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Lyrical Ballads and Wordsworth's
theories in the Preface of 1800

Lyrical Ballads was first published by Joseph Cottle of Bristol in 1798 under the title "Lyrical Ballads, with a Few Other Poems". The volume includes the following poems by Wordsworth :

Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree which stands
near the Lake of Esthwaite

The Female Vagrant

Goody Blake and Harry Gill

Lines written at a small distance from my House,
and sent by my little Boy to the Person to
whom they are addressed

Simon Lee, the old Huntsman

Anecdote for Fathers

We are Seven

Lines written in early spring

The Thorn

The Last of the Flock

The Mad Mother

The Idiot Boy

Lines written near Richmond, upon the Thames, at Evening
Expostulation and Reply

The Tables Turned; an Evening Scene, on the same subject
Old Man travelling

The Complaint of a forsaken Indian Woman

The Convict

Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey

The publishing of these collected poems is a landmark in the history of English literature. It concluded what Gray, Collins and Cowper had tried to introduce and marked the Revival of Romantic Poetry. The characteristics of the poems shocked the people who were accustomed to the poetry of the eighteenth century. The two collaborators, especially Wordsworth, were severely criticized. Lord Francis Jeffrey of the "Edinburgh Review" said that kind of poetry "will never do."¹ Others said one who wrote poetry like this would never succeed as a poet. The publisher found it difficult to sell the copies of the book.

1. Sperry, p. 100.

From the time they first met, Wordsworth and Coleridge had exchanged ideas on poetic theories and ideals. They had wanted to introduce new ones of their own. However, Lyrical Ballads had a casual and light-hearted origin. The two poets wanted a sum of money to finance their walking tour and they thought that by writing a book together they would be able to procure the money. But once they decided upon a plan, they worked with zeal. The poets' purpose in writing the poems was clearly explained in the advertisement to the edition of 1798 which says, "The majority of the poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purpose of poetic pleasure."

This experiment is a challenge to the established poetic diction of the eighteenth century. The Augustans believed that the use of common expressions or everyday language would spoil poetry and make it ridiculous. They believed that the dignity of poetry can make itself felt through noble language only. The expressions they used had to be models of good sense. They borrowed words and syntax from Greek and Latin which they studied and considered noble languages. Therefore, the people who were accustomed to reading poetry like this :

Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e're one vision touch'd thy infant thought,
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught;
Of airy Elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the Circled green,
Or virgins visited by Angel - pow'rs,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs;
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow view to things below.

(The Rape of the Lock)

were shocked to read in a book of poems passages like

"It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and thy glittering eye
Now wherefore stoppest me?"

(The Ancient Mariner by Coleridge)

Or

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

(The Thorn).

Wordsworth wrote in advance the readers "will perhaps frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry."¹ The words and expressions in those passages were so familiar that there was no poetry at all. "There was a thorn - it looks so old" has no poetic element in it. "By thy long gray beard", "not higher than a two years' child" and "a mass of knotted joints" are words people of the middle and lower classes used in ordinary conversation. Therefore Wordsworth and Coleridge's experimental poems were rejected because of their conversational language.

The form of the poems also offended conventional readers. The ballad stanzas had never had prestige in poetry. They were popular among villagers and rustic people. The ballads sung in the streets, telling about unimportant people and events, were never considered a part of poetry by the intellectual or refined people. Wordsworth did not choose the old ballads of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with their chivalric themes and archaic diction. He chose the humblest of all ballad forms, which constituted the poetry of common country people. His choice inevitably did not please the public. The Augustans under whose influence Wordsworth wrote his early poems like "An Evening Walk" preferred heroic couplets to all other metres. They thought that the grand metre added more charm to poetry. Wordsworth's use of ballad stanzas, the meanest form of poetry

1. Advertisement to the volume of 1798.

in their opinion, made them angry. They found that poems like "Goody Blake and Harry Gill", "Simon Lee, the old Huntsman" or "The Idiot Boy" were not worth reading.

