

**Charles Lamb's Sensibilities / Charles Lamb as a Man in *Dream Children;*  
*A Reverie* (part-1)**

[BA (Hons.), Part-2, Paper-IV]

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‘My attachments are all local, purely local. I have no passion [...] for groves and valleys. The rooms where I was born, the furniture [...] wherever I have moved myself, old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school - these are my mistresses’(Charles Lamb: Letter to William Wordsworth, Letter LXXXV, 30th January 1801). If this is what Lamb once wrote in indignation of the romantic poets’ frequent flight from reality and in defence of his choice, this is how one finds Lamb also in his essays. Remaining at the opposite end of Bacon’s imposingly practical assertions, Lamb, too, writes about a reality-here the reality of his heart. All his essays, including *Dream-Children; A Reverie* (1823) are products of this self-revelatory style of writing in which the personal essayist projects himself as a person fond of memories, fond of relations, a man of pathos and a lover of good-natured humour, and above all a person to whom an artlessness arising from emotional extravagance is an art in itself.

Lamb is a romanticist, but unlike a romantic poet, instead of resorting to a flight to nature, Lamb takes solace from old times and old relations. *Dream Children* teems with such nostalgic reminiscences of the grandmother Field and his visits to the great mansion in

Norfolk which she kept. The 'broad, burly, jovial' John Lamb, Lamb's elder brother, who died in the essayist's childhood, becomes a living character in these remembrances. The old times when Lamb in his childhood visited his grandmother, roomed in the vast empty rooms, the gardens with a fear of apparitions of two of two dead infants haunting the house, when he spent time with his dead brother-all are evoked. These hoarded memories, with tender regrets of losing the near and dear, are apt to draw sympathy in the heart of any reader. More touching still is the almost superhuman sweetness with which he treats the characters of his grandmother and brother.

To a man who has undergone so many pathetic experiences in life like Lamb, the pathos lurking in the sadder aspects of life cannot go by unnoticed. [...]

**.....To be continued in part-2**