

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: THE SENTIENT POET

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PREFACE

In this thesis I have attempted to show that Wordsworth was a sentient poet who drew from the external world of Nature, sensory observations--mainly, what he heard and what he saw--and used them in the first edition of Lyrical Ballads (1798) and the second (1800). His observations are, in part, valuable as tangible links with his internal sensory experiences that are included in "Tintern Abbey" and are increasingly significant after 1798.

Nature in this thesis is nature in sensate reality and not nature in works of art such as paintings, carvings, and metal castings observed by Wordsworth. The poem "Written in Germany on one of the coldest days of the Century" offers an example of the latter in the passage on a galloping horse molded in iron on a stove lid--a "dreary dull plate of black metal":

A Plague on your languages, German
and Norse!
Let me have the song of the kettle;
And the tongs and the poker, instead
of that horse
That gallops away with such fury and
force
On this dreary dull plate of black
metal. (ll. 1-5)

In the first footnote in Chapter One, I list the original table of contents for the first edition (1798) and the second edition (1800) of Lyrical Ballads, using

Wordsworth's punctuation and capitalization in the titles of the poems, but throughout the text of my thesis I have used the punctuation and capitalization adopted for the titles as they are listed in the table of contents in The Poetical Works of Wordsworth, edited by Thomas Hutchinson.

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Daisy Lee Harvill
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CHAPTER I

THE SPEAKER IN LYRICAL BALLADS

The voice that we hear in Lyrical Ballads (1798) and Lyrical Ballads (1800)¹ comes from a sensible and sentient

¹Poems by Wordsworth in the first and second editions are the following: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (written by Wordsworth and Coleridge); "The Foster-Mother's Tale"; "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree which stands near the Lake of Esthwaite"; "The Nightingale, a Conversational Poem"; "The Female Vagrant"; "Goody Blake and Harry Gill"; "Lines written at a small distance from my House, and sent by my little Boy to the Person to whom they are addressed"; "Simon Lee, the old Huntsman"; "Anecdote for Fathers"; "We are seven"; "Lines written in early spring"; "The Thorn"; "The last of the Flock"; "The Mad Mother" ("Her Eyes are Wild"); "The Idiot Boy"; "Lines written near Richmond, upon the Thames, at Evening" ("Lines written while sailing in a Boat at Evening"; "Remembrance of Collins, composed upon the Thames near Richmond"); "Expostulation and Reply"; "The Tables turned; an Evening Scene, on the same subject"; "Old Man travelling" ("Animal Tranquillity and Decay"); "The Complaint of a forsaken Indian Woman"; "The Convict"; "Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey"; "Hart-leap Well"; "There was a Boy, etc."; "The Brothers, a Pastoral Poem"; "Ellen Irwin, or the Braes of Kirtle"; "Strange fits of passion have I known, etc."; "Song" ("She dwelt among"); "A Slumber did my spirit seal, etc."; "The Waterfall and the Eglantine"; "The Oak and the Broom, a Pastoral"; "Lucy Gray"; "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or Dungeon-Gill Force. A Pastoral"; "'Tis said that some have died for love, etc."; "Poor Susan" ("The Reverie of Poor Susan"); "Inscription for (1802 this was changed to become: Lines written with a pencil upon a stone in the Wall of) the House (an Outhouse) on the Island at Grasmere"; "To a Sexton"; "Andrew Jones"; "The two Thieves, or the last stage of Avarice"; "A whirlblast from behind the Hill, etc."; "Song for the Wandering Jew"; "Ruth"; "Lines written with a Slate-Pencil upon a Stone, etc."; "Lines written on a Tablet in a School" ("Matthew"); "The two April Mornings"; "The Fountain, a Conversation"; "Nutting"; "Three years she grew in sun and

Speaker, a being such as Wordsworth described when speaking of the poet in the Preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads:

... a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.¹

The Speaker, whether the poet himself or some imaginary narrator, is what we often believe Wordsworth himself to have been, a man of unusual sensibility:

--He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and

shower, etc."; "The Pet Lamb, a Pastoral"; "Written in Germany on one of the coldest days of the century"; "The Childless Father"; "The Old Cumberland Beggar, a Description"; "Rural Architecture"; "A Poet's Epitaph"; "A Character"; "A Fragment" ("The Danish Boy"); "Poems" ("It was an April morning: fresh and clear," "To Joanna," "There is an Eminence,-- of these our hills," "A narrow Girdle of rough stones and crags," "To M. H.") on the Naming of Places"; "Michael, a Pastoral."

¹William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Second Edition of Several of the Foregoing Poems Published, with an Additional Volume, under the Title of 'Lyrical Ballads,'" The

passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; and ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves: --whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.¹

Although the sensibility referred to is mainly internal, the cause of it is both internal and external:

But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiment and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visual universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentment, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions.²

The emphasis upon sensory observations in all of the preceding passages is significant in Wordsworth's theory of creativity:

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears,

Poetical Works of William Wordsworth with Introduction and Notes, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: The Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 735.

¹Ibid., p. 737.

²Ibid, pp. 738-39.

and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment.¹

The English romanticists, who were interested in the development of psychology, recognized the existence of external sensory powers and believed in the existence of a set of internal sensory powers:

What they were doing in effect was adopting the external senses as a conceptual model for the intellectual powers and faculties they wished to establish and exalt, and by the same token, they were in effect granting metaphorical extension, visibility, tangibility, and so on, to the realities and values which these faculties apprehend--in short they were creating a second, parallel world, with a parallel set of senses in the mind to communicate with it.²

In fact, Wordsworth's emphasis upon Man's senses reflects his recognition of both external and internal sensory powers. It shows also his interest in psychology stemming from John Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding (1690), II, xxiii, 12:

'The infinite wise Contriver of us, and all things about us, hath fitted our senses, faculties, and organs, to the conveniences of life, and the business we have to do here. We are able, by our senses, to know and distinguish things: and to examine them so far as to apply them to our uses, and several ways to accommodate the exigences of this life. We have insight enough into their admirable contrivances

¹Ibid., p. 740.

²Judson S. Lyon, "Romantic Psychology and the Inner Senses: Coleridge," PMLA, LXXXI (June 1966), 247.

and wonderful effects, to admire and magnify the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Author. Such a knowledge as this, which is suited to our present condition, we want not faculties to attain. But it appears not that God intended we should have a perfect, clear, and adequate knowledge of them: that perhaps is not in the comprehension of any finite being. We are furnished with faculties (dull and weak as they are) to discover enough in the creatures to lead us to the knowledge of our duty; and we are fitted well enough with abilities to provide for the conveniences of living: these are our business in this world.¹

According to Locke in II, i, 2 of the Essay, there are two sources for the perception of ideas, namely sensation and reflection,² for when, by sensation, the mind has stored simple ideas, it may acquire new ones by reflection upon experience.³ Reflection, then, in II, i, 4 of the Essay is "the perception of the operations of our own mind within us, as it is employed about the ideas it has got. . . ." ⁴ Then, in II, ix it is evident that ideas are perceived by the mind acting in a process of perpetual motion: "When the mind turns upon itself and watches its own working, it observes as its most original faculty the power to perceive objects, so that perception becomes therefore the first simple idea arising from reflection."⁵ Ideas enter the mind thus through

¹Kenneth MacLean, John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven: The Yale University Press, 1936), p. 165. I am indebted to MacLean in my review of Locke's theories.

²Locke's Essays: An Essay concerning Human Understanding and a Treatise on the Conduct of the Understanding (Philadelphia: James Kay, Jun. and Brother, n.d.), p. 75.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵MacLean, p. 61.

the sense organs:

First, then, There are some which come into our minds by one sense only.

Secondly, There are others, that convey themselves into the mind by more senses than one.

Thirdly, Others that are had from reflection only.

Fourthly, There are some that make themselves way, and are suggested to the mind by all the ways of sensation and reflection.

First, There are some ideas which have admittance only through one sense, which is peculiarly adapted to receive them. Thus light and colours, as white, red, yellow, blue, with their several degrees or shades, and mixtures, as green, scarlet, purple, sea-green, and the rest, come in only by the eyes: all kinds of noises, sounds, and tones, only by the ears: the several tastes and smells, [not covered herein] by the nose and palate. And if these organs or the nerves, which are the conduits to convey them from without to their audience in the brain, the mind's presence room (as I may so call it), are any of them so disordered, as not to perform their functions, they have no postern to be admitted by; no other way to bring themselves into view, and be perceived by the understanding.

The most considerable of those belonging to the touch are heat and cold, and solidity; all the rest, consisting almost wholly in the sensible configuration, as smooth and rough, or else more or less firm adhesion of the parts, as hard and soft, tough and brittle, are obvious enough.¹

It is the sensory powers of the Speaker or Narrator in Lyrical Ballads that concern us in the ensuing pages. The two dominant ones belonging to the Speaker--hearing and seeing--will be the subjects of two chapters, that of hearing being considered first because Wordsworth mentions it in the Prelude, I, 269-281, as his earliest noticeable sensory experience.

The sense of hearing responds to physical environment as other senses do, according to the Lockian explanation

¹Locke, II, iii, 1, p. 86.

in the Essay, II, xxiii, 12: ". . . in this globe of earth allotted for our mansion, the all-wise Architect has suited our organs, and the bodies that are to affect them, one to another. If our sense of hearing were but a thousand times quicker than it is, how would a perpetual noise distract us! And we should in the quietest retirement be less able to sleep or meditate than in the middle of a sea-fight."¹ Then, as stated in I, ii, 15, the sense of hearing, for example, could "let in particular ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet, and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them. Afterwards, the mind proceeding further, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names. In this manner the mind comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the materials about which to exercise its discursive faculty."²

Through the sense of hearing, the poet responds to the harmony of Nature and to a mystical experience or power revealed to or felt by one who is spiritually sensitive to the source of perhaps all life. For an example of a poem in which the poet is sensitive to the harmony of Nature, let us take "Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798." Looking at "Tintern Abbey," we see that certain

¹Ibid., p. 192.

²Ibid., p. 45.

"sensations sweet" (l. 27),¹ which are felt in the blood and the heart, lead to the following state:

. . . that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight,
 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened: --that serene and blessed
 mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us
 on,--
 Until, the breath of the corporeal
 frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

The harmony of Nature, then, is best depicted in a later passage from "Tintern Abbey":

. . . For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-
 times
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample
 power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting
 suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of
 all thought,
 And rolls through all things.

(ll. 88-102)

1"Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey,
on revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13,
1798," Poetical Works, p. 164.

Wordsworth was twenty-eight years old when he composed "Tintern Abbey," and his opinions, according to Norman Lacey, were well formed by then:

. . . Wordsworth had not always regarded Nature in this way. He could remember a time in his youth, when Nature's forms, the tall rock and the gloomy wood were for him simply, 'an appetite, a feeling and a love.' But now . . . he hears in their presence 'the still sad music of humanity' and it is for a spiritual influence which appears to come from them that he gives praise. It is in the presence of nature that he has had an experience that is really the threshold of that 'gift of aspect more sublime' which he has already described.¹

The same realization exists in a number of poems published in 1798. Among these are "Expostulation and Reply," "The Tables Turned: An Evening Scene on the same Subject," "Lines written in Early Spring," and "To my Sister." Certain forces act together to produce a mental, intellectual pacification:

'Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.'²

There is a kinship or unifying alliance between Nature and Man:

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.³

This force that acts to produce a harmony between itself and

¹Wordsworth's View of Nature: And its Ethical Consequences (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1948), p. 3.

²"Expostulation and Reply," ll. 21-24.

³"Lines written in Early Spring," ll. 5-8.

Man is transcending in its scope:

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls:
They shall be tuned to love.¹

Another of the sensory powers which Wordsworth possessed to a high degree is that of sight. Upon the importance and suitability of this particular sensory experience for human life in Man's physical environment Locke comments as follows in the Essay, II, xxiii, 12:

. . . if that most instructive of our senses, seeing, were in any man a thousand or a hundred thousand times more acute than it is by the best microscope, things several millions of times less than the smallest object of his sight now would come nearer to the discovery of the texture and motion of the parts of corporeal things [kinesthesia]; and in many of them, probably get ideas of their internal constructions: but then he would be in a quite different world from other people: nothing would appear the same to him and others: the visible ideas of everything would be different. So that I doubt, whether he and the rest of men could discourse concerning the objects of sight, or have any communication about colours, their appearances being so wholly different. And perhaps such a quickness and tenderness of sight could not endure bright sunshine, or so much as open daylight; nor take in but a very small part of any object at once, and that too only at a very near distance. And if by the help of such microscopical eyes (if I may so call them) a man could penetrate further than ordinary into the secret composition and radical texture of bodies, he would not make any great advantage by the change, if such an acute sight would not serve to conduct him to the market and exchange; if he could not see things he was to avoid, at a convenient distance; nor distinguish things he had to do with by those sensible qualities others do.²

The reception-reflection process was a popular theory in the eighteenth century, but it seems to have referred chiefly to

¹"To my Sister," ll. 33-36.

²P. 192.

the sensory power of sight. Imagination and its ideas were believed to be derived from physical, as well as intellectual, experiences, for all were experiences, including the visual, based upon powers of observation.

Joseph Addison, who defined the "Pleasures of Imagination" in No. 411 of The Spectator, felt that all of reception, even that which is reflected upon, is due, first, to vision:

By the pleasures of the imagination or fancy . . . I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call upon their ideas into our minds by paintings, statutes, descriptions, or any the like occasion. We cannot indeed have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight.¹

Isaac Watts, English theologian of the sixteenth century, expressed much the same view concerning imagination in his Logic, II, iii, 3. He included more than the eye in referring to the various sensory organs, but the fact that he regarded sight as the most important sensory power is evident in his list of what is received by the various powers to be united, disjoined, multiplied, magnified, diminished, and altered in the brain by the internal soul: shapes, colors, sounds, motions, words, and things of indistinct nature. Of the list, only sounds cannot be seen; words, of course, are heard but, if printed, are seen by the eyes:

¹See MacLean, p. 55, on The Spectator by Joseph Addison.

Our imagination is nothing else but the various appearances of our sensible ideas in the brain, where the soul frequently works in uniting, disjoining, multiplying, magnifying, diminishing, and altering the several shapes, colours, sounds, motions, words, and things, that have been communicated to us by the outward organs of sense. It is no wonder therefore if fancy leads us into many mistakes, for it is but sense at second hand. Whatever is strongly impressed upon the imagination, some persons believe to be true.¹

Like Addison and Watts, Wordsworth recognized the power of sight. He sometimes commented upon the dominating tyranny of the eye by referring to sight as his most despotic sense, fearing that he might succumb to it and become "a mere epicure of visual sensations."² As the Speaker in Lyrical Ballads, he is sensitive to visual observations. He is like the normal man of average sensibility--the subject of much of his poetry, and he relies largely upon the visual aspects of life for its substance. His visual sensitivity is evident in "Tintern Abbey" where he generalizes in his scenic description but still gives evidence of sensory experience by referring to "steep and lofty cliffs" (l. 5), which impress him, the "dark sycamore" (l. 10), and an orchard "clad in one green hue" (l. 13) lost "'Mid groves and copses" (l. 14). He recalls his youthful days among "the tall rock / The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood" (ll. 77-78), and, even now, respects similar objects:

¹See MacLean, pp. 55-56, on Logick by Isaac Watts.

