***The Romantic Revival has been otherwise called the Renaissance of Wonder.***

***KUBLA KHAN, SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.***

[‘*My spiritual intelligence is certainly becoming confused by your words of conflicting conclusions, therefore ascending one of them; please reveal definitely that by which I may obtain the greatest benefit.’*]

The romantic poet has sincere love for man, or rather the spirit of man. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley have a superabundant enthusiasm for humanity. Wordsworth is deeply interested in the simple village folk that lives in contact with Nature. Coleridge shows his love of humanity in Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement when he says that he would like to serve mankind. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge show admiration for the ideals that inspires the French Revolution. Shelley’s whole poetry is an evidence of his humanitarian ardour. Shelley visualises the golden age of men, when there will be no slavery of any kind and love will reign. He expresses these ideas in his Hymn to Intellectual Beauty and Ode to the West Wind. Byron too has a great love for liberty. He denounces tyranny in his Ode to Napoleon.

**“Now enjoy….**

**Dip him in the river who loves water…..**

**The busy bee has no time for sorrow…..**

**The most sublime act is to set another before you….**

**The cistern contains: the fountain overflow….”**

The good character as well as the bad abstractions such as virtues and vices is framed up in symbols to elaborate their suggestiveness and implications. Blake’s symbology is too large and complex to be given in brief. His symbols help to express his visions which may be obscure to a common reader. Blake says: “Allegory is addressed to the intellectual powers, while it is altogether hidden from the corporeal. Understanding is my definition of the Most Sublime Poetry.” From this it is clear that in his view poetry is concerned with something else than the phenomenal world and that the only means of expressing it is through what he calls ‘allegory’. For Blake allegory is a system of symbols which presents events in a spiritual world.

In the clash of creeds, it is always a comfort to remember that sects with their sectaries, orthodox or otherwise, could not intersect all, if they were not in the same plane. We find in Blake’s poetry many of the elements characterizing Romantic poetry. “The world of imagination is the world of Eternity”, says Blake. In his championship of liberty, his mysticism, naturalism, idealization of childhood, and simplicity Blake could be called a precursor of Romantic poetry in nineteenth century England.

**“Methinks I am not wronged;**

**Nor is it aught, if from the censuring world**

**I can but hide it. Reputation,**

**Thou art a word, no more!- But thou hast shown**

**An impudence so high, that to the world**

**I fear thou wilt betray or shame thyself.”**

‘The Tyger’ displays the poet’s excellence in craftsmanship and descriptive skill. In the forest of experience Blake finds the bright- eyed tiger which appears to involve all the cosmic forces. The tiger has made its appearances in the ‘Prophetic books’ of Blake. The poet’s reliance in the cosmic and preternatural forces is increasingly exemplified and asserted when he describes the creation and the creator of the tiger. The creator is a supernatural being and not necessarily the Christian God. The creation, according to another elucidation takes place in an extraordinary cosmic commotion. When the constellations turn round in their course there is a move from light to darkness. The pattern and method of asking questions here are quite different from those employed in ‘The Lamb’. In ‘The Tyger’ the questions are put in a terrified and awe-inspired tone. It is also held that ‘The Tyger’ deals with the colossal problem of evil, but in Blake evil does not exist as an abstract quality. Instead, the evil is embodied in the wrath of God. Christ, like all other Gods, has a dual duty. He punishes the sinners and offenders and loves the followers. Thus Christ or God becomes the God of both love and unkindness. The fire is a popular symbol of wrath. Milton and Spenser have described wrath as fire, but we are not to misapprehend Blake’s use of wrath as one of the ‘deadly sins’ by the miracle and morality plays. Blake finds virtue in wrath and what he describes in the righteous indignation or the wrath of a pious soul. In addition to this, if we also construe the symbolic meaning of the forest, then we can substantiate the meaning of the lines.

Blake imagined himself under spiritual influences. He saw various forms and heard the voices of angels, fairies, kings of the past and even God; the past and future were before him and he heard in imagination, even the awful voice which called on Adam amongst the trees of the garden. In this kind of dreaming abstraction, he lived much of his life; all his s works are stamped with it. Though this visionary aspect explains much of the mysticism and obscurity of his work, it is also the element that makes his poems singular in loveliness and beauty. It is amazing that he could thus, month after month and year after year, lay down his engraver after it had earned him his daily wages, and retire from the battle, to his imagination where he could experience scenes of more than-earthly splendour and creatures pure as unfallen dew. Like Swedenborg, Blake narrates things unheard and unseen; more purely a mystic than Swedenborg, he does not condescend to dialectics and scholastic divinity. Those who fancy that a dozen stony syllogisms seal up the perennial fountain of our deepest questions, will affirm that Blake’s belief was an illusion, constant and self-consistent and harmonious with the world throughout the whole of a man’s life, cannot differ from much reality. However, it is also important to note that he was unlike common atheists.

In explaining these lines we waver in interpreting the drops of tears that water the heaven as the outcome of the rage of the defeated rebelling angels or as tears of mercy. If this wrath is one of the two aspects of God, the tiger’s cruelty and wildness is only superficially fearful. It can otherwise be construed as a prophetic rage. But after, all wrath and mercy unite at the same point where the ultimate reality of God is felt. Blake is first and foremost a poet of visions and mysticism. But of, his visions are not confined to a narrow streamline of thought about futurity alone; they take the present into consideration and unfold those aspects of contemporary society detrimental to free growth of the mental powers of man. He ridicules the artificial ethos of religion that professes a complete negation of man’s sensual life and vehemently argues for a more complete life which combines the senses and the spirit. He probes beneath the surface of things and exposes the roots of social vices, the hidden sores and scars of a tradition-bound society.

A child asks a lamb if it knows its merciful creator, its feeder or the giver of its delightful and cosy clothing of fleece. He also asks the lamb whether it knows who gave it its tender voice that fills the valleys with pleasant joy and music. Quite childlike, the lines

**“Little lamb who made thee?**

**Dost thou know who made thee?”**

are repeated, presumable with wonder in the eyes of the child. The speaker does not wait for any answer. He tells the lamb that its creator is one who is called after the name of the lamb itself. He is one who calls Himself a lamb. He is meek and mild and came on earth as a little child. The poem comes to have a meaningful pause at this juncture. The questions are asked, answers done and the child (or the poet) turns to conclude the lines in a wise hymnal vein or spiritual implication.

**“How sweet is the Shepherd’s sweet lot!**

**From the morn to the evening he strays;**

**He shall follow his sheep all the day,**

**And his tongue shall be filled with praise.”**

In the world of innocence even the meanest creature such as a lamb (which is low only in the eyes of human beings) is treated as having unbound divinity. Here is an exclusive unification of the three characters- Christ, child and the Lamb who constitute the Christian concept of ‘Trinity’ in the world of innocence. Blake’s concept of God is closely aligned to his mysticism. He conceives of God as the very epitome of characteristics which man is capable of developing. If he nurtures these qualities, man can attain godliness-it merely depends on what set of qualities a man develops.

“**Into her dream he melted, as the rose**

**Blendeth its odour with the violet,-**

**Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows**

**Like Love’s alarum pattering the sharp sleet**

**Against the window-panes; St. Agnes’ moon hath set.”**

*“The roads are gnashed with rivulets. I want to snug the futility of life, when I at the same time, noticed a dizzy and appalling street in front of door in the bog.” –RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.*

“Kubla Khan…” The fragmentary nature of poem has been suggested by Coleridge himself. Critics who believe this fact read the poem only as a “psychological curiosity”. But of, Humphry House an eminent critic of Coleridge conceive the poem to be complete and intensely meaningful. Now if these two antithetical ideas are to be analysed, it is necessary to discuss the suggested idea which Coleridge himself has forwarded. He describes the poem as a “vision in a dream a Fragment” and explains the circumstance in which he composed the poem.

**“And they are gone: ay, ages long ago**

**These lovers fled away into the storm.”**

In the summer of the year 1792, *the Author*, then in ill health, has retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton, on the Ex-moor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne has been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he is ready the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in ‘Purcha’s Pilgrimage’: “Here the Kubla Khan commands a palace to be built, and a stately garden there unto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were includes with a wall.” The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two or three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awakening he appears to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock , and detains by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found to his no small surprise and mortification. That though he still retains some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest has passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas without the after restoration of the later!

**“And they are gone: ay, ages long ago**

**These lovers fled away into the storm.”**

The poet is struck with surprise and awe to behold the wild animal’s majestic elegance and grandeur. Its symmetry is fearful and the glow of its eyes is unearthly. When the process of creation is over, “a terrible beauty is born.” The strength of the animal and its moves/ are its peculiar features. The tiger beyond its superficial beauty is a prototype of God whose harsher aspect is present n the wildness of the creature. It is a contrast and counterpart to the innocence of the lamb. The poet wonders:

**“Did he who made the Lamb make thee?”**

Kubla Khan is a concentration of romantic features. Content and style together evoke an atmosphere of wonder and romance and enchantment with supernatural phenomena in form of artistry. This is also a characteristic and manifestation of Romantic poetry. While Kubla Khan is not a supernatural poem in the conventional sense, some phrases in the poem collectively give it an atmosphere of other-worldly enchantment. The “caverns lover”, “the mighty fountain forced momently from that romantic chasm”- these are all touches, which create an atmosphere of mystery and awe. But of, the description is so precise and vivid that no sense of unreality is created.

In the poem ‘The Tyger’ a description of the process of creation is given, but no clarification is given about who the creator is. In the first stanza the creator is described as having wings by which he may have reached the skies to bring the fire for the lusture of the wild beast. The creation of the tiger is conveyed in words and phrases which, though meaningful in their totality, do not yield any explicit elucidation of the creator. We sense the strong shoulders thrusting forward in the process of forging the body of the carnivore. The dexterity of the strokes is further conveyed in the ‘dread hand’ which is gifted with unprecedented craftsmanship. If the ‘dread feet’ and ‘dread hand’ are applied to those of the busily engaged creator we can elicit the fact that those limbs are busy in working diligently. At the moment of achieving the perfection of his sublime creation the poem grows tense, the questions are broken in midway and the speaker’s hindered gasps let out incomplete phrases of exclamation.

*“Little modesty cannot immerge to make a new dimension. It creates, rather a new immersion.”* –RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.

**“Some have accused me of a strange design**

**Against the creed and mortals of the land,**

**And trace it in this poem every line:**

**I don’t pretend that I quite understand**

**My own meaning when I would be very fine,**

**But the fact is that I have nothing plann’d,**

**Unless it were to be a moment merry,**

**A novel word in my vocabulary.”**

There is scarcely any poem in Songs of Innocence and of Experience which does not have a symbolic or allegorical or allusive implication. Though these poems are rendered in the simplest possible poems is somewhat scriptural- simple and profound at the same time. The Biblical allusions add prodigious significance to his poems when foe example, we read the ‘The Shepherd’ it commemorates Christ as the Good Shepherd and reminds us that the parables are clad in pastoral elements. Without reference to the Bible the poem, ‘The Shepherd’ is meaningless and insignificant. Furthermore, Blake makes use of Biblical phrases too, as we see in the poem ‘The Lamb’.

In Songs of Innocence and of Experience, Blake’s symbols are not as obscure or abstruse as we find them in his other poems. In his later poems (Prophetic Books) they are rather incomprehensible. The principal symbols used by Blake have been classified by critics as innocence symbols. Many of these, of course, overlap, and among themselves weave richness into Blake’s poetry.

**“In what distant deeps or skies**

**Burnt the fire of thine eyes?**

**On what wings dare he aspire?**

**What the hand dare seize the fire?”**

As contrast to this vision, “I have annexed a fragment of a very different character; describing with equal fidelity the dream of pain and disease.”

Against this view, Humphry House observes that if “Coleridge had never published in his preface, who would have thought of Kubla Khan as a fragment? Who would have guessed it as a dream?” he however believes it to be a complete poem dealing with the theme of poetic creativity. Similarly, G. Wilson Knight also regards the poem dealing about life and poetic potentialities. We find that the pleasure dome is what dominates the poem. Its setting which is carefully described is important. The sacred river runs “through caverns measureless to man/ Down to a sunless sea. “It signifies that the river runs into infinity of death. The marked out area through which it flows is, however, one of teeming nature: ‘’gardens”, “rills”; “incense-bearing trees” and ancient forest. The centre of the landscape of this part is the point at which the Alph the river join. The “shadow of the dome” “floats midway on the wave”. At this point the poem presents the conjunction of pleasure and sacredness that is the core of Part 1.

Blake intends to suggest that the great purpose of wrath is to consume error, to annihilate those stubborn beliefs which cannot be removed by the tame “horses of instruction.” It is typical of Blake to ask questions when he is overpowered by wonder and amazement and it is effective especially in the case of this poem, where it results in an “intense improvisation”. The phrase ‘fearful symmetry’- whatever is possible in symbolic suggestions- is clearly ‘’the initial puzzle’’ the ‘symmetry’ implies an ordering hand or intelligence, the ‘fearful’ throws doubt about the benevolence of the creator. The ‘forest of the night’ is the darkness out of which the tiger looms brilliant by contrast: They also embody the doubt or confusion that surrounds the origins of the tiger. In the case of the lamb the creator “is meek and he is mild”: ’’He became a little child”. In the case of the tiger creator is again like what he creates. The form that must be supplied Him is now that of the Promethean Smith working violently at the forge. The tiger is an image of the Creator: its deadly terror must be His. A complete story of love’s tragedy is hidden in these three lines; a story comparable to Keat’s La Belle Dame Sans Merci.

**“Tyger Tyger burning bright**

**In the forests of the night. “**

References to distant lands and far-off places emphasis the romantic character of Kubla Khan; Xanadu, Alph, Mount Abora being to the geography of romance and contribute to the romantic atmosphere, there are highly suggestive lines in the poem and they too, are romantic in character. For instance, the picture of a woman wailing for her demon-lover under a waning moon is very suggestive-“a savage place…holy and enchanted” Coleridge calls it. Equally suggestive are these lines:

***“And mid this tumult Kubla heard from far***

***Ancestral voices prophesying war.”***

Romantic poetry is also characterized by sensuousness. Like Keats, Coleridge exhibits a keen observation. There are sensuous phrases andpictures inKubla Khan. The bright gardens, the incense-bearing trees with sweet blossoms, the sunny spots of greenery rocks vaulting like rebounding hail, the sunless caverns these are highly sensuous images. Equally sensuous is the vision of the Abyssinian maid playing on a dulcimer and singing a sweet song.

**“Cold Pastoral!**

**When old age shall this generation waste,**

**Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe**

**Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say’st,**

**‘Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty”,-that is all**

**Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.”**

Romantic poetry is also characterized by sensuousness. Like Keats, Coleridge exhibits a keen observation. There are sensuous phrases and pictures in Kubla Khan. The bright gardens, the incense-bearing trees with sweet blossoms, the sunny spots of greenery rocks vaulting like rebounding hail, the sunless caverns these are highly sensuous images. Equally sensuous is the vision of the Abyssinian maid playing on a dulcimer and singing a sweet song. Suggestiveness is the basic feature of Coleridge’s supernaturalism. It is true that a very vivid and graphic description of the surroundings of the pleasure-dome is given in the poem but the supernatural element is suggestive. Coleridge is a superb artist for intermingling the natural and the supernatural so that the probable and the improbable inter-fuse. Here are lines which for sheer suggestiveness and mystery are perhaps unsurpassed. References to distant lands and far-off places emphasis the romantic character of Kubla Khan; Xanadu, Alph, Mount Abora being to the geography of romance and contribute to the romantic atmosphere, there are highly suggestive lines in the poem and they too, are romantic in character. For instance, the picture of a woman wailing for her demon-lover under a waning moon, is very suggestive-“a savage place…holy and enchanted” Coleridge calls it. In the first, the word ‘dews’ evokes an image of harmlessness but in the second context it evokes a feeling of chill and damp. In the first there is a feeling that the night will pass, but in the second poem the word “dew” assumes further ramifications of meaning. It implies materialism, the philosophy of experience, the indifference to spiritual truth. Knowledgeof these symbolic meanings enriches our understanding of the poem. Blake gives his own interpretation to traditional symbols. The rose traditionally associated with love and modesty assumes the aura of ‘sicknesses and disease in Blake for he considered love to be free and honest and open in order to be good. The lily’s purity assumes added depth in Blake’s poetry, not because it is chaste but because it feels honestly. The sun flower’s movement with the sun has deep meaning: on the one hand it represents a search for spirituality: on the other, it expresses regret for being attached to the ground.

Positively, it causes a distortion of the poem if we try to approximate this Paradise either to the earthly Paradise of Eden before the Fall or to the Heavenly Paradise which is the ultimate abode of the blest. It may take its imagery from Eden, but it is not Eden because Kubla Khan is not Adam. Kubla Khan himself is literally an oriental prince with his name adapted from Purchas. What matters is not supposed fixed and antecedent symbolic character, so much as his activity. Within the landscape treated as literal he must be of princely scope, in order to decree the dome and gardens: and it is this decree that matters, for it images the power of man over his environment and the fact that man makes his paradise for himself. Just as there whole poem is about poetic creation at the imaginative level, so within the work of the imagination occurs the creativeness of man at the ethical and practical levels. This is what the poet, of all men, is capable of realizing.

This is truly terrifying. His soul (the human form) is burning with frightfulness within the iron body of secrecy (the condition of deceit; his face is a furnace sealed up wherein jealousy rages; his heart is recklessly cruel. The imagery is similar to that of ‘The Tyger’, but where the Tiger had broken all bounds as a symbol of regeneration, man is here imprisoned in a ‘dress’ of an iron suit, of his own forging; and all his energies burn within it, consuming him.

**“Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor,**

**Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.”**

Like a child not contaminated by the evils of experience the poet is curious to know what instruments were used to frame the tiger’s “fearful symmetry”. With the innocence of the child the poet thinks that the angels were so amazed to see the fearful tiger created that they threw down their spears and wept. He also wonders if God smiled with satisfaction to see his new creation (i.e. the tiger) - the wondering that becomes a child.

The two diverse natures- Innocence and Experience are essential for the ultimate salvation of his soul. From experience man moves to a world of higher innocence. Blake seems to argue that joy and peace, which man had experienced in his childhood, can have solid foundations only if man has experienced and overcome the impediments and unpleasant realities which day to-day life presents. That is to say, to attain a higher innocence man must be tested by suffering and misery, physical as well as emotional; he must go through the actual experience of life. Through the state of childhood innocence is charming; it is not perfect and cannot last long. For spiritual elevation, lessons from both experience and innocence are essential.

Born on a height, the river descends from a deep romantic ‘chasm’, a place which is savage, holy and enchanted, and which is associated with both a waning moon and a woman wailing for her demon lover. The river’s origin blends romantic, *sacred* and *satanic* suggestion. This part of the poem hints at a mystery, blending Satanism with sanctity and romance with savagery.

**“Shades of the prison-house begin to close**

**Upon the growing boy.”**

Then we come to the closing lines which contain a picture of poetic frenzy. Coleridge never forgets that his real purpose is to make the supernatural natural and to bring about the “willing suspension of disbelief which constitutes poetic faith.” Whether Kubla Khan is seen as a poem about poetic creativity or about life, it is a convincing work. Here too we have a superb blending of the natural and supernatural. A poet’s inspiration is a well-known and natural fact of human experience, but there is something supernatural about the way in which this poetic inspiration and the creative powers of a poet are shown….*but* of, despite the mystery and awe evoked in the poem, the whole description is psychologically accurate because when the poet is in a state of frenzy, he is really like a magician. Out of this creative madness, come the gems of truth and beauty. .Touches of realism has been added, even to the description of the chasm and the mighty fountain. Coleridge uses similes rebounding hail and chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail which are familiar to our lives and most natural.

