We have discussed in the previous chapter how the poet's heart "had been turned aside from Nature's way by outward accidents", of the Revolution and how a further alienation from her took place when he came under the philosophy of Godwin. Wordsworth has left an elaborate record of this period of his life. But the material with regard to his restoration and reconcilement as supplied by the poet, or by others, is extremely scanty. Wordsworth has touched on these points in the last few books of 'The Prelude', but what he there says does not throw sufficient light on this period of his life. We completely lose sight of the poet - from the time he received the legacy from Raisley in January, 1795, up to September, 1795. He spent these months most probably in London aimlessly, the months intervening between the publication of "Guilt and Sorrow" and the beginning of the compilation of "The Borderers". It was in October 1795, that Wordsworth settled with his sister at Racedown in Dorsetshire. It was a step that had far-reaching effects upon his life and poetry, for it was here that he met Coleridge and it was here too that he came to know his sister so well and the woodland beauty of Dorset. Both the country and the countryfolk here were somewhat different from Cumberland and its strong and hardy

1. The Prelude, X, 886-887
people. They had soft and graceful manners. Dorothy with her keen sense of perception and an 'exquisite regard for common things'\(^1\) was able to divert the attention of the poet to the perennial beauty of the natural objects. It was with her help that he was able to transform mere observation, the tyranny of the eye into an imaginative experience. Her breath is described as "a kind of gentler spring that went before my steps."\(^2\) Wordsworth has paid several tributes to his sister in 'The Prelude' and in other poems. She was able to save the poet's soul from a sense of utter blankness and despair. Wordsworth's aching heart was consoled by the active sympathy of his sister, which served as a tonic for shaking off his lethargy and filling him with poetic inspiration. In a sense she may be said to be a more faithful friend to the poet than even his wife, who though very kind and affectionate, and a priceless woman, could not give the intellectual sympathy he so much needed for the development of his genius. From 1794 until Dorothy's mind gave way, she had been constantly by his side responding enthusiastically to all that her brother said or did, giving him the help he needed. Her Journals written between 1798 and 1828 reveal her intimate relationship with her brother; as also her literary taste and her gift of expression. We know that from the Journals Wordsworth drew some of his most effective poetic images. "I wandered lonely as a Cloud" may be cited as a concrete example of this. The brother and sister were somewhat alike in their nature, in

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their acute sense perceptions and in their ideals and aspirations. No other bond in the poet's life proved to be so strong as this that existed between him and his sister Dorothy.

The close intimacy in which the brother and sister lived between 1796 and 1802, the year in which Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson had led many a modern critic to suspect that the relationship was not a healthy one, and that it was certainly not a normal one such as usually exists between a brother and a sister. The reasons adduced by such writers to support their argument is this that Dorothy who was a year younger than her brother, did not see him much after their mother's death, when she was not more than seven. It was in 1789 that Wordsworth went to Penrith during his second summer vacation and it was there that she met him again, when she was a girl of eighteen, and he himself just nineteen years old. "She seem'd a gift then first bestow'd"¹ was the remark of her brother. It is quite likely that the natural affection between brother and sister living close to each other from the days of infancy would not characterize this relationship but instead, an abnormal feeling developed gradually when they began living together under the same roof. This abnormality has been hinted at by Read with the help of various quotations from Dorothy's Journals tending to show the abnormality of her affection for her brother. There is no doubt that the sentiment actually expressed in her Journals corroborate Sir Herbert's viewpoint. I shall quote here only one example which describes Dorothy's feelings on the occasion

¹. The Prelude, UT, 217-8.
of her brother's marriage.
"On Monday, October 4th, 1802, my brother William was
married to Mary Hutchinson. I slept a good deal of the
night, and rose fresh and well in the morning. At a little
after eight o'clock, I saw them go down to the avenue
towards the church. William had parted from me upstairs.
When they were absent, my dear little Sarah prepared the
breakfast. I kept myself as quiet as I could, but when I
saw the two men running up the walk, coming to tell us it
was over, I could stand it no longer, and threw myself on
the bed, where I lay in stillness, neither hearing nor seeing
anything till Sara came upstairs to me, and said 'they are
coming'. This forced me from the bed where I lay, and I
moved, I knew not how, straight forward, faster than my legs
could carry me, till I met my beloved William and fell upon
his bosom."