²J. C. Smith, A Study of Wordsworth (2nd. ed.; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1946), pp. 1-2.

. . . Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; . . .
 (ll. 102-105)

The Speaker's observations become more specific in other poems in Lyrical Ballads. In "Lines written in Early Spring," he mentions the primrose, describing its flowers as tufts, the periwinkle, describing its trailing wreaths, and the earth--the green earth of "Tintern Abbey" (l. 105), describing it as a green bower:

Through primrose tufts, in that green bow-
 er,
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths.
 (ll. 9-10)

In a passage from "Nutting," all the nouns describing the forest, except fern, devastation, and hazels, are common or generalized: rocks, beds, thickets, way, nook, bough, leaves, sign, clusters, scene. The Speaker sees differently; he puts descriptive adjectives before and after many of the words to qualify them. He sees pathless rocks; even matted fern; tangled thickets; a dear nook unvisited; a broken bough; withered leaves; an ungracious sign; hazels tall and erect; tempting clusters; and a virgin scene. He is so impressed by the view that he calls it a visual banquet, which I believe is a summary of impressions derived from the leading words, one adjective and one noun, which are separate in context--tempting and hazels--plus the number of separate nouns and modifiers in this passage:

. . . O'er pathless rocks,
 Through beds of matted fern, and tangled
 thickets,
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough
 Drooped with its withered leaves, un-
 gracious sign
 Of devastation; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters
 hung,
 A virgin scene!--A little while I stood,
 Breathing with such suppression of the
 heart
 As joy delights in; and with wise re-
 straint
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
 The banquet; . . .

(11. 14-25)

In "She dwelt among the untrodden ways," the Speaker uses both specific and common nouns--violet, stone, eye, star, sky--plus qualifying adjectives--mossy, fair, one, half hidden--for his figures of speech. He sees his love as a specific flower, a violet, which is half hidden from sight behind a mossy stone, appearing to be "peeping" out. She is as fair as a star, not among countless stars, but suspended, shining alone as one star in the sky:

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye!
 Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.
 (11. 5-8)

The scenes described by the Speaker, as illustrated by the poems cited, may be domesticated and cultivated by Man, but they may also be wild. In a passage from "Tintern Abbey," the Speaker views an unnatural regimentation. He sees plots, qualified by a prepositional phrase, of

cottage-ground. He sees tufts again, but this time they form the last part of a compound noun, orchard-tufts, following almost immediately the first compound noun, cottage-ground. Further, the orchard-tufts, each a tree, are all of the same color--simply green, and, I believe, not different in Wordsworth's mind from the green of the earth in l. 105 of "Tintern Abbey" and the bower in "Lines written in Early Spring" (l. 9) because rarely does the Speaker describe the plant life of Nature in terms of more than one word, green. He continues to describe the fruit trees in "Tintern Abbey," however, by saying that because of the season, they are their color of green and are bearing unripe fruits:

. . . plots of cottage-ground, these
 orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their un-
 ripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose
 themselves
 'Mid groves and copses.
 (11. 11-14)

In a passage from "Lines: left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the Lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the Shore commanding a beautiful Prospect," there are a number of common, generalized nouns--stones, sod, Tree, arms, bower--with one of them, Tree, being capitalized. The single, descriptive adjective placed before each of these nouns, save one, namely stones, gives vivid life to the words by forming

such phrases as mossy sod, aged Tree, dark arms, and circling bower:

. . . Who he was
That piled these stones and with the
 mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this
 aged Tree
With its dark arms to form a circling
 bower,
I well remember.

(ll. 8-12)

In a similar passage depicting cultivated, settled land in "The Brothers," there is a field in which stood a Parish Chapel encircled by nothing more than a stone wall, covered with moss. The moss, I believe Wordsworth used to represent undisturbed age:

. . . Towards the field
In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy
 wall.

(ll. 26-28)

I have studied Wordsworth's use of his external sensory experiences--what he heard and what he saw--in Lyrical Ballads, first edition (1798) and second (1800). His auditory and visual experiences were gathered from his observations of Nature. They began in his early life when, as he says in the Prelude, XII, he deeply loved whatever he saw and never dreamed of anything better than Nature in his own native country:

. . . before I was called forth
From the retirement of my native hills,
I loved what'er I saw: nor lightly
 loved,

But most intensely; never dreamt of aught
 More grand, more fair, more exquisitely
 framed
 Than those few nooks to which my happy
 feet
 Were limited.

(11. 174-180)

In Nature's presence he stood--a sensitive soul--as I show
 in this thesis, using his dominant sensory powers--hearing
 and sight--as well as the rest of the senses, which he used
 in lesser degree, and yet, at the same time, realizing the
 necessity and the blessing that the senses--for my purposes,
 hearing and sight--counteract each other so that one does
 not dominate his mind, but leaves it open and receptive to
 all of the senses, making them the means to an end--achiev-
 ing or, at least, enhancing the ideas of Liberty and the
 Power that comes with it for his readers:

 . . . Gladly here,
 Entering upon abstruser argument,
 Could I endeavour to unfold the
 means
 Which Nature studiously employs to
 thwart
 This tyranny, summons all the senses
 each
 To counteract the other, and them-
 selves,
 And makes them all, and the objects
 with which all
 Are conversant, subservient in their
 turn
 To the great ends of Liberty and Pow-
 er.

(11. 131-139)

CHAPTER II

AUDITORY POWERS

Like other poets in the Romantic period, Wordsworth, through the influence of Locke, made much of his external sensory perception of tangible objects which he could see. He and his sister Dorothy often roamed on foot in the country near their residence at Alfoxden, not so much from necessity as from habit. I believe that these walks, carefully recorded in Dorothy's Journals, provided Wordsworth with the opportunity to experience external sensory impressions which he was later to include in Lyrical Ballads. They were particularly fond of watching the moon and the effects of the wind, which they could not see, of course, but which they wrote about again and again. According to Mary Moorman, their walks together often afforded them experiences which Dorothy entered in her Journals and William converted into poetry:

Their two favourite companions--the moon and the wind--haunt all about their writing almost antiphonally. The lines A Whirlblast, which were published in 1802,¹ describe

¹I have found "A whirl-blast from behind the Hill, etc." included in the table of contents for the 1800 edition of Lyrical Ballads in the following publication: Lyrical Ballads: The Text of the 1798 Edition with the Additional 1800 Poems and the Prefaces, eds. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1963). For this reason, I have included "A whirl-blast from behind the Hill" among the poems used in this thesis.

the day--March 18th--when they 'sheltered under the hollies during a hail-shower. The withered leaves danced with the hailstones. William wrote a description of the storm.' And in the same manner on January 25th 'the clouds seemed to cleave asunder, and left her [the moon] in the centre of a black-blue vault. She sailed along, followed by multitudes of stars, small, and bright, and sharp.'¹

I have chosen Wordsworth's sense of hearing as the first of his external sensory powers to be examined in my study because it represents his first sensory awareness, which he experienced while he was just an infant. He says that the sound of the River Derwent, near his native village of Cockermouth in the Lake District of England, was one of his earliest noticeable experiences. Its murmurs blended with his nurse's song as he was carried, an infant in arms, along its banks. He felt that the comforting sound of moving water instilled in him a sense of closeness to Nature:

. . . one, the fairest of all rivers,
 loved
 To blend his murmurs with my nurse's
 song,
 And, from his alder shades and rocky
 falls,
 And from his fords and shallows, sent
 a voice
 That flowed along my dreams? For this,
 didst thou,
 O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
 Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
 Make ceaseless music that composed my
 thoughts
 To more than infant softness, giving me
 Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
 A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm

¹Mary Moorman, William Wordsworth: A Biography, Vol. I: The Early Years: 1770-1803 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 356.

That Nature breathes among the hills and
groves. (ll. 269-281)¹

As he grew to be an older child, he retained his love for the river; and in and around it he saw sunlight, sandy fields, and flowers, which he named in his poetry, and also experienced the joys of physical activity that he often referred to in his poetry:

. . . the bright blue river passed
Along the margin of our terrace walk;
A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved.
Oh, many a time have I, a five years'
child,
In a small mill-race severed from his
stream,
Made one long bathing of a summer's day;
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked
again
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery
groves
Of yellow ragwort; . . . (ll. 285-294)²

Because of Wordsworth's early fascination for water, mentioned in the Prelude, the sound of flowing water figures in outstanding passages throughout many poems in Lyrical Ballads. The sounds are as varied as the kinds of water: rills or rivulets, mountain streams, ghylls (brooks), fountains or springs, and larger streams which may have tributaries or may not.

¹"The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind: An Autobiographical Poem," Bk. I, The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth with Introduction and Notes, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: The Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 498. All quotations from The Prelude are from this edition.

²Ibid.

In "It was an April morning: fresh and clear," for example, the Speaker mentions hearing the sounds of a rivulet along its course. He pictures it as running swiftly "with a young man's speed" (l. 3)--its waters swelled by melted winter ice or snow--and as having a gentle tone:

. . . and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
(ll. 3-5)

Later in the poem, he describes the rivulet as cascading down a rock in the form of a waterfall, causing louder "sallies" of sound which, nevertheless, fail to obscure the smaller sounds of creatures--beasts and birds: the lamb, dog, linnet, and thrush:

At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a
rock
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound,
that all
Which I till then had heard appeared the
voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the
lamb,
The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the
thrush,
Vied with this waterfall, and made a
song
Which, while I listened, seemed like
the wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be.
(ll. 20-30)

In "The Brothers," the Priest of Ennerdale recalls how the meandering, unbridged stream, which crosses and recrosses

the road, "was swoln into a noisy rivulet" (l. 256) by "storm and thaw" (l. 253). In "'Tis said that some have died for love," the Speaker, lamenting life without Emma, voices a plea that the course of a rill and its waterfall be reversed and their sounds stopped, for he thinks he ought not to hear such pleasant sounds without her:

Roll back, sweet Rill! back to thy
 mountain-bounds,
 And there for ever be thy waters chained!
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
 That cannot be sustained;
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged
 bough
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,
 Oh let it then be dumb!
 Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which
 thou art now. (ll. 29-36)

In "Song for the Wandering Jew," the first stanza contains a contrast between the sound of rushing mountain streams and the absence of sound as these same waters find rest in still pools among the mountains:

Though the torrents from their fountains
 Roar down many a craggy steep,
 Yet they find among the mountains
 Resting-places calm and deep. (ll. 1-4)

In "There was a Boy," the Speaker describes a "shock" that came upon the youth in his solitude where, but for the owls, he was utterly alone. It caused him to hear the sound of mountain streams, which I believe represented the internal spirit of Nature to Wordsworth:

Then sometimes, in that silence,
 while he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild
surprise
Has carried far into his heart the
voice
Of mountain-torrents; . . . (ll. 18-21)

Ghylls--sometimes brooks or ravines with brooks in them--figure directly and by name in two poems. In "The Pet-lamb. A Pastoral," Barbara Lewthwaite, in thinking of "mountain-tops" (l. 53), remarks that brooks which sound "all pastime and all play" roar like lions for prey when swollen and angry:

The little brooks that seem all pastime
and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for
their prey. (ll. 55-56)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," there are no specific references to sound as being heard by the Speaker; and in "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," little actual sound is communicated except through the use of an onomatopoeic adjective "tumultuous" before the name of Green-head Ghyll. In "Ruth," however, Wordsworth speaks of the sound of a ghyll or brook running over pebbles, the whole effect being imagined within a cell by the mad heroine of his poem:

And a clear brook with cheerful knell
Did o'er the pebbles play.
(11. 203-204)

In "Hart-leap Well," the sounds of a fountain or spring have a strange significance for a stag that sought

the fountain in its final struggle for life and then died, its last breath rippling the water (ll. 41-44). Years later, after the dell was debased by Sir Walter's attempts to frame the spring and erect a pleasure-house over the spot to commemorate the gallant hart, the spring gave up its sweetness, other creatures refused to drink from it (ll. 133-134), and its water even gave forth a mournful sound:

And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous
groan. (ll. 135-136)

The hart's dumb affection for the spring is partially explained by the influence of the River Derwent's sound upon Wordsworth. Infant and fawn, they were both exposed to the sound of calm and gentle waters:

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summertime.
(ll. 149-150)

Sounds of another fountain in another poem, stirring an old man's memory, cause Matthew to remember earlier days when he heard it as a strong young man. Again, the sound of the water suggests the same type of influence as the River Derwent had on Wordsworth:

And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.
("The Fountain. A Conversation," ll. 25-28)

Now that he is a much older man, Matthew sheds helpless tears

when he again hears the sound that he remembers hearing in his youth:

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

("The Fountain. A Conversation," ll. 29-32)

In "Ruth" the Speaker says that after Ruth was released from her confinement, she was found playing in springs, as she had done when a child. Although here the specific sound of water is not mentioned, I believe this is still another reference to the early comforting influence of water upon a child, now grown older, as Wordsworth himself was influenced by the River Derwent:

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild--
Such small machinery as she turned
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child!

(ll. 247-252)

Larger streams, including waterfalls, produce louder sounds. In "Ruth" the title character plays music on a pipe of straw, imitating the sounds of both wind and larger bodies of flowing water called floods:

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods.

(ll. 7-9)

In "The Waterfall and the Eglantine," the rushing Waterfall is gently chastised by the Eglantine, who sheltered a singing

linnet when the Waterfall "had little voice or none" (ll. 40). In the end, however, the Eglantine probably perished when "the Torrent down the rocky dell / Came thundering loud and fast" (ll. 52-53). In an indirect reference to sound in "The Brothers," Wordsworth says that Leonard the mariner heard the "tones of waterfalls" (l. 48) in the "piping shrouds" (l. 47) on shipboard when, as I believe, the spirit of Nature in his dale, which he had left for the sea, beckoned him to return. Another reference to the sound of a waterfall occurs in the same poem when the Priest of Ennerdale speaks of a "roaring cataract" (l. 151) caused by heavy rain in the mountains. Another cataract is described in "Tintern Abbey" as producing a curiously meaningful sound:

. . . The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: . . .
 (ll. 76-77)

In the passages cited, Wordsworth used onomatopoeic words to describe the sounds of water. The word murmur occurs in his poems as a verb and as several other parts of speech. In "Nutting" the Speaker mentions the sound of "water-breaks" (l. 33), using the onomatopoeic word murmur as a verb:

Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
 For ever; . . .

and as a noun and an adjective:

I heard the murmur and the murmuring
 sound. (ll. 33-38)

In "Three years she grew in sun and shower," murmur is used as an adjective describing the sound of rivulets:

. . . and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their way-
ward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

(ll. 26-30)

In "The Fountain. A Conversation," murmur is used as a verb in a brief passage equating the flowing stream with eternity; in other words, it will always flow and sound like this:

'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

(ll. 23-24)

Murmur is used as a verb in "Ruth" in partial description of what affected the "youth from Georgia's shore" (l. 19):

And streams that murmur as they run,
Had been his dearest joy.

