BOOK VIII

BOOK VIII resurveys the first twenty-one years of Wordsworth’s life with reference to the development of his interest in man. In method, therefore, it is more like V and XIII than are any of the other books, but in subject matter it is closer to XIII, which deals with the restoration of Wordsworth’s faith in man. Such a study comes very properly at this place just before the account of the visit to France, which was not only the most important event in his life but the one that did most to develop his interest in humanity.

The sub-title, “Love of Nature Leading to Love of Man,” which first appears in B (with “Mankind” in place of “Man”), is misleading since the book treats of the lofty conception of man, not with the love of him, and since 495-675 have nothing to say about nature. It has been pointed out that in Guilt and Sorrow and Lyrical Ballads Wordsworth emphasized the pathos of the poor and that not before 1800—in “Michael,” “The Brothers,” the “Prospectus” to The Recluse, and a little later in “Resolution and Independence”—did he emphasize their dignity, “the native grandeur of the human soul” (Excursion, vi. 666). In these poems as in the present book and in XIII it is humble men, chiefly shepherds, who are considered, since it was such men whom Wordsworth found closely associated with Nature. As he never got close to them he found it easier to reduce them to the abstraction, Man.

Of all the books of The Prelude the A version of VIII is the most loosely knit, discursive, repetitious, and leisurely—“digestive” is hardly the word since nearly all the passages are connected, if somewhat remotely, with the main theme. The structure was much improved in revision but in architectonics (never Wordsworth’s strong point) VIII remains weaker even than V. The tangential and repetitious character of the book, despite the effort that was made to relate the several passages to one another and to the general theme, will be apparent from the following outline:

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BOOK VIII

1-69. The fair,—a happy human scene against a magnificent natural background.

A 62-119. Love of nature leading to love of man.

70-115. The lake country praised (cf. 124-8, 159-72, 215-22) and (75-97, 111-15) compared with "Gehöl's matchless gardens."

100-28. The attractiveness of the lake country is due in part to the character of the shepherds who inhabit it; these men helped Wordsworth to love the country and the beauty of the country helped him to love the men.

129-72. The shepherds of literature and of earlier times (129-56, cf. 173-85) contrasted with those among whom Wordsworth grew up.


185-215. Wordsworth himself has seen such life.

215-22. But he praises the ruggedness of the lake country (cf. 73-6, 98-172) because it seizes the heart with firmer grasp.

233-56. This is illustrated in the life of an English shepherd.

256-93. Accordingly, man as Wordsworth first saw him was ennobled by nature.

293-339. The conception of man thus formed is not a delusion; we are all introduced to knowledge through seeing the idealized before the sordid.

340-64. At first Wordsworth cared primarily for sports, later for nature, and finally for man.

365-475. Fancy increased Wordsworth's interest in man.

476-94. Wordsworth felt a sudden burst of sympathy, an awareness of One Being in all things, especially in man, which led to a sense of man's preeminence.

495-529. The contribution of Cambridge to the development of Wordsworth's interest in man.

530-675. The contribution of London to the development of Wordsworth's interest in man.

676-86. Summary.

Professor de Selincourt believes that VIII was originally composed in November, 1804,—vii, viii, x, and xi being written between the middle of October and Christmas, 1804. A 221-310, which was later rejected, he attributes to "Oct.-Dec. 1800, when the poet was engrossed in Michael" (p. xxi).
THE MIND OF A POET

To the list of "MSS. for Bk. viii" should be added, "for ll. [A] 741-50 X"; and, possibly, "an earlier form of [458-75] is found in MSS V and U following ii. [A] 144."

1-69. Wordsworth sent an early version of this passage to Sir George Beaumont in June or July, 1805, because of "its standing more independent of the rest of the poem than perhaps any other part of it." Like III and IV this book opens with a picture, although in the present instance the first few lines are given over to questions and the description that follows is longer than those in III or IV and does not deal with an event in the poet's life. The contrast with Bartholomew Fair, described near the end of the preceding book (vii. 675-721), was probably not intended; nor is it certain that Wordsworth wished in these opening lines to show how Nature throws about man a grandeur not his own and so leads him to admire and cherish his fellows.

5, 8, 15-16, 21. Except for the use of "yon" and "betimes," and the substitution of 15-16 for A 14, these lines mark an improvement over the earlier texts.

12, 21, 25-6, 39, A 64, A 83. Monosyllabic lines.

32-3, 40-1. Perhaps 32-3 were substituted for A 32 because the latter did not seem clear; A 40 was wisely dropped.

48-52. Malvern Hills, 952-6. "The" (48) is "their" in Cottle's poem. That these lines are "a tribute to the poet's wife" (de S., 549) is clearer in the E\(^2\) version of A 45-8.

59-60. Cf. Thomas Hardy's preface to Two on a Tower: "This slightly-built romance was the outcome of a wish to set the emotional history of two infinitesimal lives against the stupendous background of the stellar universe, and to impart to readers the sentiment that of these contrasting magnitudes the smaller might be the greater to them as men."

63. all things serve them: Cf. the sonnet "To Toussaint L'Ouverture," 9-12:

Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies.

The animism, of which there is a suggestion in this sonnet and
in "Loves" (64) of the present passage, is strikingly expressed in the A variant of A 55-61 (de S., 265, see Chapter v).

67. This hypermetrical line is prosodically more pleasing than A 59 and, although "prattling" is inferior to "lurking," it removes the uncertainty as to the syntax of "from" in A 59.

A 55-61, A variant (de S., 265). See Chapter v. more . . . than aught that fabling Greece: In his "To the Memory of . . . Shakespeare" Ben Jonson suggests that Shakespeare's comedies are greater than "all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome Sent forth."

A 62-119. Despite the interest of all these lines and the excellence of A 88-101 and A 114-19, they are omitted presumably because the general idea is that of the remainder of the book, because one of the illustrations (A 93-101) is much like an incident narrated a little later, and because they add to the confusion of a very loosely constructed book by bringing in one more passage which turns from nature description to the dignity and influence of the shepherd's life and then back to nature description. Wordsworth may also have felt that he was suggesting so much kindliness and interest in man at an early age as to leave little room for development—which had not gone far when he was twenty-one. See likewise A 171-8 n.

70-3. These lines connect this book closely with the concluding paragraph of VII and so suggest that in their original form they were composed soon after the completion of VII and were intended for the opening of VIII. Both passages refer not to "the spiritual presences of absent things," as do the similar lines in "Tintern Abbey" (22-30), but to the realization of the debt to nature. The contrast between "City's" and "rural," between "turbulent" and "peace" is hot in A, since most of 71-3 is a late addition.


A 66-8. Cf. vii. 740-61 n. This is one of the most dubious claims Wordsworth makes for the influence of nature.

A 69-79.

Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds,
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
THE MIND OF A POET

Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such minds
In childhood, from this solitary Being,
Or from like wanderer, haply have received . . .
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
In which they found their kindred with a world
Where want and sorrow were.

("Old Cumberland Beggar," 105-16)

Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved;—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.

("Michael," 23-33)

A 72. me: My interests and affections.
A 75. complacency: "Disposition or wish to please, or comply with the wishes of, others" (NED). Cf. xii. 38; Excursion, v. 376; and Wordsworth's letter to Dorothy of September 6, 1790.
A 77. the Creature in himself: Man as man?
A 78-9. "Although he was a stranger, personally unknown to me, Nature made him a brother of this world of 'Friends and youthful Playmates'" (A 74)?
A 80. motions of delight: The phrase is used again in xii. 9, where "motions" may perhaps have the meaning it has here and in x. 458,—emotions. The emotions are those mentioned in A 75-7.
A 81-101. There are some similarities between this account and lines 13-24 of The Vale of Esthwaite (P. W., Youth, p. 270), which was written in 1787. Although the incident here described is very like that less effectively told in 263-7, it may not be the same since this one took place when Wordsworth was "yet a very Child" (A 82) and the other when he had become "a rambling school-boy" (256). There is some like-
ness between this "sight" and that pictured in lines 31-47 of de S., 601-2, but Coleridge commented on a similar appearance, which he had observed independently:

In some of the phenomena of nature, in the mist of the mountain, the traveller beholds his own figure, but the glory round the head distinguishes it from a mere vulgar copy. In traversing the Brocken, in the north of Germany, at sunrise, the brilliant beams are shot askance, and you see before you a being of gigantic proportions, and of such elevated dignity, that you only know it to be yourself by similarity of action. In the same way, near Messina, natural forms, at determined distances, are represented on an invisible mist, not as they really exist, but dressed in all the prismatic colours of the imagination.  

A 86. Redounding: Abounding. vehement: Overpowering.
A 88-91. eyelet spots: Apparently much the same as "loop-holes"; the sun struck the hills through holes in the mist. "Process": "Onward movement in space; procession; progress, progression" (NED).
A 101-19.

Waving his hat, the shepherd in the vale
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,
That, barking busy 'mid the glittering rocks,
Hunts, where he points, the intercepted flocks.

