CHAPTER VII

THIRD PHASE 1940-1957
During the third phase of his career, though Murry is deeply concerned with religious and social problems, he consolidates his position as a mature literary critic and shows professional skill of a rare order. Instead of taking a declining curve as it generally happens with writers in their advancing age and declining health, Murry's career ascends upwards and upholds the splendid reputation of the past. Instead of giving up writing Murry becomes for the first time and for a final brief period, what he thought he had never been, a professional critic who sets himself tasks of appreciation. Of principal importance is the bold application of his critical method, which had earlier brought him rich dividends on such romantic writers as Keats and Shakespeare, Lawrence and Blake, in whom he could sense 'an intimate personal possibility,' to a classical writer like Swift with whom he could not possibly identify himself, thus demonstrating once again its soundness and effectiveness.

Let us begin with Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Portraits published in 1949. It opens with 'Katherine Mansfield' and ends with 'Keats and Shelley.' Except two—'The Ode to a Nightingale' and 'Shakespeare and the Cuckoo'—all are literary portraits which are valuable for some penetrating observations. In 'Katherine Mansfield' Murry appreciates V.S. Pritchett's attempt at serious and sincere criticism of the short stories of Katherine Mansfield but challenges him on two issues. One is that "Katherine Mansfield belonged to the
the arty generation which isolated private sensibility, and detatched private life from the life of its times," and that "this was partly due to the appalling mass-pressure of the first world-war."\(^2\) Murry feels that there is a measure of truth in this but Katherine Mansfield was not an exception. There were many story-writers whose artistic integrity suffered in consequence. There is, therefore, a nuance of contempt in Mr. Pritchett's reference to "the arty generation" which, Murry thinks, "springs less from a pursuit of truth."\(^3\) Another contention of Pritchett's is that Katherine Mansfield practised "the cult of self-perfection" and this was in consequence of the "lack of a spiritual home." Again, Murry feels, there is an element of truth in this but the assumption that the cult of self-perfection is the natural compensation for the lack of a country is wrong. Many have practised, Murry points out, the cult of self-perfection, who have not been exiled from their native land. The natural consequence of living in exile from a familiar society is, as Murry rightly says, to seek compensation in a "closer human relation." "In a word," Murry says, "the natural consequence of social insecurity is the search for the security of love."\(^4\) Murry emphasises again and again that any attempt to explain Katherine Mansfield's development without recourse to love is doomed to fail. He reminds us that at a certain definite point in her life there is a marked change in the quality of her stories. This begins with Prelude. Before that time "her work showed signs of originality and power.... but, with Prelude, she entered under
full sail, a new realm of gold."⁵ "It has always seemed to me," says Murry, "that Prelude occupies much the same crucial place in the evolution of Katherine Mansfield's writing as the Ode to Psyche in that of Keats. It is the prelude to a new range of utterance, a new comprehension of experience, new complex harmonies."⁶ The birth of this new quality in Katherine Mansfield's writing Murry attributes to her happy stay at the Villa Pauline in the South of France, where she experienced "a peculiar kind of spiritual purgation," and "a condition of love." Love, Murry laments, has become too sentimental for a truly modern critic to employ in assessment.

In 'Keats and Coleridge: An Imaginary Conversation' there is an interesting contrast between Shakespeare and Milton. Milton has the greatest character, Shakespeare has not one. Milton's identity seems stamped on every line, Shakespeare's seems to have uttered itself. Again, this impress of Milton's identity upon his verse is connected with his conception of woman as an inferior being. Murry finds something in common between the effort to dominate a woman, and the effort to dominate words, and then he makes a very significant observation that "it is rare, I believe, that great poets attain domestic happiness, and when they do the faculty of poetry is apt to leave them. The very fact that Shakespeare bodied forth the idea of woman as it had never been bodied forth before, and made it prophetic, may itself be the reason why the record he has left of his own relation with a woman is one we could well be spared."⁷ In general Murry voices his familiar theory
that poetry is a revelation of truth. Since Keats departs by handing over his 'Ode to a Nightingale' to Coleridge, Murry makes a critical appreciation of the poem in the next chapter. Line by line he discusses its intricate pattern and shows its sheer loveliness. According to him the Ode is not 'a poem of despair' but 'a song of Victory'. It makes a great affirmation that "the bitterest human experience if it can be contemplated by the Imagination turns or can be transmuted into the beauty which is truth." 8