(ll. 35-36)

In "Tintern Abbey" murmur is used as a noun in lines on mountain streams as they issue forth from the inner depths of Nature, supposedly from a mountain range:

. . . and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-
springs
With a soft inland murmur. (ll. 2-4)

In "Remembrance of Collins, composed upon the Thames near Richmond," murmur is used as a verb to describe the Speaker's voice as he is affected in speech by the sound of water. The Speaker recalls a Poet reciting a "ditty" (l. 14) beside or on the waters reflecting the "image of a poet's

heart" (l. 11) as bright, solemn, and serene (l. 12), the type of waters which I believe Wordsworth was in the habit of relating to either the word murmur or its various forms as different parts of speech:

Such as did once the Poet bless,
Who, murmuring here a later ditty,
Could find no refuge from distress
But in the milder grief of pity.
(ll. 13-16)

In "A Poet's Epitaph," the Speaker describes one who might be Wordsworth the poet and uses murmur as a verb to describe the sound of recitation beside gently moving water:

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.
(ll. 37-40)

In "The Fountain. A Conversation" is another onomatopoeic verb gurgle, used to describe the sound of a spring, coming from the earth and emitting a "pleasant tune" (l. 10):

And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet. (ll. 7-8)

In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," an adjective babbling is used to describe busy waters as the shepherd Andrew gleans his "simple truths" (l. 1), which I believe to be the spirit of Nature, "beside the babbling rills" (l. 2). An adjective tumultuous is used to describe Green-head Ghyll throughout "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," beginning in the second line. In "For the Spot where the Hermitage stood on St. Herbert's Island, Derwent-water," the Speaker uses the

verb peal to describe the sound of a waterfall in the ears of a solitary man kneeling before a crucifix in prayer:

While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, . . . (ll. 18-19)

In several poems in Lyrical Ballads the Speaker hears the sounds of blowing wind, which occur singly and alone. He also hears sounds made when objects are moved by the wind.

In "Ruth" winds, as well as floods, are heard. The combination seems to me to suggest the sounds of a storm or tempest:

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods.
(ll. 7-9)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," Michael knew what all winds of every kind heralded:

Hence had he learned the meaning of
all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; . . .
(ll. 48-49)

and he heard the south wind as "subterraneous" or incorporeal, similar in sound to the music of "bagpipers":

. . . and oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the
South
Make subterraneous music, like the
noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
(ll. 49-52)

Then, Michael said that he could read the winds well enough to tell when they were "'devising work for me!'" (l. 55), and he would care for his flocks accordingly. Listening to

the wind had become such an integral part of his life that even after his son was lost, he went and "still looked up to sun and cloud, / And listened to the wind; . . ." (ll. 456-457). In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," the sound of the wind helps form the setting for Andrew's tale to his children:

One winter's night, when through the
trees
The wind was roaring, on his knees
His youngest born did Andrew hold:
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This Tale the Shepherd told.
(ll. 5-10)

In "A whirl-blast from behind the hill," the reader hears the sound of the sudden onrush of a stormy wind throughout a wood:

A whirl-blast from behind a hill
Rushed o'er the wood with star-
tling sound. (ll. 1-2)

In "The Brothers" Leonard the mariner hears in the "piping shrouds" (l. 47) of the ship's superstructure "tones of waterfalls" and "inland sounds of caves and trees" (ll. 48-49). Although further description in the following passage is visual--the wind filling the sails--I believe that the sound of whipping sails may be heard:

Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
Of caves and trees:--and when the regular
wind
Between the tropics filled the steady sail,

And blew with the same breath through days
 and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side,
 (ll. 47-55)

In "A whirl-blast from behind the hill," the wind ceases and the leaves in the wood are moved by falling hail, although they seem to be moved by wind. Again, indirectly, the sound of objects being moved by the wind is reported in the word pattered (l. 4):

Then--all at once the air was still,
 And showers of hailstones pattered
 round.

 But see! where'er the hailstones drop
 The withered leaves all skip and hop;
 There's not a breeze--no breath of air--
 Yet here, and there, and every where

 The leaves in myriads jump and spring,

 And all those leaves, in festive glee,
 Were dancing to the minstrelsy.
 (ll. 3-22)

In "The Pet-lamb. A Pastoral," young Barbara Lewthwaite cannot understand why her pet lamb bleats so discontentedly because, among other things, it can hear the sound of delectable corn as the wind moves the leaves in the field: "And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears!" (l. 28). In "'Tis said that some have died for love," the onomatopoeic verb murmur appeals to the reader's sense of hearing in lines describing the sound of leaves moving in

the wind as the Speaker laments the pleasantness of a scene from which Barbara is missing:

. . . Ye leaves,
That murmur once so dear, when will it
 cease?
Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
It robs my heart of peace.
(ll. 21-24)

Sounds of falling hail occur only once throughout the poems in Lyrical Ballads. The opening lines of "A whirl-blast from behind the hill" vividly depict a hailstorm--the sudden, onrushing wind; then the heavy calm; and, at last, the onslaught of hail on the landscape:

A whirl-blast from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling
 sound;
Then--all at once the air was still,
And showers of hailstones pattered
 round.
(ll. 1-4)

No direct mention of sound occurs in the last stanza, but the onomatopoeic verb patter, already cited in l. 4, together with the imagery of leaves moving under the force of falling hail, suggests the sound heard as the hailstones pelt the leaves in the grove of trees sheltering the Speaker:

. . . where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop;
There's not a breeze--no breath of air--
Yet here, and there, and every where
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.
(ll. 12-22)

Wordsworth, who was undoubtedly fond of using the sounds of echoes in his poems, felt, as I believe, that echoes represented his belief in a perfect communion between Man and Nature. The poem "To Joanna," which will be discussed later, has as its subject a single echo. I think it is interesting to note that Henry Crabb Robinson admired "To Joanna" so much that he experimented among the same mountains named in the poem, seeking the same echo, but was sorely disappointed. In one of his journals, dated September 23, 1816, he commented on "To Joanna":

. . . During our walk under Loughrigg Fell and in this valley of Langdale I made experiments, as I did at Crummock Water, on the echoes of the mountains. Here, as there, the echoes are remarkable rather for the length than the distinctness of the repetition, and it requires a clear and powerful voice to raise the echo. Joanna's laugh must have been uttered in a more favourable spot to rouse so great a number of repetitions. Certain at least could the poet have nowhere selected a spot where names of the adjacent mountains so beautifully combine to give dignity and beauty to the description, and which render this the most delightful account of an echo ever written.¹

In the echoes in certain of the poems in Lyrical Ballads, sounds are required to produce sounds. In "To Joanna," for example, a girl's laugh produces an echo among the mountains, while in "The Convict," the sound of a slammed gate, rather than a voice, produces an echo among the confined walls of the prison.

¹Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and Their Writers, ed. Edith J. Morley (3 Vols.; London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1938), I, 193-94.

In "To Joanna" the Speaker hears the echo of Joanna's laugh reverberated from mountains known as the Rock, Helm-crag, Hammar-scar, the Steep of Silver-how, Loughrigg, Fairfield, Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Glaramara, and Kirkstone. By listing these names, one after the other, Wordsworth imitates the rapidly occurring echoes "bouncing" off the peaks:

The Rock, like something starting from
a sleep,
Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed
again;
That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
Was ready with her cavern; Hammar-scar,
And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent
forth
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg
heard,
And Fairfield answered with a mountain
tone
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the Lady's voice,--old Skiddaw
blew
His speaking-trumpet;--back out of the
clouds
Of Glaramara southward came the voice;
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty
head. (ll. 54-65)

In "Anecdote for Fathers" the Speaker mentions the sound of the feet of lambs bounding through a glade from "shade to sunshine" (l. 19) and back again, the repetition of sunshine and shade and the interchange of these words emphasizing the echo:

The green earth echoed to the feet
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade. (ll. 17-20)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker describes a valley by using the onomatopoeic verb ring to sound the echoes of joyful life reverberating in a "never never ending song" (l. 3) in the hills, the alliterative repetition of never emphasizing the echo:

The valley rings with mirth and joy;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never never ending song,
To welcome in the May. (ll. 1-4)

In "The Convict" the Speaker describes the sound of what I believe to be echoes of a slammed prison gate, as the sound reverberates against solid walls within the prison. He uses an onomatopoeic verb resound, saying that the walls above the gate resound and, therefore, unfold the dungeons, indicating that they are revealed by the echoes that they emit:

The thick-ribbed walls that o'ershadow
the gate
Resound; and the dungeons unfold.
(ll. 9-10)

In "There was a Boy" the Speaker describes the sound of the owls answering the youth who mimicked them. I believe that the cries of the owls were echoed by the terrain, for the Speaker says ". . . ye knew him well, ye cliffs / And islands of Winander! . . ." (ll. 1-2). The repetition of the verb shout in the passage, ". . . they would shout / Across the watery vale, and shout again" (ll. 11-12), emphasizes the echoes, as well as the word echoes itself, modified by loud

(l. 14) and the repetition of another modified redoubled:

"Redoubled and redoubled; . . ." (l. 15):

. . .--And they would shout
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call,--with quivering
 peals,
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes
 loud
 Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild
 Of jocund din! (ll. 11-16)

In "Hart-leap Well" the Speaker mentions the excitement of a hunt by using the onomatopoeic verb roar to describe the sound of the echoes:

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's
 Hall,
 That as they galloped made the echoes
 roar. (ll. 13-14)

In "Simon Lee, the old Huntsman; with an Incident in which he was concerned," the Speaker recalls Simon's gusty service in the hunt during his younger days, using the onomatopoeic verb ring to describe the resulting echo amid hills and valleys when Simon called out his halloo. The noun Echo is capitalized for emphasis, and the verb bandy, modified by the repetitious phrase "round and round" (l. 11), is used to describe its action:

No man like him the horn could sound,
 And hill and valley rang with glee
 When Echo bandied, round and round,
 The halloo of Simon Lee. (ll. 9-12)

In "The Childless Father" the Speaker describes the sounds of another hunt, and although an echo is not directly heard, I believe that mention of Skiddaw again as being "glad with

the cry of hounds" (l. 4) was meant by Wordsworth to impart the sound of echoes:

The hare has just started from Hamilton's
grounds,
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the
hounds. (ll. 3-4)

Sounds made by living creatures such as animals occur in some of the poems in Lyrical Ballads. With the exception of the groan of the hart, the sounds are those of domesticated animals: dogs--hounds and a mastiff--used for hunting and guarding, respectively; horses used for hunting and transportation; and sheep--a ewe and its lamb.

In "Hart-leap Well" Sir Walter's victim, a hart, seeks a spring known since birth and dies beside it, emitting at the end of its life a sound of pain or exhaustion, for the Speaker does not say how the hart came to die (l. 31):

His nostril touched a spring beneath
a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath
had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling
still. (ll. 42-44)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," while neglectful shepherds are challenging each other on an archway over a chasm, one of them is shocked to hear a sheep crying out in terror. He discovers a lamb trapped in the swift water below. Its mother is bleating to it from the rocks above, making "a cry forlorn"--a "plaintive sound," and the lamb is answering her:

With staff in hand across the cleft
 The challenger pursued his march;
 And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
 The middle of the arch.
 When list! he hears a piteous moan--
 Again!--his heart within him dies--
 His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
 He totters, pallid as a ghost,
 And, looking down, espies
 A lamb, that in the pool is pent
 Within that black and frightful rent.

.
 His dam had seen him when he fell,
 She saw him down the torrent borne;
 And, while with all a mother's love
 She from the lofty rocks above
 Sent forth a cry forlorn,
 The lamb, still swimming round and round,
 Made answer to that plaintive sound.
 (11. 56-77)

A mastiff guard dog in "The Convict" adds to the depressing sounds that characterize the prison by howling while chained, imprisoned, too, like the wretched people he guards:

While the jail-mastiff howls at the dull
 clanking chain,
 From the roots of his hair there will start
 A thousand sharp punctures of cold-sweating
 pain,
 And terror shall leap at his heart.
 (11. 37-40)

In "Hart-leap Well" hounds and horses give the rushed, excited sounds of a hunt:

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's
 Hall,
 That as they galloped made the echoes
 roar. (11. 13-14)

In "Simon Lee, the old Huntsman; with an Incident in which he was concerned," Simon, grown old and infirm, still enjoys the sound of dogs hunting:

And still there's something in the
 world
 At which his heart rejoices;
 For when the chiming hounds are out,
 He dearly loves their voices!
 (ll. 21-24)

In "The Childless Father" Timothy is advised to hurry out of the village with everyone else to the scene of a hunt, for "the hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds, / And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds" (ll. 3-4). The resulting sound tells Timothy that he must not tarry with the dead--Ellen and the child--in his hut:

Now fast up the dell came the noise
 and the fray,
 The horse, and the horn, and the hark!
 hark away!
 Old Timothy took up his staff, and he
 shut
 With a leisurely motion the door of his
 hut. (ll. 13-16)

Sounds of birds occur in some of the poems in Lyrical Ballads. Besides speaking of hearing the sounds of birds in general, the Speaker particularizes, saying he hears the sounds of such birds as the owl and owlet, nightingale, linnets, magpie, redbreast, blackbird, lark, raven, thrush, and throstle.

In "Hart-leap Well" the Shepherd mentions the sound of birds as one of the sounds the young hart heard while resting under a thorn beside the fountain:

In April here beneath the flowering
 thorn
 He heard the birds their morning carols
 sing. (ll. 153-154)

In "Her Eyes are Wild" the mother promises her son that if he never leaves her, he will sing as the birds in spring do:

My pretty thing! then thou shalt sing
As merry as the birds in spring.
(ll. 59-60)

In "Lines written in Early Spring," the Speaker mentions a sound that, I believe, can only be attributed to the curiously harmonious cries of countless birds in a grove of trees:

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined.
(ll. 1-2)

In "Anecdote for Fathers" the Speaker mentions birds that "warbled round me" (l. 21) while he was strolling with a young boy. In "The Old Cumberland Beggar," he intones a plea that the old person always be surrounded by the cries of birds and be able to "have around him, whether heard or not, / The pleasant melody of woodland birds" (ll. 184-185).

