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Treatment of Child Life in English Romantic Literature

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TREATMENT OF CHILD LIFE
IN
ENGLISH ROMANTIC LITERATURE

by
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TREATMENT OF CHILD LIFE

IN

ENGLISH ROMANTIC LITERATURE

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I

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

The three spiritual activities of man, religion, art and literature contribute the substance out of which the ideals of man are formed and perpetuated from generation to generation. Christianity was the first to center man's attention upon the importance of Child Life in this world. When Jesus gave utterance to these words,

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven", 1

He sounded forth a message to mankind that has echoed and reechoed and will continue to echo down through the ages. As a matter of fact there is not much about Jesus' own childhood that makes it apparently different from the childhood of other human beings. There is, in the main, a glorification of His birth, a mere mention of the flight of His parents with Him into Egypt and a picturing of His presence in the temple. But during Christ's ministry we are told again and again of the presence of children in the multitudes that flocked about Him. A number of the noteworthy miracles that were performed were upon children; for example, the healing of the nobleman's son and the delivery of the

1. Mark 10:4 ................. The Bible
boy possessed with devils. The blessing of little children who were brought to Jesus by their mothers also showed His attitude toward them. The prominent place which He gave to children in His talks with His disciples and before the multitudes has had a tendency to focus man's thoughts upon children. Biblical literature laid the foundation for the highest conceptions of art that produced, during the breaking up of the Middle Ages, the greatest paintings of the Christian ideals in the portrayal of the Madonna and the Christ Child that the world has ever known. Later on, during the Romantic period of English literature great truths were flashed upon the minds of the readers in such universal messages of truth concerning Child Life as "The child is father of the man" 1 and "I am black, but Oh my soul is white" 2 and also "While childhood, and dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth". 3

The ideals of humanity gradually change in accordance with the nourishment upon which the mind


3. Old Benchers of Inner Temple. Page 105
feeds. Classical literature was the product of men who thought mostly about the Greek and Latin patterns of Aristotle and Horace, "the lucidity of language, the rigidity of form, and the closeness of reasoning"; thus, they were interested in the machinery of literature rather than in the pathos or passions of humanity. There was nothing about Child Life in this literature because the writers of that period were interested in appealing only to the intellect and to the powers of reasoning; therefore, the subject matter dealt with politics and morals. It seems, however, in literature that one extreme follows another. The Romantic movement "brought to literature more imagination, greater individuality, deeper feelings, a less artificial form of expression, and an added sense for the appreciation of the beauties of nature and their spiritual significance". It "returned to nature and to plain humanity for its material, and so is in marked contrast to classicism, which was directed to the clubs and drawing rooms and to the social and political life of London".

2. English Literature, Page 305, Halleck.
3. " " 
Strictly speaking, there is no new movement in literature; each movement grows out of some good thing, however remote, which has preceded it. The past masters, Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton enhanced by the tremendous influence of Rousseau and the French Revolution were the inspirations of the Romantic revival. Heretofore, the literature was intellectually hardened; since it was written to appeal to the intellectuals or the town-wits, it was directed to the mind. Consequently the people felt that their emotions had been starved; hence, they eagerly welcomed this new type of literature which contained emotionalism essentially "blended with all activities of the body and the mind". ¹

Jean Jacques Rousseau has been called by many "The Father of Romantic Literature", in that he first centered interest upon the personal emotion of man and because of his far reaching influence in directing the trend of literature during that period. His idea of basing the education of the child upon the child itself revolutionized the realm of thought and stirred the minds of his day so that Child Life has been treated extensively in Romantic literature. It be-

¹. Vital Interpretation of English Literature
John S. Harrison
came a prevailing custom during Rousseau's day for mothers to nurse their own babies. This great reformer said through his book *Emile*:

"If women will only once more become mothers again, men will very soon become fathers and husbands". 1

He, also, emphasized the home circle and the fact that children brought happiness into the home.

"The bustle of children, which you now think so importunate, gradually becomes delightful, it brings father and mother nearer to one another". 2

Furthermore, he connected education with the home:

"Education now came to comprehend the whole system of the relations between parents and their children, from earliest infancy to maturity". 3

Morley feels that in Rousseau's writing "the child is treated as the miniature of humanity; it thus touches the whole sphere of our sympathies, warms our curiosity as to the composition of man's nature, and becomes the very eye and center of moral and social aspirations". 4 These quotations show how

1. *Emile* 1, 27. Jean Jacques Rousseau
2. Rousseau and His Era, page 251, John V. Morley
3. " " " " " 246, " " "
4. " " " " " 249, " " "
the Child was brought by Rousseau before the minds of the people. Morley further says that at that time, "The training of the young soul to virtue was surrounded with something of the holiness of a sacrament". 1

At different intervals people were banished for a certain period of time from England and many went to France. To be sure, while they were there, they became steeped in French thought. Then too, it was customary for the better class of people in England to take tours upon the continent and many visited France. Naturally, when these people went back to their own country, they took with them new ideas, which they had gained in France, and helped to disseminate French thought throughout England. Morley's statement which follows shows how quickly Rousseau's Emile arrived in England and how eagerly it was devoured.

"In our own country (England) Emilius was translated as soon as it appeared, and must have been widely read, for a second version of the translation was called for in a very short time". 2

Another excerpt from another source states that "in an interval of four years, between 1763 and 1767, it

1. Rousseau and His Era, page 245, John V. Morley
2. " " " " 298, Vol. II, John V. Morley
was four times translated into English". 1

Many people in England became enthusiastic about Rousseau's doctrine and tried to put it into practice. For instance, Richard Lovell Edgeworth's eldest son, who was born in 1764, was a product of such an experiment, the proof of which is contained in the following quotation:-

"The father determined to make a fair trial of Rousseau's system, and a compliant mother agreed that the child should, as far as possible be formed, both in body and mind by the benignant powers of nature". 2

Another example of the interest taken in Rousseau is that of Sir Thomas Day. He "determined to breed up two young girls, under his own eye, strictly according to the principles which he had imbibed from Rousseau with the view of making the most suitable one his wife as soon as she arrived at a marriageable age". 3 After this experiment "he determined to throw all his energies into an attempt to form the minds of the rising generation, in accordance

1. The Early Life of Wm. Wordsworth, page 55, Emile Legouis
2. The French Revolution and English Literature, Page 21, Edward Dowden
3. Literary Eccentrics, page 44, John Ryrie
with what he held to be the principles of right reason and sound morality. With this object, he set about the composition of "The History of Sandford and Merton". 1 This book, according to a quotation from John Eyvie, was considered an admirable book.

"In the words of the most eminent of recent literary critics, it is, 'in spite of its quaint didacticism, still among the best children's books in the language; and it may perhaps be found both pleasant and profitable by children of a larger growth'". 2

In regard to the author, Thomas Day, Dowden records this:-

"Thomas Day was a worthy eighteenth century Briton, essentially prosaic, though much out of the common in the degree of his benevolence and generosity; and the burning rays from Rousseau's "Nouvelle Heloise", "Contrat Social" and "Emile" fell direct upon his British brain". 3

"Robert Southey's aunt, who had undertaken his education, had bought a copy of Emile in order to employ the new and excellent method. In consequence of this, at

1. Literary Eccentrics, Page 61, John Eyvie
2. " " " 61, " "
3. The French Revolution and English Literature Page 24, Edward Dowden
twenty years of age Southey's head was 'full of Rousseau'. Enthusiastic disciples of Rousseau surrounded Wordsworth on every side. It is true that most of them, such as Charles Lamb, Charles Lloyd, and William Hazlitt expend their love and admiration principally upon the Confessions and La Nouvelle Heloise. But Thomas Poole preferred Emile. William Godwin summed up the opinion of many minds when he declared that 'though teeming with absurd notions, Emile is upon the whole to be regarded as the principal reservoir of philosophic truth as yet existing in the world'".  

The people of England were not only greatly interested in French literature but also in the French government. The French Revolution was watched by the English who were deeply interested in its principles and its results. Godwin who wrote "Political Justice" embodied the three sacred words of the Revolution, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in this article. Burke, Young, Paine, Wollstonecraft, all were people who based their writings upon the French Revolution; some taking one phase and some another. Burns, known as the peasant-poet of equality, wrote:-

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
A man's a man for a' that".  