Another recent critic of Wordsworth in
his book entitled "A reinterpretation of Wordsworth" has
shown how Wordsworth came thrice under the influence of
love; and the poetic output of his life can be divided
into three groups accordingly. The first of these belongs
to the circle of Mary of Esthwaite and Taylor; the second
to that of Annette and Beaupuis and the third to that of
Dorothy and Coleridge. This critic has shown how in the
last phase of his poetic output, that is, between 1798
and 1808, frequent references to Dorothy have been made.
In fact this period begins with the composition of

1. H. Read, William Wordsworth, P.141
2. F.W. Bateson, A reinterpretation of Wordsworth, P.146
"Tintern Abbey", when he is already half in love with her as is evident from the eulogy poured in the last twenty lines of the poem where she has been addressed as "My dearest friend, My dear dear Friend". This feeling is deepened still further by their subsequent residence in Germany for seven months as some of the poems composed during this period will bear evidence. Mr. Bateson draws our attention particularly in this connexion to a fragment of "Nutting" discovered lately, in which Dorothy is referred to as the "Beloved Friend" of the poet. He also calls attention to the Lucy poems composed during this period and argues that "Lucy" can be no one else but Dorothy. In support of his argument he quotes Coleridge who, while sending a copy of "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" to Beck in April 1799 had written to him: "Whether it had any reality I cannot say. Most probably in some gloomier moment he had fancied the moment in which his sister might die". He further says that the "Lucy Poems" are a result of the conscious effort made by the poet to wrench himself free from the abnormal situation that he felt was developing in his relationship with his sister. That may partly explain the curious sexlessness of these love poems which quality has been so finely ridiculed by Shelley in "Peter Bell the Third":

"But from the first it was Peter's draft
To be a kind of moral eunuch:
He touched the hem of Nature's shift, -
Felt faint, - and never dared uplift
The closest all concealing tunic.
She laughed the while with an arch smile,
And kissed him with a sister's kiss,
And said - 'My best Diogenes,
I love you well - but if you please,
Tempt not again my deepest bliss'.

The early death of Lucy is also similarly explained by Mr. Bateson. Wordsworth, afraid of being involved in incest, must have tried to kill his passion by killing the object of his love, though in imagination only. This also explains why after his return from Germany, Wordsworth went straight to Sockburn where Mary, his future wife, whom he already knew lived with her brothers and sisters. He stayed there for seven months, and it was only after he had in a way settled his marriage with Mary that he set up a house for himself and his sister at Dove Cottage, Grasmere.

Whatever may have been the actual relation of Wordsworth with his sister, we are not much concerned with it, but what concerns us is the fact that the poetic genius of Wordsworth flowered as it had never done before, when it came under the benign influence of his sister. With her great intellectual ardour, acute sensibility and great love of Nature, she exercised a life long influence, not only upon his brother, but on the other great poet of the period too, that is Coleridge. Referring to the days of restlessness and despair which were the effects of the French Revolution and the Godwinian philosophy, Wordsworth tells us about the salutary effect of Coleridge and his sister.
upon his life:

"Ah then it was
That though, most precious Friend, about this time
First known to me, didst lend a living help
To regulate my soul, and then it was
That the beloved woman in whose sight
Those days were pass'd now speaking in a voice
Of sudden admonition, like a brook
That did but cross lonely road, and now
Seen, heard and felt, and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a league
Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self; for though impair'd and chang'd
Much, as it seemed, I was no further chang'd
Than as a clouded, not a waning moon:
She, in the midst of all, preserv'd me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name
My office upon earth."