(Evening Walk, 1793, 165-8)

The first seven lines of the present passage are pedestrian in style and prolix with unnecessary detail, but 114-16 are excellent. Presumably the incident was dropped because it has no bearing on the growth of a loftier conception of man. It does, however, illustrate the point made in A 171-8 but later omitted: the inextricable blending of man and nature in the mind of the young poet.

A 111. a Man's intelligence: The meaning, as is clear from A², is that the dog was directed by the intelligence of his master. "The man's" would be clearer.
A 114. away: Should be "a way."
A 118-19. In 471-5 a similar instance of the pathetic fallacy is cited as an illustration of fancy; the Wanderer read "utterable love" in the faces of the clouds (Excursion, i. 203-5).

75-97. Although this admirable purple patch may be justified by the emphasis it gives to the idea developed in the lines
that follow, it probably owes its existence to Wordsworth's love of romance (see vii. 77-84 n.).

83-4, 90. Better than A 129-30, 136, which they displace.

86. "Sunny" is associated with "domes Of pleasure" (cf. 84-5) in "Kubla Khan," 36 and 47; "Mount" is found in "Kubla Khan," 41.

87-8. See vi. 505 n.

98-110. Cf. Recluse, i. i. 309-470 and "Enough of garlands."

99. primitive: Original; contrasted with what man had done in Gehol's gardens.

100-3. Wordsworth insists not that nature is more uplifting in the lake region than in the Orient but that it is sensuously more "delicious" because of the character of the men who inhabit it. In A 150-1, later omitted as awkward and repetitious, he speaks of the district as breathing the fragrance of humanity.

104-5. See vi. 32-3 n., iii. 355 n.

107-8. Now to individual ends, now to social. By his manner of life he was necessarily led to attend to both.

De S., 553-9. Discussion of these lines will be found at the end of the commentary on Book VIII (pp. 480-92 below).

111. "At an age when" (A 159) might better have been kept than "to a child" (112, A 162) since it makes clearer the point of 116-20.

114. dance of images: See vi. 158-60 n.


118-19. The child seems not to regard [pay attention to] either man or nature.

A 171-8. Omitted from the final text because, penetrating and well phrased as are A 171-2 and interesting as are A 175-8 (note "Flow'd in by gushes"), they confuse the issue. A 101-19, which illustrate the point made in the present passage, were presumably dropped for the same reason. For Wordsworth's theme is not how love of nature blended with love of man but how nature exalted his conception of man.

A 173. these two principles: Implied in "the green earth" (A 166) and "human interests" (A 167).

121-4. Adapted from A 72-8 (E has A 78 after 123) to take the place of A 178-9.
125-7. Fountains which were there most abundant since Nature there dictated man's occupations. See xiii. 102 n. In place of "Nature dictated" A 181 has "Illustrated by Nature," in which "Illustrated" probably means, as elsewhere in Wordsworth, "rendered illustrious," that is, were not only "adorned" but given dignity and distinction by Nature.

129-59. Connected only indirectly with the theme of viii: the shepherds with whom Wordsworth's admiration for man took its rise were very different from those who lived in earlier times or those described in books.

129-32 and most of 135-40 and 157-8 are not in A. With 129-32 cf. Descriptive Sketches (1793), 474-91; 140 is a sonorous line.


164-7. "Lighter graces such as the may-pole were gone (129-59), but I knew instances of danger which stirred my imagination and so [this is only implied] made me conceive of man as a noble being." Wordsworth wrote to John Wilson in June, 1802: "There cannot be a doubt that in tracts of country where images of danger, melancholy, and grandeur, or loveliness, softness, and ease prevail, they will make themselves felt powerfully in forming the characters of the people." Cf. also the V variant of v. A 472 and Excursion, i. 163-6:

many a tale
Traditionary round the mountains hung,
And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
Nourished Imagination in her growth.

The early form of 164-5 (A 211-12), that given in Y, is revealing. See p. 48 above. Concerning the animism of 165 see xiv. 113 n. and Chapter v.

A 228-43. Nowhere else in The Prelude is there such a roll-call of local place-names, although a number of these reappear in "Musings near Aquapendente," 30-49. Such names are usually eliminated from the final text (see i. A 287-8 n.; ix. 40-1 n.) and in the present case are meaningless and ineffectual for most readers. Yet those who are familiar with the locality will, like Wordsworth, find pleasure in recalling them. To
him they were, of all spots not in his immediate vicinity, those
he saw most often, since they lie on the ridge of mountains
north-east and north of Dove Cottage in the triangle between
Grasmere, Brother's Water, and Thirlmere. Wordsworth's
"The Cock is crowing" was composed "at the foot of Brother's
Water." Near Grisedale Tarn, which lies at the head of "Gris-
dale's houseless Vale" (A 239,—it is still houseless), Words-
worth said good-bye to his brother John for the next to the
last time (see "Elegiac Verses, John Wordsworth"). According
to Knight (viii, 225), who refers to "There is an Emini-
ence," Arthur's Seat (A 232) is Stone Arthur.
A 241-3. Excellent lines.
A 299-300, A 302-3, A 306, A 308-9. In the main mono-
syllabic and unimpressive.
173-85. Notable poetry, which is connected with the subject
of the present book only in the same indirect way as is 75-97.
The passage is something like xi. 424-70 and different from
most of Wordsworth's poetry in being classical in both manner
and matter.
181. **calmly**: "Sweetly" in A 319; see de S., xlvi.
183. The omission of "the" before "Invisible" (A 321),
which produces a less flowing rhythm, may be due to the initial
th's in "thrilling the."
185-209. In view of 209-15, 185-6, 188, it is not unlikely
that Wordsworth is here referring to the "Goldene Aue," a
fertile plain in Prussian Saxony south of the Harz mountains
and stretching eastward from Nordhausen. He and his sister
wrote Coleridge from Nordhausen on February 27, 1799.
200-3. Neither the somewhat conventional and obvious "to
. . . fife" nor the stilted "Nook is there none" and "the same"
are in A 338-40.
215-22. Similar to 98-110 as 223-93 is similar to 111-63.
"Powers" (218), animism, see xiv. 113 n. and pp. 21-5 above.
Only the last three words of 216-18 are in A; "my native
region" (218, not in A) is needed to make clear that Words-
worth is no longer speaking of Germany.
218-22. Here again Wordsworth praises bad weather (see
i. 416-18 n.), the terrifying (see Chapter III), and the lonely (see Chapter IV).


Thence down the steep a pile of grass he throws
The fodder of his herds in winter snows (*D. S.*, 472-3)

recalls *P.*, viii. 226-9; and the contrasted picture (*D. S.*, 474-85) of the idyllic life led “of yore” by shepherds, which follows this account, is much like the description of Arcadian pastoral life, also introduced for the sake of contrast, in two passages (*P.*, viii. 128-56, 173-85) which precede this one.

229-30. *And when the spring Looks out*: Cf. Thomson's *Winter*, 16: “Looked out the joyous Spring; looked out, and smiled.”


A 361-3. *and feeds . . . it*: Monosyllables, which likewise make up A 365. Most of A 360-5, 373-4 and all of A 367-8, 371 are omitted from the final text presumably because they give details that are needless or are implied in the remainder of the account. A 367 might well have been kept.

239-49. Replaces A 379-82. Except for 240-1, 243, 246 (“protending”), 249, and A 379, both versions are good, but none of the early lines is so pleasing as 244-5 and 248. The final text suggests that Philosophy might well follow the shepherd—a course which had at first seemed needless.

251-6. Cf. *The Recluse*, i. i. 358-62:

> it is in truth
> A mighty gain, that Labour here preserves
> His rosy face, a servant only here
> Of the fire-side, or of the open field,
> A freeman, therefore, sound and unimpaired.

252. *lies*: Substituted for “is” (A 385); cf. “became” (280, “was like” A 414) and de S., xlv. Note also “Had . . .
looks" (261) as compared with "Seem'd... oft" (A 395).

255. indolence: Cf. 204-6 and vi. A 46 n.

256-73. Here Wordsworth returns to 215-22 and to the development and illustration of 98-128.

258. Cf. 335-6, 485-94 and n.

259. Nature: A personification of the external world and the forces at work in it which suggests the anima mundi.


A 396-7. Cf. i. 330-9. Omitted because abrupt (A² overcomes this) and because "suddenly... vapours" is implied in 264, which is not in A. The final text of 261-6 seems to me the best.

262-3. Cf. i. 485-90, v. 480-90. The alliteration of "trod... trackless" may be unconscious, or partly so.


267-8. Clearer but more pedestrian than A 401-2, which it replaces.

267. like Greenland bears: i.e. huge and white.


284. A significant comment. The dalesmen appealed to the imagination more strongly than did the colorless, idealized shepherds of pastoral literature.

288. for the purposes of kind: An awkward, obscure phrase, which seems to mean "from the point of view of his species," that is, "when compared with other men."

