THE INFLUENCE OF ROUSSEAU ON WORDSWORTH.

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INSCRIPTION UPON WORDSWORTH'S MEMORIAL IN GRASMERE CHURCH.

"To the Memory of
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
A True Philosopher and Poet
Who by the Special Gift and Calling of
ALMIGHTY GOD
Whether he discoursed on Man or Nature
Failed not to Lift up the Heart
To Holy Things,
Tired not of Maintaining the Cause
Of the Poor and Simple.
And so in perilous times was Raised up
To be a Chief Minister
Not only of noblest Poesy,
But of High and Sacred Truth."

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CHAPTER 1.

WORDSWORTH AND ARCADIANISM.

Romanticism and the Romantic Poets.

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The beginning of the eighteenth century is noteworthy because it witnessed in England a reaction in Literature against the artificiality of Pope, Dryden, Johnson, and the other writers of the English Augustan Age. These had made the heroic couplet fashionable in poetry, and had cast over the substance of Literature in general, a cold mantle of formalism, critical and satirical in texture, providing no warmth to stir the emotions or arouse the sympathy.(1) The new movement in Britain begun by Thomson, Gray, and Cowper, continued through Goldsmith, Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, Sheeley, Keats, and Tennyson. These poets are described as Romantic Poets, and the spirit which animates the whole of their work is called Romanticism. In the field of Literature, the reaction is a Renaissance of equal importance with the French Revolution in the realm of politics. It was not

(1). See North British Review, 1864 P.39.

(2). C.F. "Literary Characteristics of the Age of Romanticism" in English Literature - Its History and Significance, Chapter 10, by W. J. Long. (Ginn and Co.
also - "The New Romantic Poetry" in "English Poetry, its Principles and Progress", by Gayley and Young. (Macmillan & Co.

confined to England. Contemporaneously there was going on in France and Europe a similar movement led by Jean Jacques Rousseau, and his disciples, Chateaubriand, and the Bernardin de Saint Pierre. Animating the writers everywhere, an influence was at work which has been well described as "liberalism" in Art and Literature.(2)

This new movement of Romanticism is characterized not only by its protests against formalism and the slavery of custom, but by certain very definite positive elements. There was a revival of interest in mediaeval romances and heroic sagas. The poets, like song birds released from gilded cages, could find relief only in expression, and they manifested their freedom from the rules of the Classical School, by "pouring forth their songs in gushes", which recognized no set poetic form, nor any limited field for choice of themes. They placed emphasis on the individual and the ordinary life of common people. Among the humble and lowly they found inspiration for their noblest poetic expression. Their outlook on Nature and Man created an intense interest for our common humanity and a desire to alleviate sorrow and suffering. To illustrate this, we can point to the pastoral life depicted in Thomson's 'Seasons'; to the 'annals of the poor', which Gray sympathetically describes in the 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard'; to Cowper's 'Task', which holds up to admiration the coziness and lovableness of domestic joys; to the songs and poems of Burns, particularly the 'Cotter's Saturday Night', wherein the affections and passions of hom-

Note. - (2) See Page 1.

ely people are portrayed as the noblest of qualities on which Scotia's greatness is founded.

Sometimes the emphasis is placed on Man, and sometimes on Nature, for looking out imaginatively upon the Universe, the Romantic poets saw Man and Nature forming the two great parts, in which Man was reaching out through his reason, imagination, and feeling to comprehend the Almighty power that made it all. But the excesses of the French Revolution had created a distrust in man's progress along the lines of pure reason, and the feeling arose that to find the Infinite there must be a finer and closer emotional perception of Nature; that Man's 'better part' would be awakened under the influence of the sights and sounds of Nature; that the soul of goodness and purity would be stirred within him, and his finest feelings aroused and developed by exercising imagination, and practising meditation and contemplation amid the beauties of natural scenery.(1)

Now, Rousseau excelled in describing the beauties of Nature and the passions of the human heart, and, "in combining

> the two, - the effect of Nature on the feelings, and the feelings on Nature, he was without a fore runner or a model; and since all Literature after his time has been chiefly differentiated from that which preceded it by the color and tone resulting from the combination, therefore Rousseau holds an influence almost unrivalled in Literary history".(2)

(1) See Professor Baker's Introduction to Selections of French Prose and Poetry, illustrating the Romantic School, Methuen & Co.

(2) "Rousseau" in Encyclopedia Britannica, by G. Saintsbury, L.L.D: Litt. 11th Edition, 1911.

Because of this influence, he is frequently called the "Father of Romanticism".

Whatever influence Rousseau had upon Wordsworth's poetic genius will therefore be most chiefly observed in Wordsworth's attitude towards Nature and Nature's influence upon Wordsworth, both of which reactions should be, and are, fully revealed in Wordsworth's poetry.

Nature for Rousseau, stands as the equivalent of the elementary principle of intellectualized goodness in the world of both men and things; it is the antithesis of custom and formal reason,(1) and the term 'State of Nature', connotes for him a pristine natural state, where convention and custom are unknown. Hence Nature is opposed to Man in that it is always good, while Man, as he is in society, is evil. This conception of Nature, and the "State of Nature", was identified with the supposed reality which romantic travellers reported as having observed among savages. The simple 'noble savage' then became a model held up for the admiration of sophisticated civilized society. Rousseau writes thus about it:

> On ne peut reflechir sur les moeurs qu'on ne se plaise à se rappeler l'image de la simplicité des premiers temps. C'est un beau rivage, paré des seules mains de la nature, vers lequel on tourne incessament les yeux, et dont on se peut sent éloigner à regret.(2)

To this picture of simplicity he constantly points. He asks us to "compare without partiality the state of the citizen

(1) Wordsworth's Lectures and Essays, By Garrod, P.55.

(2) Discours sur les sciences, seconde partie.

with that of the savage, and trace out, if you can, how many inlets the former has opened to pain and death, besides those of his vices, his wants and his misfortunes.(1)

After comparing the barbarians, who overran Europe for so many years, with the people of the civilized Western Empire, whom they conquered - a comparison he makes to the disadvantage of the latter - he pleads inthis manner:

> O you, who have never heard the voice of Heaven, who think man destined only to live this little life and die in peace; you, who can resign in the midst of populous Cities your fatal acquisitions, your restless spirits, your corrupt hearts and endless desires; resume, since it depends entirely on yourselves, your ancient and primitive innocence; retire to the woods, there to lose sight and remembrance of the crimes of your contemporaries; and be not apprehensive of degrading your species, by renouncing its advances in order to renounce its vices.(2)

Throughout the whole of his "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality", Rousseau, for the purpose of sustaining his arguments, constantly makes comparisons between the "natural man", and his more civilized brother, - always to the disparagement of the modern product. In his "Discourse on the Moral effects of the Arts and Science", he declaims throughout against all progress, as being subversive of morals,

(1) Social Contract and other Essays". "Everyman's Library". Dent and Sons.
(2) Ibid. P.241 - 246.

happiness, and freedom, the inference being that a state of Nature for Mankind is an ideal condition.