In "The Idiot Boy" occur sounds of owls crying out in the night. In the first stanza an owlet shouts an echoing cry, which Wordsworth imitates with halloo, repeated twice as short cries, and once as a long, drawn-out cry in the manner of owls, which usually emit cries in three succeeding sounds:

The owlet, in the moonlight air,
Shouts from nobody knows where;
He lengthens out his lonely shout,
Halloo! halloo! a long halloo!
(ll. 3-6)

As Johnny departs on his mission to fetch the doctor for

Susan Gale, he answers the shouting owlets abroad in the night:

The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr,
burr,
As on he goes beneath the moon.
(11. 104-106)

As the night progresses past the clock's "dismal knell"
(l. 271) of three, the owlets are still shouting back and forth until it becomes hard to distinguish cry from echo:

The owlets through the long blue night
Are shouting to each other still:
Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob
They lengthen out the tremulous sob,
That echoes far from hill to hill.
(11. 287-291)

Johnny, his mother, and Susan Gale, being finally reunited, begin the journey homeward shortly after the owls cease their shouting:

The owls have hardly sung their last,
While our four travellers homeward wend;
The owls have hooted all night long,
And with the owls began my song,
And with the owls must end.
(11. 432-436)

In answer to Betty's question concerning what he had heard and seen during the night, Johnny, who "all night long had heard / The owls in tuneful concert strive" (11. 442-443) and seen the moon from "eight o'clock to five" (l. 446), mistakes the moon for the sun and the owls shouting the repetitious words halloo, halloo for cocks crowing to-whoo, to-whoo:

And thus, to Betty's question he
 Made answer, like a traveller bold,
 (His very words I give to you,)
 'The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
 And the sun did shine so cold!'
 --Thus answered Johnny in his glory,
 And that was all his travel's story.
 (ll. 447-453)

In "Her Eyes are Wild" more owls are heard as the distressed mother vows to teach her son "the sweetest things" (l. 81):
 "I'll teach him how the owlet sings" (l. 82). In "There was a Boy," the youth alone in the woods or by a lake would mimic the owls that often answered him. The sounds of the owls are described as quivering peals, long halloos (as in l. 6 of "The Idiot Boy"), screams, and echoes loud, followed by the repetition, redoubled and redoubled, for emphasis (ll. 13-15):

Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
 Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake;
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
 Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
 That they might answer him.--And they would
 shout
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,
 Responsive to his call,--with quivering peals,
 And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
 Redoubled and redoubled; . . . (ll. 5-15)

The Speaker summarizes the pleasant sounds mentioned in the passage above by calling them "concourse wild / Of jocund din!" (ll. 15-16). In "The two April Mornings" is an indirect reference to the song of another nocturnal bird, the night-ingale. Matthew, lamenting the death of his daughter Emma,

recalls her gift of song:

And then she sang;--she would have been
A very nightingale. (ll. 35-36)

In "The Tables Turned. An Evening Scene on the same Subject," the Speaker remarks upon the wisdom that can be heard in the song of a linnet:

Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.
(ll. 10-12)

In "The Idle Shepherd boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker mentions a magpie chattering with delight (l. 5). In "To my Sister" he mentions the progressive sweetness of the song of a redbreast in a tree outside the door:

Each minute sweeter than before,
The redbreast sings from the tall
larch
That stands beside our door.
(ll. 2-4)

In "The Fountain. A Conversation" a blackbird and a lark carol, one within a tree and the other above a hill:

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they
please,
Are quiet when they will.
(ll. 37-40)

As in "The Fountain. A Conversation," in "The Danish Boy. A Fragment," another lark, obscured by clouds rather than "leafy trees," is heard:

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
But drops not here to earth for
rest. (ll. 12-13)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," a sand-lark near the rocky edge of a river chants "a joyous song" (l. 24). In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," a pair of ravens begin croaking their attraction to each other in a mating song:

But in the branches of the oak
Two ravens now began to croak
Their nuptial song, a gladsome
air. (ll. 95-97)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," besides the sand-lark, a thrush is heard busy within the wood, one that "carols loud and strong":

The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
(ll. 25-26)

In "'Tis said that some have died for love," the Speaker pleads with a singing thrush to leave him because he cannot share his happiness with his Barbara, who is dead:

Thou Thrush, that singest loud--
and loud and free,
Into yon row of willows flit,
Upon that alder sit;
Or sing another song, or choose
another tree. (ll. 25-28)

In "The Reverie of Poor Susan," the song of a thrush in London causes Susan to remember her rural life:

At the corner of Wood Street, when
daylight appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it
has sung for three years:

Poor Susan has passed by the spot,
 and has heard
 In the silence of morning the song
 of the Bird. (ll. 1-4)

In "The Tables Turned. An Evening Scene on the same Subject," besides the song of the linnet, which was mentioned previously, the Speaker notices the song of a throstle as another example of how birds "preach" that Nature is just as important and appealing to Man as what he learns from reading books:

And hark! how blithe the throstle
 sings!
 He, too, is no mean preacher.
 (ll. 13-14)

The sounds of insects--bees and flies--are heard in only two poems in Lyrical Ballads. A housefly is the subject of another of the poems, "Written in Germany on one of the coldest days of the Century," but no sound is heard by the Speaker; the imagery is entirely visual.

In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," however, the Broom's speech to the Oak is cut off by the arrival of night and, with it, a pair of bees to murmur in the bower:

And to her own green bower the breeze
 That instant brought two stripling bees
 To rest, or murmur there.
 (ll. 98-100)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," Wordsworth uses the verb murmur to describe the sound of flies, as well as bees:

Isabel makes the cottage murmur "as with the sound of summer flies" (l. 128).

Almost without exception the sounds heard by the Speaker in Lyrical Ballads are pleasant sounds of a positive, consoling nature, as heard in the passages containing an onomatopoeic variation of the verb murmur. Of the sounds of water, the only directly unhappy sound emitted by a body of water occurs in "Hart-leap Well" when the fountain issues a "dolorous groan" (l. 136) after the hart has died and the dell has been disturbed by Man. The "sounding cataract" (l. 76) that haunted the Speaker "like a passion" (l. 77) in "Tintern Abbey" emitted a thought-provoking sound, but hardly an unhappy one. Of the sounds of echoes, the only definitely unhappy one is heard in "The Convict" as the gate slams shut (ll. 9-10), closing the prison about the wretched prisoners. Of the sounds of animals, however, the hart emits a dying groan in "Hart-leap Well" (l. 43). In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker hears the terrified cries of a lamb, caught in a torrent of water, and of its mother, helpless to come to its aid on the rocks above. In "The Convict" the sound of the howling guard-dog emphasizes the despair that hangs over the prison and its inmates. Of the sounds of birds, only the sounds of owls crying in the night in "The Idiot Boy" cause a haunting effect, but they are not definitely unhappy sounds. Johnny is in danger, because he is helpless, but he does not realize this, and the story has a happy ending with Johnny safe, his mother relieved, and Susan well again.

CHAPTER III

VISUAL POWERS

Wordsworth's vision distinguished him from ordinary men. Descriptions of his eyes by contemporaries--critic William Hazlitt, author Thomas De Quincey, and novelist-poet Sir Walter Scott--prove that he possessed a keenness of eye--an illusive, almost intangible artistic sensitivity or insight that marks creative genius or, according to Henry Reed's account of a portrait-painter's comment on the eyes of celebrities in Memoir of Wordsworth, a look of the eyes such as a looking into infinity:

Hazlitt tells us that there was a fire in his eyes as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance. De Quincey had seen his eyes 'after a long day's toil in walking, [sic] assume an appearance the most solemn and spiritual that it is possible for the human eye to wear. The light that resides in them seems to come from unfathomed depths'; . . . 'Walter Scott said that . . . [he] never beheld eyes that looked so inspired or supernatural. They were like fires half-burning, half-smouldering, with a sort of acrid fixity of regard, and seated at the further end of two caverns. One might imagine Ezekiel or Isaiah to have had such eyes.'¹

Recalling Wordsworth's eyes as he observed them at sunset at Nether Stowey, Hazlitt said Wordsworth's vision was sharper than the vision of ordinary men:

¹Marian Mead, Four Studies in Wordsworth (New York: Haskell House, 1964), pp. 15-16.

Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, 'How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!' I thought within myself, 'With what eyes these poets see Nature!' And ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me!¹

Wordsworth himself felt that his sense of sight held him in a form of subservience in his youth. Speaking in the Prelude of his awakened response to Nature and the external world after his residence in France, he remarked that, before this time, he had not truly comprehended the "Soul of Nature" (XII, 93) but had merely sat in judgment on subjects which he did not understand, an act which interrupted his "deeper feelings" (XII, 123). In addition, he explained that he was dominated by his sense of sight, the "most despotic of our senses" (XII, 129), which is inherent in Man, who is but a "frame of body and of mind" (XII, 126) and, therefore, usually subservient to his dominant sensory power, vision:

. . . Nor only did the love
Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt
My deeper feelings, but another cause,
More subtle and less easily explained,
That almost seems inherent in the creature,
A twofold frame of body and of mind.
I speak in recollection of a time
When the bodily eye, in every stage
of life
The most despotic of our senses, gained
Such strength in me as often held my
mind
In absolute dominion. (XII, 121-131)

¹"My First Acquaintance with Poets," Hazlitt: Selected Essays, ed. George Sampson (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1917), p. 15.

Further, he felt that with his sense of sight the whole world was his workshop or his "inheritance" and his "home." It was his task to "mould and remould" (XI, 150) it into perfection which does not exist, such being his aim in those days when vision dominated genius:

Why should I not confess that Earth
was then
To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,
Seems, when the first time visited, to one
Who thither comes to find in it his home?
He walks about and looks upon the spot
With cordial transport, moulds it and re-
moulds,
And is half pleased with things that are
amiss,
'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.
(11. 145-152)

The "fires of genius," noted by Wordsworth's contemporaries to be burning in his eyes, were open not only to artistic insight but to the world abroad, as well--both the visible and the invisible. Wordsworth felt that imagination was the link between the two worlds. What was it like--that invisible world revealed to him--as it was linked to the physical world? Artist-poet William Blake described the vividness of the invisible world as enhanced by the imagination:

A spirit and a vision are not . . . a cloudy vapour or a nothing; they are organised and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better light lineaments, and in stronger and better light, than his perishing mortal eye can see, does not imagine at all.¹

¹Mead, p. 27.

The visible was necessary for the invisible, and in the union of the two Wordsworth achieved his greatest triumph as a poet who saw "into the life of things":

But when, . . . insight and expression are at one, we are caught up, in our own measure, into the vision of him who saw, in rocks and trees, and even the loose stones of the road, life, seeing them linked in the universal chain, bedded in a quickening soul; who in . . . happenings of nature, lighted by some mysterious flash, or shining through glorified air as harvest of the quiet eye, saw the primal, poetic truth which is indeed of all things their life.¹

Of Celestial Phenomena

Much of what Wordsworth saw in the visible world we find referred to in the poems in Lyrical Ballads. He saw celestial phenomena in the heavens, but on the earth he saw topographical features and both inanimate and animate aspects of nature.

Of celestial phenomena, meteors and stars; planets, including the sun and the moon; and clouds--rain, hail, and snow--may be noted. They are sometimes in the background, but they are also sometimes the subject of a poem.

In "There is an Eminence,--of these our hills," Wordsworth, writing of a peak to which his sister had given his name, makes the peak and meteors the subject:

The meteors make of it a favourite haunt:
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
The loneliest place we have among the
clouds. (ll. 9-13)

¹Ibid., p. 30.

The "star of Jove" (l. 10) is the only star specifically named in Lyrical Ballads, in which recur the sun and the moon. High cliffs and stars are in the setting of "The Idiot Boy." The observer fears that helpless Johnny has climbed high cliffs or peaks to pluck a bright star from the heavens and bring it home in his pocket:

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!
 He with his Pony now doth roam
 The cliffs and peaks so high that are,
 To lay his hands upon a star,
 And in his pocket bring it home.
 (ll. 317-321)

Farther along in the poem, however, he sees that Johnny is sitting listlessly on his feeding Pony, giving no heed at all to the stars, which are fading with the nearness of dawn:

Unto his horse--there feeding free,
 He seems, I think, the rein to give;
 Of . . . stars he takes no heed.
 (ll. 352-354)

Finally, by the time Betty Foy locates Johnny, the stars are nearly invisible and the night is gone: "By this the stars were almost gone" (l. 402). In "The Thorn" there is a mountain top linked with references to a star. The Speaker is puzzled about why Martha Ray climbs a certain mountain regardless of the star that is in the skies (l. 102):

But wherefore to the mountain-top
 Can this unhappy Woman go,
 Whatever star is in the skies,
 Whatever wind may blow?
 (ll. 100-103)

I believe that the question about the star's presence in the sky means that the Speaker believes in superstitions regarding the weather, rather than evil or supernatural omens, since he seems to have been a mariner and, when he first arrived in the country, to have climbed the mountain to view the ocean with a telescope (ll. 170-172). In "There was a Boy" the youth often watched the first stars rise above the ridges on the horizon in the evening while he stood or sat under trees or beside the "glimmering lake" (l. 6), which I believe reflected the starlight:

. . .--many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering
lake. (ll. 2-6)

Figurative use of the star may be found in some of the poems. In "She dwelt among the untrodden ways," the Speaker compares a Maid to a single bright star, saying that she is "--Fair as a star, when only one / Is shining in the sky" (ll. 7-8). In "The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman," the dying woman speaks of seeing stars or "flashes" in conflict, driving through the skies, in a nightmare. I believe that she feels the dream was a bad omen because, weakened and sick, she still sees flashes before her eyes when she awakens, and she marvels that she is still alive:

The stars, they were among my dreams;
In rustling conflict through the skies,
. . . I saw the flashes drive,

And yet they are upon my eyes,
And yet I am alive. (ll. 4-8)

Stars have a special or superstitious meaning for the Indian woman because she compares her life and its end to the track or "course" of what I believe to be a star, rather than the track of an athlete, because of the earlier emphasis upon the stars in the dream:

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun.
(ll. 61-62)

In many poems in Lyrical Ballads, the sun appears at various points in the sky--in the east, the mid heavens, and the west. In "The two April Mornings," the Speaker describes a sunrise, "bright and red," as his companion Matthew equates its effect upon him with God's will:

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
'The will of God be done!' (ll. 1-4)

In "The Two Thieves; or, the Last Stage of Avarice," old Daniel and his grandson begin their sinful day's work in the half-light of dawn, while the sun is still beneath the tops of trees:

The pair sally forth hand in hand: ere
the sun
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work
is begun. (ll. 33-34)

In "Ruth" the Speaker accords the sun a mysterious importance as he recounts how the soldier from across the sea told Ruth that her love had freed his soul from darkness as the light

from the sun frees the sky from darkness:

My soul from darkness is released,
Like the whole sky when to the east
The morning doth return.