292. That is, Wordsworth knew little of the individual man and was largely indifferent to him; cf. 608-11, A 760-7 n., and see pp. 109-11 above. Similarly, it was the idea of Geometry and of the Church of England that appealed to him (see vi. 115-67 n.).

293. something must have felt: Another indication that Wordsworth was aware of a tendency in himself to read into his earlier consciousness feelings and thoughts that first came to him in later life. See iii. 612-16 n.

296-301. A kind of anti-rationalism; see Chapter vii. "Dead" is contrasted with "vital" as "letter" is with "spirit"; and, in general, reasoning about abstractions together with knowl-
edge gained from books is contrasted with the wisdom which is acquired by living.

302. Nature: Probably external nature; the God who made the external world and man and who adapted each to the other.

306-8. Wordsworth’s assertion that we are led to knowledge by seeing life at first not as it really is but idealized seems to me inconsistent with his praise of the rough-and-tumble experience in a public school (v. 406-25, xiv. 329-47). The idea is repeated in 317-27: Wordsworth does not say, what he may well have believed, that one must learn in this way, that it is the only road to truth, but that actually it is the way that, in the main, we do learn. Cf. A 760-7 and n. and “The Country Church-yard and Ancient Epitaphs” (Grosart, ii, 42): “that spirit of forbearance and those kindly prepossessions, without which human life can in no condition be profitably looked at or described.”

309-10, 315-16. Except for “evil” and “objects” these four lines are made up entirely of monosyllables.

328-9. Another expression of Wordsworth’s love of freedom (see 251-6 and n.; vi. 32-3 n.) and of the importance freedom held in his conception of education (see v. 223-363 and notes). Lines 328-30 are substituted for A 462 and the pompous 335-6 for A 467.

275-339. There is considerable repetition here. Lines 275-83 say much the same thing as 303-5 and 315-17; 306-11 is similar to 322-7; 317-22 to 330-4.

335-6. A much stronger affirmation than A 468, for which it is substituted. Cf. 257-60, 485-94 and n.

340-56. Cf. 679-86. The three stages described here are presumably the same as those mentioned in “Tintern Abbey,” 65-102, although there are important differences in the two accounts of the last period. Mr. Arthur Beatty attaches great importance to the three stages, which he thinks were derived from Hartley. But it is a division that would naturally occur to anybody and one often made in tracing the development of painters and writers. With 342-5 compare i. 328-30, 544-8; with 345-7, ii. 48b-54a, 198-203a, 276-81; with 337b-51a, iv. 191-255, viii. 485-94.

A 471-4. See de S., xlv.

363-4. Excellent verse; an illustration of the idea may be found in lines 31-47 of de S., 601-2.

A 497-509. Although these lines are more poetic and more pleasing than many retained in the final text, they do not advance the thought or show how Wordsworth came to have a lofty conception of man. Nor are they connected with what immediately precedes or directly with what follows. A 495-6 cannot be intended to apply to them since those lines refer to "beast or bird." Accordingly they must be a development of 312-17 (A 446-51). Since the thought takes a different turn at 317 and again at 340, 356, and 365, and since there are decided breaks at 340 and 365, it is confusing to revert (none too clearly) to 312-17 just before 365.

A 503, A² variant. Perhaps omitted because Wordsworth felt it was too much like Sir Egerton Brydges's sonnet, "On Echo and Silence," which was first published in 1785:

> In eddying course when leaves began to fly,
> And Autumn in her lap the store to strew,
> As 'mid wild scenes I chanced the Muse to woo,
> Through glens untrod and woods that frowned on high,
> Two sleeping nymphs with wonder mute I spy!—
> And lo, she's gone!—in robe of dark green hue,
> 'Twas Echo from her sister Silence flew:
> For quick the hunter's horn resounded to the sky!
> In shade affrighted Silence melts away.
> Not so her sister!—hark, for onward still
> With far-heard step she takes her listening way,
> Bounding from rock to rock, and hill to hill!
> Ah, mark the merry maid in mockful play
> With thousand mimic tones the laughing forest fill.

There is a fair chance of Wordsworth's being influenced by this sonnet since he esteemed it "above all, among modern writers." Like Brydges he mentions two sleeping sisters, Echo and Silence, and tells how Echo is roused and runs around the hills mocking Silence. Furthermore, although Wordworth's first two and a third lines fit in with the A 497-509 series, which describes various occupations, the remaining lines stand apart from their context like an independent stanza or incomplete
sonnet. The echo fascinated Wordsworth; see p. 142 above.

365. that: A demonstrative pronoun used in the sense of "the well-known or universal." See ii. 260-1.

366, 373. The plainness and severity of the imagination is contrasted with the wilfulness and conceit of fancy.

A 513-21. More interesting than 368-73 but perhaps unnecessarily detailed. A 513-15a, A 518, A 521 are not in the final text and 368-9 are not in A.

A 513. Nature's: My nature's; "inner" is emphatic and, like "mute" (A 512), is contrasted with A 514-15.

A 515. A visible shape: "A visible clothing of harmonious words," D. The construction of the two lines that follow in D is not clear—"and to" seems to be needed at the beginning of them.

A 519. those shapes of human life: Described in A 497-509.

373. fancy: Coleridge and Wordsworth laid so much stress upon the imagination that they were anxious lest their readers should confuse it with the more facile, airy, and capricious manipulation of reality which they termed "fancy." It is strange that they had little to say about another equally important distinction, that between imagination and invention—a quality extensively illustrated in the epics of their friend Southey. Wordsworth comments on fancy in xiv. A 282-306, in his note to "The Thorn," and in his Preface of 1815; Coleridge, who presumably was the first to develop the difference between the two faculties, discusses them in the fourth and thirteenth chapters of the Biographia Literaria and in Table Talk, June 23, 1834. "Many of the poems classed by Wordsworth under the heading 'Poems of the Fancy,' are by no means distinguished chiefly by this characteristic." Imagination has affinities with the Vernunft, fancy with the Verstand. See pp. 138-40 above. In the present passage Wordsworth points out that the adolescent boy's sentimental distortion of life and nature as well as his turning his back on reality to lose himself in a dream world both stimulated for a time his interest in nature and in man (374-6, A 583-7). Cf. ii. 386-95, iv. 231-55. conceit: "Fancy; fanciful opinion" (NED).

mentioned in 377-80, 392-420. Other illustrations are given in "A Morning Exercise," 1-22.

381-3. An improvement over A 529-31, which they displace.

A 540. A good line, which was omitted probably because of its exaggeration.

392-406. More poetic as well as more closely knit than A 541-58. A 542, A 550, A 553 and most of A 551-2 are dropped; 401 is added. The earliest form of 392, that in Y, is clearer but more prosaic than that finally adopted.

406-20. See vii. 77-84 n. Ten lines shorter than A 558-82 yet nothing of value has been lost, unless it be A 571, and the passage as a whole has been improved. Yet the first line and a half are abrupt, the third line is rough with stressed monosyllables and is none too clear, and 410-13 is less natural and pleasing than A 568-71. Note the repetition of "oft," "often," "restless" in 410-13. Jacob Boehme in his twenty-fifth year was "vom Göttlichem Licht ergriffen und mit seinem gestirnten Seelengeiste durch einen jählichen Anblick eines zinnernen Gefässes (als des lieblich jovialen Scheins) zu dem innersten Grunde oder centro der geheimen Natur eingeführet" (Frankenberg's life of Boehme as quoted in Alexandre Koyre's La Philosophie de Jacob Boehme, Paris, 1929, p. 19 n.).


421-3. Clearer than A 582-4: the original vague impulse from the diamond light was imaginative; its conscious development into a shield, the entrance to a magic cave or fairies' palace was the work of fancy.

A 584-5. Cf. A 521; imaginative feelings seemed to the boy more valuable when developed by Fancy, in her own capricious way—the imagination is not "wilful" since it cannot do as it pleases with its material.

A 585-9. These lines, later omitted as prosaic and unnecessary, serve to remind the reader that the discussion of fancy is not a digression but an attempt to show how fancy leads to the "love of man." "This Power," like "this adulterate Power" of A 591, is Fancy.
423-6. The "busy Power" is the Fancy (cf. 413) who, as is illustrated in 384-91, 402-6, 437-43, turned the attention of "her ready pupil," Wordsworth, to what he understood least, "human passions," and so stimulated his interest in man.

A 591-6. "Of this . . . compar'd" (A 591-3) and "chance . . . such" (A 595-6) are omitted and "in the midst" (A 593) is changed in the final text, which thus escapes the pedestrian, monosyllabic style of A, as well as the egotism of "on me not wasted" (A 595).

426-32. See iii. 158-69 and n.

429-31. Cf. A 602-4; xiii. 29-39. Wordsworth's fancy might have run away with him (cf. 114-15) if his mind had not been filled with reality, with images of grand and enduring natural objects.

432. Cf. xiii. 1-10.

434. A great improvement over the cacophonous and almost monosyllabic A 606.

A 601-4a. Omitted from the final text because a wordy, feeble repetition of A 596-600. "Solid" is an unfortunate epithet to apply to images.