This trend of English thought was influencing the minds of such young college students as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. "Godwin was their prophet, but they built

1. Early Life of Wordsworth, Pages 56-57, Emile Legouis
upon his speculations the superstructure of a
dream that was all their own. For some years, Cole-
ridge, Southey and Wordsworth were caught and held
in the close web of logic which Godwin gave to the
world in 1793 in the first edition of Political
Justice. Wordsworth read and studied and continu-
ally discussed it. Southey confessed that he 'read
and studied and all but worshiped Godwin'. Cole-
ridge wrote a sonnet in which he blesses his 'Holy
guidance' and hymns Godwin with 'an ardent lay'.

In becoming imbued with Godwin's teachings
"Wordsworth was acting in opposition to what was
deepest in his nature. Doubtless at this time God-
win was master of his mind; but by processes of the
understanding alone Wordsworth could attain no vital
body of truth. Rather he felt that things of far
more worth than political opinions, natural in-
stincts, sympathies, passions, intuitions were be-
ing disintegrated or denaturalized. Wordsworth re-
covered, as a sick man recovers, not through logical
processes, but by secret operations of nature, and a
gradual recuperative tendency. By the healing in-
fluences of nature, by the gentle admonition and

1. Shelley, Godwin and Their Circle, page 51,
H. N. Brailsford
quickening sympathies of his sister, Dorothy, a communion between his intellect, his affections, and his imagination was reestablished". 1

Into the midst of Wordsworth's intellectual throes Coleridge, Nature, and his sister, Dorothy, brought about a change which caused the beginning of the Romantic movement. In talking over the literary situation, while wandering in the Quantock Hills, these three determined "to destroy certain conventions of style, and to introduce new elements and new aspects into the treatment of poetry". 2

Thereupon they published "The Lyrical Ballads" which contained among others Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner" and Wordsworth's "Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey". The publishing of this volume brought derision and dislike at first but finally wrought a revolution in poetic taste. "So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797 and 1798, says Edmund Gosse, that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close of the latter year, we should, indeed, have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especially of

1. The French Revolution and English Literature page 204, Edward Dowden

2. English Literature, Vol. IV, P.108, Garnett Gosse
Wordsworth's; but the direction taken by literature would scarcely have been modified in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflammatory minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced full blown and perfect the exquisite new flower of Romantic poetry.  

How charmingly this is put by Gosse also:

"Together on the ferny hills, in the deep coombes, by 'Kilve's sounding shore', the wonderful trio discussed, conjectured, planned, and from the spindles of their talk there was spun the magic web of modern Romantic poetry".  

Swinburne says that the new poetic school, usually registered as 'Wordsworthian', was actually founded at midnight by William Blake and fortified at sunrise by William Wordsworth. It was Blake's thoughts that grouped themselves around childhood and it was he who gave a simple lyrical setting to such thoughts and by thus doing, he gave the nucleus of thought that created the embryonic stage of childhood in English literature. An excerpt substantiates

1. English Literature, Vol. IV, P. 108, Garnett Gosse
2. " " " " " " " 
3. The History of English Literature, p. 305, Halleck
this statement:

"The Songs of Innocence express for the first time in English literature the spontaneous happiness of a child. Blake recaptures the child mind. He does not merely write about childish happiness; he becomes the happy child. He does not speak of, or for, the child; he lets the child speak its own delight. Blake is universal; he expresses the natural delight in the life of every happy child in the world". 1

Also:--

"Blake made a discovery. He discovered childhood. He was the first to announce it. Heretofore, childhood had been regarded merely as a state of immaturity. He showed it to be a condition of happiness, unity and self-enjoyment; a sunrise which enables us to see the glory of God and the original state of the soul". 2

Still another quotation emphasizes his success in depicting childhood and its thoughts:--

"The imagination of the man who wrote the 'Songs of Innocence' had not outgrown the simplicity of the child. Blake might be an inspired child writing for children". 3

Lamb and De Quincey caught the spirit of Romantic poetry and they treat Child Life in their prose writing also. Evidently these four writers in the

1. An Introduction to the Study of Blake, page 34, Max Plowman
2. An Introduction to the Study of Blake, page 68, Max Plowman
Romantic movement discovered that emotions, instincts and imagination in a primitive state abound in children. Thereupon they studied the child sympathetically and idealized him, giving him a valued place in literature that corresponds to his importance in the world. Each author treated his theme in his own way. Blake and Wordsworth, being poets, highly idealized the child; while Lamb and De Quincey, being prose writers, humanized the child.

There are different aspects in child life that are treated by these authors; such as, its feelings, its sentiments, and its delicate sensibilities. All of these are factors in the building of character. Then, too, the fact that children come into the lives of adults and influence their thoughts and their feelings and often completely change their lives is considered. Blake and Wordsworth as well as Lamb and De Quincey recognized the fact that no sharp demarcation can be made between child life and adult life; accordingly the child is treated as a symbol of humanity in several selections.

In a more careful analysis one discovers that the child is treated in a variety of ways; sometimes the writer is an observer and pictures what he sees, giving an impersonal view; sometimes he remembers some
of his childhood experiences and records them, giving a very personal treatment; and, at times, he reflects upon the child as he sees it and also upon his own experience in his childhood. By so doing, he philosophizes and thus interprets the meaning of child life and its importance to mature life.
II

OBJECTIVE TREATMENT
First, the objective treatment of the child itself, its feelings of joy, sorrow, and its loneliness in being lost, its temperament, and its character in the making, will be shown as three authors present it. Then, Child Life used as a spokesman for humanity as treated by Blake, will be set forth.

In the poem "Infant Joy", Blake pictures the infant as radiating joy; this feeling of happiness is emphasized because of the simple literary form that is used. In the twelve lines of the poem the word "Joy" appears six times, along with such words as "happy", "sweet", "pretty", "sing" and "smile"; all of which help to make vivid the infant's joy when two days old.

In a companion poem "Infant Sorrow" the author has not been as successful in painting the feeling of sorrow because he inserts the line, "Like a fiend hid in a cloud", which is foreign to the subject and is really some of Blake's madness that has crept in. He brings to the reader's mind an image of the babe struggling until he is exhausted and then sulking upon the mother's breast. He gives a human touch in the babe's utter helplessness, his crying, and his struggle, that makes the picture true to life. He has rightly called it
"Infant Sorrow".

The joy which children experience in playing together out in the open on the green hills at twilight is Blake's theme in his "Nurse's Song" in "Songs of Innocence". Their childish voices and their laughter are echoed by the hills and the rhythmical setting seems to re-echo their cheerfulness.

The feeling of utter loneliness of a child who is lost is set forth in Blake's "The Little Boy Lost" in "Songs of Innocence". There is a gentle tone of censure that the little one uses toward his father that grips the reader's heart. The second stanza makes one actually feel alone in the mire and lost in the dark. Wordsworth treats of a little girl's being lost in his poem "Lucy Gray", but one does not feel the utter loneliness in reading his poem that he experiences in reading Blake's "The Little Boy Lost". The reason is that in Blake's poem the child's suffering and his crying emotionalize the reader and he feels that the child is lost, while in "Lucy Gray" the child is lost but there is an element of mystery connected with her disappearance which helps to take away the harshness of the incident. In the beginning of the poem the reader's wonder is aroused and he feels that an air of mystery surrounds Lucy Gray. How Wordsworth chanced to see her, a
child, at the break of day alone upon the wide moor
first draws one's attention.

"I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew
She dwelt on a wide moor". 1

Then he tells the story of disappearance which is very
sad but he excites the imagination of the reader again
by throwing a veil of mystery upon her being lost by
saying,

"Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

"O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind,
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind". 2

He thinks of her as associated with the lonesome moor
in the form of the whistling wind; thus he spiritualizes
her. In the preface to Lucy Gray, Wordsworth discloses
the purpose of this mysticism.

"The way in which the incident was treated
and the spiritualizing of the character
might furnish hints for contrasting the
imaginative influences which I have en-
deavoured to throw over common life with
Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating
subjects of the same kind".

1. Wordsworth's Complete Poetical Works,

2. Wordsworth's Complete Poetical Works,
Cambridge Edition, p.119, L 50-64
Incidents in children's lives aid in depicting the sentiments of children. Wordsworth, in one of his lyrical ballads "We Are Seven", relates his experiences with a little eight year old girl who has lost two of her brothers in death. After questioning her he finds that she played and worked by their graves and even sang to them. Because of these instances and the fact that she still insisted that "We Are Seven", even though two were dead, he reached the conclusion that death to a child is utterly incomprehensible.

"A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?"

