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By

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CHAPTER XI
MALTA AND ITALY

LETTER 130. TO J. TOBIN

April 10, 1804.

Men who habitually enjoy robust health have, too generally, the trick, and a very cruel one it is, of imagining that they discover the secret of all their acquaintances' ill health in some malpractice or other; and, sometimes, by gravely asserting this, here, there, and everywhere (as who likes his penetration hid under a bushel?), they not only do all they can, without intending it, to deprive the poor sufferer of that sympathy which is always a comfort and, in some degree, a support to human nature, but, likewise, too often implant serious alarm and uneasiness in the minds of the person's relatives and his nearest and dearest connections. Indeed (but that I have known its inutility, that I should be ridiculously sinning against my own law which I was propounding, and that those who are most fond of advising are the least able to hear advice from others, as the passion to command makes men disobedient) I should often have been on the point of advising you against the two-fold rage of advising and of discussing character, both the one and the other of which infallibly generates presumption and blindness to our own faults. Nay! more particularly where, from whatever cause, there exists a slowness to understand or an aptitude to mishear and consequently misunderstand what has been said, it too often renders an otherwise truly good man a mischief-maker to an extent of which he is but little aware. Our friends' reputation should be a religion to us, and when it is lightly sacrificed to what self-adulation calls a love of telling the truth (in reality a lust of talking something seasoned with the cayenne and capsicum of personality), depend upon it, something in the heart is warped or warping, more or less according to the greater or lesser power of the counteracting causes. I confess to you, that being exceedingly low and heart-fallen, I should have almost sunk under the operation of reproof and admonition (the whole too, in my conviction, grounded on utter mistake) at the moment I was quitting, perhaps for ever! my dear country and all that makes it so dear – but the high esteem which I cherish towards you, and my sense of your integrity and the reality

of your attachment and concern blows upon me refreshingly as the sea-breeze on the tropic islander. Show me anyone made better by blunt advice, and I may abate of my dislike to it, but I have experienced the good effects of the contrary in Wordsworth's conduct toward me; and, in Poole and others, have witnessed enough of its ill-effects to be convinced that it does little else but harm both to the adviser and the advisee.

There is some dubiety as to whether the J. Tobin to whom the above letter was addressed is John Tobin, the dramatist, or his brother James. But Coleridge had taken up quarters with either of the brothers in London before sailing for Malta and the letter is Coleridge's parting shot for his host's over solicitous advice.

On 16th April he was off Oporto, and wrote a description of the place, as seen from the sea, for Southey. The "Speedwell" was convoyed by the "Leviathan," man-of-war of 74 guns. Lisbon and the rest of the Portuguese coast are described by Coleridge, and on 19th April the "Speedwell" reached Gibraltar, where Coleridge landed and scrambled on the rocks among the monkeys, "our poor relations." In his note-books he describes more fully the scene around the Rock of Gibraltar with its multitude and discordant complexity of associations—the Pillars of Hercules, Calpe, and Abyla, the realms of Masinissa, Jugurtha, and Syphax; Spain, Gibraltar, the Dey of Algiers, dusky Moor, and black African. "At its feet mighty ramparts establishing themselves in the sea, with their huge artillery, hollow trunks of iron where Death and Thunder sleep," and "the abiding things of Nature, great, calm, majestic, and one!"

In the voyage between Gibraltar and Malta they were frequently in long dead calms—"every rope of the whole ship reflected in the bright soft blue sea"—an *Ancient Mariner* touch. They reached Valetta on 18th May, where Coleridge was the guest of John Stoddart (afterwards Sir John Stoddart), Attorney-General for Malta. Sir Alexander Ball was then governor of the Island, and was greatly pleased with Coleridge's conversation and manners, and appointed him his private secretary. The public secretary of the Island dying suddenly in January 1805, Coleridge was made interim Government secretary until the new nominee should arrive. He held the office for

eight months, from 18th January to 6th September (*Letters*, 494); and he acquitted himself well as a business man in the post. What De Quincey says to the contrary is a tissue of unfounded conjectures. Dykes Campbell, one of Coleridge's most painstaking biographers, admits that there is nothing to show that Coleridge did not perform the routine work of office well.

While in Malta Coleridge duly entered in his note-books his impressions of his surroundings and he records his dreamy introspections of the night watches. But Coleridge did not spend all his time in Malta. Dykes Campbell informs us that "early in August, the *demon of restlessness* drove him to Sicily", which may be rather interpreted that the proximity of the land of Theocritus was irresistible. He was away from the middle of August to 7th November 1804. He twice ascended Etna; and, although Dykes Campbell doubts his having attained to the summit, according to his own account he looked down the crater. Very few of Coleridge's letters written in Malta are extant; on account of the precariousness of the mode of despatch in a time of war some of them never reached their destination.

In the Spring of 1805 Coleridge was regretting that he had accepted the Public Secretaryship, saying that his profits would be much less than if he had employed his time and efforts in his own literary pursuits, another way of grumbling against occupations inferior to the pursuit of the Permanent. To Daniel Stuart he writes on 20th April 1805: "In my letter, which will accompany this, I have detailed my health and all that relates to me. In case, however, that letter should not arrive, I will simply say, that till within the last two months or ten weeks my health had improved to the utmost of my hopes, though not without some intrusion of sickness; but *latterly* the loss of my letters to England, the almost entire non-arrival of letters from England, not a single one from Mrs. Coleridge, or Southey, or you; and only one from the Wordsworths, and that dated September 1804! my consequent heart-saddening anxieties, and still, still more, the depths which Captain John Wordsworth's death sunk into my heart, and which I heard abruptly, and in the very painfullest way possible in a public company – all these joined to my disappointment in my expectation of returning to England by this convoy, and the quantity and variety

of my public occupations from eight o'clock in the morning to five in the afternoon, having besides the most anxious duty of writing public letters and memorials which belongs to my talents rather than to my *pro-tempore* office; these and some other causes that I cannot mention relative to my affairs in England, have produced a sad change indeed on my health; but, however, I hope all will be well. It is my present intention to return home by Naples, Ancona, Trieste, etc., on or about the second of next month". To his wife he says, on 21 July 1805: "I have been hoping and expecting to get away for England for five months past, and Mr. Chapman not arriving, Sir Alexander's importunities have always overpowered me, though my gloom has increased at each disappointment. I am determined, however, to go in less than a month. My office, as Public Secretary, the next civil dignitary to the Governor, is a very, very busy one, and not to involve myself in the responsibility of the Treasurer I have but half the salary. I oftentimes subscribe my name 150 times a day – and administer half as many oaths – besides which I have the public memorials to write, and, worse than all, constant matters of irritation. Sir A. Ball is indeed exceedingly kind to me"

Coleridge did not return by the proposed route of Naples, Ancona, Trieste, to be continued, to avoid Napoleon's power, by Vienna, Berlin, Embden, and Denmark. He went, on the contrary, straight to Naples in company with a gentleman unnamed. Here he remained till the end of January 1806; and then proceeded to Rome, where he associated with the artists resident in the Papal capital. He made the acquaintance of Baron W. von Humboldt, then Prussian Minister at the Papal Court; Ludwig Tieck, the German translator of Shakespeare; Washington Allston, the best American painter of his day; Canova, and Washington Irving.

Various accounts have been given about what Coleridge said regarding his sojourn in Italy and his flight from it. Gillman (179–181), Cottle, and Caroline Fox (*Journals*), all differing as to particulars. Flagg, the writer of the *Life of Allston*, says: "He had intended to go by Switzerland and Germany, but being somewhat apprehensive of danger on account of the movements of the French troops, took the precautions to ask the advice of Ambassador von Humboldt; he advised Coleridge to avoid Bonaparte, who was meditating the seizure of his person, and had already sent to Rome

an order for his arrest, which was withheld from execution by the connivance of the good old Pope, Pius VII, who sent him a passport, and counselled his immediate flight by way of Leghorn. Accordingly he hastened to that port, where he found an American vessel ready to sail for England, and embarked. On the voyage they were chased by a French sail; the captain, becoming alarmed, commanded Coleridge to throw his papers, including his notes on Rome, overboard". This agrees substantially with what Coleridge says in the *Biographia Literaria*. Cottle works the matter up into a romance in his own facetious way; and the other re-narrators mistake the facts somewhat. Caroline Fox, for instance, locates the embarkation from Genoa, saying: "On reaching Genoa, he so delighted an American by his conversation, who had never heard anything like it since he left Niagara, that at all risks, and with many subtleties, he got him on board, and brought him safe to England"

CHAPTER XII

HOME AGAIN, ROLLING, RUDDERLESS! THEOLOGY

[Coleridge reached England on 17th August 1806 (*Letters*, 499), and made for London, intending to write articles once more for Daniel Stuart. He does not seem, however, to have done anything at this time for the newspapers. Humphry Davy was endeavouring to get him to give a course of lectures on the Fine Arts. At the close of the year Coleridge was at Coleorton, the seat of Sir George Beaumont in Leicestershire, where he met William and Dorothy Wordsworth. Wordsworth read to him the *Prelude*, now completed; and Coleridge, after its recital, wrote the well-known poem to Wordsworth in blank verse, which is as much a dirge over his own failures as a eulogy of Wordsworth's poem. Wordsworth's view of the great men of all ages, forming an interconnected scheme of truth slowly being revealed, is a Coleridgean rather than a Wordsworthian idea; and Coleridge in his verses to his brother bard hails him as among the men of the Permanent, among the

Choir of ever-during men.

On 17th February, Coleridge was still at Coleorton; but in July, Coleridge and his wife and family were again at Stowey on a visit to Poole. Here Coleridge remained till the end of September. Tom Wedgwood had died while he was at Malta; and his brother Josiah expected Coleridge to furnish him with some materials for a Life of Tom. Poole endeavoured to impress upon him the necessity of complying; but the task was distasteful to him, at which Josiah Wedgwood, not unnaturally, was displeased. But Coleridge, after some procrastination, wrote to Josiah Wedgwood on 27th June 1807, giving reasons for his delay; and Wedgwood wrote to Poole, "I was truly glad to hear from him. His letter removed all those feelings of anger which occasionally, but not permanently, existed in my mind towards him."

Meantime, we find Coleridge again in correspondence with Cottle, who had heard of his arrival in Stowey. Cottle wrote to him, expressing the hope that Coleridge's health would soon allow him to pay a visit to Bristol. To this Coleridge replied:

LETTER 131. TO COTTLE

(— — 1807.)

Dear Cottle,

On my return to Bristol, whenever that may be, I will certainly give you the right hand of old fellowship; but, alas! you will find me the wretched wreck of what you knew me, rolling, rudderless. My health is extremely bad. Pain I have enough of, but that is indeed to me, a mere trifle, but the almost unceasing, overpowering sensations of wretchedness: achings in my limbs, with an indescribable restlessness, that makes action to any available purpose, almost impossible: and worst of all, the sense of blighted utility, regrets, not remorseless. But enough; yea, more than enough; if these things produce, or deepen the conviction of the utter powerlessness of ourselves, and that we either perish, or find aid from something that passes understanding.

Affectionately,

S. T. C.

Cottle tells us he knew nothing as yet of opium, and was struck with the interesting narratives Coleridge gave of his Italian experiences and of his voyage to England. Theology was now in the ascendant with Coleridge who had now abjured unitarianism and become more orthodox. The following letters on the Trinity and kindred subjects attest to the veracity of Cottle's estimate of Coleridge at this period:

LETTER 132. TO COTTLE

(1807.)

The declaration that the Deity is “the sole Operant” (*Religious Musings*) is indeed far too bold; may easily be misconstrued into Spinozism; and, therefore, though it is susceptible of a pious and justifiable interpretation, I should by no means now use such a phrase. I was very young when I wrote that poem, and my religious feelings were more settled than my theological notions.

As to eternal punishments, I can only say, that there are many passages in Scripture, and these not metaphorical, which declare that all flesh shall be finally saved; that the word *aionios* is indeed used sometimes when eternity must be meant, but so is the word “Ancient of Days,” yet it would be strange reasoning to affirm, that therefore, the word ancient must always mean eternal. The literal meaning of *aionios* is, “through ages;” that is indefinite; beyond the power of imagination to bound. But as to the effects of such a doctrine, I say, First, — that it would be more pious to assert nothing concerning it, one way or the other.

Ezra says well, “My Son, meditate on the rewards of the righteous, and examine not over-curiously into the fate of the wicked.” (This apocryphal Ezra is supposed to have been written by some Christian in the first age of Christianity.) Second, — that however the doctrine is now broached, and publicly preached by a large and increasing sect, it is no longer possible to conceal it from such persons as would be likely to read and understand the *Religious Musings*. Third. — That if the offers of eternal blessedness; if the love of God; if gratitude; if the fear of punishment, unknown indeed as to its kind and duration, but declared to be unimaginably great; if the possibility, nay, the probability, that this punishment may be followed by annihilation, not final happiness, cannot divert men from wickedness to virtue; I fear there will be no charm in the word Eternal.

Fourth, that it is a certain fact, that scarcely any believe eternal punishment practically with relation to themselves. They all hope in God’s mercy, till they make it a presumptuous watch-word for religious indifference. And this, because there is no medium in their

faith, between blessedness and misery,—infinite in degree and duration; which latter they do not practically, and with their whole hearts, believe. It is opposite to their clearest views of the divine attributes; for God cannot be vindictive, neither therefore can his punishments be founded on a vindictive principle. They must be, either for amendment, or warning for others; but eternal punishment precludes the idea of amendment, and its infliction, after the day of judgment, when all not so punished shall be divinely secured from the possibility of falling, renders the notion of warning to others inapplicable.

The Catholics are far more afraid of, and incomparably more influenced in their conduct by, the doctrine of purgatory, than Protestants by that of hell! That the Catholics practise more superstitions than morals, is the effect of other doctrines.— Supererogation; invocation of saints; power of relics, etc., etc., and not of Purgatory, which can only act as a general motive, to what must depend on other causes.

Fifth, and lastly.— It is a perilous state in which a Christian stands, if he has gotten no further than to avoid evil from the fear of hell! This is no part of the Christian religion, but a preparatory awakening of the soul: a means of dispersing those gross films which render the eye of the spirit incapable of any religion, much less of such a faith as that of the love of Christ.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but perfect love shutteth out fear. It is sufficient for the utmost fervour of gratitude that we are saved from punishments, too great to be conceived; but our salvation is surely not complete, till by the illumination from above, we are made to know “the exceeding sinfulness of sin,” and that horribleness in its nature, which, while it involves all these frightful consequences, is yet, of itself more affrightful to a regenerated soul than those consequences. To him who but for a moment felt the influence of God’s presence, the thought of eternal exclusion from the sense of that presence, would be the worst hell his imagination could conceive.

N.B. I admit of no right, no claim of a creature on its Creator. I speak only of hopes and of faith deduced from inevitable reason, the gift

of the Creator; from his acknowledged attributes. Above all, immortality is a free gift, which we neither do, nor can deserve.

S. T. C.

LETTER 133. TO COTTLE

Bristol (June), 1807.

Dear Cottle,

To pursue our last conversation. Christians expect no outward or sensible miracles from prayer. Its effects, and its fruitions are spiritual, and accompanied says that *true Divine*, Archbishop Leighton, "not by reasons and arguments, but by an inexpressible kind of evidence, which they only know who have it."

To this I would add, that even those who, like me I fear, have not attained it, yet may presume it. First, because reason itself, or rather mere human nature, in any dispassionate moment, feels the necessity of religion, but if this be not true there is no religion, no religation, or binding over again; nothing added to reason, and therefore *Socinianism*, misnamed *Unitarianism*, is not only not *Christianity*, it is not even *religion*, it does not *religate*; does not bind anew. The first outward and sensible result of prayer is, a penitent resolution, joined with a consciousness of weakness in effecting it, yea even a dread, too well grounded, lest by breaking and falsifying it, the soul should add guilt to guilt; by the very means it has taken to escape from guilt; so pitiable is the state of unregenerate man.

Are you familiar with Leighton's Works? He resigned his archbishoprick, and retired to voluntary poverty on account of the persecutions of the Presbyterians, saying, "I should not dare to introduce Christianity itself with such cruelties, how much less for a surplice, and the name of a bishop." If there could be an intermediate space between inspired, and uninspired writings, that space would be occupied by Leighton. No show of learning, no appearance, or ostentatious display of eloquence, and yet both may be shown in him, conspicuously and holily. There is in him something that must be felt, even as the Scriptures must be felt.

You ask me my views of the *Trinity*. I accept the doctrine, not as deduced from human reason, in its grovelling capacity for comprehending spiritual things, but as the clear revelation of Scripture. But perhaps it may be said, the Socinians do not admit

this doctrine as being taught in the Bible. I know enough of their shifts and quibbles, with their dexterity at explaining away all they dislike, and that is not a little, but though beguiled once by them, I happily for my own peace of mind, escaped from their sophistries, and now hesitate not to affirm, that Socinians would lose all character for honesty, if they were to explain their neighbour's will with the same latitude of interpretation, which they do the Scriptures.

I have in my head some floating ideas on the *Logos*, which I hope, hereafter, to mould into a consistent form; but it is a gross perversion of the truth, in Socinians, to declare that we believe in *three gods*; and they know it to be false. They might, with equal justice affirm that we believe in *three suns*. The meanest peasant, who has acquired the first rudiments of Christianity, would shrink back from a thing so monstrous. Still the Trinity has its difficulties. It would be strange if otherwise. A *Revelation* that revealed nothing, not within the grasp of human reason!—no religion, no binding over again, as before said; but these difficulties are shadows, contrasted with the substantive and insurmountable obstacles, with which *they* contend who admit the *Divine authority of Scripture*, with the *superlative excellence of Christ*, and yet undertake to prove that these Scriptures teach, and that Christ taught his own *pure humanity*.

If Jesus Christ was merely a man, if he was not God as well as man, be it considered, he could not have been even a *good man*. There is no medium. The SAVIOUR *in that case* was absolutely a *deceiver*! one, transcendantly *unrighteous*! in advancing pretensions to miracles, by the "Finger of God," which he never performed; and by asserting claims, (as a man) in the most aggravated sense, blasphemous. These consequences, Socinians, to be consistent, must allow, and which impious arrogation of Divinity in Christ, according to their faith, as well as his false assumption of a community of "glory" with the Father, "before the world was," even they will be necessitated completely to admit the exoneration of the Jews, according to their law, in crucifying one, who "being a man," "made himself God!" But in the Christian, rather than in the *Socinian*, or *Pharisaic* view, all these objections vanish, and harmony succeeds to inexplicable confusion. If Socinians hesitate in ascribing *unrighteousness* to Christ, the inevitable result of their principles, they tremble, as well they

might, at their avowed creed, and virtually renounce what they profess to uphold.

The Trinity, as Bishop Leighton has well remarked, is “a doctrine of faith, not of demonstration,” except in a *moral* sense. If the New Testament declare it, not in an insulated passage, but through the whole breadth of its pages, rendering, with any other admission, the book which is the Christian’s anchor-hold of hope, dark and contradictory, then it is not to be rejected, but on a penalty that reduces to an atom, all the sufferings this earth can inflict.

Let the grand question be determined.—Is, or is not the Bible *inspired*? No one book has ever been subjected to so rigid an investigation as the Bible, by minds the most capacious, and in the result, which has so triumphantly repelled all the assaults of infidels. In the extensive intercourse which I have had with this class of men, I have seen their prejudices surpassed only by their ignorance. This I found particularly the case in Dr. Darwin (Letter 19), the prince of their fraternity. Without therefore, stopping to contend on what all dispassionate men must deem, undebatable ground, I may assume inspiration as admitted; and, equally so, that it would be an insult to man’s understanding, to suppose any other Revelation from God than the Christian Scriptures. If these Scriptures, impregnable in their strength, sustained in their pretensions, by undeniable prophecies and miracles, and by the experience of the *inner man*, in all ages, as well as by a concatenation of arguments, all bearing upon one point, and extending with miraculous consistency, through a series of fifteen hundred years; if all this combined proof does not establish their validity, nothing can be proved under the sun; but the world and man must be abandoned, with all its consequences, to one universal scepticism! Under such sanctions, therefore, if these Scriptures, as a fundamental truth, *do* inculcate the doctrine of the *Trinity*; however surpassing human comprehension; then I say, we are bound to admit it on the strength of *moral demonstration*.

The supreme Governor of the world and the Father of our spirits, has seen fit to disclose to us much of his will, and the whole of his natural and moral perfections. In some instances he has given his *word* only, and demanded our *faith*; while on other momentous

subjects, instead of bestowing full revelation, like the *Via Lactea*, he has furnished a glimpse only, through either the medium of inspiration, or by the exercise of those rational faculties with which he has endowed us. I consider the Trinity as substantially resting on the first proposition, yet deriving support from the last.

I recollect when I stood on the summit of Etna, and darted my gaze down the crater; the immediate vicinity was discernible, till, lower down, obscurity gradually terminated in total darkness. Such figures exemplify many truths revealed in the Bible. We pursue them, until, from the imperfection of our faculties, we are lost in impenetrable night. All truths, however, that are essential to faith, *honestly* interpreted; all that are important to human conduct, under every diversity of circumstance, are manifest as a blazing star. The promises also of felicity to the righteous in the future world, though the precise nature of that felicity may not be defined, are illustrated by every image that can swell the imagination; while the misery of the *lost*, in its unutterable intensity, though the language that describes it is all necessarily figurative, is there exhibited as resulting chiefly, if not wholly, from the withdrawment of the *light of God's countenance*, and a banishment from his *presence*! best comprehended in this world by reflecting on the desolations, which would instantly follow the loss of the sun's vivifying and universally diffused *warmth*.

You, or rather *all*, should remember that some truths from their nature, surpass the scope of man's limited powers, and stand as the criteria of *faith*, determining by their rejection, or admission, who among the sons of men can confide in the veracity of heaven. Those more ethereal truths, of which the Trinity is conspicuously the chief, without being circumstantially explained, may be faintly illustrated by material objects. The eye of man cannot discern the satellites of Jupiter, nor become sensible of the multitudinous stars, whose rays have never reached our planet, and consequently garnish not the canopy of night; yet are they the less *real*, because their existence lies beyond man's unassisted gaze? The tube of the philosopher, and the *celestial telescope*, — the unclouded visions of heaven will confirm the one class of truths, and irradiate the other.

The *Trinity* is a subject on which analogical reasoning may advantageously be admitted, as furnishing, at least, a glimpse of light, and with this, for the present, we must be satisfied. Infinite Wisdom deemed clearer manifestations inexpedient; and is man to dictate to his Maker? I may further remark, that where we cannot behold a desirable object distinctly, we must take the best view we can; and I think you, and every candid enquiring mind, may derive assistance from such reflections as the following.

Notwithstanding the arguments of Spinoza, and Des Cartes, and other advocates of the *Material system*, or, in more appropriate language, the *Atheistical system*! it is admitted by all men, not prejudiced, not biased by sceptical prepossessions, that *mind* is distinct from *matter*. The mind of man, however, is involved in inscrutable darkness, (as the profoundest metaphysicians well know) and is to be estimated, if at all, alone by an inductive process; that is, by its *effects*. Without entering on the question, whether an extremely circumscribed portion of the mental process, surpassing instinct, may or may not be extended to quadrupeds, it is universally acknowledged, that the mind of man alone, regulates all the actions of his corporeal frame. Mind, therefore, may be regarded as a distinct genus, in the scale ascending above brutes, and including the whole of intellectual existences; advancing from *thought*, that mysterious thing! in its lowest form, through all the gradations of sentient and rational beings, till it arrives at a Bacon, a Newton; and then, when unincumbered by matter, extending its illimitable sway through Seraph and Archangel, till we are lost in the GREAT INFINITE!

Is it not deserving of notice, as an especial subject of meditation, that our *limbs*, in all they do or can accomplish, implicitly obey the dictation of the *mind*? that this operating power, whatever its name, under certain limitations, exercises a sovereign dominion not only over our limbs, but over our intellectual pursuits? The mind of every man is evidently the fulcrum, the moving force, which alike regulates all his limbs and actions: and in which example, we find a strong illustration of the subordinate nature of mere *matter*. That alone which gives direction to the organic parts of our nature, is wholly *mind*; and one mind if placed over a thousand limbs, could, with undiminished ease, control and regulate the whole.

This idea is advanced on the supposition that *one mind* could command an unlimited direction over any given number of *limbs*, provided they were all connected by *joint* and *sinew*. But suppose, through some occult and inconceivable means, these limbs were disassociated, as to all material connexion; suppose, for instance, one mind with unlimited authority, governed the operations of *two* separate persons, would not this substantially, be only *one person*, seeing the directing principle was one? If the truth here contended for, be admitted, that *two persons*, governed by *one mind*, is incontestably *one person*; the same conclusion would be arrived at, and the proposition equally be justified, which affirmed that, *three*, or otherwise *four* persons, owning also necessary and essential subjection to *one mind*, would only be so many diversities or modifications of that *one mind*, and therefore the component parts virtually collapsing into *one whole*, the person would be *one*. Let any man ask himself, whose understanding can both reason and become the depository of truth, whether, if *one mind* thus regulated with absolute authority, *three*, or otherwise *four* persons, with all their congeries of material parts, would not these parts inert in themselves, when subjected to one predominant mind, be in the most logical sense, *one person*? Are ligament and exterior combination indispensable pre-requisites to the sovereign influence of mind over mind? or mind over matter?

But perhaps it may be said, we have no instance of one mind governing more than one body. This may be, but the argument remains the same. With a proud spirit, that forgets its own contracted range of thought, and circumscribed knowledge, who is to limit the sway of Omnipotence? or presumptuously to deny the possibility of *that* Being, who called light out of darkness, so to exalt the dominion of *one mind*, as to give it absolute sway over other dependant minds, or (indifferently) over detached, or combined portions of organized matter? But if this superinduced quality be conferable on any order of created beings, it is blasphemy to limit the power of God, and to deny *his* capacity to transfuse *his own* Spirit, when and to whom he will.

This reasoning may now be applied in illustration of the Trinity. We are too much in the habit of viewing our Saviour Jesus Christ, through the medium of his body. "A body was prepared for him,"

but this body was mere matter; as insensible in itself as every human frame when deserted by the soul. If therefore the Spirit that was in Christ, was the Spirit of the Father; if no thought, no vibration, no spiritual communication, or miraculous display, existed in, or proceeded from Christ, not immediately and consubstantially identified with Jehovah, the Great First cause; if all these operating principles were thus derived, in consistency alone with the conjoint divine attributes; if this Spirit of the Father ruled and reigned in Christ as his own manifestation, then in the strictest sense, Christ exhibited "the Godhead bodily," and was undeniably "*one* with the Father;" confirmatory of the Saviour's words: "Of myself," (my body) "I can do nothing, the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

But though I speak of the body as inert in itself, and necessarily allied to matter, yet this declaration must not be understood as militating against the Christian doctrine of the *resurrection of the body*. In its grosser form, the thought is not to be admitted, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," but, that the body, without losing its consciousness and individuality, may be subjected by the illimitable power of Omnipotence, to a sublimating process, so as to be rendered compatible with spiritual association, is not opposed to reason, in its severe abstract exercises, while in attestation of this *exhilarating belief*, there are many remote analogies in nature exemplifying the same truth, while it is in the strictest accordance with that final dispensation, which must, as Christians, regulate all our speculations. I proceed now to say, that

If the postulate be thus admitted, that one mind influencing two bodies, would only involve a diversity of operations, but in reality be one in essence; or otherwise (as an hypothetical argument, illustrative of truth), if one pre-eminent mind, or spiritual subsistence, unconnected with matter, possessed an undivided and sovereign dominion over two or more disembodied minds, so as to become the exclusive source of all their subtlest volitions and exercises, the *unity*, however complex the modus of its manifestation, would be fully established; and this principle extends to Deity itself, and shows the true sense, as I conceive, in which Christ and the Father are one.

In continuation of this reasoning, if God who is light, the Sun of the Moral World, should in his union of Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, and from all Eternity, have ordained that an emanation from himself, — for aught we know, an essential emanation, as light is inseparable from the luminary of day — should not only have existed in his Son, in the fulness of time to be united to a mortal body, but that a like emanation from himself (also perhaps essential) should have constituted the Holy Spirit, who, without losing his ubiquity, was more especially sent to this lower earth, *by* the Son, *at* the impulse of the Father, then in the most comprehensive sense, God, and his Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, are ONE. “Three persons in one God,” and thus form the true Trinity in Unity.

To suppose that more than ONE Independent Power, or Governing mind exists in the whole universe, is absolute Polytheism, against which the denunciations of all the Jewish and Christian canonical books were directed. And if there be but ONE directing MIND, that Mind is God! operating however, in Three Persons, according to the direct and uniform declarations of that inspiration which “brought life and immortality to light.” Yet this divine doctrine of the Trinity is to be received, not because it is or can be clear to finite apprehension, but (in reiteration of the argument) because the Scriptures, in their unsophisticated interpretation expressly state it. The Trinity, therefore, from its important aspects, and Biblical prominence, is the grand article of faith, and the foundation of the whole Christian system.

Who can say, as Christ and the Holy Ghost proceeded from, and are still one with the Father, and as all the disciples of Christ derive their fulness from him, and, in spirit, are inviolately united to him as a branch is to the vine, who can say, but that in one view, what was once mysteriously separated, may as mysteriously, be re-combined, and (without interfering with the everlasting Trinity, and the individuality of the spiritual and seraphic orders) the Son, at the consummation of all things, deliver up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, and God, in some peculiar and infinitely sublime sense, become All in All! God love you,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

“The following letter,” says Cottle, “was written by Mr. Coleridge to Mr. George Fricker, his brother-in-law, it is believed, in 1807.”

LETTER 134. TO GEORGE FRICKER

Saturday afternoon.
(1807.)

My dear young friend,

I am sorry that you should have felt any delicacy in disclosing to me your religious feelings, as rendering it inconsistent with your tranquillity of mind to spend the Sunday evening with me. Though I do not find in that book, which we both equally revere, any command, either express, or which I can infer, which leads me to attach any criminality to cheerful and innocent social intercourse on the Lord's day; though I do not find that it was in the least degree forbidden to the Jews on their Sabbath; and though I have been taught by Luther, and the great founders of the Church of England, that the Sabbath was a part of the ceremonial and transitory parts of the law given by heaven to Moses; and that our Sunday is binding on our consciences, chiefly from its manifest and most awful usefulness, and indeed moral necessity; yet I highly commend your firmness in what you think right, and assure you solemnly, that I esteem you greatly for it. I would much rather that you should have too much, than an atom too little. I am far from surprised that, having seen what you have seen, and suffered what you have suffered, you should have opened your soul to a sense of our fallen nature; and the incapability of man to heal himself. My opinions may not be in all points the same as yours; but I have experienced a similar alteration. I was for many years a Socinian; and at times almost a Naturalist, but sorrow, and ill health, and disappointment in the only deep wish I had ever cherished, forced me to look into myself; I read the New Testament again, and I became fully convinced, that Socinianism was not only not the doctrine of the New Testament, but that it scarcely deserved the name of a religion in any sense. An extract from a letter which I wrote a few months ago to a sceptical friend, who had been a Socinian, and of course rested all the evidences of Christianity on miracles, to the exclusion of grace and inward faith, will perhaps, surprise you, as showing you how much nearer our opinions are than what you must have supposed. "I fear that the mode of defending Christianity, adopted by Grotius first; and latterly, among many others, by Dr. Paley, has

increased the number of infidels; – never could it have been so great, if thinking men had been habitually led to look into their own souls, instead of always looking out, both of themselves, and of their nature. If to curb attack, such as yours on miracles, it had been answered: – ‘Well, brother! but granting these miracles to have been in part the growth of delusion at the time, and of exaggeration afterward, yet still all the doctrines will remain untouched by this circumstance, and binding on thee. Still must thou repent and be regenerated, and be crucified to the flesh; and this not by thy own mere power; but by a mysterious action of the moral Governor on thee; of the Ordo-ordinians, the Logos, or Word. Still will the eternal filiation, or Sonship of the Word from the Father; still will the Trinity of the Deity, the redemption, and the thereto necessary assumption of humanity by the Word, “who is with God, and is God,” remain truths: and still will the vital head-and-heart FAITH in these truths, be the living and only fountain of all true virtue. Believe all these, and with the grace of the Spirit consult your own heart, in quietness and humility, they will furnish you with proofs, that surpass all understanding, because they are felt and known; believe all these I say, so as that thy faith shall be not merely real in the acquiescence of the intellect; but actual, in the thereto assimilated affections; then shall thou KNOW from God, whether or not Christ be of God. But take notice, I only say, the miracles are extra essential; I by no means deny their importance, much less hold them useless, or superfluous. Even as Christ did, so would I teach; that is, build the miracle on the faith, not the faith on the miracle.’

May heaven bless you, my dear George, and

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. C.

The following curious letter was written also about this time.

LETTER 135. TO COTTLE

(1807.)

My dear Cottle,

The common end of all narrative, nay, of all poems is, to convert a series into a whole, to make those events, which, in real or imagined history, move on in a straight line, assume to our understandings a circular motion – the snake with its tail in its mouth. Hence, indeed, the almost flattering and yet appropriate term, *Poesy*, *i.e.* *Poieses* – *making*. Doubtless, to His eye, which alone comprehends all past and all future, in one eternal, what to our short sight appears straight, is but a part of the great cycle, just as the calm sea to us appears level, though it be indeed only a part of the globe. Now what the globe is in geography, miniaturizing in order to manifest the truth, such is a poem to that image of God, which we were created into, and which still seeking that unity, or revelation of the one, in and by the many, which reminds it, that though in order to be an individual being, it must go further from God; yet as the receding from him, is to proceed toward nothingness and privation, it must still at every step turn back toward him, in order to be at all. A straight line continually retracted, forms of necessity a circular orbit. Now God's will and word CANNOT be frustrated. His fiat was, with ineffable awfulness, applied to man, when all things, and all living things, and man himself, (as a mere animal) included, were called forth by the Universal, "Let there be," and then the breath of the Eternal superadded, to make an immortal spirit – immortality being, as the author of the *Wisdom of Solomon* profoundly expresses it, "the only possible reflex, or image of eternity." The immortal finite is the contracted shadow of the eternal Infinite. Therefore nothingness, or death, toward which we move, as we recede from God and from the Word, cannot be nothing; but that tremendous medium between nothing and true being, which Scripture and inmost reason present as most, most horrible!

Affectionately,

S. T. C.]

XIII DE QUINCEY

[Cottle tells us that in the spring of 1807 a lady of his acquaintance introduced to him a Mr. De Quincey. On the 26th July, Cottle wrote to Poole a note of introduction and sent it with "the bearer Mr. De Quincey, a Gentleman of Oxford, a scholar and a man of genius." Coleridge had gone to Bridgwater on a visit to a friend, Mr. Chubb; but Poole entertained De Quincey and invited him to stay till Coleridge should return. De Quincey, however, preferred to go in quest of the poet, and proceeded to Bridgwater and there found Coleridge as he has depicted him in his description already given.

Afterwards De Quincey made enquiries of Cottle concerning the pecuniary affairs of Coleridge, and asked Cottle if he thought Coleridge would accept a gift of one or two hundred pounds. Cottle informs us that he enquired personally of Coleridge regarding his monetary circumstances, and then told him that "a young man of fortune, who admired his talents," wished to present him with a hundred or two hundred pounds. The *De Quincey Memorials* gives a somewhat different account of this transaction in which Cottle first divulged the generous purpose of De Quincey by letter. Doubtless Cottle had forgotten his letter, and, writing thirty years after the event, recollected only the conversation with Coleridge intervening between the date of his letter and another to De Quincey, dated 7th October. In the P.S. of the letter to De Quincey Cottle says, "I have no doubt but that Coleridge has suffered exceedingly from straits. I am sure he is the greatest genius breathing; and that such a mind should be perplexed about mutton and pudding and waistcoats and hose for himself and children is piteous and afflicting. These things paralyse his efforts. Under favourable auspices, what gigantic effort would be too mighty for him? Oct. 7, 1807."

Cottle further states that De Quincey ultimately wished to give £500; but that he urged De Quincey to make it only £300 in the meantime, to be afterwards increased, if need be, to £500.

Coleridge, in answer to Cottle, wrote the following letter which must be of even date with his letter to De Quincey.

LETTER 136. TO COTTLE

(7 Oct. 1807.)

My dear Cottle,

Independent of letter-writing, and a dinner engagement with C. Danvers, I was the whole of yesterday till evening, in a most wretched restlessness of body and limbs, having imprudently discontinued some medicines, which are now my anchor of hope. This morning I dedicate to certain distant calls on Dr. Beddoes and Colston, at Clifton, not so much for the calls themselves, as for the necessity of taking brisk exercise.

But no unforeseen accident intervening, I shall spend the evening with you from seven o'clock.

I will now express my sentiments on the important subject communicated to you. I need not say it has been the cause of serious meditation. Undoubtedly, calamities have so thickened on me for the last two years, that the pecuniary pressures of the moment, are the only serious obstacles at present to my completion of those works, which, if completed, would make me easy. Besides these, I have reason for belief that a Tragedy of mine will be brought on the stage this season, the result of which is of course only one of the possibilities of life, on which I am not fool enough to calculate.

Finally therefore, if you know that any unknown benefactor is in such circumstances, that, in doing what he offers to do, he transgresses no duty of morals, or of moral prudence, and does not do that from feeling which after reflection might perhaps discountenance, I shall gratefully accept it, as an unconditional loan, which I trust I shall be able to restore at the close of two years. This however, I shall be able to know at the expiration of one year, and shall then beg to know the name of my benefactor, which I should then only feel delight in knowing, when I could present to him some substantial proof, that I have employed the tranquillity of mind, which his kindness has enabled me to enjoy, in sincere desires to benefit my fellow men. May God bless you.

S. T. C.

The Tragedy here spoken of may have been a re-cast of *Osorio* or a projected play entitled *The Triumph of Loyalty*, of which one act was written, and of which the *Night Scene*, attributed to 1801, is a fragment.

The full account of De Quincey's meeting, and description of Coleridge, is found in De Quincey's *Works*. His dictum on Coleridge has been often quoted: "He is the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and most comprehensive that has yet existed among men."]

CHAPTER XIV FIRST LECTURES

[In August 1807 we find Humphry Davy writing to Poole that he had been corresponding with Coleridge urging him to undertake a course of Lectures at the Royal Institution, London, whither Davy had gone after leaving the Pneumatic Institute of Dr. Beddoes. Coleridge did not show alacrity in answering, one of the reasons being doubtless the attitude of his friend Tom Poole, who did not approve of Coleridge wasting his abilities in lecturing, even on Shakespeare. Southey, too, corroborated. When he heard that Coleridge was engaging to give lectures at the Royal Institution he wrote: "From this I shall endeavour to dissuade him, if it be not too late, because it will detain him from what is of greater immediate importance; because he will never be ready, and therefore always on the fret; and because I think his prospects such that it is not prudent to give lectures to ladies and gentlemen in Albemarle Street,—Sidney Smith is good enough for them."

At last Coleridge replied to Davy in a hesitating state of mind:

LETTER 137. TO DAVY

September 11, 1807.

Yet how very few are there whom I esteem, and (pardon me from this seeming deviation from the language of friendship) admire equally with yourself. It is indeed, and has long been, my settled persuasion, that of all men known to me, I could not justly equal any one to you, combining in one view powers of intellect, and the steady moral exertion of them to the production of direct and indirect good; and if I give you pain, my heart bears witness that I inflicted a greater on myself, – nor should have written such words (alluding to expression of feeling respecting himself in the opening portion of the letter), if the chief feeling that mixed with and followed them, had not been that of shame and self-reproach, for having profited neither by your general example, nor your frequent and immediate incentives. Neither would I have oppressed you at all with this melancholy statement, but that for some days past, I have found myself so much better in body and mind, as to cheer me at times with the thought that this most morbid and oppressive weight is gradually lifting up, and my will acquiring some degree of strength and power of reaction.