With this child-like innocence is blended adult wisdom. *The Tyger* expresses the wisdom (i.e. experience) that comes of age that becomes a man who has gone through his life. The wisdom sought to be conveyed is as follows. Man passes from innocence to experience. And for experience man has to pay a bitter price not merely in such unimportant things as comfort and peace of mind, but in the highest spiritual values. Experience debases and perverts noble desire. It destroys the state of childlike innocence and puts destructive forces in its place. It breaks the free life of imagination and substitutes a dark, cold, imprisoning fear, and the result is a deadly blow to blithe human spirit. The fear and denial of life which come with experience breed hypocrisy which is as grave a sin as cruelty. To destroy these forces of experiences the benign creator assumes the role of a malignant creator. In the scheme of things the tiger is as much a necessity as the lamb. So the God who created the lamb also created tiger. In other words, God is not only a God of mercy, but also a God of wrath, the creator of Satan and social and political cataclysms. Blake’s conception of God here betrays a striking similarity with the Hindoo mythological Avtar theory.

**“Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,**

**By the stream and o’er the mead;**

**Gave thee clothing of delight,**

**Softest clothing, woolly, bright:**

**Gave thee such a tender voice,**

**Making all the vales rejoice?”**

G.Wilson Knight analyses the imagery of Kubla Khan and shows that it is a poem about life and poetic potentialities. The pleasure dome dominates the poem. Its setting is carefully described. There is a sacred river running into caverns measureless to man and to a sunless seas; in other words, the river runs into an infinite of death. The marks out area through which it flows is, however, one of teeming nature, gardens, rills, incense-bearing trees, ancient forests. The river is a symbol of life since the scared river which runs, through Nature, towards death could easily correspond to life.

**“Your spring and your day are wasted in play,**

**And your winter and night in disguise.”**

In the second movement of the poem, the dome’s shadow falls half way along the river. The river, as indicates above, is the birth-death time-stream. The shadow is cast by a higher, more dimensional reality. It is directly associated with the ‘mingled measure’ of the sounds coming from the two extremes. The ‘mingled measure’ suggests the blend and marriage of fundamental oppositions: life and death, or creation and destruction. These mingle under the shadow of the greater harmony, the crowning dome-circle. It is a paradoxical thing, a ‘miracle of rare device’, ‘sunny’ but with ‘caves of ice’ which points to the resolution of opposites in the new dimension, especially those of light and heat, sunny for Eros fire of mind, and ice for the coldness of inorganic nature, ultimate being death and death, the ice caves being perhaps related to the earlier caverns. Only more optimistically tones, light instead of gloomy, just as ‘sunny’ suggests to torturing heat. The ‘caves of ice’ may also hint at cool cavernous depths in the unconscious mind blending with a lighted intelligence; whereby at least coldness becomes kind. These ice and sun fire are the two elemental antitheses, and their mingling may lead us farther. We are at what might be called a marriage-point in life’s progress half way between birth and death, and even birth and death are themselves mingled or married. We may imagine a sexual union between life, the masculine, and death, the feminine. Then our ‘romantic chasm’ and ‘cedarn cover’ the savage and enchanted, yet holy, place, with its’ ‘half-intermitted burst’ may be, in spite of the interpretation given earlier, vaguely related to the functioning of a man’s creative organs and their physical setting, and also to all principles of manly and adventurous action, while the caverns that engulf the sacred river will be correspondingly feminine with a dark passivity and infinite peace. The pleasure-dome may regard as the pleasure of a sexual union in which birth and death are the great contesting partners, with the human existence as the life-stream of a mighty coition.

Then the river goes ‘meandering in a mazy motion’. The maze is, of course, a well-known figure suggesting uncertain and blind progress and is sometimes expressely used for the spiritual complexities of human life. After five miles of mazy progress, reaches the ‘caverns measureless to man’, which represent infinity and nothingness. The river sinks, with great tumult (that is, death –agony), to a ‘lifeless ocean’, that is, to eternal nothingness, namely death.

This tumult is aptly associated with war: the principle of those conflicting and destructive forces that driven man to his end. The ancestral voices suggest that the dark compulsion that binds the race to its habitual conflicts is related by some psychologists to unconscious ancestor-worship, to parental and pre-parental authority.

The third and final movement of the poem starts with the Abyssinian damsel seen in a vision, playing music. The aptness of a girl-image here is obvious. The poet equates the once-experienced mystic and girl-born music with the dome. *Could he revive in himself that music which can build the spiritual dome in air, that is, in words, in poetry*? Or, may be, he would become himself the domed consciousness of a cold, happy, brilliance, and ice-flashing, sun-smitten, wisdom. The analogy between music and some form of architecture is not unique. After this, the movement of the poem goes ecstatic and swift. There is a hint of a new speed in the drawn-out rhythm of such a deep delight it would win me…? Now, three rhymes- lines gather up the poet’s message together, with his consciousness of its supreme meaning with a breathless expectancy towards the climax. Next follows a fall to a ritualistic solemnity, phrased in long vowels and stately-measures motion, imaged in the ‘circle’ and the eyes drops in ‘holy bread’ before the prophet who has seen and recreated ‘Paradise’ not the earthly, but the heavenly paradise: the pleasure-dome enclosing and transcending human agony and frustration.

The poem ‘A Divine Image’ is a contrast to ‘The Divine Image’ in its very title. In ‘The Divine Image’, the definite article ‘The’ shows the real, one and only Divine Image. In ‘A Divine Image’ the indefinite article ‘A’ points at a particular divine image which has a unique growth. The contrast is also visible in the two stanzas of these two poems.

Coleridge creates an atmosphere of mystery in Kubla Khan mainly by describing the pleasure-dome and the surroundings in which it stood. It is a beautiful place where the river Alph flows ‘through caverns measureless to man down to a sunless sea”. The immeasurable caverns and the sunless sea, perhaps some dark, subterranean lake, evokes in our mind a feeling of mystery and awe. There is the deep romantic chasm which lay across forest of cedar trees. From this gorge is momently forced a mighty fountain, the source of river Alph. The manner in which the water is described as intermittently forcing its way out from the soring, throwing up huge pieces of rock, fascinates the reader. The atmosphere of mystery and awe is emphasized when another reference is made to the sunless sea or the lifeless ocean into which the waters of Alph fell with a loud roar.

It is indispensible that the boy who enjoyed full freedom and liberty in innocence ought to pass into experience. This is because the design of human life gives prominence to the contrariety of human nature without which there is no ‘progression’. A complete life on earth means the life of innocence and experience. Without experience or innocence the life cycle is incomplete and imperfect. The poems of Songs of Innocence and of Experience are based on this viewpoint of contrariety.

Admittedly, the poem brings out Blake’s ideas on love and hints at his well-known belief that sex is not sinful. For Blake nakedness is a symbol of pure innocence and he lauds uninhabited love. The Golden Age is that in which the people have love for their fellowmen and mingle with one another freely. In the Golden Age love is not a crime but a grace and beauty signaling unbridled innocence, but in the present age the most tender sentiments are frozen by the ‘trembling fear’ coming from the cruel eyes of experience.

**“Because I was happy upon the heath,**

**And smiled among the winter’s snow,**

**They clothed me in the clothed of death,**

**And taught me to sing the notes of woe.”**

‘The Tyger’ is typically representative of the most characteristic features of ‘experience’ which in the poetic context of Blake involves deep meaning. From this powerful symbol we construe that Blake was a devotee of energy which, for him, was an aspect of true divinity. In this poem the poet’s irrepressible curiosity at the extraordinarily exquisite creation of God finds its vent in small broken questions. After wondering at the symmetry of its body and stripes, the lusture of its eyes, the strong muscles, elegant paws and its powerful strides, the poet turns to the reaction of the creator when he beholds his own creation. The poet says that God may have smiled at the surrender of the rebelling angels at his own master craftsmanship in the creation of the tiger. The ‘stars’ are the rebellious angels under Satan. When they failed to defeat God and were beaten they threw down their spears as in surrender and moaned for their defeat. It is after this event that God started creating inhabitants for the earth. So, at the time of the defeat of the rebelling angels, God might have just finished the creation of the awesome tiger and smiled on his hidden purpose behind all his acts.

**“O my mother isle**

**How shouldst thou prove aught also but dear holy**

**To me, who from thy lakes and mountain rills**

**Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas**

**Have drunk in all my intellectual life**

**All sweet sensations, all ennobling thought”**

Part Two, which is no less rich in its range of images, continues and completes the picture of Kubla’s Paradise, but introduces a note of fear and turmoil in its description of the river’s source and final annihilation. The raw, elemental imagery which occurs in parts of The Ancient Mariner is fully matched in the lines which describe the chasm, but, fine though the description of the ‘ceaseless turmoil’ of the ‘mighty fountain’ is, it fails to sustain the terrifying power of these lines. The images of ‘rebounding hail’ and ‘chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail’; though exact comparisons, tend to diminish the effect they are meant to convey. What does emerge is a clear picture of the Paradise. The river representing life seethes from the earth itself, flows slowly and with a ‘mazy motion’, expressive perhaps of life’s twists and turns, through a walled garden, and at last enters the ‘caverns measureless to man’ before sinking to a ‘lifeless ocean’. Dominating garden and river alike is the pleasure-dome: as it is the first so it is the last image used. In obvious opposition to the ‘sunless sea’ of death, the dome is ‘sunny’, it is a proud manifestation of life; it is both a work of superb art in itself and a symbol for all artistic achievement.

**“Why of the sheep do you not learn peace**

**Because I don’t want you to shear my fleece.”**

The ‘caves of ice’ needs a special attention. Some discussions of the poem seems to imply that they belong with the ‘cavern measureless to man’ but there, surely can be no doubt that in the poem they belong closely and necessarily with the dome-

**“It was a miracle of rare device,**

**A sunny pleasure-dome, with caves of ice;**

About the river, again, we need not aim to be precise and make equations. Its functions in the poem are clear. The bounding energy of its source makes the fertility of the plain possible: it is the sacred given condition of human life. By using it rightly, by building on its bank, by diverting its water into the sinuous rills, Kubla achieves his perfect state of balanced living. It is an image of these non-humans, holy given conditions. It is an imaginative statement of the abundant life in the universe, which begins and ends in a mystery touched with dread, but it is a statement of this life as the ground of ideal human activity.

**“When the stars threw down their spears,**

**And watered heaven with their tears,**

**Did he smile his work to see?**

**Did he who made the Lamb make thee?”**

Kubla Khan is a triumphant positive statement of the potentialities of poetry. How great those potentialities are, is revealed partly in description of its effect at the ending of the second part and partly in the very substance and content of the first.

**“For Mercy has a human heart,**

**Pity a human face,**

**And Love the human form divine.**

**Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace…”** can be seen as a stark contrast to the lines of ‘A Divine Image’ that run as:

**“Cruelty has a human heart**

**And Jealousy a human face;**

**Terror the human form divine**

**And Secrecy the human dress.”**

Thus we may confidently say that Kubla Khan is a finished fragment, about the act of poetic creation, about the ‘ecstasy in imaginative fulfilment’.

**“Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not.”**

William Blake is considered a precursor of Romantic Movement in English Literature. Romanticism laid considerable stress on the elements of imagination, nature worship, humanitarianism, liberty, mysticism and symbolism. It differed from the outlook expounded by the preceding age of Neo classicism which promoted the notion of reason, balance and logic with regard to prose and poetry. The Romantic creed of poetry rests on recording the simple emotions of humanity in a simple diction. Recollections of childhood (nostalgia) are also a common subject of Romanticism.

A different kind of clarity and precision in the first part leads us nearer to the poem’s central meaning the consistency with which the main facts of this landscape are treated, the dome and the river. The dome is an agreed emblem of fulfilment and satisfaction, it is full to touch and eye, rounds and complete. It is the stately pleasure dome in line 2, the dome of pleasure in line 31, and ‘A sunny pleasure-dome ‘in line 36. Each time the word ‘pleasure’ occurs with it. So too, the word river is used three times in the first part, and each time, without fail, it is the ‘sacred river’; this is its constant, invariable epithet. Here, without possibility of doubt, the poem presents the conjunction of pleasure and sacredness; that is the core of Part One and in Part Two the poet who has been able to realise this fusion of pleasure and sacredness is himself regarded as a holy or sacred person, a seer acquainted with the undivided life: and this part is clinched by the emphatic and final word ‘Paradise’. The conditional form of Part Two does not annul the presentation of paradise in Part One, though it may hold out the hope of a future fuller vision.

**“What is that sound high in the air**

**Murmur of maternal lamentation**

**Who are those hooded hordes swarming**

**Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth**

**Ringed by the flat horizon only**

**What is the city over the mountains**

**Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air**

**Falling towers**” At the beginning of the third part a sharp literary-geographical change of scene occurs. We move from Kubla’s Paradise, taken by Coleridge from Purcha’s Pilgrimage, to the equally exotic paradise of Mount Abora, takes from Milton. Then a much more fundamental switch occurs this time, a switch of subject. The poet affirms that his touch, could build the whole miraculous dome of Kubla, if he can revive the vision induces in him by the singing of the ‘Abyssinian maid’. Her song is in all respects a counterpart to the ‘strong music in te soul’ spoken of in Dejection. From it comes a ‘deep delight’-the joy Coleridge persistently insists on as the condition of creative activity. Granted this joy, he will create the fabled splendour of Kubla’s dome through poetry so astonishing that his powers will be thought the result of sorcery and he regarded with ‘holy dread’. It will be said by those who hear his poetry that he has fed on ‘honey-dew’, and ‘drunk the milk of Paradise. And indeed this will be true: to taste ‘the milk of Paradise’ is to know the ‘deep delight’ which expresses itself in poetry. He has very little to do with crude horrors, gibbering ghosts, witches’ cauldrons, creaking gallows, dark corridors and trap doors. He does not deliberately set out to make the flesh creep but brings home to the readers the dramatic truth of the emotions which he deals with. He forces on the readers, to use his own vivid phrase “a willing suspension of disbelief.’ He gets his marvellous magical effects by a hundred little subtleties-hints and nuances and suggestions. As Compton Rickett observes regarding The Ancient Mariner “The Mariner himself gathers up into his own person the elements of romance with the glittering eye, his skinny hand, his arresting voice, and the spiritual misery that drives him into speech to ease his tortured soul. The Supernaturalism of the poem is an atmosphere that suffuses the entire tale; the outcome of a hundred delicate touches and subtle hints, makes convincing to the reader by the profound psychological insight of the poet.” The same writer observes on Christabel: “Whether it be taken as an allegory or merely as another excursion into the dream-world of fantasy its beauty and magic are indisputable.” Summing up Coleridge’s achievement the critic finally comments: “His supreme strength lay in his marvellous dream faculty; one might add that the dream faculty lay at the root of his greatness as a poet and his weakness as a man. But of, there is no finer dreamer in English verse; this quality is that gives distinction to The Ancient Mariner and Christabel and makes of Kubla Khan so superb a triumph.”

**“And soon,” I said, “shall wisdom teach her lore**

**In the low huts of them that toil and groan**

**And conquering, by her happiness alone**

**Shall France compel the nations to be free,**

**Till love and joy look round, and call the earth their own.”**

The very line shows the closeness by the antithesis, the convex against the concave, the warm against the cold. It is not necessary to involve Coleridge’s own statement of the theory of the reconciliation of opposites in art to see that it is the holding together of these two different elements in which the miracle consists. They are repeated together, also within single line 47, in Part Two. The miracle or rare device consists in the combination of these softer and harder elements. And when this is seen in relation to the act of poetic creation, in the light of which all Part One must be understood, its function is still plainer such creation has this element of austerity in it. For this is a vision of the ideal human life as the poetic imagination can create it. Part One exists in the light of Part Two. There may be other Paradises, other false Paradises too: but this is the creation of the poet in his frenzy. And it is because he can create that he deserves the ritual dead.

**‘’ The human dress is forge iron**

**The human form is a fiery forge,**

**The human face a furnace sealed,**

**The human heart its hungry gorge.”**

The poem is in three parts. In part one, Kubla decrees a ‘stately pleasure-dome’, the central and recurrent image of the poem. We are given the details of the extent of Kubla’s pleasure-garden, and of its rich variety of natural beauties, with a clarity and particularity that is astonishing, the profusion being wonderfully conveyed by the swift flow of diverse images. The picture given is an earthly Paradise. Life has frequently been compared to a river flowing into the sea of death, and the epithets ‘sacred’, use of the river, and ‘sunless’, use of the sea, are enough to establish the implicit comparison here.

***“And all should cry, Beware! Beware!***

***His flashing eyes, his floating hair!***

***Weave a circle round him thrice,***

***And close your eyes with holy dread,***

***For he on honey-dew hath fed,***

***And drunk the milk of paradise.”***

In the capital city of Xanadu, Kubla Khan orders a magnificent pleasure-house to be built for himself. It is erected on the site where the holy river Alph flowed into the dark waters of the sea. The river in its long course, flows through abysmal gorges whose depth could hardly be measured. The chosen site covered a spacious ground, ten miles square. It is enclosed with walls and towers and was rich in vegetation. There are fine gardens inside the walls through which flows sparkling streams in their zig –zag courses. There are a large number of spice plants in full blossom. Part of the ground is covered with forests, old as the hills. Everywhere and there inside those forests are beautiful sunlit glades.

**“Souls of poets dead and gone**

**What Elysium have ye known,**

**Happy field or mossy cavern,**

**Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?”**

A deep, marvellously beautiful gorge ran down the green slope of the hills shelters by tall cedar trees on either side. It is too beautiful for words. It is a grim and awesome spot. It had an eerie and sanctified look as if under a magic spell. It thus seems to provide the right kind of setting under the waning moon for a woman in love with a demon to come out mourning plaintively for her absent lover. Through the gap in earth a huge jet of water gushed out every now and then foaming and roaring all the while. It seemed as if the whole earth was heaving thick and fast and spouting out this fountain moment by moment. In the midst of these bursts of water, quickly followed each other, huge boulders came toppling down from rock to rock. They seem like hail-stones which bounce off on hitting the ground. Sometimes by impact they break into little fragments and resemble the chaff of grain which came flying up from the threshing –floor when beaten by the short thick sticks of the threshers. In the midst of all these rocks toppling around all the time, jet by jet the fountain fed the waters of the holy river. The river ran along in its zig-zag course of miles through forest and valley. It then tumbles into a gorge of limitless depth and merges in the end with a great uproar into the calm stretch of the waters of the ocean. In the midst of all the rush and roar warning him about the wars ahead.