(ll. 178-180)

In "To my Sister" Wordsworth urges his sister to hurry with her chores so that she may enjoy the morning sun:

My sister! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign;
Come forth and feel the sun.

(ll. 9-12)

In "The Pet-lamb. A Pastoral," Barbara Lewthwaite promises to return to care for her lamb at dawn:

Why bleat so after me? Why pull so
at thy chain?
Sleep--and at break of day I will come
to thee again!

(ll. 59-60)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker refers to the sun shining at an undetermined zenith in the sky:

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun.

(ll. 12-13)

In "The Thorn" the Speaker describes an aged tree, growing beside a "little muddy pond" (l. 30), which never dries out although small and exposed to "thirsty suns" (l. 33). In "The two April Mornings," he cannot understand why Matthew is sad when such a beautiful sun is shining in the sky:

'Our work,' said I, 'was well begun,
Then from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?'

(ll. 13-16)

In "There is an Eminence,--of these our hills," the Speaker views the sunset from an "orchard seat" (l. 3) and describes the peak as the last one to "parley" with the sun in the evening:

There is an Eminence,--of these our hills
The last that parleys with the setting sun;
We can behold it from our orchard seat.
(ll. 1-3)

In "The Tables Turned. An Evening Scene on the same Subject," he urges a Friend to leave his books and observe the beauties of Nature, such as the sun shining above a peak and beginning to cast the first evening colors over the countryside:

The Sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields
has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.
(ll. 5-8)

In "Tintern Abbey" the Speaker--in describing Nature or a "presence" (l. 94), a "sense sublime" (l. 95), and, at once, a "motion and a spirit" (l. 100) which "rolls through all things" (l. 102)--mentions the light of the setting sun first, as one of its dwelling places and then, in order, the "round ocean," the "living air," the "blue sky," and the "mind of man":

. . . And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the
joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply inter-
fused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting
suns,

And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of
 man:

A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of
 all thought,
 And rolls through all things.

(ll. 93-102)

I believe Wordsworth felt that sunlight is an embodiment provided for man by God and Nature. This theory is evident not only in "Tintern Abbey" but also in "Michael. A Pastoral Poem." In speaking of his inherited land, Michael speaks figuratively of sunshine, the embodiment of God's love:

I have been toiling more than seventy
 years,
 And in the open sunshine of God's love
 Have we all lived; . . .

(ll. 228-230)

Finally, in "The Old Cumberland Beggar" the Speaker voices a plea that when the "solitary Man" is no longer able to draw sustenance from the "open sunshine of God's love" (see "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," l. 229), he be allowed "free entrance" of the light in his "languid orbs" (l. 191) by means of a calm and peaceful death, while sitting "beneath the trees" or "on a grassy bank" (l. 193), for at death, the body relaxes and the eyes become blank or void and can receive more inner light than ever before. The light of the sun, "rising or setting" (l. 190), is the "eye of nature" (l. 196), and the Speaker hopes that as the Beggar lived in it, so may he die in it:

. . . if his eyes have now
 Been doomed so long to settle upon
 earth
 That not without some effort they
 behold
 The countenance of the horizontal
 sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at
 least
 Find a free entrance to their languid
 orbs,
 And let him, where and when he will,
 sit down
 Beneath the trees, or on a grassy
 bank
 Of highway side, and with the little
 birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal; and,
 finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die!
 (11. 186-197)

Appearances of the moon seem to set the scene or to prelude hazardous or tragic adventures in some of the poems in Lyrical Ballads. In "Lucy Gray; or, Solitude," Lucy, who will be lost in the snow, realizes that night is approaching, as her father tells her to take a lantern to her mother and light her home through the snow, because it is two o'clock and already the moon is in sight:

That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon--
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!

(11. 17-20)

In "Strange fits of passion have I known," the passage of the moon from what seems to be its zenith--"all over the wide lea" (l. 10)--to its passing "near, and nearer still" (l. 16) to Lucy's cottage and, finally, to its dropping

behind the roof of the cottage (ll. 23-24) seems to coincide with the Speaker's rising fears that Lucy might be dead. He approaches her cottage:

I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.
(ll. 7-8)

He sees that the moon, perhaps an evil omen, is shedding its light all around him:

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea.
(ll. 9-10)

As he reaches the orchard near the cottage, he sees the moon "sinking" toward the cottage:

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.
(ll. 13-16)

Although he imagines one of "those sweet dreams" that Nature grants to lovers to relieve their distress, he never turns his eyes from the sinking moon:

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.
(ll. 17-20)

Finally, his latent fears are realized as the moon drops behind the roof of Lucy's cottage:

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.
(ll. 21-24)

In "Hart-leap Well" before the moon has passed across the heavens a third time, Sir Walter has erected a pleasure house on the site debased by the hart's death.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port
 had steered,
 A cup of stone received the living
 well;
 Three pillars of rude stone Sir
 Walter reared,
 And built a house of pleasure in
 the dell. (ll. 81-84)

In "The Thorn" the Speaker reports that Martha Ray, on her trips to the mountain peak, sits half the night, as shown again by the passage of the moon through the sky:

And there she sits, until the moon
 Through half the clear blue sky will
 go. (ll. 192-193)

In "Ruth" the moon appears, in contrast with its usual troublesome portent, as part of the soldier's joy, along with the shining sun and the murmuring streams:

--While he was yet a boy,
 The moon, the glory of the sun,
 And streams that murmur as they run
 Had been his dearest joy.
 (ll. 33-36)

In "The Idiot Boy" Johnny's hazardous journey is undertaken in the light of the moon. References to the moon and its light and passage through the sky are numerous, for they set the scene and mark the passage of the night. Wordsworth used the moon for contrast in this poem. The moonlight journey is hazardous for Johnny, but it ends happily not only for him but also for the others--his mother Betty Foy and Susan

'Tis eight o'clock,--a clear March
night,
The moon is up,--the sky is blue,
The owlet, in the moonlight air,
Shouts from nobody knows where.
(11. 1-4)

And, while the Pony moves his legs,
In Johnny's left hand you may see
The green bough motionless and dead:
The Moon that shines above his head
Is not more still and mute than he.
(11. 77-81)

As the owlets curr in the dark, Johnny's lips "they burr,
burr, burr, / As on he goes beneath the moon" (ll. 105-106).
Through "moonlight lanes" (l. 117) and into a "moonlight
dale" (l. 118) go Johnny and his Pony. Betty, stricken with
second thoughts about having let him go off alone, reassures
herself that before eleven o'clock he will be back "as sure
as there's a moon in heaven" (l. 143). By that time,

however, she is reassuring herself again, using the same expression (l. 151). By midnight, he has not returned, and the sight of the moon in heaven (l. 154) does little to reassure her, now. It is almost one o'clock, but neither Johnny nor the doctor appears on the "moonlight road" (l. 174).

Betty goes in search of Johnny, retracing his route through the "moonlight lane" (l. 202) and into the "moonlight dale" (l. 203). She fears that he may have left the Pony and sought the moon in a brook, drowning in the attempt. At this point, Wordsworth ceases to use the moon as a consoling influence on both characters and readers:

And while she crossed the bridge,
 there came
 A thought with which her heart is
 sore--
 Johnny perhaps his horse forsook
 To hunt the moon within the brook,
 And never will be heard of more.

(ll. 212-216)

Finally, while poor Betty is searching frantically for Johnny, the Speaker says he is beside a waterfall and beneath the moon (ll. 347-351). He is no longer taking heed of either moon or stars (l. 354). I believe the details indicate the arrival of the half-light of dawn, the fading of the stars, and the sinking of the moon toward the horizon. By the time Betty finds him, the stars are nearly gone, and the moon is pale, setting just on the horizon:

The moon was setting on the hill,
 So pale you scarcely looked at
 her.

(ll. 403-404)

Finally, when Betty asks Johnny to tell her of his night's adventures, we find that he had seen the moon:

No doubt too he the moon had seen;
 For in the moonlight he had been
 From eight o'clock till five.
 (ll. 444-446)

But unfortunately he had mistaken it for the sun, as he had mistaken the shouting owls for crowing cocks, for he remarks how cold the sun seemed to be shining:

And thus, to Betty's question, he
 Made answer, like a traveller bold,
 (His very words I give to you,)
 'The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
 And the sun did shine so cold!'
 --Thus answered Johnny in his glory,
 And that was all his travel's story.
 (ll. 447-453)

Spheres in the heavens--meteors, stars, the sun, the moon--interested Wordsworth. So also did the clouds which often came between him and some object he was viewing, as in "The Danish Boy. A Fragment," when the Speaker sees that clouds are obscuring a lark that he hears singing:

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
 But drops not here to earth for
 rest. (ll. 12-13)

In "Written in Germany on one of the coldest days of the Century," the Speaker again sees clouds obscuring creatures--insects--as only their sounds penetrate the clouds:

Yet, God is my witness, thou small
 helpless Thing!
 Thy life I would gladly sustain
 Till summer come up from the south,
 and with crowds

Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst
 sound through the clouds,
 And back to the forests again!
 (11. 31-35)

In "Song for the Wandering Jew," storm clouds obscure peaks
 by fastening themselves "helmet-like" over the tops:

Clouds that love through air to hasten,
 Ere the storm its fury stills,
 Helmet-like themselves will fasten
 On the heads of towering hills.
 (11. 5-8)

In "There is an Eminence,--of these our hills," the Speaker
 believes that this particular peak, rising so high that it
 is obscured by the clouds, is the "loneliest" such peak:
 ". . . 'Tis in truth / The loneliest place we have among the
 clouds" (11. 12-13). In "Ruth" the soldier, in describing
 Georgia--a portion of America--speaks of vast lakes dotted
 with islands which remind him of patches of sky seen through
 obscuring clouds:

The Youth of green savannahs spake,
 And many an endless, endless lake,
 With all its fairy crowds
 Of islands, that together lie
 As quietly as spots of sky
 Among the evening clouds.
 (11. 67-72)

Finally, the sky clears so that in "The two April Mornings"
 we may see a single cloud with a shadow or "purple cleft"
 in it:

Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
 Brings fresh into my mind
 A day like this which I have left
 Full thirty years behind.
 (11. 21-24)

Then, in "'Tis said that some have died for love," the man in mourning sees the clouds passing from sight and leaving the sky an empty space:

The clouds pass on; they from the heavens
depart:
I look--the sky is empty space.
(11. 17-18)

In "Hart-leap Well" the Speaker tells the Shepherd that the "Being"--Nature--that exists like God in everything, even the clouds, protects and cares for inoffensive living creatures:

The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the
groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he
loves.
(11. 165-168)

In some of the poems in Lyrical Ballads, we may observe various aspects of weather. These include moisture, such as rain, mist, frozen hail, and snow. With the rain and the mist, the winds may be either turbulent or gentle.

In "The Thorn" the Speaker describes the weather--wind, storm, driving rain, mist--in which he mistook a woman seated on the ground for a jutting crag:

'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain:
No screen, no fence could I discover;
And then the wind! in sooth, it was
A wind full ten times over.
I looked around, I thought I saw
A jutting crag,--and off I ran,
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,
The shelter of the crag to gain;

And, as I am a man,
 Instead of jutting crag I found
 A Woman seated on the ground.
 (ll. 177-187)

In "A whirl-blast from behind the hill," the Speaker sees hailstones striking a grove of trees:

Then--all at once the air was still,
 And showers of hailstones pattered round
 Where leafless oaks towered high above.
 (ll. 3-5)

In contrast to turbulence is gentleness linked with nostalgia in "The Reverie of Poor Susan" where the Speaker tells us that Susan has seen in her vision mist or "volumes of vapour" and a river:

. . . She sees
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
 Bright volumes of vapour through Loth-
 bury glide,
 And a river flows on through the vale of
 Cheapside. (ll. 5-8)

Then, when her dream fades, she finds that she can no longer see the "mist and the river, the hill and the shade: / The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise" (ll. 14-15).

Snow appears in several poems. In "The Thorn" the Speaker reports that even snow will not deter Martha Ray from going up the mountain (see the passage previously cited, l. 79). The setting of the poem "Lucy Gray; or, Solitude" is in snow. Lucy must take a lantern to light her mother "through the snow" (l. 16). She sets off, carelessly kicking with her feet so that the powder-fine snow seems to be smoke rising in the air:

Not blither is the mountain roe:
 With many a wanton stroke
 Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
 That rises up like smoke.
 (11. 25-28)

After Lucy fails to reach her destination, her mother finds her tracks in the snow:

--When in the snow the mother spied
 The print of Lucy's feet.
 (11. 43-44)

The search party then follows Lucy's tracks until they disappear in the middle of a snow-covered bridge:

They followed from the snowy bank
 Those footmarks, one by one,
 Into the middle of the plank;
 And further there were none!
 (11. 53-56)

In "The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman," the sick woman is left by her tribe to die in the snow and ice. Her fire has gone out, and the ashes have frozen:

My fire is dead: it knew no pain;
 Yet it is dead, and I remain:
 All stiff with ice the ashes lie;
 And they are dead, and I will die.
 (11. 11-14)

Then, she remembers how her baby cried for her when the tribe left her behind, as if he longed to be old enough to pull her sledge through the snow (l. 38). In what seems to be a delirious lapse of memory or a pang of desire and determination, the dying woman vows to follow her people in spite of snow and pain until she can see the camp again:

I'll follow you across the snow;
 Ye travel heavily and slow;
 In spite of all my weary pain
 I'll look upon your tents again.
 (ll. 51-54)

Then, she returns to reality and sees again the hopelessness of her situation--the frozen fire and the ice on the water in either a nearby pond or a container left behind for her:

--My fire is dead, and showy white
 The water which beside it stood.
 (ll. 55-56)

Of Topographical Phenomena

The universe which Wordsworth beheld included more than the celestial phenomena of the heavens. The earth itself had exerted a power over him from childhood. The chief topographical features included such inanimate aspects of landscape as vales, which Wordsworth also called dales, valleys, and dells; mountains; waters; and a chasm.

