The dramatic aspect of the Romantic poets of the early nineteenth-century England has been neglected right from their own time. It cannot even be said that our own time has fully done justice to these poets in this regard. But my feeling is that the neglect and indifference with which the dramatic works of the Romantics have so far been viewed are not what these works really deserve. This goes to justify the reason as to why this study has been undertaken. The dramatic failure and limitations as attributed to the poet-dramatists of the Romantic period, I think, are to be dispassionately re-examined; a fresh assessment of these poets' dramatic power and practice is felt to be a necessity, not so much for these poets themselves, as for the sake of critical truth and justice. The main object of this study is, therefore, mainly to examine the dramatic works of the Romantic poets from the dramatic point of view, and assess their dramatic power and promise as revealed through the dramas they wrote.

There seems to be a real dearth of satisfactory critical studies on the dramatic works of the Romantic poets. No detailed study of the dramas of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott has so far been attempted; the critics and scholars have made only passing references to their dramatic works. Byron, Shelley, and Keats have been able to draw some critical attention as
dramatists, but even then, it cannot, however, be said that
the attention received by them is sufficient. Byron is the
only poet of his time who has been studied more as a dramatist
has the credit of making the satisfactory study on the Byronic
dramas, but he has also paid almost exclusive attention to the
technical side of the works. On some points I have had to differ
from him. G. Wilson Knight's interpretative study of the dramas
of Byron is fascinating, though Knight has not generally
discussed them as dramas proper. But he is, so to say, the only
modern critic who has been able to recognise best the
potentiality of Byron's dramatic genius. The studies on the
Byronic dramas by William Gerard Bonamy Dobrce and a few others
are also to be mentioned. Among the Byron scholars, Boleslaw
Taborski is the only scholar who has examined the dramas of
Byron from the theatrical point of view. But he has paid more
attention to Byron's relation to the theatre, and his treatment
of the individual work is really insufficient. In the continent
Byron's dramas have been studied more in Germany, but
unfortunately, my ignorance of German and other continental
languages has stood in my way to having any access to the
studies by the continental critics and scholars.

Some of the critics have devoted a chapter or so in
their books to the dramas of Byron, Shelley, and Keats. The
only notable work on Shelley's dramas is Shelley and The
Dramatic Form by Dr. Sheila Uttam Singh, but on Keats's dramas,
no satisfactory work has appeared so far. Bernice Slote and Harry R. Beaudry are not elaborate in their treatment of the dramas of Keats. Beaudry has laid more stress on Keats's relation to the living theatre, while Slote's emphasis is on the general dramatic temper of Keats, rather than on his dramatic exercises. Besides, articles by different scholars have appeared in the various journals, and some of them are, no doubt, highly illuminating. But despite all these books and articles, it cannot be said that they are adequate. For little attempt has so far been made to study the dramatic works of the Romantic poets from the dramatic angle of vision, and these works have been discussed, more or less, as literature. As a result, the actual dramatic worth of the Romantics' plays has not been properly assessed. The present study is committed within its limited scope to the task of examining them as dramas, though their literary aspect is also not lost sight of. This is why I have discussed these works not so much in relation to their themes and ideas, but in reference to their plot-structure, characterization, and the verbal form of expression which are generally looked for in works meant for theatrical presentation.

This study is also limited only to the six major poets of England in the Romantic Age — Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. Failure in procuring the primary sources in respect of the minor poet-dramatists of the period is the reason for which the dramatic works of the minor poets of the period have been excluded from this study. But I believe, these major works of the genre will give a clear enough picture
of the nature and quality of the romantic-dramatic writing of the age.

The dramatic works of each of these poets (except Scott) have been discussed in their chronological order of composition. It could not be possible to trace from the available records, the chronological order of composition of Scott's dramatic works, and as such, the dramas of Scott have been discussed in order of their publication. Moreover, I did not think it necessary to relate the different chapters to one another in any other way.

The books and articles consulted for the purpose of this study are appended in the Bibliography. It is necessary to mention here, that the books and articles which are not directly relevant to the scope of this thesis were consulted to understand the background, as well as the nature and character of these poets' individual poetic genius. A few books, however, could not be consulted for the reason that they could not be collected in spite of my best effort.

I have duly mentioned the authors who have been cited from time to time in course of this study. Particular care has been taken to acknowledge them all. But if I have failed anywhere to mention the authors I have drawn upon, it must have occurred unawares, and the lapses so committed may be excused for their not being intentional.

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