

CHARLES KINGSLEY AS A ROMANTICIST

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

page

CHAPTER I ----- 1

Is there anything in the life of Charles Kingsley to account for a romantic disposition?

CHAPTER II ----- 4

What is Romanticism?

CHAPTER III -----13

Romantic elements in the poetry of Kingsley.

CHAPTER IV -----27

Romantic elements in the prose of Kingsley.

CHAPTER V -----40

Charles Kingsley in relation to the age in which he lived and in relation to different literary movements.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES KINGSLEY

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ROMANTICISM

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## INTRODUCTION

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Charles Kingsley, preacher, poet, novelist, and statesman, is a writer who belongs to the Victorian era. His interests were not confined to one line of work but were scattered over a broad field, and the result was that not a great deal was produced in any one form of writing. Besides being a statesman who wielded a great influence in his day, this rector of Eversley parish was a novelist and poet of no mean ability.

As a statesman, he is usually mentioned as a Christian Socialist, and this name also fits his character as a preacher in his parish. As a novelist, he is usually thought of along with Bulwer-Lytton, Charles Reade, Trollope and others and is called a writer of historical romances, though the few novels of this type that he wrote hardly justify the name. As a poet, he is mentioned as a writer of fantastic lyrics, such as are found in Waterbabies, though these by no means comprise all of his poetry.

An effort has been made to study Kingsley, the man, and his writings, in his relation to the Romantic Movement in English literature. To state the problem in another way, Kingsley has been studied and considered as a Romanticist, and his writings have been studied with a view to pointing out traces of Romanticism that may be found in them.

In Chapter I, the life of Kingsley is briefly reviewed in order to bring to the attention of the reader those influences which tend toward a Romantic temperament on the part of the writer. Later, the writer's works are considered separately, and the predominant traces of Romanticism pointed out to the reader.

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## CHAPTER I

### IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE LIFE OF CHARLES KINGSLEY TO ACCOUNT FOR A ROMANTIC DISPOSITION?

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Charles Kingsley is described as tall, wiry, of dark complexion, with fiery and hawklike eyes, and with very abrupt and decisive movements. He was born June 12, 1819, at Holne vicarage, Dartmoor, in Devonshire. His father, who came of a family of soldiers and country gentlemen, was brought up with fair expectations as a country gentleman, but was left an orphan and his money squandered in his minority. Being forced to choose a profession, he decided on the church, prepared himself, took orders, and was sent to Holne vicarage. From his father, Charles received his love for art, his sporting taste, and his fighting blood. The men of his father's family had been soldiers for generations, some having led troops to battle at Naseby, Mindad, and elsewhere.

The mother of Charles Kingsley was a remarkable woman. She is described as being highly imaginative, keenly alive to the charms of scenery, and full of poetry and enthusiasm. To her, Kingsley owes his love of travel, his peculiar bent toward the natural sciences, his love of literature, his keen sense of humor, and a force and originality which had characterized the women of her family of an older generation. To her, he owes "the romance of his nature."

The Kingsley family moved from Holne to Clifton in Nottinghamshire, and from there to Barnack rectory in the fen country, where Charles spent his early years from six to eleven years of age. There he learned to love and admire "the shining meres, the golden reed-beds, the countless water fowl, the strange and gaudy insects, the wild nature, the mystery, the majesty, which haunted the fens. . ." In after years he was to describe this country in his novel, Hereward, the Wake.

In 1830, the family again moved. This time, Sir John Hamlyn Williams of Clovelly Court, presented to Mr. Kingsley the rectory of Clovelly, situated on the north coast of Devon. This was a great change for the young lad, Charles, who was both delighted and awed by

the new scenery and by the new people with whom he came in contact. Life had been quite different in the Fens from that on this stormy, rocky Devonshire coast, with its new fauna and flora, the blue sea with its long Atlantic swell, its courageous men, and its women who sympathized with husbands and sons in their wild life of battling against the sea. Charles' father found these people very responsive, and in turn his services and ministrations were acceptable to dissenters as well as church people. When the herring fleet put out to sea, the rector with his whole family would go down to the quay where a short parting services was conducted in which these "men who worked, and women who wept" joined in singing a hymn. Romantic and tragic incidents happened on such coasts as this, and these incidents were impressed upon the mind of the young boy, Charles, to be given to the world later in his writings.

In 1831, Charles was sent to a preparatory school at Clifton. He was in school at this place when the Bristol Riots occurred. Just what effect these riots had on his mind may be seen in his account of them in Miscellanies; Great Cities and Their Influence for Good.

Charles would have been sent to Rugby or to Eaton College, but for the strong tory principles and evangelical views of his parents who sent him to Helston instead. In this school he was under the headmastership of Reverend Derwent Coleridge, son of the great Romantic poet. Here, says his devoted friend, Mr. Powles, Charles showed a strong inclination toward the study of physical science. His zeal seemed to have been led by a strong religious feeling - a sense of the nearness of God in his work.

In 1836, Lord Cordogan gave Mr. Kingsley the living at Chelsea. The beautiful and beloved West Country was left for a home in London, much to the regret of Charles. He entered King's College for two years of "grinding work." On his way to King's College each day, Charles passed through some of the most beautiful sections of London and through the worst of the slums. This started a line of thinking which culminated in his adoption of the principles of the Christian Social Movement in which he took no little part. He read a great deal while in school in London - from Southey, Coleridge, Shelley, Spencer, and others.

In 1836 he went to Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he gained a scholarship. It was

during this year that he first met his future wife. Later he termed this meeting his "real wedding day." About this time also he began to have religious doubts, which this new friendship helped to dispel.

Kingsley's plans had been laid to take up law as a profession, but in 1841, he decided on the church. Just previous to this decision he had read Carlyle's French Revolution, and was deeply impressed. Miscellanies and Past and Present placed him under a still deeper debt to Mr. Carlyle, whom he spoke of as "that old Hebrew prophet, who goes to prince and beggar and says, 'If you do this or that, you shall go to Hell'—not the hell that priests talk of, but a hell on this earth." In 1848, he was ordained to the curacy of Eversley in Hampshire. Two years later he married Fanny Grenfell and the two made their home in Eversley. Their residence was maintained at Eversley from that time to his death in 1875, and it would be difficult to find a home where there was more of constant devotion and real affection than in the home established there.

During the events of 1848, Kingsley became deeply interested in the problems of the poor. This interest colored many of his writings and demanded a great part of his time for the rest of his life. It is because of his intense sympathy with the poor and his fiery writings in their behalf, that he is called a Christian Socialist.

From 1860 to 1869, Kingsley was Professor of History at Cambridge. During this period he produced numerous lectures on historical subjects. It was also during this time that the controversy with Mr. Newman occurred, in which controversy Kingsley came out second best. Soon after the resignation of this professorship, Kingsley was appointed to the canonry at Chester, which appointment was exchanged for the canonry at Westminster in 1873.

During the time he was working at Eversley, and during the time he was at Cambridge, he was continually writing poetry and prose. His mind reverted to the scenes of his childhood and he expressed his thoughts in poetry; he viewed with alarm the wrongs and sufferings of the poor and expressed his sympathies for them in tracts and novels; he delved into history for material for historical novels and these novels became outlets for his pent-up moods and feelings.

Kingsley died, January 23, 1875, at Eversley.

## CHAPTER II

WHAT IS ROMANTICISM?  
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Romanticism is a term which does not lend itself easily to a definition - a fact which is clearly shown in the varying views expressed by eminent men of letters. The Romantic Age is the name applied to the literary world of the early nineteenth century, the period immediately following the Neo-classical period.

That there was a marked contrast between the Romantic Age and the Neo-classical period is not disputed. It is a far cry from the practices of Pope to those of Wordsworth. Pope, whose writings embody Neo-classicism, emphasized polish, correctness, and was familiar with classical literature. He wrote with uniformity in verse form and with a limited and universal appeal. He was a vigorous and rigorous self-critic and was able to balance imagination and invention against judgement and criticism. His theory of writing poetry was taken from Aristotle, and his interpretation of the expression "copy nature" was to copy the ancients. In doing this Pope was doing what the other writers of his time were doing. In following the ancients the Neo-classicist had three things in mind: restraint, balance, and proportion. Neo-classicists were afraid of having too much enthusiasm so they curbed the imagination. They gave a great deal of attention to good form and good sense but neglected subject matter. Therefore the age was intellectual, polished, formal, and correct.-1- Such was the age of Pope and the Neo-classicists- an age which is easier to define than the one following.

Wordsworth is not so true an example of the Romantic as Pope is of the Neo-classical. He has been called the true Romanticist, probably because he formulated a set of principles for poetic practices differing from those of Pope. These principles appeared in printed form in the Preface to the Lyrical Ballads. In this preface, Wordsworth proposed to "choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate and describe them throughout, as far as possible, in a

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1. Dr. Johnson, Lives of the Poets.

selection of language really used by men, and at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of the imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature; chiefly, as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement."-2- That Wordsworth did not always follow his own precepts has been proved by his great contemporary, Coleridge, but he did break away from the restraint of the preceding age. His definition of poetry showed a new conception, very different from previous conceptions of poetry. He said, "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings"- a statement that contradicts Pope in his adherence to ancient rules. Wordsworth broke away from traditional practices both by precept and by example, even though his precept and his example are not always one and the same.-3- Neither were the different literary productions of the age the same in every respect.-4-

Nevertheless, the age was one of revolt against the theories and practices of the age of Neoclassicism, and for this reason it is sometimes called the Romantic Revolt.-5- Whether or not there can be a definition comprehensive enough to include the characteristics of the different writers of this period is a subject of controversy at the present time. In the foregoing paragraphs the opinions of different critics or men of letters is given concerning these characteristics, and from these opinions a conclusion is drawn, which, perhaps, is not inclusive of all the turns taken by Romantic writers, but will include those characteristics which have been generally accepted to be representative of the period. At first, however, it may be necessary to give a brief history of the term Romanticism.