Wordsworth's valleys may be partially, if not completely, settled and cultivated by men, but they may also be wild and undomesticated. He maintained his interest in the valleys in the Lake District after the poems in Lyrical Ballads were published and in 1835 saw the publication of his Guide through the District of the Lakes in the North of England with a Description of the Scenery, etc. for the use of Tourists and Residents, under its present title for the

first time after previous publications beginning in 1810.¹
 In the Lake District the vales are "spacious" and "gently declining," appearing as level as a temple floor or the surface of a lake. Rocks and hills rise from this level floor like islands from the sea:

For they are not formed, as are most of the celebrated Welsh valleys, by an approximation of the sloping bases of the opposite mountains towards each other, leaving little more between than a channel for the passage of a hasty river; but the bottom of these valleys is mostly a spacious and gently declining area, apparently level as the floor of a temple, or the surface of a lake, and broken in many cases by rocks and hills, which rise up like islands from the plain.²

In "The Brothers" Leonard lost his way while walking through the vale where he was reared, and when he saw the grave which he feared belonged to his younger brother James, although recollections of the field and woods were returning to him, he feared the truth and resisted it, looking about, believing that the landscape--the woods and the fields--had been altered, and the rocks and hills, changed:

. . . He had lost his path,
 As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
 Through fields which once had been well
 known to him:
 And oh what joy this recollection now
 Sent to his heart! he lifted up his eyes,

¹Mary Moorman, William Wordsworth: A Biography, Vol. II: The Later Years: 1803-1850 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 384.

²A Guide through the District of the Lakes in the North of England with a Description of the Scenery, etc. for the use of Tourists and Residents, introd. by W. M. Merchant (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1952), p. 65.

And, looking round, imagined that he saw
 Strange alteration wrought on every side
 Among the woods and fields, and that the
 rocks,
 And everlasting hills themselves were
 changed. (ll. 91-99)

In "The Reverie of Poor Susan," the song of the thrush causes Susan to remember the "green pastures" in her homeland dale, where she often "tripped" or skipped along with her pail when she lived in it:

Green pastures she views in the midst
 of the dale,
 Down which she so often has tripped
 with her pail. (ll. 9-10)

In "Tintern Abbey," the Speaker views from beneath a "dark sycamore" (l. 10) a settled, domesticated landscape--containing cottages and orchard groves, laden with unripe fruit--parcelled out into "pastoral farms" (l. 16). I believe the Speaker was looking at a dale because he had to be seated on a rise of ground, looking downward, to get such a view:

The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these
 orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe
 fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose
 themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I
 see
 These Hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,
 little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild: these
 pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door; and wreaths of
 smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the
 trees! (ll. 9-18)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," Wordsworth describes a hidden valley where "the mountains have all opened out themselves" (l. 7). Only Michael's family dwells in this valley, which is so lonely and hidden that it is "in truth an utter solitude" (l. 13) but for a few feeding sheep and darting kites (l. 11). In "The Danish Boy. A Fragment," he describes a dell between two "moorland rills." It seems sacred to the flowers on the hills and to the sky, although it contains a storm-stricken tree and the lightning-struck corner-stone of a hut. Even though these objects have been ruined, the ghost or "shadow" of a Danish Boy cannot be destroyed:

Between two sister moorland rills
 There is a spot that seems to lie
 Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
 And sacred to the sky.
 And in this smooth and open dell
 There is a tempest-stricken tree;
 A corner-stone by lightning cut,
 The last stone of a lonely hut;
 And in this dell you see
 A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
 The shadow of a Danish Boy.
 (ll. 1-11)

In "There was a Boy," the Speaker sees a wild marsh or "watery vale" (l. 12) so isolated that the boy is able to sit under a tree or beside a lake, mimic the cries of owls, and hear the owls answer him.

In the preceding quotations valleys are referred to as if made by mountains, and we find that Wordsworth frequently used mountains in Lyrical Ballads. He had his characters deface them; use them as familiar landmarks, often

with stories attached to them; and observe them.

In "Rural Architecture," the Speaker is angry at some boys who have defaced a crag by building a "man" on its peak with stones. They have climbed to the summit of Great How, an actual mountain which, according to a footnote in the poem, "rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite, along the high road between Keswick and Ambleside."¹

To the top of Great How did it please them
to climb:
And there they built up, without mortar or
lime,
A Man on the peak of the Crag. (ll. 4-6)

They called the statue Ralph Jones, and it became well-known throughout the dale:

Now Ralph is renowned for the length of
his bones;
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.
(ll. 11-12)

Wordsworth used mountains as landmarks familiar to his characters. In the beginning of "The Brothers" the Priest of Ennerdale complains of tourists who sit on mountain peaks and sketch the surrounding countryside:

. . . some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting
crag,
Pencil in hand . . . (ll. 5-7)

Leonard the mariner had seen his native mountains in the depths of the water when he was sailing on the sea:

¹"Rural Architecture," Poetical Works, p. 68.

He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains: . . . (ll. 59-62)

The Priest, pointing out the changes in the countryside to Leonard, now shows him a "tall pike," the "loneliest" of all the hills, whose crag had been struck by lightning:

. . . On that tall pike
 (It is the loneliest place of all these
 hills)
 . . . the huge crag
 Was rent with lightning . . .
 (ll. 139-144)

In speaking of what a festival would occur should Leonard Ewbank return, the Priest envisions an uproar from Great Gavel, which, according to the footnote to the poem, is one of the highest Cumberland mountains, down to the River Leeza, which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale and comes out of the Lake as the End or as Enna:¹

If there were one among us who had heard
That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
From the Great Gavel, down by Leeza's
banks,
And down the Enna, far as Egremont,
The day would be a joyous festival.
(11. 308-312)

In telling of James's death by falling from a mountain, the Priest describes a precipice shaped like a building of crags with a column of rock, called "the Pillar," rising high from its midst:

1 "The Brothers," Poetical Works, p. 79.

You see yon precipice;--it wears the
 shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags;
 And in the midst is one particular
 rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called
the Pillar.
 Upon its aery summit crowned with
 heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his
 comrades,
 Lay stretched at ease; . . .
 (ll. 364-371)

The Priest continues to describe the imagined circumstances of James's death on the mountain by surmising that he had fallen asleep, walked to the edge, and fallen from the mountain--his shepherd's staff catching and hanging on the Pillar:

. . .--and, waiting for
 his comrades,
 He there had fallen asleep; that in his
 sleep
 He to the margin of the precipice
 Had walked, and from the summit had fallen
 headlong:
 And so no doubt he perished. When the
 Youth
 Fell, in his hand he must have grasped,
 we think,
 His shepherd's staff; for on that Pillar
 of rock
 It had been caught mid-way; and there
 for years
 It hung;--and mouldered there.
 (ll. 397-405)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," the Speaker, in describing how Michael seemed to be fascinated by storms, envisions the Shepherd as being lured again and again to the "heights" by these storms, where he would stand alone in the mist:

And, truly, at all times, the storm,
 that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned
 him
 Up to the mountains: he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the
 heights. (ll. 56-60)

In describing the site of Michael's cottage, the Speaker says that it was situated on a rise with a distant view to the north and to the south so that Easedale and Dunmail-Raise could be seen:

Their cottage on a plot of rising
 ground
 Stood single, with large prospect,
 north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-
 Raise,
 And westward to the village near the
 lake. (ll. 132-135)

Wordsworth lets some of his characters observe the distant mountains. Those in "To Joanna" have already been discussed in the section on echoes. The Speaker in the passage that I cited had, first, gazed at "the Rock," facing eastward, as if searching it from bottom to top:

And, when we came in front of that
 tall rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped
 short--and stood
 Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit; . . . (ll. 42-45)

In "There is an Eminence,--of these our hills," the Speaker beholds from his "orchard-seat" (l. 3) the last peak touched by the evening sun, or the peak which "parlies" with the

"setting sun" (l. 2). In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," Andrew tells the children that he had seen a crag as high as any ever struck by storm or "tempest." An Oak grew from its "head," and a Broom from its "feet":

I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat!
Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
(ll. 11-14)

One night lightning struck the cliff, breaking off a fragment which thundered down and was caught or blocked by the Oak to hang perilously over the Broom:

Down from yon cliff a fragment broke;
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,
And hitherward pursued its way;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'Tis hanging to this day! (ll. 35-40)

In "Tintern Abbey," the Speaker "once again" sees the steep, high cliffs which make any isolated scene all the more impressive:

. . .--Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty
cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene
impress
Thoughts of more deep seclu-
sion; . . . (ll. 4-7)

Waters are seen in some of the poems in Lyrical Ballads. Wordsworth was interested in the colors of a calm surface, the depths of that surface, and the movement of surfaces--both fresh water and the sea.

In "Lines written while sailing in a Boat at Evening," he comments on how the surface of the water glows with the evening colors of the sunset, while the wake of the boat, which was gleaming before the boat cut through it, is now dark:

How richly glows the water's breast
 Before us, tinged with evening hues
 While, facing thus the crimson west,
 The boat her silent course pursues!
 And see how dark the backward stream!
 A little moment past so smiling!
 And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,
 Some other loiterers beguiling.

(ll. 1-8)

In "Remembrance of Collins, composed upon the Thames near Richmond," he sees the image of "a poet's heart" in the depths below the surface of the water. The surface, however, is bright, solemn, and serene, as the Poet loved it to be:

Vain thought!--Yet be as now thou
 art,
 That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene.

(ll. 9-12)

In "Nutting" the Speaker sees "sparkling foam" (l. 34) in "fairy water-breaks" (l. 33), undoubtedly caused by the movement of small falls of flowing or trickling water. In "The Brothers" the Speaker sees the blue sea that Leonard sailed upon. It has, besides a wave, "sparkling foam" larger than what is seen in the "fairy water-breaks":

And, while the broad blue wave and
 sparkling foam
 Flashed round him . . .

(ll. 56-57)

In "The two April Mornings," in speaking of his daughter Matthew compares her movements with the "tripping" of a spring streaming from a "rocky cave" and the dancing of a wave on the sea:

No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

(ll. 49-52)

There is but one chasm in one of the poems in Lyrical Ballads, occurring in "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral." This chasm, located in Langdale (l. 50), was partially filled by "a mighty block" or landslide of rock which had fallen into it, forming a natural bridge of rock (ll. 51-52), and it was on this bridge that the shepherds were playing, rather than watching their sheep. The chasm held deep water far below and a waterfall fell into its basin from the heights above:

It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of
rock;

The gulf is deep below;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

(ll. 49-55)

Of the Animate in Nature

Now that we have discussed the outstanding topographical features, the inanimate, in poems in Lyrical Ballads, we are going to conclude the discussion of the topographical

with the living features of Nature--animals and plants.

Of the domesticated animals in Lyrical Ballads, the Speaker sees dogs, horses, cattle, and sheep. Of the wild creatures, however, he sees only hares and, chiefly, deer.

In "Hart-leap Well" the best hunting dogs--Blanch, Swift, and Music--are "noblest of their kind" (l. 19), which is only fitting for such an arrogant master as Sir Walter, but even they become the last of the pack to fall behind as Sir Walter relentlessly pursues the hart up the mountain. They must "strain" to pull themselves up the slope, and, at last, breath and eyesight gone, they fall on the fern, legs and bodies "stretched":

Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of
 their kind,
 Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.
 The Knight . . . cheered and chid them on
 With suppliant gestures . . .
 But breath and eyesight fail; and, one by
 one,
 The dogs are stretched among the mountain
 fern. (ll. 19-24)

Mounts, a horse and a pony, are seen in two poems in Lyrical Ballads. The horse is a spirited mount mistreated by an arrogant master, and the pony is a gentle mount appreciated by all who use him.

In "Hart-leap Well," Sir Walter rides a grey horse. The Speaker finds him shouting for a fresh mount to finish the hunt; so the vassal "saddled his best Steed, a comely grey" (ll. 5-6). The grey horse is an energetic, prancing

animal that complements its rider with its joyous spirit:

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's
eyes;
The horse and horseman are a happy
pair. (ll. 9-10)

When Sir Walter finds the hart dead after following it up the mountain (l. 20) and leaving the exhausted dogs behind (l. 24), he forgets about the exhausted horse--hot and lathered as if covered by sleet--that had struggled to carry him there, as he gazes on his "spoil" with "silent joy" (l. 36):

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter
leaned
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious
feat;
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned;
And white with foam as if with cleaving
sleet. (ll. 37-40)

The Speaker often mentions a gentle pony in "The Idiot Boy" because Johnny rides it on his trip to town to bring the doctor to ailing Susan Gale. The pony is first seen when the Speaker wonders why Betty Foy has set Johnny on horseback (ll. 10-11). We find that Betty has brought the pony, which will become Johnny's "protector," from the lane, and the Speaker tells us much about its personality, alluding to the pony by using masculine gender in the pronouns he, his, him. First, the pony has an even temperament, a "mild and good" (l. 33) disposition, although he happens to be a bit lazy. He keeps his good temper in both joy--when he is grazing in the lane--and distress or "pain"--when he has to work, pulling or carrying "fagots" from the wood, for

Betty's husband, who is a woodcutter. We also find that the pony belongs to Betty, for he is referred to as "Her Pony" (l. 33), even though he is used by the woodcutter. This is undoubtedly why she trusts him to carry Johnny safely into the night:

And Betty from the lane has fetched
Her Pony, that is mild and good;
Whether he be in joy or pain,
Feeding at will along the lane,
Or bringing fagots from the wood.
(ll. 32-36)

Betty is grateful to the pony because he pays no attention to Johnny shaking the bridle (l. 64); so "though Betty's in a mighty flurry, / She gently pats the Pony's side" (ll. 68-69).