There is one thing to be noted in this connection. Wordsworth gives contradictory statements at various places regarding the kind of influence that his sister had upon him. In the poems "To a Butterfly" and "The Sparrow's Nest", Wordsworth describes Dorothy as a gentler creature than he is:

"Oh pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time when in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly!

1. The Prelude, X, 905-921.
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush;
But she God lover her! feared to brush
The dust from off its wings.¹

And this is how he speaks of her in "The Sparrow's Nest":

"She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares and delicate fears;
A heart of fountain of sweet tears;
And love and thought, and joy."

But this description differs from that of her provided in "Tintern Abbey". There the poet says:

"And in thy voice catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes".

And how does the poet describe his former days?

He says that there was a time

"When like a roe
I bounded over the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers and the lonely streams,
Wherever Nature led".

Here the poet says about wild ecstasies that Dorothy enjoys in her communion with Nature. She is not depicted here as a gentle spirit. The first of the two opinions expressed of her in the poems appears to me to be more truthful as it is supported by a similar passage in "The Prelude". Speaking

¹. To a Butterfly.
about his love for Nature, Wordsworth says:

"I too exclusively esteem'd that love,
And sought that beauty, which as Milton sings,
Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down
This overstemness; but for thee, Sweet Friend,
My soul too reckless of mild grace, had been
Far longer what by Nature it was framed,
Longer retained its countenance severe,
A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds
Familiar, and a favourite of the Stars;
But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,
Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze,
And teach the little birds to build their nests
And warble in its chambers."¹

A kindred but more potent influence, that of Coleridge, had much to do with the restoration of the poet's mind to a healthy and normal condition. If Dorothy gave a richer tone to Wordsworth's perceptions by calling his attention to things humble and tender and raising these to the plane of imagination, Coleridge provided that imagination with a solid structure and a system. Unlike other scholars, far from hoarding any idea or discovery for fear of its being stolen, he would gladly share it with others. He was absolutely free from intellectual and spiritual selfishness. Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" which was written in imitation of the metre in "Christabel", published a few years earlier than Coleridge's poem, but it was beneath the dignity

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¹. The Prelude, XIII, 224-236.
of Coleridge to claim any credit on this account. On the contrary, when Wordsworth expressed his intention of acknowledging his indebtedness for the metre to Coleridge in his preface to "The White Doe of Rylstone", while publishing that poem, Coleridge objected to this, on the ground that thereby he would be exposing Scott.

The first meeting of the two poets took place most probably in Bristol in the autumn of 1795. In May 1796, they were already intimate friends, and in June 1797, Coleridge then at Nether Stowey, visited the Wordsworths at Racedown. He was simply charmed on that occasion with the recital by Wordsworth of his two poems, "The Borderers" and "Margaret", the one [thought was absolutely wonderful, and the other superior to anything in the English language. Coleridge's praise of "The Borderers" was not directed to Wordsworth's study of the psychology of crime and suffering, but he recognised the real merit of a poet in it. Also he was able to find [in it Wordsworth's effort to wrench himself free from Godwinism, a disease from which he had also lately suffered. Wordsworth has acknowledged his indebtedness to his sister and to Coleridge in the last book of "The Prelude". He admitted that their devoted affection and Coleridge's faith in his genius were instrumental in restoring him to his normal mental health, but what he did not acknowledge, and what was a much larger contribution by Coleridge was the aid he rendered to his friend in the understanding of the human mind, and specially
his own mind.