The term Romance was first used in the sense of Roman, to designate the language of France from the Latin. Later, it came to mean all those

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2. Wordsworth, Preface to the Lyrical Ballads.
  3. Coleridge, Criticisms.
  4. Cory, Herbert E., "Spenser and Thomson as Romantists" (In Pub. Mod. Lang. Ass'n, XXVI)
  5. Richardson, C. F., A Neglected Aspect of the English Romantic Revolt.



Languages which were derived from the Latin, that is, Spanish, French, and Provencal. During the Middle Ages, tales of chivalry or heroic adventure were very popular in these languages, and these tales became known as Romances.-6-

By the sixteenth century a Romance had come to mean "a fictitious story of adventure of heroism written in prose, in which the incidents were very remote from those of ordinary life." An example of Romance according to this definition is Sir Thomas Mallory's Morte d'Arthur. It will be remembered that Spenser had already appeared at this time and that Shakespeare came during this century, but it is only recently that their writings have been hailed as partly Romantic in character, and the two writers mentioned as fore-runners of the movement which reached its zenith at the beginning of the eighteenth century.-7-

A certain amount of imagination was necessary to construct or rather reconstruct the story of adventure or heroism, therefore the quality of imagination was very early attached to the meaning of the term, Romance. In the beginning of the eighteenth century Addison popularized the adjective, Romantic, a word which was being used by different writers to describe or characterize a fantastic or imaginative prose tale. From the adjective, the noun, Romanticism, was formed and used to indicate the type of literature from which it originated.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century the two terms, Romanticism and Classicism, have been used in contrast, as has been explained in a preceding paragraph, and each term suggests the other as its opposite.-8-

Simonds lists three things as characteristic of the Romantic period in English literature; first, a subjective treatment of subject matter; second, a choice of picturesque material for subject matter; and third, a spirit of reaction against previous methods and conceptions of writing.-9- These three characteristics

6. De Maar, H.G., History of Modern English Romanticism.

7. Op. Cit.

8. Op. Cit.

9. Simonds, "Charles Kingsley" (In A Student's History of English Literature).

are those concurred in by William Dean Phelps, -10- and practically the same as those given by a number of writers. An objection has been made to the last mentioned as a characteristic of any movement, since a "spirit of reaction" is conceded to be necessary to any change from one period to another. -11- The first two characteristics are repeated many times in discussions of the subject. Raleigh adds a little to the above list when he says that the age may be characterized or described as showing a revived feeling for nature, the introduction of exotic methods and models, a renewed interest in Medievalism, and an increased employment of pictorial effects. Bliss Perry also mentions the fact that the cry of Romanticism is "back to nature." -12-

James Russell Lowell, who is not an enthusiast over the Romantic mood of writing, says that Romanticism shows a strong tendency toward eccentricity, toward a deliberate choice of what is subjective, unique, or otherwise remote from normal experience. This opinion is practically the same as that of Irving Babbitt, whose recent controversies with Arthur Lovejoy have been read with no small degree of interest. -13- "Lowell was unsympathetic toward Romanticism," says Harry Hayden Clark, "because to him it represented an escape from life." Lowell's theory about art was that it should be selective, and should carry a universal and representative message. He was not in sympathy with art for art's sake, and he held to the opinion that an imagination that was not drawn back to an ethical center tended toward "art for art's sake." Imagination, then, to Lowell, should go beyond the species to the genus, presenting us with ever lasting types of human nature. The trouble with Wordsworth as he saw it was that he did not have that shaping imagination. Lowell spoke out against the subjectivity and sentimentality of Romanticism as being incompatible with good judgement. He emphasized the fact that character was the only soil in which real mental power can root itself and find sustenance. It should be said of Lowell, however, that he had no objection to Romanticism so long as one considers it recreative or appreciative.

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 10. Phelps, Beginning of the English Romantic Movement.

11. Lovejoy, "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms"

12. Perry, Bliss, A Study of Prose Fiction.

Mr. Babbitt's opposition to Romanticism amounts to the same thing as Lowell's. He was opposed to what he called the Romantic ideal - to merely letting yourself go, to expansion without concentration, to content without form.--15- Arthur Lovejoy, in an answer to a recent article by Mr. Babbitt, intimates that it might have been forgotten by Mr. Babbitt that man has senses and sentiment as well as reason and will, and that there certainly would be no such thing as art if he had not; that a vehicle is not propelled by its brakes though brakes are necessary; and that an "expansive emotion" is a thing to be harnessed, harmonized with the rest of human nature, and set to work at the creation of art and the enrichment of human life." Lovejoy sees three different Romanticisms; one in which nature is superior to art; one in which conscious art is superior to nature; and one in which the standard of art is nature, but nature in the classical sense. These differentiations, or as he calls discriminations, are given from the viewpoint of the philosopher, and take into consideration the literature of the world and not English literature alone.--16-

Herbert E. Cory has enumerated a number of the most commonly accepted types of Romanticism in English literature. "A distinctive feature of the Romanticism of Samuel Taylor Coleridge," he says, "is the passion for mystery, the power of suggestion, the devotion to things that may be real." In Wordsworth it is the intimate relation of man's soul to nature; in Byron, it is the intense subjectivity and the spirit of revolt. Keats sometimes heaps up exquisite details, sometimes he is an idealist, and again he is with Coleridge, as in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci", and "The Eve of St. Agnes." In Shelley one notices a spirit of revolt against the conventions of society, and in Scott, a passion for the grandeur of the past.--17-

Gates tell us that the spirit of the movement is embodied in the Preface to the Lyrical Ballads and that its essence consists in the peculiar redemption of the commonplace in terms of intense

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15. Babbitt, "Schiller and Romanticism" (In Modern Language Notes).

16. Lovejoy, "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms", (In Mod. Lang. Notes, 1922).

17. Cory, "Spenser and Thomson as Romanticists" (In Pub. Mod. Lang. Ass'n, XXVI, 1911).

personal feeling. He believes DeQuincy to be the most representative prose writer because he gives to prose "a new emotional and imaginative scope."-18-

Arthur Symons sees in Romanticism "the awakening of the imagination to a sense of beauty and strangeness in natural things, and in all the impulses of the mind and senses.-19- DeMaar says, "Romantic literature is that which joins a sense of wonder, mystery, and curiosity as well as individuality in form and thought, to ornamental language and technique."-20- To Professor Ker, Romantic implied reminiscence, a dependency upon the past, and he defines Romance as "the sort of imagination that possesses the mystery and spell of everything remote and unattainable."-21-

H.B.Beers has written two volumes on the subject of Romanticism, one dealing with Romanticism in the eighteenth century, the other with the same subject in the nineteenth century. To this author, Romance was the reproduction in modern art and literature of the life and thought of the Middle Ages. He is quoted as an authority on the subject, but many literary critics think his definition too narrow.-22- Watts Dunton coined the expression "A Renaissance of Wonder", which has been often repeated to characterize the period.-23- Gosse says that Romanticism is a system of writing inconsistent with keeping to the facts,-24- while Walter Pater sees in it the "addition of strangeness to beauty."-25-

Paul More places emphasis upon nature in the Romantic writers. To him, Romanticism was the illusion of beholding the infinite within the stream of nature itself instead of apart from it.-26-

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18. Gates, Studies and Appreciations.

19. Symons, The Romantic Movement in English Poetry.

20. DeMaar, History of Modern English Romanticism.

21. Ker, Epic and Romance.

22. Beers, History of Romanticism in Eighteenth Century.

23. Watts-Dunton, Poetry and the Renaissance of Wonder.

24. Gosse, "Romanticism" (In English Literature)

25. Pater, Walter, (Quoted by Gosse in English Literature).

26. More, The Drift of Romanticism.

Brandes names the characteristics of Wordsworth and his contemporaries and adds that those characteristics are modified by certain peculiarly English Characteristics which in turn may be traced back to one original distinctive quality, Naturalism. This, he says, is the strongest tendency, even in the works of Byron and Shelley. Naturalism is so strong that it permeates the writings of every author and the cause of this is the deep English appreciation for the country and for the sea. Wordsworth gives minute details of the hills, the lakes, the rivers, and the people of northern England. Scott gives accurate descriptions. Keats appreciates nature by means of all his senses. And, indeed, all Romantic writers show a deep appreciation of natural things.-27-

Benjamin M. Woodbridge, another writer on Romanticism, says that Romanticism shows restlessness and sentimentality. The Romanticist, says Mr. Woodbridge, believes in the uniqueness of his own misery, in the love of nature for its own sake, and the ability of nature to sympathize with man in his moods and feelings. -28- Thus, again, we have a love of nature listed as a Romantic trait of writing.

Arthur Lovejoy sees a great deal more in the movement than a return to the Middle Ages, but he remarks on the tendency of the Romanticist toward retrospection- toward a looking backward for subject matter, sometimes to the Middle ages.-29-

M. Scheydleur, in a very recent thesis on the subject, "Barres as a Romanticist", states that his (Barres') love of the exotic, "of violent contrast, of ruins, and of decadent life, reveals a strain of extreme Romanticism, examples of which are seen in his portraits of Spanish and Italian cities of which he seems to have discovered the peculiar essence." This love of ruins and of decadent life is particularly characteristic of Scott and all other writers of historical Romances.

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27. Brandes, Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature.

