptions for the Watchman. His failure to keep his appointments led many of his acquaintances to discontinue their subscriptions. At one time a large dinner party had been arranged, at which Coleridge was to be the guest of honor and the speaker. Guests were invited to see and hear the poet. Many of these people were subscribers. It so happened that Coleridge had completely forgotten the engagement and failed to be present. As a result of this slip in memory Coleridge lost twelve subscriptions.³ Little neglects by him caused him to lose many acquaintances. Failure to appear at a lecture, planned by Southey and him to raise funds for the expedition, at which he was the speaker, almost cost him the friendship of Southey then instead of later. Southey reproved him

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1. Fausset, op. cit., p. 67.
 2. Gillman, op. cit., p. 261.
 3. Gottle, p. 27.

severely, but Coleridge attached little significance to his failure to keep his appointment.¹ Coleridge noticed that he was losing friends, but seemed to do nothing to rectify the matter.

Bloth-jauniced all! and from my graspless
 hand
 Drop Friendship's precious pearls, like
 hour-glass sand.
 I weep, yet stoop not! the faint anguish
 flows,
 A dreamy pang in Morning's feverish doze.
(ll. 43-46)

A letter written to Allsop June 29, 1822 by Coleridge gives an interesting commentary on this poem and on his mental attitude in general,

A naturally, at once searching and communicative disposition, the necessity of reconciling the restlessness of an ever-working fancy from an intense craving after a resting-place for my thoughts in some principle that was derived from experience, but of which all other knowledge should be but so many repetitions under various limitations, - - - - - And lastly, that my eloquence was most commonly excited by the desire of running away and hiding myself from my personal and inward feelings, and not for the expression of them, while doubtless this very effort of feeling gave a passion and glow to my thoughts and language on subjects of a general nature, that they other-wise would not have had. I fled in a circle, still overtaken by the feelings from which I was evermore fleeing, with my back turned toward them: 2

Coleridge quit Cambridge about the middle of December

1. Ibid., p. 28.

2. Coleridge to Allsop, June 29, 1822. Allsop, Thomas. Letters, etc., pp. 212-213.

without taking a degree.¹ He later wrote, "In an inauspicious hour I left the friendly Cloisters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honoured Jesus College, Cambridge."² Dr. Pearce, the Master of Jesus College, tried to keep him, appealing to his political views. Coleridge ended the argument by stating that he "was neither Jacobin nor Democrat, but a Pantisocrat."³ The master then revealed to the Christ's Hospital Committee the poet's absence from November, 1793 to April, 1794 (the time spent by the poet in the Dragoons), and his departure from school before the close of the Michaelmas term. This ended Coleridge's stay at Cambridge.⁴ Gillman regretted that the poet left without a degree, but said that "it was so ordained."⁵

The Gentle Look (Campbell, p. 23) was written by the poet to express his reflections on leaving Cambridge.⁶

What time, in sickly mood, at parting day
I lay me down and think of happier years:
Of joys, that glimmered in Hope's twilight ray,
Then left me darkling in a vale of tears.
O pleasant days of Hope— forever gone!

(ll. 6-9)

After Coleridge had given up Mary Evans, he began to pay court to Sarah Fricker, whom he finally married.

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1. Campbell, p. XXIV.
 2. LeGrice, "College Reminiscences", Carlyon, op.cit. p. 20.
 3. Campbell, p. XXIV fn.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Gillman, p. 118.
 6. Printed first in Poems, 1796.

Then he changed the addresses in some of his poems from the names of other ladies to "Sara".

About 1794 he wrote The Kiss, which was dedicated to his courtship of Sara.¹

After leaving London in January, 1795, and going up to Bristol with Southey, Coleridge again paid court to Sara. Southey had recently been expelled from the home of his wealthy aunt for his persistence in planning for the Susquehannah expedition, which his aunt considered a foolish waste of time. He, Burnett, and Coleridge rented a room together in Bristol. Finances were low. Robert Lovell, one of the group, who had married one of the Fricker girls, introduced Coleridge and Southey to a London bookseller, Joseph Cottle. Shortly afterward Coleridge wrote Cottle requesting the loan of enough funds to pay the room rent. Cottle advanced the money, and later gave Coleridge thirty guineas for a volume of poetry, for which he had been offered only six in London, which he had refused. He promised Southey an equal sum for his volume.² Southey and Coleridge then resolved to obtain funds, necessary for fitting out the expedition, by delivering a series of lectures. It was decided that Southey should speak upon History,

1. Printed in Poems, 1796. In 1797 it was changed to To Sara. In 1828 et. seq., the name, Kiss, was again restored to it as the other selection, Kisses, had been omitted. This poem was read to Cottle when he visited the Coleridges at Clevedon, in late 1794 or early 1795.

2. Cottle, p. 12.

and Coleridge, upon Politics and Religion.¹

Cottle promised Coleridge a guinea and a half for each hundred lines of poetry delivered him after the first volume. The poet considered this not only enough for himself, but also sufficient for the support of a wife, and he was accordingly married at St. Mary Redcliff Church, Bristol, October 4, 1795, to Miss Sara Fricker.² Immediately they moved to a cottage on the Severn at Clevedon. Coleridge planned to subsist on the simplest of supplies and furniture, feeling that they must learn to live on the barest necessities if they were soon to subject themselves to the privations of the American wilderness. This attitude changed, however, shortly after the couple had settled in their cottage, for Coleridge wrote to Cottle asking him to bring with him "some little Articles", which included everything from a tin dust pan to a Bible. Cottle brought him the desired articles, and later sent down an upholsterer to paper the parlor.³

It seemed that Clevedon was the ideal home for the Coleridges. The rent was low, only five pounds annually, with no taxes.⁴ Behind the house was a small garden. All seemed peaceful and secluded, a perfect haven for a poet. Coleridge seemed

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1. Ibid., p. 13.
 2. Cottle, p. 40.
 3. Cottle, p. 40-41.
 4. Cottle, p. 41. Cottle remarked that S.T.C. could pay a year's rent by "mounting his Pegasus" (composing) for just one week.

almost as satisfied as he imagined he would have been on the banks of the Susquehanna.¹

But Coleridge was fundamentally the Romantic. Settled comfortably at Clevedon, he wished himself somewhere else. He was too far removed from the Bristol Library, which was like a refreshing spring to his intellect. Bristol itself was so far from Clevedon that he could not conveniently cover the distance in a day, and Sara became anxious if he remained overnight in Bristol. His friends had urged him to return to Redoliff-Hill, which he reluctantly did late in 1795.

Although he had spent only a few months at Clevedon, he was as happy there as he had been anywhere. It was in prospect of moving to Clevedon that he wrote the Eolian Harp,² and after leaving his quiet cottage, he composed Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement.³ The Eolian Harp (Campbell, p. 49) was written just prior to going to the cottage. The poet anticipates the joy of his honeymoon.

My pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
With white-flowered Jasmin, and the broad-leaved
Myrtle,

(ll. 1-4)

Love was the nature of Coleridge and finds expression in

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1. Cottle, p. 65.
 2. First printed in Poems, 1796, entitled, Effusion, 35, Written at Clevedon, August 20, 1795. Since Coleridge married October 4, 1795 this piece could not be his honeymoon composition, but might have been written in anticipation of his retreat with his bride.
 3. Printed in Monthly Magazine, October, 1796.

his poems.

Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so filled;
(ll. 30-31)

Coleridge was not the infidel he was sometimes accused
of being.¹ He was as humble as a child upon occasions, and
became antagonistic to the philosophy that forced him to Doubt.

And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
(l. 52)

Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
These shapings of the unregenerate mind;
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's eye-babbling spring.
(ll. 54-57)

His orthodoxy is clearly shown in the continuing lines:

For never guiltless may I speak of him,
The Incomprehensible! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that truly
feels:
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, dear honoured Maid.
(ll. 58-64)

Reflections on Having Left A Place of Retirement (Campbell, p. 52) was written upon the Poet's leaving Clevedon. The opening lines of the poem were quoted by Cottle as actually
²
descriptive of the cottage.

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1. Poole's nephew wrote in his Diary, August 18, 1836, "Each of them (Coleridge and Southey) was shamefully hot with Democratic rage as regards politics, and both infidels as regards religion". Campbell, p. XXXI, fn.
 2. Cottle, p. 41. "There was also a small garden with several pretty flowers, and the 'tallest rose tree' was not failed to be pointed out, which 'peeped at the chamber window'.

Low was our pretty cot; our tallest rose
 Peeped at the chamber-window. We could
 hear
 At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
 The sea's faint murmur.

(ll. 1-4)

The poet unconsciously sought for excuses and reasons why he had left Clevedon. His constant desire to be somewhere else had made him restless, and the couple had moved to Bristol where the poet might have access to the library. In the following lines he is persuaded that he left, in spite of his happiness there, that he might settle down like every one else and work for his living.

Ah! quiet dell! dear cot, and mount sublime!
 I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
 While my unnumbered brethern toiled and bled,
 That I should dream away the entrusted hours
 On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
 With feelings all too delicate for use?

(ll. 42-48)

1

Coleridge lived always in a tinted dream. He was never able to see things in the light of reality. He actually believed what he stated in the following lines, that in going back to Bristol, he was going to apply himself and become creative.

I therefore go, and join head, heart, and
 hand,

1. See Epitaph on Himself, Campbell, p. 450, ll. 1-2.
 Here sleeps at length poor Coleridge, and
 without screaming—
 Who died as he always lived, a-dreaming.

Active and firm, to fight the bloodless
 fight
 of science, freedom, and the truth in
 Christ.

(ll. 60-62)

That the poet did not succeed in writing any great amount is proved by the fact that Cottle had to beg him for copy, being constantly delayed by the poet, who declared that he could not compose because of indisposition, engagements, sickness,¹ etc.

The final line removes all doubt of Coleridge's true religious belief.²

Speed it, O Father! Let thy Kingdom come!

(l. 71)

In September 1795, in anticipation of his coming marriage with Sara, Coleridge wrote the Lines Written at Shurton Bars (Campbell, p. 47).³ This poem is autobiographical in its relationship between Coleridge and Sara. The following lines portray the poet's fancy in meeting his bride:

How oft, my Love! with shapings sweet
 I paint the moment, we shall meet!
 With eager speed I dart—
 I seize you in the vacant air,
 And fancy, with a husband's care
 I press you to my heart!

(ll. 85-90)

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1. Cf. Cottle, pp. 65-70. It must be remembered that S.T.C. was basically romantic. He wrote when he felt the urge, but abhorred having to compose in order to live. Cf. Campbell, p. XXX, and Coleridge to Cottle, Feb. 22, 1796., Cottle, pp. 68-69.
 2. Lamb said that S.T.C. 'hungered for Eternity' from a lad on. Gillman, p. 313.
 3. First printed in Poems, 1796 as Ode to Sara.

The poet was subject to fits of melancholy, from which he hoped to be relieved by his marriage.

And there in black soul-jaundiced fit
A sad gloom-pamper'd Man to sit,

(ll. 49-50)

To the Nightingale (Campbell, p. 45) might be included in the Sara group, for it, like the above poem, appears to have been written shortly before the wedding date.¹ The poet recalls Sara's acceptance of him in the following lines:

My Sara— best beloved of human kind!
When breathing the pure soul of tenderness
She thrills me with the Husband's promised
name!

(p. 46, ll. 24-26)

This poem is fundamentally a nature poem, and the poet expressed his lament that other romantic poets, as well as himself, Chatterton and Lamb, were confined in the city when they should have been out in nature.

How many Bards in city garret pent,
While at their window they with down-
ward eye
Mark the faint lamp-beam on the ken-
nell'd mud,
And listen to the drowsy cry of Watch-
men
(Those hoarse unfeather'd Nightingales
of time!)

Coleridge was too weak for his faith to keep pace with his intellect. Before he left the university he had become Unitarian in his beliefs. About 1794 he began the embodiment

1. Printed in Poems, 1796.

From Hope and firmer Faith to perfect Love
(p. 54, l. 38)

Second, this poem shows the poet's attitude toward Unitarianism, which was at its peak in his thought from the year 1793, at Frenn's trial at Cambridge, to the time of his return from Germany in 1799, when he became gradually dissatisfied with it.¹ During the period of this poem he was exalting Unitarianism, witness the following lines:

The is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
Truth of subliming import! with the
 which
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,
He from this small orbit flies with blest
 outstarting!

(p. 55, ll. 105-109)

In 1794, Coleridge revised the Monody on the Death of
Chatterton (Campbell, p. 61).² At the time he was melancholy,
and this poem is a reflection upon his own life.

Want was no stranger to Coleridge. His livelihood depended upon the production of his poems. At times he simply did not feel the urge to write, and his family had to suffer from lack of food.³

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1. Gillman, p. 161.
 2. First printed in the Christ's Hospital Book, It was revised in 1794, and printed in Poems, 1834. This revision is more autobiographical than the original.
 3. Cf. S.T.C.'s letter to Poole, begging for a lodging near him at Stowey, Fausset, p.141. "The ghosts of Otway and Chatterton, and the phantasms of a wife broken-hearted, and a hunger-bitten Baby! O, a Father and a Husband must feel who toils with his brain for uncertain bread." It must be admitted that S.T.C. was prone to exaggeration, and also wished to play upon Poole's sympathy, but there seems to be a basis of truth in what he wrote. Cf. his letter to Cottle, Feb. 22, 1796, "So I am forced to write for bread!"— Cottle, p. 68.

But doubly strange, where life is but a breath
 To sigh and pant with, up Fant's rugged steep.
 (p. 61, ll. 5-6)

Coleridge realized himself a genius, yet he was constantly
¹
 in want and misery.

I weep that heaven-born Genius so shall fall:
 And oft, in Fancy's saddest hour, my soul
 Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
 (p. 61, ll. 26-29)

Is this the land where where Genius ne'er in vain
 Poured forth his lofty strain?
 (l. 34)

Cottle remarked that there was a striking similarity between Coleridge and Chatterton, with one contrast, Chatterton was neglected by the world and cherished by his family, while Coleridge was harbored by his friends (else he would probably
²
 have starved to death) and neglected by his family.

Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,
 Thy native cot, where still, at close of day,
 Peace smiling sat, and listened to thy lay:
 (p. 62, ll. 88-88)

Coleridge reflected upon his recent follies, his term in the Dragoons, his loss of Mary Evans, failure to take his degree, his indolence, etc., and magnifying them in his despondency, sympathized with the mental attitude of Chatterton, which caused him to commit suicide. The following lines portray the poet's melancholy.

-
1. Same letter to Cottle. "Oh, wayward and desultory spirit of genius! I'll boast thou brook a task-master!", p. 69.
 2. Cottle, p. 72.

Poor Chatterton! farewell! of darkest hues
 This chaplet cast I on thy unshaped tomb;
 But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
 Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom;
 For oh! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing
 Have blackened the fair promise of my spring;
 And the stern Fate transpierced with viewless
 dart

The last pale Hope that shivered at my heart!

(p. 63, ll. 119-128)

Whenever life tortured Coleridge, he fled to the unreal, which was at this time, Pantisocracy. Although the expedition was never realized in fact, yet Coleridge often dreamed that he were already living in paradise on the banks of the Susquehanna. This poem, being one of melancholy, the poet fled in fancy to Pantisocracy.

- - - - - O'er the ocean swell
 Sublime of Hope I seek the cottaged dell
 Where Virtue gaily with careless step may stray;
 And, dancing to the moon-light roundelay,
 The Wizard Passions weave a holy spell!