Coleridge by this time had earned a name for himself by the publication of his poems and his periodical "The Watchman". Wordsworth, in spite of the publication of the two volumes of poems was yet unknown. But from the moment the two met, Coleridge instinctively recognised the poetic genius of Wordsworth and spared no pains to direct it into the right channel and help it grow to its full stature. In doing this, he did not care for his own reputation. A letter of Coleridge's, written to his friend and publisher Cottle, at this time, reveals a rare attitude of subordination and reverence which he felt for Wordsworth. Referring to "The Borderers" he says,

"Wordsworth has written a tragedy himself. I speak with heartfelt sincerity, and (I think) unblinded judgment when I tell you that I feel a little man by his side, and yet do not think myself the less man than I formerly thought myself".1

On the other hand Wordsworth would hardly pour such unqualified phrases on Coleridge's tragedy "Osorio", the work on which he was then engaged. From now onward, until their relationship partially broke down in 1810, Wordsworth accepted all that Coleridge could give in a most complacent spirit. Coleridge's tremendous faith in the genius of Wordsworth meant a lot, particularly at a critical period of his life, when he had not been able to discover the proper mode of self-expression, nor to gain any reputation as a poet. Coleridge acted as a great publicity officer for the

genius of his friend by virtue of which Wordsworth was able to regain his confidence in his own poetic power, and his reputation among the general reading public was somewhat established.

Racedown was thirty miles from Coleridge's own cottage at Nether Stowey. Coleridge wanted to have Wordsworth and Dorothy nearer at hand, and this desire was reciprocated by the other two, when they visited him in August 1797. Accordingly Coleridge had then settled in the neighbouring countryhouse of Alfoxden, which was only three miles distant from where Coleridge lived. His enthusiasm for Wordsworth fills all the letters: "Wordsworth is a very great man", he wrote to Southey, the only man to whom at all times and in all modes of Excellence I feel myself inferior". 

To Cottle he wrote in the same strain:
"The Giant Wordsworth - God love him! he has written nearly 1200 lines of a blank verse, superior, I hesitate not to aver, to anything in our language which in any way resembles it." 

It was only after his close association with Coleridge that Wordsworth's poetic genius flowered to the full. He was fortunate to come under the influence of one who read only to appreciate what he wrote and to encourage him to write more and more. This period of their friendship was no less beneficial to Coleridge. In the course of one year Coleridge was able to perfect his

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2. Ibid, 239, (Coleridge is here referring to "The Recluse")
intimate and meditative style, and also to effect in his poems, a harmony between the supernatural and the natural. If it was Coleridge who roused Wordsworth to an awareness of his capacities, it was Wordsworth who in his turn aided the manifestation of Coleridge's creative power.

In the days of their intimacy, when Wordsworth had moved from his residence at Racedown to Allfoxden, the poets were very often in daily communion. Frequent discussions there were about poetry and poetic theory; much labour was expended on experimentation with new forms of poetry and efforts were made at collaboration. As a result of all these, a thin anonymous volume entitled "Lyrical Ballads" was published in 1798 in which Coleridge contributed four poems including the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," and the other nineteen were by Wordsworth. The idea of "Lyrical Ballads" took shape in the mind of Coleridge when he listening to "Guilt and Sorrow" at Racedown was thrilled to find in Wordsworth an original gift of communicating the atmosphere of an ideal world to familiar forms and incidents. This is not something new. Other poets have produced similar effects by idealizing their experience, but the speciality of Wordsworth lay in the fact that he was perfectly faithful to his own experience. At this time Coleridge was engaged in finding out how imagination is able to lend an air of reality to the marvellous or the supernatural. So naturally their discussions at Stowey turned to imagination which lends an air of the marvellous
to the real and vice versa. The plan of the book was most probably conceived and designed by Coleridge who had a finer critical acumen than his friend. Accordingly it was decided that a series of poems of two sorts should be composed; the one of common incidents and subjects such as we find in every village, imaginatively apprehended and poetically treated; the other of themes, mainly supernatural, but made real by the dramatic truth of emotions, supposing them real. This was the programme chalked out by Coleridge and was carried out enthusiastically by both.

The imaginative apprehension of experience is the keynote of Romanticism and this finds its first expression in "Lyrical Ballads", though in a different way, in the poems of the two poets. Both were led in their work by the strong conviction that the marvellous and the familiar, the supernatural and the natural, though apparently opposed, are not really so. They are indeed alike but are placed in different atmospheres. By the time "Lyrical Ballads" was published, a full year after the beginning of his intimacy with Coleridge, Wordsworth was able to regain completely his spiritual health. In "Lyrical Ballads" Wordsworth tells us of tragic suffering, but the predominant notes are of joy and happiness. Both poets refer to this as one of their happiest periods. Wordsworth was glad to discover the source of his own power. He did not have to grope in
the dark any more to find out his poetic theme or a language suitable for its expression.

