



CHAPTER V

*Wordsworth as the
Poet of Child-Life*

WORDSWORTH AS THE POET OF CHILD-LIFE

William Wordsworth has a high opinion of childhood. He has a great love for children, the glimpses of which we find in the poems concerning to child life. He has composed a good number of poems in which children have been treated poetically. Wordsworth loves children and has treated them in his poems, because their hearts are the seats of noble human qualities- love, innocence, courage, fearlessness, bravery, capacities to feel joys and sorrows over petty things, but only for a short while. He also loves them because they are visionaries whose "fancies" [i.e. visions] from afar are bought. Over and above, he loves them and has placed them in the centre of many of his poems because they are "darling of Nature", and in them he traces "the primary laws" of Human Nature, which is his aim.

Wordsworth comes to believe in the doctrine of Memories of Pre-natal Existence, he begins to glorify the child first as the visionary in communion with Nature, and then as a mighty prophet and blessed seer of God. He gives us the impression that the child's soul is in direct communion with God, When it is lost in its visions. His glorification of the child is due to his belief in the doctrine of childhood memories.

Children attracts him by virtue of their certain peculiar, admirable, qualities. Children have boundless love for their fellow creatures. Children are satisfied with their lot; or rather they get lost in the play-things around them and desire for nothing else.

I would like to start this chapter with the inclusion of 'We are Seven' as a first poem in which the poet presents the innocence quality of a girl. Wordsworth says that a child who knows nothing, whose life is full of ease and who has an experience of the activity of life in every part of its body cannot understand what death is. She is only eight years old. Her simple beauty pleases him. The poet feels joy to see the beauty of the girl. The poet asks her how many sisters and brothers they are. She answers that they are seven brothers and sisters. The poet requests the girl to tell him where her brothers and sisters are. She replies that they are seven; And two of them live at Conway while two of her brothers and sisters have gone to sea.

"And where are they? I pray you tell"

She answered, "Seven are we",
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea."¹

She says that two, a sister and a brother they are in the churchyard. There is a cottage near the churchyard. There she lives with her mother-

"Two of us in the churchyard lie,
 My sister and my brother;
 And, in the churchyard cottage, I
 Dwell near them with my mother".²

The girl tells the poet about her brothers and sisters. But poet is troubled by the account given by her and asks her to explain it. The poet says that according to her, two of them live at Conway, while two are gone to sea. Yet she says that they are seven. He exclaims how it is possible that they are still seven brothers and sisters. The poet asks her to tell him how they are seven. So the little girl replies again. She says that they are seven boys and girls. Of them two lie in the churchyard under the churchyard tree-

"Then did the little Maid reply,
 "Seven boys and girls are we;
 Two of us in the churchyard lie,
 Beneath the churchyard tree".³

The girl does not know that the two lie in the churchyard under the churchyard tree are dead. The poet tries to show her the truth. He says that she runs here and there; her limbs have life in them. In this stanza he clearly says if two of her brothers and sisters lie in the churchyard below the churchyard tree, they are dead. They are not seven. Therefore their number is just five-

"You run about, my little Maid,
 Your limbs they are alive;
 If two are in the churchyard laid,
 Then ye are only five."⁴

The poet tells her that they are only five brothers and sisters, because one brother and one sister are dead. But his point makes no difference to her. She talks about her dead brother and sister, whose graves are green. They are about twelve steps from her mother's door; one can see their graves. Both the graves are side by side. She often goes there with her stockings. She sits there and knits her stockings. Or she hems her handkerchief there. She sits on the ground and sings songs. She does not sing for herself; perhaps she sings to her dead brother and sister. She feels that they listen to her song. She tells him

that often when the sun sets and it is light and fair, she goes there. She takes here little soup basin there and eats her food near the graves of her brother and sister. It seems that sitting near the graves she does not feel lonely. She sits there, sings and eats her supper there. She tells the poet about the first to die is her sister. Her name is Jane. She is in a very painful condition. In her bed she lay crying with pain. At last God sets her free from her pain. Then she dies and goes away. She is buried in the churchyard and when the grass is dry she and her brother John use to go there. These two use to play there round Jane's grave. She tells the poet about the death of her brother John. She and John use to play round Jane's grave in the winter when the ground is white with snow and she is able to run and move smoothly on the snow. But her brother John is compelled to go; he dies. His grave is near the grave of Jane. The girl does not use the word dead or burried for her brother and sister. This proves her point, she does not think that they are dead.

After a long silence, the poet speaks to her. He again asks her about their number. He says if two are in Heaven how many brothers and sisters they are. The little girl again replies with some impatience that they are seven-

"How many are you, then", said I,
 "If they two are in heaven?"
 Quick was the little Maid's reply,
 "O Master! we are seven".⁵

The girl does not think her brother and sister dead. She always says that they are seven. The poet, now, clearly says that those two are dead. He repeats himself that they are no more. Their souls are in Heaven. But the girl does not understand. She is not effected by his words: she stresses her point and says that they are seven-

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
 Their spirits are in heaven!"
 It was throwing words away, for still,
 The little Maid would have her will,
 And said, "Nay, we are Seven!"⁶

This poem shows the girl's innocence and simplicity. The poet rightly remarks about a simple child eight years old; it seems true that she does not know about death. Wordsworth

attributes importance to an ordinary subject. This is the characteristic of Wordsworth as a romantic poet. Here too this high-priest of Nature hints that the girl is so innocent because she lives in the lap of Nature; she is a cottage girl with a rustic, woodland air. The poem, on the whole, is as charming as the simple child.

Next to 'We are Seven' 'The Blind Highland Boy' is taken up for discussion. This poem bears the story of a high land boy who is born far far away under hills is deprived of eye-sight. He is unable to see the earthly sight, the stars, the night, trees, flowers and other beautiful things created in the creation:

"He ne, er had seen one earthly sight;
 The sun, The day; The Stars, The night;
 Or tree, or butterfly, or flower
 Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
 Or woman, man, or child".⁷

Such a Blind boy remains untouched by the melancholic notions and helpless conditions. He is assisted by God who

stands as his guardian. The boy is accorded joy of which no body is aware of. The surrounding of the cottage where the blind boy is living, brings actually a note of solitariness. It is build just near the shore which is constantly dashed by the waves of lake. William Wordsworth further describes the arrival of ships and boats through the woods and lofty rocks along with tales of distant lands for the shepherds and their flocks.

The Blind Highland Boy is keen enough to participate in each and every activity taking place at that lonely place-

And of those tales, what e,er they were,
The blind Boy always had his shore;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales,
With warmer suns and softer gales,
Or wonders of the Deep."⁸

Besides the boy is always paying his attention towards the shouting around the shore. He has ceaselessly heard the bustle of mariners in a quiet as well as in tempestuous atmosphere-

"Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
 When from the water-side he heard,
 The shouting, and the jolly cheers;
 The bustle of the mariners
 In stillness or in storm."⁹

In this condition the blind boy is living there in the protection of his mother. One day in one of vessels of his own he goes away with the mighty waves of sea. The boy here creates a grim and hopeless situation. He has expected to have lost his life and met an unthinkable doom. But he launches stoutly on a shore. He visits a particular place very often and -

"While there he sate, alone and blind,
 That story flashed upon his mind;-
 A bold thought roused him, and he took
 The shell from out, its secret nook
 And bore it on his head".¹⁰

The Blind Highland Boy inspite of his poverty and misery is adventurous. After reaching the shore he still is full of courage.

Once he is rapidly driven by the waves silently. He is chased by many boat men to be recovered and brought out of the jaws of death. The Blind Boy is rescued and brought to the shore. The mother weeps many times; when he comes again to his home. The whole of the poem presents pathos and unhappy story of the boy. He is living at a lonely place in full reconciliation with the shore-

"Thus, after he had fondly braved
 The perilous Deep, The Boy was saved;
 And, though his fancies had been wild,
 Yet he was pleased and reconciled.
 To live in peace on shore,
 And in the lonely Highland dell
 Still do they keep the Turtle-shell,
 and long the story will repeat
 Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
 And how he was preserved".¹¹

Next to 'The Blind Highland Boy' are the Lucy poems which I shall include in this chapter for discussion. Lucy poems of

Wordsworth provide a fine illustration of loneliness. These poems depict such characters who do not develop due to the tender care and support of human beings. No social norms determine their life-range. Lucy is also a nature spirit and a real woman beloved by Wordsworth.¹² William Wordsworth has composed three of four Lucy poems in Germany in 1799, specially at the time when he is disappointed by some fatal event.¹³ The poet very humbly records Lucy as such a character whose dwelling is secluded and she bears no link with the busy world. The poet himself during his stay in Germany feels the absence of Coleridge and is also isolated from his daily life.

He is deeply distressed over the consideration of his boyhood days. In such a mood the poet starts to compose Lucy Gray, and other poems of Lucy group. It slightly differs from other poems of this group. It is just in the nature of a real incident that Dorothy meets in her own childhood at Holifax. Wordsworth seems to say something personal. The poet happens to meet a solitary child of whom he has heard before. She is living at such a place where no man is able to reach. Lucy is alienated from her father and mother and also from her dwelling place specially at the time of storm. Everything for Lucy is solitary i.e. the world,

the society the crowd of people, the dins and bustles of city life. The place of Lucy's dwelling is cut off from every kind of link and it is situated near by the land which is thoroughly swampy and marshy. There seems to be a difference of the distance of relation in the poem which finds an expression from the pen of the poet. Lucy undoubtedly due to her lonely dwelling at a secluded place unfolds the separation of the poet from some body whom he loves dearly. Wordsworth seems to meet the lonely child and he for that is found very much curious. He for this purpose crosses the wild and goes to her dwelling place which far far away from human world. Here the poet seems to keep in his mind his daughter Caroline. This is because of the word child which in every sense marks the age of Lucy not more than seven years. As the composition occurs in 1799 so it is very much suitable to believe that the poet at this time is very much conscious of his daughter. His departure from France in 1792 and the year of composition of the poem if these are calculated we can say that Lucy of the poem is nobody but his daughter Caroline who is living at the distance of so many miles. There is an expression of his deep and sincere feelings of separation and also his anguish that Lucy does not know about any friend. Caroline takes her birth after two months when he drags to England by the chain of

harsh compulsions. The poet happens to meet after a long gap to Annette Vellan and Caroline specially in the accompaniment of his sister Dorothy Wordsworth :-

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 -The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door!¹⁴

'Lucy Gray' is a personal poem with a personal theme. The loss of life of Lucy in the storm is very much similar to the death of his daughter Caroline whom he has left away with her mother. This poem appeared in the year 1815 with an added title Lucy Gray. This poem describes the bravery and devotion of a small girl Lucy Gray who is a lovely child. She is the only child of her parents. She is a lovely and dutiful daughter. She dies while she is doing the duty assigned to her by her father.

The poet says that after he has heard of Lucy Gray; One day he crosses the wild area at the time of rising of the sun. By chance he sees Lucy. The poet tells us that Lucy lives a lonely

life. She lives on a wide open area with her parents. She is very beautiful. The poet thinks that she is the most beautiful child which he has ever seen in any human family.

The poet says that in the wild area among the mountains one can see the activities of nature going on. One can see the young one of the deer playing. One can also see the hare playing on the green lawn. But the sweet face of Lucy Gray will never be seen again. He wants to say that Lucy is no more in this world. She has died-

"You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen."¹⁵

She is always ready to do what her parents ask her to do. One day Lucy's father is talking to her. He says that the night is expected to be stormy. Lucy's mother has gone to the town. He asks Lucy to take a lantern and guide her mother through the snow back to the house. Lucy gladly agrees to do the duty assigned to her. She says that it is scarcely afternoon at that

time. The clock of the church has struck two. The moon is still far away. There is enough time. So she would gladly go and guide her mother through the snow. In these lines we can see the dutiful nature of Lucy Gray.

Lucy takes a lighted lantern and goes in the snow. She is fast and active like a roe. She walks fast in the snow. Due to the strokes of her feet the powdery snow scattered around her feet, like smoke-

- and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.
Not blither is the mountain roe,
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke."¹⁶

The poet tells us the misfortune of the little girl, Lucy. She goes out to guide her mother through the snow. But unfortunately, the storm comes before its time. She loses her way in the snow. She climbs many hills but could not reach the town.

When she does not return, her parents become worried. They search for her the whole night. They shouted her name everywhere, but there is no sound nor sight which could tell them about Lucy. In these lines we see the plight of the poor parents who are worried about the safety of their little daughter-

"The storm came on before its time;
 She wandered up and down;
 And many a hill did Lucy climb;
 But never reached the town.
 The wretched parents all that night
 Went shouting far and wide;
 But there was neither sound nor sight
 To serve them for a guide."¹⁷

The parents of Lucy are very sad to think the condition of Lucy. Lucy has not returned home. Lucy has caught in the storm. Lucy does not return home because of storm. Her parents search for her all the night. In the morning they stand on a hill from where the wide moor is visible. They see the wooden bridge on a stream which is a furlong away from their home. They lose

all hope of Lucy and started weeping. As they are about to turn homeward, Lucy's mother sees a print of Lucy's feet in the snow. That gives them some hope and they resume their search for her. The footmarks go through the broken hedge and along the stone wall. The marks are present in the open field also. They follow the footprints and thus come to the wooden bridge which is one furlong away from their house. They follow the footprints further on the bridge. After some time, they reach the middle of the bridge. There are no footprints after that. Thus it is clear that Lucy has fallen off the bridge into the stream and dies.

Beautiful and dutiful little girl Lucy dies as she falls into the stream from the wooden bridge. But some people believes that Lucy is still alive. They think that one can still see Lucy wandering in the wild region all alone. She walks hurriedly on the rough and smooth ways and never looks behind her. That solitary girl sings a lonely song which echoes in the wind. Thus the poet believes that Lucy has not died but lives on-

"Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray

Upon the lonesome wild.
O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind."¹⁸

The poet's greatness lies in arousing in readers the noblest feelings and thoughts of life. In this poem, Lucy becomes a symbol of innocence. She is as refreshing as fresh air. She symbolizes man's harmonious relationship with nature. After her death she becomes one with nature and her spirit still walks among the hills. Lucy is also a symbol of solitude, silence and loneliness.

Next poem 'She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways' records the secluded dwelling unnoticed growth and unknown death of Lucy. In Lucy gray the whole story is told with a great compassion and intensity.¹⁹ William Wordsworth has ushered in the positive and negative ideas about Lucy. Her place of dwelling is untrodden by human feet. She is absolutely alienated from society and other things. Lucy's presence beside the springs of dove suggests that she is totally untouched by worldly things.

She is thoroughly pure and holy in every sense and gets no praises of her beauty. Again the division, that the private world is full of aspirants who always are attempting to be praised unfolds that Lucy is without any aspiration. Here, in the private world the praise is something desired but is not easy to get over and above all Lucy is completely secluded and she does not like the worldly appreciation. Lucy remains unnoticed and place of her dwelling is unmarked till the end of this world. The whole poem is charged with the compassion of the poet towards Lucy-

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A Maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love:²⁰

Lucy who figures here is like Caroline whom Wordsworth leaves and does not hope to meet her in near future. Caroline is always in his mind whom he does not see after 1792. The sympathy of William Wordsworth towards stones is also manifested and it is almost very much significant because the

mossy stones found beside Lucy's place of dwelling indicate her total separateness from the enchanting things of this world. The atmosphere of the place where Lucy lives is full of grief and unhappiness.

Lucy dies and remains unknown till her death. Lucy is the scene of whole evening, the symbolic aggrandisement of Lucy and the sublimity, it confers upon her, react upon the poem's conclusion and it is their combination that converts the near pathos of the last line in its perfect pathos. But the sublimity and pathos are in a sense by products and, she dwelt among untrodden ways, seems to be saying as a poem and the ideas in which we keep violets and stars, our private life and public life need to be broken down in the interest of higher reality. It is no longer becomes a poem of higher love or human death. It can be asserted confidently that the poem only revolves around the lonely dwelling of Lucy who in every sense is deeply related to the poet. The utterance, beside the springs of Dove makes it clear that Lucy is perfectly pure and innocent. We can very well link it to Caroline who is always patted by Annette Vollan when she has over cried for the fulfilment of her child-like desires. Annette vollan in her letter has communicated that the grief for Caroline

is due to her over confidence in William Wordsworth whom she could not see for the last eight years. There is also another separation for William Wordsworth specially from his sister for further nine years. The death of Lucy and her burial seems to be only a product of his imagination. As he has done always so he does here also and kills the object he loves.

'The Education of Nature' also consists the description of Lucy. In this poem the poet describes about a girl known to him after three years of her life. Lucy of this poem is an orphan and helpless girl whom nature adopts and takes the responsibility of providing her all necessary things which are very much essential for her growth and development. The poet describes Lucy unprotected, unsupported and her life for three years has passed under sky. Her early phases of life are miserable and tiresome. Lucy as the poet finds is like a flower which is the most beautiful and is only one of its kind in the whole lap of Nature.

Nature wishes to educate Lucy: Nature wants to use her own scheme for the education of Lucy. The pattern which Nature adopts is quite different from the modern education in the town and cities. Nature wants to become the guardian of Lucy. Nature regards her the most lovely and charming child. Nature expresses

her desire to adopt Lucy as her own child. She wishes to bring her up under own care and supervision and decides to give her best education and make her a grownup lady-

"There years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own."²¹

Nature says to herself that she will herself be the ruling force and the inspiring influence to her darling, Lucy. Nature decides that Lucy will wander and roam at her free will in the midst of mountains and plains on earth and heavens, in the open space in a wood and the shady places among trees. Nature feels that she shall be like a Supervisor to Lucy and teach her which natural instincts Lucy should suppress and which she should express.

Nature hopes that Lucy will be as joyful as the young deer that leaps joyfully over grassy plots or upon the mountains. Lucy will enjoy soothing and fragrant breezes and the silence and calmness of those aspects of Nature which appear to be silent and without feeling. In fact, living in the midst of objects of Nature Lucy will enjoy their sweet fragrance and their peaceful atmosphere. Thus their sweet fragrance and peaceful quality will become part and parcel of Lucy's personality and temperament-

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
 That wild with glee across the lawn
 Or up the mountain springs;
 And hers shall be the breathing balm
 And hers the silence and the calm
 Of mute insensate things."²²

Nature declares firmly to take charge of the upbringing of Lucy. Nature expects that the clouds moving in the sky will give dignity and majesty to Lucy. The willow plant which is famous for its suppleness and grace, will bend low to develop suppleness and grace in Lucy. The rhythm of the storm will quietly and

invisibly pass into Lucy's figure and will teach elegance of Lucy. Thus Lucy will owe some part of her grace to the willow plants, and some part of her grace to the rhythm of storm. Nature will ensure the proper physical development of Lucy-

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
 To her : for her the willow bend;
 Nor shall she fail to see
 Even in the motions of the strom
 Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
 By silent sympathy".²³

Nature develops a moral sense in man, and lends her own grace and charm to the body of a human being. Lucy will gaze at the beauty of the stars in the sky at mid-night. Lucy will be happy to listen to the music of the waters flowing merrily and rhythmically at their will in an irregular manner. Thus the company of Nature will contribute towards the physical charm of Lucy.

Wordsworth says firmly that in the lap of Nature Lucy will experience the feelings of joy and Lucy gets strength and vigour by this feelings. Life-giving and invigorating feelings of joy and delight will make Lucy's stature tall and graceful, and in due course of time her breasts will develop and she will acquire an attractive figure. Nature will inspire noble thoughts in the mind of Lucy. While lives with Nature in the happy valley-

"Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."²⁴

Under the influence of Nature, Lucy acquires a perfect beauty of body and mind. Lucy dies very young. She dies and leaves the to poet lament for her loss. The Natural scene which looks charming in the presence of Lucy, now looks deserted to the poet. The poet feels lonely in the midst of that calm and quiet tract of land. The poet often thinks, that Lucy had once been alive but now she is no more in this world. He becomes sad to that is not able to see Lucy any more-

"Thus Nature Spake- The work was done-
 How soon my Lucy's race was run!
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
 This memory of what has been,
 And never more will be".²⁵

The next poem included in this chapter for discussion is 'Alice Fell' or 'Poverty'. The poet presents a record of an orphan girl before us. She has been described poor and miserable. The girl of this poem is like Lucy whom we find unprotected and unsupported. Lucy was living in seclusion and was alone. Alice Fell reminds us also the society and the dwellings of poor persons in it. Alice Fell comes before our eyes all of a sudden and we come to know her when her cloak has entangled with the wheel of post chaise. She rises up during an accident which Dorothy Wordsworth records in one of Journals of February 1802. She describes with reference to Graham who desires William Wordsworth to be with him next day specially when this accident takes place. Mr. Graham as Dorothy reports is riding in a post-chaise while he hears a cry which is very strange. Mr. Graham can not understand but the sound continues and he

thereafter asks the chaise-driver to get it stopped. He sees immediately a little girl who is crying as if her heart will burst. The girl is actually in a hopeless condition because she has got up behind the chaise and her cloak has been caught by the wheel and is jammed in and it hangs there. She is hopelessly crying for the cloak. Mr. Graham takes the girl into the chaise and the cloak is released from the wheel but the child's misery does not cease for her cloak is torn to rags, it has been a miserable cloak before, but she has no other and it is the greatest sorrow that can befall her. Her name is Alice Fell. She has no parents and belongs to the next town. At the next town Mr. Graham leaves money with some respectable people in the town to buy her a new cloak.²⁶

In the poem *Alice Fell*, this is transformation in which Wordsworth takes the place of Mr. Graham. A similar change of person takes place in 'The Solitary Reaper' whose song is originally heard by Mr. Wilkinson. Some people have felt that this borrowing from Dorothy and others shows a certain egotism on Wordsworth's part, but it is his method as an artist to absorb things in himself and think of them for a long period before writing them down.²⁷

In the poem 'Alice Fell' we find a touching and moving description of a poor girl who is parentless and without protection. The situation in which the poor girl meets Mr. Graham, it is almost depressing and miserable. Mr. Graham meets Alice Fell who is all alone on the road and is going to town. The post chaise which is moving on the road suddenly gets the cloak of the poor girl entangled in its wheel. As the girl is poor so it is her only property.

And there a little Girl I found
Sitting behind the chaise alone.²⁸

At the asking of Mr. Graham the poor girl could not speak much rather she utters only one word, i.e. 'Mr. Cloak'.²⁹ She is weeping bitterly Graham can not understand the cause of her weeping. She is going on sobbing and sobbing but asks Mr. Graham to look towards the wheel of post-chaise to which her cloak is badly entangled. The cloak of the poor girl is found totally torn to pieces and it is like a weather beaten rag.-

My Cloak! no other word she spake,
But land and bitterly the wept,
As if her innocent heart would break;
And down from off her seat she leapt,
'What ails you, Child?' - She sobbed. 'Look' here!
I saw it in the wheel entangled,
A weather beaten rag as e'er.
From any garden scare-crow dangled."³⁰