**“Seated on Elysian lawns**

**Brows’d by none but Dian’s fawns;**

**Underneath large blue-bells tented,**

**Where the daisies are rose-scented,**

**And the rose herself has got**

**Perfume which on earth is not; …”**

The pleasure-house cast its own reflection on the waves of the sea. It stretches, as it were, sunk half way below the surface of waters. The place lay within the hearing of the blends music of the fountain and the river as it flows through the caves. The building was a work of marvellous art, of such surpassing beauty, the like of which is never seen on earth. It is surmounted by a dome, lit up by the sun. By way of contrast its halls made of dazzling white marbles and alabaster were refreshing too. They resemble in their whiteness and coolness the ‘’caves of ice.” Among the external causes the failure of his health from 1801 onwards is an important one. He has inherited a tendency to gout which is accentuated by carelessness and indifference. Ill-health brings depression and lowering of animal spirits. Recourse to opium results not only in a dreading of natural sensibilities, but also in the prevention of resurrection of poetic powers.

**“I a child, and thou a lamb,**

**We are called by His name:”**

Domestic unhappiness and estrangement from friends, adds to indolence and irresolution, proves harmful to what is most characteristic of Coleridge’s poetry-its spirit of peace and gentleness. Under their stress as Courthope points out, creative faculty gradually withers. The second group of causes concerns the inner life of Coleridge. The first of his sources of inspiration to fail him was the revolutionary enthusiasm, though it does not prove fatal to poetry. It is interesting to note that Coleridge’s stay in Germany coincides with his death as a poet. In other words “Metaphysics destroyed the poet in Coleridge.”

A contributory cause is Coleridge’s natural indolence. He has described himself as a great “tomorrower”. Says Maroliouth, “one thing was not given to Coleridge, self-control without submission to outside authority.” C.H. Herford puts it thus: phenomenal wealth of ideas and equally phenomenal weakness of will embarrass and distracted his subtle and delicate poetry.

***“A savage place! As holy and enchanted***

***As e’er beneath a waning moon was haunted***

***By woman wailing for her demon lover?”***

As a poet, Coleridge is a strange and baffling figure both in life and poetry. By sheer force of genius he has ushered in the great age of English romantic Poetry along with his friend Wordsworth. His fame rests now on a surprisingly small output, hardly half a dozen pieces and some of them mere fragments. His early poetry when he is brooding a good deal on the complex questions of philosophy and politics and reform of mankind, is usually formless, wordy and diffuse. But of, a very distinct change comes over the spirit of his poetry after his meeting with Wordsworth in 1797. There is a growing sense of wonder and delight and fresh rapture in his handling of the themes of nature. Such poems as This Lime Tree Bower, Frost at Midnight, Fears in Solitude, belong to this period.

When looked at closely, the words ‘midway’ and ‘mingled’ prove to be both exact and consistent with other references made in the poem. Only by its very great height could the ‘dome’s reflection extend midway’ across the mighty Alph, and the impression of height is confirmed both by the reference to the domes’s being ‘in air’, and by the fact that it must soar clear of the shadow of its surrounding hills and incense-bearing trees to qualify for the adjective ‘sunny’, which is twice used. But of, not only does the dome’s shadow reach out across the river, it also falls half way between the tumult of the ‘mighty fountain’, which is the river’s source, and the tumult of the caves in which the river sinks to a ‘lifeless ocean’ , since only at a ‘midway’ position can the tumults be actually mingled. This kind of precision has been overlooked by those who are content to capitulate before the poem and praise it for its vague stringing-together of dream images.

***“’What is that noise?’***

***The wind under the door.***

***‘What is the noise now? What is the wind doing?’***

***Nothing again nothing.***

***‘Do you know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember***

***Nothing?’”***

As far Kubla Khan himself, becomes God, or at least one of those huge and mighty forms, or other similar institutions of gigantic mountainous power, in Wordsworth or we can say that the poet’s genius starting to describe an oriental monarch’s architectural exploits, finds itself automatically creating a symbolic and universal panorama of existence.

**“O wedding guest! This soul hath been**

**Alone on a wide, wide sea**

**So lonely it was, that God himself**

**Scarce there seemed to be**

**O sweeter than marriage-feast**

**‘Tis sweeter far to one**

**To walk together to the kirk**

**With a goodly company”**

But of, the full flowering of his genius has come (in 1797-98) and Coleridge at his highest has no rival even among his great contemporaries. To have written one of these poems alone have brought him within the small circle of the supreme makers of verse. Each of its kind is unique. Coleridge’s reform in English poetry has mainly concerned with the technical side of the art. Before his time the rhythms employed by English poets has been almost exclusively iambic or trochaic and the tradition tendency is to confine them more and more within the heroic couplet. The heroic couplet from its narrow limits gives little scope for liberty or variety of movement, and however effective for the purposes of the epigram, is an inadequate vehicle for the expression of powerful emotion. Coleridge, advancing along the line of invention is opened by Chatterton, converts the ancient rhythms and meters of the language into vehicles for his own imagination, thought. His ear is haunted by the possibilities of the metrical tunes suggests to him by his study of ballad poetry; and he is associates these with the strange, and as it seems to him, supernatural experiences of his own imagination, with genius akin to that of a musician. In The Rime of the Ancient Mariner he shows that it is possible, through the ballad form, to give expression to a marvellous series of supernatural incidents. Christabel is an illustration of the beautiful and picturesque effects that may be created in the fancy by the combination. Coleridge has consciously formulated the return of English verse to the principle of accentuation which is most suitable to its spontaneous rhythm. Christabel is written in lines of four accents, where the number of syllables varies on a very large scale: the pattern of the melody swelling or subsiding with the needs of musical suggestion; while the light, ample cadence of the anapaest is introduced with delicate facility among the shorter measures. This example of judicious freedom is at source of the vast development in prosody which accompanies the expansion of modern English lyricism.

**“Thou speedest thy subtle pinions,**

**The Guide of homeless winds, and playmates of waves.”**

The form that has appealed to the Roman poets, besides the lyric, is the ballad. Coleridge uses the ballad form with artistic skill. He tells a tale so well that we become apt listeners willing to believe even supernatural incidents as if they are the most natural things to happen in the given situation.

**“About, about, in reel and rout**

**The death-fires danced at night;**

**The waters, like a witch’s oils’**

**Burnt green, and blue, and white.”**

The poet once has a vision of a young maid playing on her instrument. She is from Abyssinia and is singing about true romantic charms of her native hill of Mount Abora. The poet wishes he can by some chance rouse within himself the memory of that music and song. He can work himself up to an ecstasy in that case. He will then create a new pleasure –house in the air by strains of music, loud and long. People around him will feel awe-struck at his strange looks. There will be a glow in his eyes and his hair will stream in the wind. They will draw magic circles around him to keep safe from harm. He will look like one possesses who has been filled with divine frenzy of the poet and prophet by eating of the heavenly manna. As a philosopher, Coleridge has been a sower of germinal ideas. His indebtedness to German philosophy has probably been overrated. He becomes acquainted with it at a time when his normal personality has already been formed, and he is never thoroughly acquainted with it. The doctrine of Kant, interprets in as much as it is founded a new metaphysics, encourages his own tendencies. He takes up the distinction between understanding and reason, only to push it to conclusions very far removed from those of Kant. He borrows from Schelling what in his intellectual absent-mindedness he fails to acknowledge. Taken as a whole his work reveals a general parallelism with the intuitive, idealistic and historical movement of ideas which gives General Romanticism its essential character. But at, he himself declares that he is just as much the disciple of national tradition, and of Burke. He is not the master, but the immediate predecessor of Carlyle. John Stuart Mill sees in him the principal source of the reaction which an age animated with the will to believe, and basing his inner life upon the feeling of spiritual mystery, shows against the rationalism of mechanical soul. Through the intermediary action of thinkers who are also believers as F.D. Maurice, Coleridge’s influence has helped to nurture the decisive revival of idealism in the time of Carlyle, and in adjoining circles of thought.

There are two main elements in Coleridge’s poetry (i) psychical and (ii) intellectual. The former lends to the poet’s work a pervading sense of mystery and latter accounts for the power of limpid expression and masterly execution of rhythmic effects which are so evident in the best of his poetry. In his handling of mystery or the supernatural Coleridge takes a line of his own.

In literary criticism his achievement is lasting. No one before him in England has brought such mental breadth to the discussion of aesthetic values. His judgements are all permeated by the trend of thought that is strongly under the influence of doctrinal preconceptions; even in this domain he is the metaphysician. The well-known differentiation between imagination and fancy, which Wordsworth has interprets after his own fashion, is a way of laying stressed association of the mind as opposes to the passive association of mental pictures; but for Coleridge it has a mystical significance. This feeling for the secret link existing between problems, together with his habit of intermingling, even perhaps of confounding them, by no means deprives him of a penetrating sharpness of a vision of precise points. In Biographia Literaria certain intentions as well as certain success or failings, of Wordsworth are caught and illuminates to their depths, so searching is the light, that it is even cruel. His remarks on Shakespeare show a sound intuition of the profound unity of dramatic art. Accustomed as he is to reach to the heart of things, to find there the same vital impulse which animates his own thought, and to see this secret life produces what becomes the apparent world of senses. Coleridge is thus able to discern with an unerring insight the paths along which a central impulse has radiated so to speak, towards all the fundamental ideas, aspects, and characteristics of a work. Modern English is indebted to Coleridge for some of its soundest principles as well as much of its terminology and many of its famous dicta.

**“In yonder grave a Druid lies**

**Where slowly winds the stealing wave!**

**The year’s best sweets shall duteous rise**

**To deck its Poet’s sylvan grave!”**

It is so often said that Kubla Khan achieves its effect mainly by ‘far reaching suggestiveness’ that is worth emphasizing this element of plain clear statement at the outset, a statement which does particularize a series of details inter-related to each other, and deriving their relevance from their interrelation and their order. Furthermore, the use of highly emotive and suggestive proper names is proportionately no large source of the poem’s effect, it is only necessary to watch the incidence of them. Xanadu, Kubla Khan and Alph occur once in that form within the poem’s opening two-and-a-half lines: and none of them occurs again except for the single repetition of Kubla in line 29. Abyssinian and Mount Abora occur each, in the three lines 39-41. There are no other proper names in the poem at all, unless we shall count the final word Paradise.

**“The sun’s rim dips the stars rush out,**

**At one stride comes the dark”**

“After Christabel the poet never reached the height again, though a few minor pieces survive of his later writings, dealings with Dejection, Love and Hope, which show some measure of his ancient cunning. It was not a decline of poetic power as in Wordsworth’s case, but an arrest of poetic power, of creative imagination. His imagination was as rich as ever, his intellect as restless and keen, but they sought expression in ever, his intellect as restless and keen, but they sought expression in channels other than those of verse.” (Compton Rickett). Various explanations have been offered to account for this sudden disappearance of creative power, such as defects of character especially infirmity of will. But of, Rickett points out, “The peculiar character of his poetic inspiration, its sudden outbursts, its dream like character, the mysterious way in which it would come and go, leaving him unable to complete what he had begun; these things suggest something that might well visit a youthful imagination, and then, when the flush of youth’s sensibility had passed, itself melt away. The wind bloweth where it is listeth.”

Coleridge’s period of poetic creation is incredibly brief. His is not a case of decline in poetic faculties as is the case with Wordsworth, but a case of arrest of poetic power, of creative imagination. His imagination is as rich as ever; his intellect as restless and keen, but they have sought expression in channels other than those of verse. Dejection: An Ode has been described as the poet’s dirge to his own imagination. To the magic heights of The Rime and Christabel, Coleridge never rose again. Some have sought the causes in external circumstances and others have offered a more psychological approach. In his characteristically pungent way Quillet-Couch describes these explanations of Coleridge’s arrest of poetic power as “foolish”. “Let us ask ourselves”, he writes “if it is conceivable within one’s man measure to produce a succession of poems on the plane of The Rime Ancient Mariner.” The question is indisputably answered by Christabel and Kubla Khan, both fragments. “The quality of Coleridge’s poetic genius”, in the words of Compton-Rickett, “does not suggest ling life.” Coleridge’s poetry is dream poetry. Such poetry as Kubla Khan and The Rime “comes not with observation. It draws its sustenance from mysterious half-lights of dreams.” “The dream faculty and the power to word its message”, observes O.Elton, “to a perfectly felicitous tune, is too finely strung and too liable to be jarred by outer vexations and inner disharmonies for a long lease to be expected of it.” C.E. Vaugham asks: “Is it reasonable to suppose that any poet could have gone on living forever in an air so rarefied as that The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Kubla Khan, and Christabel?” The wonderful dream palaces Coleridge built for himself in the clouds, the colours and forms of which are charged with a thousand suggestions from the unearthly and enchanted world of dreams cannot have endure.

The precision and clarity of the opening part are noteworthy even in order of the landscape. in the centre is the pleasure-dome with its gardens on the river bank; to one side is the river’s source in the chasm, to the other are the ‘caverns measureless to man’, and the ‘sunless sea’ into which the river falls. Kubla in the centre can hear the ‘mingled measure’ of the fountain of the source from one side, and of the dark caves from the other. The river winds across the whole landscape. Nobody needs to keep this mere geographical consistency of the description prominently in the mind as he reads (though once established it remains clear and constant); but if this factual-visual consistency had been absent, and there have been a mere random sequence or collection of items, such as a dream might well have provided then the absence would be noticeable. The poem will have been quite different, and a new kind of effort, will have been needed to apprehend what unity it might have had. Within this main landscape, too, there is a pervasive order. The fertility of the plain is only made possibly by the mysterious energy of the source. The dome has come into being by Kubla’s decree. The dome is stately: the gardens are girdled round with walls and towers. Perhaps, the best known and more appreciated of his narrative poems is The Ancient Mariner. The very beginning of the poem draws and keeps the attention of the reader. With the Wedding Guest the reader too is hypnotized into attending to the Mariner’s tale. Coleridge’s artistic skill is noteworthy-he knows what will grip the attention. The wrinkled hand and the glittering eye of the Mariner are enough to awe the Wedding- Guest and rivet the reader’s attention. Curiosity is at once aroused and one wants to read on. The opening of Christabel, similarly, is striking. Once again Coleridge shows his narrative skill in evoking and holding one’s attention. The bleak and cold night with its silence broken by the owl, the unexpected crowing of the cock, the howling of the mastiff, the shrunken full moon –the natural setting is perfect for the tale to follow. In Christabel, similarly, the dramatic quality is built up with the help of suspense. When Geraldine appears, suspense is intensified. An ominous atmosphere is further created by the reaction of the mastiff and the dying brand leaping into light as Geraldine passes by. The climactic moment is prepared for by Coleridge in a remarkable manner. How subtly, yet with remarkable horrific effect, Coleridge conveys to us the sense of evil embodied in Geraldine. The effect of the evil on Christabel is again portrayed dramatically.

Psychological insight enhances the dramatic quality of Coleridge’s narrative poems. The change that has come over the old Mariner would not have been so well conveyed though description as it is through giving the reaction of the pilot and his boy. The effect of guilt on the Mariner’s mind too is vividly conveyed. Christabel is transformed by the contact with evil, but Coleridge does not say so directly. He hints at the change, but the hints have more dramatic effect than direct description would have had. Coleridge, like Wordsworth, is filled with revolutionary ardour, when the French Revolution burst upon France with its cry of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

The nature descriptions are used by Coleridge to enhance dramatic effect, just as music is used in drama and movies. The natural scenes harmonise with the events. In Christabel the full-moon, covered but not fully hidden by a cloud, looks dull and small-a clear sign that all is not well. In The Ancient Mariner, nature, violent and furious, calm and soothing, or still stagnant serves to increase the dramatic effect of the incidents.

Coleridge, however, never lost his admiration and love for the ideals that the French Revolution stood for. He always holds dear the liberty of man, love for one another, and egalitarian society in which there would have been no exploitation of the poor. Blake’s maxim that the human soul is made of contrary elements can be applied here also. Indistinct and imagination or the beastly and divine nature of man is necessary for a fuller life of the soul and for its progress. It is a grievous mistake to sanctify the lamb and turn an eye of defiance towards the tiger. Blake opposes such a view and gives equal prominence to sense and soul, the wild and meek aspects of human beings.

***“Liberty, the soul of life, Shall reign,***

***Shall throb in every pulse, shall flow thro’ every vein.”***

Coleridge greets the fall of the Bastille as a promise of time …. All his youthful enthusiasm is roused (Coleridge was then 17) and he feels deeply in his blood the passion of the moment- a revolutionary passion which challenged established beliefs, and even conceived wild projects to serve the cause of Freedom. His mind is filled with Utopian dreams; with Southey and some others he has planned the scheme of Pant-isocracy- a sort of communistic society on the banks of the Susquehanna in America, where he hoped to realise his dreams of equality. Soon after, his enthusiasm cooled. The aggressive designs of France in her attack on Switzerland totally destroyed his belief that she was the champion of liberty. His feelings about the Revolution- his earlier enthusiasm and his later disillusionment are expressed in two odes-Ode to the Departing Year (1796) and France: An Ode (1797); “they form the transition between his first hopes and his later conservative despair.” The Ode to the Departing Year is an emphatic denunciation of the brood of hell-the kings who had combined against France. It calls on the Spirit of the Earth to avenge the wrongs of the poor and to speak in thunder to England, who has leagued herself against liberty, and joined “the wild yelling of Famine and Blood.” The revolutionary character of the poem is noticed in the sentiment of the poet who, like Wordsworth, was on the side of France against his own country. When France attacked Switzerland, the disillusionment of Coleridge was complete. In the Ode to France, he recollects what he had first felt about the Revolution some years earlier; he has wished that England has been fighting against liberty, might have been defeated by France:

***“Yet still my voice unaltered sang defeat***

***To all that braved the tyrant –quelling lance.***

***And shame too long delayed and vain retreat…”***

The Reign of Terror in Paris does not extinguish his hopes, he has thought that the evils are brought by the reign of blood and terror, are unavoidable, in view of the vast change for the better in human life: the sun of liberty has been raising the storms of *the* Terror.

**“now and then a smell of grass**

**Displaced the reek of buttoned carriage-cloth**

**Until the next town, new and nondescript,**

**Approached with acres of dismantled cars.”**

But of, the attack on Switzerland by France shook his faith in the Revolution; he is disappointed and has fell back upon the sense of liberty in his own soul. The world has failed him and he takes refuge in the solitudes of nature. The conclusion of the ode on France is in a lofty strain. He asks the forgiveness of Freedom for having identified her with France, and asserts her to be unquenchable even if she must be driven for her resort to the elements themselves. … Even Kubla Khan, though not basically a narrative poem, has some dramatic qualities. The description of the scene has dramatic effect-the place is “savage, holy, enchanted”, and is associated with a waning moon and a “woman wailing for her demon lover.” The image of the poet in an ecstasy of creation is not without dramatic touches.Coleridge has possessed a powerful narrative skill. He can invest a tale with drama even while giving to it a symbolic significance. More than Wordsworth, Coleridge has possessed the skill of telling a story effectively. Pictures alternate with incidents and images with episodes. There is action, excitement, thrill and subtle psycho- analysis. All these features combine to hold the reader’s interest-the most important aspect of narrative poetry. The form of the ballad and the ballad metre are used with facility and felicity by Coleridge. This again is part of his narrative art.

**“Like one, that on a lonesome road**

**Doth walk in fear and dread.**

**And having once turned round walks on,**

**And turns no more his head;**

**Because he knows, a frightful fiend**

**Doth close behind him tread.”**

The poet sends out his being to the sea and air and possesses all things “with intense love”… Coleridge has lapsed into conservatism (as did Wordsworth) when the Revolution has failed him; but the change, in the case of Coleridge is much more rapid than in Wordsworth, for Coleridge is less firm and less temperate than Wordsworth. His enthusiasm has been warmer and it has died more quickly. With the passing of his enthusiasm his will and poetic energy has also passed away. “Almost all his best poetic energy also passed with the Revolution: afterwards everything is incomplete. The weakness of will was doubled by disease, and trebled by opium, and his poetic life, even his philosophic work, was a splendid failure”, says S. A. Brooke.