In the Advertisement prefixed to the first edition of "Lyrical Ballads", Wordsworth states the purpose of composing the book:

"The majority of the following poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertaining how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure." Though incidentally he refers to "Ancient Mariner" as written in imitation of the style as well as the spirit of the elder poets, it is quite clear that in the preface, emphasis has been put on Wordsworth's and not Coleridge's poems. The contrast between the aims of the authors was revealed only in 1817 when Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria" was published. It was agreed, he says,

"that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic, .... Mr. Wordsworth on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day life ......... With this view I wrote 'The Ancient Mariner', and was preparing among other poems, ....

The 'Christabel' ..... .... But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of
heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character .... In this form the 'Lyrical Ballads' was published; and was presented by him, as an experiment.\(^1\) Wordsworth failed to appreciate the supreme quality of Coleridge's imagination as unfolded in "The Ancient Mariner". This shows his own limitations.

Sir Herbert Read is of opinion that Coleridge's contribution to the development of Wordsworth's genius may have been large, but it has nothing to do with rousing the poet from a kind of slumber, specially in matters of poetic diction.\(^2\) He bases his argument on the fact that the tone of simplicity and realistic touches in "The Ruined Cottage" appealed greatly to Coleridge who called the poem as "the finest in our language, comparing it with any of the same or similar length.\(^3\) Referring to 'Guilt and Sorrow', Coleridge says:

> "There was here no strained thought, no forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery."\(^4\) What impressed him, he says, "was the union of deep feeling with profound thought, the fine balance of truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere of the ideal world around forms, incidents and situations."\(^5\)

\(^1\) Biographia Literaria, ed. J. Shawcross, 2 vols. London, 1907, II 5-6
\(^3\) Letter to Beaumont, April 3rd, 1815.
\(^4\) Biographia Literaria, Ch.IV, p- 58.
\(^5\) Ibid, p- 59.
poetic diction may be inferred from a comparison between the respective poems contributed by the two poets to the first edition of the 'Lyrical Ballads'. "The Ancient Mariner" is an altogether different story. Apart from this, Coleridge contributed three poems which are of indifferent merit. Whereas a majority of the poems contributed by Wordsworth, corroborate the facts, he stated in his preface to the 'Lyrical Ballads'.

The discussions between Wordsworth and Coleridge were not limited to the 'Lyrical Ballads' only. Of no less importance is the laying out of the design for Wordsworth's philosophical poem 'The Recluse'. In March 1798, Wordsworth mentioned in a letter to his friend (James Tobin) that he had already completed 1,300 lines "of a poem in which I contrive to convey most of the knowledge of which I am possessed. My object is to give pictures of Nature, Man and Society. Indeed I know not anything which will not come within the scope of my plan".  

What Wordsworth intended to accomplish in "The Recluse" is nowhere hinted at in any of his letters or notes. But we find an outline of the plan of the poem in a letter written by Coleridge to Wordsworth in 1815, and again we find a clear exposition of the scheme of "The Recluse" in the "Table Talk".

"Then the plan laid out, and I believe, partly suggested by me, was that Wordsworth should assume the station of a man in mental repose, one whose principles

1. Early letters, 188.
2. Letters of Coleridge II, 648-9
were made up, and so prepared to deliver upon authority a system of philosophy. He was to treat man as man, a subject of eye, ear, touch and taste, in contact with external nature, and informing the senses from the mind, and not compounding a mind out of the senses; then he was to describe pastoral and other states of society, assuming something of the Juvenalian spirit as he approached the high civilization of cities and towns, and opening a melancholy picture of the present state of degeneracy and vice; thence he was to infer and reveal the proof of, and necessity for the whole state of man and society being subject to, and illustrative of, a redemptive process in operation, showing how this idea reconciled all the anomalies, and promised future glory and restoration. Something of this sort was, I think, agreed on. It is in substance what I have been doing all my life in my system of philosophy. This book was never completed. Wordsworth was occupied in composing an autobiographical poem between the winter of 1798 and 1799, which he thought would serve as an introduction to his more ambitious work, and by which he would be able to judge his own powers.