In 'Coleridge and Wordsworth' Murry deals with the pathetic decay of the wonderful friendship between Coleridge and Wordsworth. In fact he dwells more on the decay of Coleridge whose cause was Wordsworth. During the course of his discussion Murry makes very original observations. He expresses his conviction that "it was fatal to Coleridge to deceive himself into believing that there was an identity between Wordsworth's experience and his own." 9 Wordsworth and Coleridge, he points out, were not "two minds with but a single thought." That is plain from the nature of their collaboration in the famous volume of Lyrical Ballads. The real difference between Coleridge and Wordsworth lay in their "nurture". And this was recognised by themselves. It was frankly admitted by Coleridge that Wordsworth's nurture was both natural and ideal. To Wordsworth, Coleridge was a man cut off from the sustenance of Nature. This difference appears in the very texture of the poetry of the two men. Coleridge's observation of nature is rare. His imaginative vision is not of the same order as Wordsworth's.
"The distinction between them," says Murry, "almost exactly corresponds to Wordsworth's distinction between the Fancy and the Imagination - except that Coleridge's observation (even in the realm of Fancy) is not so spontaneous and free as Wordsworth's." In fact Murry believes that "Coleridge built his whole theory of Imagination upon Wordsworth's peculiar achievement." He further says that "it was for precisely this singular power of Wordsworth's that Coleridge coined his phrase 'the esemplastic power' - or the power of 'moulding into unity' - as a definition of Imagination." This view seems to be more plausible than the theory that Coleridge borrowed it from Germany. But the important thing is that the 'esemplastic' Imagination which Coleridge distinguished and admired in Wordsworth, he did not himself possess. That seems very strange. How could the author of The Ancient Mariner, of Christabel, of Kubla Khan, be without imagination! "We must be clear," says Murry, "what it is that we are denying that Coleridge possessed. The peculiar faculty that is manifest in Coleridge's three most famous poems he surely did possess; and what is more, possessed it at this time of his intimate association with the Wordsworths, and at no other - the power to tell a strange and fascinating story, to bathe imaginary events in a glamorous supernatural light, to be supremely 'romantic'.... This peculiar power Coleridge for a little while pre-eminently possessed. But he never did possess the power of transfiguring Nature." For Murry the Coleridge before he met Wordsworths is the true Coleridge. It seems to
him no wonder that in *Frost at Midnight*, written in February 1798, "when all thought of challenging, or identifying himself with Wordsworth is remote from Coleridge's mind, he should describe Nature with a simple imaginative power at least as great as Wordsworth's own." Why did Coleridge lose that illumination? Because by the summer of the year 1798 Coleridge had left with the Wordsworths for Germany, leaving behind him his baby, and his baby's mother, and the baby's new born brother, by themselves in Stowey. This was the cause of his inward decay.

In *'Thomas De Quincey'* Murry hails his valuable biography by Horace Eaton. "The great merit," Murry notes, "of Mr. Eaton's biography of De Quincey is that, without malice or extenuation, it puts before us a strange, yet simple and lovable human being. Mr. Eaton conceals nothing that many years of patient research have revealed to him; he makes no excuses for the little man; he uses no art, save that of a loving fidelity to his subject; and he leaves us fully satisfied." He further notes that De Quincey's chief escape from the harshness of reality was opium, not the tenderness of a woman. De Quincey's blind spots were two - his hatred for science and his complete unawareness of the splendid development of English prose-fiction. For De Quincey Mother Radcliffe remained the genius of the novel, partly because he had himself a taste for horrors, and partly because he considered the novel as a 'feminine relaxation'.

In *'Matthew Arnold and his Ideals'* Murry puts little credence in the ultra-romantic theory that Arnold was ruined as
a poet because "he did not plunge headlong into his affair with Marguerite." Arnold, as Murry points out, developed as a poet for years after that episode was over. The fact is that Arnold abandoned the pursuit of poetry for a life of service to society. Arnold believed that the truly great poet "sees life steadily and sees it whole." He feels "the happiness divine" that "runs over in every line", or what Wordsworth felt, "the deep power of joy". This deep power of joy Arnold felt to be lacking in his own poetry. "Judging himself by his own severe standards," concludes Murry, "he found himself wanting as a poet. He had the spiritual development of a great poet, but not the faculty divine to carry it as a poet. He had to proclaim his message by precept, since he could not impart it by revelation." Since Arnold could not be the kind of poet he revered, he became a servant and prophet of society.

Perhaps the best essay in this book is on Andrew Bradley whom Murry regards the most genuinely 'imaginative critic'. "There is no other critic of English literature," declares Murry, "in agreeing with whom he feels the same sense of relief." Though Bradley's scope was too narrow and his output too small, yet he had one rare quality: "the capacity for a total experience of the work criticised, and for retaining that experience throughout the subsequent work of analysis and comparison." In this respect all other English critics appear partial or capricious. Bradley "conceived it almost as his mission to enter fully into the experience of English poetry,"
and then to communicate that experience as richly and completely as he had received it.\textsuperscript{20} Besides this experiencing nature he had also the intellectual capacity to discriminate an experience to its elements. Bradley reached his pinnacle in his great book on \textit{Shakespearean Tragedy}.