28. Woodbridge, "Romantic Tendencies in the Novels of Abbe Prevost" (In Pub. Mod. Lang. Ass'n, 1911).

29. Lovejoy, "Schiller and the Genesis of Romanticism" (In Modern Language Notes, XXXV, 1920).

Among other reasons for classing Barres as a Romanticist Scheydleur list the following: his personal note and lyrical touch, his love of freedom, his fondness for extraordinary characters, and his craving for enthusiasm and emotional experience. It is stated also in this thesis that Romanticism in art is parallel to relativism in ethics and to individualism or nationalism in society, from which statement a conclusion may be drawn that the writer who stands for individuality of freedom, or who bases his writings on relative instead of universal truths, is a Romantic writer.-30-

A very interesting recent discourse on the subject under discussion may be found in a book entitled Shelley and the Unromantics, by O.W.Campbell, in the chapter entitled, "Some suggestions on the Romantic Revival and its Effects." Here the author makes the usual statement concerning the inadequacy of existing definitions of Romanticism and remarks that if it was a Romantic Age, it was so because of some more fundamental and novel qualities than "curiosity combined with a love of beauty," enthusiasm for the Middle Ages, or a liking for the picturesque and the horrible. These, he says, are only part of the Romantic style, which was dependent upon the writers attitude toward life. This attitude he attributes to a certain faith in man, a mystical faith, perhaps, not depending upon mundane manifestations of his powers, but upon some sense of the inherent greatness of his soul- a hope perhaps that he is more than mortal. Romance may be traced in close association with those twin children of Imagination, Religion and Poetry. The Jewish religion was the first in which we see a spirit of Romance; there was none of it in the Greek. And then came Christ, who taught that all men were divine, and the value of the human went up. Where the Greek hero was great only because of his achievements, the Christian hero was great also because of his power of emotion. Love and hope and faith in the divinity of man was kept alive throughout the Middle Ages, and has made possible the kinds of Romance that exist today.

It can be seen that there is confusion and controversy wherever the subject of Romanticism is being discussed. The question is no nearer solution today than it has ever been. Nevertheless, from the above estimates, a conclusion may be drawn which will include the generally accepted characteristics of the period. These traits are as follows; first, a subjectivity of expression, which means the addition of the personal note, sometimes seen in the manner of describing a landscape as a state of mind, or in the addition of the writer's opinions or prejudices in his works; second, a strong use of imaginative language, as set forth in the favorite theme of Coleridge, "to lend the charms of imagination to the real, and to lend the force of reality to the imaginary;" third, a feeling for nature, which may be expressed in different ways by as many different writers, as Mr. Lovejoy's summary clearly explains; fourth, a looking backward for subject matter—often to the Middle Ages; and fifth, an interest in different forms of writing, springing from a rejection of the old heroic couplet, iambic pentameter lines of the Neo-classical writers.

All of these traits may be found in the writings of Charles Kingsley, some to a greater degree than others. The following chapters are the result of a close examination of his best known works with a view to the pointing out of Romantic tendencies in them.

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## CHAPTER III

## ROMANTIC ELEMENTS IN THE POETRY OF CHARLES KINGSLEY

In this attempt to trace the Romantic elements in the poetry of Charles Kingsley, the poems are taken up in chronological order, except in one or two instances where a similarity exists and two or three poems are placed together because of a similarity in form or meaning, and in the case of his one drama and one hexameter poem, which although not the first poems written, are discussed first apart from the others because of a singular difference in form from the rest of his works.

The drama, The Saint's Tragedy is an account of the life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and is written chiefly in blank verse. St. Elizabeth was a character much admired by Kingsley, presumably, because he shared with her an intense devotion to the poor. In choosing a subject for this poem, Kingsley did as many Romantic writers have done. He turned to the Middle Ages for subject matter, using the entirely authentic story of St. Elizabeth as a basis for his attack on Medieval theology and practices, which he saw in England embodied in the Roman Catholic church. His own personal feelings of resentment against the Romanist attitude toward marriage and celibacy are shown in this poem. As we read we pity the beautiful saint who has given up husband and children to be the "bride of Christ", and is trying to stifle every human emotion, because her father confessor was continually admonishing her against the wickedness of earthly love and devotion.-1- This drama excited a great deal of interest in the literary world in England, though it was fiercely attacked by the high church party. In Germany the poem was read and appreciated. Baron de Bunsen, some years

1. Kingsley, Charles, Poems.



later, expressed his opinion in strong terms when he wrote to Max Muller, "As showing Kingsley's dramatic power I do not hesitate to call 'The Saint's Tragedy' and 'Hypatia', by far the most important and perfect works. In these I find the justification of a hope that Kingsley might continue Shakespeare's historical plays. He can discover in the picture of the historical past the truly human, the deep, the permanent, and he knows how to represent it."-2-

It may be observed that the type of Romanticism found in this poem as well as in other poems of Kingsley's is a sort of "graveyard Romanticism", in which is a tinge of melancholy, a sadness which is characteristic of the poet himself. There seemed to be something seething and boiling in that fiery nature of his which can only be accounted for as one studies his philosophy of life, his ideals, his visions, his sympathies and understanding of all nature. Kingsley as a dreamer, an idealist, thought of three things: life, death, and a future life. This idea is brought out in the song of St. Elizabeth, when she and her husband were first enjoying the ecstasies of their love for each other. It is quoted as follows:

#### Song

Oh, that we two were maying  
Down the stream of the soft Spring breeze;  
Like children with violets playing  
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh, that we two sat dreaming  
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down  
Watching the white mist streaming  
Over river and mead and town.

Oh that we two lay sleeping  
In our nest in the churchyard sod,  
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's  
breast,  
And our souls at home with God.-3-

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2. Kingsley, Fanny E., Letters and Memories.

3. Kingsley, Charles, Poems.

In Act IV, scene IV, of the Saint's Tragedy we find that Elizabeth is asleep and dreams of the angels who

"Warble and flutter and hover and glide,  
 Wafting old sounds to my dreary bedside,  
 Snatches of songs which I used to know  
 When I slept by my nurse, and the swallows  
 Called me at day-dawn from under the eaves.  
 Hark to the, hark to them now-  
 Fluting like woodbirds, tender and low-  
 Cool rustling leaves - tinkling waters -  
 Sheep bells over the lea -  
 In their silver plumes Eden-gales whisper -  
 In their hands, Eden lilies-not for me-not for me."

In the above lines, the first few lines are descriptive of the angels, but the imagery is a little mixed before the close and the reader almost loses connection with the train of thought before the finish. Nevertheless, the language used is chosen for its imaginative effect.

It is needless to say that Kingsley did not continue to write dramas or that his one drama is considered as a little tedious to present day readers. That he did not fulfill the expectations of Baron de Bunsen and produce other dramatic poems is probably due to the versatility of his mind which was constantly turning to new interests.

"Andromeda" has been called the best example of hexameter lines in the English language.-4- It contains a number of classical allusions, but the author has dealt with the subject matter in a Romantic manner. The following descriptive sketch from this poem shows a touch of Romantic imagination in the unusual atmosphere, the feeling of being far away, the mystical choir etc. The poet is not describing actual things as seen in the everyday world of things, but is painting pictures from his own imagination and is including his own emotions with the pictures.

". . . far off, in the heart of the darkness  
 Bright white mists rose slowly; beneath them the  
 wandering ocean  
 Glimmered and glowed to the deepest abyss; and the  
 knees of the maiden

Trembled and sank in her fear, as afar, like a dawn in  
 the midnight,  
 Rose from their sea-weed chambers the choir of the  
 mystical sea-maids."

In the first poem written by Kingsley, which is entitled "Hypothesis Hypochondriacae", evidences are seen of the "graveyard Romanticism", which may be traced all through his poetry. In this poem is a sort of mysticism, resembling Coleridge's treatment of nature, and it contains lines that are suggestive of this poet. The melancholy note so persistent in his poetry can be seen in these lines from *Andromeda*:

"And when the sullen clouds rose thick on high  
 Mountains on mountains rolling - and dark mist  
 Wrapped itself like a shroud around the hilltops,  
 When on her grave, swept by the moaning wind  
 Bending the heather bells. . . "

The lines in this poem which are so plainly suggestive of Coleridge are:

"And then I see all frightful shapes - lank ghosts,  
 Hydras, chimeras, krakens, wastes of land,  
 Herbless and void of living voice - tall mountains,  
 Cleaving the sky with height immeasurable,  
 On which perchance I climb for infinite years.

. . . . .  
 Surely there is no rest on earth for souls  
 Whose dreams are like a madman's."

The above lines show that Kingsley was capable of the wildest kind of imagination. Although this sort of imagery does not appear in all of his poetry, it shows his imaginative temper, and his love of melancholy and the unreal. Indeed, some of the characters in his novels are melancholy types which voice this sentiment in the writer. *Elsley Vavasour* in Two Years Ago is such a type, also, *Eustace Leigh* in Westward Ho. To be sure, this type was not an ideal with Kingsley, but was just the opposite, and he always connected it with weakness and even viciousness. His ideal hero was strong and happy, and a person who enjoyed his earthly existence.

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The ballad of "Trehill Well" was Kingsley's first attempt at this form of writing. It may be said here that although the ballad itself may not be considered a Romantic form of writing, the interest in the ballad, renewed by early Romantic writers, is a proof of the Romantic tendency of any author. In a postscript of a letter written to his friend Ludlow, Kingsley says concerning the ballad: "What I have said of ballads is this: that they must be objective, dealing with facts and not feelings as manifested in actions. The union of the objective ballad or epic with the subjective ode, elegiac and satire, makes the drama. The present age writes subjective ballads and fails of course."-5- "The Weird Lady" is a ballad with material taken from early English history. "The Mango Tree" is a ballad dealing with a story of a woman who is found weeping for her husband and children and whose fancy leads her to believe that it is she who is dead and not they. A poetic touch is given in the last stanza which is unusual in a ballad. It is as follows:

"Thus I am dead, yet cannot die,  
But still within my foolish brain,  
There hangs a pale blue evening sky;  
A furzy craft, a sandy lane."

In "The Knight's Return", the lark "sings high in the dark", echoing in his song the happiness in the young knight's heart as he was returning home from his long wanderings. "The Legend of La Brea" was written as an objection to the destruction of the beautiful tropical birds on Trinidad Island, whose feathers were being used for commercial purposes. Kingsley's deep appreciation for living things and especially for the beautiful caused him to resent useless destruction and brought forth this touching little ballad. "Juventus Mundi" deals with a pretty legend of two young slaves who were beaten by their master and were afterwards transformed into wrens. It contains a delightful imagery.