Besides objecting to the language and metre, the readers objected to the contents of the poems in "Lyrical Ballads". Wordsworth knew that the people might think that his subjects drawn from real lives of common people were not interesting enough. But he insisted that they were interesting because they contained "a natural delineation of human passions, human characters and human incidents." Wordsworth, unlike the Augustans, thought that what happened to a man and his feelings were important enough to write a poem about. In his opinion, Goody Blake, Simon Lee or Martha Ray were as important as royalty or people of noble rank. This is contrary to the idea of that time. The Augustans never chose as their subjects concrete and familiar things because those things did not appeal to the good sense and mature taste of the upper classes. The Augustans chose mostly abstract and philosophical subjects. They could hardly stand the stories about insane women, poor people and peasants that Wordsworth told. Wordsworth chose this kind of subject because he had the intention to "give the charm of novelty to things of everyday, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us".¹ ✓

These are the different ways people reacted to "Lyrical Ballads." The book was remarkable for the new poetic theories. Miss Helen Darbishire said, "Wordsworth's experience had led him inevitably to make a revolution in poetry. English poetry has known many leaders of revolt. Wordsworth's was a revolt of a nature and importance which perhaps no literary revolt had before. It was a revolt against literature, or the literary element in poetry".²

"Lyrical Ballads" was published for the second time in 1800 and the third in 1802. In the 1800 edition he added such masterpieces as "Lucy Poems" and "Michael, a Pastoral". The title given to

1. S. T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, p. 169.

2. Darbishire, p. 35.

the second edition is "Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems, in Two Volumes." It was introduced by his "Preface", his greatest work in prose. The title of the 1802 edition is "Lyrical Ballads, With Pastoral and Other Poems in Two Volumes." Its preface is an affirmation of the 1800 "Preface" with more details added.

In spite of all the criticism and adverse reactions to "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798, Wordsworth's faith in his poetic theory grew firmer. His "Preface" stated the characteristics of a new kind of poetry. It steered poetry into a new course, away from the prevailing classicism. In the "Preface", he carefully explained his aims and ideas. He also pointed out the duty of a poet. The "Preface" contained the theory which started that literary movement called the Romantic Revival.

The four main points which Wordsworth explained were : his choice of language, his choice of subjects, the importance of metre and the duty of the poet.

Choice of Language or Poetic Diction

In the advertisement to the first edition, Wordsworth said that poets could adopt the conversational language of common people. In the "Preface" he repeated the idea, saying, "My purpose was to imitate, and as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men." He demonstrated by giving us such lines as,

"He saw me, and he turned aside
As if he wished himself to hide:
Then with his coat he made essay
To wipe those briny tears away.
I followed him, and said, "My friend,
What ails you? wherefore weep you so?"
—" Shame on me, Sir! this lusty Lamb
He makes my tears to flow.
To-day I fetched him from the rock;
He is the last of all my flock."

(The Last of the Flock. 1798)

He called the language used by classical poets "gaudy and inane phraseology", and said that their idea was faulty because "a poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions." Therefore the

language which the poet used to explain his thoughts and feelings could not be different from that of other human beings. Some might think that it was not always possible to use the real language of men but a poet should not stop trying. If he did, he would indulge in using language that only he and a few others could understand. By doing so, he would fail as a poet because "Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men." He should express himself as other men express themselves.

Of all the languages "really used by men" Wordsworth liked that of country people best. He thought that humble and rustic people were not influenced by the city's formality. They spoke a plainer and more emphatic language. They "hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is more permanent and a far more philosophical language than which is frequently substituted for it by Poets . . ." Wordsworth meant that language, like that of the eighteenth century classical poets, invented to please the temporary taste of a certain group of people, could not last as long as the peasants' language.

However much Wordsworth believed in "language used by men", he did not mean that the conversation of common people was poetry. The language to be used in poetry should be "a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation". Therefore the language of poetry need not be different from the language of prose because generally good prose is composed of well-selected words. What makes poetry different from prose is metre.

For example :

"Thus Nature spake - The work was done —
 How soon my Lucy's race was run!
 She died, and left to me,
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;
 The memory of what has been,

And never more will be."

("Lucy Poems" -1799)

Every word in these lines is familiar. Everyday we say, "the work was done", "the race was run", "she died", "she left the memory" and "what has been and never more will be". But nobody can deny that this is good poetry. These simple words are ordinary, but well-chosen and have good metre. If the words had not been well-selected, this passage would not have been so effective. And if the words had no metre, the passage would certainly have been less impressive.

Finally, Wordsworth explained his last idea about language. He said he liked simplicity of language, but he could not accept meanness and triviality. Though he disliked refined and artificial expression, he thought it was still better than mean language. He said, "I acknowledge that this defect (triviality and meanness), where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences".