This poem exhibits a pathetic thinking to a single possession i.e. a simple love of property. The Cloak, in this case, represents a last hold upon life, and however disproportionate the child's grief may appear it is still explicable in terms of human psychology.³¹

The cloak seems to be a substitute of girls protector. Though the cloak is a poor rag yet it has every thing for the child. The cloak is not immediately freed by Mr. Graham because it is twisted and entangled. However it is loosened after a great labour. The narrator is perplexed and bewildered after meeting Alice Fell upon a lonely road. He wants to know the place where she is bound. She tells the name of the place. She is asked by

Graham to come to the chaise, she sits into it but her sobbings are heard continuously. The narrator is very much aggrieved of it. He is very much unhappy over distress that the girl is feeling after the loss of the cloak-

And whither are you going, child,
 To-night along these lonesome ways?
 'To Durham, 'answered she, half wild-
 Then come with me into the chaise'
 Insensible to all relief,
 Sat the poor girl, and forth did send,
 Sob after sob, as if her grief,
 Could never, never have an end.³²

The narrator further asks about the purpose of her journey towards Durham. She at that time somehow checks her sobbings and tells her name as Alice Fell. She also relates that she is fatherless and motherless. The last line actually throws a light upon the whole poem and Alice Fell some times is understood to be Lucy who is passing her days in sun and shower, without any support and guidance. The motherlessness

and fatherlessness virtually compels us to feel sympathy towards the girl and it is more than enough for any man to feel dejected over the miserable condition of Alice Fell. For the girl, the journey to Durham and other things are of less importance and significance. The only important thing for which her heart is aggrieved is the cloak which is totally tattered. It seems also to have played the role of her mother and father. The loss of the cloak becomes ultimately the loss of every thing for poor Alice Fell-

"Her very heart, her grief grew strong,
And all was for her tattered Cloak! ³³

The chaise moved ahead and after some time they are expected to reach to the place. Poor Alice Fell who is sitting beside him goes on weeping and weeping. It seems to Mr. Graham, that the loss of cloak for her is the loss of her only friend.

'As if she had lost her only friend,
She wept, nor would be pacified."³⁴

The narrator after reaching the tavern door asks the host to purchase a new cloak for the girl. He also tells the miserable condition of the girl-

'Up to the tavern door we post;
Of Alice and her grief I told,
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new Cloak for the old."³⁵

In the end we find that the problem of poor Alice is solved. She is weeping bitterly perhaps because of her inability to make an arrangement for the new Cloak. This also throws a light upon the whole order of society in which so many like poor Alice Fell are living. The poet is utterly dejected over the miserable condition of such persons. Poor Alice Fell at the end of the poem, is described to feels satisfaction at the purchase of new Cloak-

'And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell!
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell!"³⁶

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21. Three years she grew in sun and shower : **Wordsworth Poetical Works** ed. E.De. Selincourt, (Oxford University Press, London, 1936), p.-148, ll. 1-6.
22. Ibid., ll. 13-18.
23. Ibid, ll. 19-24.
24. Ibid, ll. 34-36.
25. Ibid, ll. 37-42.

26. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, 16th February, 1802
(John Purkis A Preface to Wordsworth), p. 110.
27. John Purkis, A Preface to Wordsworth, p. 100.
28. Alice Fell : **Wordsworth Poetical Works** ed. E.De.
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64, ll. 19-20.
29. Ibid, p. 64, l.-21.
30. Ibid, ll. 21-28.
31. John Purkis, A Preface to Wordsworth, p.-141.
32. Alice Fell : **Wordsworth Poetical Works** ed. E.De.
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65, ll. 33-40.
33. Ibid, ll. 47-48.
34. Ibid, ll. 51-52.
35. Ibid, ll. 53-56.
36. Ibid, ll. 57-60.