"Palinodia" comes nearest to a Wordsworthian ecstatic description of any of Kingsley's poems. We are reminded in these lines of the poet's early life where he learned to love and appreciate the beauties of natural scenery. In few of his poems does he allow

himself to become so personal as in certain lines of this poem when he says:

"Winds. . .  
     whose tremulous whispers through the  
     rustling glade  
 Were once to me unearthly tones of love,  
 . . . . .  
 To me alike thy frenzy and thy sleep  
 Have been a deep and breathless joy."

The above lines remind one of the Tintern Abbey poem by Wordsworth and indeed Kingsley had just as deep an appreciation for nature as Wordsworth. His philosophy however went beyond that of the great Romantic poet to the symbolism of nature. He wrote to his wife in 1828: "I feel intensely the weight of your advice to write no more novels. Why should I? I have no more to say. When this is done I must set to and read. The symbolism of nature and the meaning of history must be my studies."

In this symbolism of nature, usually a bird, or some other form of life is chosen to make a comparison with something in the life of man. In the case of the little poem "Twin Stars", the comparison is made between two stars which are seen together in the sky and two people who are closely united on earth. we have the feeling that if the poet had seen two birds at the time he was in this poetic mood that he might have used them as symbols as well. The poet was beginning at this time to see a similarity between man and the whole universe of things, and he chose poetry as his means of expression. "Twin Stars" was written in Germany when Kingsley was on his tour of that country. The two stars represent to the poet himself and his wife, to whom he was always devoted, and the poem closes with the usual suggestion of a future life, thus:

"So we through this world's waning night  
 May hand in hand pursue our way;  
 Shed 'round us order, love, and light,  
 And shine unto that perfect day."

---

An example of poetic imagery is found in the poem called "The Poetry of a Root Crop", where the poet sees the

"Frozen fields that surpliced lie  
Gazing patient at the sky."

"Airly Beacon" is a brief imaginative sketch dealing with the lives of seamen along the coast of Devonshire where Kingsley spent a part of his youth. It has that air of sadness which is in all his sea poems, and it also has that sequence of incidents or word pictures which is characteristic of each of them. A very noticeable Romantic trait in the writings of Kingsley is this "sequence of incidents and situations" which may be noticed in this little poem.-6- Note the Romantic setting. Although nothing is told us of the place, we know that it is secluded, apart from the shires that may be seen in the distance. Then note the action. We have a whole story of Romantic love. From our knowledge of Kingsley's turn of mind and of his imagination, we infer that the husband was one of the seamen of the Devon coast who was lost at sea.

#### Airly Beacon

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Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
Oh, the pleasant sight to see  
Shires and towns from Airly Beacon  
While my love climbed up to me.

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
Oh, the happy hours we lay  
Deep in fern on Airly Beacon  
Courting through the summer's day.

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;  
Oh, the weary haunt for me,  
All alone on Airly Beacon,  
With his baby on my knee.

-----  
"The Three Fishers" and the "Sands of Dee" are in the class of sea poems. A lyrical note is sounded in each of these poems. Also there is a

vividness of description and a selection of language

that carry the message to the reader, enlisting his sympathy for the "men who work, and women who weep". Ruskin has objected to the expression "cruel, crawling foam", but it seems to fit in with the theme here very well. Kingsley has been called a disciple of Ruskin in the matter of descriptive eloquence.—7— As has been stated, Kingsley aimed at objectivity,—8— but the reader may judge if the kind of description found in the two following poems is strictly objective or if it is subjective in giving us a glimpse of the state of mind of the author. Again we have a Devonshire coast scene and events in the lives of the people along this coast, but each time the end is tragic. The poems follow:

### The Three Fishers

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Three fishers went sailing away to the west,  
 Away to the west as the sun went down;  
 Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,  
 And the children stood watching them out of the town;  
 For men must work and women must weep,  
 And there's little to earn and many to keep,  
     Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat in the lighthouse tower,  
 And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;  
 They looked at the squall, and they looked at the  
 shower,  
 And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.  
     But men must work and women must weep,  
 Though storms be sudden and waters deep,  
     And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands  
 In the morning gleam as the tide went down,  
 And the women are weeping and wringing their hands  
 For those who will never come home to the town;  
 For men must work and women must weep,  
 And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;  
 And goodby to the bar and its moaning.

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7. Elton, Oliver, A Survey of English Literature, IV.  
 8. Kingsley, F. E., Letters and Memories, p. 299.

## The Sands of Dee

O Mary, go and call the cattle home,  
 And call the cattle home  
 And call the cattle home  
 Across the sands of Dee;  
 The western wind was wild and dank with foam,  
 And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,  
 And o'er and o'er the sand,  
 And 'round the sand,  
 As far as eye could see.  
 The rolling mist came down and hid the land;  
 And never home came she.

Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair -  
 A tress of golden hair,  
 A drowned maiden's hair,  
 Above the nets at sea?  
 Was never salmon yet that shone so fair  
 Among the stakes of Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,  
 The cruel crawling foam,  
 The cruel hungry foam,  
 To her grave beside the sea;  
 But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home  
 Across the sands of Dee. -9-

The first line of "Elegiacs" portrays the emotion of the poet as he looks out on the beach. It is as follows:

"Wearily stretches the sand to the surge and the surge to the cloudland."

Other expressions in this poem show a subjective attitude on the part of the poet. He speaks of the "sad, quiet, winter", and says, "blossoms would fret me with beauty". The same can be said of "The Tide Rock", which is seen "slowly weeping" as the tide is going down. In "Dartside", the poet tells of the "whispering woodlands". Inanimate objects to him become animate because of his strength of imagination. He has that faculty of inspiring and surrounding sometimes the very simplest words with an "aura" of poetic unfamiliarity,



which thing whosoever possesses, he passes as a poet without further question.-10-

"The Sonnet", written in Germany about the same time as "Twin Stars", is another poem in honor of his wife. It is known that Kingsley's home life was very happy. In "The Sonnet", the nightingale is used as a symbol. In "A Thought From the Rhine", the poet goes back to his old theme of distress because of the conditions existing in the social status of the people of that time. Kingsley championed the cause of the working classes in many of his writings and suffered much criticism and abuse because he dared to raise his voice against oppression and greed. He always faced his adversaries bravely, but it must not be inferred that he did not feel the attacks and misrepresentations very keenly. "In many respects," says Mr. Hughes, "though housed in a strong and vigorous body, his spirit was an exceedingly tender and sensitive one." In the poem mentioned above, the poet uses the eagle as a symbol for the oppressors of the weak. He imagines a better world in which these oppressors, like the eagle watching its prey, will look down and find cultivated gardens in the place of the old haunts where the expected prey was to be captured. In the "Oubit", "Saumon fry", who devour oubits, are compared with those critics who would make their meals on young poets, a touch of sarcasm concerning the severe criticisms of the day.

In "A Parable from Leibig", one is led to believe that the poet's faith is increasing because of his faith in nature. Kingsley became interested in physical science very early and this interest lasted till his death. Much of his agitation for sanitary reform was due to his study of physical science. In 1842, at Eversley, he wrote: "There has always seemed to me something impious in the neglect of personal health, strength, and beauty, which the religious, and sometimes the clergymen of this day affect. It is very often a mere form of laziness. . . I could not do half the good I do here, if it were not for that strength and activity which some consider coarse and degrading."-11- And again he writes, "The great mysticism is the belief which is everyday becoming stronger with me that all symmetrical natural objects, aye, and perhaps all forms, colors, and scents which show organization or arrangement, are types

10. Ward, History of English Literature, XIII. Series,

by F. E. Kingsley)

11. Kingsley, F. E., Letters and Memories.

of some spiritual truth or existence, of a grade between the symbolical type and the mystic type. When I walk the fields I am oppressed every now and then with an innate feeling, that everything I see has a meaning, if I could but understand it. And this feeling of being surrounded with truths which I cannot grasp, amounts to indescribable awe sometimes. . . More and more do I see daily the tremendous truth that all our vaunted intellect is nothing - nothing but a noble mechanism, and that the source of feeling is the soul. This thought begins to explain to me the mysteries of moral responsibilities and moral culture. . ." This extract from his letters partly explains what he had in mind to portray in some of his poetry.-12-

"A Lament" is another poem in which the pictures in each line are so arranged that we notice the "Romantic sequence of incidents" referred to before. In this respect, the poem resembles "Airly Beacon" and "The Three Fishers". The complete picture in each line together with the lyrical note make this a poem not easy to forget.

#### A Lament

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The merry, merry lark was up and singing,  
 And the hare was out and feeding on the lea;  
 And the merry, merry bells below were ringing,  
 When my child's laugh rang through me.

Now the hare is snared and dead beside the road  
 snow-yard  
 And the lark beside the dreary winter sea;  
 And the baby in her cradle in the church-yard  
 Sleeps still till the bell brings me.

---

"A Farewell" is so well known that it needs no explanation. It was written to his youngest child, and has since been set to music and sung.

#### A Farewell

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My fairest child, I have no song to give you;  
 No lark could pipe in skies so dull and gray;  
 Yet, ere we part, one lesson I would leave you,  
 For every day.

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I'll teach you how to sing a clearer carol  
 Than lark who hails the dawn or breezy down;  
 To win yourself a fairer poet's laurel  
 Than Shakespeare's crown.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;  
 Do noble things, not dream them all day long;  
 And so make life, death, and that vast forever,  
 One grand sweet song.

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The songs are widely read that are included in the story of "The Water-babies". They have been called real songs, especially the one beginning with these lines:

"When all the world was young, lads,  
 And all the trees were green;  
 And every goose a swan, lad,  
 And every lass a queen. . . ."  
 The hey for boot and horse, lad,  
 And round the world away;  
 Young blood must have its course, lad,  
 And every dog his day.