In "The School Boy" Blake voices the feelings of the boy who is happy and is enjoying in full measure the summer morn with its singing birds and the distant horn of the huntsman when he is suddenly reminded of the fact that he has to go to school; then joy flees.

The fact that grief is very real to a child and that he is almost irreconcilable is illustrated in Wordsworth's lyrical ballad "Alice Fell". The loss of her ragged coat entangled in the wheel of the coach nearly broke the heart of the homeless waif. The gift
of a new coat made her a proud and happy little one again.

The feelings and sentiments of children have been the theme thus far. Character has not been exhibited in the selections treated but there are instances in which pictures of Child Life are recorded showing the temperament of the child. Temperament is the soil in which character takes root. Wordsworth presents a picture of a boy about twelve years old who possessed a very delicate sensibility to sights and sounds of nature. He loved to mimic the hootings of the owls by blowing into his hands in order that he might enjoy the reverberations echoing in the hills. During the pauses that intervened, he could hear the mountain torrents which came as a surprising shock, and the visible scene about him then entered into his mind and solemnized its imagery. He was tremulously alive to different aspects of nature; they seemed to come to him unbidden. Wordsworth's own youth was an example of just such an impressionable nature.

Charles Lamb relates the experiences of "Barbara S" in a terse and pithy account which shows character in the process of making by an experience from actual life. She was a little girl in her eleventh year but seemed to be at least five years older because of
the fact that she was a little wage-earner of her family and had responsibilities added to her that were beyond her years.

The careless treasurer of the theatrical company in which she took children’s parts, had overpaid her, but she did not realize it until she was on her way home. The weight of the coin in her hand attracted her attention first, then she looked at it and discovered that it was a crown. In the words of the author, "this little maid had no instinct to evil, but she might be said to have no fixed principle. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people, men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it. Her first impulse was to go back to the treasurer and explain to him his blunder. Then, little Satanic influences caused many thoughts to surge through her bewildered brain; such as, he was old and careless and it would be hard to explain and it was such a little bit of money! She could buy stockings for her sisters so that they could accompany her to the rehearsals. Intermingled with these thoughts which were bidding her to keep the money came these ideas pleading for honesty. "Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and had recom—

1. Barbara S. p. 240 The Essays of Elia Charles Lamb
mended her promotion to some of her little parts list

Immediately following this, the knowledge that he had a reputation for being wealthy caused her to waver again in the conflict. Finally, something, she hardly realized what, "for at that moment a strength not her own, was revealed to her - a reason above reasoning - and without her own agency, as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move) she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who, in silence, took back the refunded treasure". 1 What a victory! In it she experienced the comfort of a clear conscience and she knew what it was to be honest: "and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty".

Child Life bears upon adult life to such an extent that it affects the whole span of the individual life and influences that of other contemporaries. Even though an author may treat Child Life with its feelings, temperament, character, and incidents, still children are bound up with the mature life and he, as a literary artist, will express through them the richer life experience of mature humanity. Wordsworth relates

1. Barbara S. p. 241 The Essays of Elia Charles Lamb
an incident in his poem "Michael" that had been
told to him when he was a boy, which shows how the
advent of a child into a home enriches the domestic
life and "brings hope with it, and forward-looking
thoughts". He paints an ideal shepherd's home where
the father and son help the mother card the wool
after their day's work of watching the sheep is over.
The boy had been born when the father was old and
naturally he became very dear to Michael. As the lad
grew, he and the father became very close companions
and the father's heart seemed born again.

"------a child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking
thoughts,

"Exceeding was the love he bare to him
His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand".

"And in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field,"
"And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old;
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
And, to this office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help.

"But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts; and to the heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now? That from the Boy there came
Feelings and emanations -- things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind:
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again?
Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up;
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
He was his comfort and daily hope".

The author was familiar with the fact that a boy
aspires to do what his father does. How tenderly the
old man worked with Luke in teaching him how to take
care of the sheep! Much love and thought were put into
the making of the shepherd's staff. Dearer and dearer
each day did Luke become to Michael as he accompanied
his father upon the mountains to watch the sheep. When
he and Luke were at the sheep-fold, before Luke's de-
parture to the city, the father recalled to the boy's mind how they had roamed the hills together and how joyous they were in so doing.

"But we were playmates, Luke: among these hills, As well thou knowest, in us the old and young Have played together, nor with me didst thou Lack any pleasure which a boy can know".

The boy had been surrounded with love and care all of his life and when it came time for him to leave his home to go to the city in order to earn money to redeem his father's farm, he was given a farewell admonition the thoughts of which should have kept him ever faithful to his duty to his family.

"-------- and hereafter, Luke, When thou art gone away, should evil men Be thy companions, think of me, my Son, And of this moment,ither turn thy thoughts, And God will strengthen thee;"

The boy had won such a place in his father's heart that every thought, every action, and every bit of love was for him; he was the idol of the old man's heart.

Blake uses the child's voice to express the plaintive cry of humanity as a revolt against certain deplorable conditions existing within the cities. "The Chimney Sweeper" in "Songs of Innocence" is a revolt against the church and the state. The following lines show revolt against the church:-
"And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy
He'd have God for his father and never want joy".

The expression "God for his father" is the revolt
against the priest's being called "Father". The re-
volt against the state is uttered in such words as
these:-

"And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry 'weep, weep, weep, weep';
So your chimneys I sweep and in soot I sleep".

This group of words, "my father sold me" contains the
revolt against the state for allowing the child to be
sold. Basic principles underlying democracy are found
in Blake's "The Little Black Boy" in which the child
voices the plea for equality for all and pleads for a
future when there is no race prejudice. The key note
of the poem is found in the words of the child:-

"I am black, but Oh my soul is white".

Lamb makes a symbolical use of the child in his
phantasy "The Child Angel" in which he records a dream
he had. In his dream he sees all the winged orders of
Heaven hovered around the new born Child Angel. It
makes many attempts to fly but does not succeed "be-
cause its birth was not of the unmixed vigour of Heaven".
It goes lame but even so "in its goings it exceeded all
mortal children in grace and swiftness". The child,
bearing the name Ge-Urania, because it was such a
production of Heaven and earth, according to Lamb, represents mature humanity. Although it is immortal; still, it knows human weakness and learns through humility and aspiration. Since it stands for mature humanity, it is to be a child always because it is "too gross to breathe the air of its heavenly home". Even though years evolve in Heaven, it "is to keep perpetual childhood and is the Tutelar Genius of Childhood upon earth".

In "Barbara S" Lamb deals with the character of an individual, but in "The Praise of Chimney Sweepers" he writes about a class of children. The key note of the essay is struck in these words, "I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks - poor blots - innocent blacknesses". This sympathy for the little sweeps started when he was a little child. Often did he "pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns". So deeply did he sympathize with these little folk that he pleads for a philanthropic spirit to enter each one who meets them that it might prompt him to give them aid, since their occupation had many hardships. To develop the sympathy of the reader for this group of children, he paints a very touching picture of the sweep's taste for sassafras tea.
There is something in everyone's make-up that resents being laughed at when he accidentally falls. Lamb was true to nature in this respect, but fondness for the chimney sweep prevented him from becoming angry at the "jocularity of a young sweep" when he (Lamb) happened to fall and made him have a feeling of "something more than forgiveness" toward the sweep. Every instance that he gives emphasizes his compassionate spirit for these city children and tends to develop the sympathy of the public for them. Tender feelings are aroused when one reads about the little sweep who was lost and was finally discovered between the white sheets of a Duke's bed. This is true, too, in reading about the annual feast for the sweeps instituted by Jem White, which reveals how much gladness was brought into the lives of the little urchins by the feasts. Indeed this essay has as its purpose the idea of enlisting help for this type of Child Life; still in a broader view, the chimney sweep is used as a spokesman against child labor.
III

SUBJECTIVE TREATMENT
SUBJECTIVE TREATMENT.

A few examples of subjective treatment of the child itself, its feelings, its moral development, and its relations to Adult Life will be taken from the works of Lamb, Wordsworth, and De Quincey in the following study.

Recollections of Child Life upon the part of an author contribute largely to the subjective treatment of the child. Charles Lamb in "Witches and Other Night Fears" relates an experience of how, when he was a youngster, his mind was tortured by a picture of a Witch raising Samuel which he had seen in Stackhouse's History of the Bible. This witch, in his imagination, seemed to sit upon his pillow at night, and even in the day time he was possessed with fear of it when he was in his bedroom. The following statements show how terrified he was: "The night time solitude and the dark, were my hell". "The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life - so far as memory serves in things so long ago - without an assurance which realized its own prophecy of seeing some frightful spectre". 1

On the other hand De Quincey had an experience that brought about pleasure and happiness from looking at the illustrations in the Bible and in hearing the stories read by one favorite nurse.