This poem entitled "The Prelude" was completed in 1805 but was published posthumously in 1850. He found the composition of this book an easier task and more to his taste as his mind naturally turned upon itself for its resources. In spite of the repeated entreaties of Coleridge, the poem could not be finished. In 1814, he

1. Table Talk, July 31, 1832.
published "The Excursion", which was to form the second part of the Recluse, but it drifted further away from the original plan. "The Recluse" was an unrealised dream for Wordsworth, the idea of completing it however haunted him through life.

Coleridge had a great notion that Wordsworth possessed a philosophic mind. He declared at a later date that Wordsworth was "a great poet by inspirations, in the moments of revelation, but ................ a thinking feeling philosopher habitually." So much imbued was Coleridge with the idea of the philosopher poet and the great poem that he was capable of composing, that when Wordsworth communicated to Coleridge the plan of "The Prelude" and also his intention of its being addressed to him, Coleridge remarked:

"I long to see what you have been doing. O let it be the tail-piece of 'The Recluse'! for of nothing but 'The Recluse' can I hear patiently. That it is to be addressed to me makes me more desirous that it should not be a poem of itself. To be addressed as a beloved man by a thinker at the close of such a poem as 'The Recluse' ... ... ... is the only event I believe, capable of inciting in me an hour's vanity ... ... ... "

Meantime some important events took place in the lives of these two poets. After living in close contact with each other for one year at Alfoxden and Nether Stowey they set sail for Germany. Wordsworth and his sister were separated from Coleridge and settled

in Goslar a small town, for several months. The flood of Wordsworth's creative activity was in the ascendant once more, and it was at this place that he composed some of his finest poems, including a few fine pieces later on incorporated in 'The Prelude'. On his return, Wordsworth, as has been mentioned in the previous section of this essay, spent a few months in Sockburn with the Hutchinsons and settled late in December in Dove Cottage, Grasmere. Coleridge, a few months after his return from Germany, visited the Wordsworths at Sockburn in October. It is here that he fell hopelessly in love with Sara, the younger sister of Mary Hutchinson. From Sockburn, Coleridge was taken on a tour of the Lake Country by Wordsworth, after which the former returned to London. But he would not be separated from his "god Wordsworth" for long. A suitable residence was found for Coleridge at Greta Hall, Keswick, only thirteen miles away from Grasmere.

Coleridge gave an acute analysis of the character of Wordsworth in a letter he wrote to Poole:

"My many weaknesses are of some advantage to me; they unite me more with the great mass of my fellow-beings - but dear Wordsworth appears to me to have hurtfully segregated and isolated his Being. Doubtless his delights are more deep and sublime; but he has likewise more hours, that prey on his flesh and blood."  

Poor Coleridge! in spite of the accuracy of this analysis, he was unable to foresee that his

2. Letters of Coleridge, I, 246.
affection and sympathy were not to be reciprocated. It was not that Wordsworth did not have any affection for Coleridge, but he could not certainly give his friend the love that he received from the other, and born as it was out of idolatry and herc–worship.