This outlook on Nature is referred to as Arcadianism, and its fullest exponents are Chateaubriand and Bernardin de Ste Pierre.(1) But Wordsworth has no such belief in an ideal savage state. Moreover, he takes pains to make his position clear. Man as he is, not ideal man, is his constant theme; and in the third book of "The Excursion" he shows us that the Solitary, who hoped to find in the savage of North America the type of perfect man not to be found in the European of Europe or America, was disappointed in his search. He says:

> But that pure archetype of human greatness
> I found him not. There in his stead appeared
> A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;
> Remorseless, and submissive to no law
> But superstitions, fear, and abject sloth.(2)

Again, in the poem "Ruth", Wordsworth very definitely shows that Ruth's lover, brought up amidst the primeval forests, and "Arcadian" surroundings of the "noble savage" of the Rousseau school, possesses all the vices of cultivated and uncultivated European society. His baseness leads him to

(1) Bernardin De St. Pierre's - "Harmonies", "Etudies" "Paul et Virginie".
Chateaubriand - "Atala", "Rene", "Genie du Christianism".

(2) Excursion, Bk. 3 - 951-955.

desert Ruth, who in utter despair becomes insane. The crude facts of life, such as those dealt with in "Ruth, "Michael", "Peter Bell", and the "Leech Gatherer" are a constant source of inspiration for Wordsworth, and he points out that if this world is to be made better, it will be done by those who will exercise their skill in fashioning reforms, not in Elysium, or Arcadia, and

> Not in Utopia, - subterranean fields -
> Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where,
> But in the very world, which is the world
> Of all of us, - the place where, in the end
> We find our happiness or not at all. (1)

And when he becomes "composed", and "moderated" in his attitude towards the outward things of nature, and the inward things of imagination and reflection, he tells us:

> I sought
> For present good in life's familiar face
> And built thereon my hopes of good to come. (2)

It must be confessed that he has not always been of this way of thinking. In "Descriptive Sketches", published in 1793, and written, so the poet himself tells us, during his walks on the banks of the Loire in the years 1791-2, we have a remarkable approximation to Rousseau's view point in the lines:

> Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild,
> Was blest as free, for he was Nature's child.
> He all superior but his God disdained

(1) Prelude 11, 140 - 144.
(2) Ibid 13, 61 - 63.

Walked none restraining, and by none restrained;
Confessed no law but what his reason taught,
Did all he wished, and wished but what he ought.
As man in his primeval dower arrayed,
The image of his glorious sire displayed,
Even so by faithful Nature guarded, here
The traces of primeval Man appear. (1)

"Here", refers to the high Alps, through which he and his friend Jones were touring in 1790. He is comparing the lives of mountaineers amidst natural grandeur to the Arcadian existence of primitive man.

In the same poem, he is looking forward to a new Heaven and a new earth, with their origin in France, even though this state of things should be attained by rousing "Hell's own aid", and if the result should be to set the world afire, yet from the flames there will proceed, a

"great and glorious birth
As if a new made Heaven were hailing a new birth". (2)

But these opinions were those of a youth full of enthusiasim for Liberty and Fraternity, and Wordsworth definitely associates them with his youthful days, and contrasts them with the attitude of his mind in mature age, in the "Elegaic Stanzas on Peele Castle". He says that in his youth, he would have placed his ideal in Elysium:

(1) Fenwick note to Descriptive Sketches.

(2) Descriptive Sketches, F.F. 780. F. F.

Ah! then, if mine had been the painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam
The light that never was on land and see
The consecration and the poet's dream.

I would have planted thee, thou hoary pile
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

.....

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze
Or merely silent nature's breathing life.

.....

Such is the fond illusion of my heart
Such picture would I at that time have made;
And seen the soul of truth in every part
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been - 'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control
A power is gone which nothing can restore
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

The poem was written in 1805 for the "deep Distress" was due to the loss of his brother John, who had been drowned at sea. In 1807 the poet altered "illusion" to "delusion" which makes his

declaration all the stronger. Moreover, the lines ending, "The consecration and the Poet's dream", were given a new rendering in 1820:

And add a gleam
Of lustre, known to neither sea nor land
But borrowed from the youthful poet's dream.

but in deference to the wishes of friends, the original lines were afterwards replaced.

He means by all this, that the mirage created by phantasy would have been the means used in his youthful days, for the purpose of poetically describing Peele Castle, and the emotional feeling aroused within him by its sight. By doing so he would have proved a true disciple of Rousseau, and by not doing so he clearly demonstrates that a one time influence has lost its power, to give place to a new control, to a puissant and settled serenity, whereby he was able to harmonize Man and Nature by catching the strains of -

The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue.

CHAPTER 2.

WORDSWORTH AND THE ROUSSEAU SCHOOL OF POETS.

Rousseau's love of Nature, - reverie, - a tone of melancholy and morbid sentimentalism is characteristic of Rousseau and his followers. Wordsworth influenced but not permanently.

Rousseau's love of Nature led him to cultivate a passion for solitude, where he could experience emotions through a different medium than that of a jostling crowd.

> En meme temps qu'il donnait à ses contemporains le goût de la confession sentimentale, Rousseau leur ouvrait les yeux sur la nature physique, et leur inspirait le goût de la melancholie, sensibilité, nature, tristess poétique: ce sont trois formes de la même disposition d'âme, et c'est tout le lyrisme de Rousseau. (1)

To be alone and commune with Nature was to enjoy a higher life than was possible amidst the noisy world. In such congenial natural surroundings Rousseau constantly threw himself into his dreams, for his emotional faculties could not find satisfaction in actualities. He spent day after day in voluptuous reveries, creating people, situations, and sentiments amidst the most beautiful landscapes all of his own imaginative crea-

(1) Jean Jacques Rousseau par Joseph Texte. Hachette et Cie. Paris. P.P 303.

tion, and with it all, paradoxical as it may seem, laxity of morals. Thus he writes:

> J'allois me jeter seul dans un bateau, que je conduisois au milieu du lac quand l'eau étoit calme: et là, m' étendant tout de mon long dans le bateau, les yeux tournés vers le ciel, je me laissois aller et dériver lentement au gré, de l'eau, quelquefois pendant plusieurs heures plongé, dans mille revêries confuses, mais délicieuses, et qui, sans avoir aucun objet bien déterminé, ne constant, ne laissoient pas d'être a mon gré cent fois préférable à tout ce que j'avois trouvé de plus doux dans ce qu'on appelle les plaisirs de la vie. (1)

Such is typical of Rousseau. In proportion to the keeness of the feelings aroused in him, so in that proportion he truly lived. The perpetual consciousness of his inmost feelings, the pains and pleasures of his inmost soul were calculated to produce a morbid dissatisfaction with life. It produced among the disciples of Rousseau a fashionable pessimism known as "Le Mal du Siecle".