The above and other seemingly nonsensical poems are found in many children's classics. They abound in charming phrases and in those verbal inspirations which catch the ear and linger long about the memory. -13- There are fine passages everywhere in Kingsley, but the public has chosen to remember him especially for his songs. -14- who is it that has not read with interest the child poem, "My Little Doll", which has the same lyrical touch as the others?

#### My Little Doll

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I once had a sweet little doll, dears,  
 The prettiest doll in the world;  
 Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,  
 And her hair was so charmingly curled;  
 But I lost my poor little doll, dears,  
 As I played in the heath one day;  
 And I cried for her more than a week, dears,  
 But I never could find where she lay.

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13. Ward, The English Poets, IV, 604.

14. Op. Cit.

I found my poor little doll,dears,  
 As I played in the heath one day:  
 Folks say she is terribly changed,dears,  
 For her paint is all washed away,  
 And her arms trodden off by the cows,dears,  
 And her hair not the least bit curled:  
 Yet for old sakes' sake she is still,dears,  
 The prettiest doll in the world.

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"The Summer Sea" shows so truly that the poet was gifted with a genuine vein of lyric song that it is quoted here also.

The Summer Sea

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Soft,soft winds from out the sweet south sliding,  
 Waft thy silver cloud webs from athwart the  
 summer sea;  
 Thin thin threads of mist on dewey fingers twining  
 Weave a veil of dappled gauze to shade my babe  
 and me.

Deep deep love,within thine own abyss abiding,  
 Pour thyself abroad,O lord,on earth and air and sea;  
 Worn weary hearts within Thy holy temple hiding,  
 Shield from sorrow,sin, and shame my helpless  
 babe and me.

---

"The Tide River",also taken from "Water-babies", is a beautiful little poem for a child classic and has been used much in books of poems for children. The first stanza is as follows:

Clear and Cool,clear and cool,  
 By laughing shallow,and dreaming pool;  
 Cool and clear,cool and clear,  
 By shining shingle,and foaming wear;  
 Under the crag where the ouzel sings,  
 And the ivied wall where the church bell rings,  
 Undefined for the undefined;  
 Play in me,bathe in me,mother and child.

The second stanza begins,"Dank and foul,dank and foul," and the third,"Strong and free,strong and free."

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The ballad, "Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorree", was written at Colorado Springs, Colorado, when the poet was on his tour in the United States, in 1874. He was ill at the time and hurried home to try to regain his health, but died the following year at his home in Eversley.

Kingsley could be hot and crude and violent as in "Alton Lock's Song" and "The Bad Squire"; now mannered and affected, as in "The Red King" and "The Weird Lady"; now human and pathetic, as in the "Last Buccaneer" and "Airly Beacon"; now fierce and random and turbid, as in "Santa Maura" and "The Saint's Tragedy"; now aesthetic, experimental, even imitative, as in "The Longbeard's Saga"; "Earl Haldane's Daughter", and "Andromeda"; now rhetorical and vague and insincere, and now natural, simple, direct, large in handling and earnest in expression, as only true poet can be.-15-

In a letter to his friend, Mr. Ludlow, in 1852, Kingsley wrote: "What you say about my 'ergon' being poetry is quite true. I could not write 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and I can write poetry. . . there is no denying it: I do feel a different being when I get into meter - I feel like an otter in the water, instead of an otter ashore. He can run fast enough ashore, and keep the hounds at a tearing galop, as my legs found this spring in Snowdonia, but when he takes water, then indeed he becomes beautiful, full of divine grace and freedom, and exuberance of power. . . When I have done with "Hypatia" I will write no more novels. I will write poetry, not as a profession, but I will keep myself for it, and I do think I shall do something that will live. I feel my strong faculty is that sense of form, which, till I took to poetry always came out in drawing, but poetry is the true sphere, combining music and painting and history all in one." From this letter we get an idea of the poet's own estimate of himself, and find that he really considered himself more of a poet than a writer of other forms of literature.-16-

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15. Ward, The English Poets, IV, 605.

16. Kingsley, F.E., Letters and Memories, 293.

## CHAPTER IV

ROMANTIC ELEMENTS IN THE PROSE WRITINGS OF  
CHARLES KINGSLEY

Again the versatility of This writer may be seen in the different kinds of prose writings which he produced. As a member of the clergy he was interested in religious polemics; as a historian he produced lectures on historical subjects and delved into the past for the setting and subject matter of his romances; as a statesman and sympathizer with the workingmen of England, he wrote political tracts and newspaper articles demanding reform; and as a student of science and constant observer of nature and natural phenomena, he produced a book which combined with a fairy story his beliefs concerning nature and its relation to human existence. He was a writer of historical romances, sermons, Platonic dialogs, newspaper articles, children's fairy books, scientific manuals, philosophical essays, lectures, extravaganzas, and theological polemics.-1-

Kingsley began writing prose in 1848.

Four years previous he had made the acquaintance of Frederick Denison Maurice, who soon became "the Master" to him and to a band of fellow teachers and workers. Maurice was the political and intellectual leader of a group who championed the cause of the English laboring class, and who set about preaching reform amidst the storm and stress of the middle of the nineteenth century.-2- Hence from his relationship with this group Kingsley was called a "Christian Socialist". He desired reform within the Church and believed that this was the only hope of the English laboring classes. The political events of that memorable year 1848 which shook all Europe to its foundation, stirred his blood, for he was deeply in sympathy with the poverty stricken classes. It was while in this state of mind that he wrote "The Day of the Lord".-2- Tracts were written at this time addressed to the "Workingmen of England", urging them to aim at "something nobler than the charter and dozens of Acts of Parliament" - "to be wise and then

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1. Harrison, Frederick, "Kingsley's place in literature" (In Early Victorian Literature)
  2. Ward, Cambridge History of English Literature, XIII.

you must be free for you will be fit to be free." For the discussion of his political beliefs in the pulpit, he was temporarily interdicted from preaching in London. -3- Nevertheless he continued to write tracts and pamphlets which brought down on him abuse of every sort, but which had no effect upon his actions other than to bring out his assertion of the right of individual judgement so dear to his love of freedom. He was sensitive to criticism all his life but in the case of a strong belief as was his belief in the need of reform at this particular time he allowed no criticism to interfere with his sense of justice. Therefore he continued his writings.-4-

The same year, 1848, Kingsley began working on his first novels. His strong imaginative faculty needed an outlet and he chose the novel for this outlet since at the same time he might be preaching his doctrine of reform through the pages of the novel. The first of these to be planned was Yeast, though Alton Locke was finished a year earlier. Both are novels of purpose in that they are contributions to the solution of England's pressing social problems.

The author's sympathies with the poor, first kindled on his walks to and from King's College when he passed through the alternating slums and the finest squares of London, are expressed in the Autobiography of Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet.-5- The book was refused by his publishers and it is possible that the publication by Chapman and Hall was through the intervention of Thomas Carlyle, who was interested in Kingsley as one of his followers.-6- It might be said here that Kingsley did not adhere to all of Carlyle's teaching, but he was interested in his philosophy and to some extent influenced by it. The reason for the refusal of the publishers to publish Alton Locke was that the book seemed to many to teach a doctrine of heresy and revolution. That the author was not strictly orthodox in the nineteenth century interpretation of the word may be learned by reading the first chapter of the book, which is entitled, "A Poet's Childhood". He has his hero

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3. Ward, Cambridge History of English Literature, XIII.
  4. Op. Cit.
  5. Kingsley, F. E., Letters and Memories.
  6. Ward, Cambridge History of English Literature, XIII:

say, concerning his own childhood and that of his sister: "So our gods, rather, till we were twelve years old, were hell, the rod, the ten commandments, and public opinion." Kingsley's own philosophy, a sort of Romantic philosophy, is expressed in the sentence concerning Alton Locke's mother who "used to beseech God with agonized tears to set her mind at rest by revealing his will towards us." "His will" in this case meant whether the children belonged to the elect who were set apart to be the children of God, or belonged to the great majority of the human race that was damned from the beginning. The sentence referred to reads: "If thou couldst not read the answer, written in every flower and every sunbeam, written in the very fact of our existence here at all, what answer would have sufficed thee?" Alton Locke is similar to Yeast in being an outburst of the author's fierce imagination and intense human sympathy.

Yeast began to appear in Fraser's Magazine in 1848, but was cut short upon the advice of the proprietors of that magazine who took fright at the somewhat radical doctrine it contained, and declined to produce its successor. Yeast is far less successful than Alton Locke. It is weak in plot formation and in character study. The writer's sympathy with the poor and his belief in the urgent need of reform stand out as the main topic under discussion in the book. There are many fine descriptive sketches in this volume. Because of certain character drawings in Yeast and in Alton Locke, the name "muscular Christianity" was applied to the ideas of Christianity to which Kingsley held. One critic writes, "The incessant excitement of Kingsley, though romantic and attractive in many ways, was a great deal more like Nervous Christianity than Muscular Christianity." -7- Both books mentioned above were appreciated by a certain class of readers at that time but contain little of interest to present day readers.

In 1853, Hypatia appeared and it is on this novel that a great deal of the author's fame rests. Hypatia is romantic in its dealing with the history of the Christian church in Rome during the fifth century, when the ideals of Christianity were distorted by some of the church leaders and the monks. Hypatia, herself,



was the leader of the pagan group of philosophers in Alexandria in the fifth century. Philammon was a young monk who spent his early life out on the desert in the laura with hermit monks receiving instructions from Synesius, the wisest of these monks. When he expressed his desire to Synesius that he would some day see Rome, he was permitted to go but was warned of the evils of that city and of the temptations that would come to him there. Once in Rome, Philammon found confusing conditions. Jews and Christians were aligned against each other and frequently resorted to mob practices in their thirst for revenge. Hypatia was in the height of her glory as leader of the pagan philosophers. She was a beautiful, intellectual character, much to be admired for her intellect and independence. She claimed to draw her inspiration from the gods. A mutual attraction between Philammon and Hypatia led to a more intimate relationship, in which Hypatia as teacher desired to convert the young handsome monk to her own philosophy. Already the evils practiced by those of the Christian faith in the name of Christianity led Philammon to doubts, but he remained true to his own idea of Christianity, as he had learned from Synesius. Hypatia finally came to suffer torturing doubts as to the divine inspiration of her own philosophy. A sudden prejudice arose against her and she was captured and put to a cruel and shameful death by a mob of Christian monks. Philammon learned that he was a Greek who had been captured during infancy and sold as a slave. He learned that he had a sister and after searching a long time found her. His would have been a happier life, however, if he had not found her, since she was a captive and paramour of the leader of the Goths who lived in the City. Philammon rescued her from her Gothic lover and persuaded her to go with him to the desert to do penance there for their sins. There, the sister remained apart from every one. Philammon prayed for two women, "one a harlot, the other a pagan." Their death together on the mountain top is a matter of history.