"It happened that amongst our nursery collection of books was the Bible illustrated with many pictures. And in long dark evenings, as my three sisters with myself sat by the firelight around the guard of our nursery, no book was so much in request amongst us. It ruled us and swayed us as mysteriously as music". 1

In Lamb's circumstantial narrative, "My First Play", he describes his experience in attending the theatre for the first time. The anticipation of an event is of great importance in a child's life and constitutes a large proportion of it. He had been promised that he might go to the play if the rain would stop. He describes his feelings in these words:-

"With what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which I was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation. I seem to remember the last spurt, and the glee with which I ran to announce it". 2

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 173, Thomas De Quincey
2. The Essays of Elia, p. 113, Charles Lamb
While waiting to be admitted to the theatre, and while waiting for the green curtain to be raised, his anticipations could scarcely be endured. He lived in the realm of imagination which made it possible for him to enter into the spirit of this first play, "Artaxerxes", so that everything seemed real to him. The green curtain veiled a Heaven to his imagination; the pilastres glistened and he thought of them as candy. When the curtain did go up, all was enchantment and it seemed a dream to him. To show how keen his enjoyment was he makes this statement:

"No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams". 1

Later on he writes: "I felt all, loved all, wondered all - was nourished, I could not tell how - I had left the temple a devotee". 2 This occurred when he was six, but when he was sixteen he returned to the same theatre expecting to experience the same feelings but he was disappointed because he was older and no longer lived in the land of illusion for his mind was swayed by reason.

1. The Essays of Elia, p. 116, Charles Lamb
2. " " " " p. 117, " " 
De Quincey renders a very vivid account of his feelings when taking his first trip away from the parental roof when he was seven years old. It parallels Lamb's "My First Play" in its emphasis of the pleasures of anticipating such an event. "I need not say that I had no appetite; the fullness of my heart, both from busy anticipation, and from the parting which was at hand, had made me incapable of any other thought or attention but such as pointed to the coming journey. ---- Even to this moment, I recollect the audible throbbing of heart, the leap and rushing of blood, which suddenly surprised me during a deep lull of the wind, when the aged attendant said, 'That is the sound of wheels, I hear the chaise'. 1

In studying De Quincey's life one is impressed with the large part grief plays in his childhood. Death first came into his life when he was about one and a half years old; his sister, who was about three, died at this time. "But the death was then scarcely intelligible to me, and I could not so properly be said to suffer sorrow as a sad perplexity ---- I was sad for Jane's absence. But still in my heart I trusted that she would come again. Summer and winter came again,

1. Autobiographic Sketches p. 320 De Quincey
crocuses and roses; why not little Jane?" 1 This feeling exemplifies Wordsworth's thought also that a child cannot comprehend death:—

"-------------a simple child
What should it know of death?" 2

De Quincey, in this instance, was less than two years old while the little girl to whom Wordsworth referred was about eight. Later, however, when De Quincey was about six, death again came into his life. This time it was his sister who was about nine years of age. She was his leader and companion. He records his feeling for her, "Hadst thou been an idiot, my sister, not the less I must have loved thee, having the capacious heart overflowing, even as mine overflowed, with tenderness, and stung, even as mine was stung, by the necessity of being loved. This it was which drowned thee with beauty:—

'Love, the holy sense,
Best gift of God, in thee was most intense'. 3

In thinking back over his life and his blessings, he declared that one of the four things that he was es-

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p.163, Thomas De Quincey
2. We are Seven, William Wordsworth
3. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 166, Thomas De Quincey
pecially thankful for was "that my infant feelings were moulded by the gentlest of sisters". 1

On the day after her death he slipped quietly into her room while everyone was gone so that no one would know it. He accounts for his action thus:–

"But grief, in a child, hates the light and shrinks from human eyes". 2 While he was in the presence of the corpse of his dearly beloved sister, a trance fell upon him. During this trance he was lifted to Heaven and was in pursuit of the throne of God. Later on he viewed this dream in this manner:– "O flight of the solitary child to the solitary God - flight from the ruined corpse to the throne that could not be ruined! - how rich wert thou in truth for after years! Rapture of grief that, being too mighty for a child to sustain, foundest a happy oblivion in a Heaven-born dream, and within that sleep didst conceal a dream, whose meaning, in after years, when slowly I deciphered, suddenly there flashed upon me new light". 3

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1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 169  
   Thomas De Quincey
2. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 171  
   Thomas De Quincey
3. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 176  
   Thomas De Quincey
In another place he speaks of her death as causing the night which for him gathered upon that event and ran after his steps far into his life. His own grief he expressed in these words addressed to his sister:— "Pillar of fire that didst go before me to guide and to quicken, - pillar of darkness, when my countenance was turned away to God, that didst too truly reveal to my dawning fears the secret shadow of death". 1

His grief was such that he sought consolation in solitude because it gave his fancy a chance to play. "All day long, when it was not impossible for me to do so, I sought the most silent and sequestered nooks in the grounds about the house or in the neighboring fields. The awful stillness occasionally of summer noons, when no winds were abroad, the appealing silence of gray or misty afternoons, - these were foundations of witchcraft. Into the woods or the desert air I gazed, as if some comfort lay hid in them. I wearied the Heavens with my inquest of beseeching looks. I tormented the blue depths with obstinate scrutiny, sweeping them with my eyes, and searching them forever after one angelic face that

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1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p.167
Thomas De Quincey
might, perhaps, have permission to reveal itself for a moment. The faculty of shaping images in the distance out of slight elements, and grouping them after yearnings of the heart, aided by a slight defect in my eyes, grew upon me at this time". 1

When his first sister died, there was a rumor that one of the servants, in taking care of her, had been harsh if not brutal in her treatment of her. This thought seemed to awaken a knowledge in De Quincey that the world contained evil. "The feeling which fell upon me was a shuddering awe, as upon a first glimpse of the truth that I was in a world of evil and strife". 2

Another experience which came to him sometime following his second sister's death and after he had begun his classical studies afflicted him for a little while and as he states "left behind a gloomy impression, that suffering and wretchedness were diffused among all creatures that breathe". 3 Somebody had given him a kitten to which he became so greatly attached that he

1. Confessions of an English Opiium Eater, p. 184; Thomas De Quincey
2. Confessions of an English Opiium Eater, p. 16; Thomas De Quincey
3. Confessions of an English Opiium Eater, p. 199; Thomas De Quincey
disliked to leave it when he went to school. One day, upon his return, he was told that his little kitten had been killed by a dog that had been recently given to his family. In regard to this incident he writes:- "It is impossible to describe my grief when the case was made known to me at five o'clock in the evening by a man's holding out the little creature dead; she that I had left so full of glorious life was now stretched motionless". 1 Turk, the dog, was not blamed because De Quincey had "a heart overflowing with love" and because he "had drunk too profoundly the spirit of Christiani

2. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, Thomas De Quincey

   Thomas De Quincey
a chance to flee while he attracted the attention of the maid by showing her a picture. She soon perceived what he was doing but told him that it was all right to kill spiders because they were murderers. This staggered and perplexed him greatly. Evidently, De Quincey was trying to apply the early Biblical teachings to his every day life and found it difficult.