(ll. 132-136)

O Chatterton! that thou wert yet alive!
 Sure thou would'st spread the canvass to the
 gale,
 And love with us the tinkling team to drive
 O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale;

(ll. 137-140)

Coleridge realized that he was only dreaming, but unable¹ to bear mental pain, continued his dream as an opiate.

Alas, vain Phantasies! the fleeting brood
 Of Woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood!
 Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,

1. As Coleridge lived most of his life in fancy, it seems impossible to separate, in some cases, his actual experiences from his dreams, for the latter were real to him.

Where Susquehannah pours his untamed stream;
 And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
 Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide,
 Will raise a solemn Cenotaph to thee,
 Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy!

When Coleridge wrote Lamb in the form of a poem the letter,
To a Friend, Together with an Unfinished Poem (Campbell, p. 37),
 the poem which he enclosed was most probably the Religious
¹
Musings. To a Friend, being epistolary, is largely auto-
²
 biographical.

Lamb's sister was ill when Coleridge sent this poem to
³
 him. Coleridge knew this, and thinking upon it, his mind re-
⁴
 called the loss of his own favorite sister, Anne (Nancy).
⁵

I too a sister had, an only Sister—
 She loved me dearly, and I doted on her!
 To her I pour'd forth all my puny sorrows,
 (As sick Patient in his Nurse's arms)
 And of the heart those hidden maladies

-
1. Campbell thinks that there is little doubt that the poem enclosed was Religious Musings. To a Friend was first published in Poems, 1796. It could not have been written before Coleridge had gone up to Bristol in early 1795.
 2. If the poem enclosed were Religious Musings, as was probable, Coleridge did not believe with his heart the religion which his mind had formulated.

Thus far my scanty brain hath built the
 rhyme

Elaborate and swelling: yet the heart
 Not owns it.

(To a Friend, ll. 1-3)

3. To a Friend, lines 8-11. Lamb wrote to Coleridge June 10, 1796. "I was glad to meet with those lines you sent me when my sister was so ill". Campbell, p. 573, from Ainger's Letters. I, 17.
4. Cf. On Seeing a Youth Affectionately Welcomed By a Sister.
5. This was not his only sister, but the only sister by his mother. John Coleridge had three daughters by his first wife, but these were much older than S.T.C., and he never looked upon them as sisters.

That even from Friendship's eye will
 shrink ashamed.
 O! I have woke at midnight, and have
 wept,
 Because she was not!

(ll. 12-19)

Of all Coleridge's friends, Lamb remained constant to him the greatest number of years, from grammar school, with occasional spats, until Coleridge's death on July 25, 1834.¹ Coleridge pledged his friendship in the following lines:

- - - - - Cheerily, dear Charles!
 Thou, thy best friend shalt cherish many
 a year:

(ll. 19-20)

After he had returned to Bristol from London, Coleridge had continued his suit with Sara, and the wedding date was nearing at the time of writing. Hope, after his recent disillusionment, was returning to him with his coming marriage. The following lines express this hope:

Such warm presagings feel I of high Hope.
 For not uninterested the dear Maid
 I've view'd—

(ll. 21-22)

In 1795 Coleridge wrote To an Infant (Campbell, p. 44),² presumably to Lovell's young child, his wife's nephew. In

Miscellaneous
Poems

this selection the poet sees in the infant's face his own likeness, realizing that he him-

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1. Lamb was so affected by the death of the poet that he did not allow himself to attend the funeral. Later he pressed five guineas upon the nurse for her care of Coleridge. Occasionally he would exclaim in his depression, "Coleridge is dead. Coleridge is dead." Hazlett, W.C. Letters of Charles Lamb, II, 430-431, ln.
 2. First printed in Poems, 1796.

self was still a baby in innocence and simplicity.¹

Man's breathing miniature! thou mak'st me
sigh—

A babe art thou— and such a Thing am I!

(ll. 15-16)

About the same time he composed To the Rev. W.J. Hort
(Campbell, pp. 44-45). One of the poet's dreams of Pantis-
ocracy is shown in the third stanza.²

In Freedom's UNDIVIDED dell
There toil and Health with mellow'd
Love shall dwell,
Far from folly, far from men,
In the rude romantic glen,
Up the cliff, and thro the glade,
Wandering with the dear-loved maid
I shall listen to the lay,
And ponder on thee far away

(p. 45, ll. 1-9)

The Rev. Bowles was perhaps Coleridge's greatest literary influence while he was at the Hospital. He introduced the poet to the nature sonnets, and the copy of his sonnets, given to Coleridge by Middleton, so delighted the young poet that, being unable to buy additional volumes, he set to work and made more than forty copies, within the space of a year and a half, which he gave to his friends.³ He intended to dedicate the 1797 volume of his poems to William Lisle Bowles, and wrote

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1. Gillman referred upon several occasions to the childlike simplicity and innocence of Coleridge. Gillman, pp. 116, 117, 313.
 2. Printed in Poems, 1796. (Never republished) The Rev. Hort was a master at Dr. Estlin's school during 1794-1795.
 3. Coleridge, S.T. Biographia Literaria. Ed., John C. Metcalf, p. 8.

To the Rev. V.L. Bowles (Campbell, p. 40) as the dedicatory
1
poem.

My heart has thank'd thee, Bowles! for those
soft strains,
That, on the still air floating, tremblingly
Wak'd in me Fancy, Love, and Sympathy!

(ll. 1-3)

After Coleridge had grown accustomed to the different environment of the London school, he muddled his brain with metaphysics "even before (his) fifteenth year".² At this period, the sonnets of William Lisle Bowles pointed him to an appreciation of and a love for external nature.

Taro' Youth's gay prime and thornless paths
I went;
And, when the darker day of life began,
And I did roam, a thought-bewildered man!
Thy kindred Lays an healing solace lent,

Each lonely pang with dreamy joys combin'd

-
1. Campbell, p. 574, 60 n.
 2. Biog. Lit., pp. 9-10. "in my friendless wanderings on our leavedays, highly was I delighted, if any passenger, especially if he were dressed in black, would enter into conversation with me. For I soon found the means of directing it back to my favorite subjects

Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,
And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

(— S.T.C. quoted from
Paradise Lost, II, 559-
560, Metcalf.)

This preposterous pursuit was. . . injurious both to my natural powers, and to the progress of my education. It would perhaps have been destructive, had it been continued; but from this I was withdrawn. . . by the genial influence of a style of poetry, so tender and yet so manly. . . as the sonnets and early poems of Mr. Bowles."

And stole from vain REGRET her scorpion stings;
While shadowy PLEASURE, with mysterious wings,
Brooded the wavy and tumultuous minó,

(ll. 5-12)

In one of the poems concerning Chatterton, On Observing
a Blossom on the First of February, 1796 (Campbell, pp. 63-64),

Coleridge gives the reader a little insight into the poet's
love of beauty and music.¹ Coleridge sought refuge, from his
acute sensitiveness, in abstractions.² Music to the poet trans-
ported him deeper into the abstract. In the proposed stage
direction of Osorio he made use of the musical background.³ He
had a poetic joy in everything beautiful.⁴

----- Dim similitudes
Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one
hour
From anxious Self, Life's cruel taskmaster!
And the warm woodiness of this sunny day
Tremble along my frame and harmonize
The attempered organ, that even saddest
thoughts
Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh
tune
Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

The desire for humble domestic life as least as an ideal,
is demonstrated in To— (Campbell, p. 64).⁵ He had been sublimely

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1. Published in Watchman VI, April 11, 1796. Cf. the Monody
on the Death of Chatterton (Campbell, p. 61)
 2. See Lowes, op. cit. p. 450, 7 n.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Pater, op. cit. p. 89.
 5. First found in Commonplace Book and considered a fragment,
but really is a complete poem. Note similarity in its theme
and that of Domestic Peace (Campbell, p. 33).

Tell me, on what holy ground
May Domestic Peace be found
In a cottaged vale she dwells.

The simplicity ideal is in keeping with Pantisocratic principles.

happy living on bare necessities at Clevedon. When Poole offered him the possibility of moving to Stowey in a rude cottage nearby, he eagerly accepted, and begged like a child that Poole might aid him in procuring the home.¹ After moving into Stowey December 31, 1796, he wrote to Thelwall in an unpublished letter:—

My farm will be a garden of one acre and a half, in which I mean to raise vegetables and corn for myself and wife, and feed a couple of snouted cousins from the refuse. . . . I am not fitted for public life; yet the light shall stream to a far distance from the taper in my cottage window.²

The following lines from the poem show the poet's pleasure in the simple life:

I mix in life, and labour to be free,
With common persons pleased and common
things.

(ll. 1-2)

After removing to Bristol, Coleridge decided to edit a periodical, The Watchman, which was to be sold at four pence

Sequence of
Events

a copy. Joseph Cottle printed the form of the advertisement of the publication of the Watch-

The Lloyd
Series

man.³

To supply at once the places of a Review, Newspaper, and Annual Register.

On Tuesday, the 1st of March, 1796, will be published No. 1, price fourpence, of a Miscellany, to be continued every eighth day, under the name of,

THE WATCHMAN

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

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1. Cf. Griggs, E.L. Unpublished Letters of Coleridge, I, 61, 63.
 2. Campbell, p. XXXI.
 3. Cottle, p. 75.

This Miscellany will be comprised in two sheets, or thirty-two pages, closely printed in 8vo. the type, long primer.

He set out in January getting subscriptions, lecturing, preaching, and talking on the way. By various methods he managed to interest about a thousand subscribers. But Coleridge was not a journalist, and the numbers soon grew dull and uninteresting. He lost five hundred subscribers at one time for preaching upon a repulsive text.¹ Failure to appear at dinner and lecture engagements caused him to lose others, until he stood finally on the brink of bankruptcy. Poole had realized that the poet's venture would probably end in failure, and collected a sum of forty pounds for his relief. The copies of The Watchman became valueless, and on May 13, 1796, his few subscribers read the last volume. The following is a quotation by Cottle from the "Address to the readers of the Watchman" written on the last page of the final number:

This the last Number of the Watchman.— Henceforward I shall cease to cry the state of the Political atmosphere. While I express my gratitude to those friends who exerted themselves so liberally in the establishment of this Miscellany, I may reasonably be expected to assign some reason for relinquishing it thus abruptly. The reason is short and satisfactory.— The work does not pay its expenses.²

Upon Coleridge's request Poole sent him a "horse of tolerable meekness" and the disappointed chronicler spent a few quiet

1. "Therefore my bowels shall sound like a harp."— Isaiah XVI: 11.
2. Cottle, p. 79.

days at Stowey. "I retired," said Coleridge, "to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly that literature was not a profession by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself, that whatever my talents might, or might not, be in any other respects, yet they were not of a sort that could enable me to become a popular writer."¹

Ventures of newspaper work and keeping school at Derby² failed. In July he paid a visit to his family in Ottery.

During one of the poet's visits to Birmingham, while collecting subscribers for the Watchman, he met Mr. Lloyd, a banker in the city. Lloyd had a son, Charles, who was brilliant and somewhat of a poet, but inclined to be morbid. Charles and Coleridge became friends, and Mr. Lloyd proposed to allow Charles to be a paying guest of the Bards. The pecuniary benefit was sufficient to permit the Coleridges to move from Redcliff-hill to Kingsdown in Bristol. When Poole invited Coleridge to move near him at Stowey, Lloyd went also. For a while the group was happy, then Lloyd was discovered to be victim of violent epileptic fits. Coleridge nursed his friend

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1. Gillman, p. 73. This refers to Coleridge's attitude after moving to Stowey.
 2. Mrs. Evans of Darley Evans wished him to keep school for her children. Her trustees would not permit. She gave J.T.C. ninety pounds and some baby clothes, of which he was soon to be in need. Campbell, p. XXVIII.

and gradually sank into despondency himself.¹

Coleridge wrote a series of three sonnets to his friend, To a Young Friend On His Proposing to Domesticate with the Author (Campbell, p. 67), Addressed to a Young Man of Fortune Who Abandoned Himself to an Indolent and Causeless Melancholy (Campbell, p. 68), and Sonnet (Campbell, p. 68).

To A Young Friend, as the title indicates, was written in anticipation of Lloyd's "boarding" with Coleridge.² Coleridge constantly desired a male companion as a bosom friend.³

How more than sweet, if some dear friend
 should bless
 The adventurous toil, and up the path
 sublime
 Now lead, now follow; the glad landscape
 round,
 Wide and more wide, increasing without
 bound.

(ll. 16-19)

Coleridge enjoyed nothing better than to conduct a one-sided conversation on philosophy with an intelligent friend who was willing to allow the poet to do all the talking. He looked forward to such conversation with Lloyd.

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1. Cottle, pp. 98-108 et. passim. Lloyd was the cause of the misunderstanding between Coleridge and Lamb. Later Lloyd settled at Grasmere, near Wordsworth, and wrote poetry and a novel, Edmund Oliver, based upon the life of Coleridge while in the Dragoons. Lloyd died of insanity near Versailles. Unpublished Letters, I. 62, ln.
 2. Printed in Poems, 1797.
 3. Southey, Lamb, William Wordsworth, Thomas Poole, and Joseph Cottle were some of the other intimate male friends of Coleridge. It is impossible to estimate the influence of Wordsworth upon the poet.

Ah! dearest youth! it were a lot divine
To cheat our noons in moralising mood.

(ll. 42-43)

He anticipated a domestic unity, equally loving his wife,
Sara, and his "brother", Lloyd.

Where smiling with blue eyes, Domestic Bliss
Gives this the Husband's, that the Brother's
kiss.

(ll. 47-48)

The poet professed disregard for wealth and fame. When
offered two thousand pounds to devote his time to the Courier
and the Morning Post, he refused, saying that a man should not
make over two hundred and fifty pounds a year.¹ As a result,
he was constantly a ward upon his friends, who practically
supported him.

We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile
at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the
same,

(ll. 68-69)

He planned to accept Lloyd as one of the family.

Rekindling sober joy's domestic flame
They whom I love shall love thee,
honoured youth!²

(ll. 74-75)

Addressed to a Young Man and Sonnet have no further auto-
biographical element than reflecting the relationship between
Lloyd and Coleridge.

1. Campbell, p. LI.

2. These last lines were omitted in the 1803 edition after
the break between the two poets.

During the summer of 1796, which proved so distressing to Coleridge,¹ Sara was confined with child. When she became acutely ill, Coleridge feared that one who might have proved a "Newton or an Hartley"² had been lost before his genius had been realized. But the poet was mistaken in his fears, and Hartley Coleridge was born September 19, 1796.³ He was first named David Hartley after a metaphysician, whose philosophic doctrines Coleridge favored at the time. When the infant was christened in 1803, the name was changed from David Hartley to Hartley, simply, for by that time the poet disagreed with the metaphysician.

Affected by the birth of his son, he composed three sonnets on the event, Sonnet on Receiving a Letter Informing Me of the Birth of a Son (Campbell, p. 66), Sonnet Composed on a Journey Homeward (Campbell, p. 66), and Sonnet to a Friend Who Asked How I Felt (Campbell, p. 66).

Receiving a letter, he hurried home (probably from Birmingham)⁴ to see his little son. His prayer for the unexpected infant is shown in the Sonnet on Receiving a Letter.⁵

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1. Cf. comments on the Ode to the Departing Year.
 2. Coleridge to Edwards, Mar. 20, 1796. Unpublished Letters, I, 49.
 3. Ibid., In. et al.
 4. Coleridge to Poole, Aug., 1796. Unpublished Letters, I, 56-58. Coleridge wrote to Poole from Mosely, near Birmingham, where he intended spending some time. Added to this, is the fact that Lloyd accompanied Coleridge home.
 5. First published in Supplement to Bibliographia Literaria, 1847.