The pictures which Kingsley paints for us in this novel are extremely interesting. His sketch of Philammon in the desert at the beginning of the story is particularly brilliant. It runs as follows:

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"In the four hundred and thirteenth year of the Christian era, some three hundred miles above Alexandria, the young monk Philammon was sitting on the edge of a low range of inland cliffs, crested with drifting sand. Behind him, the desert sand waste stretched, lifeless, interminable, reflecting its lurid glare on the horizon of the cloudless vault of blue. At his feet, the sand dripped and trickled, in yellow rivulets, from crack and ledge to ledge, or whirled past him in tiny jets of yellow smoke, before the fitful summer airs. Here and there, upon the face of the cliffs which walled in the opposite side of the narrow glen below, were cavernous tombs, huge old quarries, with obelisks and half-cut pillars, standing as the workmen had left them hundreds of years before; the sand was slipping down and piling up around them; their heads were frosted with arid snow; everywhere was silence, desolation - the grave of a dead nation in a dying land. And there he sat musing above it all, full of life and youth and health and beauty - a young apollo of the desert. His only clothing was a ragged sheepskin, bound with a leathern girdle. His long black locks, unshorn from childhood, waved and glistened in the sun; a rich dark down on cheek and chin showed the spring of healthful manhood; his hard hands and sinewy sunburnt limbs told of labor and endurance; his flashing eyes and beetling brow, of daring, fancy, passion, thought, which had no sphere of action in such a place. What did this glorious young humanity alone among the tombs?"

Another description of merit in this book is the sunrise scene on the desert, a part of which is quoted below:

"As he spoke, a long arrow of level light flashed down the gorge from crag to crag, awakening every crack and slab to vividness and life. The great crimson sun swiftly through the dim night-mist of the desert, and as he poured his glory down the glen, the haze rose in threads and plumes, and vanished, leaving the stream to sparkle around the rocks, like the living twinkling eye of the whole scene. Swallows flashed by hundreds out of the cliffs, and began their air-dance for the day; . . ." This is the type of romantic description which Kingsley is particularly adept in painting. So many of his writings are colored with just such scenes as this. He seems to have the power to look upon a scene as a

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painter would look upon it, first, as a whole, then as a collection of details which he could describe vividly in their relation to the romantic whole. His reconstruction of the city of Alexandria, of its buildings, its markets, its street scenes, and especially its mobs of Christians or Jews or Goths show a deep interest in the long forgotten past, and though they may not be accurate in every detail, yet depict the life of the times in a general way. And so vividly are these scenes impressed upon our minds that we find ourselves in the same electric atmosphere of excitement that Kingsley kept himself in. He said he wrote this book in his heart's blood, and there is some truth in the statement, says one critic.-8-

Much has been said of Hypatia. C.Weygandt, in his recent book, A Study of the English Novel, says, "Hypatia admits Kingsley to the company of the Romantics." Frederick Harrison in Early Victorian Literature states that Hypatia is the best conceived of all Kingsley's works. Saintsbury tells us that "Some put Hypatia at the head of his works." Chesterton admits that there are some genuinely eloquent things in the novel, but he thinks the author does not know how to convey the atmosphere of sectarian excitement in which he always placed himself. Symonds describes Hypatia as being a "fascinating narrative of conflict between Christian and Greek philosophy of the fifth century."-9- The adverse criticism of the novel was that it is not true to the facts of history and that it is biased from a religious standpoint.-10- In answer to the first, it may be stated that even Scott did not remain true to facts in his historical novels, but this fact does not prevent his novels from being great as literature.-11- Kingsley did, however, claim to be true to fact in his writings and no doubt did a great deal of research before writing the historical romances. In answer to the second, it is true that a certain antagonism may be noticed in Kingsley's denunciation of the practices of the Christian Church at that time, and this fact coupled with the fact that Kingsley was very much prejudiced against the Roman church, leads us to believe that the work was written to carry on the controversies of the earlier and later Christianity. There is no doubt that

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8. Chesterton, The Victorian Age in Literature, p.135.

9. Symonds, A History of English Literature.

10. Burton, Masters of the English Novel.

11. Perry, A Study of Prose Fiction.

Kingsley made some of his characters a mouthpiece for his own beliefs and prejudices, and that is to be expected from a writer of political novels. The fact that Kingsley had unusually strong sympathies and was of a fiery temper causes these prejudices to stand out in his novels. The sub-title of Hypatia is New Foes With an Old Face. This can be interpreted in no other way than as a proof that the novel was meant partly as a controversial work.

Westward Ho shares with Hypatia the merit of being a successful historical romance. It has been classed as a sea novel.--12-- It contains wonderful descriptions of the Devonshire coast scenery that Kingsley knew and loved and also of West Indian and tropical scenery which he loved but knew only from a secondary source. Westward Ho is a narrative of the "Voyages and Adventures of Sir Amyas Leigh, Knight." The hero is a young Englishman who longs for the sea and is at last permitted to join a group of adventurers on a trip to the New World. The fictitious part of the story describes a long search for the heroine who has been taken from England to the New World by a Spanish gentleman soldier. The hero's hatred for the Spanish is portrayed with interest, but a moral turn to the story occurs when he, during that great battle of the Armada, learns the good points of the Spanish Don's character. After being blinded by a stroke of lightning in the great storm on the waters, he returns home to marry the little half-Spanish girl who has been brought home from South America and who has been living with his mother. The historical part of the story is based upon Drake's famous voyage around the world, on the Spanish invasion of Ireland, on the ill-fated expedition of Gilbert to Newfoundland, and on the destruction of the Spanish Armada in the Channel. The novel is, as the author admits, a sanguinary book including many of bloody exploits of the Elizabethan worthies. "It is in memory of these men," says Kingsley, "their voyages and their battles, their faith and their valor, their heroic lives and no less heroic deaths, that I write this book; and if now and then I shall seem to warm into a style somewhat too stilted and pompous, let me be excused for my subjects' sake, fit rather to have been sung than

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said, and to have been proclaimed to all true English hearts, not as a novel but as an epic (which some man may yet gird himself to write), the same great message which the songs of Troy, and the Persians Wars, and the trophies of Marathon and Salamis, spoke to the hearts of all true Greeks of old." The novel begins with a beautiful description:

"All who have traveled through the delicious scenery of North Devon must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upward from its broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old bridge where salmon wait for autumn floods, toward the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town, the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower, and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls, and fertile squares of red and green, will they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sand-hills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow toward the broad surges of the bar, and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell." Another scene selected at random runs thus: "It was a glorious sight upon a glorious day. To the northward the glens rushed down toward the cliff, crowned with grey crags, and carpeted with purple heather and green fern; and from their feet stretched away to the westward the sapphire rollers of the vast Atlantic, crowned with a thousand crests of flying foam."

Westward Ho is near Scott, but even Scott has not painted landscapes in a more vivid fashion than Kingsley. -13- Saintsbury calls this novel one of the most brightly colored of historical novels. Gosse says that Hypatia and Westward Ho are as fresh as ever. Drinkwater classes Westward Ho as one of the great English novels of adventure. Tuckerman seems to think that although it aimed at describing the time of Elizabeth it resembled more closely the time of Cromwell. -14- Chesterton says: "Kingsley's best books may be called boys' books. There is a real though a juvenile poetry in Westward Ho and though that narrative, historically considered is very much of a lie, it is a good, thundering honest lie." -15-

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13. Holliday, English Fiction.

14. Tuckerman, History of English Prose.

15. Chesterton, The Victorian Age in Literature.

C. Weygandt mentions Westward Ho in his criticism of Farina by George Meredith, when he says: "Farina exults in the beauty of landscape and the German Romanticism that Meredith grew to know in his schooldays on the Rhine, but it at the same time satirizes certain aspects of romance with which Kingsley, for one, had been pre-occupied, particularly in Westward Ho." -16- The defects of Westward Ho are those of Hypatia. This novel is named by Long "his best known work". It continues to be read as a story of adventure and picture of the life of the Elizabethans.

Two Years Ago is interesting reading as a story but it has some of the characteristics of a sermon and some of a pamphlet. There is a great deal of the emphasis on reform found in his political works. The two redeeming features of the work considered as literature are the vivid picturesqueness of the writing and the character drawing found in it. The first may be seen in passages of pure description which call to mind the artistic temperament of the author and his passion for nature which has been termed "a sort of intoxication, a fevered ecstasy." -17- The young hero, Tom Thurnall, is a splendid example of character drawing. He is the type of muscular Christianity so much admired by the author. He possesses a strength of character and a physical strength, an optimistic view of life, a keen interest in every living thing, and above all and interest in people which made him want to give his time in teaching them how to live. It is evident that Kingsley has put his own ideals into this character. Tom preaches sanitary reform in a small village but is laughed at by the villagers who do not consider it worth the time and energy to "clean up". An epidemic of cholera proves that Tom was right, and Tom and the little schoolmistress labor night and day nursing the increasing number of victims of this dreaded disease. After a series of incidents the hero and the schoolmistress meet in his father's house to "live happily ever after." This is the fictitious part of the story. Kingsley took some of the incidents from fact, the epidemic of cholera, for one. He had a passion for sanitary reform and preached it in his parish and he was glad to preach his doctrines also in his novels.