Choice of Subjects

Wordsworth decided that he would choose incidents and situations from common life as the subjects for his experimental poems. This was another shock for readers who were accustomed to the abstract and philosophical subjects of eighteenth century poetry. No poet of their time had ever written about a beggar, a mad woman or a lame old man. But almost all of Wordsworth's poems in "Lyrical Ballads" are about such people. Simon Lee is an old hunter, too old and weak to be able to cut down a tree. He would never be able to draw any attention from an Augustan. "The Thorn" is a story about a mad mother who mourned for her baby whom we think she probably had killed. The old shepherd, his industrious and quiet wife and their child who was corrupted by city life in "Michael" lived in a world very different from the world of the classicists. The main character in "We Are Seven" is not a philosopher, but a little girl, so simple minded that

she can not understand that there are only five children in the family because the other two are dead. The Augustans would never stoop to be interested in an "Idiot Boy" and how precious he is to his mother. But for Wordsworth these people and what happens in the village and the neighbouring area are very interesting. He is pleased to write "Goody Blake and Harry Gill", a tale which is "founded on a well-authenticated fact which happened in Warwickshire."¹

When he is treating his favorite subjects, Wordsworth wants to "relate or describe them throughout". He relates to his readers all details possible. In "We Are Seven," he writes,

"I met a little cottage Girl:
 She was eight years old, she said;
 Her hair was thick with many a curl
 That clustered round her head,
 She had a rustic woodland air,
 And she was wildly clad:
 Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
 — Her beauty made me glad."

Then he asked the little girl how many brothers and sisters she had. The girl answered that there were seven children in her family : two living in a village, two others working at sea, two others in the graves near her cottage, and herself. He said that since two of them were dead, there were only five children in the family. But the little girl, not understanding what death means, insisted there were seven. Many readers might think that the story is nonsense. In Wordsworth's opinion, it is not, because "the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants. "An interesting story need not be full of violent or emotional happenings. The man who can be excited by a simple story is considered superior to the one who requires a more violent stimulus. A poet is considered superior to other men because he has a higher degree of feeling, not because he has a different kind of feeling. He has a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement,"

A simple story can be exciting if it is "presented to the mind in an unusual aspect." If the writer helps to arouse the reader's

1. Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads, 1798

imagination, the reader will enjoy even a simple story. Imagination will make a man's feelings stronger. His imagination will make things seem more beautiful than they really are. It will make things more interesting and exciting. His own feeling, created by imagination, will give importance to the action and situation. Wordsworth always insisted :

The moving accident is not my trade;
 To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:
 'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
 To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

(Hart = Leap Well 1800)

"The Reverie of Poor Susan" is one of the most simple of his lyrics. Those who can not imagine how much Susan loves and misses her village home may think that she is silly to walk day-dreaming in a London street only because she hears the song of a bird. But if they follow the description of Susan's recollection of the mountains, the trees, the vapour, the river, the green pastures, the dale and the cottage she loves, they will understand and sympathize with her. They will understand how a bird's song can make her see a vision and make her feel as if her heart was in heaven. They will also sympathize with her when she feels sad because the vision disappears. By then they will find that the story of poor Susan is genuinely touching.

Wordsworth also believes that he can make the incidents and situations interesting by "tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature." A man's essential feelings can be well understood by another man. Men can share their passions and thoughts if the passions and thought are elementary. But if they are elevated and made specific, they cannot be communicated without losing some meaning. In "Lucy Gray", the mother wept when her daughter was lost. The child's death affected her mind deeply and she could only say, "In heaven we all shall meet." The hope that we will join whom we love when we die is quite common. The readers feeling and the mother's can be identical.

Moreover he says that men can communicate their ideas more effectively when they are excited. Excitement makes men forget refined

manners and expressions. What they speak out is exactly what they feel and one who listens can understand fully what they mean. In "The Idiot Boy", Betty was all excited when she had to send her abnormal son to call a doctor late at night. Since the boy was an idiot it was very likely that he would get lost. She would be miserable if he did not come back because he was her only child. But Betty had no other choice. Her neighbour Susan was too sick to be left alone. After telling him carefully which way to go and what to do, she said,

Johnny! Johnny! mind that you
Come home again, nor stop at all,
Come home again, whate'er befall
My Johnny, do, I pray you do.

Johnny went, many hours passed but Johnny did not come back. Betty left Susan, who was getting worse and worse, to go after her son. When she went searching long in vain, she thought Susan was to blame for Johnny's loss. She said,

If Susan had not been so ill,
Alas! I should have had him still
My Johnny, till my dying day.