When they did greet me father, sudden
 swe
 Weigh'd down my spirit; I retired and
 knelt
 Seeking the throne of grace,

(11. 1-3)

Charles Lloyd accompanied him home. Steeped in melancholy,
 he fancied that he would be confronted with his infant's bier.

The Sonnet Composed on a Journey Homeward¹ expresses this fancy.

O my sweet baby! when I reach my door,
 If heavy looks should tell me thou art
 dead,
 (As sometimes, through excess of hope,
 I fear)
 I think that I should struggle to believe
 Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
 Sentenced for some more venial crime to
 grieve;
 Did'st scream, then spring to meet Heaven's
 quick reprieve,
 While we wept idly o'er thy little bier!

(11. 7-14)

But he was greeted with the baby, alive and healthy.

The Sonnet to a Friend² is perhaps the most autobiographic
 of the three poems. Coleridge became reflective as he regarded
 his son. He thought on his own life and feared for the boy.

All I had been, and all my child might be!

(1. 4)

His fears, however, were lost in joy when he saw the infant
 at its mother's breast. The sight temporarily satisfied his
 longings for domestic peace, and made him look more kindly on
 Sara, not as a mate, but as the mother of his child.

1. Published in Poems, 1797.

2. Printed in the above volume. The name "Charles" (l. 1) might
 refer to either Lloyd or Lamb. Lloyd accompanied S.T.C. home,
 but the sonnet was sent to Lamb in a letter dated Nov., 1796.

So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
And dearer was the mother for the child.

(ll. 13-14)

Soon after the first of December the editor of the Cambridge Intelligencer asked Coleridge to write some lines on

The Ode On The
Departing Year¹

the last day of the year. "Rheumatic complaint seized on (his) head, and continued to prevent the poetic composition till with-²in the last three days". Then it was written in "inconvenience and distraction". This distraction was probably due to his anxiety over Lloyd and his desire to retreat to Stowey.

The Watchman was on the verge of decay, and Coleridge was nearing bankruptcy. Keenly disappointed, he fled to laudanum for relief. On March 12, 1796, he wrote to the Rev. Edwards of Birmingham, "Since I last wrote you, I have been tottering on the verge of madness— Such has been my situation for the last fortnight— I have been obliged to take laudanum³ almost every night".

Increasingly from this time on Coleridge fled to opium to "sop the Cerberus", when he was oppressed by pain, whether physical or mental. As matters became worse— his wife pregnant, Coleridge fearing miscarriage, five months waiting to

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1. The Ode On the Departing Year was published in the Cambridge Intelligencer, Dec. 31, 1796 (Unpublished Letters, I. 78).
 2. Letter from Coleridge to Poole sent with the poem. Campbell, p. 586.
 3. Unpublished Letters, I, 45-46.

be fed (Sara, her mother, her little brother, George Burnet, and himself),¹ and being forced to write regardless of inspiration in order to obtain bread— Coleridge became almost calloused to misery. "Misery is an article", he wrote to Edwards, "which every Market is glutted with, that it can nowhere be encouraged as an import."² After Poole's collection in the behalf of the poet, the Rev. J.P. Estlin also collected some fifteen guineas to aid him. Later the clergymen annually gathered a sum to be given him so that he might "mount his Pegasus" at his leisure and not be tightly pinched by want.³

With the receipt of the money and the coming of Lloyd into his household, bringing financial aid, the poet's enthusiasm revived, and he soon forgot his former woes. But Lloyd's epilepsy was discovered, with the consequence that Coleridge was again thrown into despair. Mentally upset, the poet resorted to his newly found retreat, opium. He wrote to Cottle that he was taking "laudanum every four hours, 25 drops each dose".⁴ Charles Lloyd should be sent home, he reasoned. But if he were, Coleridge would lose both a friend and an income, which he sorely needed. While under the effects, and after-effects of laudanum, which he freely used during this mental conflict, he suffered horrible nightmares. Stanza VI of the Ode describes

1. Coleridge to Edwards, March 20, 1796. I, 47-49.

2. Ibid., I, 48. (Unpublished Letters)

3. Coleridge to Poole, November 15, 1796. Ibid., I, 52.

4. Coleridge to Cottle, November, 1796. Ibid., I, 59.

his reaction to one of these dreams.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread
 And ever, when the dross of night
 Renews the phantom to my sight,
 Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs;
 My ears throb hot; my eye-balls start;
 My brain with horrid tumult swims;
 Wild is the tempest of my heart;
 And my thick and struggling breath
 Imitates the toil of death!
 No stranger agony confounds
 The soldier on the war-field spread
 When all foredone with toil and wounds,
 Death-like he dozes among heaps of
 dead!

(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
 And the night-wind glaucous hoarse!
 See! the starting wretch's head
 Lies pillowed on a brother's corse!)

(p. 80, ll. 103-120)

Coleridge had expressed a desire to live near Poole at Stowey, not wishing to be confined longer in Bristol. Poole wrote him that a rude house was nearby, but it was almost unfit for habitation. The poet begged for it, saying that he must give up the home he then occupied by Christmas day.² He wished to go to farming on a small scale at Stowey. Poole wrote that he thought it best for Coleridge to remain in Bristol where he had access to the library. Coleridge answered with two letters, one rational, logically setting forth his reasons for desiring to come to Stowey, the other an emotional onslaught to which Poole surrendered.³

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1. Note the similarity to Pains of Sleep. Campbell, p. 170.
 2. Coleridge to Poole, December, 1796. I, 63.
 3. Cf. Coleridge, E.H., ed., Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. I, 184-193. Coleridge wrote both letters on the same day, December 12, 1796.

Coleridge began the work on the Ode on the twenty-fifth of December and published it on the last day of December, 1796, when he moved to Stowey.¹

He anticipated farming for a living in the following lines from the poem:

I unpertaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wailed my country with a loud Lament.²
(ll. 154-157)

Thus Coleridge passed from an uncertain period in his career to two years of happiness and creativeness in Stowey with all of its associations. During these years he bloomed poetically into rare beauty, and faded.

1. Campbell, p. XXXI.

2. This is one of Coleridge's best political poems.

II.

THE STONEY PERIOD
(1797-1798)

Coleridge and his family settled comfortably near Poole at Stowey. The home was not as bad as Poole had described it.

To the Reverend
George
Coleridge

It was located at the foot of the Quantocks, with the beauty of the hills in the background. The beauty of the country had attracted the poet the previous summer. A clear stream¹ flowed in front of the door. Behind the house was a well and a kitchen garden, and the building was shaded by a large lime tree, which formed a sort of bower. This became the poet's garden house.

Coleridge expressed his satisfaction with the place in a letter to Cottle.²

My dear Cottle,

We arrived safe. Our house is set to rights. We are all— wife, bratling, and self, remarkably well. Mrs. Coleridge likes Stowey, and loves Thomas Poole and his mother, who loves her. A communication has been made from our orchard into T. Poole's garden, and from thence to Cruikshank's, a friend of mine, and a young married man, whose wife is very amiable, and she and Sara are already on the most cordial terms; from all this you will conclude we

1. S.T.C. idealized this stream; in reality it was a gutter.
2. Cottle, p. 100.

are happy.
 God bless you,

S.T.C.

During these first few months he was preparing his second volume of poetry, which he was to dedicate to his brother, Rev. George Coleridge, upon the suggestion of Cottle.¹ George had been almost a father to him,² and had been instrumental in getting him a discharge from the Dragoons. The process of revising the poetry was slow, and it was only after much delay that the volume was finally published.

The poet had begun to mature, and To the Rev. George Coleridge (Campbell, p. 81) marked his first realization of growth as a poet.³

All had not gone well at Stowey: there were, even there, a few distresses. Lloyd was suffering from his disease, George Burnet was sick with jaundice, and the family was in financial straits, which were partially relieved by funds from Mr. Lloyd.

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1. Ibid., p. 72.
 2. Upon his visit home in July, 1796, his mother greeted him lovingly, his brother George with joy and tenderness, and his other brothers with "affectionate civility". Campbell, p. XXVIII.
 3. First printed in Poems, 1797, with the inscription, Dedication (To the Rev. George Coleridge). Several sonnets from Charles Lamb were inserted. Lloyd also added to the volume those poems of his own which he considered worthy. An interesting index to the motives of S.T.C. is given in the Preface to the Second Edition, Campbell, p. 540. "poetry has been to me 'its own exceeding great reward'; it has soothed my afflictions, it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me."

George had been appointed Vicar and teacher of Ottery St. Mary, his father's charge, and his home. The family was gathered about him, while Samuel was many miles away.

A blessed lot hath he, who having passed
His youth and early manhood in the stir
And turmoil of the world, retreats at
length

.....
To the same dwelling where his father
dwelt:

.....
.....
..... Such, O my earli-
est friend!

Thy lot, and such thy brothers too enjoy.

(ll. 1-10)

Samuel had been taken from his home when he was nine years old, and whenever he thought of home, he again regretted having been torn away so young.

To me the Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed
A different fortune and more different
mind—
Me from the spot where first I sprang to
light
Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had
fixed
Its first domestic loves:

(p. 82, ll. 15-19)

The poet was married and had his own family about him at Stowey. His friendships were, in many cases, the results of chance. But for some of his friends, as we have stated before,¹ he would have been ill-provided for.

1. Estlin procured an annual gift for him. Tom and Josiah Wedgwood, after offering him 100£ to give up the pulpit and devote himself to literature, which he reluctantly declined, gave him an annuity of 150£ for life. S.T.C. accepted, and his ministerial career ended. Unpublished Letters, I, 84n.

Chasing chance-started friendships. A
 brief while
 Some have preserved me from life's pelting
 ills:

(11. 20-21)

Through the aid of Thomas Poole, Stowey was opened to him
 as a home for his family, and he was grateful for the new friend-
 ship.

.But, all praise to Him
 Who gives us all things, more have yielded
 me
 Permanent shelter; and beside one friend,
 Beneath the impervious covert of one oak,
 I've raised a lowly shed, and know the
 names
 Of Husband and of Father;

(11. 30-35)

To be loved was part of Coleridge's nature. His brother
 George alone watched over him as a father and had patience with
 his vagaries. He appreciated his brother's affections, at the
 same time regretting his alienation from the family.

My soul is sad, that I have roamed through
 life
 Still most a stranger, most with naked heart
 At mine own home and birth-place; chiefly
 then,

(11. 40-42)

When I remember thee, my earliest friend!
 Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my
 youth:
 Didst trace my wanderings with a father's
 eye:
 And boding evil yet still hoping good,
 Rebuked each fault, and over all my woes
 Sorrowed in silence!

(11. 43-48)

Stowey, although a rude home, had a beautiful setting.
 The orchard was a favorite with the poet, and the spreading

Lime tree, which shaded the house, was a favored haunt.

Or, when as now, on some delicious eve,
 We in our sweet sequestered orchard-plot
 Sit on the tree crooked earth-ward; whose
 old boughs,
 That hang above us in an arborous roof,
(ll. 56-58)

It is quite probable that George listened to the Bard's first attempts at poetry and smiled at the errors. In this poem, the poet recognizes his growth as a poet, and asks his brother's recognition of his achievement, and patience at his erratic life.

Nor dost not thou sometimes recall those hours,
 When with the joy of hope thou gavest thine
 ear
 To my firstling-lays. Since then my song
 Hath sounded deeper notes,

. These various strains,
 Which I have framed in many a various
 mood,
 Accept, my Brother! and (for some perchance
 Will strike discordant on thy milder
 mind)
 If aught of error or intemperate truth
 Should meet thine ear, think thou that
 riper age
 Will calm it down, and let thy love for-
 give it!
(ll. 62-end)

Coleridge was very fond of his bower and composed in it.

On June 19, 1797, he wrote to Cottle:

Charles Lamb will probably be here in about a fortnight. Could you not contrive to put yourself in a Bridgewater coach, and Thomas Poole would fetch you in a one horse chaise to Stowey. What delight would it not give us.¹

1. Cottle, pp. 149-150.

Cottle was unable to accept the invitation at the time, but shortly after, having business in Stowey, he visited Coleridge. Coleridge showed him the home, the garden, and the passage ways between the gardens. Then he conducted his guest to the "Jasmine Harbour" (Lime Tree Bower). There, with Poole and Lloyd, they lunched on "delicious bread and cheese, surmounted by a brown mug of true Taunton ale."¹

It was unfortunate that Cottle had not come on the date for which he was invited, for Charles and his sister Mary were there at the time. During Wordsworth's stay, just a few days before, Sara had accidentally spilled boiling milk on Coleridge's foot, scalding it, and rendering it impossible for the poet to walk about.² Thus it happened that he was confined to his bower while his guests strolled about the neighboring country. Upon this occasion he wrote This Lime Tree Bower My Prison³ (Campbell, p. 92).

1. Ibid., p. 100.

2. Lowes, op. cit. p. 24.

3. Printed first in the Annual Anthology, 1800, under the title "This Lime Tree Bower My Prison, A Poem, addressed to Charles Lamb of the India House, London", (Campbell, p. 591). There seems to be doubt, however, if Mary and Charles Lamb were at Stowey upon this occasion. E.H. Coleridge states emphatically that, "My Friends" does not refer to Charles and Mary Lamb, but to William and Dorothy Wordsworth. "Mary Lamb was not and could not have been at that time one of the party." Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, I, 225-226, fn 4.

Well, they are gone, and her must I remain,
This lime-tree bower my prison!

(ll. 1-2)

Lamb and his sister, Mary, had successfully borne a great trial. Both had succumbed to insanity and had triumphed over it. Charles worked at the India House for an annual income of about a hundred pounds. His father had sunk into imbecility, and felt neglected if Lamb did not spend all of his time after work playing cribbage with him. Lamb consequently had given up writing and devoted his time to his father.¹ Mary had waited upon their invalid mother, who had appeared cold and ungrateful. The reasons of both brother and sister had been on the verge of becoming unbalanced. Mary had broken under the strain first, and had made an attack on her apprentice with a knife. Charles and the invalid mother had interposed. Before Charles could seize the weapon, it had accidentally found its way into the vitals of the mother, causing her death. Mary had been removed, exonerated, but had been confined in the asylum at Islington. Even while the coroner was trying the case, Lamb had been forced to play cribbage with his father. Several days later, the wake had been held and when twenty people had frolicked in the bereaved home, Lamb's resistance had snapped. He had fled to his mother's coffin and had sank upon his knees in misery. He had written to Coleridge seeking comfort, pouring out his

1. Cf. To a Friend Who Declared His Intention of Writing No More Poetry (Campbell, p. 69).

heart to him. Coleridge had replied in deepest sympathy, exhorting Christian Faith, and had begged Charles to come to him for shelter. Lamb had refused, cutting himself off from everything apart from religion to which he had fled. He had won his battle. Mary had recovered her sanity, and the imbecile father had died. Brother and sister had started life over again, devoted to each other. Lamb had begun to write poetry anew, and when the 1797 volume was published, his works had been included.¹

Lamb was at heart a lover of nature, but had been confined in the city to provide a living for the family.

. Yes! they wander on
 In gladness all; but thou, methinks,
 most glad,
 My gentle-hearted Charles! for thou
 hast pined
 And hungered after Nature, many a year,
 In the great City pent, winning thy
 way
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil
 and pain
 And strange calamity!