***“At once and ever***

***It flung up momently the sacred river***,” - that we are even in danger of missing the force of the imagery, as in ‘rebounding hail’ and ‘dancing rocks’. Suspense is another quality that Coleridge uses with, artistic finesse. This is a part of his narrative skill. In The Ancient Mariner we have a deceptively calm beginning to the Mariner’s tale. Familiar details of the journey are given. The Wedding-Guest appropriately beats his breast at having to listen to such a pedestrian account. But of, now the dramatic turn comes. The storm blast comes and with it the ship is driven toward the South Pole. The descriptive skill is used to enhance the narrative art in the poem. The mysterious atmosphere is built up; there is interplay of human emotions with the Albatross being fed and played with by the sailors then comes the single line that the Mariner has shot the Albatross with his cross-bow. The dramatic quality is enhanced and the reader’s imagination is gripped. The complete calm of the ocean and the motionless ship, the hanging of the dead Albatross round the Mariner’s neck, the appearance of the skeleton ship zigzagging it a way along a calm ocean with no wind to help it move- these episodes build up the tension and prove the power of Coleridge’s art. The story by itself is simple, but is made interesting because of Coleridge’s native art. In Love, we have a ballad within a ballad. The lover wins the love of Genevieve by narrating to her the sad tale of a knight who goes crazy because of unrequited love. The medieval atmosphere is used to enhance dramatic effect. The two stories are interwoven. The element of action, adventure and medieval chivalry in the knight’s story works toward the climax when Genevieve, overwhelmed by the pathos of the story, rushes into her lover’s arms.

***“Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth***

***Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!***

***Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth***

***The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,***

***If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?”***

*PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY:*

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was, like Byron, an aristocratic radical with the money to flout convention. But of, Byron was a Regency buck and milord, feted by society before his exile, whereas Shelley was already an exile at Eton, a revolutionary thinker, an intellectual for whom to think was normally to do. He believed in vegetarianism, pacifism and free love- for marriage, he thought, enslaved women. The philosophical anarchist William Godwin thought so too, but found himself Shelley’s father-in-law. Both held that Man, as reasonable was perfectible. Expelled from Oxford for challenging the authorities to refute atheism, Shelley was soon known as a revolutionary who had absconded with two 16-year olds in two years. The second, the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, was later to write: ‘That man could be perfect-ionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system.’ When his body was washed up on the shore of Italy with a copy of Keats’s poems in his pocket, Shelley displaced Chatterton as the Romantic poet-as-victim. Most of his work was published posthumously.

Wordsworth said that ‘Shelley was one of the best artists of us all: I mean in work-man ship of style.’ He wrote in several styles-revolutionary satire, philosophical vision and urbane verse letters- but posterity preferred his lyrics to his radical philosophical and political poems-strong stuff in ‘Men of England’ and ‘England in 1819’. Scholarly recovery of the historical context of these poems has not repaired the damage done to poetry in general by the overuse of romantic nature lyrics in primary school. It is still rumoured that Wordsworth’s heart danced only with daffodils. Shelley is not only the author of ‘Hail to thee, blithe Spirit! / Bird thou never wert’ (‘To a Skylark’). His writing is intellectually abstract, and ‘Considerably uninviting/To those who, meditation slighting, / Were moulded in a different frame’. This is one of his own cracks at Wordsworth in Peter Bell the Third. Wordsworth ‘had as much imagination/ As a pin-pot: - he never could/ Fancy another situation, /…Than that wherein he stood.’ Equally unetherial are the versatile verse letters Shelley wrote to Byron, Maria Gisborne and Jane Williams. His major achievement lays in his philosophical poems such as Mont Blanc, Prometheus Unbound and The Triumph of Life, in the pastoral elegy Adonais, and in such lyrics such ‘When the lamp is shattered’ and the Choruses from Hellas.

Shelley was a Platonist, holding the world of appearances less real than the world of underlying Forms and Ideas. An omnivorous reader, he was keenly interested in empirical science, and eventually became sceptical about earlier revolutionary fantasies, such as that in The Masque of Anarchy where ‘ankle-deep in blood,/Hope, that maiden most serene,/ Was walking with a quiet mien’. The atheist constructed new myths, as in his ambitious lyric drama, Prometheus Unbound. In this completion of Aeschylus’s Prometheus Bound, the Titan who can foresee the future is given traits Shelley found admirable in Milton’s Satan. A cosmic explosion releases Prometheus from the tortures imposed by a jealous Jupiter. The play ends with prophecies of the liberation of mankind. It has lyric variety and fine passages, but the mythology is obscure. More impressive are the bleakly apocalyptic visions of The Triumph of Life, incomplete at his death. Critics who complain that Shelley’s world lacks solidity and oxygen should reckon with his serious Platonic belief that words are inadequate to express the ultimate, which is ineffable. Shelley deploys his music and rhetoric to enact a mind racing in pursuit of complex and evanescent truths. The energy, vision and music of the most exciting of English lyric poets are exemplified in this stanza from Adonais, an elegy for John Keats:

***The One remains, the many change and pass;***

***Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;***

***Life, like a dome of many-colour'd glass,***

***Stains the white radiance of Eternity,***

***Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,***

***If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!***

***Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,***

***Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak***

***The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.***

Shelley here is near to despair-as pastoral elegist should be-but self-pity obtrudes when he ‘Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow, / Which was like Cain’s or Christ’s.’ This poet-as-victim also appears in that wonderful performance, his Ode to the West Wind,

***“Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!***

***I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!”***

The Ode combines extreme formal complexity with rhymic energy and a cosmic of reference. The final stanza is a prayer to the wind of inspiration to:

*“Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:*

*What if my leaves are falling like its own!*

*The tumult of thy mighty harmonies*

*Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,*

*Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,*

*My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!*

*Drive my dead thoughts over the universe*

*Like wither'd leaves to quicken a new birth!*

*And, by the incantation of this verse, …”*

**JOHN KEATS**

John Keats **(1795-1821)**, son of the manager of London livery stables, attended not Eton or Harrow but Enfield School**,** a Dissentingacademy. Here he learned much English poetry before leaving 15, already the head of his family. At 20 he qualified at Guy’s Hospital as an apothecary-surgeon, but decided to be a poet. Through Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), editor of the liberal Examiner, he met Hazlitt, Lamb and Shelley. His 4000-line Endymion (1818) was censured in the Tory quarterlies. His Poems appeared in 1820. He died in Rome in 1821, of tuberculosis.

Keats’s reputation rose at his death and has not fallen. His gift is clear in ‘On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer (1816). His notable trials in the sonnet form helped him devise the stanzas used in his Odes. In the couplets of Endymion and the blank-verse of the unfinished Hyperion, his fertile mind tends to run on: his imagination responded impetuously to sensuous beauty, in women, in nature or in art, and in verse and language themselves. Stanza-form controlled his sentences and concentrated his thought, and his late unstanzaic poems, Lamia and The Fall of Hyperion, ‘A thing of beauty is a joy for ever’, it begins. They found his explicit sensuousness cloying. But, of Keats did not need to be told that aesthetic joy passes. In 1816 he had asked in Sleep and Poetry, ‘And can I ever bid these joys farewell? / Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life, / Where I may find the agonies, the strife/ Of human hearts.’ He had already lost his mother to the tuberculosis which was later to claim his brother Tom and himself. Sleep and Poetry is a title which points to Keats’s lasting concern about the morality of imagination, and the complex relationships between art and experience. In his last major work, The Fall of Hyperion, he is told that ‘The poet and the dreamer are distinct,/Diverse, sheer opposite, antipodes./ The one pours out a balm upon the world,/ The other vexes it.’ In The Eve of St Agnes he produced perhaps the most coherent of all the symbolic legends invented by the Romantic poets. Using a medieval romance setting and the Spenserian stanza, Keats brings together young lovers from feuding families, a situation found in The Lay of the Last Minstrel and Christabel. The end is neither tragic, as in Romeo and Juliet, nor, as in Scott or in Coleridge’s intended ending, happy. Unlike Scott’s lovers, Madeline and Porphyro consummate their love in her stained-glass bedchamber, though she may not know that what is happening is real.

The element of mutual wish-fulfilment is clear, but the sleet tells us that it does not last. Unlike his masters, Keats sees medieval society and religion critically, but he also shows that a sweet modern solution does not bring happiness even after. This medieval romance is more serious than Scott’s and more balanced than Coleridge’s. Keats once again perfected a genre pioneered by others in La Belle Dame Sans Merci, the first lyrical ballad to have the qualities of both forms-and much imitated by poets down to W.B. Yeats. Between April and September 1819 Keats wrote six Odes. This lofty Greek lyric form, revived in the 18th century and favoured by the Romantics, often addresses abstract entities. In his Odes to the Nightingale, the Grecian Urn and Autumn. Keats has much of the grandeur of Wordsworth’s Immortality Ode, the evocativeness of Coleridge’s ‘Dejection Ode’ and intensity of Shelley’s apostrophe to the West Wind. He brings to this demanding form his sensuous apprehension and a new poetic and intellectual economy. Odes tempted Romantic poets to use capital letters-as in Schiller’s ‘Ode to Joy’. Especially tempting letters were ‘I’ and ‘O’! Keats resists. He had advised Shelley to ‘load every rift with ore’. His own gift was to imagine particularly a desired sensation: ‘O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been/ Cool’d a long age in the deep-delved earth,/Tasting of Flora and the country green,/ Dance and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth!’ Provencal troubadours sang of the nightingale. Thus, for the myth-hungry Keats, the song of the nightingale he heard on Hampstead Heath was love-poetry. (The Symbol, wrote Coleridge, ‘always partakes of the Reality which it renders sensible’.) On first hearing the bird sing ‘of summer in full-throated ease’, his ‘heart aches’: not only for the girl he loved but because he desires oblivion. He wishes to drink, and ‘with thee fade away unto the forest dim’.

Keats images of illness and death would be just as concrete if we did not know that he was an apothecary-surgeon who had nursed his dying brother Tom. This concreteness is the ‘ore’ he recommended to Shelley. The struggle continues: ‘Now more than ever seems it rich to die, / To cease upon the midnight with no pain, / While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad/ In such an ecstasy! /Still would’st thou sing, and I have ears in vain-/To thy high requiem become a sod.’

***“Thou was not born for death, immortal Bird!***

***No hungry generations tread thee down;***

***The voice I hear this passing night was heard***

***In ancient days by emperor and clown.”***

This is a strong version of the classical and Renaissance claim-one which gives this history what interest it may have- that human song is heard across human generations impatient to replace their predecessors.

The same contest between the beauty of art and the pain of life runs through the Ode to Psyche, Indolence, Melancholy and the Grecian Urn. For the Romantics, the glory of Greece surpassed the grandeur of Rome, and Keats’s Odes turn Greek myths into new English myths. Thus the Urn is a ‘still unravish’d bride of Quietness’, a foster-child of Silence and slow Time.’ Autumn is addressed as a ‘Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, /Close bosom friend of maturing Sun/Conspiring with him’. These involute apostrophes have an intelligence, poise and richness equal to those of Renaissance verse. The models which the Romantics emulated were Shakespeare and Milton. Their best lyrics survive the comparison, much as the lyric music of Schubert (1797-1828) and Chopin (1810-49) survives comparison with that of Mozart (1756-91). But at, no English Romantic poet was able to combine intensity with major form on the scale of Milton and Beethoven. Keats envies the perfection of the scenes on his ‘still unravish’d ‘urn.

Keats did not always think that what the Urn says is all we need to know, for he once wrote in a letter that ‘an eagle is not so fine a thing as a truth’. In another letter he wished for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts. He created a correlative to this wish in ‘To Autumn’, the most perfect English poem of the 19th century. The mental struggle of earlier Odes is over, and an apparently artless natural symbolism tells us all we need t5o know-that as ‘gathering swallows twitter in the skies’ in September 1819, he accepted that winter was not far behind. The spontaneous mode of Romantic poetry relies, in extended words, upon unusual powers of syntax and form, and also on organization, which cannot be improvised. Keats’s major Odes are superbly organized, but his earlier Hyperion, like some of the ambitious myths of Byron and Shelley, gets lost. The new sublime, what Keats called ‘the Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime’, needed a world, a myth, an intelligible form if it was to communicate more than the feelings and experience of one person. Turning away from Christianity to a ‘religion of humanity’ led the younger Romantics to create provisional truths in historical legend and literary myth. They found some of these difficult to finish, as have their readers. The ‘low’ rural narratives of Wordsworth succeed by understanding their symbolic values. The grandiose Titanic myths of his successors are less coherent. In Keats’s later The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream he sees a ladder leading upwards and is told by the Prophetess Moneta: ‘None can usurp this height…/But those to whom the miseries of the world/ Are misery, and will not let them rest.’ This fragment has a maturity which suggests that Keats might have qualified Wordsworth in magnitude as he did in quality. Tennyson thought Keats the greatest 19th-century poet, and T.S. Eliot, no friend of the personal cult in poetry, judged Keats’s letters ‘certainly the most notable and most important ever written by any English poet’. A few quotations may suffice to indicate their lively quality.

***“Now Beauty falls betrayed, despised, distressed,***

***And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.”…***

But in, planning the poems for this volume, the differences between these two poets at once come out. Wordsworth is to write poems on common subjects “such as will be found in every village” and make them appear significant with his “original gift of spreading the atmosphere of the ideal world over (familiar) forms and incidents.” Coleridge, on the other hand, is to write on “supernatural” subjects, “made real by the dramatic truth of such emotions, supposing them real.” In other words, while Wordsworth makes the “natural” appear as “supernatural”, Coleridge makes the “supernatural” appear as “natural”. Thus, “Coleridge represented perfectly that side of the romantic imagination which seeks to lose itself in dream and marvel.” Coleridge revive the elements of wonder and mystery, whereas, Wordsworth revive interest in nature. Coleridge by writing The Ancient Mariner make the supernatural appear like the natural (credible and convincing);Wordsworth by writing The Solitary Reaper, Immortality Ode and Tintern Abbey make the natural look like the supernatural, sublime and marvellous. Speaking of Wordsworth and Coleridge, Cazamian observes” “Their development, until the time of their meeting, offers great analogies. Coleridge, like Wordsworth, went through a phase of revolutionary ardour. The daring of a personal inspiration, and that of a fresh-created language, come to him at the same time; and this is the hour when his social zeal, his hopes for mankind, freed from the hope of any immediate realization, are transformed into a spiritual idealism. Wordsworth’s influence contributes to this result; but Coleridge is indebted to none but himself for the more philosophic and mystical character with which he invests their common doctrine.”

Romantic poetry changed priorities in English Literature. Poetry is henceforth about personal experience rather than the public and moral concerns of a classical / Christian Augustanism. In this general cultural shift to finding meaning in personal rather than collective experience, poetry showed the way. And whereas the 18th-century novel of Fielding focused on moral action, the 19th century novel chronicles the emotional development of characters-or of a leading character with whom we are expected to identify. The first-person narrator is no longer an ironist.

In a letter to a friend he wrote, thinking of Wordsworth: ‘We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us-and if we do not agree, seems to put its hand in its breeches pocket. Poetry should be great & unobtrusive…’ Elsewhere he wrote: ’axioms in philosophy are not axioms until they are proved upon our pulses.’ In another letter, he mentions to his brothers: ‘…that quality which Shakespeare possessed so enormously-I mean Negative Capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact &reason-‘. Coleridge’s criticism of Wordsworth makes us forget the close resemblance between-even identity of-the views of the two poets. Both have begun their careers as ardent supporters of the French Revolution and the cause of human progress. They give up their open support to the French Revolution but remains- in the period of their best creative activity-confirms believers in human progress and democrats. Both are opposed to the rule of the aristocracy and monarchy and hate the commercial civilization of the upper classes. Both are under the influence of the materialistic radical tradition of Locke, Hartley and Godwin. The views of these three philosophers are not identical, but they belong to a common tradition to which the poets are loyal. They have no liking for the clergy and instead of a personal God worships nature (Wordsworth in particular) and treats all living things as sacred (particularly Coleridge). Their political opposition to land-owning aristocracy make them critical of the culture of the ruling class. Their criticism of old poetic diction is a part of their general struggle against the culture of a class that has ceased to be progressive historically. Perhaps not many people realize that Coleridge have been as much a critic of neo-classical poetic diction as Wordsworth. But of, it is a fact that the views of the two friends have been identical in one phase of their intellectual development.

**“Knock and it shall be heard, but ask and given it is,**

**And all that like to keep this course of mercy shall not miss.**

**For when I call to mind how the one wandering sheep**

**Did bring more joy with his return than all the flock did keep,**

**It yields full hope and trust my strayed and wandering ghost**

**Shall be received and held more dear than those were never lost.”**

Though the nature poetry of Coleridge has an individual note, he is undoubtedly influenced by Wordsworth that his descriptions of his natural scenes shows an intensity of affection and accuracy of perception, which has been absent in his early works. But of, his nature-poetry has a subtlety and delicacy rarely found in Wordsworth, and “he reaps a richer harvest through the senses than Wordsworth.” “His senses”, says Cazamian, “invest his impressions of nature with an extraordinary freshness and splendour, and at the same time with a shrewd and minute precision which reveals the analytical mind.” Wordsworth’s idealisation of the common place no doubt impresses Coleridge; “Wordsworth had shown the wonder of ordinary sights and sounds; it remained for Coleridge to exhibit their mystery.”

The landscape of Kubla Khan is visualised with clarity. The deep chasm slanting down a green hill across a cedarn cover and the mighty fountain being momentarily forced from it had been described vividly.

This too is the argument of Shelley’s eloquent Defence of Poetry, that love and imagination, the sources of moral feelings, can be developed by poetry. The Defence is a ranging and categorical answer to an ironic essay The Four Ages of Poetry (1820), in which his friend Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1856) argued that the Romantics’ claims for poetry were brazenly exaggerated, and that modern poetry had declined from the Silver Age poetry of the 18th century, itself feebler than the poetry of primitive Golden Ages. Poetry naturally turns backwards: ‘While the historian and the philosopher are advancing in, and accelerating, the progress of knowledge, the poet is wallowing in the rubbish of departed ignorance. Mr. Scott digs up the poachers and cattle-stealers of the ancient border. Lord Byron cruises for thieves and pirates on the shores of the Morea and among the Greek islands… Mr. Wordsworth picks up village legends from old women and sextons…’ Shelley’s unfinished Defence combines Sidney’s arguments with the fervour of Wordsworth’s Preface, declaring finally ‘Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World.’ It was itself unacknowledged, being published only in 1840. The most influential British philosopher of the q19th century, the Utilitarian Jeremy Bentham (1772-1832), thought poetry trivial and unnecessary. (Bentham wrote in an unpublished manuscript of c. 1780:’ The difference between prose and poetry [is that]…prose begins at the left-hand margin and continues to the right… while in poetry some of the lines fall short.’)