Wordsworth's belief in "the primary laws of our nature" makes him fond of humble and rustic life. He said in the country, man's primary passions can develop freely. There, man's elementary feelings are "less under restraint" than in the city. They co-exist in a state of greater simplicity. In the simple surroundings of the country, man can "accurately contemplate" and "more forcibly communicate" his feelings. Wordsworth said the ways of rural life develop from elementary feelings and rural occupations are simple. He was interested in country people, their ways of living, their feelings and their language because they are easy to understand.

Besides simplicity, he admired the durable characteristics of the country. Its people never change. They live the same way their ancestors lived and their children are going to live. Their feelings toward external things remain the same. Their language is lasting because it is derived from genuine feeling while the language invented and elaborated for certain purposes dies quickly. Then Wordsworth

explained that the country had such virtues because "in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature." According to Wordsworth, nature always has a good influence on everything. Nature is beautiful. Every form of nature, rock, flower, mountain or tree has beauty in it. Nature is also permanent. Rocks, flowers, mountains and trees are the same now as formerly. Farmers and shepherds can work close to beautiful landscape all their lives. For those who love flowers, different kinds bloom every year at different periods of the year to make them happy. Since what creates their passions is permanent, the people's passions become permanent, too.

The Importance of Metre

From the beginning, Wordsworth said that well-selected language really used by man is not enough to be poetry. Though there is no essential difference between poetry and good prose, metre, the poetic measure or the arrangement of words in regularly measured or patterned or rhythmic lines or verses, cannot be absent from poetry. Words chosen from every day conversation must be arranged according to the strict laws of metre.

First of all, metre is necessary because it gives a sense of order. Wordsworth said that metre imparts the distinction of regularity and uniformity to language. If the admirers of classical poetry with "rational mind" disliked the poems because the language was typical of the conversation of the middle and lower classes or because the incidents were chosen from country life, Wordsworth hoped that they would, at least, enjoy the sense of order produced in the poems by metre. They would probably like lines like :

Old Daniel begins, he stops short - and his eye
Through the last look of dotage is cunning and sly.
'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.
Dan once had a heart which was moved by the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires:
And what if he cherished his purse? 'Twas no more
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

(The Two Thieves 1800)

Secondly, a part of the pleasure given by poetry depends upon metre. Poets and readers of all nations agree that metre gives charm to a description. Though metre has a tendency to "divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, Wordsworth allowed it because it has nothing to do with passions or feelings in a poem. On the other hand, it strengthens and increases the pleasure which co-exists with it. The following passage is a good example of this idea.

The dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink;
 I heard a voice; it said, "Drink, pretty Creature, drink!"
 And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
 A snow-white mountain Lamb with a Maiden at its side.
 No other sheep were near, the Lamb was all alone,
 And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone;
 With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel
 While to that Mountain Lamb she gave its evening meal.
 The Lamb while from her hand he thus his supper took
 Seemed to feast with head and ears; and his tail
 with pleasure shook.
 "Drink, pretty Creature, drink" she said in such a tone
 That I almost received her heart into my own.

(The Pet Lamb, 1800)

Without being fitted to metre, the scene is already pleasant. But the beautiful rhythm and rhyme makes it more charming. The reader's association of ideas is carried along by the music and he has more pleasure than when he reads a description without music. In case the description is not effective enough or the language is not very well-selected, the rhyme and rhythm will lead him towards the feelings of pleasure he is accustomed to and the feeling will make the description seem exciting and pleasurable.

Thirdly, metre is needed to keep the reader's pleasure and excitement within an appropriate limit. This is opposite to the idea in the paragraph above and shows another use of metre. Every poet has the intention to produce "excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure". If the story the poet writes is already exciting, his language already powerful, his metre already beautiful enough to strengthen excitement, the readers will receive what is too

much for their mind to grasp all at one time. And if the state of his mind is unusual or irregular at the moment, his ideas and feelings will not follow each other in good order, but will be carried farther than necessary. Here the metre will serve another purpose. It will remind the reader of something regular and orderly to which he is accustomed when he is not excited. This sense of order will calm down his excitement and control his feelings. It will enable them to "succeed each other in accustomed order". Wordsworth said in a poem, "the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion."

. . . . There can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose."

However, Wordsworth did not choose complicated rhyme and rhythm because they would restrain passions too much. Instead, he chose the simple, artless metre of the old ballads because he wanted some passion, but not too much : Moreover, Wordsworth believed that if there were two equally well-written descriptions, the one in prose and the other in verse, "the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once."