(ll. 26-32)

Coleridge paid tribute to the faith of Lamb at the time, and later in 1820. Speaking of Lamb, he said:

Utterly unlike any or all of his contemporaries, having had his lot cast in hard places, he yet by a sweetness, an uncomplainingness the very opposite, however, of torpid sorrow or resignation, had fashioned for himself a happiness, a well-being peculiarly his own.²

1. Cf. Caine, Hall, Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, pp. 50-58, et. passim.

2. Allsop, Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of Samuel Coleridge, p. 33.

That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure;
(l. 60)

Lamb was always dear to Coleridge, but perhaps no one influenced his poetic growth more than Wordsworth and his sister. The impact between the two poets stimulated Coleridge to compose several immortal poems, Christabel, the Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner, and Kubla Khan.

By the year 1797 Coleridge had attracted some notice in literary circles. William Wordsworth had published nothing better known than the Descriptive Sketches, which were regarded as immature. But Coleridge saw in Wordsworth a great poet. Early in 1797, composing some verses in Wordsworth's honor, he seized the opportunity of meeting him by taking the poems to Racedown, where Wordsworth was living with his sister Dorothy.

The meeting was fortunate. It was not unusual for Coleridge to ensnare the affections of those whom he met, but it was unusual that the ability of one poet should be the complement of that of the other. Both men were Republicans, or nearly so. Both had the love of the Romantic for nature, Wordsworth saw nature, and Coleridge felt it. Wordsworth was an individualist, sublime, silent, and meditative. Coleridge was philosophic, ethereal, intellectual, fanciful, and inspired. The two seemed naturally to blend together. Coleridge saw in Words-

worth a man of power upon whom he might lean, and Wordsworth was enriched by Coleridge's conception of an Ever-Present God in nature. An insight into the differences of their poetical character is given in the saying that Wordsworth liked to compose while walking down a smooth straight road, while Coleridge preferred composing while stumbling along a rough hilly one.

Wordsworth's greatest contribution to the union was not himself but his sister. She was electric in her sensibilities, being the eyes and ears of her brother, and later of Coleridge. Her perception and depth of sympathy, as well as her acute sense of observation are seen in a cursory glance into her Journal. Coleridge's finest nature was drawn to her, and her able criticism molded his poetic growth.

Dorothy appraised Coleridge in detail, and wrote approvingly of him to a friend who had recently left Racedown,

You had a great loss in not seeing Coleridge. He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind, and spirit. Then he is so benevolent, so good-tempered and cheerful, and like William, interests himself so much about every little trifle. At first I thought him very plain, that is, for about three minutes; he is pale, thin, has a wide mouth, thick lips, and not very good teeth, longish, loose-growing, half-curling, rough, black hair. But if you hear him speak for five minutes, you think no more of them. His eye is large and full, and not very dark, but grey, such an eye as would receive from a heavy soul the dullest emotion of his animated mind; it has more of "the poet's eye in a fine frenzy

1. Memoirs, p. 99.

rolling" than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows, and an over-hanging forehead.

Coleridge was equally impressed by Dorothy. He wrote to Cottle concerning her,

In every motion, her most innocent soul outbeams so brightly, that one who saw would say,

"Guilt was a thing impossible in her".

Her information various. Her eye watchful in minutest observation of nature; and her taste, a perfect electrometer. It bends, protrudes, and draws in, at subtlest beauties, and most recondite faults.¹

Both men were writing tragedies, and during Coleridge's visit they read and criticized them.² The Wordsworths were at Stowey about the time the Lime-Tree Bower My Prison was written. It was during their stay that Sara spilled the hot milk on Coleridge's foot. In their walks about Stowey, Dorothy and William came in sight of Alfoxden, with its beautiful environment, and wished to move there. Through the services of Thomas Poole, they were able to rent the large house on the estate.

On July 17, just three days after Wordsworth and his sister had moved to Alfoxden, Citizen Thelwall arrived at Stowey. He was a Republican and had just been released from prison

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1. Wordsworth was writing The Borderers, and J.T.C. was busy with Osorio, which Sheridan of Drury Lane Theatre had asked him to write. When it was sent to Sheridan, he disregarded it. Later through the influence of Byron, who held an interest in the theater, it was successfully produced under the title, Remorse.
 2. Coleridge had lectured and preached against the ministry, and Wordsworth was known to have sympathized with the revolutionists while in France.

where he had been confined on a charge of treason. The govern-
 ment became suspicious of the trio of reformers¹ and sent spies
 to listen to their conversation. The task, however, was fruit-
 less, for Thelwall was so pleased with the countryside that
 he was inclined to forget politics.²

In the summer of 1797 the Coleridges were again suffering
 reverses. Lloyd was no longer with them, and with Lloyd went
 the eighty pounds which his father paid annually for his board.
 Coleridge wrote to Cottle in 1797:

Every mode of life which has promised me bread and
 cheese, has been one after another, torn away from
 me, but God remains. I have no immediate pecuniary
 distress, having received ten pounds from Lloyd.
 I employ myself now on a book of morals in answer
 to Godwin, and on my tragedy.³

About September 6 the tragedy Orsorio was completed to
 the fifth act, and Coleridge travelled to Shaftesbury to show
 it to his idol, Bowles. For some reason, the two poets failed
 to be wholly congenial.⁴

In November 1797, Coleridge and the Wordsworths set out

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1. Coleridge had lectured and preached against the ministry, and Wordsworth was known to have sympathized with the revolutionists while in France.
 2. Memoirs, p. 105. Thelwall was the indirect cause of Wordsworth's removal from Alfoxden. The country folk could not understand the group of Romantists and asked that Alfoxden be released to some other party. This was done.
 3. Coleridge to Cottle, Cottle, p. 102. This letter bears the date, "Stowey, 1796", but Wordsworth was mentioned in the letter, and Cottle remarked in a note that the Lake Poet was at Alfoxden at the time. Obviously, the date was meant to be "Stowey, 1797".
 4. Cf. Campbell, p. XXXVII.

to Linton and the Valley of Stones. Lacking sufficient funds to cover the necessary expenses of the tour, they decided to defray expenses by the publication of a poem, which was to be valued at five pounds and to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine for publication. As they strolled along the Quantock hills toward Watchet, they planned the poem.

It was based upon a dream of Cruikshank's,¹ but the greater part of the poem was the fabric of Coleridge's imagination. Wordsworth had been reading Shelvoock's Voyages, and suggested the theme of the Albatross as the nautical omen of good, and the slaying of the bird as a "crime against nature". The Lake Poet also furnished the lines,

And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

(p. 95, ll. 15-16)

Late in the evening, after planning the poem for several hours, Wordsworth realized that his ideas and those of Coleridge, regarding the poem, conflicted, and proposed that Coleridge finish the ballad alone.

After a few days they returned home by Dulverton.²

As the ballad continued to grow, they foresaw that it could not be published in the Monthly Magazine. It was decided to incorporate it in a volume of poetry to be jointly written and compiled by the two poets. This volume, to be called "The

1. A friend of Coleridge, and the agent at Nether Stowey.

2. Cf. Memoirs, pp. 107-108 et. passim.

Lyrical Ballads, was first conceived as the two neighbors walked together in the nearby hills discussing the nature of poetry. The blending of light and dark shades, of like and unlike qualities, in nature caused them to wonder if such might not also be the essence of good poetry. This marked an epoch in the poetic life of both men, particularly in that of Coleridge, for the Lyrical Ballads embodied some of his greatest poetry. In this volume Coleridge was to write of the supernatural as representing phenomena which were conceivable in common life, and Wordsworth was to write of the natural as tinted by the charm of the metaphysical world. The Lyrical Ballads indicated the union of the two personalities.

On March 23, 1798, the ballad had been completed and Coleridge took it to the Wordsworths at Alfoxden.¹ Dorothy said in her Journal for this day:

Coleridge dined with us. He brought his ballad finished. We walked with him to the Miner's house. A beautiful evening, very starry, the horned moon.²

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (Campbell, p. 95) is distinctive in Coleridge's poetry. Nothing like ^{it} has appeared before or since. Based upon imagination, it is the result of synthesis of an enormous amount of reading, particularly of

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1. The poem was finished February 18, 1798— (Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth, I, 14n. The Editor cited Cottle, J., Early Reflections, I, 307 as a reference).
 2. Ibid.

works of travel.¹

The ballad, being a creature of the mind, is not highly autobiographic. Several lines, however, suggest that they may have had their origin in experience.

While Coleridge was at Stowey, Thomas Poole added a large
 2
 bassoon to the Church Choir.

The Wedding Guest here beat his breast
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

(l. 32)

The poet, while climbing a hill with a college friend, became extremely thirsty, to the extent that his mouth was so parched he became dumb. Luckily, a small spring of water was found under a stone. Later the friend said to Coleridge, "You grinned like an idiot."

It occurred to the poet that his friend, who had suffered
 3
 similarly, had done the same.

With throat's unslaked, with black lips
 baked,

Agape they heard me call:

Grammercy! they for joy did grin,

(p. 99, ll. 162-164)

Coleridge was often oppressed by rheumatism and other

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1. John Livingstone Lowes in the Road to Kanadu has made an exhaustive study of this ballad and Kubla Khan.
 2. Campbell, p. 597, from Sandford, T. Poole and His Friends. I, 247.
 3. "I took thought of grinning for joy in that poem (the Ancient Mariner) from my companion's (Berdmore's) remark to me when we had climbed to the top of Penmaenmaur and were nearly dead with thirst". Shedd, ed., The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Vol. V (Coleridge, E.H., "Biographical Supplement", p. 619 fn.).

pains which wracked his body and kept him awake at nights.

This may have had some bearing on the following:¹

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

(p. 102, Part V, ll. 291-295)

The Foster Mother's Tale (Campbell, p. 83) can not be proved definitely autobiographic, but there are certain lines in it which remind the reader of events in the poet's life.*

The precocity of Coleridge has been pointed out earlier in this paper. It has been noted that as a boy he "read, read, read" every book he could obtain. He read greedily the two books allowed him each day by a library in London.

So he became a very learned youth
But Oh! poor wretch!— he read, and
read, and read,
Till his brain turned— and ere his
twentieth year,
He had unlawful thoughts of many
things:

(p. 84, ll. 41-44)

The poet's conversational ability won him many friends.³

But yet his speech, it was so soft and
sweet,

(l. 57)

1. Cf. Pains of Sleep, p. 170.

2. "At a very premature age, I had bewildered myself in metaphysics and in theological controversy", Biographia Literaria, Mod. Read. Series, p. 9.

3. "He speaks with much elegance and energy, and uncommon facility." Campbell, p. XXI n, from Sanford, op. cit. I, Chapter VI. Cf. also Lamb, Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago, "Inspired Charity-boy".

* The poem appeared in all the editions of the Lyrical Ballads. It was taken from Act IV of Remorse.

Pantisocracy was a dream which died slowly in the bard.
The following lines obviously have reference to this ideal.

Who sung a doleful song about green
fields,
And sweet it were on lake or wild
savannah
To hunt for food, and be a naked man,
And wander up and down at liberty.

(ll. 61-65)

Soon after they arrived in that new
world,
In spite of his dissuasion, seized a boat,
And all alone, set sail by silent moon-
light
Up a great river, great as any sea,
And ne'er was heard of more; but 'tis
supposed,
He lived and died among the savage man.

(ll. 76-81)

The Dungeon (Campbell, p. 85), although it is an indica-
tion of the poet's faith in Love and Beauty as agents of re-
form, was not drawn from experience.

The Nightingale (Campbell, p. 131) has been rightly called
a "Conversation Poem", for it exemplifies the type of conver-
sation which delighted the poet, monologue.¹ The poem gives
an insight into the communion between the three friends and
nature. The setting is near Alfoxden. There is a marked dif-
ference between the depth of nature perception in this poem
and that of the earlier nature poems. This is largely due to

1. Entitled, The Nightingale; A Conversational Poem, Written
in April, 1798. This poem was placed in the Lyrical Ballads
at the last moment as a substitute for Lewti.

the fact that Coleridge in the Nightingale was looking at nature through the eyes of Dorothy Wordsworth.

The communion of the trio with nature is suggested in the following:

My Friend, and thou, our Sister: we
 have learnt
 A different lore: we may not thus
 profane
 Nature's sweet voices, always full of
 love and joyance!

(ll. 39-42)

"My Friend" is, of course, William Wordsworth, and "our Sister", Dorothy Wordsworth.

Near Stowey was an old deserted castle to which the poet refers.

. And I know a grove
 Of large extent, hard by a castle huge.

(ll. 49-50)

A casual glance into Dorothy's Journal reveals her knowledge of nature. Consider her entry for January 25, 1798, written at Alfoxden:

Went to Poole's after tea. The sky spread over with one continuous cloud, whitened by the light of the moon, which, though her dim shape was seen, did not throw forth so strong a light as to chequer the earth with shadows. At once the clouds seemed to cleave asunder, and left her in the centre of a black-blue vault. She sailed along, followed by multitudes of stars, small, and bright, and sharp. Their brightness seemed concentrated. (half-moon).¹

Coleridge may have been thinking of this when he wrote the lines,

. A most gentle Maid,
 Who dwelleth in her hospitable home

1. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I, 4.

Hard by the castle, and at latest eve

 That gentle Maid! and oft, a moment's
 space,
 That time the moon was lost behind a
 cloud,
 Hath heard a pause of silence; till the
 moon
 Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
 With one sensation.

(ll. 69-79)

David Hartley brightened the poet's life. In several of his letters he speaks in terms of deepest affection for his son. In the Commonplace Book he notes:

Hartley fell down and hurt himself. I caught him up angry and screaming— and ran out of doors with him. The moon caught his eye— he ceased immediately— and his eyes and the tears in them, how they glittered in the moonlight!¹

The poet expressed the same thought, occasioned by the same instance, in the concluding lines of this selection.

. and once, when he awoke
 In most distressful mood (some inward
 pain
 Had made up that strange thing, an in-
 fant's dream),
 I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
 And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at
 once,
 Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
 While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped
 tears,
 Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam!

(ll. 98-105)

In the fall of 1798 the Lyrical Ballads were published. The volume contained only four poems by Coleridge, The Rime

1. Campbell, p. 456.

of the Anoyent Marinere, The Foster Mother's Tale, The Nightingale: a Conversational Poem, and The Dungeon. The volume was practically a financial failure. Five-hundred copies were printed, and only a few sold. When Cottle gave up his business, his copyrights were turned over to his successors. The value of the copyright, for which Cottle gave Wordsworth thirty guineas for his share, was almost nothing. Cottle, hearing of the worthlessness of the copyright, asked that it be returned to the writers, which the new booksellers did.¹

Christabel (Campbell, p. 116) was written at about the same time and intended for the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads.² The first part was composed in 1797, and the second part at Keswick after Coleridge's return from Germany. The last parts were projected and planned until 1833. In the Table Talk for July 6, 1833, the poet confessed that the poem would never be completed:

The reason of my not finishing Christabel is not that I don't know how to do it— for I have, as I always had, the whole plan entire from beginning to end in my mind; but I fear I could not carry on with equal success the execution of the idea, an extremely subtle and difficult one.³

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1. Memoirs, pp. 122-128.
 2. First printed in a pamphlet with Kubla Khan and Pains of Sleep in 1816.
 3. Campbell, p. 604. S.T.C. probably realized that he lacked his former poetic genius which was necessary for completing the poem. Gillman in his Life of Coleridge included an outline of the proposed closing parts of Christabel.

1

Christabel is a moral poem, and is not highly auto-biographic. A few of the lines, however, seem to have been taken from experience. Some of the natural settings which he portrayed were first seen through the eyes of Dorothy. Compare the following references with lines in the poem:

The Journal: A portion of the entry for January 31, 1798.

When we left home the moon immensely large, the sky scattered over with clouds. These soon closed in, contracting the dimensions of the moon without concealing her.

(I, 5-6)

Christabel:

The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.