I have, however, received such manifest benefit from horse exercise, and gradual abandonment of fermented and total abstinence from spirituous liquors, and by being alone with Poole, and the renewal of old times, by wandering about among my dear old walks of Quantock and Alfoxden, that I have seriously set about composition, with a view to ascertain whether I can conscientiously undertake what I so very much wish, a series of Lectures at the Royal Institution. I trust, I need not assure you, how much I feel your kindness, and let me add, that I consider the application as an act of great and unmerited condescension on the part of the managers as may have consented to it. After having discussed the subject with Poole, he entirely agrees with me, that the former plan suggested by me is invidious in itself, unless I disguised my real opinions; as far as I should deliver my sentiments respecting the *arts*, would require references and illustrations not suitable to a public lecture room; and, finally, that I ought not to reckon upon spirits enough to seek about for books of Italian prints, etc. And that after all the

general and most philosophical principles, I might naturally introduce into lectures on a more confined plan—namely, the principles of poetry, conveyed and illustrated in a series of lectures. 1. On the genius and writings of Shakespeare, relatively to his predecessors and contemporaries, so as to determine not only his merits and defects, and the proportion that each must bear to the whole, but what of his merits and defects belong to his age, as being found in contemporaries of genius, and what belonged to himself. 2. On Spenser, including the metrical romances, and Chaucer, though the character of the latter as a manner-painter, I shall have so far anticipated in distinguishing it from, and comparing it with, Shakespeare. 3. Milton. 4. Dryden and Pope, including the origin and after history of poetry of witty logic. 5. On Modern Poetry, and its characteristics, with no introduction of any particular names. In the course of these I shall have said all I know, the whole result of many years' continued reflection on the subjects of taste, imagination, fancy, passion, the source of our pleasures in the fine arts, in the *antithetical* balance-loving nature of man, and the connexion of such pleasures with moral excellence. The advantage of this plan to myself is — that I have all my materials ready, and can rapidly reduce them into form (for this is my solemn determination, not to give a single lecture till I have in fair writing at least one half of the whole course), for as to trusting anything to immediate effect, I shrink from it as from guilt, and guilt in me it would be.

In short, I should have no objection at once to pledge myself to the immediate preparation of these lectures, but that I am so surrounded by embarrassments.

For God's sake enter into my true motive for this wearing detail: it would torture me if it had any other effect than to impress on you my desire and hope to accord with your plan, and my incapability of making any final promise till the end of this month.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

In spite of Poole and Southey's objections a course of Lectures was at last arranged. Poole, writing to Davy in January 1808, informs him that their mutual friend Purkis had heard one of the lectures and speaks highly of it and its effect. "I heretofore thought Coleridge," says Poole, "might employ himself in something more

permanently important than lecturing on such subjects as he would lecture on at the Royal Institution. But from my more intimate knowledge of his present state and habits, I am now convinced that he *cannot* exert himself to better purpose; and further, that nothing whatever is more likely to stimulate him to exert his matchless powers (so is he constituted, and so morbid feelings oppress him) than in reading his productions to such an audience,"

The Lectures were delivered between 12th January and June 1808. Charles Lamb, in a letter to his friend Manning, on 26th February 1808, says: "Coleridge has delivered two lectures at the Royal Institution; two more attended but he did not come. It is thought he has gone sick upon them" (*Ainger*, i, 246). Wordsworth, hearing of Coleridge's illness, came to town in April, and he reported to Sir George Beaumont that he had heard Coleridge lecture twice, and that he seemed to give great satisfaction, although he was not in spirits and suffered much during the course of the week in body and mind.

De Quincey's vivid description of the "lock" of carriages in Albemarle Street, and dismissal after dismissal of audiences on account of Coleridge's failure to appear, like so much more in the work of that supreme master of imaginative biography, is perhaps exaggerated. Coleridge disappointed his audience only twice, on account of illness.

Besides the evidence of Lamb and Purkis and Wordsworth, regarding the success of the lectures, Henry Crabb Robinson gives some short notices of them. He heard at least four of the course. The second Lecture, delivered on 5th February, he reports to have been largely taken up with discoursing on the origin of the Greek mythology and Greek drama, and in showing that the Modern Drama, like the Ancient, originated in Religion. The character of Hamlet was also treated of. The lectures were much in substance similar to the course afterwards given in 1811, in which Coleridge more fully developed his views.

In one of his lectures Coleridge made an attack on Lancaster, the founder of the method of education which went under his name, which caused some recrimination on the part of the adherents of Lancaster. Coleridge about this time had, through the Wordsworths,

become acquainted with Dr. Andrew Bell, the originator of the Madras system of education, and he spoke as the champion of Bell against Lancaster in the controversy that ensued between the partisans of the two. Bell seemingly, from the evidence of Coleridge's letters, expostulated with Coleridge for his having too warmly espoused his cause. Of the four letters written to Dr. Bell at this time, we give the first. The others are of little importance. The dates of the three others are: II, April 1808; III, 17th May 1808, in which Coleridge asserts that he is "a convinced and fervent son of the Church of England"; and IV, May, 1808. The first letter relates to the *Elements of Tuition*, which Dorothy Wordsworth had been revising for Dr. Bell, and was also submitted to Coleridge for his opinion.

LETTER 138. TO DR. ANDREW BELL

15 April, 1808.

A concurrence of intelligence from my friends in the North, has not only made it difficult for me to force my mind away from dreaming about them, but has employed me in running about after my friends day after day; yet even this would not have prevented my commencing (according to my judgment, which, on such a work, is but another word for my feelings) on the sheets you have sent me, if I had seen aught which appeared to me likely to diminish its *present utility*. I confess that I seem to perceive some little of an effort produced by talking with *objectors*, with men who, to a man like you, are far, far more pernicious than avowed antagonists. Men who are actuated by fear and perpetual suspicion of human nature, and who regard their poorer brethren as possible highwaymen, burglars, or Parisian revolutionists (which includes all evil in one), and who, if God gave them grace to know their own hearts, would find that even the little good they are willing to assist proceeds from fear, from a momentary variation of the balance of probabilities, which happened to be in favour of letting their brethren know just enough to keep them from the gallows. O dear Dr. Bell, you are a great man! Never, never permit minds so inferior to your own, however high their artificial rank may be, to induce you to pare away *an atom* of what you know to be right! The sin that besets a truly good man is, that, naturally desiring to see instantly done what he knows will be eminently useful to his fellow beings, he sometimes will consent to sacrifice a part, in order to realize, in a given spot (to construct, as the mathematicians say), his idea in a given diagram. But yours is for the world—for all mankind; and all your opposers might, with as good chance of success, stop the half-moon from becoming full—all they can do is, a little to retard it. Pardon, dear sir, a great liberty taken with you, but one which my heart and sincere reverence for you impelled—as the Apostle said, Rejoice!—so I say to you *Hope!* From hope, faith and love, all that is good, all that is great, all lovely and “all honourable things,” proceed, from fear, distrust and the spirit of compromise—all that is evil. You and Thomas Clarkson have, in addition to your *material* good works, given to the spiritual world a benefaction of incalculable value. You have both—he in removing the evil, you in producing good—afforded a practicable

proof how great things one good man may do, who is thoroughly in earnest.

May the Almighty preserve you!

P.S. If, in the course of a few days, you could send me the same, or another copy of, the sheets I now send you, they would be useful to me in composing my lecture on the subject. Sir G. and Lady Beaumont are very desirous to see and consult you about a school at Dunmow. Be assured, while I have life and power, I shall find a deep consolation in being your zealous apostle. I write in a great hurry, scarce knowing what I write; but before a future edition, I will play the minute critic with you, and regard your book as a literary work for posterity.

About this time Coleridge met his old sweetheart, Mary Evans; and, in answer to an invitation to call upon her and her husband, Mr. Todd, he wrote: "Undoubtedly the first moment of the feeling was an awful one to me, the *second* of time previous to my full recognition of you, the Mary Evans of 14 years ago, flashed across my eyes with a truth and vividness as great as its rapidity." The full letter, which is undated, but must be of 1804-8, was communicated to the *Athenæum* of 18 May 1895, by her granddaughter, Mrs. Linde, of Wiesbaden.]

CHAPTER XV THE FRIEND

[During the Spring of 1808, Coleridge, while delivering his lectures, had some correspondence with Matilda Betham between March and July. Matilda Betham was a portrait painter, and Coleridge had consented to sit for her. The letters to Matilda Betham are probably dated thus: I, (March) 1808; II, 4th April 1808; III, (April 1808); IV, 7th May 1808; V, (— — 1808). *Fraser's Magazine*, 1878.

After paying a visit to the Clarkson's, at Bury St. Edmunds, Coleridge went back to Grasmere and lived with the Wordsworths, now at Allan Bank. Coleridge felt that lecturing was not a permanent form of employment, and now projected a journal to disseminate what he called the Permanent Principles of Politics, Morality, and Religion. In a letter written about this time to his old friend Josiah Wade, he repudiates the accusation that he had lived to little purpose.

LETTER 139. TO WADE

Tuesday night, *i.e.*, Wednesday morning.
(1807–8).

My best and dearest friend,

I have barely time to scribble a few lines, so as not to miss the post, for here as every where, there are charitable people, who, taking for granted that you have no business of your own, would save from the pain of vacancy, by employing you in theirs.

As to the letter you propose to write to a man who is unworthy even of a rebuke from you, I might most unfeignedly object to some parts of it, from a pang of conscience forbidding me to allow, even from a dear friend, words of admiration, which are inapplicable in exact proportion to the power given to me of having deserved them, if I had done my duty.

It is not of comparative utility I speak: for as to what has been actually done, and in relation to useful effects produced, whether on the minds of individuals, or of the public, I dare boldly stand forward, and (let every man have his own, and that be counted mine which, but for, and through me, would not have existed) will challenge the proudest of my literary contemporaries to compare proofs with me, of usefulness in the excitement of reflection, and the diffusion of original or forgotten, yet necessary and important truths and knowledge; and this is not the less true, because I have suffered others to reap all the advantages. But, O dear friend, this consciousness, raised by insult of enemies, and alienated friends, stands me in little stead to my own soul, in how little then, before the all-righteous Judge! who, requiring back the talents he had entrusted, will, if the mercies of Christ do not intervene, not demand of me what I have done, but why I did not do more; why, with powers above so many, I had sunk in many things below most! But this is too painful, and in remorse we often waste the energy which should be better employed in reformation – that essential part, and only possible proof, of sincere repentance.

May God bless you, and your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

To Davy Coleridge writes a little later.

LETTER 140. TO DAVY

Grasmere, Kendal, Wednesday, December, 1808.

My dear Davy,

My health and spirits are improved beyond my boldest hopes. A very painful effort of moral courage has been remunerated by tranquillity—by ease from the sting of self-disapprobation. I have done more for the last ten weeks than I had done for three years before. Among other things, I wrote what the few persons who saw it thought a spirited and close reasoned letter to Mr. Jeffery, respecting the introductory paragraph of the *Edinburgh* review of your paper; but I was earnestly dissuaded from sending it, as from an act of undeserved respect—as from too great a condescension even on my part; and secondly (and which was of more weight with me), as an act involving you more or less, whatever I might say, and likely to be attributed to your instigation, direct or indirect, as it is not unknown that I have been on terms of intimacy with you. Yet I own I should be sorry to have it lost, as I think it is the most eloquent and manly composition I ever produced. If you think it worth the postage, it shall be transcribed, and I will send you the original. The passage in question was the grossest and most disgusting *kick-up* of envy that has deformed even the *E. R.* Had the author had the truth before his eyes, and purposely written in diametrical opposition, he could not have succeeded better. It is high time that the spear of Ithuriel should touch the toad at the ear of the public.

I would willingly inform you of my chance of success in obtaining a sufficient number of subscribers, so as to justify me prudentially in commencing the work (*The Friend*), but I do not at present possess grounds even for a sane conjecture. It will depend in a great measure on the zeal of my friends, on which I confess, not without remorse, I have more often cast water than oil. Here a conceit about the Greek fire might come in, but the simile is somewhat *tritical*.

Wordsworth has nearly finished a series of masterly essays on our late and present relations to Portugal and Spain. Southey is sending to the press his *History of Brazil*, and at the same time (the indefatigable!) composing a defence of religious missions to the

East, etc. Excepting the introduction (which, however, I have heard highly praised, but myself think it shallow, flippant, and ipse dixitish), I have read few books with such deep interest as the *Chronicle of the Cid*. The whole scene in the Cortes is superior to any equal part of any epic poem, save the *Paradise Lost*—*me saltem judice*. The deep glowing, yet ever self-controlled passion of the Cid—his austere dignity, so finely harmonizing with his pride of loyal humility—the address to his swords, and the burst of contemptuous rage in his final charge and address to the Infantes of Carrion, and his immediate recall of his mind—are beyond all ordinary praises. It delights me to be able to speak thus of a work of Southey's! I am so often forced to quarrel with his want of judgment and his unthinkingness—which, Heaven knows, I never do without pain, and the vexation of a disappointed wish. But I am encroaching on time more valuable than my own, and I, too, have enough to do. May God grant you health and the continuance of your intellectual vigour!

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 141. TO DAVY

Grasmere, Kendal, December 14 (1808).

Dear Davy,

The above written copies will explain this second application to you. I understood from Mr. Bernard (afterwards Sir Thomas), as well as from yourself, that Mr. Savage had agreed to print and publish the work on the sole condition that he was to have five per cent. for the publisher, and to charge the printing, etc., at the price charged to the booksellers, or the *trade* (as they very ingenuously and truly style their art and mystery). To spare me the necessity of troubling Mr. Bernard with a fresh letter, I entreat you to transmit this to him as soon as possible. There is but one part of Mr. Savage's letter that I can permit myself to comment upon, that of the propriety of pricing the essay at sixpence, and consequently of not having it stamped, nor finely printed, nor on fine paper. For him, and for a work conducted as he would have it conducted, *i.e.*, one, the object of which is to attract as many purchasers as possible, this might answer. My purposes are widely different. I do not write in this work for the *multitude*, but for those who, by rank or fortune, or official situation, or talents and habits of reflection, are to *influence* the multitude. I write to found true principles, to oppose false principles in criticism, legislation, philosophy, morals, and international law. As giving me an opportunity of explaining myself, I say Cobbett sells his weekly sheet for tenpence. Now this differs from mine in two points, mainly: First, he applies himself to the passions that are gratified by curiosity, and sharp, often calumnious, personality; by the events and political topics of the day, and the names of notorious contemporaries. Now, from all these I abstain altogether—nay, to strangle this vicious temper of mind, by directing the interest to the nobler germs in human nature, is my express and paramount object. But of English readers three-fourths are led to purchase periodical works in the expectation of gratifying these passions—even periodical works professedly literary, of which the keen interest excited by the *Edinburgh Review*, and its wide circulation, yield a proof as striking as it is dishonourable to the moral taste of the present public—all these readers I give up all claim to. Secondly, Cobbett himself rarely

writes more than a third of the weekly journal; the remainder of the sheet is either mere reprinting or stupid make-weights from correspondents (with few exceptions) of the very lowest order. And what are his own compositions? The undigested passionate monologues of a man of robust natural understanding, but one unenriched by various knowledge, undisciplined by a comprehensive philosophy; under the warping influence of rooted habits of opposing and attacking, and from this state of mind fruitful in thoughts which a purer taste would have rejected so long, that they would cease to occur, and promiscuous in the adoption of whatever such a state of mind suggests to him of these thoughts furnished by the occurrences of the day. Indeed, more often than otherwise his letters, etc., are mere comments on large *extracts* from the morning papers, such as a passionate man would talk at breakfast over a newspaper supporting the political party which he hated. No *onethesis* is proposed—there is no orderly origination, development, and conclusion; in short, none of those qualities which constitute the *nicety* and *effort* of composition. But *I* (and if I do not, my work will be dropped and abandoned)—I bring the results of a life of intense study and unremitting meditation, of toil and personal travels, and great unrepaid expense. Those to whom these reasons would not justify me in selling the work (stamped as Cobbett's) for that part of twopence more which remains when the additional cost of finer paper and printing is deducted, I neither expect nor wish to have among my subscribers. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that in pointing out these differences I had no intention of depreciating the political journal (the style and contents of the work are perfectly well suited to the purpose of the writer). The labourer's pocket knife was one excellently adapted to the cutting of bread and cheese, but it would be unfair to demand that the medical cutler A. should sell his case of lancets at the same price that the common cutler B. sells an equal weight of the bread-and-cheese knives, supposing them both equally good of their kind. This letter from Mr. Savage, added to his long delay in answering me at all, has a good deal perplexed my proceedings, but it shall not make me abandon my intention.

If anything new have occurred in chemistry from your own labours, or those of others, it would be deeply gratifying to me to be informed of it by you; for hitherto I have not been able to afford to take in any philosophical journal, or, indeed, any other. I was told

by a friend that William Allen had proved that oxygen was absorbed in the lungs, but that its action consisted in carrying off the carbon from the blood—consequently that the old hypothesis of refrigeration was not altogether false. But my communicant was no chemist, and his account was so confused, that I am not sure that I have given an accurate statement of it.

My health and spirits are far better than I had dared hope, only from neglect of exercise I remain more corpulent than I ought, though I drink nothing but table-beer, and eat very moderately. When I was in London I was shocked at the alteration in our friend Tobin's looks and appearance. Those who always interpret two coincidents into cause and effect would surmise that marriage has been less conducive to his health than to his moral comfort. It would give me serious pleasure to have a more cheerful account of him.

As soon as I have a little leisure I shall send my Greek accidence and vocabulary of terminations to the press with my Greek-English Lexicon, which will be followed by a Greek philosophical grammar. Heaven preserve and keep you!

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER FROM DAVY TO COLERIDGE

December 27, 1808.

Alas! poor Beddoes is dead! He died on Christmas eve. He wrote to me two letters, on two successive days, 22nd and 23rd. From the first, which was full of affection and new feeling, I anticipated his state. He is gone at the moment when his mind was purified and exalted for noble affections and great works.

My heart is heavy. I would talk to you of your own plans, which I shall endeavour in every way to promote; I would talk to you of my own labours, which have been incessant since I saw you, and not without result; but I am interrupted by very melancholy feelings, which, when you see this, I know you will partake of.

Ever, my dear Coleridge,

Very affectionately yours,

H. DAVY.

LETTER 142. TO DAVY

Grasmere, Kendal, Monday morning, January 30, 1809.

My dear Davy,

I was deeply affected by the passage in your letter respecting Dr. Beddoes. It was indeed the echo of my own experience. The intelligence of his departure from among us, came upon me abruptly and unexpectedly. I was sitting down to dinner, having quitted an unfinished sheet, which I had been writing, in answer to a long and affectionate letter from the Doctor. There was indeed a depth and flow of feeling in it, which filled me with bodings, but I had no thought that the event was so near at hand. The note, therefore, sent from one of his patients, who had placed himself at Clifton by mine and Wordsworth's advice, (written) the day after his decease, struck me like a bodily blow, and was followed by a long and convulsive weeping, with scarce any inward suffering: but when some half hour after I recovered myself, and my tears flowed slowly, and with grief more worthy of the cause, I felt that more hope had been taken out of my life by this than by any former event. For Beddoes was good and beneficent to all men; but to me he had always been kind and affectionate, and latterly I had become attached to him by a personal tenderness. The death of Mr. Thomas Wedgwood pulled hard at my heart; I am sure no week of my life — almost I might have said scarce a day, in which I have not been made either sad or thoughtful by the recollection. But Dr. Beddoes's death has pulled yet harder, probably because it came second — likewise, too, perhaps that I had been in the habit of connecting such oppression of despondency with my love of him. There are two things which I exceedingly wished, and in both have been disappointed: to have written the *Life* and prepared the *Psychological Remains* of my revered friend and benefactor, T. W.: and to have been entrusted with the *Biography*, etc., of Dr. B. This latter work (Southey informs me) was first offered to you, and then to Mr. Giddy, and is finally devolved on Dr. Stock. As my heart bears me full witness with what unalloyed satisfaction I should have seen this last duty in your hands or in D. Giddy's, so I feel myself permitted to avow the pain, yea, the sense of shame, with which I contemplate Dr. Stock as the performant. I could not help assenting to Southey's

remark, that the proper vignette for the work would be a funeral lamp beside an urn, and Dr. Stock in the act of placing an extinguisher on it.

I have just read a brief account of your first lecture of this season, and, though I did not see as clearly as I could wish, the pertinence of the religious declaration quoted from you, and am not quite at ease (especially when I think of Darwin), when I find theosophy mingled with science, and though I wished to have been with you to have expressed my doubts concerning the accuracy of your comparison between the great discoverers of science and the Miltons, Spinozas, and Rafaels; yet the intervening history (it is only that I am writing to you that I stopped and hesitate in using the word) overwhelmed me, and I dare avow, furnished to my understanding and conscience proofs more convincing than the dim analogies of natural organization to human mechanism, both of the Supreme Reason, as super-essential to the world of the senses; of an analogous mind in man not resulting from its perishable machine, nor even from the general spirit of life, its inclosed steam or perfluent water-force; and of the moral connection between the finite and the infinite Reason, and the awful majesty of the former, as both the revelation and the exponent voice of the latter, immortal timepiece, an eternal sun. Shame be with me in my death-hour if ever I withhold or fear to pay my first debt of due honour to the truly great man, because it has been my good lot to be his contemporary, or my happiness to have known, esteemed, and loved, as well as admired him.

It is impossible to pass otherwise than abruptly to my own affairs. I had from the very first informed Mr. Savage that I would not undertake the work at all, except I could secure him from all possible risk. His proposals were such, that had I acceded to them, after years of toil, I should have been his debtor and slave, without having received a farthing—or, to use the strong, coarse illustration of a friend, a man of consummate good sense and knowledge of the world, and of twenty years' experience in periodical works—“Savage's proposals would have led you into a gulph of debt or obligation: you would have been like a girl who gets into a house of ill-fame, and whom the old bawd always keeps in debt, stripping her of every shilling she gets for prostitution.” What my error was,

after my *first* conversation with Mr. S. I know, but shall not say: but his mistake has been in construing my indifference as to pecuniary matters, and *apparent* ignorance of business, into absolute silliness and passive idiocy. But this is passed. As soon as I received his letter I made up my mind to another mode of publication. *The Friend* will be printed as a newspaper, *i.e.* not in form or matter, but under the act of parliament, and with its privilege, printed at Kendal, and sent to each subscriber by the post.

My health is more regular; yet, spite of severe attention to my diet, etc., my sufferings are at times heavy. Please to make my best respects to Mr. Bernard.

May God bless you!

S. T. COLERIDGE.

The Prospectus of *The Friend* and the following correspondence with Southey explain Coleridge's views of what he conceived as the requirements of a periodical devoted to the highest interests of Truth and Humanity.

LETTER 143. TO — —

1 June, 1809.

It is not unknown to you, that I have employed almost the whole of my Life in acquiring, or endeavouring to acquire, useful Knowledge by Study, Reflection, Observation, and by cultivating the Society of my Superiors in Intellect, both at Home and in foreign Countries. You know too, that at different Periods of my Life I have not only planned, but collected the materials for, many Works on various and important Subjects: so many indeed, that the Number of my unrealized Schemes, and the Mass of my miscellaneous Fragments, have often furnished my Friends with a Subject of Raillery, and sometimes of Regret and Reproof. Waiving the Mention of all private and accidental Hindrances, I am inclined to believe, that this Want of Perseverance has been produced in the Main by an Over-activity of Thought, modified by a constitutional Indolence, which made it more pleasant to me to continue acquiring, than to reduce what I had acquired to a regular Form. Add too, that almost daily throwing off my Notices or Reflections in desultory Fragments, I was still tempted onward by an increasing Sense of the Imperfection of my Knowledge, and by the Conviction, that, in Order fully to comprehend and develope any one Subject, it was necessary that I should make myself Master of some other, which again as regularly involved a third, and so on, with an ever-widening Horizon. Yet one Habit, formed during long Absences from those with whom I could converse with full Sympathy, has been of Advantage to me — that of daily noting down, in my Memorandum or Common-place Books, both Incidents and Observations; whatever had occurred to me from without, and all the Flux and Reflux of my Mind within itself. The Number of these Notices, and their Tendency, miscellaneous as they were, to one common End (*"quid sumus et quid futuri gignimur,"* what we are and what we are born to become; and thus from the End of our Being to deduce its proper Objects) first encouraged me to undertake the Weekly Essay, of which you will consider this Letter as the Prospectus.

Not only did the plan seem to accord better than any other with the Nature of my own Mind, both in its Strength and in its Weakness; but conscious that, in upholding some Principles both of Taste and

Philosophy, adopted by the great Men of Europe from the Middle of the fifteenth till toward the Close of the seventeenth Century, I must run Counter to many Prejudices of many of my readers (*for old Faith is often modern Heresy*) I perceived too in a periodical Essay the most likely Means of winning, instead of forcing my Way. Supposing Truth on my Side, the Shock of the first Day might be so far lessened by Reflections of the succeeding Days, so as to procure for my next Week's Essay a less hostile Reception, than it would have met with, had it been only the next Chapter of a present Volume. I hoped to disarm the Mind of those Feelings, which preclude Conviction by Contempt, and, as it were, fling the Door in the Face of Reasoning by a *Presumption* of its Absurdity. A Motive too for honourable Ambition was supplied by the Fact, that every periodical Paper of the Kind now attempted, which had been conducted with Zeal and Ability, was not only well received at the Time, but has become permanently, and in the best Sense of the Word, popular. By honourable Ambition I mean the strong Desire to be useful, aided by the Wish to be generally acknowledged to have been so. As I feel myself actuated in no ordinary Degree by this Desire, so the Hope of realizing it appears less and less presumptuous to me, since I have received from Men of highest Rank and established Character in the Republic of Letters, not only strong Encouragements as to my own fitness for the Undertaking, but likewise Promises of Support from their own Stores.

The *Object* of *The Friend*, briefly and generally expressed, is—to uphold those Truths and those Merits, which are founded in the nobler and permanent Parts of our Nature, against the Caprices of Fashion, and such Pleasures, as either depend on transitory and accidental Causes, or are pursued from less worthy Impulses. The chief *Subjects* of my own Essays will be:

The true and sole Ground of Morality, or Virtue, as distinguished from Prudence.

The Origin and Growth of moral Impulses, as distinguished from external and immediate Motives.

The necessary dependence of Taste on Moral Impulses and Habits: and the Nature of Taste (relatively to Judgment in general and to Genius) defined, illustrated, and applied. Under this Head I

comprize the Substance of the Lectures given, and intended to have been given, at the Royal Institution, on the distinguished English Poets, in illustration of the general Principles of Poetry; together with Suggestions concerning the Affinity of the Fine Arts to each other, and the Principles common to them all: Architecture; Gardening; Dress; Music; Painting; Poetry.

The opening out of new Objects of just Admiration in our own Language; and Information of the present State and past History of Swedish, Danish, German, and Italian Literature (to which, but as supplied by a Friend, I may add the Spanish, Portuguese and French) as far as the same has not been already given to English Readers, or is not to be found in common French Authors.

Characters met with in real Life: — Anecdotes and Results of my own Life and Travels, etc. etc. as far as they are illustrative of general moral Laws, and have no immediate Bearing on personal or immediate Politics.

Education in its widest Sense, private and national.

Sources of Consolation to the afflicted in Misfortune, or Disease, or Dejection of Mind, from the Exertion and right Application of the Reason, the Imagination, and the moral Sense; and new Sources of Enjoyment opened out, or an Attempt (as an Illustrious Friend once expressed the Thought to me) to add Sunshine to Daylight, by making the Happy more happy. In the words “Dejection of Mind” I refer particularly to Doubt or Disbelief of the moral Government of the World, and the grounds and arguments for the religious Hopes of Human Nature.

LETTER 144. TO SOUTHEY

October 20, 1809.

My dear Southey,

What really makes me despond is the daily confirmation I receive of my original apprehension, that the plan and execution of *The Friend* is so utterly unsuitable to the public taste as to preclude all rational hopes of its success. Much, certainly, might have been done to have made the former numbers less so by the interposition of others written more expressly for general interest; and, if I could attribute it wholly to any removable error of my own, I should be less dejected. I will do my best, will frequently interpose tales and whole numbers of amusement, will make the periods lighter and shorter; and the work itself, proceeding according to its plan, will become more interesting when the foundations have been laid. Massiveness is the merit of a foundation; the gilding, ornaments, stucco-work, conveniences, sunshine, and sunny prospects will come with the superstructure. Yet still I feel the deepest conviction that no efforts of mine, compatible with the hope of effecting any good purpose, or with the duty I owe to my permanent reputation, will remove the complaint. No real information can be conveyed, no important errors radically extracted, without demanding an effort of thought on the part of the reader; but the obstinate, and now contemptuous, aversion to all energy of thinking is the mother evil, the cause of all the evils in politics, morals, and literature, which it is my object to wage war against; so that I am like a physician who, for a patient paralytic in both arms, prescribes, as the only possible cure, the use of the dumb-bells. Whatever I publish, and in whatever form, this obstacle will be felt. *The Rambler*, which, altogether, has sold a hundred copies for one of the *Connoisseur*, yet, during its periodical appearance, did not sell one for fifty, and was dropped by reader after reader for its dreary gravity and massiveness of manner. Now what I wish you to do for me—if, amid your many labours, you can find or make a leisure hour—is, to look over the eight numbers, and to write a letter to *The Friend* in a lively style, chiefly urging, in a humorous manner, my Don Quixotism in expecting that the public will ever pretend to understand my lucubrations, or feel any interest in subjects of such sad and

unkempt antiquity, and contrasting my style with the cementless periods of the modern Anglo-Gallican style, which not only are understood *beforehand*, but, being free from all connections of logic, all the hooks and eyes of intellectual memory, never oppress the mind by any after recollections, but, like civil visitors, stay a few moments, and leave the room quite free and open for the next comers. Something of this kind, I mean, that I may be able to answer it so as, in the answer, to state my own convictions at full on the nature of obscurity, etc.

God bless you!

S. T. COLERIDGE.

SOUTHEY'S ANSWER

To *The Friend*

[Without date.]

Sir,

I know not whether your subscribers have expected too much from you, but it appears to me that you expect too much from your subscribers; and that, however accurately you may understand the diseases of the age, you have certainly mistaken its temper. In the first place, Sir, your essays are too long. "Brevity," says a contemporary journalist, "is the humour of the times; a tragedy must not exceed fifteen hundred lines, a fashionable preacher must not trespass above fifteen minutes upon his congregation. We have short waistcoats and short campaigns; everything must be short—except lawsuits, speeches in Parliament, and tax-tables." It is expressly stated, in the prospectus of a collection of extracts, called the *Beauties of Sentiment*, that the extracts shall always be complete sense, and *not very long*. Secondly, Sir, though your essays appear in so tempting a shape to a lounge, the very fiends themselves were not more deceived by the *lignum vitae* apples, when

They, fondly thinking to allay

Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit

Chew'd bitter ashes,

than the reader is who takes up one of your papers from breakfast table, parlour-window, sofa, or ottoman, thinking to amuse himself with a few minutes' light reading. We are informed, upon the authority of no less a man than Sir Richard Phillips, how "it has long been a subject of just complaint among the lovers of English literature, that our language has been deficient in lounging or parlour-window books;" and to remove the opprobrium from the language, Sir Richard advertises a list, mostly ending in *ana*, under the general title of *Lounging Books or Light Reading*. I am afraid, Mr. Friend, that your predecessors would never have obtained their popularity unless their essays had been of the description Ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φίλονι, — and this is a light age.

You have yourself observed that few converts were made by Burke; but the cause which you have assigned does not sufficiently explain why a man of such powerful talents and so authoritative a reputation should have produced so little an effect upon the minds of the people. Was it not because he neither was nor could be generally understood? Because, instead of endeavouring to make difficult things easy of comprehension, he made things which were easy in themselves, difficult to be comprehended by the manner in which he presented them, evolving their causes and involving their consequences, till the reader, whose mind was not habituated to metaphysical discussions, neither knew in what his arguments began nor in what they ended? You have told me that the straightest line must be the shortest; but do not you yourself sometimes nose out your way, hound-like, in pursuit of truth, turning and winding, and doubling and running when the same object might be reached in a tenth part of the time by darting straightforward like a greyhound to the mark? Burke failed of effect upon the people for this reason, — there was the difficulty of mathematics without the precision in his writings. You looked through the process without arriving at the proof. It was the fashion to read him because of his rank as a political partizan; otherwise he would not have been read. Even in the House of Commons he was admired more than he was listened to; not a sentence came from him which was not pregnant with seeds of thought, if it had fallen upon good ground; yet his speeches convinced nobody, while the mellifluous orations of Mr.

Pitt persuaded his majorities of whatever he wished to persuade them; because they were easily understood, what mattered it to him that they were as easily forgotten?

The reader, Sir, must think before he can understand you; is it not a little unreasonable to require from him an effort which you have yourself described as so very painful a one? and is not this effort not merely difficult but in many cases impossible? All brains, Sir, were not made for thinking: modern philosophy has taught us that they are galvanic machines, and thinking is only an accident belonging to them. Intellect is not essential to the functions of life; in the ordinary course of society it is very commonly dispensed with; and we have lived, Mr. Friend, to witness experiments for carrying on government without it. This is surely a proof that it is a rare commodity; and yet you expect it in all your subscribers!

Give us your moral medicines in a more “elegant preparation.” The Reverend J. Gentle administers his physic in the form of tea; Dr. Solomon prefers the medium of a cordial; Mr. Ching exhibits his in gingerbread nuts; Dr. Barton in wine; but you, Mr. Friend, come with a tonic bolus, bitter in the mouth, difficult to swallow, and hard of digestion.

My dear Coleridge,

All this, were it not for the Sir and the Mr. Friend, is like a real letter from me to you: I fell into the strain without intending it, and would not send it were it not to show you that I have attempted to do something. From jest I got into earnest, and, trying to pass from earnest to jest failed. It was against the grain, and would not do. I had re-read the eight last numbers, and the truth is, they left me no heart for jesting or for irony. In time they will do their work; it is the form of publication only that is unlucky, and that cannot now be remedied. But this evil is merely temporary. Give two or three amusing numbers, and you will hear of admiration from every side. Insert a few more poems, — any that you have, except *Christabel*, for that is of too much value. There is scarcely anything you could do which would excite so much notice as if you were *now* to write the character of Bonaparte, announced in former times for “to-morrow.” and to-morrow and to-morrow; and I think it would do good by counteracting that base spirit of condescension towards him, which I

am afraid is gaining ground; and by showing the people what grounds they have for hope.

God bless you!

R. S.

LETTER 145. TO R. L.

26 October, 1809.

Dear Sir,

When I first undertook the present Publication for the sake and with the *avowed* object of referring Men in all things to PRINCIPLES or fundamental Truths, I was well aware of the obstacles which the plan itself would oppose to my success. For in order to the regular attainment of this object, all the driest and least attractive Essays must appear in the first fifteen or twenty Numbers, and thus subject me to the necessity of demanding effort or soliciting patience in that part of the Work, where it was most my interest to secure the confidence of my Readers by winning their favour. Though I dared warrant for the pleasantness of the Journey on the whole; though I might promise that the road would, for the far greater part of it, be found plain and easy, that it would pass through countries of various prospect, and that at every stage there would be a change of company; it still remained a heavy disadvantage, that I had to start at the foot of a high and steep hill: and I foresaw, not without occasional feelings of despondency, that during the slow and laborious ascent it would require no common management to keep my Passengers in good humour with the Vehicle and its Driver. As far as this inconvenience could be palliated by sincerity and previous confession, I have no reason to accuse myself of neglect. In the Prospectus of *The Friend*, which for this cause I re-printed and annexed to the first Number, I felt it my duty to inform such as might be inclined to patronize the Publication, that I must submit to be esteemed dull by those who sought chiefly for amusement: and this I hazarded as a *general* confession, though in my own mind I felt a cheerful confidence that it would apply almost exclusively to the earlier Numbers. I could not therefore be surprised, however much I may have been depressed, by the frequency with which you hear *The Friend* complained of for its abstruseness and obscurity; nor did the highly flattering expressions, with which you accompanied your communication, prevent me from feeling its truth to the whole extent.

An Author's pen like Children's legs, improves by exercise. That part of the blame which rests on myself, I am exerting my best

faculties to remove. A man long accustomed to silent and solitary meditation, in proportion as he encreases the power of thinking in long and connected trains, is apt to lose or lessen the talent of communicating his thoughts with grace and perspicuity. Doubtless too, I have in some measure injured my style, in respect to its facility and popularity, from having almost confined my reading, of late years, to the Works of the Ancients and those of the elder Writers in the modern languages. We insensibly imitate what we habitually admire; and an aversion to the epigrammatic unconnected periods of the fashionable *Anglo-gallican* Taste has too often made me willing to forget, that the stately march and difficult evolutions, which characterize the eloquence of Hooker, Bacon, Milton, and Jeremy Taylor, are, notwithstanding their intrinsic excellence, still less suited to a periodical Essay. This fault I am now endeavouring to correct; though I can never so far sacrifice my judgment to the desire of being immediately popular, as to cast my sentences in the French moulds, or affect a style which an ancient critic would have deemed purposely invented for persons troubled with the asthma to read, and for those to comprehend who labour under the more pitiable asthma of a short-witted intellect. It cannot but be injurious to the human mind never to be called into effort: the habit of receiving pleasure without any exertion of thought, by the mere excitement of curiosity and sensibility, may be justly ranked among the worst effects of habitual novel reading. It is true that these short and unconnected sentences are easily and instantly understood: but it is equally true, that wanting all the cement of thought as well as of style, all the connections, and (if you will forgive so trivial a metaphor) all the *hooks-and-eyes* of the memory, they are easily forgotten: or rather, it is scarcely possible that they should be remembered.—Nor is it less true, that those who confine their reading to such books dwarf their own faculties, and finally reduce their Understandings to a deplorable imbecility: the fact you mention, and which I shall hereafter make use of, is a fair instance and a striking illustration. Like idle morning Visitors, the brisk and breathless Periods hurry in and hurry off in quick and profitless succession; each indeed for the moments of its stay prevents the pain of vacancy, while it indulges the love of sloth; but all together they leave the Mistress of the house (the soul I mean) flat and exhausted, incapable of attending to her own concerns, and unfitted for the conversation of more rational Guests.

I know you will not suspect me of fostering so idle a hope, as that of obtaining acquittal by recrimination; or think that I am attacking one fault, in order that its opposite may escape notice in the noise and smoke of the battery. On the contrary, I shall do my best, and even make all allowable sacrifices, to render my manner more attractive and my matter more generally interesting. All the principles of my future Work, all the fundamental doctrines, in the establishment of which I must of necessity require the attention of my Reader to become my fellow-labourer; all the primary facts essential to the intelligibility of my principles, the existence of which facts I can prove to others only as far as I can prevail on them to retire *into themselves* and make their own minds the objects of their steadfast attention; these will, all together, not occupy more than six or seven of my future Essays, and between each of these I shall interpose one or more Numbers devoted to the rational *entertainment* of my various Readers; and, partly from the desire of gratifying particular requests, and partly as a specimen of the subjects which will henceforward have a due proportion of *The Friend* allotted to them, I shall fill up the present Paper with a miscellany. I feel too deeply the importance of the convictions which first impelled me to the present undertaking, to leave unattempted any honourable means of recommending them to as wide a circle as possible; and though all the opinions which I shall bring forward in the course of the Work, on politics, morals, religion, literature, and the fine arts, will with all their applications, be strictly deducible from the principles established in these earlier Numbers; yet I doubt not, that being Truths and interesting Truths (and such, of course, I must be supposed to deem them) their intrinsic beauty will procure them introduction to the feelings of my Readers, even of those whose habits or avocations preclude the fatigue of close reasoning, and that each Essay of itself, by the illustrations and the auxiliary and independent arguments appropriate to it, will become sufficiently intelligible and evident.

Hitherto, my dear Sir, I have been employed in laying the Foundation of my Work. But the proper merit of a foundation is its massiveness and solidity. The conveniences and ornaments, the gilding and stucco work, the sunshine and sunny prospects, will come with the Superstructure. Yet I dare not flatter myself, that any endeavours of mine, compatible with the duty I owe to Truth and

the hope of permanent utility, will render *The Friend* agreeable to the majority of what is called the reading Public. I never expected it. How indeed could I, when I was to borrow so little from the influence of passing Events, and absolutely excluded from my plan all appeals to personal curiosity and personal interests? Yet even this is not my greatest impediment. No real information can be conveyed, no important errors rectified, no widely injurious prejudices rooted up, without requiring some effort of thought on the part of the Reader. But the obstinate (and toward a contemporary Writer, the contemptuous) aversion to all intellectual effort is the mother evil of all which I had proposed to war against, the Queen Bee in the Hive of our errors and misfortunes, both private and national. The proof of the Fact, positively and comparatively, and the enumeration of its various causes, will, as I have already hinted form the preliminary Essay of the disquisition on the elements of our moral and intellectual faculties. To solicit the attention of those on whom these debilitating causes have acted to their full extent, would be no less absurd than to recommend exercise with the dumb bells, as the only mode of cure, to a patient paralytic in both arms. You, my dear Sir, well know, that my expectations were more modest as well as more rational. I hoped, that my Readers in general would be aware of the impracticability of suiting every Essay to every Taste in *any* period of the work; and that they would not attribute wholly to the Author, but in part to the necessity of his plan, the austerity and absence of the lighter graces in the first fifteen or twenty Numbers. In my cheerful moods I sometimes flattered myself, that a few even among those, who foresaw that my lucubrations would at all times require more attention than from the nature of their own employments they could afford them, might yet find a pleasure in supporting *The Friend* during its infancy, so as to give it a chance of attracting the notice of others, to whom its style and subjects might be better adapted. But my main anchor was the Hope, that when circumstances gradually enabled me to adopt the ordinary means of making the Publication generally known, there might be found throughout the Kingdom a sufficient number of meditative minds, who, entertaining similar convictions with myself, and gratified by the prospect of seeing them reduced to form and system, would take a warm interest in the work from the very circumstance, that it wanted those allurements of transitory interest, which render

particular patronage superfluous, and for the brief season of their Blow and Fragrance attract the eye of thousands, who would pass unregarded

Flowers

Of sober tint, and Herbs of med'cinable powers.