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 16. Weygandt, A Century of the English.

17. Dawson, Makers of English Fiction.

Two Years Ago contains the same kind of vivid scene painting which characterize Kingsley's other novels. An example is:

"Nearer again, long lines of flat tide-rock, glittering and quivering in the heat, sloped gradually under the waves, till they ended in half-sunken beds of olive oar-weed, which bent their tangled stems into a hundred graceful curves, and swayed to and fro slowly and sleepily. The low swell slid whispering among their floating palms, and slipped on toward the cavern's mouth, as if asking wistfully when it would be time for it to return to that cool shade, and hide from all the blinding blaze outside." Much more vivid, however, is the description of the storm as it appeared to the half-crazed Elsey Vavasour in his flight up the side of the mountain impelled by his own weak and wayward emotions. This character is the very antithesis of strength. It has been said that no other writer has brought so vividly before the reader the faults which Kingsley, "with the spasmodics in mind", has attributed to his Alton Lockes and his Elsey Vavasours. -18- The chapter in Two Years Ago entitled, Nature's Melodrama, contains the following description of the storm:

"Terrible were those rocks below; and ten times more terrible as seen through the lurid glow of his distempered brain. All the weird peaks and slabs seemed pointing up at him: sharp-toothed jaws gaped upward-tongues hissed upward-monstrous snake-heads peered upwards out of cracks and caves. . . The next moment all was dark again, but the images which had been called up remained and fastened on his brain and grew there."

Two Years Ago does not rank with Hypatia and Westward Ho. It is rather a social study or problem novel. -19-

The Heroes, or Greek Fairy Tales for my Children, published in 1856, has been widely read as a child classic, and no children's library is complete without this book.

The Waterbabies, or A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby, has been called an immortal bit of fun and a fantastic bit of nonsense. It is a fascinating story of a chimney sweep, which mothers read to their children at bedtime, - to the great delight of the round-eyed

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18. Ward, History of English Literature.  
19. Long, History of English Literature.

little listeners.—20— Tom, the little chimney sweep, ran away from his hardhearted master, Grimes, and, though he was chased by the whole household of Sir John Harthover, escaped over the fell and into the valley below. The next day his "shell" was found by the side of the brook and it was supposed that he was drowned. As a matter of fact he was not drowned but was turned into a waterbaby by some kind fairies, and he was having a happy time playing with all the water creatures and learning the life of his new environment. He has many thrilling adventures in the water with the fishes, with sea-creatures of every kind, the fairies with whom he played, and with the other waterbabies who came to be his playfellows. Not only children but grownups can experience real thrills in reading this story, which is sprinkled throughout with the author's philosophy of life. Kingsley wrote the story for his little daughter but he succeeded so well that it is today a child classic.

Hereward, the Wake, another historical romance, was written in 1856. It is a portrayal of early English life. It will be remembered that a part of the early life of Kingsley was spent in the fens of South Devon where his father was vicar. While Kingsley was professor of modern history at Cambridge, his old love for the fens returned, and though thirty years had changed their appearance, or the works of draining and diking had destroyed them, he reconstructed them in his own vivid imagination and left a complete picture of their appearance as he had known them. The story deals with deeds and adventures during the Norman Conquest. Hereward, the Wake, as a historical character, was the last man of note to hold out against the Norman. The chapter on the fens contains this paragraph:

"Dark and sad were those short autumn days, when all the distances were shut off, and the air choked with foul brown fog and drenching rains from off the eastern sea; and pleasant the bursting forth of the keen northeast wind, with all its whirling snowstorms. For though it sent men hurrying out into the storm, to drive the cattle in from the fen, and lift the sheep out of the snow-wreaths, and now and then never to return, lost in mist and mire, and ice and snow; yet all knew that after the snow would come the keen frost and



bright sun and cloudless blue sky, and the fenman's yearly holiday, when work being impossible, all gave themselves up to play, and swarmed upon the ice on skates and sleds, to run races, township against township, or visit old friends full forty miles away; and met everywhere faces as bright and ruddy as their own, cheered by the keen wine of that dry and bracing forest. Such was the fenland. . ."

Kingsley was fond of eulogizing the "Keen north-east wind". Strange to say, his own death was hastened by exposure in the northeast wind, about which he had written so many beautiful passages.

Hereward, the Wake is romantic in its setting and in the fact that its characters are taken from history. It has never received the attention of readers as have Westward Ho and Hypatia.

The series of Lectures written by Kingsley while he held the chair of history at Cambridge, receive but little mention today. Charles Kingsley was not suited to the duties and responsibilities of his office as professor of modern history. He devoted the best of his powers to his task and among other things did quicken the interest of his hearers in historical subjects. Neither are his Village Sermons of much general interest, but they represent one side of his nature and deserve mention among his prose works.

Among the writings which testify to his love for natural scenery and its associations are the Prose Idylls. These include descriptions of the fens made famous in Hereward, the Wake, and descriptions of the Pyrenees mountains. At Last is a similar work. It is descriptive of West Indian scenery and tells the story of the author's longing to see the country of the West Indies, about which he had learned from his mother, and of his final visit to these islands. In one of these works he mentioned the "fragrant snow of blossoms" in the tropics, which Cross says is particularly poetic and typical of the author's method of writing. -21- This expression of Kingsley's has been compared to realistic expressions of Charles Reade, his contemporary, with the result that Kingsley has been shown to be of a more poetic temperament and less of a realist than Reade.

Hereward, the Wake was the last work of any consequence in prose and as stated before it failed to interest readers as the two previous attempts at historical romance. It is a matter of speculation

as to how Kingsley might have ranked as a writer, had he turned his attention wholly to historical romances. Much of his time was taken up in advocating reforms or in writing pamphlets for the workmen whom he considered to be cruelly mistreated under the then existing conditions. Henry Craik says, "The merits of Kingsley as a writer, and especially as a writer of fiction, are so vivid, so various, and so unquestionable, by any sound and dispassionate criticism."<sup>22</sup> Lewis Melville says that Kingsley's poetry has never made the mark achieved by his romances. <sup>-23-</sup> Oliver Elton says that Kingsley in the matter of descriptive eloquence is "a disciple, though no mere disciple of Ruskin; and Ruskin, in his earlier writing, is often not transparent at all, but distracts us by his eloquence from the thing seen." Certain it is that Kingsley was eloquent in the matter of description in all of his novels.

Earnest Bernbaum in a recent thesis on the subject, "The views of the great critics on the historical novel," has this significant statement: "The significance of the historical novel may be summarily suggested by calling the roll of its greatest masters: Scott and Manzoni, Thackeray, Kingsley, and Reade, etc."

It is certain that some of Kingsley's prose has a high rank and that it contains many examples of colorful, fanciful, and imaginative description not excelled by many writers. Kingsley will long be remembered as a writer of historical romances.

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22. Craik, History of English Literature.

23. Elton, A Survey of English Literature.

## CHAPTER V

### CHARLES KINGSLEY IN RELATION TO THE AGE IN WHICH HE LIVED AND IN RELATION TO DIFFERENT LITERARY MOVEMENTS.

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It might be well to note the position of Charles Kingsley in regard to his own age and to consider some of the most important literary tendencies of this period. Kingsley was born in the year 1819 and died in 1875. His first poems were written in the decade 1830-40. His writings continued until the time of his death. Thus it can be seen that he began his writings at the close of the age designated as the Romantic Age but produced most of them during the Victorian Age. To understand a writer thoroughly, he must be studied in relation to the age in which he lived. A brief summary of these two periods is given below.

The Romantic Age in literature, as stated in a previous chapter, began as a protest against the formalism of the Age of Dryden, Pope, and Johnson. The first noteworthy poem of the romantic revival was "The Seasons" by James Thomson. This poem was written about 1730. After this the poems and the poets increased steadily in number and importance till, in the age of Wordsworth and Scott, the spirit of Romanticism dominated our literature more completely than Classicism had ever done. Victor Hugo calls this Romantic movement "liberalism in literature." Numerous definitions of the age are found in Chapter II of this volume. Long in his History of English Literature sums up the characteristics of the period as follows: "There are various other characteristics of Romanticism, but these six - the protest against the bondage of rules, the return to nature and the human heart, the interest in old sagas and medieval romances as suggestive of a heroic age, the sympathy for the toilers of the world, the emphasis upon individual genius, and the return to Milton and the Elizabethans, instead of to Pope and Dryden, for literary models - are the most noticeable and the most interesting. This summary is very much the same as

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the one given in the chapter on "What is Romanticism".

-1- The writings of the period reflect the political turmoil of the times and a new creative spirit was developed and showed itself chiefly in the poetry of such writers as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, and in the prose of Scott, Jane Austin, Lamb, and DeQuincey. In the freedom of expression of this period a new impetus was given toward individualism, humanitarianism, imagination in literature, nature, mysticism, and a study of the Medieval past. These tendencies in literature were at their highest point during the early part of the nineteenth century when the above named authors were at the pinnacle of their fame and producing their best works. (Toward the middle of the century, after the accession of Victoria to the throne of England, a reaction set in in the field of literature. Thus a new age was ushered in which is called the Victorian Age of English literature. The period lasts roughly from 1850-1900.

This reaction might be called a reaction against the form of Romanticism seen in the writings of the Greater Romantic poets and a placing of emphasis on other forms of Romanticism. Wilson Follett would have us believe that even realism has a direct connection with romance.

Be that as it may, the middle of the nineteenth century found many interests abroad in the field. Democracy, social unrest, the ideal of peace, idealism, humanitarianism, and an interest in ethics in general. The age is remarkable for the growth of democracy following the Reform Bill of 1832. There was much social unrest especially among the laboring classes and a demand on all sides for reform. Because it is an age of democracy and education it is an age of comparative peace. Rapid progress was made in the study of arts and sciences and the industrial achievements were vast. These things are reflected in the life and literature of the people. A departure seems to have been taken from the purely artistic standard, of art for art's sake, and to be actuated by a definite moral purpose.