Early in his life he became a lover of books, especially, books of a classical nature. Sometimes his guardian, who was his tutor, also, sent him to the bookstore to purchase certain volumes for him. De Quincey had an allowance and very frequently bought books for himself too. One day he bought one for three guineas, but did not pay for it. It troubled him greatly afterward. Since it was near Christmas, he felt, however, that some way his debt would be swallowed up by that season, but he lived in dread of this misdemeanor being discovered for a long time. Some of his thoughts were "to somebody's pocket it would beyond a doubt make its way; and who was that somebody?" "This question haunted me forever, Christmas had come, Christmas had gone, and I heard nothing of the three guineas. But I was not easier for that". ¹ This anxiety came

¹. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 212
Thomas De Quincey
to him as he remarks "from want of some confidential friend", who could have advised him as to how he might make amends. He decided in later life, that his little account must have been so little that the bookseller in looking after larger Christmas accounts overlooked this small one. He avows that this was his "earliest trespass, and perhaps a venial one, all things considered". ¹

This incident reminds one of Lamb's "Barbara S". In comparing the two one wonders why, with De Quincey's Biblical teachings, he did not make an open confession to the bookseller as Barbara did to the treasurer, but De Quincey's own statement answers that question:— "For I was the shyest of children and a natural sense of personal dignity held me back at all stages of life from exposing the least ray of feelings which I was not encouraged wholly to reveal".²

Closely related to this episode is another incident, which arose from a remark made in a jesting manner by one of the clerks in the store, which shows how the child's imagination enlarges ideas and

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¹ Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 211, Thomas De Quincey

² Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 170, Thomas De Quincey
causes him to live in a state of fear. It seems as though De Quincey being about eleven years old, became interested in reading histories. Among them was a "general history of navigation, supported by a vast body of voyages". He began to wonder how many volumes would be needed to complete such an immense work. Consequently he asked a clerk and received an answer, which was made in fun but was believed in earnest by De Quincey, "15,000 more or less". The answer astounded him and he slipped out quietly. Immediately he began to worry; not only because he thought his former debt would be exposed; but also, because he became possessed with the idea that since he had made the inquiry concerning the histories that he would be accused of having contracted to take all of those that were unpublished. He was haunted by visions of what would happen and really suffered greatly through this horror and grief for three years. Again he felt the need of having one in whom he could confide and be given comfort in his distress. Proof of this is found in "Never again since thy departure (his sister's) durst I utter the feelings which possessed me". 1

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 170
Thomas De Quincey
This same feeling of fear, exhibited in both of these episodes, is also set forth again in a passage which relates his experiences with the letter containing a check for forty guineas that he received when he was running away from Manchester. At this time he was seventeen years old. He knew the letter did not belong to him and he walked forty miles to take it to the Post Office to which it was directed. Courage failed him when he came to deliver it. Again he was haunted by visions; this time visions of the government authorities arresting him. After much anxiety and planning he, finally, through the agency of a woman, had it surrendered to the proper authorities. This act brought relief to his mind but the trait of living in his imagination always remained with him.

It is through Wordsworth's power and habit of reflecting that we have the impressions of his childhood recorded for us and that we learn how nature appealed to him all through his life. Even as a little "babe in arms" Nature had a quieting influence upon him in the murmurs of the river that made music with its falls which was accompanied by the soothing calm of the hills and groves.
"Was it for this
That 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
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves". 1

This river became a constant companion to Wordsworth
for even when he was only five years old he would
often spend the entire day bathing and basking in
the sun; or sometimes he played in the sandy fields
near by "leaping through flowery groves of yellow rag-
wort" or at other times he pretended that he was an
Indian and ran naked in the thunder shower. He speaks
of his boyhood days and their environment as follows:­

"Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear"; 2

Many times he, as a boy, went to gather nuts from the
woods. One time, after he had enjoyed the flowers and
the natural surroundings of the little nut grove he
unmercifully pulled down the trees and stripped them
of their fruits. Proud of his bounty, he turned to go,

1. The Prelude Lines 269-281 Wordsworth
2. " " " 301-302 "
but the silent trees brought a sense of pain to his heart which rebuked him.

"I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky --
for there is a spirit in the woods". 1

Again he shows how Nature affected his boyhood through the inspiration of fear. As he was a real boy he enjoyed trapping greatly and at times he yielded to the temptation of robbing another's trap. Then it was that Nature administered her punishment which acted as a corrective.

"Sometimes it befell
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'er powered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the capture of another's toil
Became my prey; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod". 2

Another instance illustrating Nature's influence upon his moral development is that one describing his stealing a ride in another's boat. As he rode toward a certain goal "a huge peak" 3 loomed larger and larger in the distance and appeared to him to be "a living thing" 4 striding after him. This vision haunted

1. Nutting Lines 52-53; 56 Wordsworth
2. The Prelude Book 1, " 318-325 ",
3. " " 1, " 378 ",
4. " " 1, " 384 ",

him for several days and troubled his dreams.

Many of his experiences illustrate the influence of Nature upon him. The two foregoing passages describe occasions when he had done something wrong and nature inspired him with a sense of fear, but there were incidents when he was inspired with a sense of melancholy, which had a soothing influence. Even as he skated rapidly along the polished surface of the ice, accompanied by many other boys, all of whom were playing games and shouting with great glee so that the cliffs rang with the tumult, he was aware of a melancholy strain that came from the distant hills, while the stars were sparkling in the east and the last faint touches of the evening sunset were fading away in an orange tint. Quietly he withdrew from the boisterous crowd into a silent bay and communed with nature; thus, letting his fancy play. It seemed to him as he coasted in the wind that the shadowy banks were sweeping rapidly past him; suddenly he stopped short and even then the cliffs seemed to wheel by him as in a parade until they grew dim and faded away. All was again still. Into the very midst of his sportive play, while he was giving vent to his play instincts, came the fellowship of Nature
quieting him and pouring a wholesome influence upon his inward self which was to mean much to him in his future life.

The times when beauty and joy impress him are treated more in a general way rather than through specific instances, but he sums up the lasting qualities of the experiences in stating that all these scenes whether they impressed him with fear, pleasure or happiness became dear to him.

"Ye Presence of Nature in the sky
And on the Earth! Ye Visions of the hills!
And Souls of lonely places! ----------------
---------------------------------- the earth
And common face of Nature spake to me
Rememberable things".

When Wordsworth went to school he seized every opportunity to spend his leisure time in the open with Nature. He made acquaintances with different persons whose influence took him out into nature. The peddler who stayed on different occasions in Hawkshead often took him into the woods where they walked and talked and were the companions that Wordsworth later paints in "The Fountain" in the persons of Mathew and Wordsworth.

"He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys
Singled out me, as he in sport would say,
For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years."
As I grew up, it was my best delight
to be his chosen comrade. Many a time
On holidays, we rambled through the woods;
We sat – we walked; he pleased me with report
Of things which he had seen; and often touched
Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind
Turned inward; or at my request would sing
Old songs, the product of his native hills;
A skillful distribution of sweet sounds,
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
As cool refreshing water, by the care
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused
Through a parched meadow-ground, in time of
drought.
Still deeper welcome found his pure discourse:
How precious when in riper days I learned
To weigh with care his words, and to rejoice
In the plain presence of his dignity”. 1

One day he went to the upper waters of the River
Duddon with an angler on a very rainy day where
they fished and he became so very tired that the
angler had to carry him on his back.

In his boyhood days he played in the midst
of mountains, rivers, woods, and plains and then it
was that Nature seemed secondary, but as he grew
older he sought her for her own sake for he entered
into direct communion with her and fervidly wor-
shiped her.

"I hasten on to tell
How Nature, intervenient till this time
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake". 2

1. The Excursion Book 1, Lines 52-76 Wordsworth
2. The Prelude Book 11, Lines 201-204
He speaks of his seventeenth year as full of blessings of different forms of nature,

"I, at this time
Saw blessings spread around me like a sea
Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
From Nature and her overflowing soul,
I had received so much, that all my thoughts were steeped in feeling". 1

Literature, so it seems to me, played correspondingly just as an important part in De Quincey's childhood in molding his character by giving him a sense of right and wrong and by showing him beauty, pathos, or grandeur and also by feeding his imagination as did Nature to Wordsworth. In De Quincey's own words "something analogous to these spiritual transfigurations of a word or a sentence, by a bodily organ (eye or ear) that has been touched with virtue for evoking the spiritual echo lurking in its recesses, belongs, perhaps, to every impassioned mind for the kindred result of forcing out the peculiar beauty, pathos or grandeur that may happen to lodge (unobserved by ruder forms of sensibility) in special passage scattered up and down literature. The passage first of all revealed

1. The Prelude Book 11 Lines 394-399 Wordsworth
the immeasurableness of the morally sublime. These were the two lines in which that glory of
the sublime, so stirring to my childish sense,
seemed to burn as in some mighty pharos:

'Aesopus statuam ingentem posuere Attici;
Servum collocarunt eterna in basi'.

Translated:

'A colossal statue did the Aethenian raise
to Aesop; and a poor parish slave they
planted upon an everlasting pedestal'.