Wordsworth himself followed the fashion for a time. In 1795 he wrote "Lines left upon a seat in a Yew Tree", and in his poem, under pretence of describing the builder of the seat, we have a distinct autobiographical reference:

> He was one who owned
> No common soul. In youth by science nursed
> And led by nature into a wild scene
> Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
> A favoured Being, knowing no desire
> Which genius did not hallow.
>
> .....

(1). Reverie d'un promeneur solitaire. (Rousseau).

> The world for so it thought
> Owed him no service: wherefore he at once
> With indignation turned himself away
> And with the food of pride sustained his soul
> In solitude.
> .....
>
> Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
> A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
> An emblem of his own unfruitful life:
> And lifting up his head, he than would gaze
> On the more distant scene, - how lovely tis
> Thou seeest, - and he would gaze till it became
> Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
> The beauty still more beauteous.
> .....
>
> And so lost Man!
> On visionary views would fancy feed,
> Till his eye streamed with tears. (1)

This is the romantic melancholy of Rousseau. Wordsworth distinctly associates the feeling with the days of his youth. We have a similar strain in the opening lines of Descriptive Sketches:

> Me, lured by hope her sorrows to remove
> A heart, that could not much itself approve
> O'er Gallia's wastes of corn dejected led.

Yet at that time he was able to write to his sister Dorothy:

> "My spirits have been kept in a perpetual hurry of delight, by the almost uninterrupted succession of sublime and beautiful objects which have passed before my eyes." (2)

Again the same Descriptive Sketches, he sympathises with the pilgrims visiting the wonder working image of Einsiedeln and assumes an air of extreme dejection only explained by the sentimental fashion of the times. He cries:-

(1) Lines left upon a Seat of a Yew Tree. 12 - 45.
(2) Memoirs, Vol. 1, quoted from Harper's "Life of William Wordsworth". P.93.

> Without one hope her written griefs to blot
> Save in the land where all things are forgot.
> My heart alive to transports long unknown
> Half wishes your delusion were its own. (1)

There is no worship of melancholy in Wordsworth except in youth, and then for pleasure's sake. He tells us that he and Jones, during their walking tour in 1790, often amused themselves by following the fashion set by Rousseau:

> Nor, side by side
> Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone
> Each with his humor, could we fail to abound
> In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:
> Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,
> And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,
> And sober poesies of funereal flowers
> Gathered among those solitudes sublime
> From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow
> Did sweeten many a meditative hour. (2)

But this tone is the very opposite to that of the poems of his maturer years. In the later poems we find that hope and joy and love are the key notes of the harmony in which humanity blends itself with Nature. So he writes in The Excursion:

> For the man
> Who in this spirit communes with the Forms
> Of Nature, who with understanding heart
> Both knows and loves such objects as excite
> No morbid passions, no disquietude
> No vengeance and no hatred - needs must feel
> The joy of that pure principle of love
> So deeply, that unsatisfied with aught
> Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
> But seek for objects of a kindred love
> In fellow natures and a kindred joy.

(1) Descriptive Sketches, 570.

(2) Prelude 6. 547 - 556.

Or again:-

> One adequate support
> For the calamities of mortal life
> Exists, one only; an assured belief
> That the procession of our fate, however
> Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
> Of infinite benevolence and power:
> Whose everlasting purposes embrace
> All accidents, converting them to good.

And lastly, although instances could be multiplied:-

> The food of hope
> Is meditated action: robbed of this
> Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
> We perish also; for we live by hope
> And by desire; we see by the glad light
> And breathe the sweet air of futurity:
> And so we live, or else we have no life. (1)

(1) Excurion, 9, 20 - 26.

CHAPTER 3.

WORDSWORTH AND ROUSSEAU'S REVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES.

Rousseau's Revolutionary influence indirect. His doctrines set forth in "Social Contract" and Political Discourses. Wordsworth becomes revolutionist through friendship with Beaupuy. He adopts the principles of Rousseau temporarily, - excesses of the Revolution alienate Wordsworth's sympathies.

Rousseau's Revolutionary influence upon France and Europe was indirect. With him there was no violent outpouring against all the abuses from which France suffered. Instead of pointing out with a burning indignation the disabilities under which the mass of the people lived, he painted pictures of a social state, where these things were non-existent, and no miseries present except those inseparable from humanity.

> "The contrast between the sober, cheerful, prosperous scenes of romance and the dreariness of the reality of the field life of France, - this was the element that filled generous souls with an intoxicating transport". (1)

Such pictures we find in the New Heloise. What was, in France appeared in a very unfavorable light compared with what

(1) Life of Rousseau, by John Morley. P53.

might be, in a state where the ideals of the "Social Contrat" were practised. And these contrasts were just as readily drawn wherever Rousseau was read and generous hearts were found. In England there was no lack of sympathizers for French aspirations, and one enthusiast among them was Wordsworth.

But not until he had met at first hand some of the leaders; not until he had lived for a time in France, and had become a very part of France through his connection with Mademoiselle Vallon,[1] and not until his remarkable acquaintance with Beaupuy, did he become enthusiastic, and as we shall see, his enthusiasm did not survive long.

He went to France in November, 1791, and passed through Paris on his way to Orleans. He spent only a few days in the Capital City, and used up his time in visiting the Jacobin Club, and the National Legislative Assembly, in wandering through the streets to take in the sights, or in sitting in the sunlight amidst the ruins of the Bastille, where he picked up a stone as a relic of the occasion, and pocketed it, "in the guise of an Enthusiast", "affecting more emotion than I felt".[2] He tells us frankly, that he was carelessly indifferent to the great political earthquake that was shaking the foundation of society, and the reason for this, so he himself says, was his political and historical ignorance.

> I was unprepared
> With needful knowledge, had abruptly passed
> Into a theatre whose stage was filled
> And busy with an action far advanced.

(1) See Wordsworth and Annette, North American Review, Mar. 1918.
(2) Prelude 9 - 70.