**“Colin my dear, when shall it please thee sing,**

**As thou were wont, songs of some jovisance?”**

“With him colour is melted in atmosphere which shines through like fire through a crystal. It is a liquid colour, the dew on flowers or a mist of rain in bright sunshine”, as Symons point out. Coleridge envelops Nature with a sense of awe and mystery to suit the supernatural element in his poems. In Kubla Khan we have a naturally beautiful place invites with a mysterious and awe-inspecting aspect. In Christabel we have the natural events, scenes and sounds of night being used to create a sense of mystery and haunting atmosphere. The Ancient Mariner too abounds in the phenomenon of nature has being invested with a supernatural aura. As Cazamian points out, “the very centre of Coleridge’s art lies in his faculty of evoking the mystery of things, and making it actual, widespread, and obsessing.” Nor is Vaughan wrong when he says: “Nothing, in short, that he found in the outer world attained its rightful value from him until, ‘by sublimation strange’ it had passed into the realm of shadows which Schiller conceived to be the true region both of poetry and of action.”

One of the main characteristics of the Romantic Movement is the awakening of a sense of mystery in nature. The poets of the Romantic school not only love Nature for her external beauty and grandeur, but sight deeper truths underlying her physical manifestations. They describe their emotional reactions to nature rather than her external aspects. Hence it is that each Romantic poet has his own conception of nature.

Next, the mode of appraisal which relies on suggestiveness is likely to underestimate the strength and firmness of the descriptions. In particular, lines 17-24, describing the source of the river, do not employ ‘suggestiveness’ at all.

**“About, about, in reel and rout**

**The death-fires danced at night;**

**The waters, like a witch’s oils’**

**Burnt green, and blue, and white.”**

The poet passes to the second phase of his conception of nature when he conceives that it is our own thought that makes nature appear as it is to us. This view is partly the result of his study of the transcendental philosophy of Germany. The existence of the external world is not actual, but phenomenal. It is in our thought that we give forms to external objects, and thinking of these we build up the world of nature ourselves. Nature thus lives in us, and when we receive impression from nature, we do not receive something distinct from us but our own thoughts, is reflected from the external world. This idea is expressed both in The Eolian Harp and in the Dejection and Ode. In The Eolian Harp, Coleridge’s imagination is aroused by the music of a harp when it is touched by the wind. Similarly when the thought of man touches the external world of nature, it breaks into harmony. This magnificent poem has been pronounced by Shelley as the finest ode in the English language. It is the last and the greatest poem produced by Coleridge under the influence of revolutionary enthusiasm. The last vestige of his faith in the revolution is destroyed when England was threatened with invasion. “France was no longer the apostle of freedom but the apostle of despotism.” Coleridge has once dissolved the tie of patriotism in the interest of the wider love of man; but now he has laid aside his wild hopes of love for mankind and has fell back on his old patriotism.

Coleridge has the eye of the artist, and his sensuous perception is hardly less keen than that of Keats. But of, his poetry, shows evidence of his keenness of perception, is not sensuous, for nature is always seen by him through the human atmosphere. “The shaping spirit of imagination” works upon the outward forms, and everything is seen in a “fair luminous mist”; it is then that we have the highest poetry of Coleridge. But at, when the shaping power of imagination declines, he cries in despair. Coleridge has a sense of colour comparable to that of Keats in poetry and of Turner in painting. But in, with extraordinary sense of colour and form he never lavishes it at every turn, he merely suggests with a rare sense of poetic finesse.

Coleridge shows a delicate touch in the painting of nature, specially the fleeting charms of Nature. He can produce broad and general effects of Nature as skilfully as subtle and precise delineations. He is capable of investing a sense of mystery on the common and ordinary aspects of Nature. While in the earlier poems, Coleridge describes Nature as separate from human beings; under the influence of Wordsworth he develops a pantheistic attitude. Later his attitude towards Nature under goes further change. He comes under the influence of German thinkers to believe that Nature takes on its form from our own thoughts.

From 1795 up till 1802, Coleridge and Wordsworth have enjoyed a friendship. During this time they have collaborated in producing the Lyrical Ballads, a volume of verse to which Coleridge has contributed the Ancient Mariner. This volume produces in 1798, is said to have ushered in the English Romantic Movement…Wordsworth, again, is not only a poet of nature but also a prophet of nature. He reads a deeper meaning into nature and believes that if we surrender ourselves to nature we will gain in holiness, beauty and strength.

Wordsworth’s poetic output is greater than that of Coleridge. Excepting a few masterpieces like The Ancient Mariner, Kubla Khan, and Christabel, Wordsworth’s poetic achievement is much more considerable. He writes a large number of lyrics, sonnets, odes and narrative poems that will die only with the English Language. As a lyric poet Wordsworth again surpasses Coleridge who as Grierson says, “was not essentially a lyric poet, because he lacks the passion and intensity of lyrical utterance.” Coleridge is a narrator rather than a lyrical poet. He is a gifted story teller. Wordsworth is an inspired singer who writes such immortal and imperishable lyrics as Tintern Abbey, Immortality Ode, and The Solitary Reaper. Coleridge’s lyricism in Dejection and Ode is reflective rather than inspired. It lacks the quality of rapture. Wordsworth’s command over words is not as astonishing as that of Coleridge. At his best Wordsworth cannot be easily surpassed. Coleridge, however, is a master of words. His poetry is rich in musical quality. In The Ancient Mariner he gives us rare musical effects with the help of most familiar words. For instance:

***“The sounding cataract***

***Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock***

***The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,***

***Their colours and their forms were then to me***

***An appetite.”***

Coleridge’s deep delight in the common aspects of nature finds a beautiful expression in the poem This Lime Tree Bower My Prison. Once Lamb and other friends of Coleridge goes out for a walk in the countryside but Coleridge cannot accompany them owing to an unfortunate accident. Sitting alone in his garden, he imagines the delights which his friends will enjoy but which he cannot share. The poem describes the details of the scene through which his friends would pass, is a charming specimen of natural description combines with human interest. The truth of the description is the beauty of the poem, and the influence that passes from nature to the soul of the poet is very much like that which Wordsworth describes in his poetry. Coleridge’s nature poetry rises to grandeur when he describes the sunrise over Mount Blanc in his Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni. Wordsworth is confined his natural poetry to the manifestations of nature in the Lake District; it is left to Coleridge and Shelley to depict the more violent and magnificent aspects of nature. The poetic energy of Coleridge fully rises to the occasion in the presence of that magnificent spectacle of sunrise over the snow peak of the Alps. He surveys the glorious scene and feels his own soul expanding under its mighty influence. Coleridge’s fundamental conception of nature of nature is that every object of nature-from a simple flower to the mighty mountain-is pervaded by the presence of God. His attitude towards nature passes through two phases. In his younger days he conceives that there are multitudes of spirits, by whose operation nature grew, and who informs all the organic and inorganic forms of nature. They are all in the service of God, and it is God, the all-conscious spirit, who informs all forms of nature. The whole universe thus resides in God. ***Nature is alive in God, and*** each of her forms is informed by a distinct spirit, has a distinct life of its own. This idea forms the basis of The Ancient Mariner, ‘’where the guilty man is first punished by the avenging spirits, and then is redeemed by the seraph band.’’

Coleridge possesses the faculty of minute and subtle observation, and paints the outward forms of nature with a degree of delicacy to which neither Wordsworth himself nor perhaps any other worshipper of nature, Keats accepts, ever quite attains. It is in a highly sensitive apprehension of the external aspects of nature, says Pater, “Coleridge identifies himself most closely with one of the Lake school, a tendency, instinctive, and no more matter of theory in him as in Wordsworth. That record of the “green light/ Which lingers in the west” and again of “the western sky/ And its peculiar tint of yellow green…” is a characteristic example of a singular watchfulness of the minute effect is a characteristic of natural scenery prevailing over all he writes. ’’The Ancient Mariner too is full of images of light and luminous colour in sky and sea. Ice as green as emerald sends a dismal sheen. Life-in-Death has red lips and yellow locks and her skin is as white as leprosy. The water-snakes are beautiful because of their colours and the play of light.

Coleridge is not a nature poet as Wordsworth is, but with Wordsworth he has a part in bringing to English poetry a genuine love of nature and spiritual insight into her processes. He loves nature for her own sake, and his love took almost the form of a reverent worship, for he sees behind all the phenomena of nature the veil presence of God. Nature to Coleridge is a background is a background to highlight the moods of his characters. If the Mariner describes the sun as peeping through the ribs of the phantom-ship: “As if through dungeon gate…/ With broad and burning face…/” it is because the Mariner himself is experiencing a kind of imprisonment. In Christabel the single red leaf hanging on the oak tree exemplifies Christabel’s isolation and her precarious situation. The description of Nature in Dejection: An Ode also draws a colouring from the poet’s own moods.

**“No Spring nor Summer beauty hath such grace**

**As I have seen in one Autumnal face.”**

Coleridge’s imagination is stirred more by dream than by reality. Coleridge is at his best when he abandons himself to vision and dreams. Wordsworth is at his greatest when he touches facts with imagination. Coleridge provides us an escape from the world of reality by transporting us to a land of mystery and wonder. Wordsworth spiritualises nature. He regards nature as a living presence, a sacred entity which can influence the mind of man. Coleridge feels that it is ourselves who endow nature with a spirit. Coleridge again is attracted by the mysterious aspects of nature, whereas Wordsworth by everyday homely scenes and objects. Thus, in The Ancient Mariner we have descriptions of such queer natural phenomenon. On other hand, Wordsworth delights in “meadow, grove and stream” or the “tall rock, the mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood.” Wordsworth attaches great importance to sensations but in this case they are not important for their own sake. They have an impact on his feelings and thought. In the case of Coleridge sensations come to assume a significance such as we find only in the poetry of Keats and the later nineteenth century poets like Rossetti, Morris and Swinburne. Coleridge’s sensibility is of an aesthete who is delighted by refined sensuousness for its own sake. He takes pleasure in describing things, often criticises himself for being bad at description (quite unjustifiably of course) and longs for the art of the painter to do justice to his subject.

***“The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew***

***The furrow followed free”***

***He can likewise paint a scene with a few bold strokes:***

***“The sun’s tins dips, the stars rush out***

***At one stride comes the dark.”*** When one feels in one’s soul the ‘one intellectual breeze’, which makes the harmony of the universe, one is spiritually conscious of the Divine Presence; “whosoever knows this as the truth, rejoices in it, and from him goes forth over the whole appearance which the world takes to him, a light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud that makes glorious all things, - a sweet and potent voice, the echo of God in his own soul that turns the universe into music.”

“We each in our thinking”, explains Brooke, “make the outward world for ourselves; but our thinking in this sphere is in its source the one Thought of God in which, infinitely varied through a myriad secondary forms of thought, the universe consists.”

**Lord Byron**

***George Gordon*,** *Lord Byron* **(1788-1824)** had a wild ancestry, a Calvinist childhood, handsome looks and a club foot. Inheriting his title unexpectedly, he lived noisily at Harrow and Cambridge, creating an image by athletic and libertine exploits. The ‘craving for extraordinary incident’ noted by Wordsworth could be ‘hourly gratified ‘in the Regency by spoilt noblemen, among them the Prince Regent. The Romantic Poet, spontaneously producing poems as a tree does leaves or a thundercloud lightning, was more intriguing to journalists and to society than mere poems. A composite image of poet-as flawed-genius took elements from the opium addiction of Coleridge; from Byron and Shelley scattering wives, lovers, children and debts across Europe; and from younger Romantics’ early deaths. Rousseau and Napoleon preceded Byron, but he was the first British poet to become the hero -villain of a publicity cult.

On leaving Cambridge, Byron pursued adventure in Iberia, Malta and the Turkish Empire. These travels contributed to the first two cantos of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, published in 1812. Childe is a medieval title of chivalry, and Byron (for it is transparently himself) claims a lineage stained with ancestral crime. The reveals he boasts of took place at Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire, his inherited seat. He takes his Spenserian stanzas from Thomson’s The Castle of Indolence (1748) , in which Indolence seems a venial sin. Childe Harold is unrepentant: “Apart he stalk’d in joyless reverie, / And from his native land resolv’d to go, / And visit scorching lands beyond the sea; / With pleasure almost drugg’d he almost long’d for woe, / And e’en for change of scene would seek the shades below.”

‘I awoke one morning and found myself famous,’ Byron wrote, but the fame was no accident. He never stopped writing, nor being guilty, unrepentant and famous. The poetic auto- biographer mentions his love for his daughter and his half-sister, but chiefly displays his sensibility via a travelogue. ‘Europe he saw,’ wrote Pope of an earlier milord on his Grand Tour, ’and Europe saw him too.’ The later Canto 3 and 4 have set-pieces reflecting at Waterloo or in Venice.

***“I live not in myself, but I become***

***Portion of that around me, and to me***

***High mountains are a feeling, but the hum***

***Of human cities torture….”***

This is Wordsworth on a brass instrument. Harold writes in his farewell:

***“There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,***

***There is a rapture on the lonely shore,***

***There is a society, where none intrudes,***

***By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:***

***I love not Man the less, but Nature more…”***

Having woken up famous, Byron became more than famous. After flinging herself at him, Lady Caroline Lamb described him as ‘mad, bad, and dangerous to know.’ In 1814 his half-sister gave birth to a child said to be his. In 1815 he married a rich, serious and unlucky wife. Ostracized for incest, he left England for good in 1816, travelled to Lake Geneva, stayed with the Shelley-s, and then moved to Italy. Most days Byron was a drawing-room milord, but he had wild periods: his debauches in Venice mention two hundred women; he was also bisexual. He sealed his European reputation as a rebel by his death while supporting the Greek revolt against the Turks. Wordsworth internalized the external topics of 18th century sensibility into a new personal poetry; Byron processed the result for export. Comparison makes clear the broadness of Byron’s attitudinizing. ‘Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean-roll’, he declaims. Rhetoric, the persuasive rational discourse of Burke and Gibbon, was now amplified by emotional emphasis, simplification and repetition, in writers as various as Sheridan, Mary Shelley and Macaulay, and in parliamentary oratory Winston Churchill was the last in this style. Byron worked the crowd with romances and dramatic poems in fluent verse, posing as himself. Only his liberalism, egotism and scepticism were sincere. Notable among his doomed self-projections is Manfred (1817), in which the superman refuses a deathbed repentance, telling the Abbot, ‘Old man! ‘tis not too difficult to die.’ Byron’s sensational romances continued with Cain in 1821. But of, his verse journalism also had a more intimate and epistolary side, glimpsed above in ‘Save concubines and carnal companie’ and the irony of ‘E’en for change of scene would seek the shades below’-a prophecy of Don Juan. Byron’s distinction and originality is found in his anti-romantic Don Juan. He tried of his own poses and of ‘cant’, the sanctimonious expression of sentiment. His new irony is much closer to the self he reveals in his sparking letters. Like Scott, Edgeworth, Peacock, Landor and Austen, Byron did not think that the Romantic revolution invalidated rational criticism. Pope he thought far better than any of the Romantics. His mature voice is first heard in Beppo and The Vision of Judgement. Don Juan (1818) begins

***“I want a hero: an uncommon want,***

***When every year and month sends forth a new one,***

***Till, after cloyoing the gazettes with cant,***

***The age discoveries he is not the true one;***

***Of such as these I should not care to vaunt,***

***I’ll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan,***

***We all have seen him in the pantomime***

***Sent to the devil, somewhat ere his time.”***

Byron’s Don Juan (pronounced in the English way), the legendary womanizer who ends in hell, the Don Giovanni of Mozart’s 1787 opera, is, among other things, a humorous self-portrait: a passive youngster who falls in with the amorous wishes of a series of beautiful women I Seville, Greece, St. Petersburg an England. But of, Don Juan, like Tristram Shandy, is not read for the Life but for the Opinions, which include: ‘What men call gallantry, and the gods adultery,/Is much more common where the climate’s sultry’ and ‘Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;/Thou shall not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey;/ Because the first is crazed beyond all hope, / The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthey…’ Although it rises to satire, most of Don Juan is a long-running joke. Insofar as it is self-display, the mature milord is more interesting than the self-regarding Childe. ‘It may be profligate’, Byron wrote to a friend, ‘but is it not *life*, is it not *the thing*?’ he exposes hypocrisy with a wonderfully varied use of anti-climax which disarms as it unmasks.

**“Some have accused me of a strange design**

**Against the creed and morals of the land,**

And trace it in this poem every line:

**I don’t pretend that I quite understand**

My own meaning when I would be very fine,

**But the fact is that I have nothing plann’d,**

**Unless it were to be a moment merry, /A novel word in my vocabulary.”**

**MARY SHELLEY**

If Peacock’s dialogues are modelled upon Plato’s, Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus by **Mary Shelley (1797-1851)** is a cross between the Gothic tale and fable of ideas; neither is realistic. Frankenstein began as a literary experiment within a social experiment- as a ‘ghost story’ in a game proposed by Byron at the Villa Diodati on Lac Leman, Switzerland, in 1816, while Mary’s half-sister Claire Clairmont was having an affair with Byron. Two years earlier Mary, aged 16, had eloped with Shelley from the home of her father, the philosopher-novelist William Godwin. Her mother, the feminist Mary Wollstonecraft, had died after her birth in 1797. Mary herself lost a daughter at 17, bore a son at 18, and after the suicides of another of her half-sisters and of Shelley’s wife, married the poet at 19. She had lost another child before she was widowed at 24. She dedicated Frankenstein to Godwin. Shelley wrote a preface, supposedly by Mary, and also a disingenuous pre-publication review in which he refers to the author as male and as showing the influence of Godwin. Men were the midwives of this myth-breeding text.

Frankenstein is an epistolary narrative with three narrators, the English Arctic explorer Capt. Walton, the German scientist Victor Frankenstein, and the nameless ‘man’ which Frankenstein ‘creates’ out of human body-parts by electrical experiment. The Creature wants a mate, which Frankenstein assembles but destroys. The monster then kills its creator’s brother, his friend and his wife; he tries to kill it, but it escapes into the Arctic. The sensational contents, pathos and moral ideas of Frankenstein are conveyed in a mechanical style. Its interest is cultural, moral, philosophical and psychological: it is a nightmare of alienation; a sentimental critique of the victorious intellect to which Shelley and Godwin trusted; and a negative critique of a Faustian overconfidence in natural science.

**“Open the temple gates unto my love,**

**Open them wide that she may enter in,”…**

Kubla Khan orders a pleasure house to be built at Xanadu. Alph River ran through underground caves to the dark sea. So ten miles of land are enclosed by walls. There were gardens with zig-zag streams; there are trees with flowers having sweet perfume. There are ancient forests as old as the hills. Also there are sunny spots of greenery. There is a romantic chasm full of cedar trees. It seems a magical place, where in moon light, a woman might come weeping over her ghost-lover who has broken her heart.

From this valley, a fountain of water has gushed out of the ground every moment. This burst of water throw up stones, which looks like hail or chaff being scattered around. This fountain is the source of River Alph, which for some miles ran underground and then fell into silent sea.

“Here, like one of those lovely forms which decorate the landscapes of Poussin, Waverly found Flora gazing at the waterfall. Two paces further back stood Cathleen, holding a small Scottish harp, the use of which had been taught to Flora by Rory Dall, one of the last harpers in the Western Highlands. The sun now stooping in the west, gave a rich and varied tinge…

Kubla Khan is a concentration of romantic features. Content and style together evoke an atmosphere of wonder and romance and enchantment. A basic feature of Coleridge’s poetic art is his ability to render supernatural phenomena with artistry. This is also a characteristic of Romantic poetry. This idea again is beautifully expressed in the Dejection and Ode when the poet says: “O Lady! We receive but what we give/ And in our life does Nature live.”