443-50. A romantic picture conceived by the young Wordsworth without any regard to reality. These lines continue the idea of 437b-443a. "Knew" (445), fancied.

451-75. This incident must have had for Wordsworth a significance that none of his four versified descriptions of it communicates to the reader. To him it may have become a symbol of his first attempts to write poetry about the life around him. The earliest surviving account of it is found in The Vale of Esthwaite, 498-513. 451 has "the cautious double negative," one of the worst features of Wordsworth's later style (see p. 606 below).

466. high eastern hill: Hamlet, i. i. 166.

468-75. See Marjorie L. Barstow's Wordsworth's Theory of Poetic Diction (Yale Studies in English, LVII, New Haven, 1917), pp. 75-83. Only 471-5 (cf. A 117-19) illustrate the workings of fancy, and even these lines, although they may indicate how fancy helped to deepen the boy's nature, are not related to the growth of his "love of man." Strangely enough, Rydal Mount, the poet's last residence, has an extended view
towards Esthwaite Lake and Hawkshead, which are only five or six miles away, so that from his bed-room on the upper floor the dying Wordsworth might have cast a look upon his "dear native regions."

476-9. Substituted for A 623-5, which is none too clear and which had to be changed because of the insertion of 451-75. "In time the power of fancy waned and of a sudden there came that marked change in my feelings which has already been described as beginning in my seventeenth year" (see ii. 386-418 and iii. 127-35). Line 479 speaks of the new feeling as a "sympathy" for all things, hence for men, and so relates it to the theme of the present book.

481. *the several frames of things*: Natural objects, such as stars, regarded as structures. Cf. i. A 128; x. 423; xiv. A\* variant of A 79-83, A 417, 450.

485-94. These lines add an idea not in II or III; in view of 491-4 (A 636-9) the meaning seems to be: "I was conscious not only of the presence of one Being in all things [as mentioned in II and III] but of this Being, the godhead, as present most fully and powerfully in man." The supremacy of man (mentioned in 257-60, 335-6; de S., 558-9, lines 212-13, 239-40) is insisted upon again in x. 424-6; xiv. 256-60, A 262-8, 448-54. Cf. also

*He murmurs near the running brooks*
*A music sweeter than their own.*

("A Poet's Epitaph," 39-40)

This idea is closely bound up with the belief in man's "creative sensibility" (ii. 245-61 n.). See de S., lviii.

486. *Outwardly, inwardly*: Externally, internally? If the meaning is "in others, in myself," A 631b-2a are tautological.

491. If, as the context suggests, this means "divine power and love," the idea is entirely different from that of A 635-6: in capability of being carried away by power and love. Yet 490, like A 634-6, attributes man's preeminence to his emotional capacity (see Chapter II).

493-4. These orthodox lines are taken without change from A.

495-675. Except in the concluding paragraph, the remainder
of the book has nothing to say of the influence of nature in developing a loftier conception of man. But see 676-86 n.

495-529. This very general and, in part, obscure account fails to explain how the life in Cambridge contributed to the development of a lofty conception of man. Indeed 495-517 suggest that the influence of the four university years was really in the opposite direction and that the desire to present his development as continuous led Wordsworth to distort the facts. In any case Cambridge could have stimulated his admiration for humble man (with whom this book deals) only through the contrast his professors and fellow students offered to them (see iii. 550-61). Vice and guilt receive more emphasis here than in iii or iv.

A 640. as in a dream: Cf. iii. 30 and n.

496-7. temporal shapes Of vice and folly: Contrasted with the eternal shapes of nobility and grandeur (the mountains) by which he had formerly been "begirt."

499. discriminate: Discriminated. "I began for the first time to observe manners and characters, to analyze and discuss them with others; as a result,

Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
Whereby society has parted man
From man, [were stressed to the] neglect [of] the
universal heart.” (xiii. 218-20)

501. impersonated thought: The idealized conception of mankind which he had invested with personality. Lines 501-2 emphasize the theoretical nature of Wordsworth's "love of man."

505-9. The figure seems to be that of daylight shining through a rich, old curtain. A similar idea is expressed in 625-34; iii. 261-77. The final text omits the unnecessary A 655.

510-17. The reaction to vice pictured here is closer to that described in vii. A 412-34 than to the unawareness which in iii. A 531-9 Wordsworth says characterized his university days. See iii. A 531-41 n.; vii. A 71 n.

516-17. See vi. 505 n.

518-29. A very vague, obscure passage. A 665b-7, which is entirely different from 519b-20a, together with 524-6 and
"safety" of A 669 ("guidance" in 522!) suggest that Wordsworth tried to help a fellow student by warning him of his evil courses, and was disliked and made unhappy for his pains. "Understanding" may mean "coming to understand men and things." "Love The end [i.e. the purpose or meaning] of life" is also a baffling expression since one would expect "understand" in place of "love." Perhaps "The end of life" means simply "life."

530-675. Except for the concluding paragraph, the remainder of the book deals with the contribution that life in London made to the growth of Wordsworth's interest in man and respect for him and his achievements. Although the connection is not always obvious, each paragraph except 560-89, the cave figure, relates to this question. The argument may be too subtle and far-fetched to be convincing, especially as, aside from 645-58, nothing is said of the influence (suggested in vii. 359-65, 382-99) London must have exerted in the opposite direction,—towards lowering Wordsworth's conception of man; yet none of it is beside the point.

530-1. These lines, nobler in style than the prosaic A 677, were added in 1832 or 1839. They recall the "Ode to Duty" (written 1804), especially "Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear . . ." (41), and are in marked contrast with "played idly . . . amusement" of 533-9, which describe the earlier picture of London.

543-59. See Chapter VIII. The mystic experience here described was, for Wordsworth, so far as we know, unique. It took place in a crowd, amid "mean" surroundings, the uninspiring nature of which is emphasized, and it was not occasioned by nature or by anything seen or heard but by an idea. It is most like the experience described in vi. 592-616 but that took its rise from the recollection in tranquility of an unusually stirring incident and one in which natural beauty had played a considerable part. This account also is clearer than any of the others in revealing how brief such experiences may be (557-8) and how very indefinite is the memory of what happens in them (553-4, A 708-9). This divine moment showed Wordsworth that the city might yield the loftiest spiritual revelations and, since it was the sense of what man
had done and suffered in London that moved him, the experience presumably increased his admiration for man, his high opinion of man's possibilities. Apparently the figure implied in 554-5 is that of power growing up within him as the weight of ages descended upon him. "Yet . . . memory" (558-9) was substituted for the pedestrian "and I . . . Remember" (A 708-9), which was already expressed in A 700-5. Here as in v. 197 one would expect "with Eternity" or "above [or "apart from"] Time."

560-89. This vivid comparison, perhaps the longest in *The Prelude*, belongs, together with the paragraph that follows (590-6), more properly in vii since both picture the impression made by London and neither is concerned with its contribution to the "love of man." Lines 568-75 are particularly good; 582b-4a are less vivid than A 731-6a but 584b-90 have fewer, better developed details and are more effective than A 736b-40. According to Nowell Smith, Antiparos, though known to the ancients as Oliares, was not described by them but "by several modern travellers." This passage is, therefore, another instance of Wordsworth's indebtedness to books of travel (see iii. 433-44 n.).

564. *he*: Retained from A 714, although when A 710 was changed to 560 it was no longer needed. Cf. 611 n. and de S., note to A 774.

589. Eyes that can follow the suggestions of their minds. Cf. the interesting line in D between 582 and 583.

590. Between this pedestrian, monosyllabic line and 591, which is not much better, A has two that are pleasing and illuminating. With the second of these compare E² variant of vi. A 460-1.

593. A skilful condensation of the wordy A 746-7. "Fount" is not a happy figure; "arbiter" or "moulder" would be better. Even in 1804 only an Englishman would have termed London the fount of the world's destiny and chief residence of the passions.

594-5. To one who knows their history, the streets, squares, monuments, and buildings of London furnish a kind of chronicle of the passions once active in and about them. "Their home Imperial" is their official residence, as distinguished from the place in which they live.
597-607. The first three of these lines although startlingly expressed mean no more than that Wordsworth liked London because of the novelty and vividness of the impressions he received in it, and he goes on to say that these impressions broadened his outlook. By "power" (600) he means an attribute not of the will but of the intellect: "capaciousness and amplitude of mind," the reverse of the "circumscribed And narrow" (A 755-8). The strong impressions of past and present life made by London gave mental breadth to the youth who had hitherto seen little of the world of affairs. Cambridge stood for learning, and in learning he was as yet little interested; he craved the inner power which comes from amplitude of mind. In 599 as in A 754 he used "knowledge" in the sense of "learning," but when, in 1832 or 1839, he added 600-1 he overlooked this fact or understood the word in a far wider sense, for by the second "knowledge" (600) he meant "knowledge of a kind, that is, understanding of men and life."