> Like others, I had skimmed, and sometimes read
> With care, the master pamphlets of the day,
> Nor wanted such half insight as grew wild
> Upon that meagre soil, helped out by talk
> And public news. (1)

Among such master pamphlets would be included, we may safely conjecture, some of Rousseau's writings, and indeed the "Emilius" and the "Confessions" were among the books catalogued in Wordsworth's library at his death. However the Poet immediately follows on by saying:

> But having never seen
> A chronicle that might suffice to show
> Whence the main organs of the public power
> Had sprung, their transmigrations, when and how
> Accomplished, giving unto events
> A form and body; all things were to me
> Loose and disjointed, and the affections left
> Without a vital interest. (2)

Rousseau's influence upon Wordsworth is, so far at any rate, practically non existent.

At Orleans, Wordsworth consorted with officers of royalist leanings, who sought to win him to their cause. But he tells us:

> Though untaught by thinking or by books
> To reason well of polity or law
> And nice distinctions then on every tongue
> Of natural rights and civil.
>
> .....
>
> Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp
> Of orders and degrees, I nothing found
> Then, or ever had, even in the crudest youth
> That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned
> And ill could brook, beholding that the best
> Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to rule. (3)

(1) Prelude 9, 90.
(2) Prelude 9, 198.
(3) Prelude 9, 198.

He goes to some length to tell us the reason. He had been brought up amidst the hills of Cumberland, - a poor district, - yet one whose ruggedness is reflected in the independent nature of the dalesmen, and where, few and far between, are the occasions for meeting those whose claims to attention and respect are based on wealth and block. So, too, at Cambridge he had discovered that:

> Distinction open lay to all that came,
> And wealth and titles were in less esteem (1)
> Than talents, worth, and prosperous industry.

Hence, it followed:

> It could not be
> But that one tutored thus should look with awe
> Upon the faculties of man, receive
> Gladly the highest promises and hail
> As best, the government of equal rights
> And individual worth. (2)

And he attributes his indifference to the fact that unto him

> The events
> Seemed nothing out of nature's certain course
> A gift that was come rather late than soon. (3)

But now he came in contact with Michael Beaupuy, a man for whom he soon learned to entertain the highest feelings of esteem and regard. This man with his five brothers had been brought up on the literature and philosophy of the eighteenth century;hence his revolutionary principles were grounded on a thorough study of the social philosoply on which the revolutionary principles were based. Of him Harper

(1) Prelude 9. 230 - 3.
(2) Ibid. 238.
(3) Ibid. 247 - 8.

> No other man save Coleridge had so great an influence upon Wordsworth as this sweet and devoted patriot. Of him, no doubt, the poet thought, no matter of whom besides, when he wrote "The Character of the Happy Warrior". With his more systematic philosophy Beaupuy came to Wordsworth's support. He turned the young man's vague idealism into a firm principle. (1)

Wordsworth describes him thus:

> A patriot.....
>
> .....
>
> A meeker man
> Than this lived never, nor a more benign,
> Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries
> Made <u>him</u> more gracious, and his nature then
> Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly
> As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf.
> When foot hath crushed them. He through the events
> Of that great change wandered in perfect faith.
>
> .....
>
> By birth he ranked
> With the most noble, but unto the poor
> Among mankind he was in service bound.
>
> .....
>
> Man he loved
> As man; and to the mean and lowly
> And all the homely in their homely works
> Transferred a courtesy which had no air
> Of condescension.....
>
> A kind of radiant joy
> Diffused around him. (2)

And of their communion together we are told

> Oft in solitude
> With him did I discourse about the end
> Of civil government, and its widest forms.
> Of ancient royalty, and chartered rights,

(1) William Wordsworth, His Life Works and Influence - By George McLean Harper, Vol. 1, P.162 Scribner.

(2) <u>Prelude 9.</u> 290.

Custom and habit, novelty and change;
Of self respect, and virtue in the few
For patrimonial honour set apart
And ignorance in the labouring multitude. (1)

In addition they discoursed:

dearest themes
Man and his noble nature.

They recalled

The honourable deeds
Of ancient story
.....

And finally, beheld
A living confirmation of the whole,
Before us, in a people from the depth
Of shameful imbecility uprisen
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
Upon their virtues; saw in rudest men
Self sacrifice the firmest; generous love
And continence of mind, and sense of right,
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife. (2)

Thus he came to have:

Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one
Is law for all, and of that barren pride
In them who, by immunities unjust,
Between the sovereign and their people stand,
His helper and not theirs, laid stronger hold
Daily upon me, mixed with pity too
And love; for where hope is, there love will be
For the abject multitude. (3)

Examples of the misery due to the times were all about them, and one such, that of a hunger bitten girl herding a heifer tied to her arm, while she languidly continued her knitting made such an impression, that when Beaupuy exclaimed with emotion "Tis against <u>that</u>, that we are fighting", Wordsworth was completely won over, and from that day believed:

(1) <u>Prelude</u> 9, 321.
(2) Ibid. 360
(3) <u>Prelude</u> 9, 501.

Had left an interregnum's open space
For her to move about in uncontrolled.

The "interregnum's open space" referred to was the interval of comparative calm immediately following upon the execution of Robespierre, but these lines were suppressed later, and, a significant comment upon them and their suppression is seen in the third book of the Excursion where the poet tells us:

Nature was my guide
The Nature of the dissolute. (1)

Referring to his residence in France and the idea he had once entertained of making "common cause with those who perished", he writes in the tenth book of the Prelude (lines 220) his thanks to Providence for preventing him executing his plan for his sacrifice would have been "A poor mistaken and bewildered offering".

It all seems to indicate that for a time he was bursting with enthusiasm for revolutionary principles; that he was consumed with the reformer's zeal to improve the lot of man, but that the zeal was not strong enough to nurture the plant of revolutionary reform, when Beaupuy was no longer at hand, for the plant had found no "depth of soil" in the doctrines of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

(1) Harrod. Wordsworth. Lectures and Essays, P. 54.

CHAPTER 4.

WORDSWORTH, GODWIN and ROUSSEAU.

Wordsworth, disappointed in hopes of the Revolution, denies the doctrines of Rousseau by adopting the political philosophy of Godwin; pure reason opposed to sentiment; anti-monarchical and anti-militaristic views; evidence adduced in proof of same: - letters, short poems, The Borderers, and the contemporary opinion of Wordsworth. Godwin's views not held permanently by Wordsworth, evidence of same.