(ll. 18-19)

The Journal: The latter part of the entry for March 7, 1798.

One only leaf upon the top of a tree— the sole remaining leaf— danced round and round like a rag blown by the wind.

(I, 12-13)

Christabel:

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the
sky.

(ll. 49-52)

It was Coleridge's habit to criticize his work sharply. After the 1797 volume appeared, he satirized the errors of the poetry it contained, not only his own poems, but also those

1. The virtuous finally triumph over the wicked.

of Lloyd and Lamb, whose works were included in the volume.¹
 This alienated his friends from him. Lamb addressed Coleridge a satirical letter upon his departure for Germany.² Both Lamb and Coleridge were hurt by this misunderstanding, and reproved themselves bitterly for it. On January 10, 1820, Lamb wrote Coleridge expressing his personal sorrow at the coolness between them twenty years before.

I admire some of Lloyd's lines on you, and I admire your postponing reading them. He is a sad tattler. Twenty years ago he estranged one friend from me quite, whom I have been regretting, but never could regain since; he almost alienated you from me, or me from you, I don't know which. But that breach is closed. The dreary sea is filled up.³

It is possible that Coleridge was referring to the break between himself and Lamb, and his desire for the renewal of affections, in the words of Sir Leonine regarding Sir Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
 But whispering tongues can poison truth;
 And constancy lives in realms above;
 And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
 And to be wroth with one we love
 Doth work like madness in the brain.

(ll. 408-413)

In the summer of 1798 Coleridge, being in bad health, left

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1. Cf. the Sonnets of Nehemiah Higginbottom, p. 110.
 2. Cf. Lamb's Theses Quaedam Theologicae and letter to Coleridge, Cottle, pp. 168-169.
 3. Lamb to Coleridge, January 10, 1820, Letters of Charles Lamb, II. 65-66.

Stowey and "retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and

Kubla Khan Linton" on the borders of Somerset and Devon-
1
shire. Being in mental pain, he resorted to

2
a drug. While he was reading a passage from "Cublai Can" in
Purchas His Pilgrimes, he dropped off to sleep. As he slept

he dreamed the composition of the poem, Kubla Khan (Campbell,

3
p. 94). When he awoke, some three hours later, he transcribed
on paper the verses his mind had composed while his body slept.

After he had written some fifty lines, a visitor from Porlock
came to see him on business, and detained him for the space

of little over an hour. When he returned to his poem, he was
dismayed to find that only a few scattered images remained,

the rest of the poem had vanished.

4
The poem is imaginative, and represents the culmination
of many years reading and development of a masterful metrical
style. The fragment is not autobiographical in its content.

Coleridge had sung the praise of Freedom in his earlier

-
1. Coleridge noted the date of the composition of this poem as the "summer of 1797", but the poet is not trustworthy in placing single dates. E.H. Coleridge said the poet moved to Porlock in the summer of 1798.
 2. The drug was probably some form of opium. Coleridge stated that his first recourse to opium was due to mental torture over the break between Lloyd and himself. Coleridge had taken opium, though not in any manner addicted to it, as early as 1791. He wrote to his brother, George, from Cambridge in a letter postmarked Nov. 28, 1791. "Opium never used to have any disagreeable effects on me— It has on many". S.T. Coleridge to George Coleridge, Unpublished Letters, I, 3.
 3. Published with Christabel and Pains of Sleep in 1816.
 4. Cf. Lowes, op. cit. for a full discussion of Kubla Khan.

poetry, and he praised the French people for rising against
 tyranny, so long as the revolt was to
Political Series bring about final peace and brotherhood.

When the victorious French army marched over into Switzer-
 land, a peace-loving people, he and other romantic philosophers
 denounced the French. The Swiss had a more democratic and
 "natural" society which Coleridge considered superior to the
 existing government in England. By the act of the French Re-
 public, Freedom had been exploited, and Coleridge revolted
 against it, recanting his former praise of France.

On April 16, 1798, the poet wrote, To France: An Ode
¹
 (Campbell, p. 124).

When France in wrath her giant-limbs
 upreared,
 And with that oath, which smote air,
 earth, and sea,
 Stamped her strong foot and said she
 would be free,
 Bear witness for me, how I hoped and
 feared!

Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
 To all that braved the tyrant-quelling
 lance.

But blessed the paeans of delivered
 France.

(pp. 124-125, stanza II)

During the alarm of an invasion of England by the French,
²
 Coleridge wrote the Fears in Solitude (Campbell, p. 127).

-
1. Printed first in the Morning Post entitled, The Recantation:
An Ode.
 2. Printed in the above quarto of 1798.

He had opposed the ministry of Pitt in prolonging the war with France. At first his sympathies were with the French until they threatened England. He realized that he and his family were part of England and would be compelled to suffer the pains of war,¹ along with other Englishmen, and that even his "green and silent spot amid the hills" would be menaced.

When Coleridge wrote to Josiah Wedgwood, January 5, 1798, refusing his offer of one hundred pounds to give up preaching as a calling, he included in his reasons for entering the ministry the fact that the minister is exempt from military service:

To which, Heaven only knows how soon we may be dragged, for I think it not improbable, that in case of an invasion, our government will serve all, whom they choose to suspect of disaffection, in the same way that good King David served Uriah.²

The poet's love for his peaceful nook and seclusion is shown in the lines:

Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but
chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful
years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!

(ll. 12-16)

His rebellion against the destruction of Englishmen, whom he realized to be brothers, sisters, and fathers like himself, is shown in the following lines.

1. Cf. Fire, Famine, and Slaughter.
2. Unpublished Letters, I, 89.

Oh! let not English women drag their
 flight
 Fainting beneath the burthen of their
 babes,
 Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
 Laughed at the breast! Sons, brothers,
 husbands, all
 Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
 Which grew up with you round the same fire
 side. (ll. 131-136)

Finally, the poet foresaw that war might mean the destruction of Nether Stowey, his lowly cottage, the mother, and his son.

And now, beloved Stowey! I behold
 Thy church tower, and, methinks, the
 four huge elms
 Clustering, which mark the mansion of
 my friend;¹
 And close behind them, hidden from my
 view,
 Is my own lowly cottage,² where my babe
 And my babe's mother dwell in peace!
 (ll. 220-226)

In the same month he wrote Frost At Midnight (Campbell, p. 126). This poem is not a political poem, but because it was composed at the same time and published in the same quarto, I am including it in the series.³ This selection might be included in that class which is almost wholly drawn from experience. It contains the sweet presagings of the father for the son, Hartley.

Thinking about Hartley led him to recall his own boyhood at Christ's Hospital, and the reminiscences of home while

1. Thomas Poole
 2. The cottage is now a public-house, "Coleridge-Cottage".
 3. Published in quarto with the preceding poems.

1
he was there.

With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church
tower,

(ll. 27-28)

An interesting comment on his loneliness at the Hospital and desire for friends to visit him while he was there is given in the following lines:

Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine
eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book;
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped
up.
For still I hoped to see the stranger's
face.

(ll. 37-41)

Thinking upon those he most would have liked to see, he remembered his sister, and favorite, Nancy.

Townsmen, or aunt, or sister most beloved,
My playmate when we both were clothed alike!

(ll. 42-43)

Coleridge had the heart of a woman. His love for Hartley² is conspicuous in many of his letters of this period. His was not the love of a father for his son, as he often professed, but the love of a mother for the child of her bosom.

As always, when thinking of his early boyhood, Coleridge

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1. Cf. To a Young Lady, With a Poem on the French Revolution (Campbell, p. 6), and Sonnet to the River Otter (p. 23).
 2. "O bless him! bless him! bless him! if my wife loved me, and I my wife, half as well as we both love our children, I should be the happiest man alive— but this is not— will not be!" Coleridge to Southey, November 9, 1801. Unpublished Letters, I, 189. Cf. also I, 63, 73, and 153.

expressed regret that during the formative years of his life, as much as he loved nature, he had been pent up in a city away from nature.

. For I was reared
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
 (ll. 51-53)

At the time of writing Coleridge had no idea of living in the Lake Country, yet he predicted that Hartley would be raised on the shores of a lake and grow up a lover of nature.¹

In 1797, Thomas Poole introduced Coleridge to two wealthy brothers, Tom and Josiah Wedgwood. These men became interested in the genius of the young poet, and by providing a pension for him, made it possible for him to devote himself to literature.

Sequence of Events

In December, 1797, Coleridge received an invitation to speak in the pulpit in Shrewsbury, from which the Rev. Rowe was about to retire. He preached upon the text, "And he went up into the mountains to pray, Himself alone".² He made such an impression upon William Hazlitt, a young man of the district of Wem, and a son of the Unitarian Minister there, that he was invited to visit the manse at Wem, which was about ten

-
1. It might easily have been predicted that Hartley would love nature, because he exhibited an unusual response to it as an infant. (Cf. page 83, notation from the Common-place Book) But the moving of the family to the Lake District was unforeseen.
 2. Coleridge to Wedgwood, January 15, 1798. Unpublished Letters, I, 85.

miles outside of Shrewsbury. The result of this meeting is the famous description of the poet given by Hazlitt in the Liberal, No. III.

The Wedgwoods regretted that the poet had given up his career as a poet to become a minister, a calling for which they thought him less suited, and which he had decided to pursue in order that he might have an income to support himself and his family. They sent him a note for a hundred pounds which he might have if he would give up the pulpit and return to literature. Coleridge refused in a long letter to Josiah Wedgwood, in which he listed many reasons for his refusal, among them, the desire for the assured constant provision for himself and family.¹ The Wedgwoods made him a better offer of 150 pounds per year if he would devote his whole time to letters. Coleridge readily accepted.

In April Hazlitt paid Coleridge a visit at Stowey and became a member of the little nature group. It may be that he was present on that evening when the song of the nightingale inspired Coleridge to write his conversational poem.² At that time Coleridge seemed to be in good health. Long walks were taken over rough roads. "Our feet kept time to the echo of Coleridge's tongue", said Hazlitt, concerning the occasion.

Later in April, after the rupture with Lloyd, he retired

1. Coleridge to Wedgwood, January 15, 1798. Unpublished Letters, I, 85.
2. Campbell, XLII.

to the farmhouse near Porlock, which was the birthplace of Kubla Khan.

His second son, Berkeley, was born May 14, 1798.

Cottle came to the Wordsworth's at Alfoxden and remained a week, carrying away with him the manuscript volume of Lyrical Ballads. It was hoped that enough money might be obtained to finance the projected tour of Germany, but the thirty guineas paid for the copyright of the Ballads were not sufficient. Plans for the tour, however, were carried through to completion.

Leaving Sara Coleridge in the care of Poole at Stowey, the party, including William Wordsworth, Dorothy, John Chester, and Coleridge went to London before embarking for Germany. On Friday, September 14, 1798, they left London arriving at Yarmouth on Saturday at noon, from which they sailed Sunday morning at eleven o'clock for Germany.

1. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I. 21.

III.

DECLINE OF POETIC ABILITY AND CLOSING YEARS

The little group of Romanticists had gone to Germany to study the language and customs. The Wordsworths desired to accomplish this by travelling. Coleridge chose, instead, to study at Göttingen. Sunday, September 23, Coleridge left the Wordsworths and Chester and travelled alone to Ratzeburg, thirty-five miles Northeast of Hamburg.¹ While there he made provision for himself and Chester at the home of a German pastor, and returned to Hamburg and the Wordsworths.² On October 1 he and Chester bade goodbye to Dorothy and her brother and returned to Ratzburg, where they remained about four months.

Meanwhile the Wordsworths were travelling about Germany. On October 6 they settled at Goslar, about twenty-five miles from Brunswick.³ There they hoped to acquire a knowledge of German society and language, but met with only little success. Miss Wordsworth wrote,

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1. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I, 24.
 2. Campbell, p. XLV.
 3. Memoirs, I, 134.

Coleridge is very happily situated at Katzeburg for learning the language. . . We are not fortunately situated here with respect to the attainment of our main object, a knowledge of the language. We have, indeed, gone on improving in that respect, but not so expeditiously as we might have done: for there is no society at Goslar. . . and it seems that here in Germany a man travelling alone may do very well, but, if his sister or wife goes with him, he must give entertainments.¹

While Wordsworth was at Goslar, he composed several poems and sent them to Coleridge at Katzeburg. Coleridge replied with some verses of his own, Hexameters (Campbell, p. 137) and Ad Villum Axiologum (Campbell, p. 131).²

Coleridge had been experimenting with German hexameters, and when "ill and wakeful" tried his hand at this verse form in English, which he incorporated into an epistolary poem to the Wordsworths in the poem entitled Hexameters.³

His friendship for the Wordsworths, and his longing for their company, is shown in the following stanza. As is usually the case, the poet's melancholy was induced by his physical sickness. The two diseases, mental and physical, seemed to go hand-in-hand in his life.

William, my head and my heart! dear
 Poet that feelest and thinkest!
 Dorothy, eager of soul, my most affectionate sister!
 Many a mile, O! many a wearisome
 mile are ye distant,
 Long, long comfortless roads, with no
 one eye that doth know us.
 O! it is all too far to send you mockeries
 idle;
 Yea, and I feel it not right! But O! my

1. Memoirs I, 134-135.
2. Lucy Gray, A Poet's Epitaph, Ruth, etc.
3. Memoirs I, 141.

friends, my beloved!
 Feverish and wakeful I lie— I am weary
 of feeling and thinking.
 Every thought is worn down, I am weary
 yet cannot be vacant.
 Five long hours have I tossed, rheumatic
 heats, dry and flushing,
 Gnawing behind in my head, and wan-
 dering and throbbing about me,
 Busy and tiresome, my friends, as the
 heat of the boding night-spider

(p. 138, Stanza III)

During the year 1799 he suffered temporary blindness.

. . . . my eyes are a burthen.
 Now unwilling closed, now open and
 aching with darkness.

(ll. 1-2, Stanza IV)

The poet missed the sustaining company of his new friends and longed to be with them.

William my head and my heart! dear
 William and dear Dorothea!
 You have all in each other; but I am
 lonely, and want you!

(ll. 11-12, Stanza IV)

From Ratzburg, Coleridge went to the University at Göttingen and took classes in Physiology and Natural History. There he met several other Englishmen, among them Dr. Clement Carlyon, who arrived from Pembroke College, Cambridge, on March 22. The group of Englishmen gathered themselves into a little band. On May 12 the party travelled to the Hartz Mountains. Stopping at an inn, the travellers were presented with a Stamm-Buch in which they were asked to sign their names and to write a few lines as remembrances. Coleridge wrote the following verses, which he said contained "a true account of my journey from the

1

Brocken to Elingerode". This poem was entitled, Lines Written in the Album at Elbingerode, in the Hartz Forest (Campbell, p. 145). It expressed the poet's appreciation of the beauty of the German hills and his desire to return to his own native land.

2

I stood on Brocken's sovran height, and
 saw
 Woods crowding upon woods, hills over
 hills,
 A surging scene, and only limited
 By the blue distance.

(ll. 1-4)

. O thou Queen,
 Thou delegated Deity of Earth,
 O dear, dear England! how my long eye
 Turned westward, shaping in the steady
 clouds
 Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native land!

Filled with thought of thee this heart
 was proud,
 Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that all
 the view
 From sovran Brocken, woods and wood
 hills,
 Floated away, like a departing dream.

(ll. 29-34)

This longing for wife and home is also demonstrated in the poems, Something Childish, But Very Natural, Homesick, and The Day Dream (Campbell, p. 146).

The theme of these poems is summed up in the little selection, Home-sick.³

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1. Gillman, I, 133, from Carlyon, op. cit.
 2. First printed in the Morning Post.
 3. Published first in Annual Anthology in 1800.

