

**THE PRELUDE: OR, GROWTH
OF A POET'S MIND.
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL
POEM. [NEW-YORK-1850]**

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The Prelude: Or, Growth of a Poet's Mind. An Autobiographical Poem. [New-York-1850] by
William Wordsworth

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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An Autobiographical Poem.

BY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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NEW-YORK:

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GEO. S. APPLETON, 164 CHESNUT ST.

1850.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Poem was commenced in the beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are described by the Author in his Preface to the *Excursion*, first published in 1814, where he thus speaks:—

“ Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such an employment.

“ As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them.

“ That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the author's intel-

lect is deeply indebted, has been long finished ; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the 'Recluse;' as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory Poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labor which he had proposed to himself ; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic Church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present poem was intended to be introductory to the RECLUSE, and that the RECLUSE, if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone, viz., the EXCURSION, was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

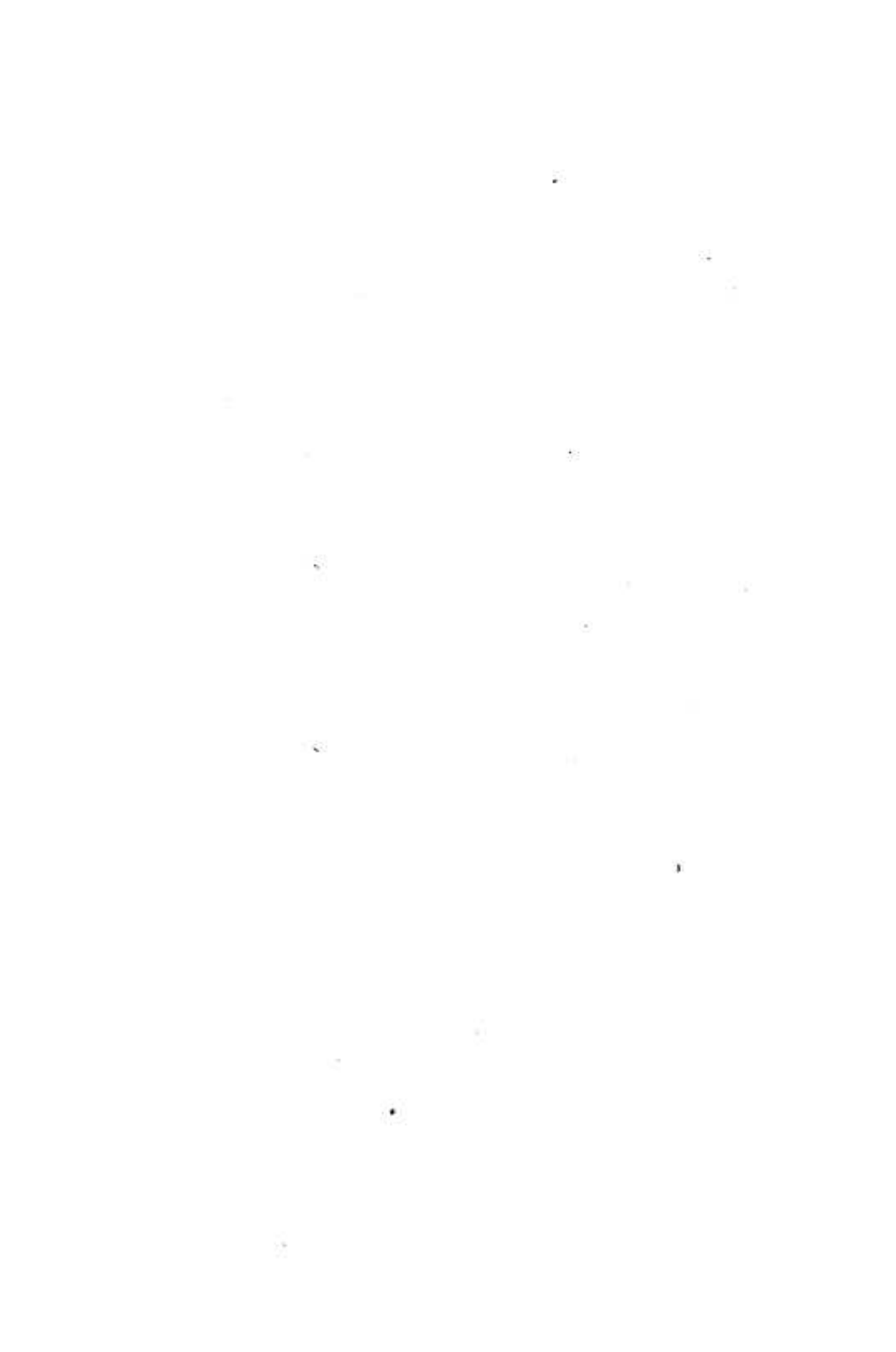
The First Book of the First Part of the RECLUSE still remains in manuscript; but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the EXCURSION.

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings, on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country) are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the "Sibylline Leaves," p. 197, ed. 1817, or "Poetical Works, by S. T. Coleridge," vol. i., p. 206.

RYDÄL MOUNT,

July 13th, 1850.



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