"Lyrical Ballads" which was published anonymously was attributed to Coleridge and a favourable review of the poem appeared in the 'British Critic'. Wordsworth requested his friend not to contradict the statement as he thought that no better fate could befall the poems, for Coleridge was a writer with some reputation, whereas Wordsworth's name was not known to many. Meantime "The Ancient Mariner" was severely criticised by Southey in the "Critical Review". Wordsworth first thought of not including the poem in the second edition of "Lyrical Ballads", but on second thought he requested his friend to make certain changes in the poem to suit the popular taste, which Coleridge did. But Wordsworth was not content with Coleridge's revision and he publicly defamed him by printing a note in the 'Lyrical Ballads' to justify its inclusion adopting a patronizing attitude towards it. It was planned first that "Christabel" would be included in the enlarged edition of "Lyrical Ballads". It was running up to 1300 lines and Wordsworth who had great admiration for the poem thought it improper to publish any book in his own name in which such a great contribution was made by some other person. But

besides this, there were other reasons also. The poem was not in accordance with *fixes* the purpose, for which 'Lyrical Ballads' was first written. So ultimately it was decided that "Christabel" should not be included. Wordsworth's disregard for "The Ancient Mariner" and "Christabel" had a very adverse effect upon the productivity of Coleridge.

Once "Christabel" was taken out of "Lyrical Ballads" there was no point in preserving its anonymous character in the second edition. The new poems except "Love" were Wordsworth's. Most of the poems written in Germany and the shorter poems written in Grasmere were included in the second Volume of the book. The reason for an anonymous publication was that Wordsworth became shrewder by this time and he was interested in the sale of his books and the income it would bring. And he thought the policy adopted by him in this matter would bear fruit, for people were under the impression that "Lyrical Ballads" had been composed by Coleridge.

The second edition of "Lyrical Ballads" succeeded in a way in establishing the reputation of Wordsworth as a poet, for which Coleridge's enthusiasm was no less responsible. Wordsworth's famous preface was added to it, in which he propounded a theory of *poetry* explaining the reasons of his departure from the *poetry* of his age. With the publication of the book in January 1801, Wordsworth's position was secure, whereas Coleridge was now a broken man.
The man who could spawn plans like a herring lost all confidence in his own power and in 1802 appeared one of the saddest poems from his pen "Ode to Dejection".

The third edition of "Lyrical Ballads" appeared in 1802. In it Wordsworth enlarged upon his Preface and added an Appendix to it on poetic diction. By this time both the poets came to realize a great divergence in their opinion in matters of poetic theory and poetic diction. So Coleridge undertook to compose an essay enumerating therein his own theory of poetry, but this essay, like his other poems, could not be brought to a finish. He however expressed his objections to the critical statements of Wordsworth in his letters. In one such letter he says:

"Although Wordsworth's essay is half a child of my own brain . . . . . . (I am speaking of the Preface as it stood in the second Volume (Edition), yet I am far from going all lengths with Wordsworth. He has written lately a number of poems . . . . . . . the greater number of these very excellent compositions, but here and there a daring humbleness of language and versification and a strict adherence to matter of fact, even to prolixity that startled me."

The step that Coleridge took in settling down in Greta Hall against the wishes of Mrs. Coleridge and his other benefactors proved fatal to his health. But this he did in order to be nearer his god Wordsworth. Both Dorothy

1. Letters of Coleridge I, 386-7
and Wordsworth were much concerned about his health. Coleridge went to Malta to recoup his health but came back from there in August 1806 ill and penniless. A reunion took place between him and the Wordsworths at an inn in Kendal. Two months after this meeting they met again in Colarton, Leicestershire. It was here that "The Prelude" was read aloud by Wordsworth to his friend. Coleridge was so much arrested by its beauty that he composed a poem on that occasion entitled "To William Wordsworth", wherein he paid a high tribute to Wordsworth's poetic genius in these lines -

"O great Bard!... . . . . .
With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
Of ever enduring men."

He admired this poem up to the last day of his life. A few years before his death he said:

"I cannot help regretting that Wordsworth did not first publish his thirteen books on the growth of an individual mind. . . . . . . You may judge how I felt about them by my own poem on the occasion."¹ "The Prelude" that was read out was the 1805 version which was first published by professor de Selincourt in 1926. In this version Coleridge has been called "The most loving soul" and the "gentle spirit". But when this poem appeared in 1850, after the death of Wordsworth, all such references were deleted, as a result of their changed feeling towards each other at a later period of their lives.

¹ Table Talk, II, 70.
The easy familiarity between the Wordsworths and Coleridge could not be revived. Wordsworth became more and more conscious of the shortcomings of his friend and began to pass moral judgment on him. Coleridge's lack of will power and inability to arrive at any decision regarding his own family matters disgusted Wordsworth. Coleridge wanted to break up his connection with Mrs. Coleridge and to arrive at a satisfactory settlement with Sara, but he failed to do so. The Wordsworths returned to Grasmere after paying a short visit to Coleridge in London, though they still held Coleridge's intellectual powers in high esteem.

From August 1808 till October 1810, Coleridge very often became an inmate of the Wordsworth household. He planned for the issue of a periodical "The Friend", which he thought would give some relief to Wordsworth in financial matters. But Wordsworth was not very hopeful about it. In spite of Wordsworth's diffidence, "The Friend" was published and continued to make its regular appearance up to the twenty-seventh number. This indifference of his friends towards his work was been pathetically described in a letter:

"From the beginning . . . . . nothing but cold water, or what is far worse, very cold praise had been bestowed on it by my friends, even by Southey and Wordsworth", but still he did not know that the Wordsworths had adopted an altogether changed attitude towards

him. In May 1810, he left Grasmere to join his family at Greta Hall.

Immediately after Coleridge had left for Greta Hall, an open breach between the two poets took place through the tale bearing of Basil Montagne, Coleridge suffered from indignation and sorrow as he had never suffered before.

In 1812, a partial reconciliation took place between the two friends through the mediation of other friends. Mentioning this incident Coleridge wrote to Poole:

"You perhaps, may . . . . . have heard . . . of the year-long difference between me and Wordsworth - compared with sufferings of which all former Afflictions of my Life were less than Flea-bites . . . . . . A reconciliation has taken place - but the feeling. . . . . . .

After 15 years of such religious, almost Superstitious, Idolatry and self-sacrifice - O No! O No! that I fear never can return. All outward actions, all inward wishes, all thoughts and Admirations, will be the same - are the same - but aye there remains an immedicable But."\textsuperscript{1}

In another letter he writes:

"Alas! during the prime manhood of my intellect I had nothing but cold water thrown on my efforts! . . . . . . I have loved with enthusiastic self-oblivion those who have been so well pleased that, I should year after year, flow with a hundred nameless Hills

\textsuperscript{1} Letters of Coleridge, II, 612.
into their Main Stream, that they could find nothing but cold praise and effective discouragement of every attempt of mine to roll onward in a distinct current of my own - who admitted that the Ancient Mariner, the Christabel, the Remorse, and some pages of the Friend are not without merit, but were abundantly anxious to acquit their judgments of my blindness to the very numerous defects. Yet they know that to Praise as mere Praise, I was characteristically, almost constitutionally indifferent."¹

But this proved to be beneficial to Coleridge in the long run. It was after the breach, between the years 1813 and 1818, that eight major works of Coleridge were published.

In 1814 Wordsworth published "The Excursion" which, he added in a preface, formed the second part of the projected philosophical poem, "The Recluse". He anxiously waited for Coleridge's criticism which was sent to him in reply to a letter written by him. Coleridge remarked in it that

"Comparatively with . . . . . (The Prelude)
'The Excursion" as far as it was new to me, had disappointed my expectations."²

In this chapter I have dwelt at full length upon the relationship of Wordsworth with Coleridge. As Wordsworth's poetic genius flowered the most during the period of their intimacy, it may become difficult for us to understand Wordsworth's real approach to Nature.

1. Letters of Coleridge, II, 696-7
without understanding the true relationship that existed between the two. I have abstained in this chapter from discussing Wordsworth's indebtedness to Coleridge for his philosophical ideas, as I propose to do so in the succeeding chapters while analyzing Wordsworth's nature-philosophy.