I hoped that a sufficient number of such Readers would gradually be obtained, as to secure for the Paper that small extent of circulation and immediate Sale, which would permit the Editor to carry it on to its conclusion, and that they might so far interest themselves in recommending it to men of kindred judgments among their acquaintances, that the alterations in my list of Subscribers should not be exclusively of a discouraging nature. Hitherto, indeed, I have only to express gratitude, and acknowledge constancy; but I do not attempt to disguise from myself that I owe this, in many instances, to a generous reluctance hastily to withdraw from an Undertaking in its first struggles, and before the Adventurer had had a fair opportunity of displaying the quality of his goods, or the foundations of his credit.- the one tantum vidi: the other I know by his works only and his public character. To profess indifference to their praises would convict me either of insensibility or insincerity. Yet (and I am sure, that you will both understand, and sympathize with, the feeling) my delight was not unalloyed by a something like pain, as if I were henceforward less free to express my admiration of them with the same warmth and affection, which I have been accustomed to do, before I had even anticipated the honour of such a communication. You will therefore not judge me too harshly, if so confirmed and cheered, I have sometimes in the warmth of composition, and while I was reviewing the materials of the more important part of my intended Essays, if I had sometimes permitted my Hopes a bolder flight; and counted on a share of favour and protection from the soberly zealous among the professionally Learned, when the Principles of *The Friend* shall have been brought into clear view, and Specimens have been given of the mode and the direction in which I purpose to apply and enforce them.

There are charges, the very suspicion of which is painful to an ingenuous mind in exact proportion as they are unfounded and

inapplicable. I can bear with resignation a charge of enthusiasm. Even if accused of presumption, I will repay myself by deriving from the accusation an additional motive to increased watchfulness over myself, that I may remain entitled to plead, Not guilty! to it in the Court of my own conscience. But if my anxiety to obviate hasty judgments and misapprehensions is imputed to a less honourable motive than the earnest wish to exert my best faculties, as to the most beneficial purposes, so in the way most likely to effectuate them, I can give but one answer: that however great my desires of *profit* may be, they cannot be greater than my ignorance of the world, if I have chosen a weekly paper planned, as *The Friend* is, written on such subjects, and composed in such a style, as the most promising method of gratifying them.

S. T. C.

LETTER 146. TO CANTAB

21 Dec. 1809.

I thank the "*Friend's friend and a Cantab*" for his inspiring Letter, and assure him, that it was not without its intended effect, of giving me encouragement. That this was not needless, he would feel as well as know, if I could convey to him the anxious thoughts and gloomy anticipations, with which I write any single paragraph, that demands the least effort of attention, or requires the Reader to enter into himself and question his own mind as to the truth of that which I am pressing on his notice. But both He and my very kind Malton Correspondent, and all of similar dispositions, may rest assured, that with every imaginable endeavour to make *The Friend*, collectively, as *entertaining* as is compatible with the main Object of the Work, I shall never so far forget the duty, I owe to them and to my own heart, as not to remember that *mere* amusement is *not* that main Object. I have taken upon myself all the blame that I could acknowledge without adulation to my readers and hypocritical mock-humility. But the principal source of the obscurity imputed must be sought for in the want of *interest* concerning the truths themselves. My sole Hope (I dare not say expectation) is, that if I am enabled to proceed with the work through an equal number of Essays with those already published, it will gradually find for itself its appropriate Public.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Coleridge worked pretty hard at *The Friend*. He was ably assisted by Miss Sarah Hutchinson, who acted as amanuensis. *The Friend* was first issued on 1st June 1809, and ceased with the twenty-seventh number on 10th March 1810. Like *The Watchman*, *The Friend* was published by subscription and was not a financial success. In *The Friend* Coleridge wrote in his most diffuse style. The long intricate sentence, imitative of that of the seventeenth century divines and political writers, was his favourite medium when writing on the Permanent Principles of things, and in it he often ran into prolixity. In a letter to Poole, of 28th January 1810, Coleridge defends himself for abandoning the Frenchified style of the *Spectator*, and the eighteenth-century Belles-Letttrists, who, in his estimation, had contributed to the taste for "unconnected writing" and "Reading

made easy." Coleridge tried to awaken a deeper note in the English magazine, and make the periodical a vehicle for profound reflection and logically connected thought; and although Coleridge's own age was against him in this, the latter half of the nineteenth century has reversed the verdict in his favour.

While busy with *The Friend*, Coleridge was again contributing to *The Courier* a series of letters supporting the Spaniards in their struggle against Napoleon, and endeavouring to maintain British sympathy for the inhabitants of the Peninsula. These letters are written with Coleridge's accustomed virility when writing for *The Courier*, and are almost as good as his Letters to Fox of 1802. It is a curious fact that when Coleridge stepped into *The Courier* office, he abandoned for the time being his over-refinement of ideas and subtle disquisitive method of writing for a more popular style, as good as any leader-writer of the day. He had great versatility of talent in prose; in fact he had three styles of writing—his Philosophic style, his Journalist style, and his Letter-Writer's style, in the last of which he abandoned himself to the most curious and humorous freaks of construction and imagery, as when he apologizes for some warmth of expression, calling it "the dexterous *toss*, necessary to turn an idea out of its pudding-bag, round and *unbroken*."]]

CHAPTER XVI
QUARREL WITH WORDSWORTH, SECOND COURSE OF
LECTURES ON SHAKESPEARE

[During the remainder of 1810, after the cessation of *The Friend*, Coleridge did nothing of importance except write letters to his acquaintances about new projects which grew up in the impetuosity of his conversation or in answering some enquiry to a correspondent. At the close of the year Coleridge had determined to go to London once more; and an unfortunate occurrence took place on his arrival in London. Basil Montagu with his wife and child were travelling from Scotland to London, and called upon the Wordsworths at Allan Bank, where Coleridge resided with brief intervals of absence from September 1808 to April 1810. Montagu invited Coleridge to travel to the metropolis with him in his chaise and stay some time at his residence. Wordsworth warned Montagu of Coleridge's opium habit, and said something to the effect that "he had no hope" of Coleridge, and perhaps that he had been a "nuisance" in the Wordsworth family. On his arrival in London, Montagu informed Coleridge that Wordsworth had commissioned him to say that Wordsworth had no hope of him, and that certain habits of his had made him a nuisance in the Allan Bank household. Coleridge, of course, left the Montagus on hearing this communication, and repaired to 7, Portland Place, Hammersmith, then the abode of his old friend John Morgan, and his wife Mary Brent, and her sister Charlotte Brent, with whom the father of the ladies also lived.

Coleridge was deeply stung that Wordsworth should have said such a thing to Montagu. Professor Knight in his *Life of Wordsworth* gives a pretty full narrative of the event, and believes that Wordsworth, though he said he had no hope of Coleridge, did not utter the more offensive assertion about Coleridge being a nuisance in his family. Henry Crabb Robinson effected a formal reconciliation between the two poets, in which both figure to some disadvantage. Wordsworth's proposal to confront Coleridge, his best and closest friend, with Montagu, a comparative stranger to both of them, for cross-examination, and thus sift out the actual expression used by the latter to the former, seems like very hard dealing; and Coleridge's vehemence of protestation to believe whatever

Wordsworth asserted to be the true version, in contradistinction to anything that Montagu might say, savours of unreality. Wordsworth's taking offence at Coleridge not going to Grasmere on the death of his child at a juncture when it was impossible for him to leave London while *Remorse* was being put on the stage, does not redound to the credit of the Bard of Rydal; and Coleridge's failure to call on his old friend while in the Lake District for the last time is equally against the poet of Stowey. The estrangement died down rather than was reconciled; but the irritation against Wordsworth remained long in Coleridge's heart, and it is more than probable that after the excitement of the reconciliation made by Crabb Robinson was over, Coleridge believed Montagu's rather than Wordsworth's version of what had occurred. This is endorsed by the fact that Montagu was again taken into favour, and he and his wife were regular guests at the Highgate Thursdays in after times.

During 1811, while in London, Coleridge again met Godwin, to whom he softened in his opinion. The following two letters indicate that he did not occupy the same attitude to the author of *Political Justice* as he did when he wrote *The Watchman*.

LETTER 147. TO GODWIN

Tuesday, March 26, 1811.

Dear Godwin,

Mr. Grattan did me the honour of calling on me, and leaving his card, on Sunday afternoon, unfortunately a few minutes after I had gone out – and I am so unwell, that I fear I shall not be able to return the call to-day, as I had intended, though it is a grief even for a brace of days to appear insensible of so much kindness and condescension. But what need has Grattan of pride?

Ha d'uopo solo

Mendicar dall' orgoglio onore e stima,

Chi senza lui di vilipendio é degno.

CHIABRERA.

I half caught from Lamb that you had written to Wordsworth, with a wish that he should versify some tale or other, and that Wordsworth had declined it. I told dear Miss Lamb that I had formed a complete plan of a poem, with little plates for children, the *first* thought, but that alone, taken from Gessner's *First Mariner*; and this thought, I have reason to believe, was not an invention of Gessner's. It is this – that in early times, in some island or part of the Continent, the ocean had rushed in, overflowing a vast plain of twenty or thirty miles, and thereby *insulating* one small promontory or cape of high land, on which was a cottage, containing a man and his wife, and an infant daughter. This is the *one* thought; all that Gessner has made out of it – (and I once translated into blank verse about half of the poem, but gave it up under the influence of a double disgust, moral and poetical) – I have rejected; and, strictly speaking, the tale in all its parts, that one idea excepted, would be original. The tale will contain the cause, the occasions, the process, with all its failures and ultimate success, of the construction of the first boat, and of the undertaking of the first naval expedition. Now, supposing you liked the idea (I address you and Mrs. G., and as *commerciants*, not you as the philosopher who gave us the first

system in England that ever dared reveal at full that most important of all important truths, that morality might be built on its own foundation, like a castle built *from* the rock and *on* the rock, with religion for the ornaments and completion of its roof and upper stories—nor as the critic who, in the life of Chaucer, has given us, if not principles of *æsthetic* or taste, yet more and better data for principles than had hitherto existed in our language) if we pulling like two friendly tradesmen together, (for you and your wife *must* be one flesh, and I trust *are* one heart) you approve of the plan, the next question is, Whether it should be written in prose or in verse, and if the latter, in what metre—stanzas, or eight-syllable iambics with rhymes (for in rhyme it must be), now in couplets and now in quatrains, in the manner of Cooper's admirable translation of the *Vert-Vert* of Gresset. (N.B. not *the* Cowper).

Another thought has struck me within the last month, of a school-book in two octavo volumes, of Lives in the manner of Plutarch—not, indeed, of comparing and coupling Greek with Roman, Dion with Brutus, and Cato with Aristides, of placing ancient and modern together: Numa with Alfred, Cicero with Bacon, Hannibal with Gustavus Adolphus, and Julius Cæsar with Buonaparte—or what perhaps might be at once more interesting and more instructive, a series of lives, from Moses to Buonaparte, of all those great men, who in states or in the mind of man had produced great revolutions, the effects of which still remain, and are more or less distant causes of the present state of the world.

I remain, with unfeigned and affectionate esteem,

Yours, dear Godwin,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 148. TO GODWIN

Friday morning, March 29, 1811.

Dear Godwin,

My chief motive in undertaking *The First Mariner* is merely to weave a few tendrils around your destined walking-stick, which, like those of the woodbine (that, serpent-like climbing up, and with tight spires embossing the straight hazel, rewards the lucky schoolboy's search in the winter copse) may remain on it, when the woodbine, root and branch, lies trampled in the earth. I shall consider the work as a small plot of ground given up to you, to be sown at your own hazard with your own seed (gold-grains would have been but a bad saw, and besides have spoilt the metaphor). If the increase should more than repay your risk and labour, why then let me be one of your guests at Hendcot House. Your last letter impressed and affected me strongly. Ere I had yet read or seen your works, I, at Southey's recommendation, wrote a sonnet in praise of the author. When I had read them, religious bigotry, the but half-understanding your principles, and the *not* half-understanding my own, combined to render me a warm and boisterous anti-Godwinist. But my warfare was open; my unfelt and harmless blows aimed at an abstraction I had christened with your name; and at that time, if not in the world's *favor*, you were among the captains and chief men in its admiration. I became your acquaintance, when more years had brought somewhat more temper and tolerance; but I distinctly remember that the first turn in my mind towards you, the first movements of a juster appreciation of your merits, was occasioned by my disgust at the altered tone of language of many whom I had long known as your admirers and disciples—some of them, too, men who had made themselves a sort of reputation in minor circles as your acquaintances, and therefore your echoes by authority, who had themselves aided in attaching an unmerited ridicule to you and your opinions by their own ignorance, which led them to think the best settled truths, and indeed *every* thing in your *Political Justice*, whether assertion, or deduction, or conjecture, to have been new thoughts—downright creations! and by their own vanity, which enabled them to forget that everything must be new to him who knows *nothing*; others again, who though gifted with high talents,

had yet been indebted to you and the discussions occasioned by your work, for much of their development, who had often and often styled you the Great Master, written verses in your honour, and, worse than all, had now brought your opinions—with many good and worthy men—into as unmerited an odium, as the former class had into contempt, by attempts equally unfeeling and unwise, to realize them in private life, to the disturbance of domestic peace. And lastly, a third class; but the name of — — spares me the necessity of describing it. In all these there was such a want of common sensibility, such a want of that gratitude to an intellectual benefactor, which even an honest reverence for their past selves should have secured, as did then, still does, and ever will, disgust me. As for — —, I cannot justify him; but he stands in no one of the former classes. When he was young he just looked enough into your books to believe you taught republicanism and stoicism; ergo, that he was of your opinion and you of his, and that was all. Systems of philosophy were never his taste or forte. And I verily believe that his conduct originated wholly and solely in the effects which the trade of reviewing never fails to produce at certain times on the best minds,—presumption, petulance, callousness to personal feelings, and a disposition to treat the reputations of their contemporaries as playthings placed at their own disposal. Most certainly I cannot approve of such things; but yet I have learned how difficult it is for a man who has from earliest childhood preserved himself immaculate from all the common faults and weaknesses of human nature, and who, never creating any small disquietudes, has lived in general esteem and honour, to feel remorse, or to admit that he has done wrong. Believe me, there is a bluntness of conscience superinduced by a very unusual infrequency, as well as by a habit of frequency of wrong actions. “Sunt quibus cecidisse prodesset,” says Augustine. To this add that business of review-writing, carried on for fifteen years together, and which I have never hesitated to pronounce an immoral employment, unjust to the author of the books reviewed, injurious in its influences on the public taste and morality, and still more injurious on its influences on the head and heart of the reviewer himself. The *prægustatores* among the luxurious Romans soon lost their taste; and the verdicts of an old *prægustator* were sure to mislead, unless when, like dreams, they were interpreted into contraries. Our reviewers are the genuine descendants of these palate-seared taste dictators. I am still confined by indisposition, but

mean to step out to Hazlitt's – almost my next door neighbour – at his particular request. It is possible that I may find you there.

With kind remembrances to Mrs. Godwin,

Yours, dear Godwin, affectionately,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

From 19th April to 27th September 1811 Coleridge (*Essays on his Own Times*, 733–938) was busy contributing articles again to *The Courier* on all subjects of the day, their irony as bright, their imagery as fresh, their philosophy as sound as anything he had formerly written. But Coleridge ceased to write for *The Courier* when he discovered that it was not an independent paper. An article on the Duke of York written by Coleridge, after having been set up in type, was suppressed, at the instigation of the Government. He wrote to Beaumont on 7th December 1811: "I have not been at *The Courier* office for some months past. I detest writing politics even on the right side; and when I discovered that *The Courier* was not the independent paper I had been led to believe, and had myself over and over again asserted, I wrote no more for it... I will write for the *Permanent*, or not at all."

During the winter of 1811–12 Coleridge did something for the *Permanent* in the shape of a new course of Lectures on Shakespeare. The course lasted from the beginning of November 1811 to 28th January 1812. The Lectures are published in T. Ashe's edition. The finest of the Lectures is No. IX, given on 16th December 1811. The Lectures were delivered at the London Philosophical Society's Rooms, Fetter Lane, and were attended, according to Henry Crabb Robinson, by enthusiastic audiences; and the course closed with *éclat*. On one occasion Rogers and Byron were present. The following letter to Dr. Andrew Bell, whom, it will be remembered, he corresponded with while he was giving his first course, is a characteristic bit of Coleridge's application of the Law of Association.

LETTER 149. TO DR. ANDREW BELL

Mr. Pople's, 67 Chancery Lane

Holborn, 30 November 1811.

My Dear Sir,

The room I lecture in is very comfortable, and of a grave academic appearance; the company highly respectable, though (unluckily) rather scanty; but the entrance, which is under a short passage from Fetter Lane, some thirty doors or more from Fleet Street, is disagreeable even to foot-comers, and far more so to carriages, from the narrowness and bendings of the lane. This, and in truth, the very name of *Fetter Lane*, renowned exclusively for pork and sausages, have told against me; and I pay an exorbitant price in proportion to the receipts. I should doubtless feel myself honoured by your attendance on some one night; but such is your distance, and such is the weather, that I scarce dare *wish* it, much less ask or expect it.

I wrote a long letter to you concerning the sophistications of your system at present in vogue, the inevitable consequences on the whole mass of moral feelings, even of the dissenters themselves, and the courage as well as fortitude, required for the effort to do one's duty. But I asked myself why I should give you pain, and destroyed it. Yet come what will, the subject shall be treated fully, intrepidly, and by close deduction from settled first principles, in the first volume of the recommencing *Friend*, which I hope to bring out early in the spring, on a quarterly or four-monthly plan, in partnership with a publisher who is personally my friend, and who will take on himself all the *business*, and leave me exclusively occupied in the composition. Even to this day I have not received nearly one-half of the subscriptions for the former numbers, and am expiating the error by all sorts of perplexities and embarrassments. A man who has nothing better than prudence is fit for no world to come; and he who does not possess it in full activity, is as unfit for the present world. What then shall we say? Have both prudence and the moral sense, but subordinate the former to the latter; and so possess the flexibility and address of the serpent to glide through the brakes and jungles of this life, with the wings of the dove to carry us upward to a better!

May the Almighty bless and preserve you, my dear Sir! With most unfeigned love and honour, I remain – and till I lose all sense of my better being, of the veiled immortal within me, ever must remain, your obliged and grateful friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.]

CHAPTER XVII DANIEL STUART AND THE COURIER

Here I may best introduce the remarks which have been made, and details which have been given, respecting Mr. Coleridge's services to *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, spoken of by him in Chapter X of the *Biographia Literaria*. That representation has been excepted against by Mr. Stuart, who was Editor of the former Paper when my Father wrote for it, and half proprietor of the other. The view which he takes of the case he has already made public; he seems to be of opinion, that the language used by Mr. Coleridge in this work is calculated to give an impression of the amount of his actual performances on behalf of those papers beyond what the facts warrant; I have not thought it necessary or proper to withdraw that portion of which he complains, nor do I see that it must necessarily bear a construction at variance with his own statements: but neither would I republish it, without giving Mr. Stuart's account of matters to which it refers, extracted from letters written by him to Mr. Coleridge's late Editor. He writes as follows from Wykham Park, on the 7th of October, 1835.

"In August, 1795, I began to conduct *The Morning Post*, the sale of which was so low, only 350 per day, that a gentleman at that time made a bet with me that the Paper was actually extinct.

"At Christmas, 1797, on the recommendation of Mr. Mackintosh, Coleridge sent me several pieces of poetry; up to the time of his going to Germany, about 12 pieces. Prose writing I never expected from him at that time. He went to Germany in the summer of 1798.

"He returned, I believe, about the end of 1799, and proposed to me to come to London to reside near me, and write daily for the paper. I took lodgings for him in King Street, Covent Garden. *The Morning Post* then selling 2,000 daily. Coleridge wrote some things, particularly, I remember, Comments on Lord Grenville's reply to Buonaparte's Overtures of Peace, in January, 1800. But he totally failed in the plan he proposed of writing daily on the daily occurrences."

Mr. Stuart then gives three short letters of Mr. C.'s, showing how often he was ill and incapable of writing for the paper, and the

beginning of a long one dated Greta Hall, Keswick, 19th July, 1800, in which he promises a second part of Pitt and Buonaparte, but speaks of it as uncertain whether or no he should be able to continue any regular species of employment for Mr. S.'s paper.

After noting that Mr. C. left London at the end of his first half year's engagement, Mr. S. brings forward more letters, containing excuses on account of illness, but promising a number of essays: two on the war, as respecting agriculture; one on the raising of rents; one on the riots (corn riots in 1800); and one on the countenance by Government of calumnies on the King;—promising also a second part of Pitt and Buonaparte, which Mr. S. supposes he was constantly dunning for, the Character of Pitt, published in *The M. P.* early in 1800, having made a great sensation; proposing a letter to Sir F. Burdett on solitary imprisonment, and that all these should be published in pamphlets, after they had been divided into pieces, and published in *The M. P.*, he doubting whether they were of value for a newspaper. Some of these essays appear to have been sent; it is not specified which or how many.

“Early in 1807,” Mr. S. says, “I was confined by a violent fever. Several weeks I was delirious, and to my astonishment, when I recovered, Pitt was out of place, and Horne Tooke in Parliament. I did not resume the conduct of the Paper till the spring. The Paper suffered loss.”

The next letter, dated May, 1801, Keswick, speaks of ill health, and “the habits of irresolution which are its worst consequences,” forbidding him to rely on himself. Mr. S. had solicited him to write, and offered terms, and it appears that he did form a new engagement for the Paper about that time. In a letter of Sept. 1801, he says, “I am not so blinded by authorship as to believe that what I have done is at all adequate to the money I have received.” Mr. Stuart then produces a letter with the postmark Bridgewater, of Jan. 19, 1802. These letters show, he says, that in July and October 1800, in May 1801, on the 30th of September 1801, Coleridge was at Keswick, that in January 1802, he was at Stowey, that he could not therefore have materially contributed to the success of *The Morning Post*. “In this last year,” says Mr. Stuart, “his Letters to Judge Fletcher, and on Mr. Fox, at Paris, were published.” The former

were not published till 1814. The six letters appeared in *The Courier* on Sept. 20th, 29th, Oct. 21st, Nov. 2nd, Dec. 3rd, 6th, 9th and 10th. The latter appeared on the 4th and 9th of Nov. 1802. Mr. Stuart speaks of it as a mistake in those who have supposed that the coolness of Fox to Sir James Mackintosh was occasioned by his ascribing this "violent philippic," as Lamb called it, to him (Sir James). "On those to Judge Fletcher," he says, "and many other such essays, as being rather fit for pamphlets than newspapers, I did not set much value." On this subject hear Coleridge himself in a letter dated June 4th, 1811, when he was engaged with Mr. Street.

LETTER 150. TO DANIEL STUART

“Freshness of effect belongs to a newspaper and distinguishes it from a literary book: the former being the Zenith and the latter the Nadir, with a number of intermediate degrees, occupied by pamphlets, magazines, reviews, etc. Besides, in a daily paper, with advertisements proportioned to its large sale, what is deferred must four times in five be extinguished. A newspaper is a market for flowers and vegetables, rather than a granary or conservatory; and the drawer of its Editor a common burial ground, not a catacomb for embalmed mummies, in which the defunct are preserved to serve in after times as medicines for the living.”

This freshness of effect Coleridge scarcely ever gave to either *The Morning Post* or *The Courier*. He was occasionally in London during my time, in *The Morning Post* it is true, but he never gave the daily bread. He was mostly at Keswick. A few months in 1800, and a few weeks in 1802, that was all the time he ever wasted on *The Morning Post*, and as for *The Courier*, it accepted his proffered services as a favour done to him,” etc.

After speaking again of the former paper, he says, “I could give many more reasons for its rise than those I gave in my former letter, and among others I would include Coleridge’s occasional writings, though to them I would not set down more than one hundredth part of the cause of success, much as I esteemed his writings and much as I would have given for a regular daily assistance by him. But he never wrote a thing I requested, and, I think I may add, he never wrote a thing I expected. In proof of this he promised me at my earnest and endless request, the character of Buonaparte, which he himself, at first of his own mere motion, had promised; he promised it letter after letter, year after year, for ten years (last for *The Courier*), yet never wrote it. Could Coleridge and I place ourselves thirty-eight years back, and he be so far a man of business as to write three or four hours a day, there is nothing I would not pay for his assistance. I would take him into partnership,” (which, I think, my Father would have declined,) “and I would enable him to make a large fortune. To write the leading paragraph of a newspaper I would prefer him to Mackintosh, Burke, or any man I ever heard of. His observations not only were confirmed by good sense, but

displayed extensive knowledge, deep thought and well-grounded foresight; they were so brilliantly ornamented, so classically delightful. They were the writings of a Scholar, a Gentleman and a Statesman, without personal sarcasm or illiberality of any kind. But when Coleridge wrote in his study without being pressed, he wandered and lost himself. He should always have had the printer's devil at his elbow with 'Sir, the printers want copy.'

"So far then with regard to *The Morning Post*, which I finally left in August, 1803. Throughout the last year, during my most rapid success, Coleridge did not, I believe, write a line for me. Seven months afterwards I find Coleridge at Portsmouth, on his way to Malta." Mr. Stuart proceeds to state that Mr. C. returned to England in the summer of 1806, that in 1807 he was engaged with his Play at Drury Lane Theatre, early in 1808 gave his lectures at the Royal Institution, at the end of that year began his plan of *The Friend*, which took him up till towards the end of 1809—in 1811 proposed to write for *The Courier* on a salary. Mr. Stuart mentions that the Essays on the Spaniards were sent in the end of 1809 by Mr. Coleridge, as some return for sums he had expended on his account, not on his (Mr. Stuart's) solicitation. He says that Mr. C. wrote in *The Courier* for his own convenience, his other literary projects having failed, and that he wrote for it against the will of Mr. Street, the Editor, who, in accepting his services, only yielded to his (Mr. S.'s) suggestion. "*The Courier*," he says, "required no assistance. It was, and had long been, the evening paper of the highest circulation." In another letter, dated 7th September 1835, he speaks thus: "*The Courier* indeed sold 8000 daily for some years, but when Street and I purchased it at a good price in June, 1799, it sold nearly 2000, and had the reputation of selling more. It was the apostasy of *The Sun* in 1803, Street's good management, its early intelligence, and the importance of public events, that raised *The Courier*." In the same letter he says, "Could Coleridge have written the leading paragraph daily his services would have been invaluable, but an occasional essay or two could produce little effect. It was early and ample accounts of domestic occurrences, as Trials, Executions, etc. etc., exclusively early Irish news; the earliest French news; full Parliamentary Debates; Corn Riots in 1800; Procession proclaiming Peace; the attack on the King by Hatfield at the Theatre; the arrest of Arthur O'Connor, respecting which I was examined at the Privy

Council: it was the earliest and fullest accounts of such things as these, while the other papers were negligent, that raised *The Morning Post* from 350, when I took it in August, 1795, to 4500, when I sold it in August, 1803, and then no other daily morning paper sold above 3000. It was unremitting attention and success in giving the best and earliest accounts of occurrences that made *The Morning Post*, and not the writings of any one, though good writing is always an important feature. I have known the Paper served more by a minute, picturesque, lively account of the ascension of a balloon than ever it was by any piece of writing. There is a great difference among newspapers in this respect. Most of the Sunday Papers, calling themselves *Newspapers*, have no news, only political essays, which are read by the working-classes, and which in those papers produce astonishing success." In other letters he says: "The reputation of the writings of any man, the mere reputation of them, would not serve, or in the very slightest degree serve, any daily newspaper." "Mackintosh's reputation as a political writer was then much higher than that of Coleridge, and he was my brother-in-law, known to have written for the Paper, especially during one year (1795-6), and to be on good terms with me, yet I must confess that even to the reputation of his writing for the Paper I never ascribed any part of its success."

It does not appear from Mr. Stuart how many essays in all Mr. Coleridge contributed to *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*. Mr. C. himself mentions several in the tenth chapter of the *Biographia Literaria*. All these have been copied, and will be republished hereafter. I happen to possess also his contributions to *The Courier* in 1811. They are numerous, though not daily; which I have now no means of ascertaining. The Critique on *Bertram* first appeared in that Paper, I believe in 1816. Mr. Stuart admits that some of the poems published by Mr. C. in *The Morning Post* before his going to Germany made a "great impression:" that on Mr. C.'s proposing "personally on the spot and by daily exertion to assist him in the conduct of the Paper," he "grasped at the engagement," and "no doubt solicited" him "in the most earnest manner to enter upon it;" that his "writings produced a greater effect in *The Morning Post* than any others." In his letter of September 19, 1835, Mr. S. says "The most remarkable things Coleridge published in *The Morning Post* were *The Devil's Thoughts* and the *Character of Pitt*. Each of these made a sensation,

which any writings unconnected with the news of the day rarely did." Elsewhere he says, "Several hundred sheets extra were sold by them, and the paper was in demand for days and weeks afterwards. Coleridge promised a pair of portraits, Pitt and Buonaparte. I could not walk a hundred yards in the streets but I was stopped by inquiries, 'When shall we have Buonaparte?' One of the most eager of these inquirers was Dr. Moore, author of *Zeluco*." In the letter mentioned just above he says "At one time Coleridge engaged to write daily for *The Courier* on the news of the day, and he did attend very regularly and wrote; but as it was in the spring, when the Paper was overwhelmed with debates and advertisements (and Street always preferring news, and a short notice of it in a leading paragraph to any writing however brilliant,) little or nothing that he wrote was inserted from want of room. Of this he repeatedly complained to me, saying that he would not continue to receive a salary without rendering services. I answered, 'Wait till Parliament is up; we shall then have ample room, and shall be obliged to you for all you can give us.' When Parliament rose Coleridge disappeared, or at least discontinued his services."

The time here spoken of was in June, 1811. In April he had proposed to Mr. Stuart a particular plan of writing for *The Courier*, and on May 5, he writes to that gentleman, that he had stated and particularized this proposal to Mr. Street, and "found a full and in all appearance a warm assent." Mr. Street, he says, "expressed himself highly pleased both at the thought of my assistance in general, and with the specific plan of assistance. There was no doubt, he said, that it would be of great service to the Paper."

Mr. Stuart has been offended by Mr. Coleridge's saying that he "employed the prime and manhood of his intellect in these labours," namely for the Papers; that they "added nothing to his fortune or reputation;" that the "industry of the week supplied the necessities of the week." This he has considered as a reproach to himself, and an unjust one. It was not—Mr. Stuart himself saw that it was not—so intended; Mr. Coleridge's only object was to show that he had not altogether suffered his talents to "rust away without any efficient exertion for his own good or that of his fellow-creatures;" that he had laboured more than would appear from the number and size of the books he had produced, and in whatever he wrote had aimed

not merely to supply his own temporal wants, but to benefit his readers by bringing high principles in view. "For, while cabbage-stalks rot on dunghills," says he, in a letter to the late Editor of *The Morning Post*, "I will never write what, or for what, I do not think right. All that prudence can justify is not to write what at certain times one may yet think." But Mr. Stuart thought that the Public would draw inferences from Mr. C.'s language injurious to himself, though it was not meant of him; and hence he gave the details which I have thought it right to bring forward. I have no doubt that Mr. Coleridge had an exaggerated impression of the amount of his labours for *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, and that when he said that he had raised the sale of the former from a low number to 7000 daily, he mistook the sale of the latter, which, Mr. Stuart admits, may have been 7000 per day in 1811, when he wrote for it constantly, with that of *The Morning Post*, which never sold above 4500. Mr. Stuart says truly "Coleridge had a defective memory, from want of interest in common things;" and of this he brings forward a strong instance. I think my Father's example and experience go to prove that Newspaper reading must ever be more or less injurious to the public mind; high and careful writing for the daily journal will never answer: who could furnish noble views and a refined moral commentary on public events and occurrences every day of the week, or even every other day, and obtain *apropportionate* recompense? On the other hand, a coarse or low sort of writing on the important subjects, with which the journal deals, must do mischief. No one will deny that the character of Mr. C.'s articles was such as he has described; he would naturally be more alive to marks of the impression made by what he wrote in particular than any one else, even the Editor; and men are apt to judge of their labours by intensity as much as by quantity. He perhaps expended more thought on some of those essays, of which Mr. Street and even Mr. Stuart thought lightly, than would have served to furnish a large amount of ordinary serviceable matter. Mr. Stuart observes, "He never had a prime and manhood of intellect in the sense in which he speaks of it in the *Lit. Biography*. He had indeed the great mind, the great powers, but he could not use them for the press with regularity and vigour. He was always ill." This may have been true; yet it was during what ought to have been the best years of his life that he wrote for the Papers, and doubtless what he did produce helped to exhaust his scanty stock of bodily

power, and to prevent him from writing as many books as he might have done, had circumstances permitted him to use his pen, not for procuring "the necessities of the week," but in the manner most congenial to his own mind, and ultimately most useful to the public. "Such things as *The Morning Post* and money," says Mr. S., in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, "never settled upon his mind." I believe that such things *unsettled* his mind, and made him, as the lampooner said, with a somewhat different allusion, "Like to a man on double business bound, who both neglects." This was a trouble to himself and all connected with him. *Le ciel nous vend toujours les biens qu'il nous prodigue*, may be applied to my poor Father emphatically.

In regard to the remuneration he received, I do not bring forward the *particulars* given by Mr. Stuart of his liberal dealing with Mr. Coleridge, simply because the rehearsal of them would be tedious, and could answer no end. Such details may be superseded by the general declaration, that I believe my Father to have received from Mr. Stuart far more than the market value of his contributions to the Papers which that gentleman was concerned in. Mr. Stuart says that he "paid at the time as highly as such writings were paid for," and to Mr. Coleridge's satisfaction, which my Father's own letters certainly testify; and concludes the account of sums advanced by him to Mr. C., when he was not writing for the paper, by saying that he had "at least £700 of him beside many acts of kindness." A considerable part of this was spent on stamps and paper for *The Friend*; two hundred of it was given after the publication of the *Biographia Literaria*.

Mr. Coleridge expressed his esteem for Mr. Stuart and sense of his kindness very strongly in letters to himself, but not more strongly than to others. He speaks of him in a letter written about the beginning of 1809, addressed to a gentleman of the Quaker persuasion at Leeds, as "a man of the most consummate knowledge of the world, managed by a thorough strong and sound judgment, and rendered innocuous by a good heart"—as a "most wise, disinterested, kind, and constant friend." In a letter to my Mother, written on his return from Malta, he says, "Stuart is a friend, and a friend indeed."

I have thought it right to bring forward these particulars,—(I and those equally concerned with myself)—not only out of a regard to truth and openness, that the language of this work respecting *The Morning Post* and *The Courier* may not be interpreted in any way contrary to fact, which, I think, it *need* not be; but also in gratitude to a man who was serviceable and friendly to my Father during many years of his life; who appreciated his merits as a prose writer when they were not generally known and acknowledged; and by whose aid his principal prose work, *The Friend*, was brought before the public. I do not complain in the least of his stating the facts of my Father's newspaper writings; in the *manner* in which this was done—as was pointed out at the time—there *was* something to complain of. Let me add that I consider his representation of my Father's feelings on certain occasions altogether incredible, and deeply regret these pieces of bad construing, dictated by resentment, in one who was once so truly his friend.

My Father certainly does not assert, as Mr. Stuart represents him as having asserted in the *Literary Biography*, that he “made the fortunes of *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, and was inadequately paid.” He speaks of his writings as having been in furtherance of *Government*. I have no doubt he thought that they were serviceable to Government and to his country, and that while they brought upon him the enmity of the anti-ministerial and Buonapartean party, and every possible hindrance to his literary career which the most hostile and contemptuous criticism of a leading journal could effect, they were unrewarded in any other quarter. There was truth in one half of Hazlitt's sarcasm, “his politics turned—*but not to account*.” “From Government, or the friends of Government!” says Mr. Stuart, “Why, Coleridge was attacking Pitt and Lord Grenville in 1800, who were at the head of the Government. In 1801, when the Addingtons came into power, he wrote little or nothing in *The Morning Post*; in the autumn of 1802 he wrote one or two able essays against Buonaparte in relation to the Peace of Amiens, and he published in that paper, at that time, a letter or two to Judge Fletcher.” This last sentence is a double mistake, as I have already shown. “At that time the newspaper press generally condemned the conduct of Buonaparte in the severest manner: and no part of it more severely than *The Morning Post* by my own writings. Cobbett attacked Fox, etc., but *The Morning*

Post was the most distinguished on this subject, and the increase of its circulation was great. The qualified opposition to Government was not given to Pitt's ministry, but to Addington's. To Pitt *The Morning Post* was always, in my time, decidedly opposed. I supported Addington against Buonaparte, during the Peace of Amiens, with all my power, and in the summer of 1803 Mr. Estcourt came to me with a message of thanks from the prime minister, Mr. A. offering anything I wished. I declined the offer. It was not till the summer of 1804, a year after I had finally left *The Morning Post* that, in *The Courier*, I supported Pitt against Buonaparte, on the same grounds I had supported Mr. Addington, Pitt having become again prime minister, to protect Lord Melville against the fifth clause. Coleridge confuses things. The qualified support of the ministry, he alludes to, applies wholly to *The Courier*." I do not see the material discrepancy between this statement and my Father's, when he says that *The Morning Post* was "anti-ministerial, indeed, but with far greater earnestness and zeal, both anti-jacobin and anti-gallican," and that it proved a far more useful ally to the Government in its most important objects, in consequence of its being generally considered moderately anti-ministerial, than if it had been the avowed eulogist of Mr. Pitt; "that the rapid increase in the sale of *The Morning Post* is a pledge that genuine impartiality with a respectable portion of literary talent will secure the success of a newspaper without ministerial patronage," and that from "the commencement of the Addington administration" whatever he himself had written "in *The Morning Post* or *Courier* was in defence of Government." In the preceding paragraph he argues that neither Mr. Percival nor "the present administration" pursued the plans of Mr. Pitt.

In what degree my Father's writings contributed to the reputation and success of *The Morning Post* cannot at this distance of time be precisely settled. It must indeed be difficult to say what occasions success in such enterprises, if Mr. Stuart's own brother could attribute that of *The Morning Post* to Sir James Mackintosh, "though with less reason even than if he had ascribed it to Coleridge." The long story told to show that booksellers were not aware of Mr. C.'s having produced any effect on the paper, and when they set up a rival journal, never cared to obtain his services, but eagerly secured those of Mr. Stuart's assistant, George Lane, does not quite decide

the question; for booksellers, though, as Mr. Stuart says, “knowing men” in such matters, are not *omniscient* even in what concerns their own business. If the anti-gallican policy of *The Morning Post* “increased its circulation,” I cannot but think that the influence of my Father’s writings, though not numerous, and indirectly of his intercourse with the Editor,—who rates his conversational powers as highly as it is usual to rate them—in directing the tone and determining the principles of the paper, must have served it materially. I believe him to have been the anti-gallican *spirit* that governed *The Morning Post*, though he may not have performed as much of the *letter* as he fancied.

I shall conclude this subject with quoting part of a letter of my Father’s on the subject of *The Courier*, to which Mr. Stuart, to whom it was addressed, declares himself to have replied, that “as long as he actively interfered, the Paper was conducted on the independent principles alluded to by Coleridge,” but that, for reasons which he states, he found it best, from the year 1811, to “leave Street entirely to his own course;” and “so it gradually slid into a mere ministerial journal—an instrument of the Treasury:” “acquired a high character for being the organ of Government, and obtained a great circulation; but became odious to the mob—excited by the falsehoods of the weekly journals.”