"Power" was a favorite word with Wordsworth; he uses it and its plural over six hundred times in his poetry. The spirits with which his animism peopled the wilder parts of the country he often termed "Powers" (see xiv. 113 n., and Chapter v); Imagination is "that awful Power" (vi. 594) or "but another name for absolute power" (xiv. 190); and Solitude is "that great Power" (iv. 366). Such expressions as "thence did I drink the visionary power" (ii. 311), "visionary power Attends . . ." (v. 595-6), "the hiding-places of man's power" (xii. 279) are common; and he tells us that nature is most potent "where appear Most obviously simplicity and power" (vii. 743-4), that she makes all "subservient . . . To the great ends of Liberty and Power" (xii. 134-9), that The Prelude is chiefly a record of "intellectual power" (xii. 44-5), and that its author, who wished his own work to be "a power like one of Nature's" (xiii. 309-12), found verse "a passion, and a power" (v. 555-6). See also ii. 324, 362; iii. 173, 366; iv. 166; v. 425, 508-9; viii. 258, 491, 554-5, 631; x. 457; xii. 268-9; de S., 600, last line; 602-4, lines 57, 88; "Essay, supplementary to the Preface" (Oxf. W., p. 952, "Every great poet . . . has to call forth and to communicate power"); and de S. note to v. A 219-22. De Quincey's emphasis on the literature of power
as opposed to the literature of knowledge (de S., 527-8) was derived from Wordsworth.

"Nothing . . . influence" (A 755-6) is not in the final text nor is 600-3 in A, which is clearer without it; 604-6 is better than A 756-8 and 599-600 is a distinct improvement over the wordy A 753-5. A 753 is monosyllabic as, except for "present," is A 752.

602. *her*: Knowledge's.

603. *fits of kindliest apprehensiveness*: Periods of sympathy that were favorable to gaining understanding.


A 760-7. Wordsworth's "amplitude of mind" was such that he found his joy and his dignity in conceiving of all men of all ages as a single Spirit (see ii. 221 n.), a Spirit which, although "far diffus'd," is not The Divine since it is spoken of as "living in time and space" (A 763). This transcendental conception was produced, we are told, in a boy of twenty-one by the impact of external nature on what he found within himself and in books. Wordsworth seems not to have been conscious that his disregard of the individual (A 762), his simplification and generalization of the men he had seen (it is doubtful if he had much intimate acquaintance with shepherds) led to idealization and falsification (cf. 275-339) and was inconsistent with his belief "that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature." 11 In the final text the passage is perhaps less clear and certainly less transcendental: A 763 is changed, and 612-15 is substituted for A 764-7.

611. "With aid . . ." cannot modify "Diffused" or "felt" (608) but must depend upon some such expression as "as I learned." Apparently Wordsworth did not notice that the omission of "the external . . . conception" (A 765-7) left the phrase dangling and unintelligible. Cf. 564 n.

612. *monuments*: "Vanished nations" (615) indicates that Stonehenge and similar circles of stones (there is one near Keswick), dolmens, and menhirs are meant. The makers of these mysterious and "sublime" (614) monuments were, like the Londoners Wordsworth met, parts of the one human spirit he reverenced.
617-64. This paragraph affirms that London contributed in three ways to Wordsworth's lofty conception of man: it showed him (1) that man had greatly achieved and endured in the past; (2) that the imagination, a faculty for which he had the highest regard but which he had hitherto associated chiefly with nature, found in the metropolis "no uncongenial element"; (3) that human nature seen at its worst could not shake his "trust In what we may become."

617-25. Wordsworth's indifference to history as history comes out most clearly in ix. 204-8 but is also expressed in ix. 167-80; xii. A 90-1; and xi. 321-33 n. On the other hand, i. 166-220 and de S., 503 should not be forgotten. Much of Wordsworth's enthusiasm for the French Revolution was due to his seeing in it the lofty idealism of Plutarch's heroes; see ix. 408-17 n. The only history that appealed to Rousseau or the young Southey was that of Greece and Rome.

618. popular: "Constituted or carried on by the people" (NED). Wordsworth presumably had in mind "Senatus populusque Romanus."

620-1. The harshness (A 772) of English history (which lacked the "fine moral effects" of Plutarch) could be rendered harmonious (that is, interesting and significant) only by pictures of customs and manners and by incidents which revealed these or the daily life and habits of mind of the people—"human interest" stories (cf. xiii. 106-13). Such pictures and incidents were ignored in the English histories of Wordsworth's youth—Hume's (the most popular), Robertson's, Macpherson's, Smollett's, Goldsmith's—which, being mainly political and military, were of little interest to him.

622-5. Clearer in A, partly because of the omission of A 778 from the final text: historical associations had contributed little to Wordsworth's enjoyment of places.

625-8. Cf. 505-9, iii. 261-77. "Thought" (628) is emphatic: the impression was not merely a matter of sensation and emotion.

631-2. natures: Entities, beings. Wordsworth was prone to think of abstractions and natural forces as beings. Yet, since in A 785 "nature" is in the possessive case, he may have intended to write "nature's": I found in London the same
majesty and power that I had found in the mountains, where
nature is independent of man. Concerning "power" see
597-607 n.

A 785-9. Omitted from the final text. Scenes and incidents
of the poet's earlier life were recalled by what he saw in London
and the two blended and were transformed into spiritual
ministrations.


637-8. A beautiful line and a half. See i. 82-5 n.

A 797-9. Much of this is not in the final text just as, except
for parts of 640-1, 640-3 is not in A. "Imagination" is the
subject of "tried" and of "simplified," "arranged," and "Im-
pregnated." "These objects" is understood as the object of
"simplified" and "arranged." The comma after "strength"
should be after "objects."

641. The imagination adapts itself to the new objects or
bends them to its needs. Cf. Bacon, *The Advancement of
Learning*, section corresponding to II. xiii of *De Augmentis
Scientiarum*:

And therefore it [poesy] was ever thought to have some participation
of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting
the shews of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth
buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things.

642. As the imagination is not necessarily the servant of the
heart and as Wordsworth's emotional life was presumably
quiescent while he was in London, this line, which was added
in 1832 or 1839, probably means no more than "as I wished."

643. Imagination moves swiftly in the service of reason,
which follows more slowly, verifying and correcting what the
imagination has done. As A 798-9 and vii. 722-36 affirm, the
"blank confusion" of the city—which to the analytical and
logical reason is "an unmanageable sight"—is reduced to order
and has its significance revealed by the imagination.

645-64. Wordsworth does not say that he was able to recon-
cile the vice and misery of London (which are referred to again
in 669-70) with his previously-formed conception of man, but
that they could not overthrow this conception or convince him
that he was a mere dreamer. This fact may, however, prove
not the soundness of his belief but the stubbornness with which he held it. There can be no certainty as to "what we may become" without a clear recognition of what many of us are. Observe that "often" of A 804 is moderated to "sometimes" in 648.

665-75. Cf. A 760-7; ii. 221 n.; X variant of vii. A 432-4; vii. 726-7; and xiii. 216-20. Wordsworth does not say how the unity of man is set forth in the city but he may have thought that shepherds are, materially and spiritually, more independent and individualistic, city dwellers more cohesive and, in their daily existence, more dependent upon one another, that the distance between the shepherds' cottages leads to spiritual isolation and a lack of sociability. He may likewise have felt that one who lives in the country is conscious of individuals and of differences while one who sees multitudes tends to regard differences—even when they extend to "ignorance and vice"—as relatively unimportant and all persons as much alike, members of the same family. Yet it is not invariably but "oftentimes" (666) that the city sets forth the unity of man. The Recluse, i. i. 597-616 declares that for the man "by the vast Metropolis immured . . . neighbourhood serves rather to divide Than to unite." It will be recalled that an important function of the imagination is the perception of unity in diversity and that it is only through the imagination that one "sees the [many] parts [of a city] As parts, but with a feeling of the whole" (vii. 735-6). We have just been told that in the city Wordsworth's "young imagination found No uncongenial element" (639-43, A 796-9) and it may well be that he had in mind something more transcendent than what I have suggested.

671-2. Fundamentally we all see alike in moral matters as we do with our physical eyes. Cf. Excursion, iv. 800-10.

A 830-5. When strongly conscious of this sense of union (or of communion with others) the soul reaches its highest joy, for the unity of men rests on the One Life which is diffused through them and when the soul is most alive to this unity she is likewise most aware of her kinship with the divine. The soul passes through all nature, through which the One Life is likewise diffused (ii. A 429-30), to the One Life itself. This passage is very close to xiv. 113-18:
the highest bliss
That flesh can know is theirs—the consciousness
Of [by] Whom they are habitually infused.

Light on the meaning of "destiny" in the earliest (Y) form of A 834-5 may be gained from vi. 604-5. A 830-5 is quite orthodox—A 835 implies the transcendence of the Deity—but, since *The Excursion* had been widely criticized for pantheism and even irreligion, and since as the years passed Wordsworth was increasingly anxious not to give offense to worthy but unduly conservative or intellectually timid folk, he changed it for 672-5, which exhibits much less religious and poetic fervor but which could not give offence. Note the substitution of "idea" (673) for "sensation" (A 831) and "feeling" (A 834), on which see the de S. notes to xii. A 235; xiv. A 183 (de S., 594, 607).