But what is all, to his delight,
 Who having long been doomed to
 roam,
 Throws off the bundle from his back,
 Before the door of his own home?

Home-sickness is a wasting pang,
 This feel I hourly more and more:
 There's healing only in thy wings,
 Thou breeze that play'st on Albion's
 shore!

(Stanzas III & IV)

About April, 1799, when Coleridge was suffering from not hearing from his wife and friends, he received word that his youngest son, Berkeley,¹ was dead. In his sorrow he composed a poem on the death of his baby, Epitaph on an Infant (Campbell, p. 145).² It is interesting to note that just prior to hearing of his son's death, he wrote (April 8, 1799) On an Infant Which Died Before Baptism (Campbell, p. 145), concerning the death of an infant of a friend. He sent these³ verses to his wife as being prophetic of Berkeley's death.

Its balmy lips the infant blest
 Relaxing from its mother's breast,
 How sweet it heaves the happy sigh
 Of innocent satiety!

And such my infant's latest sigh!
 Oh tell, rude stone! the passer by,
 That here the pretty babe doth lie,
 Death sang to sleep with Lullaby.

-
1. Born May 14 of the preceding year.
 2. Campbell includes two poems entitled Epitaph on an Infant. The first was written earlier and was published first in the Morning Chronicle, September, 1794. The second, concerning Berkeley, was published first in 1834 in the Poetical Works.
 3. Campbell, p. 620 Notes.

On June 4, 1799, Coleridge took leave of his German friends and prepared to return to England.¹ It is uncertain just when or where he returned.² Gillman said he arrived in London, November 27, 1799.³ But he probably returned to Stowey before going to London.

The Wordsworths were visiting the Hutchinsons⁴ at Sockburn-on-Tees. Coleridge visited them there, where he first met the two sisters, Mary and Sarah Hutchinson. Sarah became one of his best friends, and it is thought by some that he would have asked her hand in marriage if he had not already been married to Sara Fricker.⁵ Coleridge and Wordsworth moved into Dove Cottage at Grasmere, and Coleridge settled in London, where he wrote occasional prose bits and poetry for the Courier and Morning Post. Stuart, the editor, offered him half-shares in the two papers. Rebelling against a large income and desiring to read old folios, he refused the offer and retired to Keswick in the Lake Country near Wordsworth. There he rented half of Greta Hall for twenty-five pounds a year. While in Keswick he continued

1. Traill, op. cit. p. 71.

2. Gillman, I, 143.

3. Cf. letter to Southey, written August, 1799, after arrival from Germany, Unpublished Letters I, 123.

4. Mary Hutchinson later became Mrs. Wordsworth.

5. Cf. Smith, Fred Manning, "The Relation of Coleridge's Ode On Dejection to Wordsworth's Ode On Intimations Of Immortality", PMLA, Vol. L, pp. 224-235.

to write for the Morning Post, but his one big opportunity¹ of receiving a large income had passed.

While at Keswick Coleridge produced very little. He wrote the second part of Christabel in 1800, but did little else except read and exercise. In 1802 Coleridge toured Wales with Thomas Wedgwood. Returning he visited Poole at Stowey and Southey in Bristol. Later Southey came to Greta Hall where he shared the house with Coleridge.

Since 1801 Coleridge had suffered from gout and rheumatism. On August 15, 1803, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Dorothy left Keswick for Scotland, but Coleridge's health failed and he was forced to return home. Wordsworth wrote in the Memorials of a Tour in Scotland 1803--

Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself, started together from Town-End, to make a tour in Scotland, August 14th. Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection, and he departed from us . . . soon after we left Loch Lomond.²

Up to this period Coleridge had been a growing poet. When he met Wordsworth, he had been the better known, and had had many friends who supported him and enabled him to travel. His letters prove his love for his family. Yet from the year 1802, at the age of thirty years, until 1816 when he entered the home of Dr. Gillman at Highgate, he was a broken man. His

1. Cf. Lamb's description of Greta Hall, Traill, p. 84.
2. Memoirs, I, 14.

poetic ability had faded and his reaction to nature had become negative. After his return to Keswick in September, 1803, his health became increasingly worse. It appeared necessary to go abroad for his health. He went to Grasmere in December, where he lay in sickness and was nursed by the Wordsworths.

In 1803, obsessed by a sudden fear that he would lose his life, he took out a policy with the Equitable Insurance Company,¹ in order that Sara Coleridge might be provided for in her widowhood.

As his rheumatism and gout became more violent, he accepted an invitation from (Sir John) Stoddart to visit the latter at Malta. On April 18, 1804, he landed at Varlette, Harbor, Malta. There he made friends with Sir Alexander Bell, the Governor. Upon the death of the Secretary, he became provisional secretary, but found the work too laborious. The unchangeable, warm climate failed to relieve his rheumatism and his breathing became difficult. He sought solace from physical pain in religious contemplation.² When the new secretary arrived in September, 1805, he gladly gave up his task and set out for Sicily and Rome, where he barely escaped arrest by agents of Napoleon. The American vessel upon which he sailed was pursued by a French Man-of-War. The American Captain advised him to throw away all of his papers, which he did. With

1. Unpublished Letters, Coleridge to Southey, February 15, 1803.
 2. Gillman, p. 183-184.

that package all of his poems written in Malta were flung overboard. Only a few of his essays of the period have been preserved.

In 1806 he returned to Keswick and spent most of his time at Grasmere with the Wordsworths. Poetry began to be a thing of the past. In one of his letters to Southey he declared his inability to write poetry while in such ill health.¹

In this letter he attributed the continuation of his disease to a constant usage of Laudanum and brandy, which he took to relieve him momentarily from pain. He continued the practice of drugging himself until the habit could not be broken.

Writing in April, 1826, Coleridge said that twenty-three years before (1803) he had become aware that he was addicted to opium. Due to neuralgic pains, rheumatism, and other diseases, he had been confined for many months. One day while reading a periodical, he had noticed an advertisement of the healing powers of the "Kendal Black Drop". He had ordered it, and had discovered that the medicine miraculously soothed him. Overjoyed, he had constantly carried a bottle about with him, prescribing it for all whom he met who suffered from similar ailments. Later he had been struck with horror to find from reading De Quincey's Confessions of An Opium Eater that the soothing quality was that of opium, and that he had grown too

1. Unpublished Letters, Coleridge to Southey, February 7, 1803.

weak to break the habit.¹

He left the Lake Country in 1810 and stayed with Basil Montague in London. Mr. Montague's gentle manner and kindness soothed Coleridge, and the poet keenly felt and appreciated the other's friendship. Afterwards Coleridge moved to Hammersmith, where he stayed at the home of Mr. Morgan.²

Just as Wordsworth's star was rising, Coleridge's was slowly sinking. Wordsworth had won the hand of Mary Hutchinson and the marriage date was set for the 4th³ of October, 1802. The domestic relations of Coleridge had not turned out well. Sara was too obtuse to understand her poetic husband. Sickness and pain, aggravated by the use of opium, had sapped his sensibilities until his response to nature had been almost destroyed. In the warm, dry, months his pain was least, but April was coming, bringing with it rain and physical torture, and hence a greater recourse to opium. Coleridge was despondent and in his despondency he wrote his "swan song", one of his best known

William
Wordsworth
Series

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1. Gillman, pp. 246-247. It is known that Coleridge was taking a drug prior to 1801, and realized that the drug he was using was opium. During the Stowey period his letters show that he "sopped the Cerberus" during his periods of mental pain.
 2. John J. Morgan ministered to Coleridge in his home in 1810-1816, during the years of his abject submission to opium. He cared for Coleridge until the poet came under the care of Dr. Gillman at Highgate in 1816.— Unpublished Letters, p. 391 n.
 3. Cf. Wordsworth's She Was A Phantom of Delight.

poems, Dejection: An Ode (Campbell, p. 50).¹

William Wordsworth was also writing his great ode, Ode On Intimations of Immortality. He did not finish it until Coleridge had completed his ode, but Coleridge in one of his visits to Grasmere probably talked with Wordsworth about the poem in its unfinished form. Dorothy wrote in her Journal for March 19,

Coleridge was so affected by the signs of rain, which he knew would bring a renewal of rheumatism, causing his joints to swell and throb, that he addressed his ode with a selection from the Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence. In the first stanza he stated his reason for not wishing the coming rain storm.²

I see the old Moon in her lap, fortelling
The coming-on of rain and squally blast.

(ll. 13-14)

The poet attacked by physical pain relapsed into a mental torpor that was worse. His condition hardly allowed acute pain.

Might now perhaps their wonted impulse
give
Might startle this dull pain, and make it
move and live!

(ll. 19-20)

Coleridge admitted the fact that he was no longer able to appreciate nature. He saw it, but he had no response to it. His sensibilities had become dulled.

I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

(ll. 17-18, II)

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1. Printed in Morning Post, October 4, 1802. Published in Poems, 1817.
 2. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, I., 103.

The poet realized that his genius was fading and that poetry was losing its meaning for him.

My genial spirits fail;

(Stanza III, l. 1)

Coleridge had the ability as a younger man to flee into the realms of fancy from the visitations of misfortune and draw on imagination for poetry. But at this time he knew that he had lost both self respect and the "shaping spirit of imagination".

There was time when, though my path was
rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the
stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For hope grew round me, like the twin-
ing vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own,
seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to
earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth:
But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my
birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.

(Stanza VI, ll. 1-11)

The latter lines of this stanza have been quoted as Coleridge's excuse for his resignation¹ to his fate. Coleridge's home life had been unhappy. He wished to leave his wife, who was destroying his peace of mind and making his refuge of home unpleasant. He rebelled against this and sought relief in "abstuse research". Before he realized it, metaphysics had become

1. Unpublished Letters, I, 215. Coleridge to Wedgwood, October 20, 1802.

one of his desires and had driven out his poetic impulses.

For not to think of what I needs must
 feel,
 But to be still and 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 only plan:
 Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
 And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.
 (l. 87-end)

This ode sounded a note of discord and despondency.

I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
 Which long has raved unnoticed.
 What a scream of
 Of agony by torture lengthened out
 That lute sent forth! . . .
 (ll. 97-99)

The earlier dedications were changed from "William" to "Edmund" in the Morning Post. The poem had first been dedicated to "Sarah" (Hutchinson), whom he had begun to love as an intimate friend. In this poem the dedication is to "Lady" and "Otway", but it may be read to mean Wordsworth. Coleridge realized that Wordsworth was rising as a poet, and wished him blessings as he arose, even though his own poetic height had been reached and the remaining pathway led downward.¹

May all the stars hang bright above her
 dwelling,
 Silent as though they watched the
 sleeping Earth!

1. Smith suggests that the reason Coleridge did not wish to dedicate this poem to Wordsworth was that he did not wish William Wordsworth to think that he was begrudging his happiness. Smith, Fred Manning, op. cit., p. 233.

With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her
 voice:

(ll. 130-133)

In 1806 Coleridge returned to London from abroad and visited his friend William Wordsworth at Coleorton. While he was there Wordsworth read him the Prelude.¹ Recording his response to those verses, Coleridge wrote To A Gentleman (William Wordsworth) (Campbell, p. 176).

In 1806 Coleridge returned from abroad and visited Wordsworth, who was living with his sister in Sir George Beaumont's home in Coleorton. He took with him his favored child, Hartley. While the group, composed of Wordsworth, his wife and children, Dorothy Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Hartley, were seated about Wordsworth, the latter read them his Prelude.² Wordsworth had finished this poem in June 1805 after working six years upon it. It represented a biography of his life and poetic growth.

It is no wonder that Coleridge, to whom the poem was addressed, reacted to the reading of it, for, as in the Ode to Dejection, he recognized his own poetic decline in contrast to Wordsworth's development. He later said in regard to the poem;

I cannot help regretting that Wordsworth did not

1. Memoirs I, 355.

2. Memoirs, I, 355. The full title was The Prelude, or Growth of His Own Mind.

first publish his thirteen (fourteen) books on the growth of an individual mind. . . It is, in substance, what I have been all my life doing in my system of philosophy. . . I think Wordsworth possessed more of the genius of a great philosophic poet than any man I ever knew, or as I believe has existed in England since Milton.¹

To A Gentleman (William Wordsworth) (Campbell, p. 176)²

was the poet's immediate response to his friend's poem.

Friend of the wise! and Teacher of the
Good!

Into my heart have I received that Lay
More than historic, that prophetic Lay
Wherein (high theme by thee first sung
aright)

Of the foundations and the building up
Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to
tell

That may be told, to the understanding
mind

Revealable:

(ll. 1-8)

When Coleridge had been thrilled by the struggle for liberty in France during the Revolution, he had fought in fancy, while Wordsworth had actually taken part in the politics of
3
Revolutionary France:

Of more than Fancy, of the Social
Sense

Distending wide, and man beloved as
man,

Where France in all her towns lay
vibrating

Like some becalmed bark beneath the
burst

Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when
no cloud

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1. Memoirs I, 302-303. From Table Talk— 1835, II, 70.
 2. First printed in Sybilline Leaves, 1817.
 3. Cf. "To A Lady", With a Poem on the French Revolution.
Note lines 25-26.

Later at Clevedon and Stowey he had communed with nature, fostering his poetic genius. This genius had burst into bloom as a result of his meeting William and Dorothy Wordsworth.¹ Then his genius having blossomed, had faded.

Sense of past youth, and manhood come
in vain;
And all which I had culled in wood--
walks wild,
And all which patient toil had reared,
and all,
Commune with thee had opened out--
but flowers
Strewed on my corse, and borne upon
my bier,
In the same coffin, for the self-same
grave!

(ll. 69-75)

It has been noted that Coleridge changed the dedication of his Ode to Dejection to prevent Wordsworth's thinking of him as being envious of Wordsworth's success. He put aside his melancholy recollections at this time for the same reason:

That way no more! and ill beseems
it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's
guise,
Singing of glory, and futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful
road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And
ill
Such interwine beseems triumphal
wreaths
Strew'd before thy advancing!

(ll. 76-82)²

The poet during these years longed for tranquility, which

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1. His best poems, The Ancient Mariner, Kubla Khan, and Christabel were written during his early associations with the Wordsworths.
 2. Cf. Ode to Tranquility.

in his dreams while away from his family, he believed to be in his own home.

Eve following eve,
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense
of Home
Is sweetest! . . .

(ll. 91-92)

Coleridge constantly sought some male friend upon whom he might lean. He saw in Wordsworth a teacher and friend strong enough to support him in his irresolution.

And when— O Friend! my comforter
and guide!
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give
strength! (ll. 102-103)

When Wordsworth finished reading, Coleridge was sublimely happy. He was contented in the company of happy faces about ¹him.

Thy long sustained Song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased— yet
thou thyself
Wert still before my eyes, and round us
both
That happy vision of beloved faces—
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of
its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought
(Thought was it? or aspiration? or re-
solve?)
Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
And when I rose, I found myself in
prayer.

(ll. 103-end)

Coleridge did not wish this poem published until after

1. In an early edition he has beneath l. 107 this line "All whom, I deepliest love— in one room all". This excluded Sara and his children, besides Hartley, and T. poole.

his death because of its personal references. He altered the poem in later editions, dropping occasional lines in order to make it less personal. He wrote to Wordsworth in a letter dated May 30, 1815:

I wanted no additional reason for its not being published in my life-time than its personality regarding myself.¹

When Coleridge visited the Wordsworths at Sockburn, where they were visiting the Hutchinsons, he met and became very

Sara
Hutchinson
Series

friendly with the two sisters. He was particularly attracted by Sarah Hutchinson's friendship.