LETTER 151. TO STUART

Wednesday, 8th May, 1816.

James Gillman's, Esq., Surgeon,

Highgate.

My dear Stuart,

Since you left me, I have been reflecting a great deal on the subject of the Catholic question, and somewhat on *The Courier* in general. With all my weight of *faults*, (and no one is less likely to underrate them than myself), a tendency to be influenced by selfish motives in my friendships, or even in the cultivation of my acquaintance, will not, I am sure, be by *you* placed among them. When we first knew each other, it was perhaps the most interesting period of both our lives, at the very turn of the flood; and I can never cease to reflect with affectionate delight on the steadiness and independence of your conduct and principles, and how, for so many years, with little assistance from others, and with one main guide, a sympathizing tact for the real sense, feeling, and impulses of the *respectable* part of the English nation, you went on so auspiciously, and likewise so *effectively*. It is far, very far, from being an hyperbole to affirm, that you did more against the French scheme of Continental domination than the Duke of Wellington has done; or rather, Wellington could neither have been supplied by the Ministers, nor the Ministers supported by the nation, but for the tone first given, and then constantly kept up by the plain, un-ministerial, anti-opposition, anti-Jacobin, anti-Gallican, anti-Napoleon spirit of your writings, aided by a colloquial style and evident good sense, in which, as acting on an immense mass of knowledge of existing men and existing circumstances, you are superior to any man I ever met with in my life-time. Indeed you are the only human being, of whom I can say with severe truth, that I never conversed with you for an hour without rememberable instruction; and with the same simplicity I dare affirm my belief, that my greater knowledge of *man* has been useful to you, though, from the nature of things, not so useful as your knowledge of *men* has been to me.

Now, with such convictions, my dear Stuart, how is it possible that I can look back on the conduct of *The Courier*, from the period of the Duke of York's restoration, without some pain? You cannot be seriously offended or affronted with me, if, in this deep confidence and in a letter, which, or its contents, can meet no eye but your own, I venture to declare, that though since then much has been done, very much of high utility to the country, by and under Mr. Street, yet *The Courier* itself has gradually lost that sanctifying spirit which was the life of its life, and without which, even the best and soundest principles lose half their effect on the human mind; I mean, the faith in the *faith* of the person and paper which brings them forward. They are attributed to the *accident* of their happening to be for such a side, or for such a party. In short, there is no longer any *root* in the paper, out of which all the various branches and fruits, and even fluttering leaves, are seen or believed to grow. But it is the old tree, barked round above the root, though the circular decortication is so small and so neatly filled up and coloured as to be scarcely visible but in its effects, excellent fruit still hanging on the boughs, but they are tied on by threads and hairs.

In all this I am well aware, that you are no otherwise to be blamed than in permitting that which without disturbance to your heart and tranquillity, you could not, perhaps, have prevented or effectively modified. But the whole plan of Street seems to me to have been motiveless from the beginning, or at least affected by the grossest miscalculations, in respect even of pecuniary interests. For, had the paper maintained and asserted not only its independence, but its appearance of it;—it is true that Mr. Street might not have had Mr. A. to dine with him, or received as many nods and shakes of the hand from Lord this or that; but at least equally true, that the ministry would have been far more effectively served, and that (I speak from facts), both the paper and its conductor would have been held by the adherents of ministers in far higher respect; and after all, ministers do not *love* newspapers in their hearts, not even those that support them; indeed it seems epidemic among Parliament men in general to affect to look down upon and despise newspapers, to which they owe $999/1000$ of their influence and character, and at least $3/5$ ths of their knowledge and phraseology. Enough! burn the letter, and forgive the writer, for the purity and

affectionateness of his motive." —Quoted from the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June, 1838.

One other point connected with Mr. C.'s writings for public journals I must advert to before concluding this chapter. Mr. Cottle finds want of memory in some part of the narrative, contained in this work, respecting the publication of *The Watchman*; it is as well to let him tell the story in his own way, which he does as follows. "The plain fact is, I purchased the whole of the paper for *The Watchman*, allowing Mr. C. to have it at prime cost, and receiving small sums from Mr. C. occasionally, in liquidation. I became responsible, also, with Mr. B. for printing the work, by which means, I reduced the price per sheet, as a bookseller (1000), from fifty shillings to thirty-five shillings. Mr. C. paid me for the paper in fractions, as he found it convenient, but from the imperfection of Mr. Coleridge's own receipts I never received the whole. It was a losing concern altogether, and I was willing, and did bear, uncomplaining, my portion of the loss. There is some difference between this statement, and that of Mr. Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*. A defect of memory must have existed, arising out of the lapse of twenty-two years; but my notices, made at the time, did not admit of mistake. There were but twenty sheets in the whole ten numbers of *The Watchman*, which, at thirty-five shillings per sheet, came to only thirty-five pounds. The paper amounted to much more than the printing.

"I cannot refrain from observing further, that my loss was augmented from another cause. Mr. C. states in the above work, that his London publisher never paid him 'one farthing,' but 'set him at defiance.' I also was more than his equal companion in this misfortune. The thirty copies of Mr. C.'s poems, and the six '*Joans of Arc*' (referred to in the preceding letter) found a ready sale, by this said 'indefatigable London publisher,' and large and fresh orders were received, so that Mr. Coleridge and myself successively participated in two very opposite sets of feeling; the one of exultation that our publications had found *so good a sale*; and the other of *depression*, that the time of *payment* never arrived!"

I take this opportunity of expressing my sense of many kind acts and much friendly conduct of Mr. Cottle towards my Father, often

spoken of to me by my dear departed Mother, into whose heart all benefits sank deep, and by whom he was ever remembered with respect and affection. If I still regard with any disapproval his publication of letters exposing his friend's unhappy bondage to opium and consequent embarrassments and deep distress of mind, it is not that I would have wished a broad influential fact in the history of one whose peculiar gifts had made him in some degree an object of public interest, to be finally concealed, supposing it to be attested, as this has been, by clear unambiguous documents. I agree with Mr. Cottle in thinking that he would himself have desired, even to the last, that whatever benefit the world might obtain by the knowledge of his sufferings from opium,—the calamity which the *unregulated* use of this drug had been to him—into which he first fell ignorantly and innocently, (not as Mr. De Quincey has said, to restore the "riot of his animal spirits," when "youthful blood no longer sustained it," but as a relief from bodily pain and nervous irritation)—that others might avoid the rock, on which so great a part of his happiness for so long a time was wrecked; and this from the same benevolent feeling, which prompted him earnestly to desire that his body should be opened after his death, in the hope that some cause of his life-long pains in the region of the bowels might be discovered, and that the knowledge thus obtained might lead to the invention of a remedy for like afflictions. Such a wish indeed, on the former point, as well as afterwards on the latter, he once strongly expressed; but I believe myself to be speaking equally in his spirit when I say, that all such considerations of advantage to the public should be subordinated to the prior claims of private and natural interests. My own opinion is, that it is the wiser and better plan for persons connected with those, whose feats of extraordinary strength have drawn the public gaze upon them, to endure patiently that their frailties should be gazed and wondered at too; and even if they think, that any reflection to them of such celebrity, on such conditions, is far more to be deprecated than desired, still to consider that they are not permitted to determine their lot, in this respect, but are to take it as it has been determined for them, independently of their will, with its peculiar pains and privileges annexed to it. I believe that most of them would be like the sickly queen in the fairy tale of Peronella, who repented when she had obtained the country maiden's youth and health at the loss of rank and riches. Be this as it may, they have not a choice of evils, nor can

exchange the aches and pains of their portion, or its wrinkles and blemishes,—for a fair and painless obscurity. These remarks, however, refer only to the feeling and conduct of parties privately affected by such exposures. Others are bound to care for them as they are not bound to care for themselves. If a finished portrait of one, in whom they are nearly concerned, is due to the world, they alone can be the debtors, for the property by inheritance is in them. Other persons, without their leave, should not *undertake* to give any such portrait; *their* duties move on a different plane; nor can they rightly feel themselves “entitled” (to borrow the language of Mr. De Quincey, while I venture to dissent from his judgment), “to notice the most striking aspects of his character, of his disposition and his manners, as so many reflex indications of his intellectual constitution,” if this involves the publication of letters on private subjects, the relation of domestic circumstances and other such personalities affecting the living. I am sure at least that conscience would prohibit *me* from any such course. I should never think the public good a sufficient apology for publishing the secret history of any man or woman whatever, who had connections remaining upon earth; but if I were possessed of private notices respecting one in whom the world takes an interest, should think it right to place them in the hands of his nearest relations, leaving it to them to deal with such documents, as a sense of what is due to the public, and what belongs to openness and honesty, may demand.

Of all the censors of Mr. Coleridge, Mr. De Quincey is the one whose remarks are the most worthy of attention; those of the rest in general are but views taken from a distance, and filled up by conjecture, views taken through a medium so thick with *opinion*, even if not clouded with vanity and self-love, that it resembles a horn more than glass or the transpicuous air;—The Opium eater, as he has called himself, had sufficient inward sympathy with the subject of his criticism to be capable in some degree of beholding his mind, as it actually existed, in all the intermingling shades of individual reality; and in few minds have these shades been more subtly intermingled than in my Father’s. But Mr. De Quincey’s portrait of Coleridge is not the man himself; for besides that his knowledge of what concerned him outwardly was imperfect, the inward sympathy of which I have spoken was far from entire, and he has written as if it were greater than it really was. I cannot but

conjecture, from what he has disclosed concerning himself, that on some points he has seen Mr. Coleridge's mind *too much* in the mirror of his own. His sketches of my Father's life and character are, like all that he writes, so finely written, that the blots on the narrative are the more to be deplored. One of these blots is the passage to which I referred at the beginning of the last paragraph: "I believe it to be notorious that he first began the use of opium, not as a relief from any bodily pains or nervous irritations—for his constitution was strong and excellent—but as a source of luxurious sensations. It is a great misfortune, at least it is a great pain, to have tasted the enchanted cup of youthful rapture incident to the poetic temperament. Coleridge, to speak in the words of *Cervantes*, wanted better bread than was made with wheat." Mr. De Quincey mistook a constitution that had vigour in it for a vigorous constitution. His body was originally full of life, but it was full of death also from the first; there was in him a slow poison, which gradually leavened the whole lump, and by which his muscular frame was prematurely slackened and stupified. Mr. Stuart says that his letters are "one continued flow of complaint of ill health and incapacity from ill health." This is true of all his letters—(all the *sets* of them)—which have come under my eye, even those written before he went to Malta, where his opium habits were confirmed. Indeed it was in search of health that he visited the Mediterranean,—for one in his condition of nerves a most ill-advised measure,—I believe that the climate of South Italy is poison to most persons who suffer from relaxation and tendency to low fever. If my Father sought more from opium than the mere absence of pain, I feel assured that it was not luxurious sensations or the glowing phantasmagoria of passive dreams; but that the power of the medicine might keep down the agitations of his nervous system, like a strong hand grasping the jangled strings of some shattered lyre,—that he might once more lightly flash along

Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,

On winding lakes and rivers wide,

That ask no aid of sail or oar,

That fear no spite of wind or tide,—

released, for a time at least, from the tyranny of ailments, which, by a spell of wretchedness, fix the thoughts upon themselves, perpetually drawing them inwards, as into a stifling gulf. A letter of his has been given in this Supplement, which records his first experience of opium: he had recourse to it in that instance for violent pain in the face, afterwards he sought relief in the same way from the suffering of rheumatism.

I shall conclude this chapter with a poetical sketch drawn from my Father by a friend, who knew him during the latter years of his life, after spending a few days with him at Bath, in the year 1815.

Proud lot is his, whose comprehensive soul,
Keen for the parts, capacious for the whole,
Thought's mingled hues can separate, dark from bright,
Like the fine lens that sifts the solar light;
Then recompose again th' harmonious rays,
And pour them powerful in collected blaze —
Wakening, where'er they glance, creations new,
In beauty steeped, nor less to nature true;
With eloquence that hurls from reason's throne
A voice of might, or pleads in pity's tone:
To agitate, to melt, to win, to soothe,
Yet kindling ever on the side of truth;
Or swerved, by no base interest warped awry,
But erring in his heart's deep fervency;
Genius for him asserts the unthwarted claim,
With these to mate — the sacred Few of fame —

Explore, like them, new regions for mankind,
And leave, like theirs, a deathless name behind.

CHAPTER XVIII

MRS. COLERIDGE. LAST STAY AT THE LAKE DISTRICT

[Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, as we have already seen, on 5th October, 1795. The first period of Coleridge's married life had been a happy one. Although there is reason to believe Coleridge married his wife to "heal a deeper wound," and that Mary Evans would have been the object of his choice, there is no reason to suppose that he ever regretted his union with Sarah Fricker during the first years of their marriage. All accounts we have of the Clevedon and Stowey periods agree that Coleridge was happy in the new domestic bond. Cottle prints a glowing picture of the life at Clevedon (*Reminiscences*); and Richard Reynell concurs regarding the Stowey cottage life (*Illustrated London News*, 1893). Coleridge, too, wrote most affectionately to his wife during his absence in Germany, and he was a deep lover of his children, and always in dread lest any calamity should happen to them while he was in Germany and Malta. Coleridge, above most men, was peculiarly fitted to make a good husband. He never spoke of his wife as his intellectual inferior, although he knew perfectly well she was not fitted to follow him in his Platonic imaginings. Dorothy Wordsworth's remarks on this point are beside the mark. Coleridge never expected to find in the woman he was prepared to love intellectual grasp of his philosophic system. The woman ideals he has given us are not blue-stockings, but domestic Ophelias and Imogens. Read in this connection *The Eolian Harp* and *Lines written on having left a Place of Retirement*, *Lewti*, *Christabel*, *Love*, *Fears in Solitude*, *the Day Dream*. "I could," said Coleridge to Thomas Allsop in 1822, "have been happy with a servant-girl had she only in sincerity of heart responded to my affection."

Strained relations commenced to develop between the poet and Mrs. Coleridge between the summer of 1801 and the summer of 1802; and that Coleridge was not living happily with his wife began to leak out among their acquaintances during 1802; and by 1807 it had become a recognized fact. The evidence of all this does not require to be quoted to those who have read the *Journals* and *Letters* of Dorothy Wordsworth. There are numerous notices of the estrangement, and Dorothy in a letter to Lady Beaumont,

enumerates what she supposes were the causes of the gulf of separation.

The causes of the estrangement were cumulative. While Coleridge never looked upon his wife as his inferior, and never expected attainments in her which she did not have, Mrs. Coleridge, as she advanced in years, could not be slow to perceive that there were other women beside herself who deeply interested themselves in her husband with his conversational fascinations and gentlemanly bearing toward woman. She could not be oblivious to the fact that Dorothy Wordsworth, for instance, was intellectually better fitted than herself to comprehend the "large discourse" which characterized Coleridge; and into Dorothy's ear was poured many a transcendental disquisition not understandable by the wife. Very few wives, as we know from the Carlyle history, can allow their husbands to have a "Gloriana;" and it is not likely that Sarah Fricker was one of the exceptions. Later, Charlotte Brent became one of Coleridge's Platonic sisterhood, but of what intellectual capacity she was of we cannot tell. But she added to the wife's resentment. Opium, too, of course, had its share in irritating the discontented wife.

There is little foundation, as far as I can see, that Mrs. Coleridge had a horrible and ungovernable temper. I think ill-temper was created by events and by the non-success of Coleridge, and by the unfavourable comparison Coleridge as a literary man made with Southey, who was luckily successful in his ventures while Coleridge was always unfortunate. She was doubtless sorely tried.

It must also be stated that Coleridge did not neglect his wife in the pecuniary sense. He allowed Mrs. Coleridge to enjoy the whole of the Wedgwood Pension (less £20 a year which he granted to her mother, Mrs. Fricker). In his brief bursts of prosperity he also remitted her supplementary sums, £110 was sent from Malta, and £100 more promised. When *Remorse* was a success he sent her £100, on 20th January 1813, and another £100 was promised in a month. Coleridge also effected an insurance on his life for £1,000, with profits, before going to Malta, the premium for which was £27 5s. 6d. per annum. This was paid to the end of his life, sometimes, no doubt, by the help of friends; and the policy realized £2,560. The

charge, therefore, that Coleridge neglected or deserted his wife and family is without foundation. Stuart, in an article otherwise by no means favourable to Coleridge, acquits him on this charge. He says Coleridge "never deserted them in the sense which the words imply. On the contrary, he always spoke of them to me with esteem, affection, and anxiety. He allowed to them the greatest part of his income, but that was sometimes insufficient for their comfortable subsistence, and he himself was usually more distressed for money than they;". We may add that Coleridge was a man of a vestal purity; and, in spite of his own experience, never said anything in disparagement of the marriage bond.

Coleridge paid his last visit to the Lake District in the spring of 1812, 23rd February to 26th March. He quitted his wife on cordial enough terms, and wrote an agreeable letter to her from London, of date 21st April. But he never returned to Keswick. That mysterious gulf which he has described so wonderfully and weirdly in *Christabel* which separates sundered hearts, widened with the years; and

They stood aloof, the scars remaining!

CHAPTER XIX REMORSE AT DRURY LANE

By what I *have* effected, am I to be judged by my fellow-men; what I *could* have done is a question for my own conscience. —S. T. C.

As the *Biographia Literaria* does not mention all Mr. Coleridge's writings, it will be proper to give some account of them here.

The Poetical Works in three volumes include the *Juvenile Poems*, *Sibylline Leaves*, *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, *Remorse*, *Zapolya*, and *Wallenstein*.

The first volume of *Juvenile Poems* was published in the Spring of 1796. It contains three sonnets by Charles Lamb, and a poetical Epistle which he called "Sara's," but of which my Mother told me she wrote but little. Indeed it is not very like some simple affecting verses, which were wholly by herself, on the death of her beautiful infant, Berkeley, in 1799. In May, 1797, Mr. C. put forth a collection of poems, containing all that were in his first edition, with the exception of twenty pieces and the addition of ten new ones and a considerable number by his friends, Lloyd and Lamb. *The Ancient Mariner*, *Love*, *The Nightingale*, *The Foster Mother's Tale* first appeared with the *Lyrical Ballads* of Mr. Wordsworth in the summer of 1798. There was a third edition of the *Juvenile Poems* by themselves in 1803, with the original motto from Statius, *Felix curarum*, etc. *Silo*. *Lib. iv.* A spirit of almost child-like sociability seemed to reign among these young poets — they were fond of joint publications.

Wallenstein, a Play translated from the German of Schiller, appeared in 1800. *Christabel* was not published till April 1816, but written, the first part at Stowey in 1797, the second at Keswick in 1800. It went into a third edition in the first year. The fragment called *Kubla Khan*, composed in 1797, and the *Pains of Sleep*, which was annexed to the former by way of contrast, were published with the first edition of *Christabel*, in 1816.

The Tragedy called *Remorse* was written in the summer and autumn of 1797, but not represented on the stage till 1813, when it was performed at Drury Lane — on the authority of an old play-bill of the Calne Theatre, "with unbounded applause thirty successive nights."

On "the success of the *Remorse*," Mr. Coleridge wrote thus to his friend Mr. Poole, on the 14th of February, 1813:

LETTER 152.

“The receipt of your heart-engendered lines was sweeter than an unexpected strain of sweetest music;—or in humbler phrase, it was the only pleasurable sensation which the *success of the Remorse* has given me. I have read of, or perhaps only imagined, a punishment in Arabia, in which the culprit was so bricked up as to be unable to turn his eyes to the right or to the left, while in front was placed a high heap of barren sand glittering under the vertical sun. Some slight analogue of this, I have myself suffered from the mere unusualness of having my attention forcibly directed to a subject which permitted neither sequence of imagery, nor series of reasoning. No grocer’s apprentice, after his first month’s permitted riot, was ever sicker of figs and raisins than I of hearing about the *Remorse*. The endless rat-a-tat-tat at our black-and-blue bruised door, and my three master fiends, proof sheets, letters (for I have a raging epistolophobia), and worse than these—invitations to large dinners, which I cannot refuse without offence and imputation of pride, nor accept without disturbance of temper the day before, and a sick aching stomach for two days after—oppress me so that my spirits quite sink under it.

“I have never seen the Play since the first night. It has been a good thing for the Theatre. They will get £8,000 or £10,000 by it, and I shall get more than all my literary labours put together, nay, thrice as much, subtracting my heavy losses in *The Watchman* and *The Friend*, including the copyright.”

The manuscript of the *Remorse*, immediately after it was written, was shown to Mr. Sheridan, “who,” says my Father, in the Preface to the first Edition, “by a twice conveyed recommendation (in the year 1797) had urged me to write a Tragedy for his theatre, who, on my objection that I was utterly ignorant of all stage tactics, had promised that *he* would himself make the necessary alterations, if the piece should be at all representable.” He however neither gave him any answer, nor returned him the manuscript, which he suffered to wander about the town from his house, and my Father goes on to say, “not only asserted that the Play was rejected because I would not submit to the alteration of one ludicrous line, but finally, in the year 1806, amused and delighted (as who was ever in

his society, if I may trust the universal report, without being amused and delighted?) a large company at the house of a highly respectable Member of Parliament, with the ridicule of the Tragedy, as a *fair specimen* of the *whole* of which he adduced a line:

Drip! drip! drip!

There's nothing here but dripping.

In the original copy of the Play, in the first scene of the fourth act, Isidore *had* commenced his soliloquy in the cavern with the words:

Drip! drip! a ceaseless sound of water-drops, —

as far as I can at present recollect: for, on the possible ludicrous association being pointed out to me, I instantly and thankfully struck out the line." I repeat this story as told by Mr. C. himself, because it has been otherwise told by others. I have little doubt that it was more pointedly than faithfully told to him, and can never believe that Mr. S. represented a ludicrous line as a fair specimen of the whole Play, or his tenacious adherence to it as the reason for its rejection. I dare say he thought it, as Lord Byron afterwards thought *Zapolya*, "beautiful but not practicable." Mr. Coleridge felt that *he* had some claim to a friendly spirit of criticism in that quarter, because he had "devoted the firstlings of his talents," as he says in a marginal note, "to the celebration of Sheridan's genius," and after the treatment described "not only never spoke unkindly or resentfully of it, but actually was zealous and frequent in defending and praising his public principles and conduct in the *Morning Post*" — of which, perhaps, Mr. S. knew nothing. However, in lighter moods, my Father laughed at Sheridan's joke as much as any of his auditors could have done in 1806, and repeated with great effect and mock solemnity "Drip! — Drip! — Drip! — nothing but dripping." I suppose it was at this time, — the winter of 1806-7 — that he made an unsuccessful attempt to bring out the Tragedy at Drury Lane.

When first written this Play had been called *Osorio*, from the principal character, whose name my Father afterwards improved into *Ordonio*. I believe he in some degree altered, if he did not absolutely recast, the three last acts after the failure with Mr. Sheridan, who probably led him to see their unfitness for theatrical

representation. But of this point I have not certain knowledge. It was when Drury Lane was under the management of Lord Byron and Mr. Whitbread, and through the influence of the former, that it was produced upon the stage. Mr. Gillman says, "Although Mr. Whitbread did not give it the advantage of a single new scene, yet the popularity of the Play was such, that the principal actor, (Mr. Roe,) who had performed in it with great success, made choice of it for his benefit night, and it brought an overflowing house." This was some time after Mr. Coleridge took up his residence at Highgate, in April, 1816. After all I am happy to think that this drama is a strain of *poetry*, and like all, not only dramatic poems, but highly poetic dramas, not to be fully appreciated on the stage.

Zapolya came before the public in 1817. The stage fate of this piece is alluded to in the *B. L.* Mr. Gillman mentions that it was Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, then the critic for Drury Lane, who rejected the Play, and complained of its "metaphysics" — a term which is not, upon all occasions, to be strictly construed, but, when used in familiar talk, seems merely to denote whatever is too fine-spun, in the texture of thought and speech, for common wear; whatever is not readily apprehensible and generally acceptable. Schoolboys call everything in books or discourse, which is graver or tenderer than they like, "*metaphysics*." Mr. Kinnaird may have judged quite rightly that the Play was too *metaphysical* for our theatres in their present state, though certainly plays as metaphysical were once well received on the stage. *Zapolya*, however, had a favourable audience from the public as a dramatic poem. Mr. Gillman says this Christmas Tale, which the author "never sat down to write, but dictated while walking up and down the room, became so immediately popular that 2,000 copies were sold in six weeks."

The collection of poems entitled *Sibylline Leaves*, "in allusion to the fragmentary and widely scattered state in which they had been long suffered to remain," appeared in 1817, about the same time with *Zapolya*, the *Biographia Literaria*, and the first *Lay Sermon*.

The *Miscellaneous Poems* were composed at different periods of the author's life, many of them in his later years. I believe that *Youth and Age* was written before he left the North of England in 1810, when

he was about seven or eight-and-thirty, — early indeed for the poet to say of himself

I see these locks in silvery slips,

This drooping gait, this altered size:

But spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,

And tears take sunshine from thine eyes.

The whole of the *Poetical Works*, with the exception of a few which must be incorporated in a future edition, are contained in that in three volumes. *The Fall of Robespierre*, an Historic drama, of which the first act was written by Mr. Coleridge, and published September 22, 1794, is printed in the first vol. of the *Lit. Remains*. This first act contains the Song on *Domestic Peace*. In the blank verse there are some faint dawnings of his maturer style, as in these lines:

The winged hours, that scatter'd roses round me,

Languid and sad, drag their slow course along,

And shake big gall-drops from their heavy wings —

and in these:

Why, thou hast been the mouth-piece of all horrors,

And, like a blood-hound, crouch'd for murder! Now

Aloof thou standest from the tottering pillar,

Or, like a frightened child behind its mother,

Hidest thy pale face in the skirts of — *Mercy!*

but it contains scarcely anything of his peculiar original powers, and some of the lines are in schoolboy taste; for instance,

While sorrow sad, like the dank willow near her,

Hangs o'er the troubled fountain of her eye.

Yet three years after the date of this composition, in 1797, which has been called his *Annus Mirabilis*, he had reached his poetical zenith. But perhaps it may be said that, from original temperament, and the excitement of circumstances, my Father lived fast.

He had four poetical epochs, which represented, in some sort, boyhood, youthful manhood, middle age, and the decline of life. The first commenced a little on this side childhood, when he wrote *Time real and Imaginary*, and ended in 1796. This period embraces the Juvenile Poems, concluding with *Religious Musings*, written on the Christmas Eve of 1794, a few months after *The Fall of Robespierre: The Destiny of Nations* was composed a little earlier. *Lewti*, written in 1795, *The Æolian Harp*, and *Reflections on having left a place of Retirement*, written soon after, are more finished poems, and exhibit more of his peculiar vein than any which he wrote before them; though one poet, Mr. Bowles, has said that he never surpassed the *Religious Musings! Fire, Famine, and Slaughter* belongs to 1796. *The Lines to a Friend* (Charles Lamb) who had declared his intention of writing no more poetry, and those *To a Young Friend* (Charles Lloyd) were composed in the same year. These poems of 1794-5-6 may be considered intermediate in power as in time, and so forming a link between the first epoch and the next.

Then came his poetic prime, which commenced with the *Ode to the Departing Year*, composed at the end of December, 1796. The year following, the five-and-twentieth of his life, produced the *Ancient Mariner*, *Love*, and *The Dark Ladie*, the first part of *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *Remorse*, in its original cast, *France*, and *This Lime-tree bower*. *Fears in Solitude*, *The Nightingale*, and *The Wanderings of Cain*, were written in 1798. *Frost at Midnight*, *The Picture*, the *Lines to the Rev. G. Coleridge*, and those *To W. Wordsworth*, are all of this same Stowey period. It was in June, 1797, that my Father began to be intimate with Mr. Wordsworth, and this doubtless gave an impulse to his mind. *The Hymn before Sunrise*, and other strains produced in Germany, link this period to the next. The *Hexameters written during a temporary blindness*, and the *Catullian Hendecasyllables* (which are freely translated from Matthisson's *Milesisches Märchen*) Mr. Cottle seems to place in 1797, but the Author has marked the former as produced in 1799, and I believe that the latter are of the same date. *The Night Scene*, *Myrtle leaf that ill besped*, *Maiden that with sullen brow*,

are of this period, and so I believe are *Lines composed in a concert-room*, and some others.

The poems which succeed are distinguished from those of my Father's Stowey life by a less buoyant spirit. Poetic fire they have, but not the clear bright mounting flame of his earlier poetry. Their meditative vein is graver, and they seem tinged with the sombre hues of middle age; though some of them were written before the Author was thirty-five years old. A characteristic poem of this period is *Dejection, an Ode*: composed at Keswick, April 4, 1802. *Wallenstein* had been written in London in 1800. *The Three Graves* was composed in 1805 or 6; the second part of *Christabel* soon after the Author's settling in the Lake country (in 1801); *Youth and Age* not long before he quitted it as a residence for ever (in 1810). *Recollections of Love* must have been written on his return to Keswick from Malta in 1806: *The Happy Husband* at that time, or earlier. The small fragment called *The Knight's Tomb* probably belongs to the North. *The Devil's Thoughts* appeared in *The Morning Post* in 1800. This production certainly has in it more of youthful sprightliness than of middle-aged soberness; still it is less fantastic and has more of world-wisdom in its satire than the *War Eclogue* of 1796. *The Complaint and Reply* first appeared in 1802. *The Ode to Tranquillity* was published in *The Friend*, March, 1809.

The poems of his after years, even when sad, are calmer in their melancholy than those produced while he was ceasing to be young. We are less heavy-hearted when youth is out of sight than when it is taking its leave. *Duty surviving Self-Love*, *The Pang more sharp than all*, *Love's Apparition and Evanishment*, *The Blossoming of the solitary Date tree*, and some other poems of his latter years, have this character of resigned and subdued sadness. *Work without Hope* was written at fifty-six. *The Visionary Hope* and *The Pains of Sleep*, which express more agitation and severer suffering, are of earlier date. These and all in the *Sibylline Leaves* were written before the end of 1817, when he had completed his forty-fifth year. The productions of the fourth epoch, looked at as works of imagination, are tender, graceful, exquisitely finished, but less bold and animated than those of his earlier day. This may be said of *Zapolya*, *Alice du Clos*, *The Garden of Boccaccio*, *The Two Founts*, *Lines suggested by the last Words of Berengarius*, *Sancti Dominici Pallium*, and other poems written, I

believe, when the poet was past forty, the four last-named after he was fifty years old. *Love, Hope, and Patience in Education* was, I think, one of his latest poetical efforts, if not the very last.

The whole of the Poetical Works, except a few which have been reprinted in the *Literary Remains*, are contained in the stereotyped edition in three volumes. The Poems without the Dramas have been collected in a single volume, from which some of the Juvenile Poems, and two or three of later date, are excluded, and which includes a few not contained in the three vol. edition.

I now proceed to Mr. Coleridge's compositions in Prose. *Conciones ad Populum*, are two addresses to the People, delivered at the latter end of February, and then thrown into a small pamphlet. "After this," says Mr. Cottle, "he consolidated two other of his lectures, and published them under the title of *The Plot Discovered*." A moral and political Lecture delivered at Bristol by Mr. C. was published in the same year. I do not know whether he printed any of his other Bristol orations of the year ninety-five. *The Watchman* was carried on in 1796. The first number appeared March 1; the tenth and last, May 13. These were youthful immature productions. Whatever was valuable and of a permanent nature in them was transferred into his later productions, or included in later publications.

The Friend, a Literary, Moral, and Political Weekly Paper, excluding personal and party politics and the events of the day, was written and published at Grasmere. The first number appeared on Thursday, June 1st, 1809, the 27th and last of that edition, March 15, 1810. *The Friend* next appeared before the public in 3 vols. in 1818. This was "rather a rifacimento," as the Author said, "than a new edition, the additions forming so large a proportion of the whole work, and the arrangement being altogether new." (Essays V-XIII, pp. 38-128, treat of the *Duty of communicating truth, and the conditions under which it may be safely communicated*; Essay V is on the expediency of pious frauds, etc.). The third edition of 1837 gave the Author's last corrections, an appendix containing the parts thrown out in the recast, with some other *miscellanea*, and a synoptical table of the contents by the Editor. There is now a fourth edition.

The two *Lay Sermons* were published, the one in 1816, the other in 1817. The first is entitled *The Statesman's Manual, or The Bible the best*

Guide to Political skill and foresight: a Lay Sermon addressed to the higher classes of society, with an Appendix, containing comments and essays connected with the study of the inspired writings: – the second *A Lay Sermon*, addressed to the Higher and Middle Classes, on the existing distresses and discontents. Mr. Gillman says he “had the intention of addressing a third to the lower classes.”

The *Biographia Literaria* was published in 1817, but parts of the first volume must have been composed some years earlier. The *Edinburgh Review* in its August number of that year was as favourable to the book *as could be expected.*”

CHAPTER XX COTTLE'S DARK CHAPTER

[Coleridge had now become a recognized public lecturer on Poetry, and it was his last resource to keep out of political writing, which he saw was a rather barren business on which to waste his powers. Two courses of lectures were given between the spring of 1812 and that of 1813. His third course was delivered at Willis's Rooms from 12th May to 5th June. Henry Crabb Robinson attended the second, third and fourth of the course on 23rd, 26th, and 29th May, and has left some short accounts. His fourth course began on 3rd November 1812 and closed on 29th January 1813. H. C. R. attended the closing lecture. "He was received," says H. C. R., "with three rounds of applause on entering the lecture room, and very loudly applauded during the lecture and at its close."

The letter to Poole of 13th February 1813 quoted in the last chapter is only a fragment; the full text is given by Mr. E. H. Coleridge. It ends as follows: "You perhaps may likewise have heard (in the Whispering Gallery of the World) of the year-long difference between me and Wordsworth (compared with the sufferings of which all the former afflictions of my life were less than flea-bites), occasioned (in great part) by the wicked folly of the arch-fool Montagu.

"A reconciliation has taken place, but the *feeling*, which I had previous to that moment, when the (three-fourth) calamity burst, like a thunderstorm from a blue sky, on my soul, after fifteen years of such religious, almost superstitious idolatry and self-sacrifice. Oh no! that, I fear, can never return. All outward actions, all inward wishes, all thoughts and admirations will be the same — *are* the same, but — aye, there remains an immedicable *But*."

Not much is known regarding Coleridge's whereabouts in the summer of 1813. In September Southey came to London and took him to see Madame De Staël, who as we know was drowned by his monologue. In the end of October Coleridge left for Bristol, and reached the then second city of England to deliver a fifth course of lectures on poetry which had been arranged for by his friends there. The course lasted from 28th October to 16th November. Cottle says the first lecture was on *Hamlet*; but the report from the Bristol papers

contradicts this, the lecture on *Hamlet* being the third. A sixth course of lectures was arranged for, which Cottle says were well attended. Another course of four lectures on Milton, between 5th and 14th April, was indifferently attended. His eighth course of lectures, this time on Homer, scarcely paid expenses. Although Coleridge must have repeated himself frequently in these lectures, they were new to Bristol. C. R. Leslie, a painter of some note in his day, speaks favourably of them. The following letters belong to the visit to Bristol.

LETTER 153. TO WADE

8 Dec. 1813.

Since my arrival at the Greyhound, Bath, I have been confined to my bed-room, almost to my bed. Pray for my recovery, and request Mr. Roberts's prayers, for my infirm, wicked heart; that Christ may mediate to the Father, to lead me to Christ, and give me a *living* instead of a *reasoning* faith! and for my health, so far only as it may be the condition of my improvement, and final redemption.

My dear affectionate friend, I am your obliged, and grateful, and affectionate, friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 154. TO COTTLE.

(5-14 April 1814.)

My dear Cottle,

An erysipelatous complaint, of an alarming nature, has rendered me barely able to attend and go through with my lectures, the receipts of which, have almost paid the expenses of the room, advertisements, etc. Whether this be to my discredit, or that of the good citizens of Bristol, it is not for me to judge. I have been persuaded to make another trial, by advertising three lectures, on the rise, and progress, and conclusion of the French Revolution, with a critique on the proposed constitution, but unless fifty names are procured, not a lecture give I.

Even so the two far, far more important lectures, for which I have long been preparing myself, and have given more thought to, than to any other subject, viz.: those on female education, from infancy to womanhood practically systematized, I shall be (God permitting) ready to give the latter end of the week after next, but upon condition that I am assured of sixty names. Why as these are lectures that I must write down, I could sell them as a *recipe* for twice the sum at least.

If I can walk out, I will be with you on Sunday. Has Mr. Wade called on you? Mr. Le Breton, a near neighbour of yours, in Portland Square, would, if you sent a note to him, converse with you on any subject relative to my interest, with congenial sympathy; but indeed I think your idea one of those Chimeras, which kindness begets upon an unacquaintance with mankind.

Harry! thy wish was father to that thought.

God bless you,

S. T. C.

LETTER 155. TO COTTLE.

(— 1814).

Mr. — — I find is raising the city against me, as far as he and his friends can, for having stated a mere matter of fact; viz. that Milton had represented Satan as a sceptical Socinian; which is the case; and I could not have explained the excellence of the sublimest single passage in all his writings, had I not previously informed the audience, that Milton had represented Satan, as knowing the Prophetic and Messianic character of Christ, but was sceptical as to any higher claims. And what other definition could Mr. — — himself give of a sceptical Socinian? (with this difference indeed, that Satan's faith somewhat exceeded that of Socinians.) Now that Satan has done so, will you consult *Paradise Regained*, Book IV, from line 196, and the same Book, from line 500.

LETTER 156. TO COTTLE.

(— 1814.)

My dear Cottle,

I have been engaged three days past, to dine with the sheriff, at Merchant's Hall to-morrow. As they will not wield knife and fork till near six, I cannot of course attend the meeting (for the establishment of an Infant School) but should it be put off, and you will give me a little longer notice, I will do my best to make my humble talents serviceable in their proportion to a cause in which I take no common interest, which has always my best wishes, and not seldom my prayers. God bless you, and your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. To you who know I prefer a roast potatoe and salt to the most splendid public dinner, the very sight of which always offends my infant appetite, I need not say that I am actuated solely by my pre-engagement, and by the impropriety of disappointing the friend whom I am to accompany, and to whom probably I owe the unexpected compliment of the sheriff's invitation.

I have read two-thirds of Dr. Pole's pamphlet on Infant Schools, with great interest. Thoughts on thoughts, feelings on feelings, crowded upon my mind and heart during the perusal, and which I would fain, God willing, give vent to! I truly honor and love the orthodox dissenters, and appreciate with heart-esteem their works of love. I have read, with much pleasure, the second preface to the second edition of your *Alfred*. It is well written.

LETTER 157. TO COTTLE.

1814.

My dear Cottle,

On my return home yesterday, I continued unwell, so as to be obliged to lie down for the greater part of the evening, and my indisposition keeping me awake during the whole night, I found it necessary to take some magnesia and calomel, and I am at present very sick. I have little chance of being able to stir out this morning, but if I am better I will see you in the evening. God bless you,

S. T. COLERIDGE..

Mr. Wade's, Queen Square.

While Coleridge was in Bristol in 1814 Cottle for the first time learnt of Coleridge's addiction to opium, which is rather surprising in one who had known him so intimately during 1795-98 and in 1807. It is remarkable, too, that in the early years of opium taking Coleridge never hid the fact from his friends, but freely corresponded with Tom Wedgwood and others about the effects of opium and kindred drugs, as if it were no secret that he was in the habit of resorting to them. But Cottle now saw that opium had been, in his estimation, the cause of all Coleridge's failures to apply his great powers to do something of the first order, and deemed it his duty to rate Coleridge for his folly, and wrote him the following letter:

COTTLE TO COLERIDGE.

Bristol, April 25, 1814.

Dear Coleridge,

I am conscious of being influenced by the purest motives in addressing to you the following letter. Permit me to remind you that I am the oldest friend you have in Bristol, that I was such when my friendship was of more consequence to you than it is at present, and that at that time you were neither insensible of my kindnesses, nor backward to acknowledge them. I bring these things to your remembrance, to impress on your mind, that it is still a *friend* who is

writing to you; one who ever has been such, and who is now going to give you the most decisive evidence of his sincerity.

When I think of Coleridge, I wish to recall the image of him, such as he appeared in past years; now, how has the baneful use of opium thrown a dark cloud over you and your prospects. I would not say anything needlessly harsh or unkind, but I must be *faithful*. It is the irresistible voice of conscience. Others may still flatter you, and hang upon your words, but I have another, though a less gracious duty to perform. I see a brother sinning a sin unto death, and shall I not warn him? I see him perhaps on the borders of eternity, in effect, despising his Maker's law, and yet indifferent to his perilous state!