**SIR WALTER SCOTT**

The Lay of the Last Minstrel (1805) was the first of the verse romances by which **Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)** made his name. he had begun by translating German imitation-romances, and collecting the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, continuing the work of Percy and The Scots Musical Museum. The battlefields of the Borders of Scotland and England produced ballads such as the 15th century Chevy Chase, a romance admired by Sidney, praised by Addison and printed by Percy. Scott spent much of his boyhood in the Borders with his grandparents, hearing many stories. The Lay, sung at a noble Scott household in the 1690s, is a medieval tale of feud and magic, taking clues from Christabel, which Scott had seen in manuscript, and from Spenser. It has a shape- changing dwarf, and a wizard, Michael Scott, from whose tomb a magic book is taken to provide a curse. Amid this conventional Gothic mummery there is something new and more genuine, something of the chivalry of the Middle Ages as we have come to think of it. Canto First of the Minstrel’s Lay gives us, in its fourth Stanza, the Knights feasting in Branksome Hall:

***“Ten of them were sheathed in steel,***

***With belted sword, and spur on heel;***

***They quitted not their harness bright,***

***Neither by day, nor yet by night;***

***They lay down to rest***

***With corselet laced,***

***Pillow on buckler cold and hard;***

***They carved at the meal***

***With gloves of steel,***

***And they drank the red wine through the helmet barred.”***

**MARIA EDGEWORTH**

Women had made a notable contribution to fiction from the middle of the 18th century, and a better-recognized contribution from early in the 19th. The historical novel was perfected by Scott, but he did not invent it. In Waverly he wrote ‘so as in some distant degree to emulate the admirable portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth’. He refers to the anonymous Castle Rackrent, published 1800. Subtitled An Hiberian tale taken from facts and from the manners of the Irish squires before the year 1782, it purports to be an edited oral memoir of the steward of the Rackrent estate…

This historian-editor is R.L. Edgeworth, an enlightened Country Longford land owner who despite his ‘new consciousness’ was attached to his Irish identity, and in 1800 voted against the Union of the Irish Parliament (after a short period of independence) with that of Great Britain. When his eldest daughter Maria left her English boarding school, he gave her Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations. This gave her the term Rackrent, a title which suggests both extortionate rent and the rack and ruin of the estate. The ‘oral’ style was new.

**(1764-1849) Maria**, took Thady’s idiom from the speech of her father’s steward. To this passage is added a long note on the Irish greatcoat, and a Glossary explaining customs and terms. Thus , ‘An English tenant does not mean a tenant who is an Englishman, but a tenant who pays his rent the day that it is due.’ Successive Rackrents die of drink, apoplexy, gaming and drink, loyally helped by Honest Thady, whose nephew buys up Sir Condy’s estate. The ‘long…extinct’ facts and manners of the Rackrent squires have since formed the staple of Anglo-Irish fiction, as has illogical rattle in which they are reported: ‘not a man could stand after supper but Sir Patrick himself, who could sit out the best man in Ireland, let alone the three kingdoms itself’. As for Sir Kit, ‘unluckily, after hitting the tooth pick out of his adversary’s finger, he received a ball in a vital part, and was brought home, in little better than an hour after the affair, speechless on a handbarrow, to my lady’.

The anecdotes are in lively Irish English, the Notes and Glossary in dry Anglo-Irish. Beneath the comedy is a sharp analysis of the supposedly stupid servile Irish –man and the feckless folly of the old squires. Castle Rackrent is, like Tristram Shandy, a tale of sharp decline, but with Swift’s command of perspective. It is also the first of various kinds of novel: historical, Anglo-Irish, regional, colonial. With her father, Maria Edgeworth championed the education of daughters, and wrote other tales, but the Irish tales stand out: Ennui, The Absentee and Ormond. She sent Scott examples of Irish talk; Jane Austen sent her a copy of Emma.

**“And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills**

**Where blossomed many an incense bearing tree;**

**And here were forests ancient as the hills,**

**Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.”**

The poem is described by Coleridge himself as a fragment. According to him it is only a part of the poem of two to three hundred lines which has come to him in a dream. Not only he actually see the picture that he paints in the poem; even the lines and the words came to him, just as they are. But of, he cannot complete the poem as he was interrupted by a visitor and the vision faded.

**“But still moves delight,**

**Like clear springs renewed by flowing,**

**Ever perfect, ever in them-**

**Selves eternal.”**

Ever since then, then, critics have regarded this poem as a fragment. Not all critics, however, are of this view. For example, George Saintsbury disbelieves Coleridge’s statement. He remarks, the prose rigmarole in which Coleridge tells the story of the coming and going of the vision called Kubla Khan is “a characteristic piece of self –description.” It is his view that the poem is not a fragment. Says he, “Far from being an opium dream, Kubla Khan is the product of one unexpected lucid interval before the fumes closes up once more the expression of the spirit; moreover, it is complete. It is pure poetry, it is perfect.” A modern critic named Humphrey House also holds that the poem is complete. He regards it a poem about the process of poetic creation, about the ecstasy of imaginative fulfilment.

The shadow of the pleasure-house fell mid-way on the waves of the river. It is a strange miracle-a sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice.

Once the poet saw in a dream, an Abyssinian girl playing on her dulcimer (musical instrument) and singing a song of Mount Abora. If the poet could recall that song, he with the power of music creates the sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice. People will think him to be a magician, who has eaten honey dew and drunk the milk of Paradise. (Heaven) Readers were taken with the vigour of such a stanza, and were expected to enjoy the touch of hyperbole in the last line. These were real knights! But of, the reason that we think knights might have been like this is that this is how Scott re-imagined them. He also gave his readers a fight in the woods and a tournament (taken from Chaucer’s Knight’s Tale), lots of armour and daring ride through picturesque country. Border ballads usually end grimly, but a tragic outcome to this tale of lovers from feuding families is averted-by love, chivalry and magic, not by divine grace. The Lay is recited in a lively and flexible minstrel verse-form, and it runs easily through its more than 3000lines. In his History of English Literature of 1898, George Saintsbury called the Lay ‘ in some ways the most important original work in poetry, taking bulk, form and merit together, that had appeared for generations, though poetically it could not vie with the Lyrical Ballads.’ Scott followed up its huge success with other verse-romances including Marmion and The Lady of the Lake, until Byron captured this market. He then wrote novels, anonymously.

At first reading, the poem gives the impression of being “airy and unsubstantial”. It gives us the feeling that it has no coherence and that the two parts of the poem do not hang together. The first part describes the river Alph. The second part describes a vision and then a poet in frenzy. Even in the first part, the description does not follow an even course. It wanders and wanders like the river Alph. There seems to be no connection between the river Alph and the Abyssinian maiden.

In the midst of this noise of water and waves, Kubla heard from far, ancestral voices prophesying war.

**“And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething**

**As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,**

**A mighty fountain momently was forced:**

**A mid whose swift half-intermitted burst**

**Huge fragments vaulted with rebounding hail,**

**Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail:**

**And ‘mid these dancing rocks at once and ever**

**It flung up momently the sacred river.”**

The poet, therefore, glides into his new theme through suggestion. The two parts are connected by the poet’s desire to build a pleasure dome with the help of his imagination. He then describes the poet when the fit of creation is upon him. Such an interpretation is possible and so the poem can be shown to be complete. But of, the coherence and the completeness of this poem is the coherence and the completeness of a dream, not of walking life. In fact, the whole poem follows the course of a dream. Even the description of the river Alph has this dream-like quality. The pictures are repeated, and it is not easy to follow the course of the river exactly. It is also difficult to conclude whether the river has an entire course of ten miles or whether this is only a part of the course. Again, it is not at all possible to say with confidence how the wild and fertile parts of the course of the river are related to each other. Again the transition from the description of the river to the description of the vision is abrupt, and the connection between the first and the second part tenuous. In vividness as well as lack of smooth transitions, the poem is like a dream. Equally vague and yet vivid is the picture of the river. We cannot answer a definite question about it. How far, we ask, was the sunless sea from the pleasure-dome? How far is the fountain head of the river? Was the entire course of the river only ten miles? And these questions have no answer because the entire description has the indefiniteness of a dream.

These pictures are at once vivid and yet vague. This is exactly what happens in a dream. The impressions of a dream have clear outline, and yet they concentrate only on a few details, the rest being left vague. In other words, the description on leaves much to the imagination of the reader they are suggestive, not explicit. For example, what exactly do we know, about the pleasure-dome, that it was situated on the bank of the river Alph, that it had a sunny dome and caves of ice, that its shadow fell on the floating waves and that it was haunts by the tumult of the mighty river. This poem is a master-piece of descriptive art. It has a pictorial quality about it. In fact, the poem is nothing but a series of pictures that follow each other in quick succession. After announcing that Kubla Khan decreed a pleasure-dome, the poet describes the course of river Alph. Then he builds up the picture of a romantic chasm-a scene of vast desolation in the dim light of the moon then follows the picture of the mighty fountain. The picture of the course of the river is repeated, and is followed by a picture of the pleasure-dome. Then comes a description of the vision, and finally the description of the poet in frenzy.

Several touches in the poem raise from the region of everyday realities to that of a supernatural world. The details are realistic, and each detail has an actual counterpart somewhere. The total impression, however, is of an unearthly rather than earthly scene. This is achieved with the help of deft touches scattered in the poem. The very mention of Xanadu, Kubla Khan, Alph, Abora and the Abyssinian maid evokes associations of remoteness, mystery and strangeness. “The woman wailing for her demon-lover,” the chasm “seething with ceaseless turmoil”, “the earth breathing in thick pants”, “the huge fragments”, thrown up by the waves “the caverns measureless to man”, “the sunless, lifeless ocean”, “the ancestral voices prophesying war”, “the caves of ice”, the poet with “his flashing eyes, his floating hair”, fed on honey-dew and milk of Paradise, the circle woven around him thrice- all these are touches which make the poem of a supernatural world. While giving us the history of the composition of the Lyrical Ballads and his own share in it, Coleridge writes in his Biographia Literaria. “My endeavours were directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitute of poetic faith”. Coleridge with an artistic mastery achieves a blend of the supernatural and the natural to fulfil his role in the contribution to the Lyrical Ballads. His technique is successful in rendering the supernatural real enough to the reader, not only while reading the poem, but even afterwards; for he conveys a sense of a whole reality in which the supernatural exists without difficulty. Before Coleridge, the supernatural element has entered into English Literature (apart from drama) in a rather gross and crude form. It has appeared in the works of Horace Walpole. Mrs. Radcliffe and Monk Lewis has introduced the supernatural element in a crude form in their romances. They have tried to produce an atmosphere of mystery and horror by artificial devices like sudden transformation; noise and thunder, mysterious whisperings and awful appearances. Coleridge totally has discarded such grotesque and ludicrous grossness. He has given an inward quality to his conception of the supernatural; he brings supernaturalism into intimate relation with individual experience and gives a new psychological interest to it. The difference between Coleridge on one side and Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe on the other is the difference between the maker of horror and the maker of horrors. Coleridge creates the atmosphere of mystery by indefiniteness and by subtle suggestion while the other two employ crude description and pile horrors in order to send a cold shiver down the reader’s spine and to curdle the reader’s blood. The treatment of supernatural by the earlier writers is of the objective kind. Coleridge’s treatment is of a fine kind; the supernatural is brought in line with subjective experience. Coleridge himself wrote in reference to the supernatural class of poems in the Lyrical Ballads….”the incidents and agents are to be in part at least supernatural; and the excellence aims at, is to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as will naturally accompany such emotions, supposing them real” Thus Coleridge, even before he writes The Ancient Mariner lays stress upon three essential features of the poems of the supernatural class; (i) psychological interest, (ii) dramatic truth, and (iii) “reality” of the supernatural.

Coleridge has aroused the sense of supernatural mystery by taking the imagination to some distant unknown place as in The Ancient Mariner or to some distant past, as in Christabel. A known place, or the living present has no wonder or mystery; it is distance that is romantic and produces a sense of mystery and wonder. In Christabel, the poet takes us back to the old medieval days, which bring to our mind the associations of magic, superstition, and witchery. In The Ancient Mariner, he takes us away from the busy haunts of men to the distant seas, where the Mariner is left alone, “ Alone, alone , all, all alone/Alone on a wide wide sea!”

***“The self-same sun that shines upon his court***

***Hides not his visage from our cottage, but***

***Looks on all alike.”***

The poet’s imagination is much aroused by the river Alph and its subterranean course. The measureless caverns, the panting earth, the dancing rocks, sunless and lifeless sea, the tumult of the mighty waves as they rush into the silent ocean, the scene where a woman wails for her demon lover -all these excites his imagination. A feeling of awe and mystery is upon him, and he is lifted into a mood of poetic creation. A closer study, however, convinces us that the poem is not as innocent as it seems to be. It cannot be explained in rational terms, but when we follow the course of the associations and suggestions that runs through the poem, it does yields a coherent meaning. This suggests him the power of creation in man. It arouses in him the desire to capture the weird beauty of the entire scene, and reminds him that this can be built in colours, strains and words. The symbol of this creative power is the maiden whom he sees in a vision.

***“Hang ye! Trust ye?***

***With every minute you do change a mind ,***

***And call him noble that was now your hate-“***

Coleridge’s power is in the very fineness with which as with some really ghostly finger, he brings home to our inmost sense; his inventions, daring as they are.” The secret of Coleridge’s unique success works on the mind and not merely on the external objects. He knows with his psychological insight that the mysterious world of the supernatural must remain a mystery, and that subtle suggestion only can produce this sense of mystery, not crude description. It is with delicate touches of suggestions, combines with psychological insight, he brings out all the shadowy mysteries of the unseen world. The art with which Coleridge excites supernatural wonder and curiosity produces an atmosphere of what Aristotle calls “the higher illusion of reality”. It is the human note in his poems dealing with the supernatural that helps to create, this sense of reality. When the Mariner recovers from his spell and returns to his normal self, a natural human interest emerges in his weary words. And in this chastened and humanised mood, he derives the simple moral: “He prayeth well who loveth well/ Both man and bird and beast.” Towards the end of Kubla Khan, the poet is presented as a supernatural being. The description is psychologically accurate, for a poet in the frenzy of creative inspiration may achieve the level of a supernatural reality.

**“I moved my lips-the pilot shrieked**

**And fell down in a fit.”**

References to distant lands and far-off places emphasise the romantic character of Kubla Khan. Xanadu, Alph, Mount Abora belong to the geography of romance and contribute to the romantic atmosphere. There are highly suggestive lines in the poem and they too, are romantic in character. For instance, the picture of a woman wailing for her demon-lover under a waning moon, is very suggestive-“a savage place…holy and enchanted” Coleridge calls it. Equally suggestive are the lines: “And mid this tumult Kubla heard from far/ Ancestral voices prophesying war.”

**“Where was heard the mingled measure**

**From the fountain and the caves.**

**It was a miracle of fare device,**

**A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!”**

This vagueness, however, is the greatest strength of the description. It leaves so much to suggestion that every reader with a little imagination will build a vast scene of his own. The mystery becomes more effective because of this vast vision of vagueness which surrounds the vivid picture of the poem.

**“The level sunshine glimmers with green light.”**

While Kubla Khan is not a supernatural poem in the conventional sense, some phrases in the poem collectively give it an atmosphere of other –worldly enchantment. The “caverns measureless to a man “, a “sunless sea”, a “woman wailing for her demon lover”, “the mighty fountain forced momently from that romantic chasm”- these are all touches, which create an atmosphere of mystery and arouse awe. But of, the description is so precise and vivid that no sense of unreality is created. Romantic poetry is also characterized by sensuousness. Like Keats, Coleridge exhibits a keen observation. There are sensuous phrases and pictures in Kubla Khan. The bright gardens, the incense-bearing trees with sweet blossoms, the sunny spots of greenery, rocks vaulting like rebounding hail, the sunless caverns these are highly sensuous images. Equally sensuous is the vision of the Abyssinian maid playing on a dulcimer and singing a sweet song.

**“O, the joys, that came down shower-like**

**Of Friendship, Love, and’ Liberty,**

**Ere I was old I”**

The picture of the divinely has inspired poet closing lines is typically romantic. No writer imbued with the classical spirit has written these lines where the poet is presented as a divinely inspired creator. The poet achieves an awesome personality of whom the ordinary persons must “Beware”.

**“Our age was cultivated thus at length,**

**But what we gain’d in Skill we lost in Strength.**

**Our Builders were with Want of Genuis curst;**

**The second Temple was not like the first.”**

Kubla Khan is a work of pure fancy, the result of sheer imagination. The dream-like atmosphere of the poem is purely romantic…Kubla khan is one of the three great poems of Coleridge.it is the shortest but in some ways the most remarkable of the three. It differs from the other two in that it does not relate a story. It is a piece of description. The first part describes a mighty river and a rare pleasure-dome constructed on it by a mighty conqueror, Kubla Khan. The later part describes the power of poetry and inspiration as well as a poet in the frenzy of creation. The supernaturalism of Coleridge’s poems is no matter of “stage-lighting as with Monk Lewis’ of hysterical declaration as with Mrs. Radcliffe; of stage accessories as with Scott; it is an atmosphere that suffuses the entire tale; the outcome of a hundred delicate touches and subtle hints makes convincing to the reader by the profound psychological insight of the poet.” Coleridge lays the scenery of such poems The Ancient Mariner and Christabel in the midst of untravelled seas and the deep forests of romance. It is supernatural, but of ancient, common, simple kind which longs to all mankind. We find nothing unnatural in supernatural dread conveyed in the lines-

**“Like one, that on a lonesome road**

**Doth walk in fear and dread.”**

*The Romantic Revival has been otherwise called the Renaissance of Wonder.* Apart from the fact that the romanticism of the early nineteenth century is a revolt against the classical tradition of eighteenth century, it is marked by certain positive trends, the most important of which is the awakening of the feeling of wonder. Wordsworth takes upon himself to give the charm of novelty to things of everyday and to excite a feeling of wonder by directing the mind to the glory and loveliness of the world before us. Coleridge, on the other hand, undertakes to awaken the feeling of wonder by depicting the supernatural and the mysterious. The pervading sense of mystery is the key to Coleridge’s supernaturalism; it is that species of supernaturalism whose essence is psychological. If Wordsworth has given the charm of novelty to common things of life and nature, Coleridge has made the supernatural appear to be natural by a hundred delicate touches and subtle suggestion. “It is this finer, more delicately marvellous supernaturalism, fruit of his own more delicate psychology,” says Pater, “that Coleridge infuses into romantic adventure, which itself was then or new or revived thing in English language.”