Within five years of leaving France, Wordsworth's conception of the French Revolution suffered a great change. He had hitherto thought of it, as a convinced disciple of Rousseau would be expected to do, namely, as consisting of a "return to Nature". But he became disappointed with a nation which, having succeeded in its own struggle for liberty, was now attempting to impose its authority upon other nations through wars of conquest. He therefore swung over to the theories of Godwin whose treatise, "Political Justice" was dominating English political thought at that time. The book was published in 1793, and of it Crabb Robinson records in his diary:

> I read a book which gave a turn to my mind, and in effect directed the whole course of

> my life.....It made me feel more generous. (1)

William Haylitt writes of it:

> No work in our time gave such a blow to the philosophical life of the country as the celebrated Enquiry Concerning Political Justice. (2)

and again, in the same Volume, "The Spirit of the Age", he tells us that Wordsworth advised a young student of the Temple, to throw aside his books of chemistry and read Godwin on Necessity. Wordsworth records the impression which the book made upon him in the lines:

> Yet I feel
> (Sustained by worthier as by wiser thoughts)
> The aspiration, nor shall ever cease
> To feel it. (3)

These were written in 1804, and tell us plainly that while Godwin's theories had no permanent effect on his philosophical outlook, yet at the time of reading the book, he had felt its power to such an extent that he never afterwards forgot the dynamic appeal it made to his feelings.

The great characteristic of Godwin's Political Justice is its readableness, and its freedom from complexity. In his preface to the book, Godwin acknowledges his indebtedness to three outstanding philosophers, d'Holbach, Helvetius and Rousseau, all of whom he draws upon for the purpose of establishing his own arguments, and for building up his own

(1) Crabb Robinson Diary. Reminiscences and Correspondence Edited by Thomas Sadler, 2 Vols. 1872, 1-18.
(2) William Hazlitt's Spirit of the Age, containing Essay on William Godwin.
(3) Prelude ll. 255 - 257.

theory of the fundamental importance of reason. He argues that when men are perfectly "reasonable" they will no longer be governed by prejudice, obsolete tradition or feelings, but each will act for the best. Godwin's political ideal is, therefore, individualism; the doctrine of liberty in its widest sense. Society, therefore, according to him should be nothing but an aggregation of units bound together by no rules whatever. In this we have the negation of Rousseau's doctrine of the "general will" in human affairs and conduct. To Godwin the "general will" was a new form of tyranny as would be any form of contract. He believes in nothing less lofty than Reason, and lays it down that there is no valid reason save that of the individual, and that collective reason which is only another name for the "general will" is tyranny. Godwin's system is therefore a reaction against Rousseau's. Acceptance of the one means the rejection of the other.

Wordsworth discarded what he held of Rousseau, and as evidence of his full acceptance of the creed of Godwin, we have his poems "Guilt and Sorrow" and the tragedy "The Borderers", which closely follow the plot of Godwin's political novel Caleb Williams, and the theories expounded in Political Justice. The change did not occur all at once. He tells us that at first

> To the wild theories that were afloat

he had

> But lent a careless ear, assured
> That time was ready to set all things right, (1)

(1) Prel. 11. 225.

The "wild theories", we may infer, were those of Godwin which had not yet been fully accepted by him. Later, he found,

> A ready welcome
> For speculative schemes, that promised to abstract
> The Hopes of Man out of his feelings, (1)

and says what a delight it would be,

> In knowledge and self rule
> To look through all the frailties of the world
> And, with a resolute mastery shaking off
> Infirmities of nature, time, and place,
> Build social upon personal liberty,
> Which to the blind restraints of general laws
> Superior, adopts one guide, the light of circum-
> stances
> Flashed upon an independent intellect.

We have the voice of one converted to Godwinism. Occasionally we have regrets as when he tells us -

> His heart had
> From Nature's way by outward accidents
> Been turned aside.

But the effect upon him of his conversion was such that finally he came to a position where he was -

> Continually
> Demanding formal proof
> And seeking it in everything.

That is, he placed his sole reliance on bare Reason

Godwin's revolutionary humanitarianism also appealled to Wordsworth's sympathies. Godwin does not feel hatred for those who enjoy special privileges, but because equality is the heart of his theory, therefore special privileges must be abolished so that benefit may accrue to all. In "Political Justice" is a vision of emancipated humanity enjoying natural justice, a condition which was then not existent because of institutions

(1) Prel. 11. 225.

based on custom and prejudice and not on right reason. These ideas, we have already pointed out, were set forth in the political novel "Caleb Williams", the plot and characters of which were closely approximated by Wordsworth in his tragedy "The Borderers". That "Marmaduke of the Borderers" represents Wordsworth's real ideas is shown in Wordsworth's letters of the time, where he expresses his belief that every enlightened lover of mankind, "Should let slip no opportunity of explaining and enforcing those general principles of social order which are applicable to all times and places. He should diffuse by every method a knowledge of those rules of political justice from which the farther any Government deviates, the more effectually must it defeat the object for which Government was ordained". (1)

The Memoirs also bear witness to these same opinions:

> He expresses a deep feeling of sorrow and commiseration for the wrongs suffered by human nature under existing Governments; and having fixed his mind on these melancholy results, and brooding upon them, he identified monarchy with its abuses, and looked for a correction of them all to the unexplored Utopia of democracy. (1)

From Godwin's anti-monarchical doctrines naturally followed an anti-militarist enthusiasm, for the connection between autocracy and war, made the remedy for war obvious. Kings should be banished, then war would disappear. Godwin warns against those who glorify patriotism, and teaches that love of country is good only when directed by reason. Indeed he preaches the

(1) Letters of the Wordsworth Family 1, 69 - 79, Date is 1794.

(1) Memoirs of William Wordsworth, by Christopher Wordsworth, D.D. 1851.

the modern doctrine of internationalism.

> "Wherever there are men who understand the value of political justice, and are prepared to assert it, that is his country. Wherever he can most contribute to the diffusion of those principles and the real happiness of mankind, that is his country. Nor does he desire for any country any other benefit than justice. (1)

Now Wordsworth adhered to Godwinism for some six years. He conquered love of country with love of mankind, and rebuked with a reasoned hatred of war the elemental instincts of a people in arms. We find his views expressed in his correspondence of the time, his letter to the Bishop of Llandaff, and in his short poems, "Guilt and Sorrow" and "The Convict".

The Bishop of Llandaff, Richard Watson had attacked the principles of the French Revolution in a sermon published in 1793, and in an appendix to the same issued after the execution of Louis XVI, he added to his former strictures a defence of the British Constitution. Wordsworth's letter was never published until 1876 by Grossart and was undated. The title reads:

A
Letter
to the
Bishop of Llandaff
on the extraordinary avowal of his
Political Principles
contained in the
Appendix to his Late Sermon
By a
Republican. (1)

The Writer affirms that his own spirit will meet with disapproval "for it is a republican spirit". He attacks the British penal code, the hereditary principle, and of monarchy he says "The

(1) Political Justice, 2. 513-515.

(1) Quoted from Grossart's Prose Works of William Wordsworth. Vol. 1.