In recalling what the expectations concerning you once were, and the excellency with which, seven years ago, you wrote and spoke on religious truth, my heart bleeds to see how you are now fallen; and thus to notice, how many exhilarating hopes are almost blasted by your present habits. This is said not to wound, but to arouse you to reflection.

I know full well the evidences of the pernicious drug! You cannot be unconscious of the effects, though you may wish to forget the cause. All around you behold the wild eye! the sallow countenance! the tottering step! the trembling hand! the disordered frame! and yet will you not be awakened to a sense of your danger, and I must add, your guilt? Is it a small thing, that one of the finest of human understandings should be lost! That your talents should be buried! That most of the influences to be derived from your present example, should be in direct opposition to right and virtue! It is true you still talk of religion, and profess the warmest admiration of the church and her doctrines, in which it would not be lawful to doubt your sincerity; but can you be unaware, that by your unguarded and inconsistent conduct, you are furnishing arguments to the infidel; giving occasion for the enemy to blaspheme; and (amongst those who imperfectly know you) throwing suspicion over your religious profession! Is not the great test in some measure against you, "By their fruits ye shall know them?" Are there never any calm moments, when you impartially judge of your own actions by their consequences?

Not to reflect on you; not to give you a moment's *needless* pain, but, in the spirit of friendship, suffer me to bring to your recollection, some of the sad effects of your undeniable intemperance.

I know you have a correct love of honest independence, without which, there can be no true nobility of mind; and yet for opium, you will sell this treasure, and expose yourself to the liability of arrest, by some "dirty fellow," to whom you choose to be indebted for "ten pounds!" You had, and still have, an acute sense of moral right and wrong, but is not the feeling sometimes overpowered by self-indulgence? Permit me to remind you, that you are not more suffering in your mind than you are in your body, while you are squandering largely your money in the purchase of opium, which, in the strictest equity, should receive *a different direction*.

I will not again refer to the mournful effects produced on your own health from this indulgence in opium, by which you have undermined your strong constitution; but I must notice the injurious consequences which this passion for the narcotic drug has on your literary efforts. What you have already done, excellent as it is, is considered by your friends and the world, as the bloom, the mere promise of the harvest. Will you suffer the fatal draught, which is ever accompanied by sloth, to rob you of your fame, and, what to you is a higher motive, of your power of doing good; of giving fragrance to your memory, amongst the worthies of future years, when you are numbered with the dead? (And now I would wish in the most delicate manner, to remind you of the injurious effects which these habits of yours produce on your family. From the estimation in which you are held by the public, I am clear in stating, that a small daily exertion on your part, would be sufficient to obtain for you and them, honour, happiness, and independence. You are still comparatively, a young man, and in such a cause, labour is sweet. Can you withhold so small a sacrifice? Let me sincerely advise you to return home, and live in the circle once more, of your wife and family. There may have been faults on one, possibly on both sides; but calumny itself has never charged criminality. Let all be forgotten, a small effort for the Christian. If I can become a mediator, command me. If you could be prevailed on to adopt this plan, I will gladly defray your expenses to Keswick, and I am sure, with better habits, you would be hailed by your

family, I was almost going to say, as an angel from heaven. It will also look better in the eyes of the world, who are always prompt with their own constructions, and these constructions are rarely the most charitable. It would also powerfully promote your own peace of mind.

There is this additional view, which ought to influence you, as it would every generous mind. Your wife and children are domesticated with Southey. He has a family of his own, which by his literary labour, he supports, to his great honour; and to the extra provision required of him on your account, he cheerfully submits; still, will you not divide with him the honour? You have not extinguished in your heart the Father's feelings. Your daughter is a sweet girl. Your two boys are promising; and Hartley, concerning whom you once so affectionately wrote, is eminently clever. These want only a father's assistance to give them credit and honourable stations in life. Will you withhold so equitable and small a boon. Your eldest son will soon be qualified for the university, where your name would inevitably secure him patronage, but without your aid, how is he to arrive there; and afterward, how is he to be supported? Revolve on these things, I entreat you, calmly, on your pillow.)

And now let me conjure you, alike by the voice of friendship, and the duty you owe yourself and family: above all, by the reverence you feel for the cause of Christianity; by the fear of God, and the awfulness of eternity, to renounce from this moment opium and spirits, as your bane! Frustrate not the great end of your existence. Exert the ample abilities which God has given you, as a faithful steward; so will you secure your rightful pre-eminence amongst the sons of genius; recover your cheerfulness; your health; I trust it is not too late! become reconciled to yourself; and through the merits of that Saviour, in whom you profess to trust, obtain, at last, the approbation of your Maker! My dear Coleridge, be wise before it be too late! I do hope to see you a renovated man! and that you will still burst your inglorious fetters, and justify the best hopes of your friends.

Excuse the freedom with which I write. If at the first moment it should offend, on reflection, you will approve at least of the motive, and, perhaps, in a better state of mind, thank and bless me. If all the

good which I have prayed for, should not be effected by this letter, I have at least discharged an imperious sense of duty. I wish my manner were less exceptionable, as I do that the advice through the blessing of the Almighty, might prove effectual. The tear which bedims my eye, is an evidence of the sincerity with which I subscribe myself

Your affectionate friend,

JOSEPH COTTLE.

Coleridge replied to this next day:

LETTER 158. COLERIDGE TO COTTLE.

April 26th, 1814.

You have poured oil in the raw and festering wound of an old friend's conscience, Cottle! but it is *oil of vitriol*! I but barely glanced at the middle of the first page of your letter, and have seen no more of it—not from resentment, God forbid! but from the state of my bodily and mental sufferings, that scarcely permitted human fortitude to let in a new visitor of affliction.

The object of my present reply, is, to state the case just as it is—first, that for ten years the anguish of my spirit has been indescribable, the sense of my danger staring, but the consciousness of my GUILT worse—far worse than all! I have prayed, with drops of agony on my brow; trembling, not only before the justice of my Maker, but even before the mercy of my Redeemer. “I gave thee so many talents, what hast thou done with them?” Secondly, overwhelmed as I am with a sense of my direful infirmity, I have never attempted to disguise or conceal the cause. On the contrary, not only to friends, have I stated the whole case with tears, and the very bitterness of shame; but in two instances, I have warned young men, mere acquaintances, who had spoken of having taken laudanum, of the direful consequences, by an awful exposition of its tremendous effects on myself.

Thirdly, though before God I cannot lift up my eyelids, and only do not despair of his mercy, because to despair would be adding crime to crime, yet to my fellow-men, I may say, that I was seduced into the ACCURSED habit ignorantly. I had been almost bed-ridden for many months, with swellings in my knees. In a medical Journal, I unhappily met with an account of a cure performed in a similar case, or what appeared to me so, by rubbing in of Laudanum, at the same time taking a given dose internally. It acted like a charm, like a miracle! I recovered the use of my limbs, of my appetite, of my spirits, and this continued for near a fortnight. At length the unusual stimulus subsided, the complaint returned,—the supposed remedy was recurred to—but I cannot go through the dreary history.

Suffice it to say, that effects were produced which acted on me by terror and cowardice, of pain and sudden death, not (so help me

God!) by any temptation of pleasure, or expectation, or desire of exciting pleasurable sensations. On the very contrary, Mrs. Morgan and her sister will bear witness so far, as to say, that the longer I abstained, the higher my spirits were, the keener my enjoyments – till the moment, the direful moment arrived, when my pulse began to fluctuate, my heart to palpitate, and such falling abroad, as it were, of my whole frame, such intolerable restlessness, and incipient bewilderment, that in the last of my several attempts to abandon the dire poison, I exclaimed in agony, which I now repeat in seriousness and solemnity, “I am too poor to hazard this.” Had I but a few hundred pounds, but £200 – half to send to Mrs. Coleridge, and half to place myself in a private mad house, where I could procure nothing but what a physician thought proper, and where a medical attendant could be constantly with me for two or three months (in less than that time, life or death would be determined), then there might be hope. Now there is none!! O God! how willingly would I place myself under Dr. Fox, in his establishment; for my case is a species of madness, only that it is a derangement, an utter impotence of the volition, and not of the intellectual faculties. You bid me rouse myself: go bid a man paralytic in both arms, to rub them briskly together, and that will cure him. “Alas!” he would reply, “that I cannot move my arms, is my complaint and my misery.” May God bless you, and

Your affectionate, but most afflicted,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

“On receiving this full and mournful disclosure,” Cottle says, “I felt the deepest compassion for Mr. C.’s state, and sent him the following letter. (Necessary to be given to understand Mr. Coleridge’s reply.)”

COTTLE TO COLERIDGE

Dear Coleridge,

I am afflicted to perceive that Satan is so busy with you, but God is greater than Satan. Did you ever hear of Jesus Christ? That he came into the world to save sinners? He does not demand, as a condition, any merit of your own, he only says, “Come and be healed!” Leave

your idle speculations: forget your vain philosophy. Come as you are. Come and be healed. He only requires you to be sensible of your need of him, to give him your heart, to abandon with penitence, every evil practice, and he has promised that whosoever thus comes, he will in no wise cast out. To such as you Christ ought to be precious, for you see the hopelessness of every other refuge. He will add strength to your own ineffectual efforts.

For your encouragement, I express the conviction, that such exercises as yours, are a conflict that must ultimately prove successful. You do not cloak your sins. You confess and deplore them. I believe that you will still be as "a brand plucked from the burning," and that you (with all your wanderings) will be restored, and raised up, as a chosen instrument, to spread a Saviour's name. Many a "chief of sinners," has been brought, since the days of "Saul of Tarsus," to sit as a little child at the Redeemer's feet. To this state you, I am assured, will come. Pray! Pray earnestly, and you will be heard by your Father, which is in Heaven. I could say many things of duty and virtue, but I wish to direct your views at once to Christ, in whom is the alone balm for afflicted souls.

May God ever bless you,

JOSEPH COTTLE.

P.S. If my former letter appeared unkind, pardon me! It was not intended. Shall I breathe in your ear?—I know one, who is a stranger to these throes and conflicts, and who finds "Wisdom's ways to be ways of pleasantness, and her paths, paths of peace."

To this letter Cottle received the following reply:

LETTER 159. TO COTTLE

O dear friend! I have too much to be forgiven, to feel any difficulty in forgiving the cruellest enemy that ever trampled on me: and you I have only to *thank!* You have no conception of the dreadful hell of my mind, and conscience, and body. You bid me pray. O, I do pray inwardly to be able to pray; but indeed to pray, to pray with a faith to which a blessing is promised, this is the reward of faith, this is the gift of God to the elect. Oh! if to feel how infinitely worthless I am, how poor a wretch, with just free-will enough to be deserving of wrath, and of my own contempt, and of none to merit a moment's peace, can make a part of a Christian's creed; so far I am a Christian.

S. T. C.

April 26, 1814.

Cottle informs us that Coleridge had now resolved to put himself under constraint in the asylum of Dr. Fox, in the neighbourhood of Bristol.

LETTER 160. TO COTTLE

(– Apl., 1814.)

Dear Cottle,

I have resolved to place myself in any situation, in which I can remain for a month or two, as a child, wholly in the power of others. But, alas! I have no money! Will you invite Mr. Hood, a most dear and affectionate friend to worthless me; and Mr. Le Breton, my old school-fellow, and, likewise, a most affectionate friend: and Mr. Wade, who will return in a few days: desire them to call on you, any evening after seven o'clock, that they can make convenient, and consult with them whether anything of this kind can be done. Do you know Dr. Fox?

Affectionately,

S. T. C.

I have to prepare my lecture. Oh! with how blank a spirit!

Cottle did not give his sanction to this proposal; but, on the contrary, wrote to Southey detailing what he had discovered about Coleridge, and requesting Southey's opinion. Southey wrote without delay advising other measures. Southey had been fully cognizant of the consumption of opium and laudanum, and says the Morgans had at one time broken him of the habit when his consumption was from two quarts a week to a pint a day (*Rem.*, 373). It is difficult to credit that any one, even habituated to the drug, could consume this quantity; but Southey evidently believed it. An ordinary dose of laudanum is 30 drops. 480 drops form an ounce, and there are 20 ounces in a pint. This makes 320 doses in a pint; and this, taken within twenty-four hours, would not give a patient time to wake up out of his stupor, even though administered by other hands, to take the successive draughts. Southey recommended that Coleridge should go and visit Poole at Stowey for a few weeks; then come on to Keswick by way of Birmingham and Liverpool, and deliver lectures at these places to raise funds. In answer to a second letter by Cottle to Southey proposing to get up an annuity among Coleridge's friends to enable him to prosecute

some of his projects, Southey threw cold water on the scheme; and Cottle says that Coleridge's repugnance to visit Greta Hall and apply his talents in the way suggested by Southey was invincible; neither would he visit Poole, nor lecture at Birmingham nor Liverpool. To this Mr. Hall Caine says: "My strong conviction is that the chief bugbear for Coleridge at Greta Hall was none other than Southey himself."

Cottle, having been taken ill after his correspondence with Southey, was prohibited intercourse with friends. "During my illness," says Cottle, "Mr. Coleridge sent my sister the following letter and the succeeding one to myself."

LETTER 161. TO MISS COTTLE

13th May, 1814.

Dear Madam,

I am uneasy to know how my friend, J. Cottle, goes on. The walk I took last Monday to enquire, in person, proved too much for my strength, and shortly after my return, I was in such a swooning way, that I was directed to go to bed, and orders were given that no one should interrupt me. Indeed I cannot be sufficiently grateful for the skill with which *the surgeon treats me*. But it must be a slow, and occasionally, an interrupted progress, after a sad retrogress of nearly twelve years. To God all things are possible. I intreat your prayers, your brother has a share in mine.

What an astonishing privilege, that a sinner should be permitted to cry, "Our Father!" Oh, still more stupendous mercy, that this poor ungrateful sinner should be exhorted, invited, nay, commanded, to pray—to pray importunately. That which great men most detest, namely, importunacy; to *this* the GIVER and the FORGIVER ENCOURAGES *his* sick petitioners!

I will not trouble you except for one verbal answer to this note. How is your brother?

With affectionate respects to yourself and your sister,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

To Miss Cottle, Brunswick Square.

LETTER 162. TO COTTLE

Friday, 27th May, 1814.

My dear Cottle,

Gladness be with you, for your convalescence, and equally so, at the hope, which has sustained and tranquillized you through your imminent peril. Far otherwise is, and hath been, my state; yet I too am grateful; yet I cannot rejoice. I feel, with an intensity, unfathomable by words, my utter nothingness, impotence, and worthlessness, in and for myself. I have learned what a sin is, against an infinite imperishable being, such as is the soul of man.

I have had more than a glimpse of what is meant by death and outer darkness, and the worm that dieth not—and that all the *hell* of the reprobate, is no more inconsistent with the love of God, than the blindness of one who has occasioned loathsome and guilty diseases to eat out his eyes, is inconsistent with the light of the sun. But the consolations, at least, the sensible sweetness of hope, I do not possess. On the contrary, the temptation which I have constantly to fight up against, is a fear, that if *annihilation* and the *possibility* of *heaven*, were offered to my choice, I should choose the former.

That is, perhaps, in part, a constitutional idiosyncrasy, for when a mere boy, I wrote these lines:

Oh, what a wonder seems the fear of death,

Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep;

Babes, children, youths and men,

Night following night, for three-score years and ten.

And in my early manhood, in lines descriptive of a gloomy solitude, I disguised my own sensations in the following words:

Here wisdom might abide, and here remorse!

Here too, the woe-worn man, who weak in soul,

And of this busy human heart aweary,
Worships the spirit of *unconscious life*,
In tree, or wild-flower. Gentle lunatic!
If so he might not wholly cease to BE,
He would far rather not be that he is;
But would be something that he knows not of,
In woods, or waters, or among the rocks.

My main comfort, therefore, consists in what the divines call the faith of adherence, and no spiritual effort appears to benefit me so much as the one earnest, importunate, and often, for hours, momentarily repeated prayer: "I believe, Lord help my unbelief! Give me faith, but as a mustard seed, and I shall remove this mountain! Faith, faith, faith! I believe, O give me faith! O, for my Redeemer's sake, give me faith in my Redeemer."

In all this I justify God, for I was accustomed to oppose the preaching of the terrors of the gospel, and to represent it as debasing virtue, by the admixture of slaving selfishness.

I now see that what is spiritual, can only be spiritually apprehended. Comprehended it cannot.

Mr. Eden gave you a too flattering account of me. It is true, I am restored, as much beyond my expectations almost, as my deserts; but I am exceedingly weak. I need for myself, solace and refocillation of animal spirits, instead of being in a condition of offering it to others. Yet, as soon as I may see you, I will call on you.

S. T. COLERIDGE..

P.S. It is no small gratification to me, that I have seen and conversed with Mrs. Hannah More. She is, indisputably, the first literary female I ever met with. In part, no doubt, because she is a Christian. Make my best respects when you write.

“Mr. Josiah Wade,” says Cottle, “presented to me the following mournful and touching letter, addressed to him by Mr. Coleridge in the year 1814, which, whilst it relieved my mind from so onerous a burden, fully corroborated all that I had presumed, and all that I had affirmed. Mr. W. handed this letter to me that it might be made public, in conformity with his departed friend’s injunction.”

LETTER 163. TO WADE

Bristol, June 26th, 1814.

Dear sir,

For I am unworthy to call any good man friend—much less you, whose hospitality and love I have abused; accept, however, my intreaties for your forgiveness, and for your prayers.

Conceive a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain, by a constant recurrence to the vice that reproduces it. Conceive a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven, from which his crimes exclude him! In short, conceive whatever is most wretched, helpless, and hopeless, and you will form as tolerable a notion of my state, as it is possible for a good man to have.

I used to think the text in St. James that “he who offended in one point, offends in all,” very harsh: but I now feel the awful, the tremendous truth of it. In the one crime of OPIUM, what crime have I not made myself guilty of!—Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors—injustice! *and unnatural cruelty to my poor children!*—self-contempt for my repeated promise—breach, nay, too often, actual falsehood!

After my death, I earnestly entreat, that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least, some little good may be effected by the direful example.

May God Almighty bless you, and have mercy on your still affectionate, and in his heart, grateful—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Meantime, during all this strange transaction with Cottle and Wade, Coleridge during the year 1814, was never more brilliant in his intellectual output, whether as lecturer, letter-writer, or political writer. His letters at this date to Charles Mathews to Sir George Beaumont of 9th June; to John Murray (*Letters*, 624), about a projected translation of Faust; to Daniel Stuart, of 12th September

and 30th October; and to John Kenyon, of 3rd November 1814, his *Essays on the Fine Arts* to Felix Fairley's *Bristol Journal* and his six political letters to the Editor of *The Courier* from 20th September to 10th December 1814, show no diminution of intellectual power, but rather sustained mental vigour. C. R. Leslie's account of Coleridge at this date, too, leaves us to imagine a very different Coleridge from the one depicted in the *Reminiscences* of this period. Leslie was accompanying the Allstons from London to Bristol. Mr. Allston fell ill at Salt Hill, and Coleridge was sent for from town. Coleridge came to Salt Hill the same afternoon, accompanied by his friend, Dr. Tathill. He stayed and nursed Allston. "We were kept up late," says Leslie, "in consequence of the critical condition of Allston, and when he retired, Coleridge, seeing a copy of *Knickerbocker's History of New York* lying on the table, took it up and began reading. I went to bed, and I think he must have been up the greater part of the night, for the next day I found he had nearly got through *Knickerbocker*. He was delighted with it." Leslie adds: "At Salt Hill, and on some other occasions, I witnessed his performance of the duties of friendship in a manner which few men of his constitutional indolence could have roused themselves to equal"

Coleridge was a chameleon character; and altered his tone to suit every kind of individual with whom he came into contact. We have seen how he changed his attitude to Godwin between his letter in *The Watchman* in 1796, and his letters to the author of *Political Justice* in 1811. It was the same in many cases, and Southey reproved him for it. Hence it was that, in the presence of Cottle and Wade, of an evangelical tone of mind, Coleridge humiliated himself and wrote penitential letters, while at the same time towards Sir George Beaumont, Stuart, and others, he was the Coleridge of vast intellectual pretensions to whom no task was impossible.

Whether Cottle was justified in publishing the "opium letters" of Coleridge has always been a moot point. The fact is Cottle had determined on "pointing a moral and adorning a tale," as was the custom of writers of his day, and he enlisted the sympathy and support of Southey and John Foster to endorse his project of making moral capital out of the story of Coleridge's life. The long correspondence at the end of the *Reminiscences* with these two friends regarding how much he should divulge and how much he

should keep back, is a study in the art of compromise; but the “moralist’s duty,” as it was then called, prevailed in the end. They had determined, as is mentioned in the last letter of the correspondence by John Foster, that “an emphatic moral lesson” should be wrung out of the life of Coleridge; and Southey and Foster warned Cottle to be on his guard against collaborating with Gillman—as was his original intention—to write the *Life of Coleridge*, lest the “solemn warning and example should be lost”.

The real cause of Coleridge’s many and harassing ailments has now been made known. Writing to the *Times* newspaper in reply to a criticism which had appeared in its columns on Coleridge’s *Letters*, just published (in 1895), and which had asserted that the perpetual cry of ill health which echoes through the volume from end to end, meant little less than “opium and indolence,” Mrs. Lucy E. Watson, granddaughter of James Gillman, quotes a letter by the latter narrating the circumstances attending the post mortem examination of Coleridge’s body. The disease from which he had suffered was enlargement of the heart, by which the sides of that organ were so attenuated as not to be able to sustain it when raised. An article appeared in the *Lancet* on 15th June 1895 on the matter, which closes by saying: “The record suffices to prove that this intellectual giant must have suffered more than the world was aware of, and it can be understood that his *indolence* as well as his opium habit had a physical basis. It can only add to the marvel with which his achievements are justly regarded that one so physically disabled should have made such extensive and profound contributions to philosophy and literature. It is one more instance of the triumph of mind over body”.

This physical defect was the cause of all Coleridge’s inability to execute his own ambitious schemes. As he states in his letter to Davy of 25 March 1804, he had Power minus Strength. His enfeeblement of will is attributable to the physical defect of his enlarged heart; and while he treated himself for gout and kindred ailments by taking narcotics he, of course, only increased his own inability to act. He was continually trying to drive what he felt to be an inward stomach gout to the extremities. Coleridge enjoyed, however, at rare intervals, some happy spells of health duly recorded in his letters. He seems to have been best while climbing

hills and bathing in the dry, hard air of the East Coast. His ascent of the Brocken, his long walk in the Scottish Highlands in 1803, in which he accomplished 263 miles in 8 days, and other hill walks seemed to inspire him with a new life. He has given an account of the effects of mountain climbing on him in his letter to Tom Wedgwood of 14th January 1803, and this is one of his most surprising letters.

Coleridge made a great mistake, however—labouring under the impression that his ailment was gout—of choosing warm and slumberous climates for his health-recruiting spheres. Malta did him no good, for he had an intellectual affinity for the sunshine, for the land of the Lotus. In fact, Coleridge's addiction to opium was temperamental as well as acquired. He contracted the habit to deaden pain, it is true; but his nature was of an Asiatic cast. He had in his infancy, as he tells us, been brought up on the *Arabian Nights*, and his mind had been habituated to the Vast. Joined to a dreaminess of imagination was the love of warm climatic associations betraying the Asiatic temperament. *Kubla Khan*, with its slumberous melody and vague music, embodies the Asiatic sentiment. We feel in reading it on the borders of the Buddhistic territory. To those endowed with such a temperament the opium habit is easy to fall into; their dreamy soul is the seed-bed on which it fastens. Indolence, Procrastination, vast ambitions, unachieved accomplishments are the results: and we have in Coleridge and his brother genius, Amiel, two examples in the Western world of the Asiatic Genius, one terminating his career in opium and the other in the Malady of the Ideal. Both endeavoured to push beyond the limitations of Humanity. "Man can destroy the harmony of his being in two ways," says Chateaubriand, Coleridge's great French contemporary and brother Romanticist, "by wishing to love too much and by wishing to know too much". Coleridge and Amiel have this fault in common; it is one of the defects of their qualities.]

CHAPTER XXI THE MORGANS, BRISTOL, AND CALNE

[John James Morgan, the joint friend of Coleridge and Southey in their Pantisocratic days, was the son of a Bristol merchant, and as early as 1795 was acquainted with Coleridge. It was to the house of Morgan that Coleridge repaired after his return from Malta, at the close of 1807, when he felt himself "ill, penniless, and worse than homeless"; and in the *Courier* of 10th December 1807 appeared a poem, entitled the *Wanderer's Farewell*, addressed to Mrs. Morgan and Charlotte Brent, her sister. Morgan was at one time possessed of a fortune of £10,000 to £15,000; but adverse circumstances had come against him, and he and his family had removed to Hammersmith, London. After the quarrel with Wordsworth, Coleridge, as we have already seen, went to the Morgans, and remained off and on with them in the various places of their abode for the six years between 1810 and 1816. Not only were the Morgans kind hosts to Coleridge; Mrs. Morgan exercised a considerable command for good over him, and put compulsory measures in force when he was indulging in opium.

Although the Morgans were not exactly literary people, they were discerners and appreciators of the genius of Coleridge; and it was while staying with them that he produced his greatest contributions to thinking. The Morgans changed about a good deal. In November 1810 they were living at 7, Portland Place, Hammersmith; in April 1812 they had removed to 71, Berners Street; in April 1814 they were at 2, Queen's Square, Bristol; in September Coleridge and they had taken up quarters at Ashley, Box, near Bath; on 3rd November they were at Bath; and on 10th November they had removed to Calne, in Wiltshire.

It would make an interesting study to detail in full all the changes of Coleridge's political creed from the time when he was an ardent enthusiast for the French Revolution to his gradual evolution into a conservative whose creed was

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain.

As men advance in years they generally believe less in the power of politics to accomplish what can be achieved only by Religion,

Poetry, Art and Culture. The contemplation of Coleridge's change of view from Radicalism to temperate Conservatism, registering the natural swing of the pendulum from Youth to Age, is a most inviting study for the statesman. Southey and Wordsworth underwent the same change, but their evolution is not so instructive as that of Coleridge.

A Tory in the strictest sense of the word Coleridge never was; for he always claimed right to dissent and did at times dissent from the ministry of the hour. A striking instance of his dissension was given while living at Calne, when he strongly objected to the imposition of new corn duties when wheat was selling at 63s. a quarter and the quartern loaf sold at 11*d*. The working people were in a state of starvation, and Coleridge espoused the cause of the starvers and got up a Petition against the duties proposed. He even became the ringleader of the local agitation. He writes to Dr. Brabant of Devizes (6½ miles away) in the Spring of 1815: "On Wednesday we had a public meeting in the Market Place, at Calne, to petition Parliament against the Corn Bill. I drew it up for Mr. Wait, and afterwards mounted on the butcher's table made a butcherly sort of speech of an hour long to a very ragged but not butcherly audience, for by their pale faces few of them seemed to have had more than a very occasional acquaintance with butcher's meat. Loud were the huzzas, and if it depended on the inhabitants at large, I believe they would send me up to Parliament".

Coleridge and the Morgans themselves were not in a flourishing condition. They were in straitened circumstances, and Coleridge wrote the following two letters to Cottle in March 1815.

LETTER 164. TO COTTLE

Calne, March 7, 1815.

Dear Cottle,

You will wish to know something of myself. In health, I am not worse than when at Bristol I was best; yet fluctuating, yet unhappy! in circumstances "poor indeed!" I have collected my scattered, and my manuscript poems, sufficient to make one volume. Enough I have to make another. But till the latter is finished, I cannot without great loss of character, publish the former on account of the arrangement, besides the necessity of correction. For instance, I earnestly wish to begin the volumes, with what has never been seen by any, however few, such as a series of Odes on the different sentences of the Lord's Prayer, and more than all this, to finish my greater work on *Christianity, considered as Philosophy, and as the only Philosophy*. All the materials I have in no small part reduced to form, and written, but, oh me! what can I do, when I am so poor, that in having to turn off every week, from these to some mean subject for the newspapers, I distress myself, and at last neglect the greater wholly to do little of the less. If it were in your power to receive my manuscripts (for instance what I have ready for the press of my poems) and by setting me forward with *thirty* or *forty* pounds, taking care that what I send, and would make over to you, would more than secure you from loss, I am sure you would do it. And I would die (after my recent experience of the cruel and insolent spirit of calumny) rather than subject myself, as a slave, to a club of subscribers to my poverty.

If I were to say I am easy in my conscience, I should add to its pains by a lie; but this I can truly say, that my embarrassments have not been occasioned by the bad parts, or selfish indulgences of my nature, I am at present five and twenty pounds in arrear, my expenses being at £2 10s. per week. You will say I ought to live for less, and doubtless I might, if I were to alienate myself from all social affections, and from all conversation with persons of the same education. Those who severely blame me, never ask, whether at any time in my life, I had for myself and my family's wants, £50 beforehand.

Heaven knows of the £300 received, through you, what went to myself. No! bowed down under manifold infirmities, I yet dare to appeal to God for the truth of what I say; I have remained poor by always having been poor, and incapable of pursuing any one great work, for want of a competence beforehand.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 165. TO COTTLE

Calne, Wiltshire, March 10, 1815.

My dear Cottle,

I have been waiting with the greatest uneasiness for a letter from you. My distresses are impatient rather than myself: inasmuch as for the last five weeks, I know myself to be a burden on those to whom I am under great obligations: who would gladly do all for me; *but who have done all they can!* Incapable of any exertion in this state of mind, I have now written to Mr. Hood, and have at length bowed my heart down, to beg that four or five of those, who I had reason to believe, were interested in my welfare, would raise the sum I mentioned, between them, should you not find it convenient to do it. Manuscript poems, equal to one volume of 230 to 300 pages, being sent to them immediately. If not, I must instantly dispose of all my poems, fragments and all, for whatever I can get from the first rapacious bookseller, that will give anything—and then try to get my livelihood where I am, by receiving, or waiting on day-pupils, children, or adults, but even this I am unable to wait for without some assistance: for I cannot but with consummate baseness, throw the expenses of my lodging and boarding for the last five or six weeks on those who must injure and embarrass themselves in order to pay them. The *Friend* has been long out of print, and its republication has been called for by numbers.

Indeed from the manner in which it was first circulated, it is little less than a new work. To make it a complete and circular work, it needs but about eight or ten papers. This I could and would make over to you at once in full copyright, and finish it outright, with no other delay than that of finishing a short and temperate Treatise on the Corn Laws, and their national and moral effects; which had I even twenty pounds only to procure myself a week's ease of mind, I could have printed before the bill had passed the Lords. At all events let me hear by return of post. I am confident that whether you take the property of my Poems, or of my Prose Essays, in pledge, you cannot eventually lose the money.

As soon as I can, I shall leave Calne for Bristol, and if I can procure any day pupils, shall immediately take cheap lodgings near you. My

plan is to have twenty pupils, ten youths or adults, and ten boys. To give the latter three hours daily, from eleven o'clock to two, with exception of the usual school vacations, in the Elements of English, Greek, and Latin, presenting them exercises for their employment during the rest of the day, and two hours every evening to the adults (that is from sixteen and older) on a systematic plan of general knowledge; and I should hope that £15 a year would not be too much to ask from each, which excluding Sundays and two vacations, would be little more than a shilling a day, or six shillings a week, for forty-two weeks.

To this I am certain I could attend with strictest regularity, or indeed to any thing mechanical.

But composition is no voluntary business. The very necessity of doing it robs me of the power of doing it. Had I been possessed of a tolerable competency, I should have been a voluminous writer. But I cannot, as is feigned of the Nightingale, sing with my breast against a thorn. God bless you,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Saturday, Midnight.

To the first of these letters Cottle replied with a five-pound note; but he now believed that all Coleridge's earnings went to fill what he calls the "Circean chalice". He believed that Coleridge was spending £2 10s. a week on opium. It is as likely that Coleridge was now keeping the home of the Morgans going; although they oftener kept him than he kept them. We know that he gave them the money received for the *Christabel* volume.

From the first letter to Cottle it will be seen that Coleridge had been collecting his poems with a view to publication, afterwards given to the world as *Sibylline Leaves*. On 3rd April 1815, he writes to Lady Beaumont requesting a copy of the Poem to Wordsworth composed on hearing the Prelude. Wordsworth had just published the *Excursion*, and on 30th May Coleridge wrote to Wordsworth criticising that poem in a long letter, which, with other notes of 1802, contained the germs of the Critique of the *Biographia Literaria*. The *Biographia* was at first merely intended as an Introduction to

the *Sibylline Leaves*; but in the writing it swelled so much that it had to be published as a separate work.

Coleridge has been charged with plagiarism from Schelling, in composing his *Biographia*, by Ferrier in *Blackwood's Magazine* of 1840, and by others. Some others complain that Coleridge has no formal scheme of philosophy of his own. But this is merely saying it was never written down in its entirety, not that he did not have a philosophy. One of the features of Coleridge is that he was never without a Philosophy, and could not speak without betraying the fact that he judged all things from a standpoint which was the centre of a large planetary system of dependent and interdependent ideas. Coleridge's philosophy is a combination of parts of the philosophies of Plato, Plotinus, Giordano Bruno, Vico, Berkeley, Herder, Kant, Maas, and Schelling; he took freely from all his predecessors, as every new philosopher is bound to do, and has done, before him. Nor is he merely eclectic; his borrowings are fused together into a system. His originality consists not in the ideas which he entertains in his system, but in the reconstellation of these ideas. To charge Coleridge with plagiarism for having appropriated certain trains of thinking from others is on a level with the brilliant discovery which finds that Shakespeare pilfered some of his plots and stories from Italian novels, or that Molière took his own where he found it (*Je prend mon bien où je le trouve*).

The valuable parts of the *Biographia*, however, are not the philosophical, but the critical and biographical portions. The Critique on Wordsworth's poetry will always be reckoned as the finest of our literary criticisms on Wordsworth. We may object to Coleridge's strictures on *The Daffodils* or *Alice Fell*, but lovers of Wordsworth will give general acquiescence to the contentions of Coleridge's discriminating criticism. Coleridge stands in the front rank of those great exponents of Poetry and Art who, from Aristotle to Sainte-Beuve, have guided the taste of the nations.

The contention of the closing paragraph that Faith is but the continuation of Reason is founded on a saying of his early love, Mary Evans, that "Faith is only Reason applied to a particular subject" (*Letters*, 88). It was written in her farewell letter in 1794.

Among the works of Coleridge undertaken at Calne was the drama of *Zapolya*, in which the character of Sarolta, an offshoot from the Christabel idea, appears.

These works were composed by Coleridge to tide over the necessities of the time, but the Morgans and he were unable to hold together, and Coleridge came once more to London at the beginning of 1816. Morgan fell into ill health. Mrs. Morgan latterly had to take a situation as teacher of a charity school; Charles Lamb and Southey got up a subscription annuity of £25 for Morgan, who did not live long to enjoy it, dying in 1820; and after 1823 Charlotte Brent disappears from the arena of literary history.

Coleridge's letters to Dr. Brabant of Devizes, were written between February 1815, and 5th December 1816, and are published in the *Westminster Review* for 1870.]

CHAPTER XXII HIGHGATE; LECTURES OF 1818

[It was in the Spring of 1816 that Coleridge took refuge from himself and the world and came to the Gillmans of Highgate, and became the great lay preacher of his time. Before this he had been staying at 42, Norfolk Street, Strand, and consulting a physician, Dr. Joseph Adams, who recommended him to Mr. Gillman. The letter of Dr. Adams to Mr. Gillman is as follows:

Hatton Garden, April 9, 1816.

Dear Sir.

A very learned, but in one respect an unfortunate gentleman, has applied to me on a singular occasion. He has for several years been in the habit of taking large quantities of opium. For some time past he has been in vain endeavouring to break himself of it. It is apprehended his friends are not firm enough, from a dread, lest he should suffer by suddenly leaving it off, though he is conscious of the contrary; and has proposed to me to submit himself to any regimen, however severe. With this view he wishes to fix himself in the house of some medical gentleman, who will have courage to refuse him any laudanum, and under whose assistance, should he be the worse for it, he may be relieved. As he is desirous of retirement, and a garden, I could think of no one so readily as yourself. Be so good as to inform me whether such a proposal is absolutely inconsistent with your family arrangements. I should not have proposed it, but on account of the great importance of the character, as a literary man. His communicative temper will make his society very interesting, as well as useful. Have the goodness to favour me with an immediate answer, and believe me, dear sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

JOSEPH ADAMS.

Before calling on Dr. Gillman, Coleridge wrote the following letter:

LETTER 166. TO JAMES GILLMAN

42, Norfolk Street, Strand, Saturday Noon.

(April 13, 1816.)

My Dear Sir.

The first half hour I was with you convinced me that I should owe my reception into your family exclusively to motives not less flattering to me than honourable to yourself. I trust we shall ever in matters of intellect be reciprocally serviceable to each other. Men of sense generally come to the same conclusions; but they are likely to contribute to each other's enlargement of view, in proportion to the distance or even opposition of the points from which they set out. Travel and the strange variety of situations and employments on which chance has thrown me, in the course of my life, might have made me a mere man of *observation*, if pain and sorrow and self-miscomplacence had not forced my mind in on itself, and so formed habits of *meditation*. It is now as much my nature to evolve the fact from the law, as that of a practical man to deduce the law from the fact.

With respect to pecuniary remuneration, allow me to say, I must not at least be suffered to make any addition to your family expenses — though I cannot offer anything that would be in any way adequate to my sense of the service; for that indeed there could not be a compensation, as it must be returned in kind, by esteem and grateful affection.

And now of myself. My ever wakeful reason, and the keenness of my moral feelings, will secure you from all unpleasant circumstances connected with me save only one, viz. the evasion of a specific madness. You will never *hear* anything but truth from me: — prior habits render it out of my power to tell an untruth, but unless carefully observed, I dare not promise that I should not, with regard to this detested poison, be capable of acting one. No sixty hours have yet passed without my having taken laudanum, though for the last week comparatively trifling doses. I have full belief that your anxiety need not be extended beyond the first week, and for the first week, I shall not, I must not be permitted to leave your

house, unless with you. Delicately or indelicately this must be done, and both the servants and the assistant must receive absolute commands from you. The stimulus of conversation suspends the terror that haunts my mind; but when I am alone, the horrors I have suffered from laudanum, the degradation, the blighted utility, almost overwhelm me. If (as I feel for the *first time* a soothing confidence it will prove) I should leave you restored to my moral and bodily health, it is not myself only that will love and honour you; every friend I have (and thank God! in spite of this wretched vice I have many and warm ones, who were friends of my youth, and have never deserted me,) will thank you with reverence. I have taken no notice of your kind apologies. If I could not be comfortable in your house, and with your family, I should deserve to be miserable. If you could make it convenient, I should wish to be with you by Monday evening, as it would prevent the necessity of taking fresh lodgings in town.

With respectful compliments to Mrs. Gillman and her sister, I remain, dear sir,

Your much obliged,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

The Gillmans felt spellbound by Coleridge's talk, and consented to receive him into their household, where he remained for the last eighteen years of his life.

It was at Highgate that Coleridge sat looking down upon the "illimitable liminary ocean of London," as Carlyle finely puts it. He had still his ambitions to do something for the Permanent; but the world of England was not yet ripe for Transcendentalism, and the fine distinctions between the Reason and the Understanding, Imagination and Fancy, the Person and the Thing, and all the other subtle analysings of the Human Intellect; but he still had his lore on Shakespeare to fall back on, and he could re-churn it into a new series of Lectures. His ninth course he delivered in 1818, 27th January to 13th March. The course was delivered at "Flower de Luce" Court (Fleur-de-Lis Court). The notes of these lectures occupy about a half of the Bohn Library volume of the *Lectures on Shakespeare*. They are often, like the rest of Coleridge's prose writing,

a series of brilliant digressions from the main point, but like De Quincey's similar wanderings, they often come wonderfully round to the subject in hand. H. Crabb Robinson attended only four of the course, and he does not give a very favourable account of them. Gillman says: "He lectured from notes, yet it was obvious that his audience was more delighted when, putting his notes aside, he spoke extempore. He was brilliant, fluid, and rapid; his words seemed to flow from a person repeating with grace and energy some delightful poem. If, however, he sometimes paused, it was not for the want of words, but that he was seeking the most appropriate, or their most logical arrangement." The following letters, given by Gillman in his *Life of Coleridge*, are supposed to belong to this period.

LETTER 167. TO — —

(— 1816?)