-2- There is a faith and a definite moral purpose in the writings of this period. Also there is a definite trend toward realism, and a search for the underlying

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1. Long, History of English Literature.
  2. Op. Cit.

truths of human life. Most of the novels of this period break away from the romanticism of Scott and deals with human life as it is and as it ought to be. Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, are names familiar to every reader. Great essayist appeared upon the scene, such as Macaulay, Carlyle, and Ruskin and leave us with a greater faith in humanity. The literature as a whole was very close to daily life, reflecting its practical problems and interests. Nearly all writers of the period are moral teachers. Science exerts a powerful influence emphasizing truth as a fundamental law of the universe and giving a new view of life in the principle of growth or development from simple to complex forms. Nearly all the writers also exalt a purely idealistic conception of life notwithstanding the fact that the age has been classed as materialistic.

Realism, the stern endeavor to keep the imagination in harmony with the actual, had dominated the writings of Jane Austin, and was again revived in the novels of Thackeray, Dickens and others. Humanitarianism, an interest in humanity, in the life and struggles of people, may be said to have begun with Romanticism, and was well on its way as a movement by the first reform bill of 1832. Individualism developed into a desire for freedom and culminated in the rise of democracy in politics. Sentimentalism has been variously defined.—3— It deals with the human emotions in literature but as a philosophy it is the doctrine of the innate goodness of man. The idealist seeks to embody the inner life in art, with a direct or implied moral purpose. His theme is the worth of our thoughts, imaginings, affections, and religious instincts; the need of a trust in our fellow men, a faith in the final outcome of human endeavor, and a belief in immortality. Idealism came to mean almost the same thing as Romanticism though there is much more feeling connected with the latter.

Kingsley was not a realist in the strict sense of the word. It is true that he aimed in some of his writings to portray the actual life of the people of his time, and he did this, with fiery indignation against the existing social evils. To some extent he was a realist in doing this but his prejudices were too strong and his imagination too great for him to give a true account of all life, with any degree of

rationalism. Therefore, though there are certain realistic tendencies in his works, no critic would call Charles Kingsley a true realist. Charles Reade, a contemporary, in writing about Australia, takes pains to inform his audience that in that country, "the flowers make a point of not smelling, and the bushes that nobody expects to smell or wants to smell, they smell lovely." How different from this matter of fact, blunt way of expression to the more romantic description which Kingsley makes of the Tropics, when he speaks of the "fragrant snow of blossoms in the Tropics." -4- The realistic tendency is clearly more noticeable and better illustrated in the writings of Reade than in Kingsley's, where the descriptions are more imaginative and colorful.

The humanitarian motive was strong in Kingsley's writings. Kingsley was a "Christian Socialist, a believer in muscular Christianity, and belonged to that group of reformers headed by the Rev. Denison Maurice. It was this group that Chesterton referred to as trying to bring about a new romanticism, a Protestant romanticism.-5- Kingsley, no doubt, came in contact with just such people in his parish as he has described for us in his novels of purpose, Alton Locke, Yeast, and Two Years Ago, and his interests along humanitarian lines were quickened because he came into close contact with the conditions of the times. He gave much of his time to work among the poor and to teaching the children of his parish. He did hard manual labor in connection with his other duties, building up a run down parish into a modern habitation. His work in Eversley was of a very commendable sort, for it is known that when he went to Eversley, the spiritual life of the church was at a very low ebb, and that his work there consisted of establishing schools, preaching sanitary reform, doing any kind of physical labor that needed to be done, besides carrying the necessary work of a rector in his parish. Sometimes he even worked among his people when he was physically unable to do so, but his labors were appreciated and he ingratiated himself into the hearts of his people so that he was as loved and respected as was his father on the coast of Devonshire years before. Poor laws, Reform bills, etc. were the topics of the day. Kingsley was a political as well as a social leader. He knew the needs of the poor from intimate contact and it is no wonder that he

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4. Cross, The Development of the English Novel.

5. Chesterton, The Victorian Age.

was impatient for reforms which were so badly needed.

The writer of the historical novels had a purpose in view, perhaps, other than to portray the grandeur, the struggles, and the great controversies of a past age, but that purpose could not by any use of the imagination be called humanitarian. The political tracts written by Kingsley were prompted by this purpose, as well as parts of Alton Locke, Yeast, and Two Years Ago, but not so with either his historical novels or of much of his poetry.

Sentimentalism, or the doctrine of the innate goodness of man or human nature had a place in the writings of Kingsley, but here again his strong prejudices keep him from seeing good in every one he meets, and we find a few very black characters in his works, among them some of the leaders of the church in the fifth century in the novel Hypatia.

Kingsley comes near to being an idealist in some of his works; for instance, in Yeast, Two Years Ago; and in that group of poems in which he shows his faith in man and in a future life. Sometimes this theory of idealism is set forth in all its forms, but at times Kingsley sees only the sorrowful actualities of life. He paints these vividly with his brush, at times, without giving any conclusion to assure us of his faith in man or in nature. This is the case in the poems, Airly Beacon, The Three Fishers, and other sea poems. In these he is in no sense an idealist, but a Romanticist who exaggerates one phase of human life without tempering his viewpoint with any sort of rationalism.

Opinions differ as to the greatness of Kingsley's works or as to the place which the author himself should occupy in the field of literature. We find one author who says that he will probably be remembered for works which may be classed as novels of purpose and for a few beautiful ballads, and some short snatches of lyric verse, rather than for his lectures on historical subjects, or for his historical novels. -6- Another writer says that interested as he was in the social upheavals of his day, and realistic and vigorous as were his descriptions of the miseries of the toilers; he gained more lasting fame by the mingling of history and realism found in his two novels,

Hypatia and Westward Ho. Still another view is illustrated in the opinion of William Dean Howells who says that Kingsley is a true poet in the manner of handling subject matter. One recent writer maintains that Kingsley is being resurrected as a poet today.--7--  
 Masson says: "In Mr. Kingsley's bold descriptions of scenery, heroic and impassioned conceptions of character, and the romantic sequence of incidents and situations, there is as marked an inroad as has been made in recent prose fiction into the peculiar domain of the poet."

In the above opinions of eminent critics, it is evident to the reader that Kingsley's art is varied and that the place of this writer has not been firmly fixed. First, he is to be remembered more especially as a writer of novels of purpose, as Alton Locke, Yeast, and Two Years Ago. Next, he is more famous because of his historical novels, which are Hypatia, Westward Ho, and Hereward, the Wake; and lastly, he is a true poet, and is being resurrected as such. There are a greater number, probably, who support the second view than the other two combined, though not a view authors mention the lyric poems as being among his best works. Kingsley, as a man, was keenly interested in the problems of the day and was a leader of men. Because of his varied interests, he was able to write on different subjects.

We have in Kingsley, a man who, though he may be as Mr. Dawson says, "the product of circumstances, the interpreter of tendencies, the voice of a movement," yet has many individual characteristics that make him an interesting figure in the literary world. Among these individual characteristics are those which show his tendencies toward Romanticism, the subjectivity or personal note that colors his writings, the deep imaginative power behind his writings, the love and appreciation he had for nature and the manner in which he linked all life, the reverting to history for subject matter, and lastly, the variety of his literary productions.

Much more might be said concerning these points and concerning the writer of these varied works, but it may be sufficient to say that, with Kingsley, life and works are one. If he includes the personal note in his writings, it was not from a preconceived aim, but



from a deep conviction and strong emotions of the author. Kingsley's aim was to be objective in the poems which he wrote, especially. If his writings are highly colored, "many colored," by strong imaginative language, the reason may be found in his own keen appreciation of life and nature. His treatment of nature, though differing from that of any number of so-called Romantic writers, is nevertheless indicative of as great a love for natural phenomena, and grew with and out of his philosophy that life is a great miracle, and that human nature is closely akin to plant life and to other animal life. In this connection however, he never forgot the divinity of man. Rather, he looked for the divine in all living things. In his return to history for subject matter, he may have received the idea from Scott, but his direct productions of historical romances grew out of his historical research which he started when he was professor of modern history at Cambridge. The various forms of literature in which he was interested are due to the variety of interests to which he was attached. He turned from one form of writing to another as suited his fancy. No love for fame or pecuniary gain prompted him in his work, but he was pushed forward by the crying needs of the times and by the strong impulses of his own genius.

As an illustration of the strong faith in which he lived, this paragraph is quoted from Letters and Memories. When asked if he thought it cowardly for a poor soul, who had been encompassed with such protecting love as his, to tremble on the Brink of the dark river alone— to shrink from leaving husband, children — the love that had made life blessed and real and full for so many years — and to go alone into the unknown: "Cowardly," he said, "don't you think I would rather some one put a pistol to my head than lie on that bed there waiting? But," he added, "it is not darkness you are going to, for God is light. It is not lonely, for Christ is with you. It is not an unknown country, for Christ is there." When Kingsley was on his deathbed, his favorite poetry was read to him, Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality," Milton's magnificent ode to "Time", Matthew Arnold's "Buried Life", and certain passages from Shakespeare. It was such

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literature as this that helped him to construct his own philosophy of life and inspired him to write.

Kingsley did not belong exclusively to any age. He possessed the characteristics named above, characteristics which belong partly to the Age of Romanticism and to the Age called the "Victorian Age." Therefore, though not in the strictest sense of the word a Romanticist, he is neither in the strict sense a Victorian writer. His Romantic traits are sufficiently noticeable for him to be considered as a Romanticist, and this we have tried to do in this brief study.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES KINGSLEY

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The following bibliography of Charles Kingsley is included in this volume as a contribution to that particular field of study. So far as the writer has been able to learn, no bibliography of this author has been compiled previous to this time.

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