A 836-58. Cf. xiii. 110-15. "Affectingly set forth" (667,—not "clearly," it should be observed) suggests that this picture was originally intended as an illustration of "the unity of man." The tender solicitude, the "utterable love," which the brawny and probably illiterate artisan has for his child show that "the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady Are sisters under their skins." The incident also makes clear how life in London may contribute to "more elevated views Of human nature"; the transfer to VII may have been due to the desire to relieve the unfavorable picture of city life given in that book. But see Chapter VI, note 53.

A 840. *set off by foil*: "Nor in the glistening foil Set off to the world" ("Lycidas," 79-80).

A 841-2. Wordsworth's profound reserve, his matter-of-factness, and his preoccupation with the sublime have concealed from many that he was a man not only of strong passions (see iv. 316-19 n.) but of an emotional nature. He "passionately loved" a boyish friend (ii. 333-4) and seems to have been warmly attached to Robert Jones (vi. 323 n.). He wrote Dorothy, "Oh my dear, dear sister with what transport shall I again meet you, with what rapture shall I again wear out the day in your sight. I assure you so eager is my desire to see you that all obstacles vanish. I see you in a moment running or rather flying to my arms." 12 He betrayed "unconquerable
agitation” if his son William was ailing and had “not courage to think” of what the loss of his sister would mean to him.\textsuperscript{13} Two of the severest shocks of his life were the deaths of his brother John and his daughter Dora. Rogers declared, “Few know how he loves his friends.”\textsuperscript{14}

One of his earliest poems is a “Sonnet on seeing Helen Maria Williams weep,” in which he refers to his “swimming eyes”; when a young man in London he was “most passionately moved,” even to “sobs and tears” by the theatre (vii. 470-6); he wept on seeing the grave of his former teacher, at parting from Coleridge, and at the reading of \textit{Paradise Lost} and \textit{Henry V};\textsuperscript{15} and in referring to Coleridge’s return from Malta he mentions “the first mingling of our tears” (xiv. 427). He wept at the death of a dog, “scarcely could . . . refrain from tears of admiration at the sight of” the Jardin des Plantes, said on the death of Sarah Hutchinson, “I write through tears,” and told Miss Fenwick, “Your generosity to Wm . . . overpowered me even to the shedding of tears.”\textsuperscript{16}

To the French Revolution he was at first indifferent because it failed to arouse his affections (ix. 106-7) but later, “tears . . . dimmed [his] . . . sight, In memory of the farewells of that time” (ix. 269-70) and his “heart Was oftentimes uplifted” by a face in a crowd—“a stranger and beloved as such.” Spectacles like these seemed “arguments sent from Heaven” (ix. 275-83), for

\begin{quote}
still I craved  
An intermingling of distinct regards  
And truths of individual sympathy  
Nearer ourselves.
\end{quote}

(xiii. 110-13)

As a young man he shared the eighteenth-century tendency to regard sensibility as an evidence of virtue, and in his mature theory of life he gave the emotions a very important place (see Chapter 11 and pp. 215-18, 237, 468 above) and held that with love gone “we are as dust” (xiv. 168-70, cf. xiii. 106-15).

See also ii. 255 n., 387-418 n.; iv. 316-19; ix. 74-80 n., 106-7 n., 354-63 n., 357-60 n.; x. 417-20 n.; xii. A 134-7 n.

A 843-8. See p. 27 above.

676-86. A pleasing conclusion. Lines 676-9 summarize the teaching of this book; 679-82 furnish a transition to 683-6,
which repeat the idea of 340-56: in the scales of Wordsworth's affections nature still outweighed man. The book accordingly begins and ends on the same note: nature. There is a suggestion in 679-82 that even in Cambridge and London Nature was mysteriously leading him to man. Lines 683-4 are an improvement on the uninspired A 866-7, the second of which is monosyllabic.
THE MINISTRY OF WONDER

All Divinity Is love or wonder.

Donne, "A Valediction: of the booke"

I grieve not that ripe Knowledge takes away
The charm that Nature to my childhood wore,
For, with that insight, cometh, day by day,
A greater bliss than wonder was before.

Lowell, "I grieve not that"

"I have learnt nothing from life," wrote Omar Khayyam, "except my own amazement at it." . . . I also should wish to pass to my urn, as I passed from my cradle, in the glow of constant astonishment. . . . I refuse to allow the sense of wonder to shrivel in my soul.

Harold Nicolson, The Spectator, December 15, 1939

This is the longest of the passages printed for the first time by Professor de Selincourt; that given on pages 600-5, which contains much better poetry, has less than half as many lines. Aside from the ideas expressed, it is of considerable interest as a piece of Wordsworth's unrevised verse (which that on pages 272, 274, 276, 592-4, and 600-5 are not). For the first draft of an argument it is well done: less wordy, vague, and repetitious than some of the poet's finished work, with bits of good imagery and admirable phrasing (e.g., 24-7, 51, 64-5, 77, 109). Yet it makes clear how much Wordsworth's verse gained from the laborious revision to which he subjected it and how mistaken is the conception, which Arnold seems to have held, that it is chiefly "when he seeks to have a style" that Wordsworth "falls into pondeiosity and pomposity." 11 For both the style and the language of this uncorrected piece of relatively direct and unpretentious exposition reveal these defects: "fluid element" (33), "cerulean firmament" (43), "attestations new of growing life" (80), "Transcripts that do but mock their archetypes" (186), "what finds he there to this Fram'd answerably" (196-7), and

Then doth an after transport, to the first
Succeeding lawfully, nor less intense,
Attend the Child. 

(21-3)
Although the subject was one that Wordsworth held vital, especially to poetry, it was the conscious mind rather than "the brooding soul" or the imagination that produced these lines. They represent not poetry but the material out of which poetry might have been made. Unfortunately the obscurities which revision would have removed are greatly increased by the mishaps that have befallen the manuscript. For so many words are now illegible or uncertain that not only the meaning of certain passages but the general purport of the whole and its connection with what has gone before are in question. Professor de Selincourt may accordingly be right in believing that the chief intent of these pages is to show "how the human associations of Nature fasten imperceptibly upon the child's mind" and how "love and admiration for Nature prepare the way for love and admiration of Man" (551, 552). Yet it is noteworthy that in the first 193 of these 240 lines nothing is said about human associations or the love of man; and that in 194-213 the youth whose development we are following is pictured as turning in disgust from man to nature. If we had only these first 213 lines, it would not have occurred to anyone that they trace the growth of interest in mankind. The meaning would then, indeed, be immediately apparent but for the somewhat unusual sense in which the word "admiration" is employed. That it cannot have its more familiar meaning will be seen as soon as that meaning is applied to lines 30 to 119. For in what sense does the child "admire" an echo, frozen water, an "arch of stones in air Suspended," an ever-flowing river, the fish that lives in the element that would drown men, lightning, rain, "storm implacable," "dwarfs, giants, genii . . . desert wastes of sand," snakes, or burning mountains? Clearly "admiration" here means what in line 38 is called "thoughtful wonder" and in 48, "astonishment." It has this same sense in the description of the objects which the Solitary sees in the clouds: "implements of ordinary use, But vast in size . . . forms uncouth of mightiest power For admiration and mysterious awe." Such implements would hardly excite admiration in the usual sense. The word has a like meaning in a passage (de S., 594) which affirms that the follower of nature will be controlled by "salutary awe" and, instead of being mastered
by capricious fancy, will regulate "his notions of the beautiful and grand":

In him will admiration be no weak
Fantastic quality that doth betray
Its owner, but a firm support, a source
Perennial of new faculties and powers.