> The office of Kings is a trial to which human virtue is not equal.

He questions whether the people if left to the quiet exercise of their own judgement

> "deprived almost of the necessaries of existence by the burden of their taxes"

would

> "cry out as with one voice, for a war from which not a single ray of consolation can visit them to compensate for the additional keenness with which they are about to smart under the scourge of labour, of cold and of hunger". (1)

In "Guilt and Sorrow", the sailor's story is based upon the theme

> "that sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities"

and this theme, says Professor Harper, is one to which Godwin would have given his consent, and which is easily recognized as conformable to his view of human nature. (2) Of this poem Wordsworth says, in a letter to his friend Wrangham, Nov. 20th, 1795, -

> Its object is partly to expose <u>the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war</u> as they affect individuals.

Thirty stanzas of the woman's story in the same poem, as originally published, contained a bitter denunciation of society, and the soldiery after whom the creature had dragged herself in the American Revolutionary war, are described as:

> That lap (their very nourishment) The brood their brothers blood. (3)

Again in the <u>Excursion</u> lines 871 - 916 of Book One, there is part of a poem originally written in 1797, and entitled at

(1) Grossart's <u>Prose Works of William Wordsworth</u>, Vol. 1, F. Moxon & Co.
(2) William Wordsworth, by G. McLean Harper, 1 - 271. 3 Ibid - 271.

that time "The Ruined Cottage". Margaret, the woman in the story, is left to grieve amid the ruins of her home, because her husband, helpless through poverty, has joined a troop of soldiers going to a distant land.

In "Lyrical Ballads" of 1798 is contained a poem "The Convict", which is of little value except for its political significance. It was originally printed in the London "Morning Post", December 14th, 1797, and the version clearly shows the poet's feeling toward monarchy:

> When from the dark Synod, or blood reeking field
> To his chamber the monarch is led,
> All soothers of sense, their soft virtue shall yield,
> And silent attention shall pillow his head.
>
> If the less guilty Convict a moment would doze
> And oblivion his tortures appease
> On the iron that galls him his limbs must repose
> In the damp dropping vault of disease. (1)

In 1795, while living at Racedown, Wordsworth conceived the idea of writing and publishing in collaboration with his friend Wrangham, satires on public men and national politics. The idea was not carried out but in an undated letter to Wrangham, this daring couplet appears:

> Heavens! Who sees Majesty in George's face?
> Or looks at Norfolk and can dream of grace? (2)

an expression antimonarchical enough in these days to warrant transportation for sedition. We have a constant affirmation of the same faith. In 1794, he had conceived the idea of establishing a magazine in London with his friend William Matthews,

(1) William Wordsworth, His Life, Work and Influence, P. 301., by G. McLean Harper. Scribner & Sons.

(2) Ibid, P.285.

as co-editor. Before definitely engaging in the task they exchanged ideas and political views. Wordsworth wrote to him thus:

> You know perhaps already that I am of that odious class of men called democrats, and of that class I shall ever continue.

And again in June, 1794:

> I disapprove of monarchical and aristocratic governments, however modified. Hereditary distinctions and privileged orders of every species, I think must necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement; hence it follows, that I am not amongst the admirers of the British Constitution. (1)

There is abundant evidence of this attitude from other sources, if further evidence were necessary, to establish the degree to which Wordsworth was influence by Godwin's theories.

In 1796 we are given the following account:

> About one o'clock, Thomas Poole.....and two young men friends of his come in..... One is an undergraduate of Oxford, the other of Cambridge. Each of them is shamefully hot with democratic rage as regards politics, and both Infidel as to religion. (2)

The Thomas Poole mentioned was a gentleman of independent means, and radical in outlook, who had become very friendly with Coleridge and Wordsworth at Nether Stowey. The quotation is from the diary of Poole's cousin John, fresh from Oxford; the occasion was a call of Thomas Poole at the house of his uncle in the neighboring Village of Upper Stowey.

(1) Letters to William Matthews, quoted in Letters of the Wordsworth Family, 1 - 65,69,77,81.

(2) Mrs Sandford's Thomas Poole and his friends. Vol. 1, P. 103.

In 1797 Thelwall, the agitator, visited Nether Stowey. Coleridge was interested in him not only because he was an ardent revolutionist, but because he was an atheist who might be converted to more moderate religious views. This is what Poole's cousin Charlotte says of the coterie in her diary:

> July 23, 1797. We are shocked to hear that Mr. Thelwall has spent some time at Stowey this week with Mr. Coleridge, and consequently with Tom Poole. Alfoxden House is taken by one of the fraternity and Woodlands by another. To what are we coming?

Wordsworth was living at Alfoxden and later had to give up the tenancy on account of the attitude taken by Mrs. St. Aubyn, the owner, towards her tenant for holding advanced radical views.

To what does all the foregoing point? - to the fact that Wordsworth with youthful enthusiasm had seized upon theory after theory, philosophic principles upon philosophic principles, as the "school of advanced thought", his associates and his environment changed. The declared "fixed principles" unconsciously, no doubt, were undergoing constant transmutation and we do not find them "fixed" to any degree until after quiet settlement amidst the hills and lakes of his native Cumberland. What can we adduce in proof of the change of opinions?

The "Convict" Poem, which M. Legouis remarks "is thoroughly Godwinian", as containing the philosopher's favourite idea for the reformation of the penal laws and in

which we have already noted the anti-monarchical protestations of Wordsworth, appeared in "lyrical Ballads" of 1798 and subsequently dropped from the poet's edition of his works.

The political disaffection of the fifth and sixth stanzas of "Guilt and Sorrow" in the story told by the female vagrant, where the legalized oppression of a poor man by a rich neighbor is entirely described, were later completely altered and weaked to:

> But through mischance and cruel wrong
> My father's substance fell into decay.

Likewise the stanzas in the original Female Vagrant bitterly attacking society were at a later date much softened, and the lines detracing the soldiery as -

> That lap (their very nourishment) their
> The brood
> brother's blood.
> (1)

were omitted in all editions after 1800.

As "Guilt and Sorrow" was finally published, it contained no word against capital punishment, but ends with the sailor's voluntary submission to the law, which avenges upon him the crime for which he is atoning, and the guilt which leaves no stain upon his soul. It afforded a splendid opportunity for the poet to drive hom Godwin's doctrine of retributive justice and the injustice of the death penalty, but he neglects it. His early attachment to Godwinism has by now undergone a change. He has passed through a period of evolution which will ultimately end by the poet discovering himself. How far he departed from his pronounced radical views on the penal laws is seen in his series of sonnets on the Punishment

(1) Harper 1 - 271.

of Death. For example in number eight he says:

> Lamentably do they err who strain
> His mandates, given rash impulse to control
> And keep vindictive thirstings from the soul,
> So far that, if consistent in their scheme
> They must forbid the State to inflict a pain
> Making of social order a mere dream.