**“Where lies the land to which would go?**

**Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.**

**And where the land she travels from? Away,**

**Far, far behind, is all that they can say.”**

While describing the first vision of Christabel, the poet says:

***‘With open eyes-ah woe is me!***

***Asleep, and dreaming, yet I wish,***

***Dreaming that alone, which is.’***

Supernaturalism in Coleridge is neither a presentation of sorrow by external devices, nor as mere exhibition of the effects of the supernatural of human conduct and behaviour, but it is an exploration of what Pater calls, ‘soul-love’; the deepest emotions of the soul are explored by the experience of the supernatural. Secondly, the incidents and emotions arising from them are so full of human interest that they acquire a dramatic truth and produces a ‘suspension of disbelief’ which constitutes poetic faith. It is the dramatic truth of the Mariner’s emotions in The Ancient Mariner that gives an air of reality to his weird experiences. Thirdly the supernatural in Coleridge appears to be real-not objectively but psychologically real. ‘Reality does not consist merely in the external appearances of things perceptible to the senses, but also in the deeper passions and experiences of the soul. The supernatural experiences of the Ancient Mariner are in this sense as real as his sailing in the ship or his meeting with the Wedding-Guest. The three poems, The Ancient Mariner, Christabel and Kubla Khan, are the best examples of Coleridge’s use of the supernatural. The poet does not employ any crude device to produce the sense of supernatural. “It is delicacy,” says Pater, “the dreamy grace in the presentation of the marvellous which makes Coleridge’s work so remarkable. The palpable intruders from a spiritual world in almost all ghost literature, in Scott and Shakespeare even, have a kind of coarseness or crudeness. Though Coleridge’s poetic achievement is small and sometimes fragmentary, yet he remains unequalled in one sphere of poetry-that of the supernatural. While planning a new volume of poems to be jointly written by Wordsworth and Coleridge, Coleridge undertakes to deal with the supernatural. He has written in, Biographia Literaria: “It was agreed that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural or at least romantic, yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith.” It is with this idea in his mind that he has composed The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. The two other poems dealing with the supernatural element are both left incomplete-Christabel and Kubla Khan. Unfortunately, the oft-quoted passage about Coleridge’s role in the collaboration with Wordsworth in the composition of the Lyrical Ballads has encouraged critics to over-simplify Coleridge’s contribution. Up to a limit it is true that Coleridge directs himself to purpose and characters supernatural, that he deals with those poems in which “the incidents and agents are to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at is to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human under supernatural agency. However, Coleridge, in his modesty, is a little less than just to the raison d’etre of his supernaturalism.

Coleridge has blended the natural and supernatural phenomena so skilfully and successfully that no reader can draw a line of demarcation between the two, saying that here the natural ends and the supernatural begins. His way of describing natural scenes is such that they appear to be supernatural. At the same time the poet presents his supernatural phenomena so that the supernatural world becomes a reality. The poet invests his tales with ‘a human interest’ and ‘a semblance of truth’ and, consequently, produces ‘willing suspension of disbelief’ for the moment, in the reader’s mind. The fantastic and the real, the human and the supernatural, the probable and the improbable, are so well dove-tailed that the effect is one of realism. The transition from the natural to the supernatural and vice versa is so well and so dextrously managed that the reader is hardly conscious of it. The Ancient Mariner is a masterpiece of vivid description. However, it is most remarkable for the way in which the transition from the detailed, matter-of-fact and accurate description of the voyage towards and from the South Pole to the equally matter-of-fact description of the avowedly supernatural manifestation of the phantom ship is managed with so little change of tone that in a rapid reading, we fail to realise that the transition has been made. There is no question of an incursion, a border raid, of the supernatural on the natural; both are parts of a whole. Christabel abounds in supernatural touches-the dying fire leaps in a fit of flame; Geraldine sees the spirit of the dead mother of Christabel and speaks to her with altered voice; the serpent women casts an evil spell upon the innocent Christabel so that she cannot disclose the real nature of the sorceress to anyone, not even to her dear father. But in, the total effect is one united impression of realism. In Kubla Khan we have the description of the sacred river being “flung up momently”. The lines certainly have a supernatural aura but the similes employed are familiar and natural. Surprising, no doubt, and repellent but direct. This is the technique of The Ancient Mariner and this, Coleridge feel will not do. So he rewrites it with a suggestive quality “Behold! Her bosom and half her side/A sight to dream of, not to tell.” And we “either shiver deliciously or turn away the too patent garden path according to temperament,” as one critic puts it.

Coleridge’s poems have a psychological background. They are invested with nature and human life and with man’s spiritual possibilities. He is a master of human psychology and knows well how man will react under given conditions. He imagines the dramatic situation in which he places his characters. But of, the emotional reactions of these characters are convincing and true. In The Ancient Mariner, the poet portrays the Mariner’s state of mind and makes us share the feelings and thoughts that arise in his mind and makes us share the feelings and thoughts that arise in his mind as a result of the various happenings in the story. Again, the Mariner’s reaction to the experience he has at the time when the two hundred crew has died and has cursed him, is described. Now any man, under similar circumstances will have reached exactly in the same manner in which the Mariner did. One of the most effective methods used by the poet to make his stories look real is that of infinite suggestiveness. He deliberately leaves many things in his supernatural tales vague and indefinite. He gives the picture in broad outlines so that the details may be filled in by the reader himself according to his own temperament. The path he pursues so as to create horror in his readers is indirect. Now every reader has to conjure up before his mind’s eye the exact picture of the horror Christabel see in her vision, and this picture will differ with different readers according to their temperament. He writes first: “Behold! Her bosom and half her side/Are lean and old and foul of hue”

**“Doth Poetry**

**Wear Venus’ livery? Only serve her turn?**

**Why are not sonnets made of thee, and lays**

**Upon thy altar burnt? Cannot thy love**

**Heighten a spirit to sound out thy praise**

**As well as any she?”**

At such a place and in such a situation, the Mariner with a consciousness of guilt, may very well have a supernatural experience. The poet thus creates what is called ‘dramatic probability’ and produces that willing suspension of disbelief which constitutes poetic faith.’ Coleridge produces the sense of horror, not by describing the spectre woman and her death-mate or other external phenomena at length, but by portraying the effect of these external things on the Mariner’s mind. Coleridge’s method is psychological. For instance, at one point in the poem, the poet wishes to tell us how horrifying the Mariner’s face appeared. He does not describe the face itself; he simply describes the effect of the face upon the pilot. In Kubla Khan, the mighty fountain being forces out of the earth is definitely vested with a supernatural energy, but describing it Coleridge employs familiar and natural similes.

**“Think what a present thou to God hast sent,**

**And render him with patience what he lent;**

**This if thou do, he will an offspring give**

**That till the world’s last end shall make thy name to live.”**

In none of Coleridge’s poem is the supernatural element brought in abruptly. Coleridge first takes his readers around familiar places and wins their confidence through vivid portrayal of minute details. Then minor hints of the supernatural are introduced, finally the entire scene takes on a supernatural look. Thus the reader readily accepts it. The atmosphere is built up in this way in The Ancient Mariner as well as Christabel. There is not merely the willing suspension of disbelief in reading his supernatural poems; they deal equally with reality- only, it is a different level of reality from Wordsworth’s. Coleridge, as Professor Otto and Aldous Huxley point out, is not so much a poet of the supernatural as the super sensible. His poetry is a record of the numinous’ experiences which are common to both savage and mystic. In Coleridge’s world he so-called supernatural events are not disconnected from the natural world; they are parts of one complex system is governed by a principle which is neither subject nor object exclusively., but which is the identity of both, which can be conceived neither as infinite nor as finite exclusively, but as the most original union of the two. After all, if only we could see far enough, we shall see that the distinction between natural and supernatural is one created by man in his ignorance. What he thinks he can understand, he is pleased to call natural; what wholly baffles him, he calls supernatural. The Ancient Mariner is not that of sleep but of intense vision. “My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels”. The highest powers of the mind work in harmony with energies normally ‘unconscious’. The distinction between poetic reality and human realty is very often merely conventional. All beauty draws itself from the existence of the ideal within the real; even in the bodily statesman can converse with the ideal beauty. Christabel is the first expression of the medieval spirit in the new poetry. The hall, the moat, the bard, the friar, the rushes, the carving, the brands all together by subtle suggestion creates the indefinable thing, the atmosphere.

**“Beauty is but a flower**

**Which wrinles will devour:**

**Brightness falls from the air,**

**Queens have died young and fair,**

**Dust hath closed Helen’s eye.**

**I am sick, I must die.**

**Lord, have mercy on us!”**

Along with Wordsworth, Coleridge is the co-founder of the Romantic Movement by virtue of his contribution to the writing of the Lyrical Ballads published in 1798, the official date of the commencement of Romantic Movement. Coleridge’s poems are few in number but show Romantic features at their best. Coleridge is a poet of moods and nature generally accords with his own dominating feeling. He can give truthful pictures of natural scenes when he chooses and there is often that love of detail, and what is more, a stress on individual details, which later characterised the Pre-Raphaelites. Wordsworth is seldom interested in details for their own sake as Coleridge is, in the picture. Coleridge has often picked such sense not in the mountains but in the plains. For mountains scenery, he generally prefers Switzerland and the Alps or the bleak and dismal mountains of the English of north. Like Shelley, rejoice in the torrents and avalanches of the snow-covered mountains. He also associates with them the emotional upsurge in the human heart and as in Prometheus Unbound, he makes nature rejoice in the happy millennium of humanity. It is new kind of poetry he has given to his generation when he has written in the Chamouni Hymn. Like Shelley, he has a tendency to etherealise nature; beneath the external form, he seems to penetrate to its changing non-material substance. Thus he asks to the solid Mont Blanc to: “Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth”! The Romantic Movement draws the attention of the poet to the Middle Ages. The name Lyrical Ballads suggests the blending of new lyricism with the ballad poetry of the past Dr. Johnson has ridiculed the ode and sonnet school but these become the favourite metrical forms for the new poetry. The new poets has turned to ballads not only for the variety of the stanza as being opposed to the heroic couplet but also for the flavour of old romantic tales and their dramatic appeal. They are resuscitated the superstitious beliefs of the people which has found less sympathy in a more sophisticated age. They, of course, has ignored the barbarisms and cruelty of feudal society., the values in life which has made the Renaissance a great period of creative literature quite different from the soulless scholasticism of the Middle Ages. This aspect is partly stressed by Morris and Swinburne in their earlier work. To Coleridge and Keats, the medieval world is one of pure romance where even witches put on such lovely forms that the doom of their victim has become a pleasurable experience to the poet.

Keats glories in colours; he luxuriates in the deep golden colour of autumnal sunsets but Coleridge observes the subtler shades and nuances has been brought about by shifting light like an impressionist. Even the Pre-Raphaelites are not so concerned with these fleeting effects in nature. In the Lime-Tree Bower My Prison, Coleridge watches the pale colour of the transparent foliage, observes a broad and sunny leaf and its shadow, the richly tinge walnut tree and the deep radiance on the ancient ivy, and because of the black mass of ivy, the dark branches of the elm trees “…gleam a lighter hue/Through the late twilight.”

The fatal woman usually has a male lover and she is not interested in tormenting female victims. But of, Coleridge’s purpose is not to write a poem of love and beauty like the later nineteenth century poets. The theme is haunting his mind is the paralysis of human will and this he could depict very well with the aid of a female character. She is in a dizzy trance when she goes to meet her father and her fearful dreams have given her a sense of guilt. The Ancient Mariner has killed the Albatross; the dreams of Christabel have wrought such a change in her that the poet asks, “Can this be she? The lady who knelt at the old oak tree?” and “Sure, have I sinned”, says Christabel to herself. Coleridge did not complete the poem and we do not know if Christabel have been shriven by a priest like Ancient Mariner. There is also a faint suggesting in the prolonged embrace of Geraldine that she wants to catch not only the daughter but also the father in her snare.

Coleridge bridges the gulf between Wordsworth and the younger romantics. He sings of the beneficent effects of nature on the human mind in the manner of Wordsworth, glorifies childhood as the period of peace and innocence and of communion with God and in his earlier phase, he welcomes the French Revolution as the new dawn for humanity. But of, more than Wordsworth, he lets in a new aestheticism in English poetry through his worship of the beauty of women, he revives interest in Gothic art and medieval legends, he starts the cult of Spenser, the great favourite of Keats, he dreams of faery lands which have no location in time and place, he treats the supernatural with unsurpassed mastery. He gives new imagery to Shelley, a new medievalism to Keats, Laudanum and Gothic to the Pre-Raphaelites, religious fervour to the Oxford Movement and “patriotism” and worship of all things English to Lord Tennyson. Across the whole length of the nineteenth century falls the shadow of Coleridge. With him we enter the work of Romanticism proper.

Coleridge is a firm believer in human dignity and liberty. He fiercely denounces “Statesman blood-stained and priests idolatrous.” The blood of Christ, he says, has been bartered away for war; and state and religion make widows groan and orphans weep for bread. In his sonnet on Burke, he laments the fact that a wise statesman like him shall make “Oppression’s hireling crew rejoice.” Lafayette, whom Burke calls an “unspeakable ruffian”, is lauded in another sonnet as heralding a new dawn in the long night of winter. It is not, however, in the expression of bright hopes for future that Coleridge is at his best, he is most effective in his denunciation of tyrants and in such progress, and he is the direct predecessor of Shelley.

His love of exotic scenes and dream-nature distinguishes him from Wordsworth. The imagery of Kubla Khan is as exotic and suggestive as the pal trees beneath which the Indian maiden is discovered in Endymion. His exoticism is best seen in The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. The sense of guilt and pursuit through distant lands forms the subject of The Ancient Mariner. He relates his story to a Wedding-Guest and curiously enough holds him with “his glittering eye”. It is, however, not the guest who falls a victim to a hypnotic and superior will-power; the Mariner holds him only to tell him how he has been guilty of shooting the Albatross for apparent reason. The Mariner and his friends are punished for this sin with a terrible nightmare. They see strange colours on the water at night time. Much of Coleridge’s nature poetry bears the obvious imprint of Wordsworth’s thought. No doubt, Wordsworth himself is indebted to Coleridge for much of his idealism. While in the ‘Christmas Eve’ Coleridge echoes his friend’s pantheism. In Dejection: And Ode: he says that Beauty is within us and not outside in nature. This confirms more to his Platonism and is opposed to the attitude of Wordsworth.

Keats is more lavish in his detail; he makes things too palpable to have that ethereal suggestive quality which is characteristic of Coleridge. He is also less correct in his details as in the too many inconsistent pictures in Bertha’s manuscript in the Eve of St. Mark and notorious carpets in the Eve of St. Agnes Coleridge is more careful and is a master in achieving utmost-poetic effect through minimum of detail. Yet the medievalism of Christabel is not the chief feature in that poem. The primary thing is the hypnotic effect of the superior will power of Geraldine on Christabel.

In his prose passage on the Wanderings of Cain he describes the same agonizing experience again. “He pursueth my soul like the wind”, says Cain, “like sand-blast he passeth through me; he is around me even as the air; that I might be utterly no more; I desire to die...For the torrent that roareth far off hath a voice; and the clouds in heaven look terribly on me; the mighty one who is against me speaketh in the wind of the cedar grove; and in silence am I dried up.” This can describe very well the feelings of the Mariner; he has the same sense of unutterable guilt and shame and the nightmare of being ever pursued through space is, as in the case of De Quincey, opium.

**“And a thousand thousand slimy things**

**Lived on; and so did I.”**

The supernatural is intimately connected with opium in the poetry of Coleridge. This may appear to be fantastic at first sight and example of poets can readily be given who write of the supernatural without in the least being addicted to that fatal drug. But in, Coleridge’s treatment of the supernatural is not the same as that of other poets. Without going into a detail comparison of their different treatments, one can readily see that in Coleridge, the supernatural means the pursuit of the victim, the complete collapse of his will power and the intense pain resulting from a fascination, not horror exercised by the supernatural being. Coleridge’s Geraldine is the prototype of Keats’ Lamia, the serpent-woman who can assume a fascinating form and works the ruin of her lover. The serpent-eye of Geraldine is noticed by Christabel only when she is completely within her power. Sir Leoline does not see any sign of the witch in her. She is exceedingly beautiful like a lady of a far off country and to make her alluring, Coleridge lets his look linger on her for a little while as she is undressing. Keats may be say to have enlarged in his description of the undressing of Madeline.

The fascinating character of this horror cannot be missed. The sea is rotting and the crew are going to die, yet the Mariner can hardly take his eyes off these colours. To know what lay behind the story of the Mariner, compare with the above stanza the following: “But yesternight I prayed aloud/ In anguish and in agony, / Up-staring from the fiendish crowd/ Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:/ A lurid light, a trampling throng,/ And whom I scorned, those only strong…(Pairs of Sleep) Coleridge is describing the pains of sleep as he has endured them in his real life. Like the Mariner and Christabel, he has a strange and inexplicable sense of shame and horror.

**“A light, a glory, a fair luminous clod**

**Enveloping the Earth.”**

This will naturally draw his attention rather to the more dynamic aspects of nature, to movement and to change, than to objects that are static and in repose. It is not given to Wordsworth to sing of the constant shifting of huge masses of snow on the high mountains, where:”…the avalanche, unheard, /Shoots download, glittering through the pure serene/Into the depth of clouds.” Shelley alone probed into these mysteries of nature. But of, Coleridge will be himself if this were the sole or even dominating characteristic of his nature poetry. He is more like a newly emancipated spirit that is interested in tasting as many forbidden fruits as possible. He also describes objects in repose and in sharp relief in the manner of Keats and Rossetti. The solitary leaf in Christabel-to which his attention is drawn by Dorothy-is an example of his stress on solitary detail.

**“I wander thro’ each charter’d street,**

**Near where the charter’d Thames does flow,**

**And mark in every face I meet**

**Marks of weakness, marks of woe.”**

Like Wordsworth, Coleridge too has dreams of the political regeneration of mankind and has a great enthusiasm for the French Revolution though its cruelty later on repelled him. His love for humanity is expressed in Reflection on Having Left a Place of Retirement where he bids farewell to his cottage in order to go to the city and work for relieving people of their distress. He condemns those theoretical lovers of mankind who do nothing practical for humanity. In the Ode to France, he regrets the failure of the French to live up to their revolutionary ideals. Fears in Solitude expresses his love for mankind and his abhorrence of injustice and inhumanity. Coleridge has started his career as a poet of love and nature; he has brought it to a climax by his treatment of the supernatural; and then it comes to an abrupt end with the complete deadening of his imagination. He has touched lightly on all those keys which are to give new melodies to the next generation, though he cannot create symphonies of his own. His early intellectual death matches the early physical death of Keats and Shelley who, however, has lived a fuller life than Coleridge.

The quality which distinguishes the poetry of the beginning of the 19th century, the poetry which we can roughly group together as the Romantic poetry, is the quality of its imagination and this quality is seen as a kind of atmosphere, which adds strangeness to beauty. Watts-Dunton uses a phrase which has become famous, “Renaissance of Wonder” for “that great revived movement of the soul of man, after a long period of prosaic acceptance in all things, including literature and art.” It means a reawakening to a sense of beauty and strangeness in natural things, and in all the impulses of the mind and the senses. Poetry is realised as a personal confession, or as an evocation, or as “an instant made eternity.” At countless points the universe of sense and thought acquires a new potency of response and appeals to man, a new power of ministering to and mingling with, his richest and interest life. Glory of lake and mountain, graces of childhood, dignity of the untaught peasant, mystery of the Gothic castle, radiance of Attic marble all these springs of the poet’s inspiration and the artist’s joy begins to flow. Wordsworth is the poet of a peculiar mystic idealism who discloses, in the rapt of communion with nature, an undreamed of access to the “life of things”. Coleridge is allured to rare and remoter tracks of humanity, lurking places of strange dreams and fantastic anomalies of belief. Shelley and Keats find the world controlled not by laws of nature, but of beauty. In Byron the artist’s self-assertion takes a more defiant and lawless form, even to the abnegation of art. What all these poets aims at is the emancipation of the world and of the mind and of the vehicle of poetry from the bondage of fact, opinion, formality and tradition and the right to look through “Charmed magic casements opening on the foam/ Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.”