"Admiration" is also used as practically synonymous with "wonder" in xiv. A 61 and in some lines that originally formed part of "Michael":

... in his thoughts there were obscurities,
Wonder, and admiration, things that wrought
Not less than a religion in his heart. (Knight, viii, 230)

If we turn now to the first 194 lines it will be clear that they trace the development of admiring or thoughtful wonder and its ministry to the mind and spirit. For the adult no less than the child is "brac'd, startled into notice, lifted up As if on plumes" (24-5) by wonder. It is "thoughtful wonder" which "give[s] the mind its needful food" (38-9) and "appease[s] the absolute necessities That struggle in us" (82-3). When these necessities are unappeased we cease to rejoice in the spirit of life that is in us, the heavens become "a blue vault merely," we see "one old familiar likeness over all" (141-2), and something very simple and universal and precious dies. This tragedy is mentioned in the last book of The Prelude as a result of the tendency

Of use and custom to bow down the soul
Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,
And substitute a universe of death
For that which moves with light and life informed.
(xiv. 157-61)

We are there told that "fear and love" are the enemies of this tendency and that "fear" is associated with "sublime . . . forms," with "pain" and with "grandeur" (xiv. A 143-50)—which brings us back to the "grandeur and . . . tenderness," the "admiration and . . . love" with which the passage before us begins. In this passage, as in that in xiv, we find wonder associated with fear since among "Nature's unfathomable works" mention is made of "objects of fear," "lightning and
the thunder’s roar, Snow, rain and hail, and storm implacable” (51-4). Evidently we have in wonder another of those forces, by most persons disliked or ignored, which Wordsworth thought essential for developing the higher faculties of man—forces which are the vitamins, as it were, of the spirit. They include solitude, loneliness, darkness, and awe, as well as fear and wonder; they are associated with mystery, with the sense of infinitude, and with nature; they are the basis of Wordsworth’s strong anti-rationalism. Indeed, it is hard to say what without nature would have meant to him. They stimulated his imagination, they had a part in his mystical experiences, and thus were the paths leading to the hiding places of his power. With wonder he had already dealt concretely and eloquently in connection with “the wishing cap Of Fortunatus” and the Arabian Nights (v. 341-6, 460-533); it was tales of wonder that called from him the famous lines

Our childhood sits,
Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne
That hath more power than all the elements. (v. 507-9)

One reason for his glorification of childhood is that childhood is preeminently the age of wonder. If “the echo, rainbow, cuckoo, and glowworm all haunt Wordsworth’s poetry as they haunted his mind from childhood,” it is because these phenomena, these objects, appealed to his sense of wonder, to the fascination which the magical and inexplicable continued to have for him. “And for all poets,” he might have added, for he was undoubtedly of Coleridge’s opinion:

The poet is one who carries the simplicity of childhood into the powers of manhood; who, with a soul unsubdued by habit, unshackled by custom, contemplates all things with the freshness and the wonder of a child. . . . What is old and worn-out, not in itself, but from the dimness of the intellectual eye, produced by worldly passions and pursuits, he [the poet] makes new.

In the first 124 lines of the passage before us Wordsworth traces the growth and gradual dulling of the sense of wonder in the average individual. At first the child delights in any object that appeals to the senses; later the element of thought enters—curiosity as to the cause of things; still later fear makes
itself felt. But in a few years familiarity breeds indifference; the child ceases to question and acquiesces in the belief that the things at which he formerly wondered are miracles, that "they are so because God willed it" or "God made them so." His earlier animistic belief that each natural object or force is a kind of person fades and nature's ceaseless marvels are accepted as a matter of course. For a time, however, books take their place: fairy tales, stories of impossible adventures, and, later, accounts of travels into strange lands. Apparently what comes next is the development of fancy (treated in 365-475 of the present book), which leads to delight in the bizarre, the fantastic, the unnatural. It is in this state that most men pass their maturity: only strong sensations, striking contrasts, or unnatural sights can rouse their dulled and dying sense of wonder.

Wordsworth now turns to

The child, by constitution of his frame,
And circumstances favour'd from the first. (125-6)

Such a child apparently passes through all the stages just enumerated in the development of wonder but with differences that are not made clear. To him, however, nature never becomes commonplace and the vagaries of fancy are but harmless eccentricities, a stage in his growth. For he does not stop where most men do and his sense of wonder has not dulled as the years have passed. As a boy he is careless of nature and centered in himself, but in time nature becomes the center and soul of his being—a living thing, fascinating in its mystery. Later, when the world of thought attracts him, it is fused with his love of nature (148-58). He now turns back to the questions that troubled him as a child, but in this season of second birth authority can no longer "hoodwink His intuitions" and make him content with explanations that do not explain (158-67). He realizes that the universe and his mind are each worthy of the other and each fitted to the other. For the universe is not dead but instinct with Being (169-94).

If, in this stage of his development, he looks upon man he sees only what is sordid, transient, ignoble; hence he cleaves to nature (194-213). Obviously this last is a mistaken view;
wonder cannot do all. To right the balance the young man needs the help of the other force mentioned in the opening lines, tenderness or love. The final paragraph is accordingly devoted to showing how that power, without which there can be no lasting grandeur (xiv. 168-70), brings the growing boy to right reason and rounds out his development. Undoubtedly this paragraph is vague, disproportionately brief, and inconclusive, but it was unrevised and its unsatisfactory character may well have caused the rejection of the entire passage. For there is every reason to suppose that, with no more labor than many other parts of the poem received, these first 213 lines might have become a significant addition to the study of the poet's mind. But the final paragraph was different; it dealt with a large, important subject which was the theme of the present book and which was treated from another point of view in xiv. It may well be that the poet whose "will never governs his labours" could not bring himself to develop this matter in a way that would satisfy him and would fit the whole into the completed eighth book. Nor could he use the first 213 lines by themselves since they left the young man at an unfortunate stage of his development—scorn of his fellow men.

This scorn may have troubled him on another account since apart from it the growth of the favoured child parallels Wordsworth's own. He had known the ministry of fear, he had at first been indifferent to nature, he had loved tales of impossible adventure and, later, books of travel, he had fallen under the spell of fancy, he had resolved "into one great faculty Of being bodily eye and spiritual need" (153-4), he had turned back to ponder the intuitions and perplexities of childhood, he had come to see the universe as a living thing equal to his highest aspiration and fitted to his mind as his mind was to it. Finally, with him, too, the development of "tender sympathies" (222) came considerably later than responsiveness to wonder and fear (xiv. 232-66, where the word "tenderness" is used, viii. 340-56). Can it be that for a time he, like the favoured child, had looked upon man as "sordid ... Ignoble and deprav'd"? See xi. 183-5 n.

Several other considerations may have influenced Wordsworth's rejection of this passage. For one thing, in the first
five lines "admiration" may be taken in the usual sense, whereas in the pages that follow it certainly means wonder. Then, too, lines 168-213 deal with the ministry of nature and do not mention "admiration." Again, the treatment of the subject is limited to childhood and youth, or early manhood; nothing is said as to the higher and less obvious ministry of wonder, as to what it does for the adult. Finally, there is no reference to man himself as an object of wonder: his body and his mind, his creative powers, his capacity for love, self-denial, and endurance. Yet Wordsworth speaks elsewhere of "that superior mystery Our vital frame, so fearfully devised"; he exclaims, "O Heavens! how awful is the might of souls," and "Oh! mystery of man, from what a depth Proceed thy honours"; he declares that Chaos, Hell, and aught else of which man may dream cannot breed such fear and awe as the mind of Man. The poet must, therefore, have found these pages far from satisfactory: confused in what they do, inadequate because of what they fail to do.

The idea presented in them is much like that of Tennyson's "Flower in the Crannied Wall," which however is chiefly concerned with the immanence of all in everything. There is similarity also to Whitman's swaggering assertion,

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars,
And the pismire is equally perfect, and a grain of sand, and the egg of the wren . . .
And a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels. ("Song of Myself," section 31)

Wordsworth, however, is speaking not of a belief but a feeling, not of marvels themselves but of their ministry to the child's spirit. He is therefore closer to Carlyle's conception:

He [Teufelsdröckh] deals much in the feeling of Wonder; insists on the necessity and high worth of universal Wonder; which he holds to be the only reasonable temper for the denizen of so singular a Planet as ours. 'Wonder,' says he, 'is the basis of Worship: the reign of wonder is perennial, indestructible in Man. . . .' That progress of Science, which is to destroy Wonder, and in its stead substitute Mensuration and Numeration, finds small favour with Teufelsdröckh.
Newman attacked this idea as leading to pantheism, as centering our attention, as it undoubtedly does, on God's works not on God himself. Irving Babbitt likewise attacked it for its romanticism, romantic wonder consisting, as he believed, in "emphasis on the element within him [man] and without him that is associated with novelty and change." Mr. Babbitt goes on to say:

In direct proportion as he [man] turns his attention to the infinite manifoldness of things he experiences wonder; if on the other hand he attends to the unity that underlies the manifoldness and that likewise transcends him, he experiences awe. As a man grows religious, awe comes more and more to take the place in him of wonder.

If Mr. Babbitt had found keener delight in the beauty of the external world he would probably not have been so confident on this point. Certainly Wordsworth was one in whom the sense of wonder, of "the infinite manifoldness of things," was strong; but he was also possessed of a deep craving for the permanent and abiding and for "the unity that underlies the manifoldness." He was religious, he had a deep sense of awe, but he likewise felt and valued wonder. "There are, of course," Watts-Dunton remarked, "different kinds of wonder."