When the pony "moves his legs" (l. 72), Johnny is so overcome with joy that he forgets to apply his horsemanship, and "while the Pony moves his legs" (l. 77), Johnny's whip is idle. The pony seems to be as "meek as a lamb" (l. 99). The Speaker again emphasizes the animal's gentle disposition by describing how the two--horse and rider--make a team and how a rumor has declared that if the pony were to lose both sight and hearing and live almost forever, he would never lose his good "humour":

His steed and he right well agree;
For of this Pony there's a rumour
That, should he lose his eyes and
ears,
And should he live a thousand years,
He never will be out of humour.
(ll. 107-111)

The pony has a certain degree of intelligence, or is a creature that "thinks" (l. 112), and his pace slackens when his attention is diverted by Johnny's antics on his back because he cannot understand the unusual rider on his back:

But then he is a horse that thinks!
 And, when he thinks, his pace is slack;
 Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
 Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
 What he has got upon his back.
 (11. 112-116)

When Johnny fails to return with the doctor and Betty goes in search of her son, she imagines all sorts of horrors that might have happened to him, even venting her frantic anger on the gentle pony, imagining that he might have taken Johnny to a goblin's cave:

Or him that wicked Pony's carried
 To the dark cave, the goblin's hall.
 (11. 227-228)

Betty is in such "sad distemper" (l. 237) that she blames everyone, in turn, for her troubles, barely overlooking even the good doctor. She continues to vent her rage on the pony, who is as gentle as a cow:

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
 The Doctor's self could hardly spare:
 Unworthy things she talked, and wild;
 Even he, of cattle the most mild,
 The Pony had his share.
 (11. 237-241)

Now she pleads tearfully for the pony to bring Johnny back and promises to see that he is never overloaded again if he will just do her this one favor:

Such tears she never shed before;
 'Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!
 Oh carry back my Idiot Boy!
 And we will ne'er o'er load thee more.'
 (ll. 298-301)

She takes hope with the thought that, after all, the pony is "mild and good" (l. 303) and has not been mistreated; so perhaps he has merely gone "along the dell, / And carried Johnny to the wood" (ll. 305-306). Now the Speaker begins to speculate about Johnny's real activities. Perhaps he and the pony have roamed the peaks so high that he might pluck a star from the heavens to carry home in his pocket (ll. 317-321), or perhaps he is sitting backward on the pony, his face to its tail, and is riding in the vale (ll. 322-326). Perhaps with flaming, devil-like appearance he is galloping the pony and will cause it to gallop on forever, like an evil spirit:

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,
 And like the very soul of evil,
 He's galloping away, away,
 And so will gallop on for aye,
 The bane of all that dread the devil!
 (ll. 332-336)

Then the Speaker finds someone sitting carelessly on a feeding horse (ll. 347-351). It is "feeding free" (l. 352) on a loose rein, and the Speaker now identifies it as the pony. He is "worth his weight in gold" (l. 362) to Betty, says the Speaker, but by now, Betty has seen first Johnny and then the pony. In her joy to reach Johnny and hold him, she almost overturns the pony, now called a Horse for the first time (l. 375); perhaps Wordsworth rewarded the little horse

by allowing him to grow in stature since he had carried Johnny safely in the night. Betty is frantic in her gratitude to the pony, flying to, first, its tail, then its head, on first one side and then the other:

And now she's at the Pony's tail,
And now is at the Pony's head,--
On that side now, and now on this.
(ll. 382-384)

She does not even know where or when she pats the pony because she is so happy, but the pony still is "mild and good." We can hardly see his pleasure at receiving such attention:

She pats the Pony, where or when
She knows not, happy Betty Foy!
The little Pony glad may be,
But he is milder far than she,
You hardly can perceive his joy.
(ll. 392-396)

Now Betty turns the pony, leading him by the reins or bridle (l. 400), and all--Betty, Johnny, and the pony--"wind slowly through the woody dale" (l. 408) where they meet Susan Gale, who, because of her anxiety for her missing friends, has left her sick bed, cured, to search for them. The Speaker refers to the group as the "four travellers" (l. 433), giving the pony equal importance with his human companions--Betty, Johnny, and Susan.

Cattle are seen but twice and always as heifers in poems in Lyrical Ballads. In "Written with a Pencil upon a Stone in the Wall of the House (an Outhouse), on the Island at Grasmere," the Speaker describes a rude animal shelter

used by animals, including cattle--a heifer, for example--
for respite from the weather:

Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these
walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, . . .
(ll. 14-15)

In "Hart-leap Well" the Shepherd describes how animals--dog, heifer, horse, and sheep--will not touch the fountain debased by Sir Walter. Of the general classes of animals named by the Speaker--all domesticated--heifer, a young female, is used instead of the general term cattle:

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse
nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of
stone. (ll. 133-134)

Sheep are seen frequently in poems in Lyrical Ballads because many of Wordsworth's characters are shepherds, and their farms are suitable for raising sheep.

In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," the Broom sees a "mother-ewe" and her new-born or "infant" lamb lying under its shade when the grass is chilled by rain or dew; she also sees the love between them and the "sweet joy" of their life:

When grass is chill with rain or dew,
Beneath my shade the mother-ewe
Lies with her infant lamb; I see
The love they to each other make,
And the sweet joy which they partake,
It is a joy to me. (ll. 85-90)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," Michael, as caretaker of his flocks, recalls the many incidents of "hardship, skill

or courage, joy or fear" (l. 69) preserved in his memory of sheep, "dumb animals" (l. 71), which he has saved, fed, or sheltered out of kindness and not out of desire for "honourable gain" (l. 73):

So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage,
joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the
memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had
saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to
such acts
The certainty of honourable gain.
(ll. 68-73)

In season, Michael would sit on his "shepherd's stool" (l. 163), shearing his fettered sheep stretched before him on the ground beneath a shady oak:

. . . or on his shepherd's stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him
stretched
Under the large old oak, . . .
(ll. 163-165)

Michael would then reprove his young son Luke if he saw the child playing among the sheep, disturbing them by clutching at their legs or shouting at them while they lay still to be sheared:

. . . Michael [would] exercise his
heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof
bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed
the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with
his shouts

Scared them, while they lay still
beneath the shears.

(ll. 172-176)

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker celebrates a beautiful spring day by declaring that a thousand new-born lambs may be seen: "A thousand lambs are on the rocks, / All newly born!" (ll. 27-28). The shepherds, however, are celebrating the day with a game--crossing a chasm on a bridge of rock--when one is attracted by the sound of terrified sheep and, looking down, sees a lamb trapped in the pool of the dark chasm below:

He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful
rent. (ll. 63-66)

The lamb, which had fallen into the stream, had been carried by the "cataract" down into the torrent within the chasm and was frightened, but not hurt and still able to swim. The mother-ewe is on the rocks above, crying to it in despair:

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne;
And, while with a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and
round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.
(ll. 67-77)

A Poet (l. 84), rather than the shepherds, rescues the lamb

upon finding it within the "encompassing" walls of the chasm:

And there the helpless lamb he found
By those huge rocks encompassed round.
(ll. 87-88)

He lifts the lamb up from the "black and frightful rent"
(l. 66) where the light can strike it, and the shepherds
greet him, taking back their charge:

He drew it from the troubled pool,
And brought it forth into the light:
The Shepherds met him with his charge,
An unexpected sight!
Into their arms the lamb they took.
(ll. 89-93)

In "The Last of the Flock," the Speaker meets a shepherd carrying a Lamb (capitalized for importance because it symbolizes wealth to the man):

Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;
And in his arms a Lamb he had.
(ll. 9-10)

The Speaker asks the man why he is crying and receives the answer that this "lusty Lamb" (l. 17) the man is holding is the last of his flock. Then, he tells the Speaker about his rich flock, which increased from a single ewe (ll. 24-26) until it "numbered a full score" (l. 29) and still increased. His stock grew to number fifty fine sheep which fed on the Quantock hills:

Year after year my stock it grew;
And from this one, this single ewe,
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
As fine a flock as ever grazed!
Upon the Quantock hills they fed;
They throve, and we at home did
thrive. (ll. 31-36)

The man had six children, however, and to feed them, he had to begin selling his sheep. It was "a woeful time" for him to see his flock that he had reared with "care and pains" diminish like melting snow:

A woeful time it was for me,
To see the end of all my gains,
The pretty flock which I had reared
With all my care and pains,
To see it melt like snow away--
For me it was a woeful day.
(ll. 55-60)

The sheep dwindled to thirty (l. 65) and then "from ten to five, from five to three, / A lamb, a wether, and a ewe" (ll. 92-93), "from three to two" (l. 94), and finally, to "only one" (l. 96):

And, of my fifty, yesterday
I had but only one:
And here it lies upon my arm,
Alas! and I have none;--
To-day I fetched it from the rock:
It is the last of all my flock.
(ll. 95-100)

In "The Pet-lamb. A Pastoral," the Speaker, looking over a hedge, spies a maiden with a white lamb:

And, looking o'er the hedge, before
me I espied
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a
Maiden at its side. (ll. 3-4)

The lamb was the only creature in sight, and it was tied by a slight cord to a stone while the maiden knelt to feed it by hand (l. 9):

No sheep nor kine were near; the lamb
was all alone,

And by a slender cord was tethered to
 a stone;
 With one knee on the grass did the
 little Maiden kneel,
 While to that mountain-lamb she gave
 its evening meal. (ll. 5-8)

The lamb took its food from her hand, head and ears nodding
 and tail shaking:

The lamb, while from her hand he thus
 his supper took,
 Seemed to feast with head and ears; and
 his tail with pleasure shook.
 (ll. 9-10)

The maiden, Barbara Lewthwaite, speaks to the lamb as she
 prepares to leave it for the night. She asks why it pulls at
 its cord (ll. 21,59), remarks on its beauty (l. 26), advises
 it to "stretch thy woollen chain" (l. 29) if the sun is hot
 and gain the shade of a nearby beech, and remembers how her
 father had brought it home to her in his arms (l. 37). In
 "Written with a Pencil upon a Stone in the Wall of the House
 (an Outhouse), on the Island at Grasmere," the Speaker de-
 scribes how an animal shelter, "a homely Pile" (l. 14) pro-
 vides a wind-break for a lamb: ". . . and here, / The new-
 dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind" (ll. 15-16).
 While the Poet shelters himself here, also, the "unshorn"
 sheep, panting from their weight of wool, lie beside him in
 the summer shade as if they were all the same:

. . . and beneath this roof
 He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
 Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,
 the Sheep,

Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own Household: . . . (ll. 21-26)

Of the wild animals, hares appear in "The Childless Father," when the Speaker tells Timothy to hurry, for the hare has been flushed or "started" from Hamilton's grounds (l. 3) and the hunt is on, and in "Lucy Gray; or, Solitude," when the Speaker tells how a person may see "the hare upon the green" (l. 10) where Lucy lived because it is such an isolated moor.

Deer--hart, roe, roe-buck, and fawn--are seen more frequently than the hare in poems in Lyrical Ballads. They are included in certain poems as victims of the hunt, as objects of comparison in figures of speech, and simply as a fawn.

In "Hart-leap Well," the hart is a stag, and its appearances coincide chiefly with passages concerning its death, which have been previously cited. In "Ruth" the soldier needs someone by his side to assist him by driving the "flying deer" toward him (l. 96).

Figuratively speaking, in "Tintern Abbey" the Speaker says that when he was younger, he "bounded" over mountains "like a roe" (l. 67). In "The Brothers" the Speaker again uses the simile "bounding over hills like roe," but uses "roe-bucks" instead (l. 277), to describe the energy of the youths, Leonard and James. In "Three years she grew in sun

and shower," Nature uses the roe simile, substituting fawn for roe, and describing how her child will spring over lawn or mountain:

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs.

(ll. 13-15)

In "Lucy Gray; or, Solitude," besides a hare, a fawn can be seen on the isolated moor where she used to live:

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

(ll. 9-12)

In Lyrical Ballads, the winged creatures--birds and insects--are more often heard than seen. Of the specific birds which are seen, however, the poet mentions the following: a raven, kites, a lark, a redbreast, an ostrich, and a falcon. Of the few insects which he causes us to see, he mentions only a pair of bees, a colorful butterfly, a common housefly, and a lowly slow-worm.

Birds are described as drifting or riding on wind currents, flying in the air, hopping on stones, and brooding over eggs. They are also used as similes in comparisons regarding man.

In "Song for the Wandering Jew," the Speaker sees a raven, saying that even though it may play in the sky on windy days in rough currents of air while going to its nest, it still loves the haven in the cliff:

If on windy days the Raven
 Gambol like a dancing skiff,
 Not the less she loves her haven
 In the bosom of the cliff.

(ll. 17-20)

In "Michael. A Pastoral Poem," he sees kites drifting on wind currents and "sailing" overhead in the valley (ll. 11-12). His description of them seems to have been taken directly from an entry made in Dorothy's Grasmere Journal on October, 1800, when she recorded a scene almost identical with one that Wordsworth included near the beginning of "Michael" when he described a scene containing "a few sheep" (l. 11) as well as kites "sailing in the sky." Dorothy used the exact phrase "Kites sailing in the sky" in her Journal and also described bleating sheep arranged in "chains and patterns" on the mountains, including, of course, more visual detail than Wordsworth used for his sheep in the poem:

" . . . Kites sailing in the sky above our heads; Sheep bleating and in lines and chains and patterns scattered over the mountains."¹ The verb sailing is used again to describe the motion of another bird, a lark, seen above a hill in "The Fountain: A Conversation." Matthew speaks of a black-bird obscured by "leafy trees" and a lark sailing above a hill, both freed by Nature to sing when they will: "The

¹Dorothy Wordsworth, Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth: The Alfoxden Journal 1798; The Grasmere Journals 1800-1803 with an Appendix of Wordsworth's shorter Poems referred to in the Journals, ed. Helen Darbishire (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 60.

blackbird amid leafy trees, / The lark above the hill, /
Let loose their carols when they please" (ll. 37-39).

In "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral," the Speaker sees a flock of young "mountain ravens." They have left their mother and her nest to go "rambling" east and west in search of their own food, darting through the "glittering vapours" with the carefree abandon of the young:

The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and her nest;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.

(ll. 6-11)

In "Written with a Slate Pencil upon a Stone, the largest of a Heap lying near a deserted Quarry, upon one of the Islands at Rydal," Wordsworth hopes that Man will leave the ruined "pleasure-house" in solitude and let the redbreast hop undisturbed "from stone to stone" (l. 35).

An unusual bird, the ostrich, appears only once throughout Lyrical Ballads in "Song for the Wandering Jew." The Speaker sees the bird as a desert vagrant reposing or brooding over a nest of eggs when the cool night causes the need for warmth:

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,
Vagrant over desert sands,
Brooding on her eggs reposes
When chill night that care demands.

(ll. 21-24)

In "The Brothers" the Speaker used a simile to describe how young Leonard and James frolicked on the crags with the carefree abandon of young ravens: "They played like two young ravens on the crags" (l. 278). In "Hart-leap Well" the object of comparison in the simile is a falcon, mentioned when the Speaker remarks that Sir Walter flies like a falcon after his prey: "But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies, / There is a doleful silence in the air" (ll. 11-12).

The few insects appearing in Lyrical Ballads are seen in motion or at rest, flying in a happy bower while a slow-worm lies motionless. Only one instance of suffering occurs in the description of a housefly crawling on the top of a hot stove.

In "The Oak and the Broom. A Pastoral," two insolent young bees enter the Broom's green bower: "And to her own green bower the breeze / That instant brought two stripling bees" (ll. 98-99). Earlier, the Broom had bragged that the beautiful green and gold butterfly often flew to her blossoms to behold "wings," which I believe Wordsworth meant for petals, as lovely as its own:

The butterfly, all green and gold,
To me hath often flown,
Here in my blossoms to behold
Wings lovely as his own.
(ll. 81-84)

In "Written with a Slate Pencil upon a Stone, the largest of a Heap lying near a deserted Quarry, upon one of

the Islands at Rydal," the Speaker, in wishing the ruined pleasure-house not to be disturbed further by Man, desires that the new or "vernal" slow-worm be allowed to sun himself in peace: "There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself" (1. 34).