The rest of the essays in this volume are tertiary. In 'Richard Hillary' Murry mentions his book, \textit{The Last Enemy}, which he enjoys for it records with "remarkable vividness and objectivity"\textsuperscript{21} the experience of an Oxford undergraduate turned airman. Then follows 'Max Plowman' whom Murry admires for his self-effacement and for his being "a master of imaginative friendship."\textsuperscript{22} Murry had the privilege of coming into direct contact with 'Karl Mannheim'. He was "an eminent mind"\textsuperscript{23} and provided "constant stimulus" to the mind of Murry. 'George Chapman' is considered by Murry as "the rival poet" of Shakespeare's sonnets. Behind his work he feels envy and hatred. He thinks of him as one "for whom the opposition between sense and soul was never resolved."\textsuperscript{24} In 'Shakespeare and the Cuckoo' Murry maintains that "Coleridge's Shakespeare criticism is, originally and essentially, an application to Shakespeare of a conception of the Imagination which he derived from Wordsworth."\textsuperscript{25} The English poet 'F.V. Branford', Murry feels, is forgotten, mainly because of his 'magniloquence' which is "terribly out of fashion nowadays."\textsuperscript{26} In 'Thomas Hardy' he records his visit to the author whom he regarded "as the one indisputably great English writer"\textsuperscript{27} then living. In the
last essay 'Keats and Shelley' Murry considers Shelley parti-
cularly in reference to his _Adonis_, and finds him "the victim
of the divided mind, or the divided heart and mind." Shelley
did not submit his mind to the dictates of his heart.

_**John Clare and Other Studies**, published in 1950, contains
twenty-one studies, of which eighteen are the republication
of critical essays which were collected in earlier volumes
which we have already considered under the first and second
phase. The only ones which have not appeared elsewhere and
which require our attention are 'Amiel's Love Story', 'The Divine
Plain Face', and 'The Mortal Moon'.

The occasion for writing 'Amiel's Love Story' was the
publication of _Philine_ in 1929, which deals with Amiel's
relations with women, and particularly with one woman, to whom
Amiel gave the imaginary name of Philine. What absorbs Murry
is Amiel's self which is revealed in the volume. Amiel could
not bear his own loneliness and therefore he was driven to
seek consolation and companionship in women's love. Murry
holds Amiel wholly responsible for inflicting suffering upon
another human being. "He had indulged himself," writes Murry,
"and brought Philine to a condition of soul of which love and
marriage were the rightful consummation. Then he shrank
away. His conscience never ceased to accuse him." In
recording his fears in his _Journal_ Amiel performed a heroic
task. "It needed," as Murry says, "nothing less than a hero
to make so ruthless a record of his own timidness."
'The Divine Plain Face' tells the story of Fanny Kelly whose glimpses haunted Charles Lamb at his desk in the East India House. Lamb embraced the career as a dramatic critic for the sole purpose of singing Fanny Kelley's praises as a great actress on the stage of Drury Lane. That was his peculiar method of courtship. But when he was refused the courtship ended. Murry "feels that here for once his good-humoured and whimsical faculty for seeing things as they are had failed him a little.... he had misconceived the situation, by imputing to Fanny Kelly herself his own sense that the theatre was a bondage (and a little even of a degradation) to her." 31. Fanny Kelly died at the age of ninety-two and never married. She remained a friend of the Lambs.

In 'The Mortal Moon' Murry deals with Dr. Leslie Hotson's astonishing theory that Shakespeare's famous Sonnet 107 containing the cryptic line

The mortal Moone hath her eclipse indur'de

should be dated in 1588, because "the mortal Moones" refers to the crescent formation of the Spanish Armada. Here Murry brings his linguistic knowledge to bear upon the interpretation of the text of the Sonnet. The general trend of Shakespeare criticism has been to assign the Sonnet to 1603, on the ground that it contains a specific reference to the death of Queen Elizabeth and to the liberation from the prison of the Earl of Southampton. Murry rejects the general consensus as well as Dr. Hotson's novel interpretation and dating. He agrees, of course, that the general consensus is right in taking the natural meaning o
"the mortal Moone" as Queen Elizabeth. Murry points out that Dr. Hotson and the critics before him have neglected "the important fact that the Sonnet is not isolated, and cannot be interpreted in isolation." It is necessary, he says, to examine Sonnet 107 carefully in its context of Sonnets 100 to 112. He marks that the word 'confined' appears in three Sonnets of this small group and nowhere else in the whole of the Sonnets. "It not only points," says he, "to the Sonnets having been composed at the same time; but it gives a hint towards the interpretation of the word in Sonnet 107, where its meaning is much disputed." First he shows that 'confined' in Sonnets 105 and 110 clearly means 'limited'. There is no hint of imprisonment. Then he undertakes the interpretation of the first four lines of Sonnet 107:

Not mine own feares, nor the prophetic soule
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love controule,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doome.