At this time his own family ties with Sara were strained and he welcomed the womanly kindness of Sarah.² He wrote a series of poems centered around her friendship with him. These poems include To Asra (Campbell, p. 171), and A Day Dream (Campbell, p. 179).³

To Asra is autobiographical only in its name, which he employed in all his poems to Sarah Hutchinson. The lines expressed boundless love, but probably had no basis in reality.

A Day Dream was written during the poet's fancy of an outing with Mary and Sarah Hutchinson. It proved that the

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1. Knight, W., Life of William Wordsworth, II, 255—from Campbell, p. 635.
 2. I do not believe that Coleridge ever loved Sarah Hutchinson with the same love which he developed for Mary Evans, or even with the domestic love, which he had for his wife.
 3. Farewell to Love, written while in Malta, might also be included in this group, but there is no proof that it should be included.

poet's remarkable power of imagination and fancy had not quite
¹
 left him.

My eyes make pictures, when they are
 shut:
 I see a fountain, large and fair,
 A willow and a ruined hut,
 And thee, and me and Mary there.

(11. 1-4)

'Twas day! but now few, large, and
 bright,
 The stars are round the crescent
 Moon!
 And now it is a dark warm night,
 The balmiest of the month of June!
 A glow-worm fall'n, and on the marge
 remounting
 Shines, and its shadow shines, fit stars
 for our sweet fountain.

(11. 13-18)

The poet's friendship ("love") for Sarah is shown in the fol-
²
 lowing lines:

O ever-ever be thou blest!
 For dearly, Asra! love I thee!

(1. 19)

As we have remarked before, during these years when Coler-
 idge was addicted to opium and constantly in pain, his one de-
³
 sire was tranquility.

This brooding warmth across my
 breast,
 This depth of tranquil bliss—ah,
 me!

(11. 20-21)

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1. "Our sister and our friend" are D. and W. Wordsworth— l. 20.
 2. "Asrs" is Sarah Hutchinson.
 3. Cf. his letters of this period, Unpublished Letters, I, 238-299.

But now Coleridge's fancy had become short-lived and blurred like an ill-taken photograph. The scattered images of the fountain (l. 2) and of the stars (l. 14) had passed away and the poet again faced reality.

Fount, tree and shed are gone, I know
 not whither,
 But in one quiet room we three are still
 together.

(ll. 22-23)

The poet realized that only a trace of his fancy remained and that henceforward he must "dream with his eyes", or see pictures rather than feel them.

I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my
 heart I feel thee!

(l. 29)

Coleridge, taking his only domestic pleasure in his children, gradually became less and less happy in his home. When near Sara he was increasingly convinced of the misfit of the two personalities. Only in some of his letters to her did he express a degree of love for her and a desire to be at her side. As early as 1801 he wrote to Southey:

Break With
Sara
Coleridge

And Sara— Alas! We are not suited to one another.
 But the months of my absence I devote to self discipline, and to the attempt to draw her nearer to me by

1. Cf. Letters written to Sara from Wales, where he was travelling with Tom Wedgwood, Unpublished Letters, I, 218-228. As an example, he wrote to her from St. Clears, Carmathen on November 22, 1802: "God bless you, my dear Love! and speed me back to you, and our dear H. and D. and etc."— p. 222.

a regular development of all the sources of our unhappiness— then for another trial. Fair as I hold the love of good men dear to me— Patient as I love myself and my own dear children. . .¹

Feeling unable to endure the conflict at home, he contemplated separation from her.

Later, when he was away from home at Covent Garden, he wrote to Sara at Keswick expressing the hope that they might be reunited as "affectionate Husband and Wife ought to be."²

After he returned to England from touring Wales with Wedgwood, the constant discord with his wife drove out his poetic impulse. Coleridge spoke of her as the "utter negation of all a Husband expects from a Wife."³

Sara had grown jealous of her husband's affection for his friends, both male and female, and showed her feelings in her attitude toward the Wordsworths. Coleridge was displeased at his wife's unfriendliness and rebuked her in a letter written from Carmarthen, November 22, 1802. He defended his right to love whomever he chose, as love was the very nature of his being.⁴ Considering his intellect and feeling superior to hers,

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1. Coleridge to Southey, Oct. 20, 1801, Unpublished Letters, I, 182.
 2. Coleridge to Sara, Feb. 20, 1802, Unpublished Letters, I, 191.
 3. Coleridge to Wedgwood, Oct. 20, 1802, Unpublished Letters, I, 215.
 4. "I can neither retain my happiness nor my faculties, unless I move, live and love in perfect freedom, limited only by my own purity and person, man or woman, unless at the same time I honor and esteem them. . . My nature is quick to love and retentive."— Coleridge to Sara, Nov. 22, 1802, Unpublished Letters, I, 220.

he declared his freedom, while demanding that she better esteem those whom he loved.

On February 17, 1803, he wrote to Southey:

In an evil hour for me did I first pay attention to Mrs. Coleridge, in an evil hour for me did I marry her, but it shall be my care and my passion that it shall not be an evil day for her, and that whatever I may be, or may be represented as a Husband, I may not be unexceptional as her Protector and Friend.¹

In the autumn of 1806 Coleridge was convinced of the inevitability of separation from Sara. When he wrote to his brother George of his plan to separate from his wife and mentioned the possibility of his bringing his family to Ottery, the Rev. Coleridge was shocked, but kindly disposed to the poet. He advised him not to come to Ottery, as the household was in sickness and the invalid mother was unable to endure such a shock. He asked him to remain and live apart from his wife and support his family in Bristol until he had time to reconsider what was best for himself and Sara.²

In 1808 Coleridge wrote to Sara from Grasmere, addressing her as one would an older sister, and declaring his desire to work when able to do so, in order that he might provide for her and for their children.³

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1. Coleridge to Southey, Unpublished Letters, I, 254.
 2. Cf. editors's summary of Coleridge's relationships to his wife, Unpublished Letters, I, 371 n.
 3. It was never his intention to disregard his family, and when he was in good health, he worked to support it. He did not dislike Sara, but admired and respected her (Unpublished Letters, I, 238). They were not congenial as man and wife.

This break between husband and wife may have suggested
the Happy Husband (Campbell, p. 178).¹

Oft, oft methinks, the while with thee,
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea, in that very name of Wife!

(Stanza I)

Nor bless I not the keener sense
And unalarming turbulence

(Stanza II, l. 5-6)

And leave their sweeter understrain
Its own sweet self-- a love of Thee
That seems, yet cannot greater be!

(last 3 lines)

Coleridge, since his Christ's Hospital days, had been annoyed by illness, and had been had been used to both physical and mental pain. While at the Hospital, he had contracted rheumatic fever and jaundice as a result of swimming with his clothes on and allowing them to dry on his back. Since that time he had constantly been distressed with rheumatism. Upon one occasion Dr. Fenwick of Durham had advised him to refrain from swimming in the ocean. In 1801, when visiting the sea shore, he had "frolicked" in the salt water and had found that it did him no harm. Returning from the trip he had written a poem upon the incident and sent it in a letter to Southey at Bristol.²

1. First appeared in Sibylline Leaves, 1817.

2. Coleridge to Southey, Aug. 11, 1801. Unpublished Letters, I, 179.

This poem, entitled On Revisiting the Sea Shore (Campbell, p. 159), includes his reaction to Dr. Fenwick's advice.

Dissuading spake the mild Physician,
 'Those briny waves for thee are
 Death!
 But my soul fulfilled her mission,
 And low! I breathe untroubled
 breath!

(Stanza III)

At one time two friends visited Coleridge and spent the night, planning to leave the following morning. But it was raining when morning came, and Coleridge was fearful lest his friends, with whom he did not wish to talk, might be detained. Lying in bed he composed An Ode To The Rain (Campbell, p. 168),¹ which is less autobiographical for its story than for the illustration it gives of Coleridge's reaction to rain, which brought rheumatic pains in his body, and to loss of sleep.

Wet weather caused Coleridge's joints to swell and ache, bringing with its pains a sense of oppression and sorrow. Since the poet's grammar school days his body had reacted painfully to dampness and moisture.

You know, if you know aught, that we,
 Both night and day, but ill agree:
 For days and months, and almost years,
 Have limped on through this vale of
 tears,
 Since body of mine, and rainy weather,
 Have lived on easy terms together.

1. Published first in the Morning Post, Oct., 1802. Cf. Dejection: An Ode, in regard to rain, and Pains of Sleep, in regard to sleeplessness.

Though you should come again to-
 morrow,
 And bring with you both pain and
 sorrow
 Though stomach should sicken and knees
 should swell—

(Stanza II, ll. 3-8; 11-13)

Gout, rheumatism, and frequent use of opium served to wrench the body of the poet during waking hours and to fill his few hours of sleep with horrible nightmares. On October 3, 1803, he wrote to Poole of his dread of sleep with its evil dreams, and inclosed a poem, The Pains of Sleep (Campbell, p. 171),¹ in the letter.

By this year (1803) Coleridge was freely taking opium, realizing as he did it that he was destroying the last vestiges of poetry left within him. He had not begun the opium habit to produce pleasure, but to avoid pain, although at the time he fled to it to condone his indolence. The intervals between indulgence projected him into melancholia, as he thought of many things which he had planned to do but would never do. His morals were high, but during these periods he firmly believed his soul to be black with evil.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud
 In anguish and in agony,
 Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
 Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:
 A lurid light, a trampling throng,
 Sense of intolerable wrong,
 And whom I scorned, those only strong!

1. Coleridge to Poole, Oct. 3, 1803, Unpublished Letters, I, 286. First printed with Christabel and Kubla Khan in 1817.

Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
 Still baffled, and yet buring still!
 Desire with loathing strangely mixed
 On wild or hateful objects fixed.
 Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!
 And shame and terror over all!
 Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
 Which all confused I could not know
 Whether I suffered, or I did:
 For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe,
 My own or others still the same
 Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame!

(Stanza II)

In his letter to Poole he said:

God forbid that my worst enemy should ever have the
 nights of sleep that I have had night after night—
 surprized by sleep, while I struggled to remain awake,
 starting up to bless by own loud screams, that had
 awakened me.¹

He expressed his thought in the third stanza:

So two nights passed; the night's dismay
 Saddened and stunned the coming day.
 Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me
 Distemper's worst calamity.
 The third night, when my own loud scream
 Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
 O'ercome with sufferings strange and
 wild,
 I wept as I had been a child:

(ll. 33-40)

Coleridge was aware of the harmful effect of opium and
 rebelled against having to use the drug, but desired it, and
 in his weakness constantly resorted to it.

To know and loathe, yet wish and do!

(l. 48)

Coleridge was sensitive to kindness and quickly responded

1. Unpublished Letters, I, 286. Cf. also Unpublished Letters,
 I, 276.

with his own love. This abstract love for all beings was
 characteristic of him during this period.¹

Such griefs with such men well agree,
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me?
 To be beloved is all I need,
 And whom I love, I love indeed.

(ll. 49-end)

While preparing to travel to London, in 1807, to give a series of lectures, he was suddenly taken ill and cared for by the wife of J.J. Morgan and her sister. The two pretty women cared for him and nursed him to health. Upon regaining his health he wrote to the two sisters a poem of appreciation and farewell.² He did not love them in the common sense of the word, but was sensitive to their kindness and included them in his inner circle of friends, made up of those "deserving" of his "love".

He published the poem To Two Sisters (Campbell, p. 178) over the signature SIBTI, which was too near ESTEISI not to be recognized by his wife, who became jealous and displeased with her husband.³

The poet was quick to appreciate kindnesses, and especially so during the years of his hypochondriacal condition, when he considered himself despicable.

O fair! O kind!

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1. The love theme is predominant in the poems of this period. Cf. Coleridge to Sara, Unpublished Letters, I, 220.
 2. Campbell, p. 636. Printed in Courier, December 10, 1807.
 3. Campbell, p. 636. The was first printed in The Courier in 1807.

Sisters in blood, yet each with each in-
 twined
 More close by sisterhood of heart and
 mind;
 Me disinherited in form and face
 By nature, and mishap of outward grace:
 Who, soul and body, through one guilt-
 less faults
 Waste daily with the poison of sad
 thought,
 Me did you soothe, when solace hoped I
 none!

(ll. 6-12)

Utterly in the grip of self induced melancholy, Coleridge lost all hope of ever realizing the fulfillment of his talents and of regaining his health.

Hope long is dead to me! an orphan's
 tear
 Love wept despairing o'er his nurse's
 bier.

(ll. 41-42)

This was a fallow period for Coleridge. He had great potentialities, which caused his friends to have an increased interest in him when he showed to them his projected work.¹ When he consistently failed, however, to complete his work, his friends began sympathetically to lose patience with him. During this period Coleridge wrote prose bits for the Courier and read metaphysical works. In his letters he complained of his sicknesses and described them graphically, but both the readers of the letters and Coleridge himself could see in-

1. Campbell states that Coleridge planned great works but never completed them. He told Beaumont that he was going to make a translation of the latter's paintings, but never did so. Campbell, LXV.

dolence underlying his excuses.

Wordsworth wrote to Poole March 23, 1809:

I give it to you as my deliberate opinion founded upon proofs which have been strengthening for years, that he neither will nor can execute anything of importance to himself, his family, or mankind. He is frustrated by a derangement in his intellectual and moral constitution. In fact, he has no voluntary power of mind whatever, nor is he capable of acting under any constraint of duty or moral obligation.¹

The poet realized that he was caught in a net of mental indolence, largely induced by addiction to opium and brandy, from which it was impossible to extricate himself. The result was hopelessness. This became a dominant theme in the poetry of his later years.

In The Visionary Hope (Campbell, p. 171) Coleridge expressed a triple hopelessness, a decline of poetic ability with little or no chance of his powers returning, a degeneration into drug addiction, which it seemed impossible to cast off, and an uncertainty in religion. His nature told him that Unitarianism was an empty shell, but his intellect rebelled against formal Christianity.² He saw no solution for his difficulties, and hence, fatalistically accepted them, and appealed to his friends for sympathy and aid in his letters.

Sad lot, to have no Hope! Though lowly

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1. Campbell, p. LXXIX, from Knight's Life of William Wordsworth, II, 124.
 2. His poems and letters of the period seem to cry out in pity at his chronic condition. The Visionary Hope was added in the second edition of Remorse, and also altered and printed in the Biographia Literaria, 1817.

kneeling,
 He fain would frame a prayer within his
 breast,
 Would fain entreat for some sweet breath
 of healing,
 That his sick body might have ease and
 rest:
 He strove in vain! the dull sighs from
 his chest
 Against his will the stifling load revealing,
 Though Nature forced;

(ll. 1-6)

The condition constantly brought evil dreams upon him.
 In poems other than the Pains of Sleep, he cried out against
 his tortured rest. This thought is uttered in the following
 lines.

The sternness on his gentle brow con-
 fessed,
 Sickness within and miserable feeling;
 Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
 And dreaded sleep, each night repelled
 in vain,
 Each night was scattered by its own
 loud screams;

(ll. 9-13)

He wrote in his Pocket Book at one time, "My sole sen-
 suality is not to be in pain".¹

Yet never could his heart command,
 though fain,
 One deep full wish to be no more in
 pain.

About 1811² Coleridge wrote The Pang More Sharp Than All³
 (Campbell, p. 182), which he composed in allegorical form.