The most extensive of Wordsworth's descriptions of an insect is that of the common housefly in "Written in Germany on one of the coldest days of the Century." The Speaker begins this description with the statement "See that Fly,--a disconsolate creature!" (l. 6) upon spotting one crawling on the hot stove-top, lured by the heat which will destroy him:

And, sorrow for him! the dull treacherous
heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter
retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.
(11. 8-10)

The fly is confused by the intricate carvings or indentions on the stove-top as he "funbles" around over the "domains" and finally comes to the edge:

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out what trace he
 must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search
 of the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.
(11. 11-15)

Now, he stands "stock-still," amazed, like a lost traveller,

that all of his tried skill has failed to let him escape.
He uses his antennae or feelers in all directions, but finds
not a "guide-post" or landmark or "guide" or mentor:

Stock-still there he stands like a
traveller bemazed:
The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him
put forth
To the east and the west, to the
south and the north,
But he finds neither guide-post nor
guide. (ll. 16-20)

Now, the heat causes his legs or "spindles" gradually to sink
beneath him--foot, leg, then thigh. Sight and hearing are
lost. Its blood alternately freezes and thaws, casting the
fly into a limbo between life and death. The frosty cold air
of the room has "glued" two fragile "pinions" or wings "of
blue dusky gauze" to its sides:

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg,
and thigh!
His eyesight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood freezes
and thaws;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky
gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.
(ll. 21-25)

The Speaker sees the fly as being alone without loved one or
companion near: "No brother, no mate has he near him--while
I / Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love" (ll. 26-27).
Finally, he addresses the fly as a "small helpless Thing"
(l. 31) and would sustain its life if possible (l. 32).

Of the plants which are seen in poems in Lyrical
Ballads, many are specifically named, proving that Wordsworth

was familiar with all of the more common trees and smaller, often flowering plants growing in the wilds. The most visually descriptive passages on plants, however, do not necessarily concern the specifically named plants, for the name alone is not so descriptive as a passage giving, for example, colors and setting. According to my survey of plants which are specifically named, among the trees are the alder, ash, aspen, beech, birch, cypress, greenwood, juniper, larch, oak, magnolia, sycamore, thorn, and willow. Of the smaller plants, ferns and mosses occur most often, but only one fern, the Queen Osmunda in ll. 32-38 of "A narrow Girdle of rough stones and crags," bears a specific name. Other plants which Wordsworth used in his poems are the bell, broom, dandelion, fox's tail, hawthorn, lily, myrtle, periwinkle, primrose, common rose, staghorn, thistle, violet, and woodbine.

When referring to plants, Wordsworth mentions the blending of colors, the cycle of blooming flowers, and even the drops of dew upon them. Usually, they are English, but not all his plant life is to be found in England. For one poem, Wordsworth drew upon a travel book by an American writing of vegetation in the United States. He was especially influenced, in fact, by The Travels of William Bartram, first published in Philadelphia in 1791.¹ From reading such

¹William Bartram, The Travels of William Bartram, first published in Philadelphia in 1791, ed. Mark Van Doren with an Introduction by John Livingston Lowes (New York: Facsimile

passages as the following in Bartram, he learned the names of certain American plants, their descriptions, colors, variations in richness and texture, and even the look of dew-drops on the plants:

What a beautiful display of vegetation is here before me! seemingly unlimited in extent and variety; how the dew-drops twinkle and play upon the sight, trembling on the tips of the lucid, green savanna, sparkling as the gem that flames on the turban of the eastern prince. See the pearly tears rolling off the buds of the expanding Grana-dilla; behold the azure fields of cerulean Ixea! what can equal the rich golden flowers of the Canna lutea, which ornament the banks of yon serpentine rivulet, meandering over the meadows; the almost endless varieties of the gay Phlox, that enamel the swelling green banks, associated with the purple Verbena corymbosa, Viola, pearly Gnaphalium, and silvery Perdicium? How fantastical looks the libertine Clitoria, mantling the shrubs, on the vistas skirting the groves! . . . ¹

From observations like the foregoing, Wordsworth drew for his poem "Ruth" details about plants that Ruth's lover recalled--plants that hourly change in appearance in a "boundless range" of "intermingling" colors; flowers that are budding and fading on the same plant where every stage of life may be seen; and flowers that are the "wonder" of the landscape from morning dew to evening:

He spake of plants that hourly change
Their blossoms, through a boundless range
Of intermingling hues;
With budding, fading, faded flowers

Library, Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1940. I am indebted to the director of my thesis, Dr. Autrey Nell Wiley, for this information given in her lecture to the T.W.U. Traveling English Workshop.

¹Ibid., pp. 140-141.

They stand the wonder of the bowers
From morn to evening dews.

(ll. 55-60)

Further, there are trees--the magnolia, rising as high as a cloud, and the cypress spire--and there are even more flowers, scarlet ones, that spread a solid scarlet "gleam" a "hundred leagues," seeming to set the hills afire:

He told of the magnolia, spread
High as a cloud, high over head!
The cypress and her spire;
--Of flowers that with one scarlet
gleam
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
To set the hills on fire.

(ll. 61-66)

In "The Thorn," the vegetation is English. Several passages describe a barren, gnarled tree--grey and overgrown with parasitic lichens:

There is a Thorn--it looks so old,
In truth, you'd find it hard to say
How it could ever have been young,
It looks so old and grey.
Not higher than a two years' child
It stands erect, this aged Thorn;
No leaves it has, no prickly points;
It is a mass of knotted joints,
A wretched thing forlorn.
It stands erect, and like a stone
With lichens is it overgrown.

(ll. 1-11)

The narrator continues to describe the scene. The ancient tree is overgrown with heavy moss, creeping from the earth to clasp it and drag it to earth as if to bury it:

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
With lichens to the very top,
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
A melancholy crop:

Up from the earth these mosses creep,
 And this poor Thorn they clasp it round
 So close, you'd say that they are bent
 With plain and manifest intent
 To drag it to the ground;
 And all have joined in one endeavour
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

(ll. 12-22)

Beside the Thorn, overgrown with both lichens and moss, is a beautiful hillock of moss, half a foot high, with all the colors that may be seen; the "mossy network" is so fibrous and delicate that it might have been woven by a "lady fair," and the blooms or "cups" are "darlings of the eye" because of their rich vermillion color:

And, close beside this aged Thorn,
 There is a fresh and lovely sight,
 A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
 Just half a foot in height.
 All lovely colours there you see,
 All colours that were ever seen;
 And mossy network too is there,
 As if by hand of lady fair
 The work had woven been;
 And cups, the darlings of the eye,
 So deep is their vermillion dye.

(ll. 34-44)

Further, the Speaker sees the colors as "olive green" and "scarlet bright" (l. 46) in green spikes, red branches, and starlike blossoms that are "pearly white":

Ah me! what lovely tints are there
 Of olive green and scarlet bright,
 In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
 Green, red, and pearly white!

(ll. 45-48)

Reviewing Wordsworth's visual imagery in Lyrical Ballads, we observe a preponderance of pleasant sights with

a few exceptions. The defacing of the natural scenery of a mountain by mischievous boys in "Rural Architecture" displeases the reader as much as it does the Speaker. In "Hart-leap Well" the once-verdant grounds become arid and dry after they are defaced by Sir Walter. Animals more frequently than scenery, however, move the reader to sympathy and pity. In "Hart-leap Well" Sir Walter's lathered, exhausted horse and the lamb that fell into the chasm in "The Idle Shepherd-boys; or Dungeon-Ghyll Force. A Pastoral" and its distressed mother-ewe are unpleasant sights that arouse pity. Both hares and deer are victims of hunters, but the death scene of the hart in "Hart-leap Well" is the most moving example of cruelty. Of the winged creatures only one pity-inspiring series of pictures confronts us, namely, the detailed account of a common housefly crawling to its death on top of a hot stove in a freezing room.

CHAPTER IV

MAJOR SENSORY EXPERIENCES WHICH UNITE THE EXTERNAL WITH THE INTERNAL

As I have attempted to show, in the poems in Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth used his major sensory experiences-- what he heard and what he saw in Nature--in order to unite external sensory experiences with the internal. It is hard to separate the two; the inner was for Wordsworth often more real than the other. I believe that he considered Nature as an embodiment, a manifestation or proof of the existence of a Divine Being.

In the conclusion of The Prelude (XIV, 64-86), he speaks of a vision or scene that he observed from the top of Mt. Snowden when the moon illuminated the misty sea and landscape below. The vision "reflected" a "majestic intellect," and he beheld in that vision "the emblem of a mind" which feeds and becomes a part of infinity. Nature is shadowed in that intellect as one of its functions. She so dominates and influences the external world, "the face of outward things," that the least sensitive of men can see, hear, perceive, and "cannot choose but feel":

That vision, . . .
Reflected, it appeared to me the type
Of a majestic intellect, its acts

And its possessions, what it has and
 craves,
 What in itself it is, and would become.
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
 Its voices issuing forth to silent light
 In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
 By recognitions of transcendent power,
 In sense conducting to ideal form,
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.
 One function, above all, of such a mind
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting
 forth,
 'Mid circumstances awful and sublime,
 That mutual domination which she loves
 To exert upon the face of outward things,
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed
 With interchangeable supremacy,
 That men, least sensitive, see, hear,
 perceive,
 And cannot choose but feel.

We see this theory expressed in "Expostulation and Reply." The eye cannot choose but see; we cannot stop the ear from hearing; and our bodies will feel despite our will:

The eye--it cannot choose but see;
 We cannot bid the ear be still;
 Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
 Against or with our will.

(11. 17-20)

In "Tables Turned: An Evening Scene on the Same Subject," the Speaker regards Nature as a Teacher (l. 16). Hers is a world of wealth, ready to bless the mind and heart of man. She can impart, through this world, "spontaneous wisdom" and Truth "breathed" by positive states of health and cheerfulness:

She has a world of ready wealth,
 Our minds and hearts to bless--
 Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
 Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

(11. 17-20)

In "Lines Written in Early Spring," Nature has linked her "fair works" to the human soul so that it grieves the speaker to compare the two and find "what man has made of man":

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man. (ll. 5-8)

Although he cannot always comprehend the reasons for his seeing what he sees, he only knows that the sensory observation affords him much pleasure. There are the birds, for example:

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:--
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure,
(ll. 13-16)

and even "budding twigs" spreading their leaves to catch the "breezy air":

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.
(ll. 17-20)

In "To My Sister" he urges Dorothy to put aside her chores and come outside, speaking only of pleasurable emotions being experienced from Nature. He says "there is a blessing in the air" (l. 5) that yields a "sense of joy" to the bare trees and mountains and the green grass (ll. 6-8). Love, a "universal birth" (l. 21), is stealing from heart to heart, from earth to man and back again; now is the time for feeling this kinship:

Love, now a universal birth,
 From heart to heart is stealing,
 From earth to man, from man to earth:
 --It is the hour of feeling.

(ll. 21-24)

He says their minds will drink "at every pore" (l. 27) "the spirit of the season" (l. 28). Brother and sister will "frame" the "measure" of their souls (l. 35) from the transcending power of God, as shadowed by Nature, and then they will be tuned to love:

And from the blessed power that rolls
 About, below, above,
 We'll frame the measure of our souls:
 They shall be tuned to love.

(ll. 33-36)

This "linking"--inherent in Nature--that man "cannot choose but feel" affects everyone to some extent. It is his kinship, his connection, faint though it be while he is on earth, which Wordsworth said we give up to a large extent as we age and grow farther away from our childhood newness, when we are closer to God or the divine state from which we emerged, when "the Child is father of the Man." Why is the "linking" always a pleasurable experience when the less sensitive of us cannot understand it, and what does the "linking" indicate? Wordsworth's answers to these questions are to be found in poems written after 1800. The best known of these is, of course, his "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," IX, 165-171. Our souls never lose sight of the "immortal sea," the state of

Divine love and perfection, which brought us forth, and in a moment we can die on this earth and return to dwell there forever:

Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

While the less sensitive of men must be made aware of the existence of a Divine Being by natural impressions or the sensory powers, we find in The Prelude, Bk. XIV, ll. 86-90, that "higher minds" bear this knowledge, this "glorious faculty," with them "as their own":

. . . The power, which all
 Acknowledge when thus moved, which Nature
 thus
 To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty
 That higher minds bear with them as their
 own.

With this knowledge, higher minds can "deal / With the whole compass of the universe" (XIV, 91-92). They are the creative people, men like Wordsworth who could use sensory impressions of the external world to convey us into the internal. They were not "enthralled" by the senses, although Wordsworth once feared enslavement by the "tyranny of the eye"; rather, their knowledge enabled them to converse with "the spiritual world" and "the generations of mankind" throughout the ages--past, present, and future--until the end of time:

. . . in a world of life they live,
 By sensible impressions not enthralled,
 But by their quickening impulse made more
 prompt
 To hold fit converse with the spiritual
 world,
 And with the generations of mankind
 Spread over time, past, present, and to
 come,
 Age after age, till Time shall be no more.
 (XIV, 105-111)

Emile Legouis voices the same theory in explaining in his study of The Prelude that the purpose of such natural observations is not to catalogue them, which is the "least valuable of their uses," but to use them to inspire the imagination. A sensation should not link us only with the physical object giving it "birth," but should also put us in touch with the "soul," the "absolute truth," that it conceals and establish a "dialogue" between the soul of man and the soul of "external things":

But to use the senses for no other purpose than to draw up the catalogue of nature's sights and sounds, in the hope of thereby attaining to perfect knowledge, is to put them to the least valuable of their uses. Every sensation ought to bring us, and actually does bring us, into touch, not with the object which gives it birth, but with the soul which that object conceals,--with absolute truth. It is a dialogue between the soul of man and the soul of external things. The senses provide the means, the object the occasion.¹

As Legouis said, Wordsworth felt that the poet who used Nature as his bible was the "supreme teacher" on earth.

¹The Early Life of William Wordsworth 1770-1798: A Study of "The Prelude," first published in 1897, this edition trans. by J. W. Matthews, 2nd printing (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1932), p. 454.

whose task it was to reveal to his readers their own nature "and that of the universe in which they dwell" (p. 472). As I have attempted to show in this thesis, Wordsworth created a great sensory impression of Nature, using both sound and sight, in the poems in Lyrical Ballads, and his object, not entered into herein, was to reveal to his readers their own nature through revealing the nature--the "absolute truth" in natural objects--which we have said is linked to the Divine Being--of the universe. Nature on earth is much the same anywhere on the globe. It is proof of a Divine Being in tangible objects--man, animal, plant, the earth itself. Wordsworth did not have to create a world of his own to impart his philosophy; he merely used the world of reality to find in it a lasting permanence and truth.

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