In a copy of verses, entitled *A Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni*, I describe myself under the influence of strong devotional feelings, gazing on the mountain, till as if it had been a shape emanating from and sensibly representing her own essence, my soul had become diffused through the mighty vision: and there,

As in her natural form, swell'd vast to Heaven.

Mr. Wordsworth, I remember, censured the passage as strained and unnatural, and condemned the hymn in toto, (which, nevertheless, I ventured to publish in my *Sibylline Leaves*,) as a specimen of the mock sublime. It may be so for others, but it is impossible that I should myself find it unnatural, being conscious that it was the image and utterance of thoughts and emotions in which there was no mockery. Yet, on the other hand, I could readily believe that the mood and habit of mind out of which the hymn rose, that differs from Milton's and Thomson's and from the psalms, the source of all three, in the author's addressing himself to *individual* objects actually present to his senses, while his great predecessors apostrophize *classes* of things presented by the memory, and generalized by the understanding;—I can readily believe, I say, that in this there may be too much of what our learned *med'ciners* call the *idiosyncratic* for true poetry.—For, from my very childhood, I have been accustomed to *abstract*, and as it were, unrealize whatever of more than common interest my eyes dwelt on, and then by a sort of transfusion and transmission of my consciousness to identify myself with the object; and I have often thought within the last five or six years, that if ever I should feel once again the genial warmth and stir of the poetic impulse, and refer to my own experiences, I should venture on a yet stranger and wilder allegory than of yore—that I would allegorize myself as a rock, with its summit just raised above the surface of some bay or strait in the Arctic Sea, “while yet the stern and solitary night brooked no alternate sway” — all around me fixed and firm, methought, as my own substance, and near me lofty masses, that might have seemed to “hold the moon and stars in fee,” and often in such wild play with meteoric lights, or with the quiet shine from above, which they made rebound in sparkles, or

disband in off-shoot, and splinters, and iridescent needle shafts of keenest glitter, that it was a pride and a place of healing to lie, as in an apostle's shadow, within the eclipse and deep substance-seeming gloom of "these dread ambassadors from earth to heaven, great hierarchs!" And though obscured, yet to think myself obscured by consubstantial forms, based in the same foundation as my own. I grieved not to serve them—yea, lovingly and with gladness I abased myself in their presence: for they are my brothers, I said, and the mastery is theirs by right of older birth, and by right of the mightier strivings of the hidden fire that uplifted them above me.

LETTER 168. TO — —

(—1816?)

My dear sir,

Accept my thanks for your kind remembrance of me, and for the proof of it in the present of your tribute of friendship, I have read it with uninterrupted interest, and with satisfaction scarcely less continuous. In adding the three last words, I am taking the word satisfaction in its strictest sense: for had I written pleasure, there would have been no ground for the limitation. Indeed as it was, it is a being scrupulous over much. For at the two only passages at which I made a moment's *halt* (viz. § p. 3, and p. 53, last line but five,) "she had seldom" — — "oppressive awe," my not *objection* but *stoppage* at the latter amounted only to a doubt, a *quære*, whether the trait of character here given should not have been followed by some little comment, as for instance, that such a state of feeling, though not desirable in a regenerate person, in whom belief had wrought love, and love obedience, must yet be ranked amongst those constitutional differences that may exist between the best and wisest Christians, without any corresponding difference in their spiritual progress. One saint fixes his eyes on the *palm*, another saint thinks of the previous *conflict*, and closes them in prayer. Both are waters of the same fountain — *this* the basin, *that* the salient column, both equally dear to God, and both may be used as examples for men, the one to invite the thoughtless sceptic, the other to alarm the reckless believer. You will see, therefore, that I do not object to the sentence itself; but as a matter of *feeling*, it met me too singly and suddenly. I had not anticipated such a trait, and the surprise counterfeited the sensation of perplexity for a moment or two. On as little objection to anything you have said, did the *desiderium* the sense of not being quite satisfied, proceed in regard to the § p. 3. In the particular instance in the application of the sentiment, I found nothing to question or qualify. It was the rule or principle which a certain class of your readers might be inclined to deduce from it, it was the possible generalization of the particular instance that made me pause. I am jealous of the disposition to turn Christianity or Religion into a particular *business* or line. "Well, Miss, how does your pencil go on, I

was delighted with your last landscape." "Oh, sir, I have quite given *up* that, I have got into the religious line." Now, my dear sir, the rule which I have deduced from the writings of St. Paul and St. John, and (permit me also to add) of Luther, would be this. Form and endeavour to strengthen into an habitual and instinct-like feeling, the sense of the utter incompatibility of Christianity with every thing wrong or unseemly, with whatever betrays or fosters the mind of flesh, the predominance of the *animal* within us, by having habitually present to the mind, the full and lively conviction of its perfect compatibility with whatever is innocent of its harmony, with whatever contra-distinguishes the HUMAN from the animal; of its sympathy and coalescence with the cultivation of the faculties, affections, and fruitions, which God hath made *peculiar* to *man*, either wholly or in their ordained *combination* with what is peculiar to humanity, the blurred, but not obliterated signatures of our original title deed, (and God said, man will we make in our own image.) What? – shall Christianity exclude or alienate us from those powers, acquisitions, and attainments, which Christianity is so preeminently calculated to elevate and enliven and sanctify?

Far, very far, am I from suspecting in you, my dear sir, any participation in these prejudices of a shrivelled proselyting and censorious religionist. But a numerous and stirring faction there is, in the so-called Religious Public, whose actual and actuating principles, with whatever vehemence they may disclaim it in words, is, that redemption is a something not yet effected – that there is neither sense nor force in our baptism – and that instead of the Apostolic command, *Rejoice, and again I say unto you, rejoice*; baptized Christians are to put on sackcloth and ashes, and try, by torturing themselves and others, to procure a rescue from the devil. Again, let me thank you for your remembrance of me, and believe me from the hour we first met at Bristol, with esteem and regard,

Your sincere friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

In 1816 an attempt was made to revive *Remorse* at Drury Lane, and Coleridge had some intercourse with Byron regarding it and another tragedy he was proposing to write for the theatre. He wrote the following fragment on Byron probably about this time:

LETTER 169. TO — —

(—1816?)

If you had seen Lord Byron, you could scarcely disbelieve him—so beautiful a countenance I scarcely ever saw—his teeth so many stationary smiles—his eyes the open portals of the sun—things of light and for light—and his forehead so ample, and yet so flexible, passing from marble smoothness into a hundred wreathes and lines and dimples correspondent to the feelings and sentiments he is uttering.]

CHAPTER XXIII THOMAS ALLSOP

[Coleridge's lectures and his conversations at the Gillmans brought him many new friends. Among others was Thomas Allsop, a young London merchant, whose acquaintance dates from January, 1818; and which, by December, had ripened into close friendship. Allsop acted as the Boswell of the later period of Coleridge's life, and by his devotion made up for the absence of Wordsworth and Poole. He afterwards published the letters he received from Coleridge, and some of Coleridge's axiomatic sayings and conversations. Allsop was also a friend of Charles Lamb, and often visited Highgate in company with Elia, who made Allsop one of his testamentary trustees. The following letters to Allsop indicate the birth of the intimacy between Coleridge and him.]

LETTER 170. TO ALLSOP

Jan. 28th, 1818.

Dear Sir,

Your friendly letter was first delivered to me at the lecture-room door on yesterday evening, ten minutes before the lecture, and my spirits were so sadly depressed by the circumstance of my hoarseness, that I was literally incapable of reading it. I now express my acknowledgments, and with them the regret that I had not received the letter in time to have availed myself of it.

When I was young I used to laugh at flattery, as, on account of its absurdity, I now abhor it, from my repeated observations of its mischievous effects. Amongst these, not the least is, that it renders honourable natures more slow and reluctant in expressing their real feelings in praise of the deserving, than, for the interests of truth and virtue, might be desired. For the weakness of our moral and intellectual being, of which the comparatively strongest are often the most, and the most painfully conscious, needs the confirmation derived from the coincidence and sympathy of the friend, as much as the voice of honour within us denounces the pretences of the flatterer. Be assured, then, that I write as I think, when I tell you that, from the style and thoughts of your letter, I should have drawn a very different conclusion from that which you appear to have done, concerning both your talents and the cultivation which they have received. Both the matter and manner are manly, simple, and correct.

Had I the time in my power, compatibly with the performance of duties of immediate urgency, I would endeavour to give you, by letter, the most satisfactory answer to your questions that my reflections and the experience of my own fortunes could supply. But, at all events, I will not omit to avail myself of your judicious suggestion in my last lecture, in which it will form a consistent part of the subject and purpose of the discourse. Meantime, believe me, with great respect,

Your obliged fellow-student

of the true and the beseeming,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 171. TO ALLSOP

Sept. 20th, 1818.

Dear Sir,

Those who have hitherto chosen to take notice of me, as known to them only by my public character, have for the greater part taken out, not, indeed, a poetical, but a critical, license, to *make game* OF me, instead of sending game TO me. Thank heaven! I am in this respect more tough than tender. But, to be serious, I heartily thank you for your polite remembrance; and, though my feeble health and valetudinarian stomach force me to attach no little value to the present itself, I feel still more obliged by the kindness that prompted it.

I trust that you will not come within the purlieus of Highgate without giving me the opportunity of assuring you personally that I am, with sincere respect,

Your obliged,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 172. TO ALLSOP

Nov. 26th, 1818.

Dear Sir,

I take the liberty of addressing a Prospectus to you. Should it be in your power to recommend either Course among your friends, you will (I need not add) oblige your sincere, &c.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

“Prospectus of a Course of Lectures, Historical and Biographical, on the Rise and Progress, the Changes and Fortunes of Philosophy, from Thales and Pythagoras to the Present Times; the Lives and Succession of the distinguished Teachers in each Sect; the connexion of Philosophy with General Civilisation; and, more especially, its relations to the History of Christianity, and to the Opinions, Language, and Manners of Christendom, at different Æras, and in different Nations.

“BY S. T. COLERIDGE, ESQ.

“Logical subtleties and metaphysical trains of argument form neither part nor object of the present Plan, which supposes no other qualification in the auditors of either sex than a due interest in questions of deepest concern to all, and which every rational creature, who has arrived at the age of reflection, must be presumed, at some period or other, to have put to his own thoughts:—What, and *for* what am I made? What *can* I, and what *ought* I to, make of myself? and in what relations do I stand to the world and to my fellow men? Flattering myself with a continuance of the kind and respectful attention, with which my former courses have been honoured, I have so little apprehension of not being intelligible throughout, that were it in my power to select my auditors, the majority would, perhaps, consist of persons whose acquaintance with the History of Philosophy would commence with their attendance on the Course of Lectures here announced. When, indeed, I contemplate the many and close connexions of the subject with the most interesting periods of History; the instances and illustrations which it demands and will receive from Biography, from individuals of the most elevated genius, or of the most singular

character: I cannot hesitate to apply to it as a whole what has been already said of an important part (I allude to Ecclesiastical History)—that for every reflecting mind it has a livelier as well as deeper interest, than that of fable or romance.

Nor can these Lectures be justly deemed superfluous even as a literary work. We have, indeed, a History of Philosophy, or rather a folio volume so called, by STANLEY, and ENFIELD'S Abridgment of the massive and voluminous BRUCKER. But what are they? Little more, in fact, than collections of sentences and extracts, formed into separate groups under the several names, and taken (at first or second hand) from the several writings of individual philosophers, with no *Principle* of arrangement, with no *method*, and therefore without unity and without progress or completion. Hard to be understood as detached passages, and impossible to be remembered as a whole, they leave at last on the mind of the most sedulous student but a dizzy recollection of jarring opinions and wild fancies. Whatever value these works may have as books of reference, so far from *superseding*, they might seem rather to *require*, a work like the present, in which the accidental influences of particular periods and individual genius are by no means overlooked, but which yet does in the main consider Philosophy historically, as an essential part of the history of man, and as if it were the striving of a single mind, under very different circumstances indeed, and at different periods of its own growth and development; but so that each change and every new direction should have its cause and its explanation in the errors, insufficiency or prematurity of the preceding, while all by reference to a common object is reduced to harmony of impression and total result. Now this object, which is one and the same in all the forms of Philosophy, and which alone constitutes a work *Philosophic*, is—the origin and primary laws (or efficient causes) either of the WORLD, man included (which is *Natural* Philosophy)—or of Human Nature exclusively, and as far only as it is *human* (which is *Moral* Philosophy). If to these we subjoin, as a third problem, the question concerning the sufficiency of the human reason to the solution of both or either of the two former, we shall have a full conception of the sense in which the term Philosophy is used in this Prospectus and the Lectures corresponding to it.

The main Divisions will be—1. From Thales and Pythagoras to the appearance of the Sophists. 2. And of Socrates. The character and effect of Socrates' life and doctrines, illustrated in the instances of Xenophon, as his most faithful representative, and of Antisthenes, or the Cynic sect, as the one partial view of his philosophy, and of Aristippus, or the Cyrenaic sect, as the other and opposite extreme. 3. Plato and Platonism. 4. Aristotle and the Peripatetic school. 5. Zeno and Stoicism, Epicurus and Epicureans, with the effects of these in the Roman republic and empire. 6. The rise of the Eclectic or Alexandrine Philosophy, the attempt to set up a pseudo-Platonic Polytheism against Christianity, the degradation of Philosophy itself into mysticism and magic, and its final disappearance, as Philosophy, under Justinian. 7. The resumption of the Aristotelian philosophy in the thirteenth century, and the successive re-appearance of the different sects from the restoration of literature to our own times.

The last letter refers to lectures delivered from 19th December 1818 to April 1819, his tenth course. Another course on Shakespeare was also being given at the same time, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, Strand, commencing 17th December 1818. No record has been published of these two series of lectures. The next letter is about Wordsworth and the *Edinburgh Review*, and repeats some of Coleridge's strong convictions against anonymous criticism.

LETTER 173. TO ALLSOP

Dec. 2nd, 1818.

My Dear Sir,

I cannot express how kind I felt your letter. Would to Heaven I had had many with feelings like yours, "accustomed to express themselves warmly and (as far as the word is applicable to you, even) enthusiastically." But, alas! during the prime manhood of my intellect I had nothing but cold water thrown on my efforts. I speak not now of my systematic and most unprovoked maligners. On *them* I have retorted only by pity and by prayer. These may have, and doubtless *have*, joined with the frivolity of "the reading public" in checking and almost in preventing the sale of my works; and so far have done injury to my *purse*. *Me* they have not injured. But I have loved with enthusiastic self-oblivion those who have been so well pleased that I should, year after year, flow with a hundred nameless rills into *their* main stream, that they could find nothing but cold praise and effective discouragement of every attempt of mine to roll onward in a distinct current of my own; who *admitted* that the *Ancient Mariner*, the *Christabel*, the *Remorse*, and some pages of the *Friend* were not without merit, but were abundantly anxious to acquit their judgments of any blindness to the very numerous defects. Yet they *knew* that to *praise*, as mere praise, I was characteristically, almost constitutionally, indifferent. In sympathy alone I found at once nourishment and stimulus; and for sympathy *alone* did my heart crave. They knew, too, how long and faithfully I had acted on the maxim, never to admit the *faults* of a work of genius to those who denied or were incapable of feeling and understanding the *beauties*; not from wilful partiality, but as well knowing that in *saying* truth, I should, to such critics, convey falsehood. If, in one instance, in my literary life, I have appeared to deviate from this rule, first, it was not till the fame of the writer (which I had been for fourteen years successively toiling like a second Ali to build up) had been established; and, secondly and chiefly, with the purpose and, I may safely add, with the *effect* of rescuing the necessary task from Malignant Defamers, and in order to set forth the excellences and the trifling proportion which the defects bore to the excellences. But this, my dear sir, is a mistake to

which affectionate natures are too liable, though I do not remember to have ever seen it noticed, — the mistaking those who are desirous and well pleased to be loved *by* you, for those who love you. Add, as a more general cause, the fact that I neither am nor ever have been of any party. What wonder, then, if I am left to decide which has been my worse enemy, the broad, pre-determined abuse of the *Edinburgh Review*, &c., or the cold and brief compliments, with the warm *regrets*, of the *Quarterly*? After all, however, I have now but one sorrow relative to the ill success of my literary toils (and toils they have been, *though not undelightful toils*), and this arises wholly from the almost insurmountable difficulties which the anxieties of to-day oppose to my completion of the great work, the form and materials of which it has been the employment of the best and most genial hours of the last twenty years to mature and collect.

If I could but have a tolerably numerous audience to my first, or first and second Lectures on the HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, I should entertain a strong hope of success, because I know that these lectures will be found by far the most interesting and *entertaining* of any that I have yet delivered, independent of the more permanent interests of rememberable instruction. Few and unimportant would the errors of men be, if they did but know, first, *what they themselves meant*; and, secondly, what the *words* mean by which they attempt to convey their meaning; and I can conceive no subject so well fitted to exemplify the mode and the importance of these two points as the History of Philosophy, treated as in the scheme of these lectures. Trusting that I shall shortly have the pleasure of seeing you here,

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours, most sincerely,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

At the close of 1818, Coleridge published his *Essay on Method*, an introduction to the *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, which exhibits his grasping ambitious intellect.

The two following letters to Mr. Britton were written regarding his lectures. Neither Thomas Ashe nor Dykes Campbell has been able to find any evidence that Coleridge delivered lectures on Shakespeare seventeen years before 1819. He must have been labouring under a delusion on this matter and mistaking the date of his lectures delivered in 1808.

LETTER 174. TO MR. BRITTON

Highgate, 28th Feb., 1819.

Dear Sir,

First permit me to remove a very natural, indeed almost inevitable, mistake, relative to my lectures; namely, that I *have* them, or that the lectures of one place or season are in any way repeated in another. So far from it, that on any point that I had ever studied (and on no other should I dare discourse—I mean, that I would not lecture on any subject for which I had *toacquire* the main knowledge, even though a month's or three month's previous time were allowed me; on no subject that had not employed my thoughts for a large portion of my life since earliest manhood, free of all outward and particular purpose)—on any point within my habit of thought, I should greatly prefer a subject I had never lectured on, to one which I had repeatedly given; and those who have attended me for any two seasons successively will bear witness, that the lecture given at the London Philosophical Society, on the *Romeo and Juliet*, for instance, was as different from that given at the Crown and Anchor, as if they had been by two individuals who, without any communication with each other, had only mastered the same principles of philosophical criticism. This was most strikingly evidenced in the coincidence between my lectures and those of Schlegel; such, and so close, that it was fortunate for my moral reputation that I had not only from five to seven hundred ear witnesses that the passages had been given by me at the Royal Institution two years before Schlegel commenced his lectures at Vienna, but that notes had been taken of these by several men and ladies of high rank. The fact is this; during a course of lectures, I faithfully employ all the intervening days in collecting and digesting the materials, whether I have or have not lectured on the same subject before, making no difference. The day of the lecture, till the hour of commencement, I devote to the consideration, what of the mass before me is best fitted to answer the purposes of a lecture, that is, to keep the audience awake and interested during the delivery, and to leave a sting behind, that is, a disposition to study the subject anew, under the light of a new principle. Several times, however, partly from apprehension respecting my health and animal spirits, partly from the wish to

possess copies that might afterwards be marketable among the publishers, I have previously written the lecture; but before I had proceeded twenty minutes, I have been obliged to push the MS. away, and give the subject a new turn. Nay, this was so notorious, that many of my auditors used to threaten me, when they saw any number of written papers on my desk, to steal them away; declaring they never felt so secure of a good lecture as when they perceived that I had not a single scrap of writing before me. I take far, far more pains than would go to the set composition of a lecture, both by varied reading and by meditation; but for the words, illustrations, &c., I know almost as little as any of the audience (that is, those of anything like the same education with myself) what they will be five minutes before the lecture begins. Such is my way, for such is my nature; and in attempting any other, I should only torment myself in order to disappoint my auditors—torment myself during the delivery, I mean; for in all other respects it would be a much shorter and easier task to deliver them from writing. I am anxious to preclude any semblance of affectation; and have therefore troubled you with this lengthy preface before I have the hardihood to assure you, that you might as well ask me what my dreams were in the year 1814, as what my course of lectures was at the Surrey Institution. *Fuimus Troes.*

LETTER 175. TO MR. BRITTON

(Feb.-Mch., 1819)

My next Friday's lecture will, if I do not grossly flatter-blind myself, be interesting, and the points of view not only original, but new to the audience. I make this distinction, because sixteen or rather seventeen years ago, I delivered eighteen lectures on Shakespeare, at the Royal Institution; three-fourths of which appeared at that time startling paradoxes, although they have since been adopted even by men, who then made use of them as proofs of my flighty and paradoxical turn of mind; all tending to prove that Shakespeare's judgment was, if possible, still more wonderful than his genius; or rather, that the contra-distinction itself between judgment and genius rested on an utterly false theory. This, and its proofs and grounds have been—I should not have said adopted, but produced as their own legitimate children by some, and by others the merit of them attributed to a foreign writer, whose lectures were not given orally till two years after mine, rather than to their countryman; though I dare appeal to the most adequate judges, as Sir George Beaumont, the Bishop of Durham, Mr. Sotheby, and afterwards to Mr. Rogers and Lord Byron, whether there is one single principle in Schlegel's work (which is not an admitted drawback from its merits), that was not established and applied in detail by me. Plutarch tells us, that egotism is a venial fault in the unfortunate, and justifiable in the calumniated, &c.

Mr. Dykes Campbell thinks these letters to Mr. Britton refer to a course projected to be given at the Russell Institution; but there is no evidence that another Shakespeare course was delivered after that of 1818-19. Coleridge's indebtedness to Kant, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Jean Paul Richter, and Augustus Schlegel is traced by Brandl Schlegel's Lectures were delivered in 1808, the same year as Coleridge's first course. Coleridge did not peruse Schlegel's *Lectures* till 1811; but as no full record of his Lectures of 1808 exist, the original indebtedness of Coleridge to Schlegel cannot be determined.

During his stay at Highgate, Coleridge occasionally went to Ramsgate to enjoy the seaside. The next letter was written on his return from one of his visits to Ramsgate.

LETTER 176. TO ALLSOP

Highgate, Sept. 30th, 1819.

My dear Sir,

Returned from Ramsgate, I hasten to assure you that, next to seeing you, I have pleasure in hearing from you: and wish the former in preference, not merely from the greater mutual enjoyment, but likewise because one can convey more, and with greater assurance of being understood, in an hour, than one could write in a day. On the other hand, letters are more permanent, and an epistolary correspondence more endearing, like all marks of remembrance in absence.

My sentiments concerning the expediency, and both moral and intellectual advantages, of a trade or profession, for such as fix their ultimate end on objects nobler than trades or professions can bestow on the most favoured of their followers, may be learnt from the eleventh chapter of my *Literary Life*, which, though addressed to a small and particular class, yet permits a more general application. To you, my dear young friend, I should say, temptations and preventives—the poisons and the antidotes—are pretty evenly dispersed through all the different accredited paths of life. Nay, those temptations which are foreknown and foreseen as most appertinent to our particular calling, are commonly least dangerous, or even cease to be temptations to a mind forearmed by principles and aspirations like yours. The false step is more likely to take place in the recoil than the advance; in the neglect rather than in the too eager pursuit of the means; in under, rather than over, valuing the advantages of wealth and worldly respectability. The true plan on which you should regulate your conduct and feelings, (that at least, which to me appears such) is the following. Propose to yourself from the present hour such views of action and enjoyment, as will make the leisure attached to independence, and honourably earned by previous industry, the fair object of a wise man's efforts and a good man's desires. Meantime, let the chosen *employments* of the years in *hope* be the *relaxations* of the time present, of the years devoted to present duties, and, among these, to the means of realising that hope; thus you will answer two great ends at once. Your inward trains of thought, your faculties, and your feelings, will

be preserved in a fitness and, as it were, contempered to a life of ease, and capable of enjoying leisure, because both able and disposed to *employ* it. Secondly, while you thus render future affluence more and more desirable, you will at the same time prevent all undue impatience, and disarm the temptation of poisoning the allotted interval by *anxieties*, and anxious schemes and efforts to get rich *in haste*. There is yet one other inducement to look on your existing appointment with complacency. Every improvement in knowledge, and the moral power of wielding and directing it, will *tell for more*,—have a wider and more benignant influence,—than the same accomplishment would in a man who belonged to one of the learned professions. Both your information and your example will fall where they are most wanted, like the noiseless dews in Malta, where rain comes seldom and no regular streams are to be met with. As to your present studies, for such portions of your time as you can prudently appropriate to reading, without wrong to the claims of health and *social* relaxation, there is one department of knowledge, which, like an ample palace, contains within itself mansions for every other knowledge; which deepens and extends the interest of every other, gives it new charms and additional purpose; the study of which, rightly and *liberally* pursued, is beyond any other *entertaining*, beyond all others tends at once to tranquillize and enliven, to keep the mind elevated and steadfast, the heart humbler and tender: it is *biblical theology*—the philosophy of religion, the religion of philosophy. I would that I could refer you to any *book* in which such a plan of reading had been sketched out, in detail or even but generally.

Alas! I know of none. But most gladly will I make the attempt to supply this desideratum by conversation, and then by letter. But of this when I have next the pleasure of seeing you at Highgate.

You have perhaps heard that my publisher is a bankrupt.

All the profits from the sale of my writings, which I should have had, and which, in spite of the accumulated disadvantages under which the works were published, would have been considerable, I have lost; and not only so, but have been obliged, at a sum larger than all the profits made by my lectures, to purchase myself my own books and the half copyrights. Well, I am now *sole* proprietor, and

representing my works by cyphers, and the author by *I*, my emblem might be 00001. I have withdrawn them from sale. This is rather hard, but perhaps my comet may some time or other have its perihelion of popularity, and then the *tail*, you know, whisks round to the other end; and for 00001, lo! and behold, 10,000. Meantime, enough for me to thank God that, relatively to my fellow men at least, I have been “sinned against, not sinning;” and relatively to my Maker, these afflictions are but penances of mercy, less than the least of my forfeitures. — I hope you will soon take pot-luck with us.

Believe me, with esteem and regard, yours,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

The bankrupt publishers referred to were Rest and Fenner, to whom Coleridge had entrusted the publication of his works. The next letters are about Cobbett, who was also a friend of Allsop.

LETTER 177. TO ALLSOP

Dec. 13th, 1819.

My dear Sir,

Accept my affectionate thanks; and, in mine, conceive those of my housemates included. Would to heaven I had more than barren thanks to offer you. If you, or rather your residence, were nearer to me, and I could have more of your society, I should feel this the less. It was, for me at least, unfortunate, that, almost every time you have been here, I should have been engaged in the only way that I should have suffered to be a pre-engagement, viz. the duties of friendship. These are now discharged; and whenever you can give me a day, henceforward, I shall have nothing to do but to enjoy it. I could not help "winning an hour from the hard season," as Milton says, the day before yesterday, by surrendering my reason to the detail of a day dream, as I was going over, and after I had gone over, a very pretty house, with beautiful garden and grounds, and a still more lovely prospect, at the moderate rent of £60 and taxes proportionally low, discussing the question with myself, as seriously as if it were actually to be decided, how far the rising at eight, breakfasting, and riding, driving, or staging to London, and returning by the stage or otherwise, would be advantageous to your health; and then the ways and means of improving and enjoying our Sundays, etc. All I can say in excuse of these air-built castles is, that they bring with them no bills for brick and mortar, no quarrels with the masons, no indignation at the deceits and lures of the architects, surveyor, etc., when the final expense is found to treble the amount of the well-paid and costly calculation: in short, that if they do no honour to the head, they leave no harm in the heart. And then, *poeta fuimus*: and the philosopher, though pressing with the weight of an Etna, cannot prevent the poet from occasionally changing sides, and manifesting his existence by smoke traversed by electrical flashes from the crater.

Have you seen Cobbett's last number? It is the most *plausible* and the best written of anything I have seen from *his* pen, and *apparently* written in a less fiendish spirit than the average of his weekly effusions. The self-complacency with which he assumes to himself exclusively, truths which he can call his own only as a

horse-stealer can appropriate a stolen horse, by adding mutilation and deformities to robbery, is as *artful* as it is amusing. Still, however, he has given great additional publicity to weighty truths, as *ex. gr.* the hollowness of *commercial* wealth; and from whatever dirty corner or straw moppet the ventriloquist Truth causes her words to proceed, I not only listen, but must bear witness that it is Truth talking. His conclusions, however, are palpably absurd – give to an over-peopled island the countless back settlements of America, and countless balloons to carry thither man and maid, wife and brat, beast and baggage – and then we might rationally expect that a general crash of trade, manufactures, and credit, might be as mere a summer thunderstorm in Great Britain as he represents it to be in America.

One deep, most deep, impression of melancholy, did Cobbett's letter to Lord Liverpool leave on my mind, – the conviction that, wretch as he is, he is an overmatch in intellect for those, in whose hands Providence, in its retributive justice, seems to place the destinies of our country; and who yet rise into respectability, when we compare them with their parliamentary opponents.

I am commanded to add an especial request, that it may not be long before you make yourself visible on the banks of Lake Superior.

Ever, my dear sir,

Yours faithfully and affectionately,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 178. TO ALLSOP

20th March, 1820.

My dear Sir,

You must have thought it strange that I had taken no notice of so kind a letter from you; but the truth is, I received the little packet supposing it to contain the Cobbett only, put it in my pocket for my reading at a leisure hour, and had not opened it until the day before I last saw you. Within a few days, I hope to lay myself open to you in an express letter; till when, I can only say, that the affectionate interest you have taken in my well-being, has been not only a comfort but a spur, when I needed both, and was almost yielding at times to the apprehension, that I had sacrificed all that the world holds precious, without being able to do any effective good in a higher and nobler kind. I have sent the three volumes of the *Friend*, with my MS. corrections, and additions. The largest, that towards the end of the last *philosophical* essay in the third volume, had a two-fold object—to guard my own character from the suspicion of pantheistic opinions, or Spinozism (it *was* written, though not so much at large, before the work was printed, and omitted by wilfulness, or such carelessness as does not fall far short of it); and next, to impress, as far as I could, the conviction that true philosophy, so far from having any tendency to unsettle the *principles* of faith, that may and ought to be common to all men, does itself actually require them as its premises; nay, that it supposes them as its ground.—I was highly gratified to hear, and from such a man too as Mr. John Hookham Frere, that a man of rank, and of a highly cultivated mind, who had become reluctantly a sceptic, or something more, respecting the Christian religion, wholly in consequence of studying Leland, Lardner, Watson, Paley, and other defenders of the Gospel on the strength of the *external* evidences—not of Christianity, but of the miracles with which its first preaching was accompanied—and of having been taught to regard the arguments, and mode of proof adopted in the works above mentioned, as the only rational ones, had read the *Friend* with great attention, and when he came to the passage in which I had explained the nature of miracles, their necessary dependence on a credible religion for their own credibility, etc., dropped the book (as

he himself informed Mr. Frere), and exclaimed, "Thank God! I can still believe in the Gospel—I can yet be a Christian." The remark that a miracle, divested of all connection with a doctrine, is identical with witchcraft, which in all ages has been regarded with instinctive horror by the human mind, and the reference to our Lord's own declarations concerning miracles, were among the passages that particularly impressed his mind.

I should have sent a corrected copy of the *Sibylline Leaves*; but for a two-legged little *accident* having torn out two leaves at the beginning, and I will no longer delay this parcel, but will transcribe at another time what I had written in them, and I hope it will not be long before you let us see you. The people here are occupied in raising and distributing relief for the poor of the hamlet. On the first day there were seven hundred and fifty applicants to whom small sums were given! It would be most un-Christian moroseness not to feel delight in the unwearied zeal with which every mode and direction of charity is supported; and I hope that this is a sunshiny spot in our national character, and that this virtue will suspend the judgments that threaten the land. But it would, on the other hand, be wilful blindness not to see that the lower orders become more and more improvident in consequence, more and more exchange the sentiments of Englishmen for the feelings of Lazzaroni.

God bless you; and, S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S.—Charles and Mary Lamb dined with us on Sunday.

When I next see you, that excellent brother and sister will supply me with half an hour's interesting conversation. When you know the *whole* of him, you will love him in spite of all oddities and even faults—nay, I had almost said, *for* them—at least, admire that under his visitations they were so few and of so little importance. Thank God, his circumstances are comfortable; and so they ought, for he has been in the India House since his fourteenth year.

I have subjoined the MS. addition mentioned above, and should wish you to read it with great care and attention in its proper place; which is, after the word "vacuum," in page 263, vol. iii of the *Friend*.

If we thoughtfully review the course of argument pursued, we shall rest in the following as our sum and ultimum. The dialectic intellect, by exertion of its own powers exclusively, may enable us to affirm the reality of an absolute Being, generally. But here it stops. It can command neither insight nor conviction concerning the existence (or even the possibility) of the world as distinct and different from Deity. It finds itself constrained to confound the Creator with the creation; and then, cutting the knot it cannot solve, merges the latter in the former, and denies reality to all finite existence. But here the philosophiser is condemned to meet with his sure confutation in his own secret dissatisfaction, and is forced at length to shelter himself from his own importunate queries in the wretched evasion, that of Nothings no solution can be required. Wretched indeed, and weak as desperate! Nature herself—his own inevitable Nature—through every organ of sense, compels his own abused reason to reiterate the demand: How and whence did this sterile Nothing split or multiply into *plurality*? Whence this portentous transnihilation of Nothing into Nothings? What, above all, is that inward mirror, the human mind, in and for which these Nothings possess at least a relative existence? Or dost thou wait till, with a more bitter irony, Pain and Anguish and Remorse ask thee, Are WE too Nothings?

O youthful reader! (for such *The Friend* dares anticipate), thou, that in my mind's eye, standest beside me, like my own youth! Fresh and keen as the morning Hunter in the pursuit of Truth, glad and restless in the feeling of mental growth! O learn early, that if the Head be the Light of the Heart, the Heart is the Life of the Head: yea, that Consciousness itself, that Consciousness of which all reasoning is the varied modification, is but the Reflex of the Conscience when most luminous; and too often a fatuous vapour, a warmthless bewildering mockery of Light, exhaled from its corruption or stagnation. Mark the inevitable result of all *consequent* reasoning, when the intellect refuses to acknowledge a higher and deeper ground than itself can supply, and weens to possess within itself the centre of its own system! From Zeno the Eleatic to Spinoza, and from Spinoza to Schelling, Oken, and the German "*Natur-philosophen*" of the present day, the Result has been, and ever must be, PANTHEISM, under some one or other of its modes or disguises: and it is of awful importance to the speculative

Inquirer to be aware, that the seemliest of these modes differs from the most repulsive, not in its consequences, which in all alike are Atheistic, but only as far as it evinces the efforts of the individual to hide these consequences from his own consciousness.

This, then, I again repeat, is our ultimate conclusion. All *speculative* disquisition must begin with *Postulates*, authorised and substantiated by the conscience exclusively. From whatever point the reason may start, whether from the *Things that are seen* to the One Invisible, or from the idea of the ABSOLUTE ONE to the *things that are seen*, it will in either case find a chasm, which the moral being, the *spirit* and the *religion* of man, can alone fill up or overbridge. "THE LIFE IS THE LIGHT OF MAN:" and "WE LIVE BY FAITH."

LETTER 179. TO ALLSOP

Highgate, April 10th, 1820.

My dear Friend,

May I venture to obtrude on you what I cannot intrust to a messenger, much less to the post. Sackville-street is not I hope more than fifteen or twenty minutes' walk from your house. It is to inquire if Mr. Caldwell is *in town*; if he be, then to leave the letter, and that is all; but if not, to learn whether he is at his living, and if so, then to transfer his present address to the letter, and put it into the nearest General Post Office box. It is of serious importance to Derwent that the inclosed should reach Mr. Caldwell with as little delay as possible, or I need not say that I should not have taxed your time and kindness merely to make a letter-carrier of you.

On Saturday evening I received a note from Mathews, which I have inclosed. I took it very kind of him; but to obtrude myself on Walter Scott, *nolentem volentem*, and within a furlong of my own abode, as he knows (for Mr. Frere told him my address), was a liberty I had no right to take; and though it would have highly gratified me to have conversed with a brother bard, and to have renewed on the mental retina the image of, perhaps, the most extraordinary man, assuredly the most *extraordinary* writer, of his age, yet I dared not purchase the gratification at so high a price as that of risking the respect which I trust has not hitherto been forfeited by,

My dear friend,

Your obliged and very affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. I had not the least expectation, yet I could not suppress a sort of fluttering hope, that my letter might have reached you on Saturday night, and that you might be disengaged and turn your walk Highgate-ward. You will be delighted with the affectionate attachment of the two brothers to each other, the boyish high spirits with manly independence of intellect, and, in one word, with the

simplicity which is their nature, and the common *ground* on which the differences of their mind and characters (for no two can be more distinct) shoot and play. When I say that nothing can exceed their fondness for their father, I need not add that they are impatient to be introduced to you. And I can offer no better testimony of the rank you hold in my bosom, my dear Allsop, than the gladness with which I anticipate their becoming your *friends*, in the noblest sense of the word. Would to Heaven their dear sister were with us, the cup of paternal joy would be full to the brim! The rapture with which both Hartley and Derwent talk of her, quite affects Mrs. Gillman, who has always felt with a sort of lofty yet refined enthusiasm respecting the relations of an only sister to her brothers. Of all women I ever knew, Mrs. G. is the woman who seems to have been framed by Nature for a heroine in that rare species of love which subsists in a tri-unity of the heart, the moral sense, and the faculty, corresponding to what Spurzheim calls the organ of *ideality*. What in other women is *refinement* exists in her as by implication, and, *à fortiori*, in a native *fineness* of character. She often represents to my mind the best parts of the Spanish Santa Teresa, ladyhood of nature.

Vexation! and Mrs. Gillman has this moment burnt Mathews' note. The purport, however, was as follows:—"I have just received a note from Terry, informing me that Sir Walter Scott will call upon me tomorrow morning (*i.e.* Sunday) at half-past eleven. Will you contrive to be here at the same time? Perhaps the promise of your company may induce Sir Walter to appoint a day on which he will dine with me before he returns to the north."

Now as Scott had asked Terry for my address on his first arrival in town, it is not *impossible*, though not very probable, that Terry may have said—"You will meet Coleridge at Mathews's," though I was not entitled to presume this. The bottom of all this, my dear friend, is neither more nor less than as follows:—I seem to feel that I *ought* to feel more desire to see an extraordinary man than I really do feel; and I do not wish to appear to two or three persons (as the Mr. Freres, William Rose, etc.), as if I cherished any dislike to Scott respecting the *Christabel*, and generally an increasing dislike to appear out of the common and natural mode of thinking and acting. All this is, I own, sad weakness, but I am weary of *dyspathy*.

It will be seen from the postscript of the last letter that Hartley and Derwent, Coleridge's sons, were on a visit to Highgate.]

CHAPTER XXIV SIR WALTER SCOTT

[Coleridge and Sir Walter Scott met at least three times during their lives, once in 1807, once in 1820, and again in 1828. Sir Walter was cognizant of the genius of Coleridge both as the author of *Christabel* and of the translation of *Wallenstein*, which he praised highly; and he had on the last occasion of their meeting to acknowledge Coleridge's extraordinary colloquial power. His tribute to the genius of Coleridge is well known to readers of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. The next letter to Allsop contains Coleridge's estimate of Scott. No greater contrast than Scott and Coleridge as literary men, the two greatest, with the exception of Goethe, of their generation, could be conceived. Scott, successful, the darling of the hour, reaping thousands of pounds for his literary output and almost unable to keep pace with the demand for his creations; Coleridge, always unable to obtain anything like remuneration for his more profound and original work, and never the possessor in advance of £50 which he could call his own. And yet, both were the victims of a fate which seemed to brood over them; and, after all, it is difficult to say from a worldly point of view which was really the more successful, the creator of a whole gallery of characters known throughout Anglo-Saxondom as household beings, or the other the disseminator of the most fruitful ideas in all departments of human thought.

LETTER 180. TO ALLSOP

Highgate, April 8th, 1820.

My dear Friend,

It is not the least advantage of friendship, that by communicating our thoughts to another, we render them distinct to ourselves, and reduce the subjects of our sorrow and anxiety to their just magnitude for our own contemplation.

As long as we inly brood over a misfortune (there being no divisions or separate circumscriptions in things of mind, no *proper* beginning nor ending to any thought, on the one hand; and, on the other, the confluence of our recollections being determined far more by sameness or similarity of the feelings that have been produced by them, than by any positive resemblance or connection between the things themselves that are thus recalled to our attention) we establish a centre, as it were, a sort of nucleus in the reservoir of the soul; and toward this, needle shoots after needle, cluster points on cluster points, from all parts of contained fluid, and in all directions, till the mind with its best faculties is locked up in one ungenial frost. I cannot adequately express the state of feeling in which I wrote my last letter; the letter itself, I doubt not, bore evidence of its *nest* and mode of incubation, as certain birds and lizards drag along with them part of the egg-shells from which they had forced their way. Still one good end was answered. I had made a clearance, so far as to have my head in light and my eyes open; and your answer, every way worthy of you, has removed the rest.

But before I enter on this subject, permit me to refer to some points of *comparative* indifference, lest I should forget them altogether. I occasioned you to misconceive me respecting Sir Walter Scott. My purpose was to bring proofs of the energetic or inenergetic state of the minds of men, induced by the excess and unintermitted action of stimulating events and circumstances, — revolutions, battles, *newspapers*, mobs, sedition and treason trials, public harangues, meetings, dinners; the necessity in every individual of ever increasing activity and anxiety in the improvement of his estate, trade, etc., in proportion to the decrease of the actual value of money, to the multiplication of competitors, and to the almost

compulsory expedience of expense, and prominence, even as the means of obtaining or retaining competence; the consequent craving after amusement as proper *relaxation*, as *rest* freed from the tedium of vacancy; and, again, after such knowledge and such acquirements as are *ready coin*, that will pass *at once*, unweighed and unassayed; to the unexampled facilities afforded for this end by reviews, magazines, etc., etc. The theatres, to which few go to see *a play*, but to see Master Betty or Mr. Kean, or some one individual in some *one* part: and the single fact that our neighbour, Mathews, has taken more, night after night, than both the regular theatres conjointly, and when the best comedies or whole plays have been acted at each house, and those by excellent comedians, would have yielded a striking instance, and illustration of my position. But I chose an example in literature, as more in point for the subject of my particular remarks, and because every man of genius, who is born for his age, and capable of acting *immediately* and widely on that age, must of necessity *reflect* the age in the first instance, though as far as he is a man of genius, he will doubtless be himself reflected by it reciprocally. Now I selected Scott for the very reason, that I do hold him for a man of *very extraordinary* powers; and when I say that I have read the far greater part of his novels twice, and several three times over, with undiminished pleasure and interest; and that, in my reprobation of the *Bride of Lammermoor* (with the exception, however, of the almost Shakspearian old witch-wives at the funeral) and of the *Ivanhoe*, I mean to imply the grounds of my admiration of the others, and the permanent nature of the interest which they excite. In a word, I am far from thinking that *Old Mortality* or *Guy Mannering* would have been less admired in the age of Sterne, Fielding, and Richardson, than they are in the present times; but only that Sterne, etc., would not have had the same *immediate* popularity in the present day as in their own less stimulated and, therefore, less languid reading world.

Of Sir Walter Scott's poems I cannot speak so highly, still less of the Poetry in his *Poems*; though even in these the power of presenting the most numerous figures, and figures with the most complex movements, and under rapid succession, in *true picturesque unity*, attests true and peculiar genius. You cannot imagine with how much pain I used, many years ago, to hear — —'s contemptuous assertions respecting Scott; and if I mistake not, I have yet the

fragments of the rough draft of a letter written by me so long ago as my first lectures at the London Philosophical Society, Fetter Lane, and on the backs of the unused admission tickets.

One more remark. My criticism was *confined* to the one point of the higher degree of intellectual activity implied in the reading and admiration of Fielding, Richardson, and Sterne;—in moral, or, if that be too high and inwardly a word, in *mannerly* manliness of taste the present age and its *best* writers have the decided advantage, and I sincerely trust that Walter Scott's readers would be as little disposed to relish the stupid lechery of the courtship of Widow Wadman, as Scott himself would be capable of presenting it. And, that though I cannot pretend to have found in any of these novels a character that even approaches in genius, in truth of conception, or boldness and freshness of execution, to Parson Adams, Blifil, Strap, Lieutenant Bowling, Mr. Shandy, Uncle Toby and Trim, and Lovelace; and though Scott's *female* characters will not, even the very best, bear a comparison with Miss Byron, Clementina Emily, in Sir Charles Grandison; nor the comic ones with Tabitha Bramble, or with Betty (in Mrs. Bennet's *Beggar Girl*); and though, by the use of the Scotch dialect, by Ossianic mock-highland motley-heroic, and by extracts from the printed sermons, memoirs, etc., of the fanatic preachers, there is a good deal of *false effect* and stage trick: still the number of characters *so good* produced by one man, and in so rapid a succession, must ever remain an illustrious phenomenon in literature, after all the subtractions for those borrowed from English and German sources, or compounded by blending two or three of the old drama into one—*ex. gr.* the Caleb in the *Bride of Lammermoor*.

Scott's great merit, and, at the same time, his *felicity*, and the true solution of the long-sustained *interest* novel after novel excited, lie in the nature of the subject; not merely, or even chiefly, because the struggle between the Stuarts and the Presbyterians and sectaries, is still in lively memory, and the passions of the adherency to the former, if not the adherency itself, extant in our own fathers' or grandfathers' times; nor yet (though this is of great weight) because the language, manners, etc., introduced are sufficiently different from our own for *poignancy*, and yet sufficiently near and similar for sympathy; nor yet because, for the same reason, the author, speaking, reflecting, and descanting in his own person, remains still

(to adopt a painter's phrase) in sufficient *keeping* with his subject matter, while his characters can both talk and feel interesting to *us* as men, without recourse to *antiquarian* interest, and nevertheless without moral anachronism (in all which points the *Ivanhoe* is so wofully the contrary, for what Englishman cares for Saxon or Norman, both brutal invaders, more than for Chinese and Cochin-Chinese?)—yet great as all these causes are, the essential wisdom and happiness of the subject consists in this,—that the contest between the loyalists and their opponents can never be *obsolete*, for it is the contest between the two great moving principles of social humanity; religious adherence to the past and the ancient, the desire and the admiration of permanence, on the one hand; and the passion for increase of knowledge, for truth, as the offspring of reason—in short, the mighty instincts of *progression* and *free agency*, on the other. In all subjects of deep and lasting interest, you will detect a struggle between two opposites, two polar forces, both of which are alike necessary to our human well-being, and necessary each to the continued existence of the other. Well, therefore, may we contemplate with intense feelings those whirlwinds which are for free agents the appointed means, and the only possible condition of that equilibrium in which our moral Being subsists; while the disturbance of the same constitutes our sense of life. Thus in the ancient Tragedy, the lofty struggle between irresistible fate, and unconquerable free will, which finds its equilibrium in the Providence and the future retribution of Christianity. If, instead of a contest between Saxons and Normans, or the Fantees and Ashantees,—a mere contest of indifferents! of minim surges in a boiling fish-kettle,—Walter Scott had taken the struggle between the men of arts and the men of arms in the time of Becket, and made us feel how much to claim our well-wishing there was in the cause and character of the priestly and papal party, no less than in those of Henry and his knights, he would have opened a new mine, instead of translating into Leadenhall Street Minerva Library sentences, a cento of the most common incidents of the stately self-congruous romances of D'Urfe, Scuderi, etc. N.B. I have not read the *Monastery*, but I suspect that the thought or element of the faery work is from the German. I perceive from that passage in the *Old Mortality*, where Morton is discovered by old Alice in consequence of calling his dog Elphin, that Walter Scott has been

reading Tieck's *Phantasies* (a collection of faery or witch tales), from which both the incident and name is borrowed.

I forget whether I ever mentioned to you, that some eighteen months ago I had planned and half collected, half manufactured and invented a work, to be entitled *The Weather-BOUND Traveller*; or, *Histories, Lays, Legends, Incidents, Anecdotes, and Remarks*, contributed during a detention in one of the Hebrides, recorded by their Secretary, Lory McHaroldson, Senachy in the Isle of — — .

The principle of the work I had thus expressed in the first chapter: — “Though not *fact*, must it needs be false? These things have a truth of their own, if we but knew how to look for it. There is a *humanity* (meaning by this word whatever contradistinguishes man), there is a humanity common to all periods of life, which each *period* from childhood has its own way of representing. Hence, in whatever laid firm hold of us in early life, there lurks an interest and a charm for our maturest years, but which *he* will never draw forth, who, content with mimicking the unessential, though natural defects of thought and expression, has not the skill to remove the *childish*, yet leave the *childlike* untouched. Let each of us then relate that which has left the deepest impression on his mind, at whatever period of his life he may have seen, heard, or read it; but let him tell it in accordance with the *present state* of his intellect and feelings, even as he has, perhaps (Alnaschar-like), acted it over again by the parlour fire-side of a rustic inn, with the fire and the candles for his only companions.”

On the hope of my Lectures answering, I had intended to have done this work out of hand, dedicating the most genial hours to the completion of *Christabel*, in the belief that in the former I should be rekindling the feeling, and recalling the state of mind, suitable to the latter. — But the Hope was vain.

In stating the names and probable size of my works, I by no means meant any reference to the mode of their publication; I merely wished to communicate to you the amount of my labours. In two moderate volumes it was my intention to comprise all those more prominent and systematic parts of my lucubrations on Shakspeare as should be published (in the first instance at least, in the form of books), and having selected and arranged them, to send the more

particular illustrations and analysis to some respectable magazine. In like manner, I proposed to include the philosophical critiques on Dante, Milton, Cervantes, etc., in a series of Letters entitled *The Reviewer in Exile, or Critic confined to an Old Library*. Provided the truths (which are, I dare affirm, original, and all tending to the same principles, and proving the endless fertility of true principle, and the decision and power of growth which it communicates to all the faculties of the mind) are but in existence, and to be read by such as might wish to read, I have no choice as to the mode; nay, I should prefer that mode which most multiplied the chances.—So too as to the order.—For *many* reasons, it had been my wish to commence with the *Theological Letters*: one, and not the least, is the strong desire I have to put you and Hartley and Derwent Coleridge in full possession of my whole Christian creed, with the grounds of reason and authority on which it rests; but especially to unfold the true “glorious liberty of the Gospel,” by showing the distinction between doctrinal faith and its sources and historical belief, with their reciprocal action on each other; and thus, on the one hand, to do away (with) the servile superstition which makes men *Bibliolators*, and yet hides from them the proper excellences, the one continued revelation of the Bible documents, which they idolise; and, on the other hand, to expose, in its native worthlessness, the so-called evidences of Christianity first brought into *toleration* by Arminius, and into fashion by Grotius and the Socinian divines; for as such I consider all those who preach and teach in the spirit of Socinianism, though even in the outward form of a defence of the thirty-nine articles.

I have been interrupted by the arrival of my sons, Hartley and Derwent, the latter of whom I had not seen for so dreary a time. I promise myself great pleasure in introducing him to you. Hartley you have already met. Indeed, I am so desirous of this, that I will defer what I have to add, that I may put this letter in the post, time enough for you to receive it this evening; saying only, that it was not my purpose to have had any further communication on the subject but with Mr. Frere, and with him only as a counsellor. Let me see you as soon as you can and as often. I shall be better able hereafter to talk with you than to write to you on the contents of your last.

Your very affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

Hartley Coleridge had been sent by the generosity of his uncles and Poole, and other friends, to Oxford, and had gained a Fellowship at Oriel in 1819; but at the close of his probationary year forfeited his fellowship on the ground of intemperance. This calamity fell upon Coleridge with great severity. The following letters refer to it.

LETTER 181. TO ALLSOP

31st July, 1820.

My very dear Friend,

Before I opened your letter, or rather before I gave it to my best sister, and, under God, best comforter, to open, a very heavy affliction came upon me with all the aggravations of surprise, sudden as a peal of thunder from a cloudless sky.

Alas! both Mr. and Mrs. Gillman had spoken to him with all the earnestness of the fondest parents; his cousins had warned him, and I (long ago) had written to him, conjuring him to reflect with what a poisoned dagger it would arm my enemies: yea, and the phantoms that, half-*counterfeiting*, half-expounding the conscience, would persecute my sleep. My conscience indeed bears me witness, that from the time I quitted Cambridge, no human being was more indifferent to the pleasures of the table than myself, or less needed any stimulation to my spirits; and that by a most unhappy quackery, after having been almost bedrid for six months with swollen knees and other distressing symptoms of disordered digestive functions, and through that most pernicious form of ignorance, medical half-knowledge, I was *seduced* into the use of narcotics, not secretly, but (such was my ignorance) openly and exultingly, as one who had discovered and was never weary of recommending, a grand panacea and saw not the truth till my *body* had contracted a habit and a necessity; and that, even to the latest, my responsibility is for cowardice, and defect of fortitude, not for the least craving after gratification or pleasurable sensation of any sort, but for yielding to pain, terror, and haunting bewilderment. But this I say *toman* only, who knows only what has been yielded not what has been resisted: before God I have but one voice — “Mercy! mercy! woe is me.” — This was the sin of his nature, and this has been fostered by the culpable indulgence, at least non-interference, on my part; while, in a different quarter, contempt of the *self-interest* he saw seduced him unconsciously into *selfishness*.

Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may not pass such another night as the last. While I am awake and retain my reasoning powers, the

pang is gnawing, but I am, except for a fitful moment or two, tranquil; it is the howling wilderness of sleep that I dread.

I am most reluctant thus to transplant the thorns from my own pillow to yours, but sooner or later you must know it, and how else could I explain to you the incapability I am under of answering your letter? For the present (my late visitation and sorrow out of the question) my anxiety is respecting your health. Mr. Gillman feels satisfied that there is nothing in your case symptomatic of aught more dangerous than irritable, and at present disordered, organs of digestion, requiring indeed great care, but by no means incompatible with comfortable health on the whole. Would to God! that your uncle lived near Highgate, or that we were settled near Clapham. Most anxious am I—(for I am sure I do not *overrate* Gillman's medical skill and sound medical good sense, and have had every possible opportunity of satisfying myself on this head, *comparatively* as well as positively, from my intimate acquaintance with so many medical men in the course of my life)—I am most anxious that you should not apply to any medical practitioner at Clapham, till you have consulted some physician recommended by Gillman, and with whom our friend might have some confidential conversation. —The next earnest petition I make to you,—for should I lose *you* from this world, I fear that religious terrors would shake my strength of mind, and to how many are you, must you be, very dear,—is that you would stay in the country as long as is *morally* practicable. Let nothing but *coercive* motives have weight with you; a month's tranquillity in pure air (O! that I could spend that month with you, with no greater efforts of mental or bodily exercise than would exhilarate both body and mind) might save you many months' interrupted and half-effective labour.

If any thoughts occur to you at Clapham on which it would amuse or gratify you to have my notions, write to me, and I shall be served by having something to think and write about not connected with myself. But, at all events, write as often as you can, and as much as (but not a syllable more than) you ought. Need I say how

unspeakably dear you are to your, you must not refuse me to say in
heart,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 182. TO ALLSOP

August 8th, 1820.

My very Dear Friend,

Neither indolence nor procrastination have had any place among the causes of my silence, least of all either yourself, or the subject of your letter, or the purpose of answering it, having been absent from my thoughts. You may with almost literal truth attribute it to want of time, from the number, quantity, and quality of my engagements, the necessity of several journeys *to* and (still worse) *in* town being the largest waster of time and spirits. At length I have settled J. for the next six or eight weeks with Mr. Montague, where he is engaged on an *Essay on the Principles of Taste in relation to Metre and Rhythm*, containing, first, a new scheme of prosody, as applied to the choral and lyrical stanzas of the Greek drama; secondly, the possibility of improving and enriching our English versification by digging in the original mines, viz.—the tunes of nature and impassioned conversation, both of which may be illustrated from Mr. Frere's *Aristophanic Poems*. I have been working hard to bring together for him the notes, etc., that I had prepared on this subject. E. has been ill, and even now is far from well. There are some persons—I have known several—who, when they find themselves uncomfortable, take up the pen and transfer as much discomfort as they can to their absent friends. But I know only one of this sort, who, as soon as they take up the pen, instantly become *dolorous*, however smug, snug, and cheerful the minute before and the minute after.

Now just such is Mrs. D., God bless her! and she has been writing letter after letter to E. about J., and every uncomfortable recollection and anticipation that she could conjure up, that she has completely overset him. *This must not be*. Mr. Gillman, too, has been *out of sorts*, but at this present we are all better. I at least am as well as I ever am, and my regular employment, in which Mr. Green is weekly my amanuensis, the work on the books of the Old and New Testaments introduced by the assumptions and postulates required as the pre-conditions of a fair examination of Christianity as a scheme of doctrines, precepts, and histories, drawn or at least deducible from these books. And now, in the narrative line, I have only to add that

Mrs. Gillman desires to be affectionately remembered to you, and bids me entreat you to stay *away as long* as you possibly can, provided it be from *London* as well as from Highgate.

Would to heaven I were with you! In a few days you should see that the spirit of the mountaineer is not yet utterly extinct in me. Wordsworth has remarked (in the *Brothers*, I believe),

The thought of death sits light upon the man

That has been bred, and dies among the mountains.

But I fear that this, like some other few of Wordsworth's *many* striking passages, means less than it seems, or rather promises to mean. Poets (especially if philosophers too) are apt to represent the effect made upon themselves as general; the geese of Phœbus are all swans; and Wordsworth's shepherds and estates men are Wordsworth's, even (as in old Michael) in the unpoetic traits of character. Whether mountains have any particular effect on the native inhabitants by virtue of being mountains exclusively, and what that effect is, would be a difficult problem. If independent tribes, mountaineers are robbers of the lowlanders; brave, active, and with all the usual warlike good and bad qualities that result from habits of adventurous robbery. Add clanship and the superstitions that are the surviving *precipitate* of an established religion, both which are common to the uncivilised Celtic tribes, in plain no less than in mountain, and you have the Scottish Highlanders. But where the inhabitants exist as states, or civilised parts of civilised states, they appear to be in mind and character just what their condition and employments would render them in level plain, the same as amid Alpine heights. At least the influence acts indirectly only, as far as the mountains are the *causa causæ* or occasion of *apastoral* life instead of an agricultural; thus combining a lax and common property, possessed by a whole district, with small hereditary estates sacred to each, while the properties in sheep seem to partake of both characters. And truly, to this circumstance, aided by the favourable action of a necessarily scanty population (for *man* is an oak that wants room, not a *plantation tree*), we must attribute whatever superiority the mountaineers of Cumberland and Westmoreland and of the Swiss and Tyrolese Alps possess, as the shocking contrast of the Welsh mountaineers too clearly evinces. But

this subject I have discussed, and (if I do not flatter myself) satisfactorily, in the *Literary Life*, and I will not conceal from *you* that this inferred dependency of the human soul on accidents of birth-place and abode, together with the vague, misty, rather than mystic, confusion of God with the world, and the accompanying nature-worship, of which the asserted dependence forms a part, is the trait in Wordsworth's poetic works that I most dislike as unhealthful, and denounce as contagious; while the odd introduction of the popular, almost the vulgar, religion in his later publications (the popping in, as Hartley says, of the old man with a beard), suggests the painful suspicion of worldly prudence – at best a justification of masking truth (which, in fact, is a falsehood substituted for a truth withheld) on plea of expediency – carried into religion. At least it conjures up to my fancy a sort of *Janushead* of Spinoza and Dr. Watts, or "I and my brother the dean."

Permit me, then, in the place of the two lines,

The thought of death sits easy on the man,

Who hath been bred, and dies among the mountains,

to say,

The thought of death sits easy on the man,

Whose earnest *will* hath lived among the deathless.

And I can perhaps build upon this foundation an answer to the question, which would deeply interest me, by whomever put, and pained me only because it was put by *you*; *i.e.* because I feared it might be the inspiration of ill health, and am jealous of any *consenting* of that inward will which, with some mysterious germination, moves in the Bethesda pool of our animal life, to withdraw its resistance. For the soul, among its other regalia, has an energetic veto against all undermining of the constitution, and among these, as not the least insidious, I consider the thoughts and hauntings that tamper with the love of life.

Do not so! you *would not*, if I could transfer into you, in all its depth and liveliness, the sense what a hope, promise, impulse, you are to

me in my present efforts to realise my past labours; and by building up the temple,—the shaped stones, beams, pillars, yea, the graven ornaments and the connecting clamps of which have been piled up by me, only in too great abundance,—to enable you and my two (may I not say other) sons to affirm,—*Vivit, quia non frustra vixit*. In reading an extract in the German Encyclopædia from Dobrizhoffer's most interesting account of the Abiponenses, a savage tribe in Paraguay, houseless, yet in person and in morals the noblest of savage tribes; who, when first known by Europeans, amounted to 100,000 warriors, yet have a tradition that they were but the relic of a far more numerous community, and who by wars with other savage tribes, and by intestine feuds among themselves, are now dwindled to a thousand (men, women, and children do not exceed five thousand), it struck me with distinct remembrance—first, that this is the history of *all* savages tribes; and, second, that all tribes *aresavage* that have not a positive religion defecated from witchcraft, and an established priesthood contra-distinguished from individual conjurers. Nay, the islands of the Pacific (the Polynesia, which sooner or later the swift and silent masonry of the coral worms will compact into a rival continent, into a *fifth quarter* of the world), blest with all the plenties of nature, and enjoying an immunity from all the ordinary dangers of savage life, were many of them utterly dispeopled since their first discovery, and wholly by their own feuds and vices; nay, that their bread-fruit tree and their delicious and healthful climate had only made the process of mutual destruction and self-destruction more hateful, more basely sensual. This, therefore, I assume as an undoubted fact of history; and from this, as a portion of the history of *men*, I draw a new (to my knowledge, at least, a new) series of proofs of several, I *might* say of *all*, the positions of pre-eminent importance and interest more than vital; a series which, taken in harmonious counterpart to a prior series drawn from *interior* history (the history of *man*), the documents of which are to be found only in the archives of each individual's own consciousness, will form a complete *whole*—a system of evidence, consisting of two correspondent worlds, as it were, correlative and mutually potentiating, yet each integral and self-subsistent—having the same correlation, as the geometry and the observations, or the metaphysics and the physics, of astronomy. If I can thus demonstrate the truth of the doctrine of existence after the present life, it is not improbable that some rays of light may fall

on the question, what *state* of existence it may be reasonably supposed to be? At all events, we shall, I trust, be enabled to determine negatively, what it can *not* be for *any*; and *for whom* this or that, which does not appear universally precluded, is yet *for them* precluded. In plainer words, what can *not* be, universally speaking; second, what may be; third, what the differences may be for different individuals, within the limits prescribed in No. 2; fourth, what scheme of embodied representation of the future state (our *reason* not forbidding the same) is recommended by the truest analogies; and, fifth, what scheme it is best to combine with our belief of a hereafter, as most conducive to the growth and cultivation of our collective faculties in this life, or of each in the order of its comparative worth, value, and permanence. This I must defer to another letter, for I cannot let another post pass by, without your knowing that we are all thinking of and loving you.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 183. TO ALLSOP

Highgate, Oct. 11th, 1820.

My dear Friend,

You will think it childish in me, and more savouring of a jealous boarding-school miss than a friend and a philosopher, when I confess that the "with great respect, your obliged and grateful..." gave me pain. But I did not return from Mr. Cooper's, at whose house we all dined, till near midnight, and did not open the packet till this morning after getting out of bed; and this you know is the hour in which the cat-organ of an irritable viscerage is substituted for the brain as the mind's instrument.

The Cobbett is assuredly a strong and battering production throughout, and in the best bad style of this political rhinoceros, with his coat armour of dry and wet mud, and his one horn of brutal strength on the nose of scorn and hate; not to forget the flaying rasp of his tongue! There is one article of his invective, however, from which I cannot withhold my vote of consent: that I mean which respects Mr. Brougham's hollow complimentary phrases to the ministry and the House of Lords. On expressing my regret that his poor hoaxed and hunted client had been lured or terrified into the nets of the revolutionists, and had taken the topmost perch, as the flaring, screaming *maccauw*, in the clamorous aviary of faction, Sheriff Williams, who dined with us, premising that his *wishes* accorded with mine, declared himself, however fully and deeply convinced, that, without this alliance, the Queen must have been overwhelmed, not wholly or even chiefly from the strength of the party itself, but because, without the activity, enthusiasm, and combination, peculiar to the reformists, her case, in all its detail and with all its appendages, would never have had that notoriety so beyond example universal; which (to translate Sheriff Williams into Poet Coleridge), with kettle drum reveillée, had echoed through the mine and the coal-pit, which had lifted the latch of every cottage, and thundered with no run-away knock at Carlton Palace. I could only reply, that I had never yet seen, heard, or read of any advantage in the long run, occurring to a good cause from an unholy alliance with evil passions and incongruous or alien purposes. It was ever heavy on my heart, that the people, alike high and low, do perish for lack

of knowledge; that both sheep and shepherd, the Flocks and the Pastors, go astray among swamps and in desolate places, for want of the *Truth*, the *whole Truth*, and nothing but the Truth; and that the sacred motto, which I had adopted for my first political publication (*The Watchman*), would be the aspiration of my death-bed—THAT ALL MAY KNOW THE TRUTH; AND THAT THE TRUTH MAY MAKE US FREE.

I observed farther, that in bodies of men, not accidentally collected nor promiscuously, but such as our House of Lords, the usual effect of terror was, first, self-justification as to the worst of their past violent and unconstitutional measures; and, next, a desperate belief that their safety would be still more endangered by giving way than by plunging onward; that, if they must fall, they would fall in that way in which they might take vengeance on the occasion of the mischief. If the proposition be either ... or ..., and the latter blank is to be filled up by a *Civil War*, what shall we put for the former, to make our duty to submit to it deniable or even doubtful? A Legislature permitted by us to stand in the eye of the whole civilised World as the representative of our country, corruptly and ruthlessly pandering to an Individual's Lust and Hate! Open Hostility to Innocence, and the subversion of justice, a shameless trampling under foot of the Laws of God and the Principles of the Constitution, in the name and against the known will of the Nation! Well! if anything, it must be this! It is a decision, compared with which the sentence of the elder Brutus were a grief for which an onion might supply the tears. A dreadful decision! But be it so!—How much more then are we bound to be careful, that no conduct of our own, no assent or countenance given by us to the violence of others, no want of courage and alertness in denouncing the same, should have the least tendency to bring about an act or event, dire enough to justify a civil war for its preventive! I produced, as you may suppose, but small effect; and yet your very note enforces the truth of my reply—for these very answers of the Queen's conjointly with her plebicular (or plebicolous) Clap-Trapperies in the live puppet-show of wicked Punch and his wife, that has come back again, and the devil on all sides, make it impossible for me to ask you, as I otherwise should have done,—What proof, proveably independent of the calumny plot, have we of any want of delicacy in the Queen? What act or form of demeanour can be adduced on competent testimony, from which we are forced or entitled to infer

innate Coarseness, if not Grossness? The dire disclosure of the extent and extremes to which Calumny may be carried—and perhaps the recent persecution of poor dear ... mixes its workings—makes me credulous in incredulity; so that I am almost prepared to reverse the proverb, and think that “what every one says must be a lie!” They put a body up to the nostrils in the dunghill of reeking slander, and then exclaim: There is no smoke without some fire!

It is my purpose, God willing! to leave this place on Friday, so as to take an afternoon coach, if any such there be, or the Oxford mail, as the dernier resource—and so to be in Oxford by Saturday morning, while my letter, which is unfortunately a very long one (and I could not make it otherwise), will reach Dr. Coplestone, if arrived, on Friday morning; thus giving him a day’s preparation for the personal interview. How long my absence from Highgate may be, I cannot of course predetermine; certainly not an hour beyond what [Hartley]’s interest requires.

God bless you, my dear friend, and your truly affectionate, and—if it did not look like a *retort*, how truly might I not add—

Your obliged and grateful friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S.—Sheriff Williams is apparently a very worthy, and assuredly a very entertaining man. He gave us accounts, on his own evidence, of wonderful things respecting Miss M’Evoy and a Mr. De Vains of Liverpool; so wonderful as to threaten the stoppage even of my Bank of Faith.

I have just heard from Derwent, who is well; but I have not had time to decipher his villainous scrawl.

LETTER 184. TO ALLSOP

Oct. 20th, 1820.

My dear Friend,

Doubtless nothing can be more delightful to me, independent of Mrs. Gillman's kind but unnecessary anxieties, than to go to Oxford with you. Nay, though it will be but a flight to and fro, with a sojourn but of two days, if so much, yet I should even ask it of you if I were quite sure, absolutely sure, that it would not inconvenience you.

But in the fear of this, I could not ask or receive your companionship without some selfishness which would completely baffle itself.

I have not yet received an answer from Oxford respecting Dr. Coplestone's return to Oriel.

God bless you, my ever dear friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE

T. Allsop, Esq.

The visit to Oxford was undertaken to try to get the authorities to mitigate the sentence on Hartley.

Queen Caroline and her misfortunes had been in his young days the subject of one of Coleridge's poems, *On a late Connubial Rupture in High Life*. She still engaged his attention, and he meditated writing on the matter, from which, however, Gillman dissuaded him.

LETTER 185. TO ALLSOP

Oct. 25th, 1820.

My dearest Friend,

It will please you, though I scarcely know whether the pleasure is worth the carriage, to know that my own feelings and convictions were, from the very commencement of this unhappy affair, viz. — the terms proposed to the Queen by Lord Hutchinson, in coincidence with your present suggestion, and that I actually began an essay, and proposed a sort of *diary*, i.e. remarks moral and political, according as the events of the day suggested them. But Mr. Gillman dissuaded me. Again, about five weeks ago I had written a letter to Conder, the editor of the *Eclectic Review* and *ci-devant* bookseller, offering, and offering to *execute*, a scheme of publication, “the Queen’s case stated *morally*; 2, *judicially*; 3, *politically*.” But *again* Mr. G. earnestly persuaded me to suppress it. His reasons were, first, that my mind was not sufficiently tranquil, in consequence of I.’s affair, to enable me to rely upon going through with the publication; secondly, that it would probably involve me with certain of my connexions in high life, and be injurious to Hartley and Derwent, especially the latter; with thirdly, the small chance of doing any good, people are so guided by their first notions. To tell you the truth, Mr. G.’s *own dislike* to it was of more weight than all his three reasons.

However, we will talk of the publication, if *it be not too late*, and at all events I will compose the statement.

I pray you make no apologies for doing that which cannot but add to the esteem and affection with which I am most truly your *friend*, fraternally and paternally.

We shall soon see you?

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 186. TO ALLSOP

Nov. 27, 1820.

My very dear Friend,

I have been more than usually unwell, with great depression of spirits, loss of appetite, frequent sickness, and a harassing pain in my left knee; and at the same time anxious to preclude, as much as I can, the ill effects of poor J.'s procrastination—indolence it is not, for he is busy enough in his own way, and rapidly bringing together materials for his future credit as a man of letters and a poet, but shrinking from all things connected with painful associations, and of that morbid temperament, which I too well understand, that renders what would be motives for men in general, narcotics for him, in exact proportion to their strength; and this I could only do by taking on myself as much of the document writing as was contrivable. Besides this, I have latterly felt increasingly anxious to avail myself of every moment that ill health left me, to get forward with my *Logic* and with my *Assertion of Religion*.

Nay, foolish though it be, I cannot prevent my mind from being affected by the alarming state of public affairs, and, as it appears to me, the want of stable principle even in the chiefs of the party that seem to feel aright, yet chirrup like crickets in warmth without light.

The consequence of all this is, that I not only have deferred writing to you, but have played the procrastinator with myself, even in giving attention to your very interesting letter. For minor things your kindness and kind remembrances are so habitual, that my acknowledgments you cannot but take for granted. Mr. Gillman has been ill; Mrs. Gillman—and this leads me to the particular object of this letter—expresses aloud and earnestly what I feel no less, her uneasiness that three weeks have passed, and we have not had the comfort of seeing you. Do come up when you can, with justice to yourself and other connections, for it is a *great* comfort to me; something, I trust, I shall have to show you. A note of warning from one who has been a true but unheard prophet to my countrymen for five-and-twenty years.

May God bless you, my dear friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 187. TO ALLSOP

January, 1821.

My dear young Friend,

The only impression left by you on my mind is an increased desire to see you again, and at shorter intervals. Were you my son by nature, I could not hold you dearer, or more earnestly desire to retain you the adopted of whatever within me will remain, when the dross and alloy of infirmity shall have been purged away. I feel the most entire confidence that no prosperous change of my outward circumstances would add to your *faith* in the sincerity of this assurance; still, however, the average of men being what it is, and it being neither possible nor desirable to be fully conscious in our understanding of the habits of thinking and judging in the world around us, and yet to be wholly impassive and unaffected by them in our feelings, it would endear and give a new value to an honourable competence, that I should be able to evince the true nature and degree of my esteem and attachment beyond the suspicion even of the sordid, and separate from all that is accidental or adventitious. But yet the friendship I feel for you is so genial a warmth, and blends so undistinguishably with my affections, is so perfectly one of the family in the household of love, that I would not be otherwise than obliged to you; and God is my witness, that my wish for an easier and less embarrassed lot is *chiefly* (I think I might have said *exclusively*) grounded on the deep conviction, that exposed to a less bleak aspect I should bring forth flowers and fruits both more abundant and more worthy of the unexampled kindness of your *faith* in me. Interpreting the "wine" and the "ivy garland" as figures of poetry signifying competence, and the removal of the petty needs of the body that plug up the pipes of the playing fountain (and such it is too well known was the intent and meaning of the hardly used poet), and oh! how often, when my heart has begun to swell from the genial warmth of thought, as our northern lakes from the (so called) bottom winds, when all above and around is stillness and sunshine—how often have I repeated in my own name the sweet stanza of Edmund Spenser:

Thou kenst not, Percie, how the rhyme should rage.

O! if my temples were bedewed with wine,

And girt in garlands of wild ivy twine;

How I could rear the muse on stately stage,

And teach her tread aloft in buskin fine

With quaint Bellona in her equipage.

Read what follows as you would a note at the bottom of a page.

But ah! Mecænas is ywraapt in clay, and great Augustus long ago is dead.

(This is a natural sigh, and natural too is the reflection that follows.)

And if that any buds of poesy

Yet of the old stock 'gin to shoot again,

'Tis or *self*-lost the worldling's meed to gain,

And with the rest to breathe its ribauldry,

Or as it sprung it wither must again;

Tom Piper makes them better melody.

But though natural, the complaint is not equally philosophical, were it only on this account,—that I know of no age in which the same has not been advanced, and with the same grounds. Nay, I retract; there never was a time in which the *complaint* would be so little wise, though perhaps none in which the *fact* is more prominent. Neither philosophy nor poetry ever did, nor as long as they are terms of comparative excellence and contradistinction, ever can be *popular*, nor honoured with the praise and favour of contemporaries. But, on the other hand, there never was a time in which either books, that were *held* for excellent as poetic or philosophic, had so extensive and rapid a sale, or men reputed poets and philosophers of a high rank were so much *looked up* to in society, or so munificently, almost profusely rewarded. Walter Scott's poems

and novels (except only the two wretched abortions, *Ivanhoe* and the *Bride of Ravensmuir*, or whatever its name may be) supply both instance and solution of the *present* conditions and components of popularity, viz. to amuse without requiring any effort of thought, and without exciting any deep emotion. The age seems *sore* from excess of stimulation, just as, a day or two after a thorough debauch and long sustained drinking match, a man feels all over like a bruise. Even to admire otherwise than *on the whole*, and where "I admire" is but a synonym for "I remember I *liked* it very much *when I was reading it*," is too much an effort, would be too disquieting an emotion. Compare *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, and *Co.*, with works that had an *immediate run* in the last generation, *Tristram Shandy*, *Roderick Random*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Tom Jones* (all of which became popular as soon as published, and therefore instances fairly in point), and you will be convinced that the difference of taste is real, and not any fancy or croaking of my own.

But enough of these generals. It was my purpose to open myself out to you in detail. My health, I have reason to believe, is so intimately connected with the state of my spirits, and these again so dependent on my thoughts, prospective and retrospective, that I should not doubt the being favoured with a sufficiency for my noblest undertaking, had I the ease of heart requisite for the necessary abstraction of the thoughts, and such a reprieve from the goading of the immediate exigencies as might make tranquillity possible. But, alas! I know by experience (and the knowledge is not the less because the regret is not unmixed with self-blame, and the consciousness of want of exertion and fortitude), that my health will continue to decline, as long as the pain from reviewing the barrenness of the past is great in an inverse proportion to any rational anticipations of the future. As I now am, however, from five to six hours devoted to actual writing and composition in the day is the utmost that my strength, not to speak of my nervous system, will permit; and the invasions on this portion of my time from applications, often of the most senseless kind, are such and so many as to be almost as ludicrous even to myself as they are vexatious. In less than a week I have not seldom received half-a-dozen packets or parcels, of works printed or manuscript, urgently requesting my candid *judgment*, or my correcting hand. Add to these, letters from

lords and ladies, urging me to write reviews or puffs of heaven-born geniuses, whose whole merit consists in being ploughmen or shoemakers. Ditto from actors; entreaties for money, or recommendations to publishers, from ushers out of place, etc. etc.; and to *me*, who have neither interest, influence, nor money, and, what is still more *àpropos*, can neither bring myself to tell smooth falsehoods nor harsh truths, and, in the struggle, too often do both in the anxiety to do neither.—I have already the *written* materials and contents, requiring only to be put together, from the loose papers and commonplace or memorandum books, and needing no other change, whether of omission, addition, or correction, than the mere act of arranging, and the opportunity of seeing the whole collectively bring with them of course,—I. Characteristics of Shakspeare's Dramatic Works, with a Critical Review of each Play; together with a relative and comparative Critique on the kind and degree of the Merits and Demerits of the Dramatic Works of Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger. The History of the English Drama; the accidental advantages it afforded to Shakespeare, without in the least detracting from the perfect originality or proper creation of the Shakspearian Drama; the contradistinction of the latter from the Greek Drama, and its still remaining *uniqueness*, with the causes of this, from the combined influences of Shakespeare himself, as man, poet, philosopher, and finally, by conjunction of all these, dramatic poet; and of the age, events, manners, and state of the English language. This work, with every art of compression, amounts to three volumes of about five hundred pages each.—II. Philosophical Analysis of the Genius and Works of Dante, Spenser, Milton, Cervantes, and Calderon, with similar, but more compressed Criticisms on Chaucer, Ariosto, Donne, Rabelais, and others, during the predominance of the Romantic Poetry. In one large volume.—These two works will, I flatter myself, form a complete code of the principles of judgment and feeling applied to Works of Taste; and not of *Poetry* only, but of Poesy in all its forms, Painting, Statuary, Music, etc. etc.—III. The History of Philosophy considered as a Tendency of the Human Mind to exhibit the Powers of the Human Reason, to discover by its own Strength the Origin and Laws of Man and the World from Pythagoras to Locke and Condillac. Two volumes.—IV. Letters on the Old and New Testament, and on the Doctrine and Principles held in common by the Fathers and Founders of the Reformation,

addressed to a Candidate for Holy Orders; including Advice on the Plan and Subjects of Preaching, proper to a Minister of the Established Church.

To the completion of these four works I have literally nothing more to do than *to transcribe*; but, as I before hinted, from so many scraps and *Sibylline* leaves, including margins of books and blank pages, that, unfortunately, I must be my own scribe, and not done by myself, they will be all but lost; or perhaps (as has been too often the case already) furnish feathers for the caps of others; some for this purpose, and some to plume the arrows of detraction, to be let fly against the luckless bird from whom they had been plucked or moulted.

In addition to these—of my GREAT WORK, to the preparation of which more than twenty years of my life have been devoted, and on which my hopes of extensive and permanent utility, of fame, in the noblest sense of the word, mainly rest—that, by which I might,

As now by thee, by all the good be known,

When this weak frame lies moulder'd in the grave,

Which self-surviving I might call my own,

Which Folly cannot mar, nor Hate deprave—

The incense of those powers, which, risen in flame,

Might make me dear to Him from whom they came.

Of this work, to which all my other writings (unless I except my Poems, and these I can exclude in part only) are introductory and preparative; and the result of which (if the premises be, as I with the most tranquil assurance, am convinced they are—insubvertible, the deductions legitimate, and the conclusions commensurate, and only commensurate, with both), must finally be a revolution of all that has been called *Philosophy* or *Metaphysics* in England and France since the era of the commencing predominance of the mechanical system at the restoration of our second Charles, and with this the present fashionable views, not only of religion, morals, and politics, but even of the modern physics and physiology. You will not blame

the earnestness of my expressions, nor the high importance which I attach to this work; for how, with less noble objects, and less faith in their attainment, could I stand acquitted of folly, and abuse of time, talents, and learning, in a labour of three-fourths of my *intellectual* life? Of this work, something more than a volume has been dictated by me, so as to exist fit for the press, to my friend and enlightened pupil, Mr. Green; and more than as much again would have been evolved and delivered to paper, but that, for the last six or eight months, I have been compelled to break off our weekly meeting, from the necessity of writing (alas! alas! of *attempting* to write) for purposes, and on the subjects of the passing day. — Of my poetic works, I would fain finish the *Christabel*. Alas! for the proud time when I planned, when I had present to my mind, the materials, as well as the scheme, of the Hymns entitled *Spirit, Sun, Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and Man*: and the Epic Poem on — what still appears to me the one only fit subject remaining for an Epic Poem — *Jerusalem besieged and destroyed by Titus*.