Also in number eight of the same series, Wordsworth argues that while fit retributive justice is beyond the 'State's embrace", yet there may be found for each peculiar case, "well measured terrors in the road of wrongful acts", and that if the death penalty were not inflicted, the result would be such a feeling of injustice, among those who had suffered through the act of the murderer that "a wild justice of revenge would prevail".

Not only does Wordsworth depart from his Republican attitude but he adopts the other extreme, and becomes an ardent patriot of that type, whose love for mankind is bounded by his own national boundaries. In the sixth Book of the Excursion, we have an outburst of nationalism which far transcends the earlier spasms of Republicanism and of anti-monarchical outbursts:

> Hail to the Crown by Freedom shaped to gird
> An English Sovereign's brow! and to the throne
> Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations lie
> In veneration and a people's love.
> Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
> Hail to the State of England! And conjoin
> With this a salutation as devout
> Made to the spiritual fabric of the Church
> Founded on truth; by blood of martyrdom
> Cemented, by the hands of wisdom reared
> In beauty of holiness with ordered pomp
> Decent and unreproved. The voice that greets
> The majesty of both, shall pray for both
> That mutually protected and sustained
> They may endure long as the sea surrounds
> This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil. (1)

(1) The Excursion, Book VI, 1 - 12.

These views on the penal law, Monarchy, Church, and State are a complete recantation of those opinions expressed to Wrangham, and Matthews, quoted early in this chapter. The complete "turnover" points to the fact that while Wordsworth had been variously influenced to a greater or lesser degree during the years of his early manhood, yet not one of those agencies had left a permanent impression. He had, like the other young intellectuals of the time, differed from the crowd and had enjoyed the privilege of being included among those, who at that time as reformers and leaders of thought claimed to possess a greater measure of truth and vision than average men and women. It was only when he refused to follow fashionable thought, that he discovered himself, and revealed to the world his spiritual insight into the works of nature.

All this must be emphasized, because in our attempt to estimate Rousseau's influence upon Wordsworth, it is important to know what kind of a man Wordsworth was, and so far we have only discovered enthusiasm temporary in character whether inspired by foreign thought or native theory.

CHAPTER 5.

WORDSWORTH NOT A TRUE "SON OF ROUSSEAU".

Parallelism of thought shown by Wordsworth and Rousseau, - illustrations of same. The "parallelisms" have created two schools of thought, for and against Wordsworth as a "Son of Rousseau", - citations. Conclusion.

We have denied in this thesis that Rousseau had a permanent influence upon Wordsworth, and we have attempted to maintain our stand by reference to Rousseau's political and philosophical opinions, and to the interpretation which Rousseau placed upon a "return to Nature". But there are certain parallelisms of thought between Rousseau and Wordsworth, which make it appear as though the latter had absorbed to a very great degree the doctrines of the former.

Both, for example, found a harmony between the outward forms of nature, and the inward soul of man. In the mountains, rocks, and the gloomy woods Rousseau found refreshment for his spirit. In manifestations of Nature not hitherto regarded as friendly to man, he found sources of emotional experience and imaginative delight. So too did

Wordsworth, but not because he had learned the lesson at the feet of Rousseau. His childhood and youth, spent amidst magnificent natural beauty, had unconsciously led his poetic genius to the main spring of its delight - mountain, valley, wood, and lake. He pays tribute to it:

> Fair seed time had my soul, and I grew up
> Fostered alike by beauty and by fear
> Much favoured in my birthplace, and no less
> In that beloved Vale to which 'ere long
> We were transplanted. (1)

Likewise he describes the emotional effect of Nature upon him. When he steals a bird from another boy's trap, this is how he feels:

> I heard among the solitary hills
> Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
> Of undistinguishable motion, steps
> Almost as silent as the turf they trod. (2)

or, when he has climbed to some perilous ridge and rests upon it:

> With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
> Blow through mine ear! The sky seemed not a sky
> Of earth - and with what motion moved the clouds. (3)

He praises Nature for the "calm existence" which is his, when he is worthy of himself, and gives:

> Thanks to the means which Nature deigned to employ
> Whether her fearless visiting, or those
> That came with soft alarm, like hurtless light
> Opening the peaceful clouds. (4)

(1) Prelude 1, 301 - 305.
(2) Ibid 1, 322.
(3) Ibid 1, 337 - 40.
(4) Ibid 1, 351 - 354.

His sensitiveness to external surroundings, and the power of his imagination is depicted for us in the first book of the Prelude, where he tells us that once, when rowing on the lake in the dusky twilight of a Summer evening -

> A huge peak, black and huge
> As if with voluntary power instinct
> Upreared its head, (1)

To his mind it seemed alive, and strode after him so that with "trembling oars" he turned once more towards the mooring place, and -

> For days thereafter, no familiar shape
> Remained, no pleasant images of trees
> Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields,
> But huge and mighty forms that do not live
> Like living men moved slowly through the mind
> By day, and were a trouble to my dreams. (2)

All this, so reminiscent of Rousseau, was in Wordsworth's childhood, for up to the age of ten he says:

> I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
> Old as creation, drinking in a pure
> Organic pleasure. (3)

Nature's appeal during this stage of his mental growth had been purely sensual. He saw things, but saw them differently from other boys of his age, for to the sense of sight he superadded a poetic mind and spirit. But Nature had not yet made claim upon his intellectual faculties. He calls his experiences "fits of vulgar joy", and seems frequently to contradict Rousseau in a quiet but forceful manner. When beholding natural beauty he indulges in no phantasy to add to the pleasure; he then has stood -

(1) Prelude, 1 - 376.
(2) Ibid 1, 395 - 401.
(3) Ibid 1, 463 - 7.

Linking with the spectacle

No conscious memory of kindred sight,

And bringing with me no peculiar sense

Of quietness or peace. (1)

and he tells us:

The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock
The mountain and the deep and gloomy wood
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love.
That had no need of a remote charm
Unborrowed of the eye. (2)

The intellectual appeal of Nature came to Wordsworth in later lefe. It seems to have been no sudden growth, but a quiet development of those germs of feeling he had noted in his boyhood days. In "Tintern Abbey" we have this confession:

I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hours of thoughtless
Youth.....
I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime,

Because he recognizes an animating spirit "impelling all thinking things, rolling through all things" therefore he is still a -

Lover of all that we behold
Of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear - both what they half create
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature, and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse
The guide, the guardian of my heart; the soul
Of all my moral being.