The Duty of the Poet

Wordsworth said each poem in Lyrical Ballads has a "worthy purpose". He said though he did not have a distinct purpose in mind when he began to write, the feelings aroused and controlled by his habits of meditation automatically produced a purpose. According to him, "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." A poet looks steadily at his subject, which stirs his feelings as long as he looks at it. Then the feeling is directed and modified by his thoughts which are the representatives of his past feeling. Therefore, by contemplating the relation of thoughts, a poet will come to the very essence of the subject. Then the poet relates what he finds

to his reader. If the poet is successful in expressing his idea in a convincing way (using the real language of men, adding some imagination and using good metre), the reader will adopt the poet's way of looking at things and will come to know their essence, too. By following the poet's lead, the reader's understanding will be "in some degree enlightened, his affections strengthened and purified".

The object of poetry is truth, Wordsworth said. Poetry is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe and it is the most philosophic of all writings. A poet conveys truth to his reader, "truth not individual and local, but general and operative". A poet succeeds in finding truth because he has stronger sensibility than other men. The poet is "endowed with more lively sensibility, a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings (E) on of the universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them". A poet's unusual sensibility not only enables him to see more deeply into what is present, but at the same time finds him more deeply affected by absent things.

With his strong sensibility, the poet contemplates his subject in tranquillity. His poetry takes its origin from "emotion recollected in tranquillity." His emotion is contemplated long and deeply till "by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind." In this way he achieves truth.

Then the poet "binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society". He knows that his passion leads him to truth. Therefore, to make his readers understand the truth, he has to enlarge their sensibility. He has to help them to feel as vividly and see as clearly as he does. The readers may come to the same conclusion if they confound and identify their feelings with his. To do so he has to deal with their pleasure because "all sympathy has its roots

in pleasure". Pleasure is the most general and universal of all passions. A man learns, feels, lives and moves by pleasure. It is his "stay and support". Wordsworth said, "We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure". In a story, the happy part is better understood than the sad one. For example, in "The Idle Shepherd-boys", the boys' race and the lamb's falling in the stream do not impress us as much as the description of the happy valley :

The valley rings with mirth and joy;
 Among the hills the Echoes play
 A never never ending song
 To welcome in the May.
 The Magpie chatters with delight;
 The mountain Raven's youngling brood
 Have left the Mother and the Nest;
 And they go rambling east and west
 In search of their own food;
 Or through the glittering vapors dart
 In very wantonness of heart.

In "The Idiot Boy", we sympathize with Betty when we read such lines as: "She screams - she cannot move for joy", "She almost stifled with her bliss" and "Her limbs are all alive with joy".

By the word "pleasure", Wordsworth also meant pain. He said that we also sympathize with pain but pain is secondary because "wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure."

He once said :

thence may I select
 Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight;
 And miserable love, that is not pain.

(The Prelude, Book XIII)

In many of his poems, Wordsworth demonstrated that pleasure and pain were closely mingled. In "Lines Written in Early Spring", he said, "In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts bring sad thoughts to the mind." In "Michael", the shepherd and his wife were very unhappy to let their son go into town. The wife even thought that her husband would die if the boy went away. But for no reason,

she recovered her courage. At their last meal together, all sat "like happy people round a Christmas fire." Months passed, Michael and his wife missed their son more and more but

"The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts.

With themselves identified with the poet's "pleasure", the readers arrive at truth in poetry. Contemplation of particular facts is not knowledge, but what has been built up by pleasure and exists in us by pleasure is knowledge. Men of other professions have agreed with the poet. The anatomist, for instance, feels that his knowledge is pleasure; where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. Though he may have painful experiences before he arrives at pleasure.

In spite of similarity of the ways of finding truth, the poet is still superior to the scientist who finds "individual and local truth". The scientist studies some particular parts of nature. The pleasure he acquires is individual and personal and cannot be shared. But the poet studies all parts of nature. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, acting and re-acting upon each other so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure. Consequently, his knowledge is general. He "sings a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. He binds together by passion and knowledge "the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth and over all time."

Finally, Wordsworth concluded that poetry is "the first and last of all knowledge -- it is as immortal as the heart of man."

With this conception of poetry and with the principles that he insisted on, Wordsworth believed that a poet would bring about a new kind of poetry which would interest mankind permanently and have some moral influence on human beings.

The poems in "Lyrical Ballads", especially those of the 1798 edition, are interesting for the principles in accordance with which they were written and for their own saka.