Having regard to Shakespeare's liking for legal terms and comparing with other parallels, Murry explains that it is 'the lease of my true love' and not 'my true love' which has been 'supposed as forfeit'. "A lease," Murry says, "is not subject to imprisonment, but it is always subject to determination; and 'determination' is precisely the meaning here of 'a confined doom', i.e., a sentence of limitation. To imagine that lines 3-4 mean that Shakespeare's friend has been supposed
condemned to imprisonment for life is to show ignorance of the language of the sonnets and a complete neglect of the context of this one in particular." Coming to the 'mortall Moone' of the next four lines, Murry says that if the 'mortall Moone' is the Queen, the natural meaning of

The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'd
is not: 'The Queen is dead', but 'The Queen has recovered'. He points out that the normal meaning of 'endure' in Shakespeare is 'to suffer and survive'. "The natural meaning," he explains, "of the line, leaving aside the probable reference to Elizabeth, is: 'The mortal Moon has been obscured and now shines as bright as ever', and that meaning is confirmed by the next line:

And the sad Augurs mock their own presage.
Why, unless the moon had recovered from eclipse, should the augurs mock their own presage?" On the purely internal evidence Murry had come to the conclusion that Sonnet 107 was probably written in or about 1596. In this he was later confirmed by G.B. Harrison who showed that in the year 1596 Queen Elizabeth fell ill and that her illness caused great alarm in England.

Against Murry's weight of evidence Dr. Leslie Hotson's theory seems to be insubstantial and unconvincing.

Murry's crowning achievement of this period is Swift which was published in 1954. It was followed by a shorter version published for the British Council in 1955. Swift, a masterpiece in its kind, is the most beautiful and most naked exposition of the suppressed personality of one of the greatest
figures in English literature. For the first time an entirely new light is thrown on Swift's development as man and artist. In particular it illuminates the crisis of disillusion which led to his breach with Sir William Temple and to the shaping of his unique personality. The evidence of his curious cult of the cave offers a new key to the significance of *A Tale of a Tub*. And most interesting is the new analysis of Swift's extraordinary relations with the three women—Varina, Stella, and Vanessa—who had a crucial influence upon his life.

In depicting the extreme effort of emotional suppression which characterizes Swift's maturity, Murry shows how the deepening conflict caused in an exceptionally affectionate nature by its rejection of life, imparts a volcanic tension and vehemence to his writing, which culminates in a final explosion—of hatred, disgust and indignation.

To begin with, Murry states: "It is worth bearing in mind that the Swift we know, the marks of whose suppressed passionate nature are so unmistakable, was at a critical moment an emotionally frustrated man." The chief cause of this crisis was his intense displeasure at not having achieved a secure place in the affections of Sir William Temple. In this connection Murry refers to an early poem *Occasioned by Sir William Temple's Illness and Recovery* written in December 1693, and especially quotes from it the following four lines:

And from this hour
I here renounce thy visionary power;
And since thy essence on my breath depends,
Thus with a puff the whole delusion ends.
This poem which records a complex emotional crisis is "obviously quite as much a farewell to Temple as it is a farewell to poetry." Swift felt that Temple had failed him and that the Muse had brought him only 'a false beam of joy'. Moreover, Swift believed that the excellence of poetry derived from its allegiance to the great and good. And this conviction was inextricably mixed with his devotion to the person of Temple who was the embodiment of moral beauty. Therefore Murry says: "the break with Temple was caused by a combination of emotional disappointment and creative frustration." As a consequence, not merely his propensity to satire was whetted but its scope was vastly and ominously widened.

His disappointment, however, did not diminish his desire for sympathy and affection. His need of affection and sympathy was rather great. And he found it in Varina, a young lady, whose real name was Miss Jane Waring. Swift pressed her hard to marry him, but she refused. "Varina's rejection of him," asserts Murry, "was perhaps decisive in Swift's renunciation of marriage." Swift resolved that he would never again suffer emotional humiliation at the hands of a woman. Emphasising the point further Murry says: "Swift's love for Varina... was directed, from the beginning towards marriage as its right and natural consummation. It was the healthy natural love of a naturally passionate, and naturally generous nature. Her rejection of it was probably as important in Swift's life as anything that happened to him. If we want the true answer to the eternal question: why did he not marry Stella? we do not
have to seek it in fantastic theories, of concealed consanguinity, or physical incapacity, or overweening pride; it is simple enough. It was because of his rejection by Varina."

Thus Swift began his public career with an effort at emotional Self-repression. Behind the manifestation of his formidable genius lay his feeling of humiliation.

*A Tale of a Tub* is the outcome of this psychological crisis. "It proceeds," writes Murry, "from the deliberate repression of inspiration, by the constant reduction of the first impulse of imagination to absurdity. And that, in turn, brings us as close as we can get to the substantial theme of the book. It is many things, but more than anything else it is a laughing and unflagging 'debunking' of inspiration.... Psychologically considered, it is a prolonged whoop of laughter over a dead self."*

The universal derision of *A Tale of a Tub* gradually passes into a universal nausea and disgust of humanity. The ruthless moral exposure of humanity is the theme of *Gulliver*. It is haunted, from beginning to end, by the physical nausea of mankind. Murry believes that this deliberate degradation of man beneath the animal had a "pathological origin". "As to the causes of this evident obsession," Murry remarks, "we can only speculate, but it is possible that the root of the disturbance was Swift's violent renunciation of marriage after his abortive courtship of Varina." Especially in Book IV of the *Gulliver*, Swift's loathing of the physical being of man, and above all
of the sexual being of woman, is highly intense. It is represented in the figure of Yahoo, and in particular the She-Yahoo. "But Woman," stresses Murry, "was the root of the evil and the cause of his own distress. He would put her where she belonged. Now, in Book IV, the sex-relation between humans must be degraded and annihilated; he presents it to his mind and to ours, as unspeakably disgusting."^43