Primitive poetry is full of wonder—the naive and eager wonder of the healthy child. It is this kind of wonder which makes the Iliad and the Odyssey so delightful. The wonder of primitive poetry passes as the primitive conditions of civilisation pass. And then for the most part it can only be succeeded by a very different kind of wonder—the wonder aroused by a recognition of the mystery of man's life and the mystery of nature's theatre on which the human drama is played—the wonder, in short, of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

It is with the "naive and eager wonder of the healthy child" that the present passage in the main deals. Wordsworth touches on the more philosophic wonder elsewhere, but he nowhere treats it adequately. What he felt about its ministry may, however, be inferred from what we know of his purpose in composing the Lyrical Ballads:

Mr. Wordsworth [Coleridge writes] . . . was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the
mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the
loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible
treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and
selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and
hearts that neither feel nor understand.\textsuperscript{82}

This, it may be recalled, is much the same service as Shelley
believed was performed by poetry:

It purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures
from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which
we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the
universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence
of impressions blunted by reiteration.\textsuperscript{83}

2-3. Cf. i. 302; vi. 746-8.
6-54. Presumably these lines reflect the proud and delighted
observation that the entire household gave to Wordsworth's
first two children, one of whom was about three months and
the other about seventeen months old when these lines were
composed. Coleridge had previously said and written much
about his children's reactions to sights like these.

28, 35. Are the illegible words "myriad" and "Become"?
did a child . . . influx?'").
55-8. In view of 58b-62 "miracle" seems to have its literal,
religious meaning and to be emphatic. "Produce," the things
mentioned in 37-51.

67. Are the illegible words "To inanimate objects"?
69. The first edition of de S. had, by mistake, a period
instead of a comma after "loth."

70-1. The child comes to realize that there are other kinds
of existence than our own and no longer attributes conscious
personality to the waterfall, the tree, the wind. Although the
young Wordsworth doubtless fell into this variety of animism,
\textit{The Prelude} contains no account of his doing so, the nearest
approach to it being ii. 386-418 and iii. 127-35, which describe
his awareness of the one Presence, the One Life in all things.
to be the subject of "come." With 82-3 compare v. 506-7, which also refers to romances and the like.


133-9. The repetition of "centre" and "soul" is introduced in order to contrast "his own person" (133) with "Nature" (139).

139-44. Cf. ii. 361-2; xiv. 157-62.

147-8. Delight in intellectual pursuits rather than in mystery for its own sake, as in viii. 419-20.

153-5. He makes from his observation of nature and from his spiritual craving one faculty, by the aid of which he "converses" with the world about him. Eye and mind (or heart) are wedded for the understanding of life and of the universe.

156-8. That is, from zenith to nadir. With Wordsworth "abyss" is likely to imply what is mysterious and important, as in vi. 594, xiv. 72. In the present instance it recalls "earth, the great abyss" (Excursion, vii. 712).

162-7. Contrast 55-62 and compare Mark, x. 14-15: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. . . . Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."


176. Is the missing word "discerns" or "observes"?

183. *his proper*: His own.

183-9. The universe is not dead, a mere record of a former activity of God, a mere copy of true being [apparently referring to Plato's theory of ideas, see ninth line of addition in MS V to v. A 472], but is alive and is not decaying from a former golden age. "Primary and independent" (187) are used loosely and for the sake of contrast since Wordsworth believed that One Life pervaded all things.

206. *brotherhood*: Either the brotherhood of man or, continuing the figure of 203-5, he is not even one of the brotherhood of monks or priests of nature but is alone.

213. See 239-40; viii. 485-94 n.

216, 222, 237. "mild humanities," "tender sympathies," and "gracious charities" apparently mean much the same thing as "tenderness" and "love" in lines 2 and 3.
214-40. In view of 194-213 followed by the "yet" of 214, in view also of 215-16 and of the theme of viii, it seems likely that Wordsworth intended in this paragraph to outline the growth of affection for man. In reality he did nothing of the kind since, with the dubious exception of "humanities" (216), the lines do not refer to man or imply any feeling for him. What they do sketch is the development of a general sympathy and tenderness of heart which would doubtless extend to man.

232-3. Fear again.
237-40. To develop in each of the senses those tender sympathies with the external world until they become habits. Except for the emphasis on tenderness and on the senses this is much the same idea as the wedding of "the discerning intellect of Man . . . to this goodly universe In love and holy passion" proclaimed in The Recluse, "Prospectus" (47-55). Unless the universe is so wedded it is valueless even to its Maker.
NOTES

1 See pp. 108-12 above.
3 This may be due to the way the lines were originally composed. Possibly a number of the parts were at first written as independent bits or were connected with other passages than those to which they are now joined.
5 William Wordsworth, his Doctrine and Art, University of Wisconsin Studies, 2 ed., 1927, chapters v, vi. Miss A. E. Powell, on the other hand, finds nothing "distinctively Hartleian in Wordsworth's theory of 'the three ages'" (The Romantic Theory of Poetry, 1926, p. 128 n.).
6 Letter to Alexander Dyce of spring(?), 1833.
7 J. Shawcross, edition of Biographia Literaria, ii, 293. The introduction to this edition contains an extended discussion of the two terms. See also Ruskin, Modern Painters, iii, ii, chapter iii, "Of Imagination Penetrative," I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, 1930, pp. 192 and n., 239-53, and Coleridge on Imagination, 1934. Shawcross (loc. cit., i, 226) and Raysor (Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism, i, 212 n.) have shown that Coleridge did not derive the distinction from Richter's Vorschule der Aesthetik.
8 This note, like that to 594-5, was suggested to me by J. Q. Wolf, Jr.
9 P. W., Youth, p. 281. This was written in the spring and summer of 1787, shortly before he left Hawkshead for the university.
10 On "trivial" (545) see iv. 278-306 n.
11 Preface to Lyrical Ballads (Oxf. W., p. 938). "Nature," as is clear from the context, is here used in the sense of human nature.
12 Quoted by Dorothy in her letter to Jane Pollard of July 10, 1793.
13 Dorothy's letter to Mrs. Clarkson of June 28, 1815; William's letter to Crabb Robinson of April 26, 1829.
15 x. 543-4; Coleridge's letter to Poole of May 5, 1799 (Harper, i, 372-3); Dorothy's Journal of February 2 and May 8, 1802.
16 "'Tribute to the Same Dog,'" 21-2; letter to Lord Lonsdale of October 7, 1820; letter to Crabb Robinson of June 24, 1835; letter to Isabella Fenwick of October 19, 1846.
17 "'Wordsworth,'" Essays in Criticism, second series. Arnold's remark does apply to some of the later additions to The Prelude, the ponderosity and pomposity of which arise from the desire to give an impressiveness to passages untouched by passion or imagination; but with Wordsworth even more than with most men, simplicity, ease, and naturalness were achievements rather than gifts.
18 For example, 124-37, certain lines of which do not, to me, make sense. The punctuation supplied for 129 may be misleading; perhaps the semicolon should come after "irradiates" (externally he has the appearance of a vulgar impostor) or after "without" (assuming it to be contrasted with "Within").
19 Excursion, ii. 865-9.
Theodore Watts-Dunton said of Browning, "His desire is to express not wonder but knowingness, the opposite of wonder" (Poetry and the Renascence of Wonder, New York, 1916, p. 287). Watts-Dunton's characterization of romanticism as "the renascence of wonder" is illuminating in this connection, since it is because of the importance Wordsworth attached to wonder, solitude, mystery and the like and to the emotions and intuitions which are associated with them that he is essentially and nobly, although not superficially, a romantic poet.

Observe that there is nothing to suggest pre-existence in this picture of infancy, although there was plenty of opportunity, if Wordsworth had thought of the matter.

De S., 553, note to lines 29-30. Another illustration of a sound that fascinated him by arousing his wonder is given in de S., 562. See also pp. 81, 142 above and i. 469-75 and vi. 50-2. The lines that begin "Among a grave fraternity" mention "salutary sense of awe Or sacred wonder" (24-5).

Collier's report of Coleridge's eighth lecture on Shakespeare, 1811-12, Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism, ed. Rayson, ii, 148-9. Coleridge said much the same thing though not with reference to the poet in Anima Poetae (p. 41) and again in The Friend (number 5 of 1809-10 edition; i, 183 of 1818 edition) when pointing out the distinctive characteristics of genius.

Dorothy to Mrs. Clarkson, March 27, 1821. Over six and a half years elapsed between the beginning and the completion of the first draft of The Prelude; of the long-promised Recluse only one book was ever written.

Excursion, iv. 974-5; Prelude, iii. 180; xii. 272-3; Recluse, "Prospectus," 35-40. To be sure, lines 154 and 156 of the present passage mention "spiritual need" and "the firmament of thought" but the wonder of the latter is not stressed and nothing is said of the spiritual ministry of wonder.

Sartor Resartus, i, chapter X. Goethe remarked: "Das Höchste, wozu der Mensch gelangen kann, ist das Erstaunen, und wenn ihn das Urphänomen in Erstaunen setzt, so sei er zufrieden; ein Höheres kann es ihm nicht gewähren, und ein Weiteres soll er nicht dahinter suchen: hier ist die Grenze" (Gespräche mit Eckermann, February 18, 1829); but this was not a general observation, as Goethe was speaking of the color of drinking glasses.

The Tamworth Reading Room, in Discussions and Arguments, 1918, p. 302.


See i. 409 n.; ii. 221 n.

Poetry and the Renascence of Wonder, p. 240.

See pp. 141-6 above and xiv. 157-62 and n.

Biographia Literaria, chapter xiv (ed. Shawcross, ii, 6).