(1) Prelude 1 - 373-6.

(2) "Tintern Abbey", 76 - 82.

This is a striking tribute to Nature as a moral teacher, besides expressing the antitheses of Rousseau's pleasure in reverie.

As a prophet of Nature, Rousseau was opposed to what was arbitrary and conventional, hence his constant insistence on a "return to Nature". Wordsworth shows the same strenuous opposition to formal custom, but in a different way, - most strikingly in the field of poetry. His whole theory of poetic diction is based in a belief, that there is no essential difference between the language of prose, and the language of poetry, hence the incidents and situations from common life, he proposes to describe as far as possible in the ordinary every day language used by men; (1) and he heldto the belief so strongly, that he chose for the themes of his "Ballads" common people, common incidents, and simple language used, entirely free from the poetic classical verbiage which had been prevalent before him.

But Lyrical Ballads was published in 1798 during the time, when Coleridge and Wordsworth were to one another as David and Jonathan, and "holding up the mirror to Nature" to reflect the ordinary incidents of life, is probably due more to Coleridge's direct influence than to Rousseau, and in addition there must not be overlooked, the subtle influence of Wordsworth's early reading of his favorite authors - Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Milton.

Another parallelism - Rousseau taught that each individual, while forming part of a great social whole, had to awaken to a consciousness of his rights and liberties. Wordsworth too loved his fellow man. He developed his capacity for

(1). See Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1798.

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for loving man from his contemplation of Nature, and he constantly shows his sympathy in the subjects he deals with in prose and verse:- The Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff, the Convention of Cintra, his correspondence on the danger to English rural life resulting from the evils of the factory system, and the Preface of 1798 already alluded to, wherein he stoutly maintains that,

> in humble and rustic life, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity.

All this is akin to Rousseau, for

> En même temps Rousseau élargissait beaucoup cette conception traditionnelle du Roman. Aux personnage pseudo-historiques, princes on gens de qualite, si fort à la mode depuis plus d'un siècle, il substituait ces héros obscus, la fille d'un gentilhomme compagnard du pays de Vand, et un simple maitre d'études, venu on ne sait d'où. (1)

But again, we affirm that Wordsworth had learnt to sympathize with the lot of common humanity very early in life, through his association with shepherds, wanderers and "just ordinary folk" of Cumberland dales. This bred in him the same distaste which Rousseau had for what seemed the luxurious and artificial life of Cities; He expresses it as follows -

> The services of artificial life
> And manners finely wrought, the delicate race
> Of colours lurking, gleaming up and down
> Through that state arras woven with silk and gold
> I neither knew nor cared for. (2)

The stand that we have taken is based on views expressed by

(1) Histore dela langue et de la Litteraiture francaise, Publiee sous la direction de L. Pelit de Tulleville. Vl. - P. 487

(2) Prelude, 559 - 566., Book 3.

by Wordsworth himself, bit it should be noted that there are two schools of opinion. Scholars like Professors Legouis, Babbitt, and Harper, maintain that Wordsworth was a true disciple of Wordsworth; others, such as, Herford, Beatty and Caird, take the opposite view point. For example, M. Legouis writes:

> In Wordsworth we find Rousseau's well known fundamental tenets; he has the same semi-mystical faith in the goodness of nature as well as in the excellence of the child; his ideas on education are almost identical; there are apparent a similar diffidence inrespect of the merely intellectual processes of the mind, and an equal trust in the good that many accrue to man from the cultivation of his senses and feelings. The differences between the two, mainly occasional and of a political nature seem secondary beside the profound analogies. For this reason, Wordsworth must be placed by the general historian among the numerous "Sons of Rousseau", who form the main battalion of romanticism; though, if we merely regard the ideas he expressed and propagated, his personality may, thereby, lose some of its originality and distinctness. (1)

Professor Beatty says in contradition;

> In the sphere of art, he (Wordsworth) revolts against poetic diction and harks back to Milton and Shakespeare and Chaucer; in doctrine he revolts against Rousseau and Godwin. This is Wordsworth's true originality; he was a genuine pioneer, only gradually clearing his notions on fundamental questions on art and life. But whatever the obscurities and contradictions of Wordsworth's doctrine may be, it is fundamentally opposed to that of Rousseau in the ultimate implication of both. If Wordsworth began as a "Son of Rousseau" he spent the best and most productive years in denying his father. (2)

(1) "William Wordsworth" in the Cambridge History of English Literature, XI, 103, by Emile Legouis.

(2) William Wordsworth, His doctrines and Art in their historical relations, By Arthur Beatty, 2nd Edition 1927. Madison.

Professor Harper leans towards the viewpoint of M. Legouis. He says -

> It has often been remarked that his works, particularly "The Prelude" show Wordsworth to have been a reader of Rousseau, and although it might be difficult to cite many passages in which Rousseau's teachings are distinctly traceable, there can hardly be any doubt that he was. (1)

In his "Essays on Literature" Professor Caird denies this.

> Wordsworth indeed was never, so far as we know, a worshipper of Rousseau. Indeed he never was one who learned much directly from books; his reluctance to reading was at all times great and in later years grew into positive aversion. But he was singularly responsive to the influences of outward nature, and also, at least during his youth and early manhood, he was deeply moved by the spirit of the times in which he lived. (2)

Lastly, we quote Professor Dowden's judgement:

> With Rousseau it might be supposed that the mind of the English poet would find something in common; but the sentimental return to Nature of Rousseau, his self conscious simplicity, and his singular combination of brooding sensuality, with a recoil from the enervating effects of luxury, differed as much as possible from the temper and genius of Wordsworth; on one side simple, hardgrained, veracious, as that of a Westmoreland dalesman, on the other capable of entrance into a plane of idealizing thought and imagination where for Rousseau to breathe would have been death. (3)

The fact is, that Wordsworth was possessed of a personality self-sufficient, independent, majestic in its isolation, which

(1) William Wordsworth, His Life, Works and Influence, Vol. 1, 46, By George McLean Harper, Chas. Scribner & Sons.
(2) Essays on Literature, by Edward Caird, L.L.D, Glasgow, 1909 Also Lord Grey and the Prelude in Times, Litt. Supl., June 7th, 1923.
(3) Studies in Literature, Dowden.P.146.

makes him stand out from his fellows like

> "Some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale, and midway, leaves
> the storm."

He was too great a giant to be permanently attracted into the sphere of influence where Rousseau held sway. Nevertheless, those qualities which make him giantesque in the field of poetry are the resultant of the many component influences which acted upon him, his environments, his varied associations, the friendship of Coleridge, the self abregating love of Dorothy, and, his own inborn genius.

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