The knowledge that all hope had passed was expressed in

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1. Gillman, I, 246. It is interesting to note the similarity in phrases in his poetry and in his letters and notes.
 2. Variouslly dated 1807 and 1819. Campbell places it in 1811 as a compromise.
 3. First printed in Poetical Works, 1828.

the following verses:

Hope's last and dearest child without a
name!—
Has flitted from me, like the warmthless
flame,

(ll. 2-3)

Coleridge's failure to produce anything of worth, his habit of neglecting his appointments, and his constant weak will caused him to lose the esteem of some of his friends. (His own self-esteem had long been lost, if he ever had it.) He was not deserted, however, but provided for until 1812 by the pension from Wedgwood, and cared for by his friends through kindness and in respect to his latent genius. He recognized this fact and expressed it in this allegory. In the past lines the poet discarded his cloak of obscurity and frankly said:

O worse than all! O pang all pangs
above
Is Kindness counterfeiting absent Love!

(ll. 57-58)

One of his most direct autobiographic poems of the time is A Tombless Epitaph (Campbell, p. 180).¹

In his prose autobiography he referred to himself as Satyrane.² This title also appears in the address of the poem.

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane!

(l. 1)

The qualities of the romantic, revolting against classic

1. Printed first without the title in The Friend XIV, November 23, 1809.

2. Satyrane Letters—Biographia Literaria, 1817.

standards, are shown in the lines:

Of elder times, he hated to excess,
 With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
 The hollow puppets of an hollow age,
 Ever idolatrous, and changing ever,
 For worthless idols! Learning, power,
 and time,
 (Too much of all) thus wasting in vain
 war
 Of fervid colloquy.

(ll. 8-14)

Even oppressed by sickness when younger, he had continued to compose poetry.

Sickness, 'tis true,
 Whole years of weary days, besieged him
 close,
 Even to the gates and inlets of his life!
 But it is true, no less, that strenuous,
 firm,
 And with a natural gladness, he maintained
 The citadel unconquered, and in joy
 Was strong to follow the delightful Muse.

(ll. 14-20)

His love of nature was shown in the following lines:

For not a hidden path, that to the shades
 Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads,
 Lurked undiscovered by him; not a rill
 There issues from the fount of Hippo-
 crene,
 But he had traced it upward to its
 source,
 Through open glade, dark glen, and secret
 dell,
 Knew the gay wild flowers on its banks,
 and culled
 Its med'cinable herbs.

(ll. 21-28)

Coleridge, from the time he was fifteen years old, had delighted in plumbing the depths of philosophy.

Yes, oft alone,
 Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,

The haunt obscure of old Philosophy,

(ll. 29-30)

Coleridge was constantly reading and his desire for truth led him into a maze of philosophy which confused his religious conceptions. Gillman described him as having the simplicity of a child.¹ Coleridge embodied these thoughts in a romantic idealization of himself.

O studious Poet, eloquent for truth!
Philosopher! contemning wealth and death,
Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love!

(ll. 35-37)

During the years 1811-1812 he again contributed to the Courier, but his work was inferior to that with the Morning Post in 1800. In 1811 Wedgwood withdrew the Closing Years pension of 150 £ because of his neglect of wife and children (Southey and friends had put the boys in colleges),² and because of his failure to produce any of the great literary projects which he had planned.

Upon Byron's recommendation Remorse was accepted by the Drury Lane Theater and successfully produced. He realized a large compensation, more than he had earned by the production of all his literary work put together. It seems that this sum should have maintained him many years, but by this time he had grown accustomed to extravagancies and indulgence in opium,³ and in less than two years he had wasted the entire sum.

1. Gillman, I, 116.

2. Traill, p. 139, from Southey to Cottle, October 17, 1814.

3. Ibid., p. 136.

In 1814 Coleridge lectured in Bristol, failing to keep some of his appointments and not being punctual in others. The result was a failure. In the middle of August he returned to London. During this year he sank to the lowest level, almost to the rubbish heap.

Upon one occasion Cottle happened to be visiting at the home of Hannah More and noticed that Coleridge at the dinner table was unable to hold a glass of wine in his hand without spilling the liquid, even though one hand was supported by the other. Cottle remarked to the hostess about the fact. "That", she replied, "arises from the immoderate quantity of opium he takes.¹

Cottle became alarmed at Coleridge's condition and wrote to him on April 25, 1814, attempting to portray the dangers of the drug habit to him.² Cottle pointed out to him the harm to his body, to his friends and family, and to his literary productiveness, and asked him to return to Keswick and aid Southey in supporting his family.

On the following day Coleridge indignantly replied, reminding Cottle concerning his chance addiction to the drug

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1. Cottle, p. 361. Hannah More, late Eighteenth Century dramatist, "was a woman of strong character, masculine intellect and passions, which thwarted in life, were almost bound to find expression in literature". Routh, H.V., "The Georgian Drama", (Cambridge History of English Literature. Vol. XII. p. 301).
 2. Cottle, p. 361 ff., Coleridge to Cottle, Bristol, April 25, 1814.

as a medicine, and his present absolute subjection to it. He desired a hundred pounds to give to Mrs. Coleridge, and another hundred to place himself under the care of Dr. Fox in his mad-house.¹

While at the Morgans he had been partially cured. When he entered their home he had been consuming from two quarts of laudanum a week, to a pint a day.² Rebellling against abstinence, he said that it was better that he die than endure the pain. Mrs. Morgan "resolutely" replied, it was indeed better that he should die than that he should continue to live as he had been living.

His abstinence, however, was short-lived, and he relapsed into his customary indulgence.

He retired to the home of the Morgans at Calne where he convalesced. Putting himself under the care of Dr. Adams, he frankly told all of his checkered career. He realized that he was not strong enough to control himself, and that unless he totally surrendered himself to the guidance of another he would perish. Dr. Adams, however, was unable to help him, and wrote Dr. Gillman at Highgate asking that he harbor the forlorn poet and force him to leave off opium.

Dr. Gillman did not wish to take such a person into his home, but made arrangements with Adams to drive out with Coler-

1. Ibid., pp. 366-369, Coleridge to Cottle, April 20, 1814.

2. Ibid., p. 373, Coleridge to Cottle, Keswick, April, 1814.

idge on the following day. Before the appointed hour, Coleridge, who had come along, walked into the home. Gillman had a guest seated before his fire. Coleridge made himself calmly at home and began such a familiar conversation that the guest arose and said, "I see by your manners an old friend has arrived, and I shall, therefore, retire".

Coleridge parted from Gillman promising to return the next evening leaving Gillman charmed and "impatient for the morrow."¹

The poet wrote Dr. Gillman informing him of the facts of his illness, in which he stated that he feared insanity might ensue from refraining from opium, as his longest interval between doses had been sixty hours. He requested Gillman to guard him diligently during the first week. An interesting reference to his conversation in the letter follows:

The stimulus of conversation suspends the terror that haunts my mind, but when I am alone, the horrors I have suffered from laudanum, the degradation, the blighted utility almost overwhelms me.²

On the following Monday evening Coleridge came to Highgate bringing Christabel with him, which was published in 1817.

Thus started the long road back. He never wholly recovered, and did not regain his powers of fancy, but he regained his dignity and some of his literary powers.³ His wisdom had

1. Gillman, I, 273.

2. Gillman, I, 275, Coleridge to Gillman, April 13, 1816.

3. His Biographia Literaria, a critical study of his literary growth, was published in 1817.

finally triumphed over philosophy and he had become an orthodox Christian. Thomas Carlyle in the Life of John Sterling has given us a picture of the old Coleridge in these closing, yet mellow, years at Highgate.

The good man, he was now getting old, towards sixty perhaps; and gave you the idea of a life that had been full of sufferings; a life heavy-laden, half-vanquished, still swimming painfully in seas of manifold physical and other bewilderment. Brow and head were round, and of massive weight, but the face was flabby and irresolute, but expressive of weakness under possibility of strength. He hung loosely on his limbs with knees bent, and stooping attitude; in walking he rather shuffled than decisively stepped; and a lady once remarked, he never could fix which side of the garden walk would suit him best, but continually shifted, in corkscrew fashion and kept trying both. A heavy-laden, high-aspiring and surely much-suffering man. His voice, naturally soft and good, had contracted itself into a plaintive snuffle and sing-song— you would have said preaching earnestly and also hopelessly the weightiest things.¹

He still retained his keen intellect ripened into full maturity, and a great wealth of sensibility to the beautiful, but his nature was set in irresolution. He had fled from life, lacking the will to fight it.

In 1823, while at Highgate, Coleridge began composing Youth and Age (Campbell, p. 191), which is a reflection upon his past youth, full of hope, and his present state of senility with its hopeless but mellowing years.²

The poem shows dominantly the poet's resignation to hope-

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1. Carlyle, Thomas, The Life of John Sterling, p. 54.
 2. Coleridge worked upon this poem at odd intervals finally publishing it in Bijou and Literary Souvenir, 1828.

lessness. The latter years were as of one who was waiting for the hour to come when he would quit the world to which he had never been able to adapt himself.

As a young man Coleridge had reacted feelingly to nature. His poetic ability had been developed in his college days and found its apex in the Ancient Mariner. In the poem to The Rev. George Coleridge he had commented upon his poetic growth and expressed the hope of future greatness as a poet. All had been wasted during the years of his indulgence.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having
 passed
 His youth and early manhood in the stir
 And turmoil of the world, retreats at
 length,
 With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
 To the same dwelling where his father dwelt;
 (ll. 1-5)

It was the young poet's nature to be loved, and his enthusiasm and intellect drew friends to him. In the latter years many of these friends, becoming disappointed and impatient with him, left him, only a few loyal ones remained through pity and kindness.
 1

1. Coleridge was unfortunate in many things, but not in his friendships. Some left him, but others loved and cared for him until his death. As his older acquaintances left him, new ones came, who, attracted by his love and faded genius, made him comfortable in his declining years. Wordsworth, who had grown a little impatient but remained loyal to him, wrote:

How can he expect that others should
 Sow for him, reap for him, and at
 his call,
 Love him, who for himself will take
 no thought at all.

—The Old Leechgatherer

Friendship is a sheltering tree;
 O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,

Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah, woeful Ere,
 Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!

(ll. 19-23)

But Coleridge was not old in years. At this time he was not more than fifty-six years old, but dissipation and ill health, as well as inability to adapt himself, had broken him in body and spirit.

O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
 'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
 I'll think it but a fond conceit—

I see these locks in silvery slips,
 This drooping gait, this altered size:
 But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
 Life is but thought; so think I will
 That Youth and I are house-mates still.

(ll. 24-26; 33-38)

The poet's hopelessness is shown in the concluding lines:

Where no hope is, life's a warning
 That only serves to make us grieve,
 When we are old.

On February 21, 1827, Coleridge composed Work Without Hope (Campbell, p. 203), regretting his loss of response to nature. He recognized in writing the Ode to Dejection that his power of feeling nature had gone. In his latter years at Highgate, as health began to improve, he saw the beauty of nature which had inspired him to compose in his earlier years, and now felt no response to it. He realized that this sensibility could never be recalled, and that all hope of appreciation of nature had left him.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
 blow,
 Have traced the fount whence streams of
 nectar flow.
 Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom
 ye may.
 For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich
 streams away!
 With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow,
 I stroll:
 And would you learn the spells that
 drowse my soul?
 Work without Hope draws nectar in a
 sieve,
 And Hope without an object cannot
 live.

(ll. 7-14)

Since his return to England from Germany in 1799 he had become more inclined to Christianity. He began to think of Unitarianism as the religion of a man, whose reason would make his an atheist, but whose heart and common sense would not permit it.¹

Coleridge was kind to all whom he believed good. He was quick to forgive when injured, as he hoped to be forgiven for his misspent life. Even when he had been reviled and persecuted, he never persecuted others. He wrote upon one occasion:

I do not care for men's religious opinions— they vary, and are dependent on that which usually surrounds them, but I regard with more attention what men are.²

In his later years he regarded Unitarianism as merely a beautiful shell from which the animal, which secreted the pearl covering, had been extracted. Unitarianism was Christianity

1. Gillman, p. 161.

2. Ibid., p. 165.

without the redemptive Christ.¹

As the years passed, he became increasingly orthodox in his views. In 1817 Coleridge wrote in his Confessions of Belief:

I sincerely profess the Christian faith and regard the New Testament as containing all the articles, and I interpret the words not only in the obvious, but in the literal sense, unless where common reason and the authority of the Church of England join in commanding them to be understood figuratively: as for instance, "Herod is a Fox".²

Two poems exemplify the regenerated Coleridge, Forbearance³ (Campbell, p. 208) and My Baptismal Birthday (Campbell, p. 210).

Forbearance is Coleridge's plea for forgiveness for a mis-⁴spent life, as he himself could forgive others.

GENTLY I took that which ungently
came,
And without scorn forgave:— Do thou
the same.

(ll. 1-2)

My Baptismal Birthday was written while Coleridge lay sick. Emerson visited him on August 5, 1833. A chance remark from Dr. Channing caused Coleridge to rail against "the folly and ignorance of Unitarianism", which antagonized Emerson who "had been born and bred a Unitarian".⁵ When Emerson rose to go, Coleridge read him this poem, which shows his positive accept-
of Christianity:

1. Ibid., p. 315.

2. Gillman, p. 359.

3. First printed in Friendship's Offering, 1834.

4. Cf. Epitaph.

5. Campbell, p. CXXI.

GOD's child in Christ adopted,— Christ
 my all,—
 What that earth boasts were not lost
 cheaply, rather
 Than forfeit that blest name, by which I
 call
 The Holy One, the Almighty God, my
 Father?—
 Father! in Christ we live, and Christ in
 Thee—
 Eternal Thou, and everlasting we.
 The heir of heaven, henceforth I fear not
 death;
 In Christ I live! In Christ I draw the
 breath
 Of the true life! (ll. 1-9)

Coleridge lived hardly a year after the visit of Emerson. His body became wracked with pain and he seemed to yearn to take "leave of his incumbrance".¹ In the winter he wrote his Epitaph. Wordsworth, in reading the account of his death, remarked that in his last years he had been hopeful of recovery from sickness and lived in a peace which he had never known before. All things were "reconciled and harmonized".²

On July 25 he died quietly and was buried in Highgate Charchyard, leaving behind him his Epitaph to be inscribed upon his stone.³ His body was accompanied by only a few friends,⁴ Lamb being absent.⁵

In the Church was erected a handsome tablet in his honor⁶ donated by the Gillmans.

1. Ibid., from T. Poole and His Friend, II, 294.

2. Memoirs, I, 291.

3. For an account of Coleridge's death of. Unpublished Letters, II, 455 n.; 457n.

4. Campbell, CXXI.

5. Letters of Charles Lamb, II, 430.

6. Cottle, p. 486.

His Epitaph, written November 9, 1833, is a plea for charity for his failure in life and a praying hope for forgiveness, through Christ.

STOP, Christian passer-by!— Stop, child
of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath
this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seem'd
he.—
O, lift one thought in prayer for S.T.C.:
That he who many a year with toil of
breath
Found death in life, may here find life in
death!
Mercy for praise— to be forgiven for fame
He ask'd, and hoped, through Christ.
Do thou the same!

IV.

CONCLUSION

I have endeavored to show that Coleridge's poetry, although imaginative, has a dominant element of experience in it. I have traced this element from his earliest poem, Genevieve, written while at Christ's Hospital, to the Epitaph written in 1833 at Highgate.

Only enough of his life has been included to give an adequate background of his career, and I have not attempted a full outline of his biography apart from its relation to his poems. In many cases chronological sequence has been sacrificed in order that each series of autobiographical poems might be better defined.

It will be noticed that in general the latter poems seem more autobiographical than the earlier ones, and that the element of experience in his poetry grew with the decline of his poetic ability.

Although this research has given the author a deeper appreciation of poetry, its principal value lies in the profit that comes from the study of a poet's life through the medium of his verse.

V.

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