This utter savagery that visits Swift's writing has unduly tarnished his reputation. Swift was essentially a tender human being, who had to distort his deeply affectionate nature by an effort of the will. That was his tragedy. Giving his verdict Murry says: "Swift is still a living influence in literature. The finest satire of modern times, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, is plainly indebted both to the story of the Coat in *A Tale of a Tub* and to the Houyhnhnms in *Gulliver.*"^44

Murry made no claim to original research but his elucidation of the brief 'romantic' phase of Swift's development was, he claimed, his one original contribution to the subject, which undoubtedly it is. Moreover, it sheds new light on some critical points that had long baffled and puzzled research scholars. The book is based on some years of patient and arduous study of Swift's writings. It took Murry two and a half years to complete it. His aim, as he states in the *Preface*, was "to write a book which should be at once a life of Swift and a critical study of his works."^45 One cannot deny that he has wonderfully fulfilled his ambition.
Keats, published in 1955, incorporates mostly all the matter which originally appeared in three previous editions entitled Studies in Keats (1930), Studies in Keats: New and Old (1939), and The Mystery of Keats (1949). In the words of F.A. Lea, it is "a beautiful monument, not only to a lifetime's intimate study of the man and the poet, but also to a life uniquely moulded and inspired by that study." It should be read as a "companion volume" to Keats and Shakespeare. Indeed it fills gaps, of which later Murry became conscious, in his Keats and Shakespeare. In particular, Murry reconsiders the character of Fanny Brawne and the nature of her influence on Keats in the light of the new evidence which had come to his knowledge since Keats and Shakespeare was written in 1925. He completely revises his harsh judgment he had then passed upon her. He also takes the opportunity of refuting the sensational theses concerning Keats's relations with Isabella Jones put forward by Mr. Robert Gittings in his book John Keats: The Living Year (1954).

In Keats and Shakespeare Murry had written: "Fanny Brawne killed him. That is true; but it is a partial truth." At that time Murry was ignorant of the very existence of the evidence that makes such a judgment for ever impossible. He now recants it completely. Improving on it Murry says: "In the sense in which something other than phthisis may be said to have killed Keats, in the same sense in which it was meaningful to say 'Fanny Brawne Killed Keats', the opposite is the truth. Separation from Fanny Brawne killed him."
Keats's real misery began when he parted from Fanny Brawne on June 28th, 1819. Nearly all Keats's great poetry, Murry notes, was written in the brief twelve weeks when Fanny and he first lived close together at Wentworth. "April, May and early June 1819," Murry says, "was the time when Keats came nearest to happiness in his love, when Fanny was living almost in the same house. It was also the period when his poetic genius touched the greatest heights." To this period belong the last Canto of Hyperion, The Eve of St. Agnes, The Eve of St. Mark, The sonnet Bright Star!, the sonnet To Sleep, the Andromeda sonnet, La Bella Dame, and the Odes. Fanny Brawne was really the woman "to be with whom was life for Keats and to be parted from whom was death."

Murry's reconsidered opinion about Fanny Brawne does not, however, invalidate any of his interpretations of Keats's poems. Murry then rigorously examines Mr. Gittings's most revolutionary theory regarding Keats's relations with Mrs. Isabella Jones. Mrs. Isabella Jones was already known to the world as the lady who suggested to Keats a poem on the legend of the eve of St. Agnes. She is now identified by Mr. Gittings as the lady Keats first met and kissed at Hastings in May or June 1817, met again a year later when he was going to the theatre in company with George, and met for the third time at the end of October 1818. This seems to be quite convincing to Murry but he thinks Mr. Gittings has unduly exaggerated her importance in Keats's life: Mr. Gittings tries to establish that the Bright Star sonnet was originally written
in October 1818, and not in 1819, and that the woman about whom it was written was not Fanny Brawne but Mrs. Isabella Jones. Even more sensational is his argument that Keats, in January 1819, had a love-affair with Mrs. Isabella Jones, the success of which he first celebrated in the verses, *Hush, hush, tread Softly* and then in *The Eve of St. Agnes*. Murry strongly repudiates both these improbable propositions. "After all, Keats had written," reminds Murry, "a long poem called *Isabella* after he first met and kissed Mrs. Jones; but — rather to my surprise, I confess — not even Mr. Gittings suggests that it had anything to do with her." It seems incredible that four weeks after Fanny Brawne's merry Christmas Day, Keats should have been involved in a love-intrigue with Isabella Jones. Still more incredible it seems that Keats, shortly after his return to London, should have presented Fanny Brawne a copy of the verses *Hush, hush, tread Softly* to transcribe into the *Literary Pocket Book*. Thus Mr. Gittings's theory is based on mere conjectures.

In 'El dorado' Murry attempts a close analysis of the sonnet *On First Looking into Charman's Homer* which creates on him the overwhelming impression of perfect unity. He observes that the imagery of exploration and discovery is maintained from the beginning. "At the very outset," Murry remarks, "Keats imagines as the explorer in search of *El dorado*, and when finally he likens himself to the mightiest of the conquistadors, at the supreme moment of discovery, he has carried the imagery with which he began to the pinnacle of its
potentialities. Thus the poem is a perfect whole.

Murry explores "The Meaning of 'Endymion'" in the light of Keats's experience of the 'Cave of Quietude'. Keats believed that the soul contained the seldom discovered 'cave of quietude' which had the "virtue of receiving into it and regenerating the whole of the pain-tormented human being." All great poems of Keats reflect the recurrent pattern of his inward life. In 'Endymion' the abstract parable becomes the painful adventure of his poetic soul, seeking communion with the spirit of essential Beauty.

'Keats and Milton' is a fitting reply to E.M. Tillyard who holds Murry's book Keats and Shakespeare responsible for the widespread critical depreciation of Milton. There are two distinct issues. The first is: the proper estimate of Milton as a poet. The second is: the proper estimate of the role he played in Keats' experience at a particular moment. Murry reaffirms that for him Milton does not possess much intrinsic value as a poet. And as for the role he played in Keats' experience in 1819 his estimate was correct. Tillyard's view that before writing Lycidas Milton himself underwent the same kind of experience as Keats had undergone in the early months of 1819, and that the thought and feeling of Lycidas is akin to that of the Ode to a Nightingale is unacceptable to Murry. "I think," says Murry, "Lycidas a very beautiful poem; but I find in it little trace of suffering, and less sense of the mystery of suffering. But it is not the poem of one who has been oppressed by 'the burden of mystery'." Keats' mode of
thinking and feeling was quite different from that of Milton's. But there came a moment in Keats' life when he turned to Milton to adopt his style. That effort proved intolerable. He had to break free from it. 'Life to him would be death to me'.

In 'Keats and Wordsworth' Murry traces the influence of Wordsworth on Keats. But he is inclined to be thankful that when he wrote *Keats and Shakespeare*, he did not know Wordsworth so intimately as he had come to know him since. Otherwise his beautiful book would have been spoiled.

In 'Keats and Blake' Murry shows how the two poets "came to a realization of their own truth by way of a struggle with Milton," and how they reached the identical conclusion that the soul is a condition that is attained after annihilating the self.

As if to sum up the poetical character of Keats, Murry, in 'Keats and Friendship' reveals how he always unvaryingly responded to genuine friendship. For Keats friendship was as noble as supreme poetic achievement. Both emanated from 'the holiness of the Heart's affections'.

*Unprofessional Essays*, published in 1956, comprises four essays which were written, as the title of the book indicates, when Murry was no longer dependent on literary criticism for his livelihood. Whitman as poet-prophet of democracy, Clare as elegiast, Fielding as protagonist and Eliot as antagonist of the 'true man-woman relation', form very interesting studies of this book. In all these four studies what counts above all,
in Murry's eyes, is the writer's attitude to love.

In 'In Defence of Fielding' Murry protests against esotericism and laborious analysis in modern criticism in dealing with the novels of Fielding. His main target is Dr. F.R. Leavis who contemptuously excludes Fielding from 'The Great Tradition' of the English novel built up by such novelists as Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad. According to Dr. Leavis, the essential quality of a great novelist is 'an intense preoccupation' with the problems of life. Judging by this standard, he finds that Fielding has no such moral preoccupation. Murry is surprised that Dr. Leavis, who so greatly and justly admires Jane Austen and George Eliot, and who points out that 'it is not for nothing that George Eliot admired Jane Austen's work profoundly', should not have noticed that George Eliot also profoundly admired the work of Fielding. But Fielding does not delight Dr. Leavis. "It is because Fielding's novels," remarks Murry, "do not lend themselves to the kind of treatment which Dr. Leavis delights to exercise upon the novel. They bring devilishly little grist to his particular mill. They are evasive and recalcitrant to his highly specialized mental processes. The moral preoccupations with which they are concerned.... are not of the sort that makes an impression upon him. Their durable achievement, in the creation of characters of whose reality we are convinced and who abide in the memory, is one which he cannot recognize because he cannot find it by his critical methods." Murry unabashedly declares: "I admire Fielding the writer; and I
admire Fielding the man." He reckons both *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* as great novels. Judging them by the standard of Dr. Johnson who rightly held that 'nothing can please many and please long but just representations of human nature', Murry finds them absorbing stories of credible and lovable human beings whose characters appeal to what is permanent in our human sympathies. To depreciate them as empty of interest is to underestimate "the rare talent which, with a minimum of elaboration, can put before the imagination characters which we can believe and love, which endure in the memory and take their place with some of Shakespeare's as types of natural humanity." Murry admits that Fielding's sense of form was defective; his Prefaces and his digressions were clumsy. But, in spite of these shortcomings, he achieves his main purpose: "to present us with human beings who are real and natural, with whose vicissitudes we deeply sympathise." Even in respect of 'moral intensity' Murry finds Fielding hardly poor.

On many occasions Murry has appreciated the poetry of Clare but he had not done sufficient justice to the power of Clare as a visionary poet, which he now does to him in 'Clare Revisited'. There is a small group of poems which were written during the early years of his madness. What confronts Murry in these poems "is the phenomenon of a poet of unique though limited achievement who, under the stress of the threatening disintegration of his personality, suddenly becomes the vehicle for the utterance of thoughts hitherto beyond the reaches of his soul." He takes, for instance,
the most famous of these visionary poems, entitled *A Vision*. By the most rigorous judgment, he deems it to be equal to some of the finest of Blake: "This natural song," says Murry, "had been the mode of his real, or most essential and personal existence: the speech of his own reality, of the love which was for him the mode of true being." It recaptures a moment of intense vision, related to the transfiguration of Mary Joyce, his childish sweetheart, into a symbol of freedom, of poetry, of love, and of unattainable peace.

In 'Whitman: Poet-prophet of Democracy' Murry speaks highly of Whitman's struggle as poet-prophet to communicate his religious sense. To put it in the simple language of Whitman, the idea of oneness in mystical experience corresponds to the idea of oneness in Democracy. Whitman believed that body and soul are one. A soul distinct from the body was an illusion. This is also the fundamental religious postulate of Democracy. That, according to Whitman, "is what we discover when as free individuals we explore the reality of what we are. We find an ultimate and indefeasible unity of ourselves of soul and body as individual one, which at the moment of its awareness of itself, is known to be part of the universal one. Thus that infinite worth and uniqueness of the individual, on which Democracy purports to be founded, is a reality only when it is pursued to its religious recesses in an ultimate and immediate self-knowledge of what he calls 'the identified soul.'" Murry notes here how near Whitman comes to the language and ideas of Keats in his famous letter on
'the world as a Vale of Soul-making'. Whitman remembers the very physical process by which his corporeal body was spiritualized. He describes it as physical caress of his body by his soul. Moreover, this realization is accompanied by a vision of the infinite significance of the created world and a simultaneous assurance that 'a kelson of the creation is love'. This mystical experience, Murry understands, is "the creative kernel of the whole of the Song of Myself; the seed of which that great poem is an exfoliation." Murry pronounces the Song of Myself as "Whitman's greatest poem" and "the one around which all the other leaves of grass naturally cluster themselves." It can be compared with Blake's Milton.

Coming to 'The Plays of T.S. Eliot' Murry thinks they are simpler in diction than his poems. In Eliot's poems he encountered two kinds of difficulty - the difficulty of the texture and the difficulty of the underlying body of thought. The plays, on the other hand, move towards a natural diction. "While his poetry has become more recondite," Murry observes, "his poetic drama has steadily tended to approach more nearly to the level of ordinary experience and communication. The poetic diction has steadily come nearer to ordinary speech." The perplexity, however, begins when Eliot begins to treat of contemporary characters. In particular, it is the treatment of romantic love that seems to be unpalatable. Romantic love, according to Eliot, is a faded ecstasy. It is an illusion. This illusory ecstasy of love between man and woman is constantly symbolised by the rose-
garden. Love ceases to deceive only when it is transmuted into the one Rose of mystical adoration.

Many will share with Murry the feeling that love between man and woman is not, inevitably, doomed to disillusion; that the relation, instead of degenerating into cold stubborn indifference, can grow to its own fulfilment in perpetually renewed delight. The difficulty of Eliot's plays arises from his almost inhuman detachment from the common experience of love.

The last book of this phase, namely, Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Studies, with a Foreword by T.S. Eliot, was posthumously published in 1959 by Mary Middleton Murry, the fourth wife of John Middleton Murry. It is the best memorial, made from a collection of three essays, that Mary Middleton Murry could possibly erect to perpetuate the memory not only of her husband but also of the kind of literary criticism that he practised. Sandwiched between George Gissing and Henry Williamson, Katherine Mansfield holds the centre of the book as if in her is sacredly preserved the ideal of 'true man and woman relation' which has been and is Murry's criterion of value in these essays.