**“A motion and a spirit that impels**

**All thinking, all objects of all thought**

**And rolls through all things”**

In Frost at Midnight we see evidence of Wordsworth’s influence in the lines is addressed by Coleridge to his baby. Coleridge refers to a Divine Spirit behind nature and to the moral and shaping influence which she exercises over those who seek her company. Later on he modifies his attitude to Nature and believes that we interpret the moods of Nature according to our own moods. In other words, if we are happy, Nature looks to us happy too and if we are dejected, Nature also looks dejected. Nature therefore, has no moods and feelings of her own. We receive from Nature only that which we give to her. This belief finds expression in his Dejection: An Ode. His love for Nature makes him give us beautiful pictures of it. He has a preference for the uncommon and rare phenomena of nature and this preference is illustrated in the Ancient Mariner.

**“Oh! Dream of joy! Is this indeed**

**The light-house top I see?**

**Is this the hill? Is this the Kirk?**

**Is this mine own countree?”**

The Ancient Mariner a binds in this supernatural element. All nature is pillaged to supply the mysterious atmosphere he creates. The sun is flecked with bars. Nothing can, exceed the terror and horror, is suggested by the appearance of the phantom ship and its inmates. And we have the weird ship moving zigzag across the water when there is absolute calm and no wind to push it along. Marvellous, too, when we come to it-the serpent-nature of Geraldine-is of a subtle weirdness, for no prodigies of the external world touch the imagination so nearly as distortion of human personality.

**“Help us to save free conscience from the paw**

**Of hireling wolves whose gospel is their maw.”**

***“I curtailed whole length of own thoughts to bring the intense revocation on English Literature,*** together constitutes ***My*** ***Triumph on Rendition****.”*- RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.

Coleridge is always peculiarly engaged with the inquiry into the quality by which poetic imagination gives an air of reality to the marvellous. It is his critical ingenuity which conceives the design of “a series of poems…of two sorts; the one, of common subjects such as will be found in every village” is poetically treated, the other, of subjects mainly “supernatural, but is made real by the dramatic truth of such emotions, supposing them real.” He is peculiarly fascinated by the “interception” of the spiritual world, the straggling branches of marvel which startle and waylay the observer. He looks into the void and found it peopled with presences. His is the uncommon eye that beheld the unseen. With rare felicity of phrase and imagery he makes the supernatural natural, giving to the unreal, weird and mysterious phenomena of this world a sense of actuality and substance.

**“Transparent forms too fine for moral sight,**

**Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.**

**Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,**

**Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew.”**

In Christabel the element of the marvellous is not obtruded, but slowly distils into the air. The first part is a masterpiece in the art of suggesting enchantment by purely natural means. The castles, the wood, the mastiff, the tree with its jagged shadows, are drawn with a quivering intensity of touch which conveys the very atmosphere of foreboding and suspense.

The lines reveals a minute realism, an imaginative apprehension of the silent and unseen processes of nature and the vivid aspects of external nature which is characteristic of a singular watchfulness for the minute fact and expression of natural scenery and a closeness to her exact physiognomy.

**“He prayeth best, who loveth best**

**All things both great and small.**

**For the dear God who loveth us,**

**He made and loveth all.”**

The last line, suggests the fatal character of her beauty but is not meant to evoke a feeling of horror. He has already told the reader that she is a sight to dream of. She is the first of that long line of fatal women who enchant their lovers in proportion to their power of evil. They become an obsession with Swinburne, Pater, the Pre-Raphaelites and the Decadents.

**“A! fredome is a noble thing.**

**Fredome maiss man to have liking:**

**Fredome all solace to man givis:**

**He livis at ease that freely livis.”**

Two great movements of Europe though stand in an intimate but complex intellectual relation to Romanticism the revolutionary naturalism of Rousseau and the transcendental movement in Germany from Kant to Hegel. Rousseau the apostle of the French Revolution preaches the worth and dignity of man as man, and the power of natural scenery to respond to his needs. Kant and his successors is exalted the mind as mind. The ideal is more and more explicitly identified with the real; to will goodness, or to imagine beauty, is alone to live truly. Art is thus not merely a heightening of the actual, but an escape from it. It insists on the power and autocracy of the imagination which alone gives a varied, subtle, intimate interpretation of the world of “external nature” and of that other world of wonder and romance which the familiar comradeship of Nature generates in the mind of man.

***“I was reading on revival of path leading to a room eons to be slithered with a book in my hand, provision of a new segment, so denim and defund- ant…”*** *–RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.*

Coleridge is a great musician. His best poems are marked by a delightful melody. He has been called an epicure in sounds (i.e., a lover of melody). The Ancient Mariner illustrates the witchery of his music. The alliteration and simplicity of the words is used to add the melody of the lines, and suggests the swift movement of the ship. Here, the artistic repetition of words is noteworthy. It immediately suggests the stillness of the atmosphere. Indeed, in this poem Coleridge has attained the highest level of verbal music ever reached by an English poet. And this he did, by the use of simplest words possible. The poem is perfect in rhythm, sound and cadence and magical in its metrical felicities. He is really a “master of harmony”. Love also illustrates this.

**“And close your eyes with holy dread,**

**For he on honey-dew hath fed,**

**And drunk the milk of Paradise.”**

Thus, all the features of the Romantic revival are fully manifested in the poetry of Coleridge. In his poetry, there is bold adventure, joy of discovery, romance of action. There is the glamour of untravelled regions, elements of mystery and marvel. There is Nature in a variety of moods: familiar, weird, tender, tumultuous, gay, desolate, soothing or horrifying. All these features are linked into a vital unity with a psychological insight. Truly, in Coleridge’s poetry, romanticism attained a fullness of complexity.

However the image like “caves of ice” needs special attention. While some critics hold that they belong with “caverns measureless to man”, there are others believing it be associated with the dome: “It was a miracle of rare device/A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!” *the antithesis* in this line shows the holding together of two different elements in which the miracle consists. They are again repeated togetherin line47, of Part II, which indicates the unity of both Part I and the Part II of Kubla Khan.

**”That’s brave god, and bears celestial liquor.**

**I will kneel to him.”**

Coleridge thus took upon himself the treat of the supernatural in such a manner as to give it “a semblance of truth” and “to procure for it a willing suspension of disbelief for the moment.” To accomplish this, Coleridge often goes back to Middle Ages to create the necessary background for his supernatural characters and incidents. The romanticism in Coleridge consists among other things, in his introduction of medieval elements in his poetry, which enables him to call up all the magic and enchantment of the distant past. In The Ancient Mariner several references give a medieval touch-such as mention of the cross-bow, vesper penance for a wrong done has a Catholic overtone and is medieval in spirit. Christabel of course, has a palpably medieval atmosphere-moated castle, feudal lords, bards, pages and chivalry. The ballad form used in The Ancient Mariner and in Love is also an influence of the Medieval literary tradition.

**“Father of Earth and Heaven**

**All-conscious presence of Universe**

**Nature’s vast ever-acting energy**

**In Will, in Deed, impulse of All in All.”**

Coleridge may be called the most romantic of the poets of the Romantic revival. His poetry, more than even that of Wordsworth, snows the unfolding of the process of the Romantic revival. His early poems are more or less experimental, but they show his ardent delight in natural beauty and his self- consciousness as an artist. His feelings for the beauties of the physical world and his spiritual interpretation of the universe may be traced in some of his early verse, like-The Song of the Pixies (1793), Lines on an Autumnal Evening (1794), The Eolian Harp (1795) and Religious Musings (1796). His revolutionary ardour and his subsequent feeling of despair and indignation break out in the Odes to the Departing Year (1796) and To France (1797); these poems are full of fire and passion and display a poetic eloquence hitherto lacking in his work. His emotional response to the beauties and glories of nature is poetically expressed in practically all his poems. Coleridge has planted his supernaturalism on the truth of human emotions and so made the supernatural appear to be natural. The three great poems of Coleridge- The ancient Mariner, Christabel and Kubla Khan-all contain supernatural elements (the last one having just a touch of it)- and they are his most romantic poems. Romantic poets often draw upon the Middle Ages. Keats loves the Middle Ages for their passion and chivalry and art; Scott for their action and adventure as also chivalry. Keats’ The Eve of St. Agnes, Coleridge’s Love and Scott’s William and Helen-all have been inspired by medieval times.

The mystery, the strangeness, the weirdness of the supernatural cast a peculiar spell on the dreamy imagination of Coleridge. In Kubla Khan we have an instance of dream-poetry at its finest. According to Saintsbury, the nineteenth lines “But oh!...war” (L.12-30) reach the highest point of English verse-music. And the three lines “A savage place, as holy and enchanted/As e’ver beneath a waning moon was haunted/ By a woman wailing for her demon-lover!”, represent the very summit of romantic poetry, condensing within themselves the whole world of romantic imagination in the same manner as the famous lines of Keats “Charmed magic-casement, opening on the foam/ Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.” There is in The Ancient Mariner the abrupt movement of stages, exactly like what happens in a dream. Its visual impressions are brilliant and its emotional impacts change rapidly. The poem clings to the memory with the peculiar tenacity of a dream.

**“And when they reared, the elfish light.**

**Fell off in hoary flakes.”**

No poet, except Shakespeare, has shown such a profound insight into the working of the human soul or has expressed it with finer accuracy as Coleridge in his poems. Subtle-souled psychologist Shelley called him. He is as familiar with the avenues of the soul as Wordsworth with the dales of his much loved country. He can translate soul hieroglyphics as accurately as his fellow pot can portray the landscape and the flower. He can descend to the depths of our consciousness and discover the secret springs of action; it is only in questioning ourselves that we can unravel the universe; the true, the only events are those of the soul and the special domain of Coleridge’s poetry is this inner theatre. He can describe vividly the feeling of fear or the distraction of an agonize soul, or in Christabel.

*In the summer of the year* 1797, the poet then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance in “Purchas’s Pilgrimage”. ‘Here the Kubla Khan commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto.’ The poet continued sleeping for about three hours. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business ***from Porlock***, and detained by him above an hour. On his return to his room, he found to his surprise that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast. ***Thus, according to the poet himself Kubla Khan is no more than a psychological curiosity***.

In Part II, however, the poet who has been able to realise this criss-cross of pleasure and sacredness is himself regarded as a holy or sacred person and this part is also clinched by the emphatic and final word paradise: “And drunk the milk of Paradise.” Thus, though the two parts of the poem appear to be disjointed, yet these various links; i.e. paradise and caves of ice, shows the possibility of unity between the two parts.

**“And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills**

**Where blossomed many an incense bearing tree;**

**And here were forests ancient as the hills,**

**Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.”**

The style of the romantic poets deserves special mention. In the 18th century, conventional and artificial diction has been employed and a particular metre (the heroic couplet) is thought to be the best metre for writing poetry. The romantic poets introduce several new metres and stanza forms with remarkable success. Their poems, especially those of Coleridge and Shelley, are marked by delightful melody and cadence. The Ancient Mariner and Ode to the West wind are musical. The romantic poets also coin special phrases and uses fresh and beautiful words (as against conventional and artificial words of the 18th century poetry). Wordsworth and Keats are especially known for their phrases. We come across such phrases as “unchartered freedom”, “trailing clods of glory” and “virgin sense” in Wordsworth and “azure-lidded sleep”, “purple riot” and “warmed jewels” in Keats.

There are two means for the achievement of the goal, the first being through the ‘innocence’ of the lamb and other being through the ‘experience’ of the tiger. The close of the poem gives us the clue: the daring of the creator whether God or man is the cleansing wrath of the tiger. What holds our attention is not merely the brute’s beauty but the mystery and purpose behind its creation. In ‘The Lamb’ the poet visualizes the holiness of the lamb and child and unifies them with Jesus Christ. It is obvious that the link that connects these figures is ‘innocence’. The harmlessness of the lamb and the purity of the heart of a child are nothing but the manifestation of heart nor does he act premeditatedly. The air of innocence is clearly visible on the face of all the three of them. More than this element of innocence there is another thread of connection between the lamb and Christ. Christ refers to himself as the Lamb of God: “The lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” In the Bible Christ is referred to both as a lamb and as a shepherd. In this aspect the lamb has a religious significance too.

**“A motion and a spirit impels**

**All thinking things, all objects of all thought**

**And rolls through all things.”**

The publication of Lyrical Ballads in 1798 by Wordsworth and Coleridge may be regarded as the founding event of the Romantic Movement. The chief Romantic poets besides Wordsworth and Coleridge are Scott, Byron, Shelley and Keats. We discuss now the salient features of Romantic poetry and its manifestation in the works of the poets is termed as Romantic poets.

**“Fear at my heart, as at a cup,**

**My life-blood seems to sip!”**

In The Ancient Mariner, for instance, he refers to “a copper sky” “the bloody sun” and the death-fires dancing at night and the water burning green and blue and white like a witch’s oil. Coleridge is a great lover of colour: the ice is as green as emerald, the water-snakes and rare phenomena of nature. The Ancient Mariner is full of word pictures. When there is no breeze and the ship is motionless, it is “as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.” We have several natural pictures like the moving moon going up the sky and a star or two beside, the slimy things crawling upon the slimy sea, the ice crackling, and growling and roaring and howling. The distinctive note of Coleridge’s shining nature pictures is that, he dwells upon the uncommon moves in tracks white and they are blue, glossy green and velvet black. Closely connects with this quality is the power of observing and depicting the subtle aspects of nature, richly and faithfully. In The Song of the Pixies, he paints the russet suites landscape of the eighteenth century idyllists from the rich and varied palette which we are accustomed to call Celtic. Their beauties of nature, the clouds, the furze, the dew, are drawn with delicate feeling, full of half-lights and elusive suggestion. Stopford Brook praised “the perfect pictorial skill and truth of his descriptions.” Takes the description of the ice in The Ancient Mariner and, of the night in **Christabel or this,** which has a touch of “romantic” weirdness:

**“Alone, alone, all, all alone**

**Alone on a wide wide sea!”**

Besides the above more or less common features, there are certain qualities of romantic poetry which are possessed by particulars poets. Supernaturalism is an outstanding romantic quality. It gives to certain poems an atmosphere by virtue of which the romantic poetry is often called the ‘renascence of wonder’. Coleridge is a great master of supernaturalism in The Ancient Mariner. He is psychological, refined and suggestive. Scott too writes supernatural poetry, e.g. William and Helen though’ his supernaturalism is rather crude. Keats gives supernatural touches to some of his poems such as , La Belle Dame Sans Merci and Eve of St. Agnes.

There is a note of melancholy in Romantic poetry. It may be nostalgia for past glory, or experience of sheer sadness. Byron shows this melancholy in Lake Leman. Byron’s melancholy comes to have a special appeal over the continent. Keats wrote an Ode to Melancholy and Coleridge an Ode to Dejection. The Romantic poets are deeply subjective. They write deeply personal poems, revealing their own nature, feelings and thoughts. This subjectivity leads them to write lyrics. All the Romantic poets have fine lyrics to their credit but Shelley surpasses them all in this respect. Shelley’s lyricism is exquisite, incomparable. The Ode to the West Wind is a supreme example of his lyrical gift. Wordsworth too wrote excellent lyrics, such as, The Solitary Reaper. Romantic poets are lovers of Beauty-beauty of nature as well as of man. Keats wrote “Beauty is Truth, Truth is Beauty” and “A Thing of Beauty is a joy for ever”. Indeed Keats’ sensuous love of beauty is his chief quality as a romantic poet. Shelley writes A Hymn to Beauty (Intellectual Beauty, of course). Greek mythology has a fascinating effect on Keats and Shelley and to some extent also on Byron. Keats love Greek mythology for the sensuous charm of its stories and writes several poems pertaining to it. His fancy contains references to Proserpine, Pluto, Jove, etc. Shelley’s poems, too contain abundant reference to it. The World’s Great Age Begins Anew contains references to Ulysses Battle of troy, Sphinx etc.

The Romantic Movement in English poetry has started as a conscious reaction against the Neo-classical poetry of the eighteenth century. Towards the close of the eighteenth century the great intellectual, moral and religious changes which marks the end of the Age of Reason gains momentum and results in the Romantic Movement. Like all great movements, the Romantic Movement is resulted from the preparations of a preceding age. Its greatness lay in the way in which it draws together the formerly scattered elements of thought and feeling, into a new and significant pattern.

***“Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lull’d by the coil of his crystalline streams,  
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae’s bay,  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers,”***

The 18th century poets are little interested in nature. Even when they do refer to her in their poems, they do so casually and without having any genuine appreciation of her beauty or significance. The romantic poets, on the contrary, have a deep and sincere love for Nature. Wordsworth is the greatest Nature poet in English literature. He gives Nature a high status as an independent subject for poetry and develops a full-fledged philosophy regarding her. This is his chief contribution to romantic poetry. Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley and Keats are also ardent lovers of Nature though they can be distinguished from one another in their attitude to Nature. Nature is a very important subject in their poetry. Nutting, Frost at Midnight, Lake Leman, Ode to West Wind and Ode to Autumn, are all Nature poems as they contain nature description as well as the poet’s love for nature. They also reveal what significance Nature holds for the poet. The essential qualities of romantic poetry are emotion and imagination. Neo-classical poetry appeals chiefly to reason.

**“The shadow of the dome of pleasure**

**Floated! midway on the waves;**

**Where was heard the mingled measure**

**From the fountain and the eaves.”**

Romantic poetry has a predominately emotional appeal. Besides, neo-classical poetry shows very little exercise of the imagination of the writer. Such purely imaginative poems of Keats’ La Belle Dame Sans Merci and Coleridge’s Kubla Khan cannot have been written by an eighteenth century poet. As for emotion, there is hardly any romantic poem which does not appeal chiefly to the heart as is distinguished from the head. Even Wordsworth’s Ode to Duty which aims at teaching us a lesson, has an emotional appeal. Poets like Keats or Shelley, indeed, are intense, and passionate. Even when the romantic poet wishes to teach a lesson, he does not do so like the 18th century poets; he teaches by appealing to us through our emotions. Shelley’s Ozymandias, for instance, aims at teaching us a lesson but the lesson is not directly preached. The poet succeeds in impressing the moral upon us by raising in us a certain feeling or emotion. Of pure didacticism there is little in the work of romantic poets, except in the later poems of Wordsworth.

Thoughts and feelings can lie inertly side by side, like chemicals; they can be so combined that active forces are released. The French Revolution, Methodism, Idealist philosophy, which insist on the supreme importance of mind, and the work of Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge are all expressions of creative forces working at different levels within society. *Broadly, what the Romantic Movement attempts to reassert is an organic, as opposed to a* mechanical view, of life; it has set out to bring God back into a living universe, and it has placed a higher value on private vision than upon general theories which has degenerated into dogma. At its best the Romantic Movement adds a new dimension to man’s vision of himself and the world about him, and is, as Coleridge is aware, a magnificent attempt ‘to reconcile the heart and the head’.



~RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.

**Except self-Setting; self-Views and Administration on Thoughts: Words are taken from Dr. S. Sen, An authentic Spiritual Book and History of Literature…**

… ~RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI.