Chapter : 2.

Different interpretations of the conception of man.

A study of the growth and development of man from his origin to the present state through different interpretations of the concept of man is indispensable for a comprehensive idea of Wordsworth's attitude to the common man. The history of creation says that the material world is a rational Universe and it is the creation of an Absolute Power, which is eternal reason, as a consequence of mysterious scientific actions and reactions of organic and inorganic phenomena through innumerable processes ad infinitum. So the universe is a moral order administered by laws inherent within itself. Man emerged in the world against such a background out of the primordial substances, and was endowed with mind which was the outcome of an organised development of matter. As a corollary to the evolutionary process of body-physique, nervous system and subsequent control of brain, thereupon emerged and the course of evolution had its culmination in man with his power of perception, ego and consciousness.

Now, an analysis of the concept of man in general from various viewpoints is necessary for an idea of Wordsworth's conception of the common man. The points of analysis are as follows:

1) theological,
2) sociological,
3) historical,
4) philosophical, and
5) dialectical.
Theology, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, passes from God to facts. It is the science of God, the world-soul. So theology conceives God as absolute, divine and majestic. His intelligence and knowledge are all-pervasive. He is the architect of all the branches of knowledge and His will is supreme and no law of causation can jeopardise the supremacy of divine desire. His actions are consistent with His will or desire. The phenomenal world and all ideas are in His creative intelligence, which proves that He proceeded rationally in creating the world. He is one and many, changing and changeless.

The universe is the creation of His sweet will. He is indivisible, but, as if, divided in beings. This division is the consequence of evolution of His Supreme Being. His creative energy never ceases to function and creation continues, though a particular aspect of creation comes to an end at a particular point. God created time and space before this world came into existence. So the creation has the beginning and the created things are finite and subject to different phenomenal influences which may lead to ultimate decay and destruction. So in one sense the creation is not eternal.

God is an extremist and man on earth is the manifestation of this extremity, because he is endowed with certain senses - the culture and development of which make him achieve an astounding majesty of corporeal aspects and unfathomable serenity of mind, which leads to the suprarational ultimatum of life. Achievement of psychic sagacity develops a sixth sense in him and man attains the mystic intuition congenial for, and beneficial to, his ultimate sublimation in his divine origin. In such a state man
becomes God - complete and absolute, and we can echo Hamlet to describe the magnitude of dignity and magnificence of excellence of man:

What a piece of work is a man / How noble in reason / how infinite in faculties / in form and moving, how express and admirable / in action, how like an angel / in apprehension, how like a god / the beauty of the world / the paragon of animals /

(Hamlet, Act 2, scene ii.)

The sociological interpretation of the concept of man says that man is a social animal and sociology is but a comprehensive philosophical anthropology which deals with the knowledge of man as psycho-physical individual. Anthropology is the science of man and philosophical-anthropology is that branch of knowledge which envisages the concept of being and affords the opportunity to analyse man as an individual. The individual is a fiction and in reliance upon this concept of individuality, the society is some amorphous organism which came into existence as a natural evolution, consistent with the creation of man. So the fundamental concept of society is that man created society and he goes before society in time, position, rank, importance. Man on earth is an individual entity. His appearance was not an end in itself, rather it involved a vast dynamism for his growth and progress. To reach the culmination of development man created society. This development concerns not only the material necessity of man's life but also the aesthetic and spiritual
quest which emerge in him as an eventuality of his possession of supranational conscience. Again, man as an individual, is not capable of waging war for his material progress and survival, the organisation of the society resulted in man's combined efforts for his benefits and protection.

Thus the logical view of the origin of the society is that man created it for his own advantages and as a result social organisation should be helpful to every man, because an individual for the manifestation of all the qualities and potentialities inherent in him requires it. So there should be a relationship between society and man, because each and every individual is the offspring of a social relationship, itself determined by pre-established mores. Further, every person, as man or women, is essentially a term in a relationship. The individual is neither the beginning nor the end, but a link in the succession of life. This is a sociological as well as biological truth. (1) So, society grew out of the necessity for the establishment of integrity and cohesion in man's life — external and internal, material and spiritual. The theory is not only logically consistent but also empirically demonstrable.

The historical concept of man provides the framework of objective analysis of human experience and human phenomena for the transformation of the world-process into the ideal of humanity. So, in accordance with the principles of history, God manifests

(1) Society — An Introductory Analysis.
Himself in Nature and man and His creation is the means for His end which finds its culmination in the development of man in every sphere of life, corporeal and material, aesthetic and spiritual— for the accomplishment of the ideal of humanity through the process of history.

Rousseau, who is the pioneer of the Romantic Movement, perceives history as the history of 'Romantic Revival'. Rousseau had an unquestionable faith in God and his conception of history illustrates that God created man as free, innocent and good. Virtues and vices are not inherent in him, but originate in man from social and other political ingredients and consequently, he advocates the theory of the perfection of man.

Man is endowed with impulses and capacities congenial to the preservation of his self. He possesses sympathy for fellow men and his actions are motivated by religious and aesthetic instincts. Rousseau expounds "the worth and dignity of man as man", and attempts "to construct politics on the basis of the principle that every man has equal and inalienable rights". Rousseau's conception is positivism. He does not advocate the theory, 'return to nature', by altogether denouncing civilisation and its related values, but suggests means for remodelling the society to maintain its democratic character to ensure social justice. He probed into the cause of the origin and growth of man and society, comprehended the futility of so-called civilisation and uncongeniality of its attendant vices, and laid the

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(2) The Age of Wordsworth.
C.H. Herford.
London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd. 1960. p. XVI.

(3) loc. cit.
foundation-stone of historical revival. So, Prof. Herford appears to be perfectly right when he says, "Rousseau's invectives against the intrusive civilization which perverts the natural man, concealed a profound instinctive sense that human nature contains the germ of whatever man is destined to become—that man grows by development, not by aggregation". (4)

Hegel interprets history in terms of ideas and the Hegelian doctrine of history says that God and the world are simultaneous. God is living and the world is the manifestation of his living spirit and moving reason. Man is God's consciousness in the world, and is the manifestation of the Absolute, which becomes self-conscious through him.

Marx's philosophy of history is opposite to that of Hegel. He thinks that man came on earth as a result of the 'inevitability' of matter through an evolutionary process and consequently, it is not spirit but matter that is the driving-force for the creation of man.

So, whatever may be the form of the concept of the origin of mankind, the historical interpretation of man provides an explanation of human phenomena for the assertion of the world-process which culminates into human destiny through human history.

The philosophical conception of man reveals the truth of the origin, growth and development of human being as being, and provides an idea of the mystery of creation for the attainment of final salvation in life of man through transformation of the material existence into spiritual being. Man is always in quest

(4) : op. cit.  p. 36.
of finding out the truth of himself and also of his existence individually and collectively to discover the mystery of the universe and to attain supreme serenity of mind through his knowledge. But an individual, seeking for the law of his being, should realise that the fulfilment of the individual depends not only on the development of physical well-being or mental force but also on the flowering of the divine in him for the perception of the beauty and delight in existence. Thus the main theme of the philosophical concept of man centres round the absolute realisation of the inner-self of man through cultivation of the finer elements of mind far above the search of pleasure or the fear of pain. This is the philosophy of discovery of his own-self and of the world-self for the attainment of the state of sublimation with the eternal spirit of the existential contents of life.

Lastly, the dialectical concept of man enables to establish the existence of the world vis-a-vis man's relation with it. The common theme of the dialectical method shows that one process follows the other and begets a contradictory one with which it may be unified to form another process. Everything is subject to change and to pass over to opposite, and contains in itself the seeds of impulse to contradict and to transcend itself. So, the dialectical method is the logical method of exposing thoughts, and if this method is accurately carried, it will be identical with the process of the world and will enable man to think God's thoughts after him. It is in reliance on this basic concept that man involves himself in a perpetual conflict through contraries, to maintain his existence unto the last for the accomplishment of finality in the world of reality.
Hegelian conception of dialectics is idealistic. Hegel believes that history is a process of production and everything is produced by process of contradiction, - higher and lower. That which was explicit in the higher becomes implicit in the lower and vice versa. So contradiction is the root of the creation of the world and man thereupon. God becomes aware of his consciousness through this process. God becomes aware of himself means that He becomes conscious of Himself as an Infinite Being or that He is the Spirit of all reality. The process of consciousness reaches its apex when Spirit beholds the Absolute totality of creation as Spirit and thus achieves complete self-realisation in the knowledge of itself as Absolute Being. This is the scientific demonstration of the entire process of the world and history. The self-realisation of God is the self-realisation of humanity.

Marxian dialectics, on the contrary, tends to interpret the world and man in a "continual process of mutual adaptation",(5) and sets man in a perpetual struggle against the adversaries of the world with the existing conditions of life for the achievement of victory in the world of materialism.

Thus the dialectical conception of man relates to the process of evolution of human consciousness and the finality of life of man with his tendencies — idealistic and materialistic — through contradictions.

(5) : A History of Western Philosophy.
Bertrand Russell.
Now, a critical analysis of the different interpretations of the conception of man shows that man is the finest creation of God, and remains supreme under any condition, perpetuating his existence in the universe against the background of the existing conditions which contain in themselves misery and misfortune, destitution and desolation, despair and destruction, and in few cases delight and gaiety, joy and pleasure. Theological and social laws, historical and philosophical principles and dialectical doctrines bring to light the real shape and condition of man, and reveal the history of man's involvement in the world of reality from origin to end. Wordsworth knows these doctrinal principles relating to the origin, development and finality of the life of man and the related phenomena, and is capable of perceiving him in his existent reality within the realm of his justness and exactness, and the poet's realisation reaches the zenith of appreciation in the revelation of his common men and women with their particular and salient feature throughout his poetik.