The essay on 'George Gissing' emphasises that the characters in the novels of Gissing suffer from a compulsive bias in the mind of the creator. They are essentially a projection of a facet of the writer's personality. In this connection Murry tells the story of the adolescent love and crime of Gissing when he was a young student in Manchester. At the age
of seventeen he had fallen in love with a street-girl named Nellie Harrison. As it was not possible to support her and support himself on his meagre scholarship, he would steal money from the coat-pockets of his fellow-students hanging in the college cloakroom. One day he was caught and sentenced to prison. A few sympathisers offered him a little money to enable him to go to the United States to begin a new life. He went there but returned to England after a year. He lived in isolation. "Behind him sat," Murry remarks, "the black fear that if he did not remain virtually in hiding from society, the damning secret of his past would come to light." This fear of social exposure dominated Gissing so much that its influence can be traced in his work. Murry takes up, for instance, Gissing's best novel *Born in Exile*, which, he thinks, is nothing but "a brilliant and moving parable of his own situation." Godwin Peak, the hero, is modelled pretty closely on Gissing himself. He is loved by Marcella Moxey, a girl of social status higher than his own. But he is not interested in her because she is rather plain. His ambition is to marry a beautiful and refined lady. He meets her in Sidwell Warriccombe. But, in order to win her, with her family's approval, he plays a trick on her parents. In the sheep's garb of a theological student he gets entry into the Warricombes' house and gradually begins to love Sidwell for herself. But the secret of his deception is soon revealed. Even though Sidwell loves him, she decides not to marry him because she cannot break her ties with her family. Shortly afterwards Godwin Peak dies in frustration.
The same dreadful secret dominates Bernard Kingcote, the hero of *Isabel Clarendon*. He suffers from an invincible pessimism. He is loved deeply by Isabel. She offers herself to him, with a very modest income, which would have been sufficient for a modest happiness. But he has no trust in his own powers. He forebodes disaster if she has to live without the luxury to which she is used. So, at the last moment, he withdraws.

What is the cause of frustration? asks Murry. Is it through the trick of the man's circumstance or defect of his character, that the ideal woman is unattainable, or if attained, turns into something remote from the dream? What forbids fruition in the author's imagination? Gissing's own history supplies the answer: "He was shut out from the love and companionship he longed for, not lack of money, but by fear that the scandal of the past would be revealed." It is this fear of the past that shapes the destiny of the heroes of the novels of Gissing.

The study of 'Katherine Mansfield' shows the significance of her letters which are essential to a real understanding of her work. What Murry felt about the poetry and the letters of Keats, he feels about the short stories and the letters of Katherine Mansfield. He finds a perfect unity between her life and her work. "It means," says Murry, "that there was no difference in kind between her casual and her deliberate utterances; it means that she was never what we understand by a professional writer; it means that she was distinguished
by the peculiar gift of spontaneity." Spontaneity is the peculiar quality of Katherine Mansfield's writing. By spontaneity Murry means "an absence of any cleavage or separation between the living self and the writing self" which is the true condition of the soul. It comes through a submission of the self to the experience. Katherine Mansfield was born with 'an experiencing nature' which is the chief endowment of a great artist. She possessed 'more than ordinary organic sensibility' through which she responded to her experience. "That astonishing simplicity of hers," writes Murry, "by which she renders some of the most complex and evanescent conditions of the human soul, responsive to the truth and beauty of life.... was not in the main a technical achievement.... It was the consequence of a moral or spiritual victory won at the end of a long travail of soul: a sustained effort at self-purgation, of self-refinement into a condition of 'crystal clarity' for which Katherine Mansfield unconsciously struggled and towards the end of her life consciously prayed." Of her progress towards this condition of inward clarity, she mentions in her letter she wrote to Murry in February 1918. There in it she mentions two 'Kick-offs' in the writing game. One is 'joy' that made her write when she and Murry lived together at Pauline in France. The other is her 'old original one' of despair and hopelessness. She writes that 'had she not known love', the feeling of despair and hopelessness which had inspired her writing so far 'would have been her all'. As her work progressed these two conditions blended together in her art.
The novels of Henry Williamson, which is the subject of the last essay, tells us how their writer had "to await a slow and gradual clarification of his soul." At the time Murry wrote this essay, Henry Williamson had published a series of five novels: *The Dark Lantern*, *Donkey Boy*, *Young Phillip Maddison*, *How Dear is Life*, and *A Fox Under my Cloak*. They bear the corporate title *A chronicle of Ancient Light*. The period it covers is the twenty years from 1894 to the end of 1915. It begins with the love and marriage of Richard Maddison and Hetty Turney and leaves Phillip struggling in November 1915. Williamson had earlier written a series of four novels: *The Beautiful Years*, *Dandelion Days*, *The Dream of Fair Women* and *The Pathway*, with a related fantasy, *The Star-born*, which are corporately entitled *The Flax of Dream*. Though a period of twenty years separates the two series, there is a close relation between them. First, Phillip Maddison, the hero of *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight*, is the cousin of William Maddison, the hero of *The Flax of Dream*. Second, both these cousins are as children at odds with their fathers. During this interval of twenty years, Murry imagines, "Williamson was waiting for a moment of vision when the past should appear in the simplicity and beauty of its natural truth; waiting for the inward eye to become clear and untroubled." Why had he to wait for twenty years? Why could he not begin? He could not begin until he had achieved some vital self-purification. "He was waiting to see the past with the vision of the timeless truth of art." This inward conflict is represented in the struggle of Phillip Maddison, the hero of *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight*, who will achieve the final resolution of all the conflicts in what Murry calls 'the integration of double nature'.