This sublimity originated in the awful chasm, in
the abyss that no eye could bridge between the
pollution of slavery, - the being a man, yet with­
out right or lawful power belonging to a man, -
between this unutterable degradation and the starry
attitude of the slave at that moment when, upon
the unveiling of his everlasting statue, all the
armies of the earth might be conceived as present­
ing arms to the emancipated man, the cymbals and
kettledrums of kings as drowning the whispers of
his ignominy and the harps of all his sisters that
wept over slavery yet joining in one choral gratu­
lation to the regenerated slave. This passage
from Phaedrus which might be briefly designated
THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE SLAVE gave to me my first
grand and jubilant sense of the moral sublime". 1

Still another great influence upon his thoughts of the nobler ideals of life was the story of the young officer and the private soldier in which account the soldier upon being struck by the officer in a tumult of indignation, said that he would make the officer repent the act. He did later but not by returning evil for evil but rather good for evil. The noblemindedness of the officer in acknowledging the courage of the soldier for performing a very noble deed for his country impressed deeply the mind of De Quincey and added to his sense of moral grandeur.

Books were not only his childhood friends but he continued to live with books throughout his entire life; and thus, his thoughts were molded by the best of literature since he was especially fond of Greek and Latin authors as well as English. Wordsworth read books too, but they did not hold the paramount place in his thoughts that nature held. In a letter to De Quincey, Wordsworth gave this advice:-

1. Autobiographic Sketches P. 144 De Quincey
"Love nature and books: seek these, and you will be happy: for virtuous friendship, and love, and knowledge of mankind must inevitably accompany these, - all things thus ripening in their due season". 1

There is a longing within every normal adult sometime during his life for children and their love. Lamb, in his "Dream Children", is an example of one with such a desire. What a picture of ideal home life he presents as he sits in the armchair with his children around him and tells them stories of their immediate ancestors! How much he enjoys telling them and how much they enjoy listening! A feeling of sadness comes to the reader when he discovers that it is only a dream. Then it is that he realizes that in this essay, Lamb has let him look into the secret wishes of his own heart, wishes which were smothered under the sacrificial care he gave his afflicted sister even though he loved a woman and had revealed to her his love. How pathetic this hidden tragedy is! And yet how well it reveals the relationship that exists between mature life and child life.

Young life coming in contact with older life

helps to enrich both lives. This is shown by Wordsworth's writing as an actual participant in the life he describes in "The Fountain" in which Mathew and Wordsworth were companions. Happy, indeed, is the lad who could have the companionship of a man as true, noble, and spiritual as Mathew. Through the silent influences of Mathew's love, Wordsworth became embued with a like spirit. Mathew, without apparently teaching, was really teaching Wordsworth the love of God out in Nature's school: - in the open fields, among the hills, along the running brooks, under the trees, around the springs, beneath the ever-changing skies, and amidst the songs of happy birds. The boy unconsciously caught the wholesome thoughts that Mathew had and expressed his delight in the entertainment that his teacher evidently had afforded him on other jaunts in the woods. In the midst of the joys of Nature, Mathew sowed the serious thoughts to which the youth responded with the desire to help him forget his sorrows. Too often does the person, who has outlived his loved ones, enjoy the state of reminiscence to his own detriment. Mathew, however, had Wordsworth in his old days and when he began to brood, the childish voice would break in upon his recollections and the two comrades would
roam the hills while the beloved teacher sang songs to please the boy. His sorrows were forgotten in so doing. In actual life there was no Mathew but there was Mr. Taylor who had been dear to Wordsworth as a teacher and companion and it is thought that Mathew, the ideal teacher, was built upon Mr. Taylor's likeness. It was he who was a great lover of nature and encouraged Wordsworth in his love for it and also in his poetic efforts.

"-------- when I, at his command,
Began to spin, with toil, my earliest songs".1

1. The Prelude Book X Lines 551-552 Wordsworth
IV

PHILOSOPHIC TREATMENT
Philosophical statements are often found scattered here and there in selections that are in the main subjective in treatment. One reads and understands Blake's poems of "Infant Joy" and "Infant Sorrow" because of their simple language and form, while Wordsworth's poem "Address to my Infant Daughter, Dora" is read and re-read and studied, and then one does not grasp the meaning and receive a clear image of the growing babe because of the reflective ideas that are interspersed. Both authors depict the helpless state of the infant; both speak of its smiles, but Wordsworth meditates upon them thus:

"Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers Thy loneliness; or shall those smiles be called Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore This untried world". 1

Blake speaks of the babe as sulking upon its mother's breast while Wordsworth glorifies the nursing babe with these lines:

"Blest the Babe, Nursed in his mother's arms, who sinks to sleep

Rocked on his mother's breast, who with soul
Drinks in the feelings of his mother's eye!" 1

In one of Wordsworth's letters is found a passage
that shows that even a very small child has feel­
ings of wonder about God. "A conversation which I
had in bed with my sweet little boy who was four
and one-half years old. 'How did God make me? Where
is God? How does He speak? He never spoke to me!'
I told him that God was a spirit; that He was not
like his flesh which he could touch; but more like
his thoughts, in his mind, which he could not touch.
The wind was tossing the fir trees, and the sky and
light were dancing about in their dark branches, as
seen through the window. Noting these fluctuations,
he exclaimed eagerly, 'There's a bit of Him, I see
it there!'" 2

In "Witches and Other Night Fears", Lamb
expresses the belief that children have a natural
fear of the dark, and that their imaginations have
full sway at that time. He cites an instance of a
child, (Thornton Hunt) who had "been brought up with

1. Wordsworth's Complete Poetical Works, p. 135,

most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition and who finds all this world of fear, from which he had been so rigidly excluded as extra, in his own 'thick-coming fancies'; and from his little night pillow ----- will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-dammed murderer are tranquillity". Moreover he feels that these fears are a part of everyone's composition and that "they date beyond body" and accompanying them is another fear "of a spirit unembodied" ----- which "predominates in the period of sinless infancy" and that an understanding of these fears would give us "a peep into at least the shadowland of pre-existence". Indeed, Lamb, being of a nervous, imaginative disposition as a child, had experiences in which fear predominated and this fact strengthened his sympathy with children who are left alone in the dark. Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. "The feeling about for a friendly arm - the hoping for a familiar voice - when they awake screaming and find none to soothe them - what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves!"

In speaking of the grief of little children, De Quincey felt that it was a feeling that was
prevalent among all children.

"But you, reader! think --- children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. But there are more than you ever heard of who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the foundation should be there twelve years; he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but that it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted among its martyrs". 1

In a letter to Reverend Mr. Trussler, Blake gives expression to his idea of the importance of the imagination. "I know that this world is a world of imagination and vision. -------- But to the eyes of the man of Imagination 'Nature is Imagination itself'. To me this world is all one continued vision of fancy or imagination". 2 There does not seem to be any comment of his that bears directly upon his conviction in regard to the imagination of childhood; still, the above lines lead one to the conclusion that he was a firm believer in imagination being supreme in life.

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 239, Thomas De Quincey
2. The Letters of William Blake together with His Life, p. 62, F. Tatham
Concerning the imaginative faculty De Quincey affirms "I recall ---- one instance which may show how merely shadows or a gleam of brightness, or nothing at all could furnish a sufficient basis for this creative faculty". He gives the vision of the apostles and the beds of the sick children that he sees in heaven in his imagination through the stained glass windows while he was at church. Throughout his experiences there are many instances of the workings of his active and powerful imagination. In fact, nearly every instance cited in this treatment concerning him is an example of it. It is no wonder that he became known as a "dreamer of dreams", and the "dream poet" since grief and solitude in his younger days nurtured this creative tendency and the use of opium in his manhood brought about a recurrence of his childhood experiences.

As Lamb spent his first seven years in the Temple, his imagination naturally fed upon its environment and its inhabitants. He passed through a hero-worship period that caused him to see those old lawyers in the light of imagination, the impression of which remained with him even as he grew older and reflected upon his childhood experiences so that in writing about them he has given a certain
reverent touch that glorifies them as he portrays their character. He speaks of them as follows:-

"Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me - to my childish eyes - the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as "old men covered with a mantle", walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish, - extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, - in the heart of childhood, there will, forever, spring a well of innocent or wholesome superstition - the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital - from everyday forms reducing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, Imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth".

In his reflections upon the fountain after he found that it had been destroyed because it was esteemed childish, there is a note sounded that contained much truth:-

"Why must everything smack of man, and mannish? Is the world all grown up? Is childhood dead? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments?"

This passage shows why Lamb chose to relate his

1. The Essays of Elia  page 105 Charles Lamb
2. " " " " " " 99 " " 
childhood experiences and also why he wrote about Child Life.

To Wordsworth the Imagination was a most precious and important factor in the up-building of his spiritual life. Nature was the power that built up his soul with high ideals and finally brought him into close communion with the God of the Universe so that in later life his reflections caused him to believe that God is in all things. In the "Prelude", Wordsworth shows his attitude toward the imagination, which he personifies and addresses thus:

"Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe!
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of men,
But with high objects with enduring things -
With life and nature - purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear, until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart,
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
With stinted kindness". 1

That De Quincey maintained that solitude played the important role in a child's life is set forth in

1. Prelude  Book 1  Lines 401-416  Wordsworth
the following lines:-

"Interesting it is to observe how certainly all deep feelings agree in this, that they seek for solitude; and are nursed by solitude ---- Love, grief, the passion of reverie, or the mystery of devotion, what were these without solitude?" 1

Emphasis upon the same idea is also in this statement:-

"God speaks to children, also, in dreams and by oracles that lurk in darkness. But in solitude above all things, when made vocal to the meditative heart by the truths and services of a national church, God holds with children, 'communication undisturbed'". 2

Often Wordsworth would arise early in the morning and go alone in the woods and sit upon an "abrupt eminence" from which he would watch the first gleams of the dawn across the sleeping valley in its solitude.

"Oft in these moments such a holy calm would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes were utterly forgotten, and what I saw appeared like something in myself, a dream, a prospect in the mind". 3

His very action shows his attitude toward the value of solitude:-

1. Confessions of an Opium Eater, p. 184, De Quincey
2. Autobiographic Sketches p. 50 De Quincey
3. Prelude Book 11 Lines 339-352 Wordsworth
"In November days,
When vapours rolling down the valleys made
A lonely scene more lonesome; among woods
At noon; and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
When, by the margin of the trembling lake
Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went
In solitude, such intercourse as mine;
Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
And by the waters all summer long.

There is a comment that he makes concerning solitude
in which he tells about the boat races that he entered
with the boys in school at the college.

"And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much,
The self-sufficing power of solitude". 2

Wordsworth lived so very close to Nature and felt her
living presence to such an extent in the molding of
his character that he gave her the credit of inspir­
ing him with lofty thoughts that shaped his life.

"In my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
With God and Nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires -
The gift is yours ------------------
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed
My lofty speculations; and in thee,
-------------------------- I find
A never failing principle of joy
And purest passion". 3

1. Influence of Natural Objects, p. 110, Wordsworth
2. Prelude Book 11 Lines 426-451 Wordsworth
3. Prelude Book 11 Lines 426-451 Wordsworth
In "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey", he again declares that Nature fashioned his moral being. This fact illustrates that he believed that the thoughts of childhood build the character of the future adult.

"Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, - both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being". 1

At the beginning of the section headed "Philosophical Treatment" there is a portion of a quotation used in regard to the fears that Lamb believed to be natural to all children that seems necessary to be referred to again because it shows that he believed in the pre-existence of the soul. He feels that an understanding of these fears would give "a peep into the shadow-land of pre-existence". Wordsworth also had something of Lamb's conviction, concerning the pre-existence of the soul which is set forth in his "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality". Childhood, to him, is nearer the spiritual world than is the nature man. The fact

1. Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, Lines 101-111 Wordsworth
is he, himself, explains that he took hold of the
notion of pre-existence of the soul because it had
sufficient foundation in it for authorizing him to
make for his purpose the best use of it that he could
as a poet. He speaks of the soul, before it was born
on this earth, as living in eternal glory and coming
"From God, Who is our home". 1 This is Platonic
theory. He, moreover, declares that the memory of
such a life stays with the soul and in childhood
this memory is so fresh that it seems everything is
bathed in this celestial light which seems to be re­
lected from the soul itself. He further proclaims
"Heaven lies about us in our infancy" 2 and that as
the child grows older, conditions in life cause the
memory of this glory to fade, but when one has reached
mature life he remembers the feeling which he has ex­
perienced as a child and recognizes that he has been
in close touch with eternity. It is his childhood
experiences that cause him to have a firmer faith
in the reality of the unseen and eternal. In the
preface to this poem he declares with great earnest­

1. Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, p. 66
William Wordsworth

2. Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, p. 67
William Wordsworth
"I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to Heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of eternal existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school, have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from the abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. ------ To that dreamlike vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, everyone, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony". 1

The spirit is conceived by Wordsworth as having no definite beginning or ending.

"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". 2

Thus Wordsworth connects childhood with the immortality of the soul which is the highest hope of the human race.

Very closely related to Lamb's and Words-


worth's ideas concerning the soul is De Quincey's comment which follows:

"The solitude, therefore, which in this world appalls or fascinates a child's heart is but the echo of a far deeper solitude through which already he has passed, and of another solitude deeper still, through which he has to pass; reflex of one solitude - prefiguration of another". 1

Another statement emphasizes De Quincey's belief in regard to the importance of solitude to a child:

"solitude for the child is Agrippa's mirror of the unseen universe:" 2

Also:

"For a Grecian child solitude was nothing, but for a Christian child it has become the power of God and the mystery of God". 3

Many times does this author refer to the solitude of his boyhood, one excerpt follows:

"It is certain that, from the essential solitude in which my childhood was passed; from the depths of my sensibility; from the exaltations of this by the resistance of an intellect too prematurely developed; it resulted that the terrific grief which I passed through drove a shaft for me into the worlds of death and darkness which never

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 189
   Thomas De Quincey
2. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 189
   Thomas De Quincey
3. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 189
   Thomas De Quincey
again closed, and through which it might be said that I ascended and descended at will according to the temper of my spirits. Some of the phenomena developed in my dream-scenery, undoubtedly, do but repeat the experiences of my childhood. 1

The foregoing quotation gives one an insight into the workings of De Quincey's imagination and helps him to understand more readily the meaning of Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow, the purpose of which is to present a mythological account of the griefs which permeated and influenced his spirit in his early childhood. Levana, a Roman Goddess, has become known as the "Tutelary Power that controls the education of the nursery" 2 and according to De Quincey "She, therefore, watches over human education". 3 To him the true forces active in the education of a child are in charge of Levana and her three agencies: Mater Lachrymarum (Our Lady of Tears), Mater Suspiriorum (Our Lady of Sighs) and Mater Tenebrarum (Our Lady of Darkness). "These ministers are

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 155 Thomas De Quincey
2. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 237 Thomas De Quincey
3. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 238 Thomas De Quincey
presented as impersonations; that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh". ¹ He wished "a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart"; ² therefore, he chose our Ladies of Sorrow. He further believed that these goddesses made up "that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passions, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, work forever upon children". ³

De Quincey's thoughts were influenced by Wordsworth as is exemplified by these words of the former, "The child", says Wordsworth, "is father of the man"; thus calling into conscious notice the fact, else, faintly or not at all perceived, that whatever is seen in the maturest adult, blossoming and bearing fruit must have preexisted by way of germs in the infant. "Yes; all that is now broadly emblazoned in

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 240
   Thomas De Quincey
2. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 240
   Thomas De Quincey
3. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 238
   Thomas De Quincey
the man was once latent - seen or not seen - as a vernal bud in the child. But not, therefore, is it true inversely, that all which preexists in the child finds its development in the man. Infancy, therefore, is to be viewed not only as part of a larger world that waits for its final complement in old age, but also a separate world in itself; part of a continent, but also a distinct peninsula. Most of what he has, the grown-up man inherits from his infant self.

"Childhood, therefore, in the midst of its intellectual weakness, and sometimes even by means of this weakness, enjoys a limited privilege of strength. The heart in this season of life is apprehensive, and, where its sensibilities are profound, is endowed with a special power of listening for the tones of truth - hidden, struggling, or remote; for the knowledge being then narrow, the interest is narrow in the objects of knowledge; consequently, the sensibilities are not scattered, are not multiplied, are not crushed and confounded (as afterwards they are) under the burden of that distraction which lurks in the infinite littleness of details". 1

1. Autobiographic Sketches, p. 137-138 De Quincey
Parallelizing this same idea, he remarks in another section:

"But coming back to the case of childhood, I maintain steadfastly that into all the elementary feelings of man children look with more searching gaze than adults. My opinion is, that where circumstances favor, where the heart is deep, where the situation is favorable as to solitude and as to genial feelings, children have a specific power of contemplating the truth, which departs as they enter the world. It is clear to me, that children upon elementary paths which require no knowledge of the world to unravel, tread more firmly than men; have a more pathetic sense of beauty which lies in justice; according to the immortal ode of our great laureate (Ode "On the Intimations of Immortality in Childhood"), a far closer communion with God". 1

Many times Wordsworth speaks of Childhood in his works; for instance, in looking back into his life, he is impressed with the thought which these lines convey:

"O mystery of man, from what a depth Proceed thy honour's! I am lost, but see In simple childhood something of the base On which thy greatness stands". 2

Then again is found this:

"Our simple childhood sits upon a throne That hath more power than all elements". 3

1. Confessions of an English Opium Eater, p. 208, Thomas De Quincey
2. Prelude Book XI P. 272-275 Wordsworth
3. Prelude Book V P. 508-510 Wordsworth
In one place the child is referred to as an unstained creature "fresh from the hand of God"; at another time childhood is called "the hiding place of man's power"; 1 while in "My Heart Leaps Up" is found this ever famous universal truth that sums up his ideals about childhood:

"The child is father of the man".

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1. Prelude Book XII P. 278 Wordsworth
V

CONCLUSION
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In the foregoing studies an attempt has been made to show that Child Life furnished to these four Romantic authors a large field of humanity in which they might produce and set forth ideas that were basic in the formation of Romantic principles. They realized that Child Life, generally speaking, reveals the primitive state of emotions, sentiments, imagination, and character in the making; hence, they sought to write about children by featuring them in various moods and under a variety of circumstances. In doing this, they individualized the child in such a way as to set an everlasting glorification about childhood.

In depicting the child in an objective way the authors recorded their observations of the child's feelings of joy and sorrow, his anticipations and disappointments, and his influence upon Adult Life. They saw humanity itself as a child and sent a message to humanity through Child Life. As they observed children and wrote about them their thoughts naturally turned back to their own childhood with its feelings of joy and sorrow, and the little incidents in their lives that helped to build their
Blake wrote about Child Life in the simplest of literary forms and he had the power of setting forth the child's thoughts so that one feels in reading his poetry the child itself is speaking its gladness or its sadness. Truly one feels himself to be happy or grieved or lost, whatever the case may be; so much does this genius arouse the emotions of the reader. Then, it is no wonder that Wordsworth felt the influence of this great writer and chose to make childhood a portion of his theme.

Anyone, in reading "Alice Fell", quickly puts himself in Alice's place or goes back in his own mind to a similar grief in his life and has tender sympathetic feelings for this forlorn little girl. In this poem Wordsworth entered wholly the mind of the child and produced a simple incident of Child Life that stirs the deepest of sympathetic emotions of the most mature readers. The same narrative read by a child or to a child, appeals to the tender feelings of the little one. In this example the grief of childhood is conceived as a real thing and is measured as by the child's mind. In "The Pet Lamb" Wordsworth admits that he entered so thoroughly into
the life of the child as she talked, petted, and sang to her pet lamb that he scarcely knew which part of the song was hers and which was his own.

"And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line
That but one half of it was hers, and one half of it was mine,
Again and once again did I respect the song;
Nay, said I, more than half to the damsel must belong,
For she looked with such a look and she spake with such a tone
That I almost received her heart into my own".

Very frequently, indeed, did such common incidents as referred to above bring the more serious thoughts of life to Wordsworth. One time, as he held his baby daughter, Dora, in his arms and watched a kitten playing with the falling leaves and at the same time caught the smiles of ecstacy in her eyes, his thoughts drifted to his own life with its joys and sorrows and he wished that he might gambol with "Life's Falling Leaf" as did the kitten with those leaves and that he might derive wisdom from such bliss when time would bring on decay. To be sure, as he meditated, when observing incidents, upon the more serious side of life he was also given to introspection, and he thought many times of his own childhood with its sensitiveness to the influence of Nature upon his moral development.

"The thought of our past years in me doth breed Perpetual benediction".
Childhood to him was a time of "delight and liberty" for which he was thankful. Even though he felt it (a time of delight and liberty) to be "the simple creed of Childhood", still, he seemed to be more grateful for the "obstinate questionings of sense and outward things". This takes one back to the time when Nature seemed to punish him as in such cases as the robbing of the snares of another, the stripping of the branches of their nuts, and the stealing a ride in another's canoe. It was then Nature rebuked him with "low breathings coming after him", or by her "silent branches lifted in the air" or "the mountain looming in the distance" and pursuing him as some huge giant. He felt that early affections and shadowy recollections of childhood "are yet the fountain light of all our day". He also believed that during childhood "truths wake to perish never". Through the study of Wordsworth's treatment of Child Life it is shown that he spiritualizes the individuality and personality of the child and surrounds childhood, itself, with a glorification that reflects divinity. In childhood he sees humanity in miniature; capable of thoughts, actions and emotions of the Adult Life. But he sees further than this: he
sees a nearness of the child to Heaven; he sees the child's susceptibility to the influence of Nature. This interpretation causes one to draw the conclusion that Wordsworth believes there is a spirit of youth. The result of this communion acted as a guiding power in the formation of the character of this youth.

In college De Quincey became an enthusiastic admirer of Wordsworth's poetry. It was due to his great desire to meet the man who could write such verses that he made a journey to his home to learn to know him. Since De Quincey's mind was extremely imaginative, it was only natural for him to be a Romanticist and in being this he just as naturally wrote about his childhood experiences which teem with sorrowful emotion. In relating his various experiences, he described the emotions that stirred his mind as a child and at the same time he allowed his own feelings as an author to enter into his work. This gave an opening to the trend of Romantic theory which permitted the author to portray his feelings. De Quincey, along with Wordsworth, attempted to show that childhood held a part of life that was a complement to old age but also that it held a
place unto itself:

"As 'in today already walks tomorrow;' so in the past experiences of a youthful life may be seen dimly the future".

Closely allied to this idea is a negative statement of William Blake:

"Neither youth nor childhood is folly or incapacity".

In thinking over Wordsworth's and Lamb's early lives, one is impressed emphatically with the contrast of their delights: one was a lover of nature; the other, a lover of people - their houses, their cities, etc. While the former spent his time communing with the trees, the rivers, the mountains, and, in fact, all of God's great out-of-doors; the latter ardently loved to spend his time exploring the rooms of some house. In speaking of the haunted room where Mrs. Battle died, he declares:

"But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that though there lay - I shame to say how few rods distant from the mansion - half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not until late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the Lacus
Incognitus of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects - and those at no great distance from the house - I was told of such - what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden? So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison; and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I was there as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides, the low-built roof, parlours ten feet by ten, frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home - these were the condition of my birth - the wholesome soil which I was planted in".  

Lamb realized the difference between his tastes and Wordsworth's and in writing to the Nature-lover he openly confessed his state of mind.  

"Separate from the pleasure of your company, I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead Nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street; the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, wagons, playhouses; all the bustles and wickedness round about Covent Gardens; the very women of the town; the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles; life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old bookstalls, parsons cheapening books, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes - London itself a pantomime and a masquerade - all these things work them- 

1. Complete Works of Lamb P. 160 Guy Faux
my mind, and free me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life. All these emotions must be strange to you; so are your rural emotions to me. But consider, what must I have been doing all my life, not to have lent great portions of my heart with usury to such scenes.

"My attachments are all local, purely local. I have no passion (or have had none since I was in love, and then it was the spurious engendering of poetry and books) for groves and valleys. The rooms where I was born, the furniture which has been before my eyes all my life, a bookcase which has followed me about like a faithful dog (only exceeding him in knowledge) wherever I have moved, old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school, - these are my mistresses. Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you. I should pity you. did I not know that the mind will make friends of anything. Your sun, and moon, and skies, and hills, and lakes, affect me no more, or scarcely come to me in more venerable characters, than as a gilded room with tapestry and tapes, where I might live with handsome visible objects. I consider the clouds above me but as a roof beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind; and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me, from disuse, have been the beauties of Nature, as they have been confinedly called; so ever fresh, and green, and warm are all the inventions of man, and assemblies of men in this great city".

   Alfred Ainger
In his treatment of childhood he humanizes the child as no one else has ever done.

Thus, these four authors, in spiritualizing and humanizing childhood in their works formed the means by which Child Life found a place in literature that corresponds to its importance in the human race. Christ many years before had shown the value of Child Life when He spoke in parables, using the child as a symbol in teaching His people the need of becoming as little children in their faith so that they could more readily understand His teachings and thus inherit Eternal Life.

"Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven". 1

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1. Mathew 18:3  The Bible
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