And here comes, my dear friend — here comes my sorrow and my weakness, my grievance and my confession. Anxious to perform the duties of the day arising out of the wants of the day, these wants, too, presenting themselves in the most painful of all forms, — that of a debt owing to those who will not exact it, and yet need its payment, and the delay, the long (not live-long but *death*-long) behind-hand of my accounts to friends, whose utmost care and frugality on the one side, and industry on the other, the wife's management and the husband's assiduity are put in requisition to make both ends meet, I am at once forbidden to attempt, and too perplexed earnestly to pursue, the *accomplishment* of the works worthy of me, those I mean above enumerated, — even if, savagely as I have been injured by one of the two influensive Reviews, and with more effective enmity undermined by the utter silence or occasional detractive compliments of the other, I had the probable chance of disposing of them to the booksellers, so as even to liquidate my mere boarding accounts during the time expended in the transcription, arrangement, and proof correction. And yet, on the other hand, my heart and mind are for ever recurring to them. Yes, my conscience forces me to plead guilty, I have only by fits and starts even prayed. I have not prevailed on myself to pray to God in

sincerity and entireness for the fortitude that might enable me to resign myself to the abandonment of all my life's best hopes, to say boldly to myself,—“Gifted with powers confessedly above mediocrity, aided by an education, of which, no less from almost unexampled hardships and sufferings than from manifold and peculiar advantages, I have never yet found a parallel, I have devoted myself to a life of unintermitted reading, thinking, meditating, and observing. I have not only sacrificed all worldly prospects of wealth and advancement, but have in my inmost soul stood aloof from temporary reputation. In consequence of these toils and this self-dedication, I possess a calm and clear consciousness, that in many and most important departments of truth and beauty I have outstrode my contemporaries—those at least of highest name; that the number of my printed works bears witness that I have not been idle, and the seldom acknowledged, but strictly *proveable*, effects of my labours appropriated to the immediate welfare of my age in the *Morning Post* before and during the peace of Amiens, in *The Courier* afterwards, and in the series and various subjects of my lectures at Bristol and at the Royal and Surrey Institutions, in Fetter Lane, at Willis's Rooms, and at the Crown and Anchor (add to which the unlimited freedom of my communications in colloquial life), may surely be allowed as evidence that I have not been useless in my generation. But, from circumstances, the *main* portion of my harvest is still on the ground, ripe indeed, and only waiting, a few for the sickle, but a large part only for the *sheaving*, and carting, and housing; but from all this I must turn away, must let them rot as they lie, and be as though they never had been, for I must go and gather blackberries and earth-nuts, or pick mushrooms and gild oak-apples for the palates and fancies of chance customers. I must abrogate the name of philosopher and poet, and scribble as fast as I can, and with as little thought as I can, for *Blackwood's Magazine*, or as I have been employed for the last days, in writing MS. sermons for lazy clergymen, who stipulate that the composition must not be more than respectable, for fear they should be desired to publish the visitation sermon!” This I have not yet had courage to do. My soul sickens and my heart sinks; and thus, oscillating between both, I do neither, neither as it ought to be done, or to any profitable end. If I were to detail only the various, I might say capricious, interruptions that have prevented the finishing of this very scrawl, begun on the

very day I received your last kind letter, you would need no other illustrations.

Now I see but one possible plan of rescuing my permanent utility. It is briefly this and plainly. For what we struggle with inwardly, we find at least easiest to *bolt out* namely – that of engaging from the circle of those who think respectfully and hope highly of my powers and attainments a yearly sum, for three or four years, adequate to my actual support, with such comforts and decencies of appearance as my health and habits have made necessities, so that my mind may be unanxious as far as the present time is concerned; that thus I should stand both enabled and pledged to begin with some one work of these above mentioned, and for two-thirds of my whole time to devote myself to this exclusively till finished, to take the chance of its success by the best mode of publication that would involve me in no risk, then to proceed with the next, and so on till the works above mentioned as already in full material existence should be reduced into formal and actual being; while in the remaining third of my time I might go on maturing and completing my great work, and (for if but easy in mind, I have no doubt either of the re-awakening power or of the kindling inclination), and my *Christabel*, and what else the happier hour might inspire – and without inspiration a barrel-organ may be played right deftly; but

All otherwise the state of *poet* stands;

For lordly want is such a tyrant fell,

That where he rules all power he doth expel.

The vaunted verse a vacant head demands,

Ne wont with crabbed Care the muses dwell:

Unwisely weaves who takes two webs IN HAND!

Now Mr. Green has offered to contribute from £30 to £40 yearly, for three or four years; my young friend and pupil, the son of one of my dearest old friends, £50; and I think that from £10 to £20 I could rely upon from another. The sum required would be about £200, to be

repaid, of course, should the disposal or sale, and as far as the disposal and sale, of my writings produce the means.

I have thus placed before you at large, wanderingly, as well as diffusely, the statement which I am inclined to send in a compressed form to a few of those of whose kind dispositions towards me I have received assurances,—and to their interest and influence I must leave it—anxious, however, before I do this, to learn from you your very, very inmost feeling and judgment as to the previous questions. Am I entitled, have I earned *a right* to do this? Can I do it without moral degradation? and, lastly, can it be done without loss of character in the eyes of my acquaintance, and of my friends' acquaintance, who may have been informed of the circumstances? That, if attempted at all, it will be attempted in such a way, and that such persons only will be spoken to, as will not expose me to indelicate rebuffs to be afterwards matter of gossip, I know those, to whom I shall entrust the statement, too well to be much alarmed about.

Pray let me either see or hear from you as soon as possible; for, indeed and indeed, it is no inconsiderable accession to the pleasure I anticipate from disembarassment, that *you* would have to contemplate in a more gracious form, and in a more ebullient play of the inward fountain, the mind and manners of,

My dear friend,

Your obliged and very affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE

T. Allsop, Esq.

Coleridge's animadversions on Scott's work are not justifiable. Although Sir Walter's poetry is not to be compared for literary technique to that of Coleridge, it has a merit not unlike some parts of Coleridge's own. Sir Walter may be designated the Poet of Romantic Association; much of his poetry is founded on the associations of localities celebrated in history. The *Second Part of Christabel* and the *Knight's Tomb* are clearly of this genre of poetry. A touch of jealousy of the success of Scott seems to enter into

Coleridge's estimate of his brother poet. His criticism of the novels is of less importance; for Coleridge was always hostile to the novel as enticing men away from serious study and reading.]

CHAPTER XXV HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Among the men who met Coleridge, and recorded their impressions of his talk, Henry Crabb Robinson occupies a prominent place. He was one of the leading genius tasters of the time, and made pilgrimages to great living men in place of visiting the relics of departed worth or the shrines of the saints, which serves with others the same purpose. He thus came into contact with as wide a circle of intellectuality as any man of his day, his list including Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and many of the Germans, Madame De Staël, Wordsworth, Lamb, and a host of others well known to readers of his lively *Diary*. Henry Crabb Robinson met Coleridge for the first time in 1810 at Lamb's, and was at once smitten with Coleridge's talk. He met him several times in the first month of their acquaintanceship, and one of his entries in the *Diary* reads—"Coleridge kept me on the stretch of attention and admiration from half past three to twelve o'clock." But for a long time Robinson did not rank Coleridge as high as Wordsworth, with whom he had been familiar before meeting the former, and he was rather surprised when Lamb put Coleridge above the poet of Rydal.

Robinson frequently visited Coleridge at Highgate. Indeed he was among the first of Coleridge's acquaintances to be asked to dine at the Grove. On 17th June 1817 we find Coleridge asking him to make an appointment so that he might bring Ludwig Tieck with him to meet John Hookham Frere. He induces him to come to Highgate to have a walk or drive "in Caen Wood and its delicious groves and alleys (the finest in England), a grand Cathedral aisle of giant lime-trees, Pope's favourite composition walk when with the old Earl, a brother rogue of yours in the law line." He informs Robinson that he has read two pages of *Lallah Rookh*, which he pronounces "Crockery-ware!"

The following is a specimen of the many entries in the *Diary*—
"December 24, 1822. This afternoon I spent at Aders. A large party—a splendid dinner, prepared by a French cook; and music in the evening. Coleridge was the star of the evening. He talked in his usual way, though with more liberality than when I saw him last some years ago. But he was somewhat less animated and brilliant

and paradoxical. The music was enjoyed by Coleridge, but I could have dispensed with it for the sake of his conversation".

CHAPTER XXVI CHARLES LAMB

[Charles Lamb, Coleridge's associate of the "Cat and Salutation" days, remained a close friend to the last, and he plays an important part in the Highgate period. Among Lamb's letters, edited by Canon Ainger, are sixty-two to Coleridge; and there are a few to Allsop and James Gillman from 1821 onward. The next fourteen letters to Allsop reflect the relationship of the little circle of the Lambs and Gillman and Coleridge.]

LETTER 188. TO ALLSOP

Blandford-place, March 1st, 1821.

My dearest Friend,

God bless you, and all who are dear and near to you! but as to your pens, they seem to have been plucked from the *devil's* pinions, and slit and shaped by the blunt edge of the broad sprays of his antlers. Of the ink (*i.e.* your inkstand), it would be base to complain. I hate abusing folks in their *absence*. Do you know, my dear friend, that having sundry little snug superstitions of my own, I shrewdly suspect that whimsical ware of that sort is connected with the state and garniture of your paper-staining machinery.—Is it so? Well, I have seen Murray, and he has been civil, I may say kind, in his manners. Is this your knock?—Is it you on the stairs?—No. I explained my full purpose to him, namely,—that he should take me and my concerns, past and future, for print and reprint, under his umbrageous foliage, though the original name of his great predecessor in the patronage of genius, who gave the name of Augustan to all happy epochs—Octavius would be more appropriate—and he promises,—*cætera desunt*.

LETTER 189. TO ALLSOP

May 4th, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Mr. and Mrs. Gillman's kind love, and we beg that the good lady's late remembering that (as often the very fullness and vividness of the purpose and intention to do a thing imposes on the mind a sort of counterfeit feeling of quiet, similar to the satisfaction which the having done it would produce) you had not been written to, will not prejudice the present attempt at "better late than never." We have a party *to-morrow*, in which, because we believed it would interest you, you stood included. In addition to a neighbour Robert Sutton, and ourselves, and Mrs. Gillman's most un-Mrs. Gillmanly sister (but *n. b.* this is a secret to all who are both blind and deaf), there will be the Mathews (Mr. and Mrs.) *at home*, Mathews I mean, and Charles and Mary Lamb.

Of myself the best thing that I can say is that, in the belief of those well qualified to judge, I am not so ill as I fancy myself. Be this as it may,

I am always, my dearest friend,

With highest esteem and regard,

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

"Of this day and the one following," Allsop says, "I have a few notes, which appear to me of interest. It must be borne constantly in mind, that much of what is preserved has relation to positions enforced by others, which Coleridge held to be untenable on the particular grounds urged, not as being untrue in themselves."

Had Lord Byron possessed perseverance enough to undergo the drudgery of research, and had his theological studies and attainments been at all like mine, he would have been able to

unsettle all the evidences of Christianity, upheld as it is at present by simple confutation. Is it possible to assent to the doctrine of redemption as at present promulgated, that the moral death of an *unoffending* being should be a consequence of the transgression of humanity *and its atonement*?

Walter Scott's novels are chargeable with the same faults as Bertram, *et id omne genus*, viz., that of ministering to the depraved appetite for excitement, and, though in a far less degree, creating sympathy for the vicious and infamous, solely because the fiend is *daring*. Not twenty lines of Scott's poetry will ever reach posterity; it has relation to nothing.

When I wrote a letter upon the scarcity, it was generally said that it was the production of an immense cornfactor, and a letter was addressed to me under that persuasion, beginning "Crafty Monopolist."

It is very singular that no *true poet* should have arisen from the lower classes, when it is considered that every peasant who can read knows more of books now than did Æschylus, Sophocles, or Homer; yet if we except Burns, none such have been.

Crashaw seems in his poems to have given the first ebullience of his imagination, unshapen into form, or much of, what we now term, sweetness. In the poem, *Hope*, by way of question and answer, his superiority to Cowley is self-evident. In that on the name of Jesus equally so; but his lines on St. Theresa are the finest.

Where he does combine richness of thought and diction nothing can excel, as in the lines you so much admire —

Since 'tis not to be had at home,

She'l travel to a martyrdom.

No home for her confesses she,

But where she may a martyr be.

She'l to the Moores, and trade with them

For this invaluable diadem,
She offers them her dearest breath
With Christ's name in't, in change for death.
She'll bargain with them, and will give
Them God, and teach them how to live
In Him, or if they this deny,
For Him she'll teach them how to die.
So shall she leave amongst them sown,
The Lord's blood, or, at least, her own.
Farewell then, all the world – adieu,
Teresa is no more for you:
Farewell all pleasures, sports and joys,
Never till now esteemed toys –
Farewell whatever dear'st may be,
Mother's arms or father's knee;
Farewell house, and farewell home,
She's for the Moores and martyrdom.

These verses were ever present to my mind whilst writing the second part of *Christabel*; if, indeed, by some subtle process of the mind they did not suggest the first thought of the whole poem. – Poetry, as regards small poets, may be said to be, in a certain sense, conventional in its accidents and in its illustrations; thus Crashaw uses an image: –

As sugar melts in tea away,

which, although *proper then*, and *true now*, was in bad taste at that time equally with the present. In Shakspeare, in Chaucer there was nothing of this.

The wonderful faculty which Shakspeare above all other men possessed, or rather the power which possessed him in the highest degree, of anticipating everything, evidently is the result—at least partakes—of meditation, or that mental process which consists in the submitting to the operation of thought every object of feeling, or impulse, or passion observed *out* of it. I would be willing to live only as long as Shakspeare were the mirror to nature.

What can be finer in any poet than that beautiful passage in Milton—

— — Onward he moved

And thousands of his saints around.

This is grandeur, but it is grandeur without completeness: but he adds—

Far off their coming shone;

which is the highest sublime. There is *total* completeness.

So I would say that the Saviour praying on the Mountain, the Desert on one hand, the Sea on the other, the city at an immense distance below, was sublime. But I should say of the Saviour looking towards the City, his countenance full of pity, that he was majestic, and of the situation that it was grand.

When the whole and the parts are seen at once, as mutually producing and explaining each other, as unity in multiety, there results shapeliness—*forma formosa*. Where the perfection of *formis* combined with pleasurableness in the sensations, excited by the matters or substances so formed, there results the Beautiful.

Corollary.—Hence colour is eminently subservient to beauty, because it is susceptible of forms, *i.e.* outline, and yet is a sensation. But a rich mass of scarlet clouds, seen without any attention to

the *form* of the mass or of the parts, may be a *delightful* but not a beautiful object or colour.

When there is a deficiency of unity in the line forming the whole (as angularity, for instance), and of number in the plurality or the parts, there arises the Formal.

When the parts are numerous, and impressive, and predominate, so as to prevent or greatly lessen the attention to the whole, there results the Grand.

Where the impression of the whole, *i.e.* the sense of unity predominates, so as to abstract the mind from the parts—the Majestic.

Where the parts by their harmony produce an effect of a whole, but there is no seen form of a whole producing or explaining the parts, *i.e.* when the parts only are seen and distinguished, but the whole is felt—the Picturesque.

Where neither whole nor parts, but unity, as boundless or endless *allness*—the Sublime.

It often amuses me to hear men impute all their misfortunes to fate, luck, or destiny, whilst their successes or good fortune they ascribe to their own sagacity, cleverness, or penetration. It never occurs to such minds that light and darkness are one and the same, emanating from, and being part of, the same nature.

The word Nature, from its extreme familiarity, and in some instances, fitness, as well as from the want of a term, or *other* name for God, has caused very much confusion in the thoughts and language of men. Hence a Nature-God, or God-Nature, not God in Nature; just as others, with as little reason, have constructed a natural and sole religion.

Is it then true, that Reason to man is the ultimate faculty, and that, to convince a *reasonable* man, it is sufficient to adduce adequate reasons or arguments? How, if this be so, does it happen that we reject as insufficient the *reasoning* of a friend in our affliction for this or that *cause or reason*, yet are comforted, soothed, and reassured, by

similar or far less sufficient *reasons*, when urged by a friendly and affectionate woman? It is no answer to say that women were made *comforters*; that it is the tone, and, in the instance of man's chief, best comforter, the wife of his youth, the mother of his children, the oneness with himself, which gives value to the consolation; the *reasons* are the same, whether urged by man, woman, or child. It must be, therefore, that there is something in the will itself, above and beyond, if not higher than, reason. Besides, is Reason or the reasoning always the same, even when free from passion, film, or fever? I speak of the same person. Does he hold the doctrine of temperance in equal reverence when hungry as after he is sated? Does he at forty retain the same *reason*, only extended and developed, as he possessed at four and twenty? Does he not love the meat in his youth which he cannot endure in his old age? But these are appetites, and therefore no part of him. Is not a man one to-day and another to-morrow? Do not the very ablest and wisest of men attach greater weight at one moment to an argument or a *reason* than they do at another? Is this a want of sound and stable judgment? If so, what then is this perfect reason? for we have shown what it is not.

It is prettily feigned, that when Plutus is sent from Jupiter, he limps and gets on very slowly at first; but when he comes from Pluto, he runs and is swift of foot. This, rightly taken, is a great sweetener of slow gains. Bacon (alas! the day) seems to have had this in mind when he says, "seek not proud gains, but such as thou mayst get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly." He that is covetous makes too much haste; and the wise man saith of him, "he cannot be innocent."

I have often been pained by observing in others, and was fully conscious in myself, of a *sympathy* with those of rank and condition in preference to their inferiors, and never discovered the source of this sympathy until one day at Keswick I heard a thatcher's wife crying her heart out for the death of her little child. It was given me all at once to feel, that I sympathized equally with the poor and the rich in all that related to the best part of humanity – the affections; but that, in what relates to fortune, to *mental* misery, struggles, and conflicts, we reserve consolation and sympathy for those who can appreciate its force and value.

There are many men, especially at the outset of life, who, in their too eager desire for the end, overlook the difficulties in the way; there is another class, who see nothing else. The first class *may* sometimes fail; the latter rarely succeed.

LETTER 190. TO ALLSOP

June 23, 1821.

My dearest Friend,

Be assured that nothing bearing a nearer resemblance to offence, whether felt or perceived, than a syllogism bears to the colour of the man in the moon's whiskers, ever crossed my brain: not even with that brisk diagonal traverse which Ghosts and apparitions always choose to surprise us in. I have *indeed* observed *or* fancied, that, for some time past, you have been anxious about something, have had something pressing upon your mind, which I wished *out of you*, though not particularly *to have* it out of you. I must explain myself. Say that X. were my dearest Friend, to whom I would be as it were transparent, and have him so to me in all respects that concerned our permanent Being, and likewise in all circumstantial accidents in which we could be of service to each other. Yet there are many things that will press upon us which are our *individualities*, which one man does not feel any tendency in himself to speak of to a man, however dear or valued. X. does not think or wish to think of it when with Y., nor Y. in his turn when with X., and yet still the great law holds good—whatever vexes or depresses ought if possible to be *out* of us. Now I say that I should rejoice if you had a female Friend—a Sister, an Aunt, or a Beloved to whom you could lay yourself open. I should further exult if your *confidante* were *my* Friend too, my Sister or my Wife.

God bless you.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 191. TO ALLSOP

My dear Friend,

We are quite sure that you would not allow yourself to fancy any rightful ground, cause, or occasion for not coming here, but the wish, the duty, or the propriety of going elsewhere or staying at home. When the Needle of your Thoughts begins to be magnetic, you may be certain that my *Pole* is at that moment attracting you by the spiritual magic of strong wishing for your arrival. N.B. My *Pole* includes in this instance *both the Poles* of Mr. and eke of Mrs. Gillman, *i.e.*, the head and the heart.

But seriously — I am a little anxious — so give my blest sisterly Friend a few lines by return of post — just to let us know that you are and have been well, and that nothing of a painful nature has deprived us of the expected pleasure; a pleasure which, believe me, stands a good many degrees above *moderate* in the cordi or hedonometer of,

Yours most *cordially*,

S. T. COLERIDGE

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 192. TO ALLSOP

Sept. 15th, 1821.

My dear Friend,

I cannot rest until I have answered your last letter. I have contemplated your character, affectionately indeed, but through a clear medium. No film of passion, no glittering mist of outward advantages, has arisen between the sight and the object: I had no other prepossession than the esteem which my knowledge of your sentiments and conduct could not but secure for you. I soon learnt to esteem you; and in esteeming, became attached to you. I began by loving the man on account of his conduct, but I ended in valuing the actions chiefly as so many looks and attitudes of the same person. "*Hast* thou any thing? Share it with me, and I will pay thee an equivalent. *Art* thou any thing? O then we will exchange souls."

We can none of us, not the wisest of us, brood over any source of affliction inwardly, keeping it back, and as it were pressing it in on ourselves; but we must MAGNIFY it. We cannot see it clearly, much less distinctly; and as the object enlarges beyond its real proportions, so it becomes vivid; and the feelings that blend with it assume a proportionate undue intensity. So the one acts on the other, and what at first was effect, in its turn becomes a cause; and when at length we have taken heart, and given the whole thing, with all its several parts, the proper distance from our mind's eye, by confiding it to a true friend, we are ourselves surprised to find what a dwarf the giant shrinks into, as soon as it steps out of the mist into clear sunlight.

I am aware that these are truths of which you do not need to be informed; but they will not be the less impressive on this account in your judgment, knowing, as you must know, that nothing short of my deep and anxious convictions of their importance in all cases of hidden distress, and of their *unspeakable* importance in yours, could impel me to *seek* and *entreat* your *entire* confidence, to beg you, so fervently as I here am doing, to open out to me the cause of your anxiety, that I may offer you the best advice in my power, — advice that will not be the less dispassionate from its being dictated by zealous friendship, and blended with the truest love.

I fear that in any decision to which you may come in any matter affecting yourself alone, you may, from a culpable delicacy of honour, which, forbidden by wisdom and the universal experience of others, cannot but be in contradiction to the genuine dictates of duty, want fortitude to choose, the lesser evil, at whatever cost to your immediate feelings, and to put that choice into immediate and peremptory act. But I must finish. I trust that the warmth and earnestness of my language are not warranted by the occasion; but they are barely proportionate to the present solicitude of,

Your faithful and affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 193. TO ALLSOP

Sept. 24th, 1821.

My dearest Friend,

I will begin with the beginning of your (to me most affecting) letter. Not exactly *obligation*, my entirely beloved and relied-on friend! The soiling hand of the world has dyed and sunk into the sense and import of the term too inseparably, for it to convey the kind and degree of what I feel towards you, on the one scale. I love you so truly, that in the first glance, as it were, and *welcome* of your anxious affection, it delights me for the very act's sake. I think only of it and you, or rather both are one and the same, and I live in you. Nor does the complacency suffer any abatement, but becomes more intense and lively. As a mother would talk of the soothing attentions, the sacrifices and devotion of a son, eager to supply every want and anticipate every wish, so I talk to myself concerning you; and I am proud of you, and proud to be the object of what cannot but appear lovely to my judgment, and which the hard contrast in so many heart-withering instances forced on me by the experience of my last twenty years, compels me to feel and value with an additional glow. Lastly, it is a source of strength and comfort to know that the labours and aspirations and sympathies of the genuine and invisible Humanity exist in a social world of their own; that its attractions and assimilations are no Platonic fable, no dancing flames or luminous bubbles on the magic cauldron of my wishes; but that there are, even in this unkind life, spiritual parentages and filiations of the soul. Can there be a counterpoise to these? Not a counterpoise—but as weights in the counter-scale there will come the self-reproach, that spite of all inauspicious obstacles, not in my power to remove without loss of self-respect, I have not done all I could and might have done to prevent my present state of dependence. I am now able to hope that I shall be capable of setting apart such a portion of my *useable* time to my greater work (in assertion of the ideal truths and *à priori* probability, and *à posteriori* internal and external evidence of the historic truth of the Christian religion), as to leave a sufficient portion for a not unprofitable series of articles for pecuniary supply. I entertain some hope, too, that my *Logic*, which I could begin printing immediately if

I could find a publisher willing to undertake it on equitable terms, might prove an exception to the general fate of my publications. It is a long lane that has no turning, and while my own heart bears witness to the genial delight you would feel in assisting me, I know that you would have a more satisfactory gladness in my not needing it.

And now a few, a very few, words on the latter portion of your letter. You know, my dearest Friend, how I acted myself, and that my example cannot be urged in confirmation of my judgment. I certainly strive hard to divest my mind of every prejudice, to look at the question sternly through the principle of Right separated from all mere Expedience, nay, from the question of earthly happiness *for its own sake*. But I cannot answer to myself that the image of any serious obstacle to your peace of heart, that the Thought of your full development of soul being put a stop to, of a secret anxiety blighting your *utility* by cankering your happiness, I cannot be sure – I cannot be sure that this may not have made me *weigh* with a trembling and unsteady hand, and less than half the presumption of error, afforded by the shrinking and recoil of your moral sense or even feeling, would render it my duty and my impulse to bring my conclusion anew to the ordeal of my Reason and Conscience. But on your side, my dear Friend! try with me to contemplate the question as a problem in the *science* of Morals, in the first instance, and to recollect that there are false or intrusive weights possible in the other scale; that our very virtues may become, or be transformed into temptations to, or occasions of, *partial* judgment; that we may judge *partially against* ourselves from the very fear, perhaps contempt, of the contrary; that self may be moodily gratified by *self-sacrifice*, and that the Heart itself, in its perplexity, may acquiesce for a time in the decision as a more safe way; and, lastly, that the question can only be fully answered, when Self and Neighbour, as equi-distant from the conscience or God, are blended in the common term, a *Human Being*: that we are *commanded* to love ourselves as our Neighbour in the Law that requires a Christian to love his Neighbour as himself.

But indeed I persuade myself that this dissonance is not real between us, and that it would not have seemed to exist, had I continued the subject into the possible particular cases; *e.g.*, suppose

a case in which the misery, and so far the moral incapacitation, of both parties were certainly foreseen as the immediate consequence. A morality of Consequences I, you well know, reprobate; but to exclude the necessary *effect* of an action is to take away all meaning from the word action – *to strike Duty with blindness*. I repeat it, that I do not, cannot find it in myself to believe, that *on any one* case, made out in all its limbs, features, and circumstances, your heart and mine would prompt different verdicts.

But the thought of you personally and individually is at present too strong and stirring to permit me to reason on any points. If the weather is at all plausible, we propose to set off on Saturday. I do most earnestly wish that you could accompany us; a steam-vessel would give us three-fourths of the whole day to *tête-à-tête* conversation. God bless you,

And your affectionate and faithful friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

Cottle saw Coleridge for the last time in 1821. He says “It is a consolation to reflect, that, in the year 1821, being in London, I called to see Mr. Coleridge, at Mr. Gillman’s, when he welcomed me in his former kind and cordial manner. The depressing thought filled my mind, that that would be our final interview in this world, as it was. On my going away, Mr. C. presented me with his *Statesman’s Manual*, in the title-page of which he wrote – ‘Joseph Cottle, from his old and affectionate friend, S. T. Coleridge.’” –

Coleridge, during his Highgate period, was induced by Blackwood to send a few contributions to his magazine. He had contributed *Fancy in Nubibus* in 1819, and he now sent selections from his *Literary Correspondence* in the shape of letters, which appeared in 1821. Two of these letters are printed by Thomas Ashe. The following is one of the letters not published by Ashe:

LETTER 194. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

October, 1821.

Dear Sir,

Here have I been sitting, this whole long-lagging, *muzzy*, mizly morning, struggling without success against the insuperable disgust I feel to the task of explaining the abrupt chasm at the outset of our correspondence, and disposed to let your verdict take its course, rather than suffer over again by detailing the causes of the stoppage; though sure by so doing to acquit *my willof* all share in the result. Instead of myself, and of *you*, my dear sir, in relation to myself, I have been thinking, first, of the *Edinburgh Magazine*; then of magazines generally and comparatively; then of a magazine in the abstract; and lastly, of the immense importance and yet strange neglect of that prime dictate of prudence and common sense—Distinct Means to Distinct Ends. But here I must put in one proviso, not in any relation though to the aphorism itself, which is of universal validity, but relatively to my intended application of it. I must assume—I mean, that the individuals disposed to grant me free access and fair audience for my remarks, have a *conscience*—such a portion at least, as being eked out with superstition and sense of character, will suffice to prevent them from seeking to realise the *ultimate* end, (*i.e.* the maxim of profit) by base or disreputable means. This, therefore, may be left out of the present argument, an extensive sale being the common object of all publishers, of whatever kind the publications may be, morally considered. Nor do the means appropriate to this end differ. Be the work good or evil in its tendency, in both cases alike there is one question to be predetermined, *viz.* what class or classes of the reading-world the work is intended for? I made the proviso, however, because I would not mislead any man even for an honest cause, and my experience will not allow me to promise an equal immediate circulation from a work addressed to the higher interests and blameless predilections of men, as from one constructed on the plan of flattering the envy and vanity of sciolism, and gratifying the cravings of vulgar curiosity. Such may be, and in some instances, I doubt not, has been, the result. But I dare not answer for it beforehand, even though both works should be equally well suited to their several purposes,

which will not be thought a probable case, when it is considered how much less talent, and of how much commoner a kind, is required in the latter.

On the other hand, however, I am persuaded that a sufficient success, and less liable to drawbacks from competition, would not fail to attend a work on the former plan, if the scheme and execution of the contents were as appropriate to the object which the purchasers must be supposed to have in view as the means adopted for its outward attraction, and its general circulation were to the interest of its proprietors.

During a long literary life, I have been no inattentive observer of periodical publications; and I can remember no failure in any work deserving success that might not have been anticipated from some error or deficiency in the means, either in regard to the mode of circulating the work (as, for instance, by the vain attempt to unite the characters of author, editor, and publisher), or to the typographical appearance; or else from its want of suitableness to the class of readers on whom, it should have been foreseen, the remunerating sale must principally depend. It would be misanthropy to suppose that the seekers after truth, information, and innocent amusement, are not sufficiently numerous to support a work in which these attractions are prominent, without the dishonest aid of personality, literary faction, or treacherous invasions of the sacred recesses of private life, without slanders which both reason and duty command us to *disbelieve* as well as to abhor; for what but falsehood, or that half truth, which is falsehood in its most malignant form, can or ought to be expected from a self-convicted traitor and ingrate?

If these remarks are well founded, we may narrow the problem to the few following terms – it being understood that the work now in question is a monthly publication, not devoted to *anyone* branch of knowledge or literature, but a magazine of whatever may be supposed to interest readers in general, not excluding the discoveries or even the speculations of science, that are generally intelligible or interesting, so that the portion devoted to any one subject or department shall be kept proportionate to the number of readers for whom it may be supposed to have *aparticular* interest.

Here, however, we must not forget, that however few the actual dilettanti, or men of the fancy may be, yet, as long as the articles remain generally intelligible (in *pugilism*, for instance) Variety and Novelty communicate an attraction that interests all. *Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum*. If to this we add the exclusion of theological controversy, which is endless, I shall have pretty accurately described the present *Edinburgh Magazine*, as to its characteristic plan and purposes; which may, I think, be comprised in three terms, as Philosophical, Philological, and Aesthetic Miscellany. The word miscellany, however, must be taken as involving a predicate in itself, in addition to the three preceding epithets, comprehending, namely, all the ephemeral births of intellectual life which add to the gaiety and variety of the work, without interfering with its express and regular objects.

Having thus a sufficiently definite notion of what your Magazine is, and is intended to be, I propose to myself, as a problem to find out, *in detail*, what the *means* would be to the most perfect attainment of this end. In other words, what the *scheme*, and of what nature, and in what order and proportion, the *contents* should be of a monthly publication; in order for it to verify the title of a Philosophical, Philological, and Aesthetic Miscellany and Magazine. The result of my lucubrations I hope to forward in my next, under the title of *The Ideal of a Magazine*; and to mark those departments, in the filling up of which, I flatter myself with the prospect of being a fellow labourer. But since I began this scrawl, a friend reminded me of a letter I wrote him many years ago, on the improvement of the mind by the habit of commencing our inquiries with the attempt to construct the most absolute or perfect form of the object desiderated, leaving its practicability, in the first instance, undetermined. An essay, in short, *de emendatione intellectûs per ideas*—the beneficial influence of which on his mind he spoke of with warmth. The main contents of the letter, the effect of which my friend appreciated so highly, were derived from conversation with a great man now no more. And as I have reason to regard that conversation as an epoch in the history of my own mind, I feel myself encouraged to hope that its publication may not prove useless to some of your numerous readers, to whom Nature has given the stream, and nothing is wanting but to be led into the right channel. There is one other motive to which I must plead conscious, not only in the following,

but in all these, my preliminary contributions; viz.—That by the reader's agreement with the principles and sympathy with the general feelings which they are meant to impress, the interest of my future contributions, and still more, their permanent effect, will be heightened; and most so in those in which, as narrative and imaginative compositions, there is the least show of reflection, on my part, and the least necessity for it,—though I flatter myself not the least opportunity on the part of my readers.

It will be better, too, if I mistake not, both for your purposes and mine, to have it said hereafter that he dragged slow and stiff-kneed up the first hill, but sprang forward as soon as the road was full before him, and *got in* fresh; than that he set off in grand style—broke up midway, and came in broken-winded. *Finis coronat opus.*

Yours, etc.,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I wish I could find a more familiar word than aesthetic for works of taste and criticism. It is, however, in all respects better, and of more reputable origin, than belletristic. To be sure, there is *tasty*; but that has been long ago emasculated for all unworthy uses by milliners, tailors, and the androgynous correlatives of both, formerly called *'its*, and now yclept dandies. As our language, therefore, contains no other *useable* adjective, to express that coincidence of form, feeling, and intellect, that something, which, confirming the inner and the outward senses, becomes a new sense in itself, to be tried by laws of its own, and acknowledging the laws of the understanding so far only as not to contradict them; that faculty which, when possessed in a high degree, the Greeks termed φιλοκαλία, but when spoken of generally, or in kind only, το αισθητικόν; and for which even our substantive, Taste, is a—not inappropriate—but very inadequate metaphor; there is reason to hope, that the term *aesthetic*, will be brought into common use as soon as distinct thoughts and definite expressions shall once more become the requisite accomplishment of a gentleman. So it was in the energetic days, and in the starry court of our *English*-hearted Eliza; when trade, the nurse of freedom, was the enlivening counterpoise of agriculture, not its alien and usurping spirit; when commerce had all the enterprise, and more than the romance of war;

when the precise yet pregnant terminology of the schools gave bone and muscle to the diction of poetry and eloquence, and received from them in return passion and harmony; but, above all, when from the self-evident truth, that what *in kind* constitutes the superiority of man to animals, the same *in degree* must constitute the superiority of men to each other, the practical inference was drawn that every proof of these distinctive faculties, being in a *tense* and *active* state, that even the sparks and crackling of mental electricity, in the sportive approaches and collisions of ordinary intercourse, (such as we have in the wit-combats of Benedict and Beatrice, of Mercutio, and in the dialogues assigned to courtiers and gentlemen, by all the dramatic writers of that reign,) are stronger indications of natural superiority, and, therefore, more becoming signs and accompaniments of *artificial* rank, than apathy, studied mediocrity, and the ostentation of wealth. When I think of the vigour and felicity of style characteristic of the age from Edward VI to the restoration of Charles, and observable in the letters and family memoirs of noble families—take, for instance, the *Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, written by his widow—I cannot suppress the wish—O that the *habits* of those days could return, even though they should bring pedantry and Euphuism in their train!

Coleridge and the Gillmans had gone to Ramsgate for a holiday while Allsop had gone to Derbyshire. The next letter is from Ramsgate.

LETTER 195. TO ALLSOP

Oct. 20, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Not a day has passed since we left Highgate in which I have not been tracing you in spirit up and down the Glens and Dells of Derbyshire, while my feet only have been in commune with the sandy beach here at Ramsgate. Once when I had stopped and stood stone still for some minutes, Mrs. Gillman's call snatched me away from a spot opposite to a house, to the second-floor window of which I had been gazing, as if I had feared, yet expected, to see you passing to and fro by it. These, however, were visions to which I had myself given the commencing act—fabrics of which the "I wonder where Allsop is now" had laid the foundation stone. But for the last three days your image, alone or lonely in an unconcerning crowd of human figures, has forced itself on my sleep in dreams of the rememberable kind, accompanied with the feeling of being afraid to go up to you—and now of letting you pass by unnoticed, from want of courage to ask you, what was most on my mind—respecting the one awful to me because so awfully dear to you—(for there is a *religion in all deep love*, but the love of a Mother is, at your age, the veil of softer light between the Heart and the Heavenly Father!) Mrs. Gillman likewise has been thinking of you both asleep and awake: and so, though I know not how to direct my letter, yet a letter I am resolved to write.

I am sure, my dear Friend! that if aught can be a comfort to you in affliction or an addition to your joy in the hour of Thanksgiving, it will be to know, and to be reminded of your knowledge, that I feel as your own heart in all that concerns you. Next to this I have to tell you, that the Sea Air and the Sea Plunges, and the leisure of mind, with regular devotion of the Daylight to exercise (for I write only after tea), have been auspicious, beyond my best hopes, to my health and spirits. The change in my looks is beyond the present reality, but may be veracious as *prophecy*, though somewhat exaggerating as *history*. The same in all essentials holds good of Mrs. Gillman; and I am most pleased that the improvement in her looks and strength has been gradual though rapid. First she got rid, in the course of four or five days, of the *Positives* of the wrong sort—*e.g.* the

blackness under the eyes and the thinness of the cheeks – and now she is acquiring the Positives of the right kind, her eyes brightening, her face becoming plump, and a delicate, yet cool and steady colour, stealing upon her cheeks. Mr. Gillman too is uncommonly well since his second arrival here. The first week his arm, the absorbents of which had been perilously poisoned by opening a body, was a sad drawback, and prevented his bathing. In short, we are all better than we could have anticipated; and the better we are, the more I long, and we all wish you to be with us. If you *can* come, though but for a few days, I pray you come to us. In grief or gladness, we shall grieve less, and (I need not say) be more glad, by seeing you, by having you with *us*. I will not say *write*, for I would a thousand times rather have you plump in on me, unannounced; but yet write, unless this be possible. We have an excellent house, with beds enough for half a dozen Allsops, if so many there were or could be, the situation the very best in all Ramsgate (Wellington Crescent, East Cliff, Ramsgate); and we, or rather Mrs. Gillman's voice and manner, procured it *shameful cheap* for the size and accommodations.

I am called to dinner; so God bless you, and receive all our loves, my very dear friend.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

My birth-day, 51; or, as all my collegiates and Mrs. Coleridge swear, 50.

Coleridge was only forty-nine on 21st October 1821, not fifty-one as he supposes. He could never remember his birthday, nor the year in which he was born.

LETTER 196. TO ALLSOP

Ramsgate, Nov. 2nd, 1821.

My dear Friend,

First, let me utter the fervent, God be praised! for the glad tidings respecting your dear Mother, which would have given an abounding interest to a far less interesting letter. May she be long preserved both to enjoy and reward your love and piety! And now I will try to answer the other contents of your letter, as satisfactorily I *hope*, as I am sure it will be sincerely and affectionately. Conscious how heedfully, how watchfully I cross-examined myself whether or no my anxiety for your earthly happiness and free exercise of head and heart had not *warped* the attention which it was my purpose to give whole and undivided to the one Question—What is the Right, I can repeat (with as much confidence as the slippery and Protean nature of all self-inquisition and the great *à priori* likelihood of my reason being tampered with by my affections, will sanction me in expressing) what I have already more than once said, viz., that I hold it incredible, at least improbable to the utmost extent, that you and I should decide differently in any one definite instance. Let a case be stated with all its *particulars*, personal and circumstantial, with its antecedents and *involved* (*n.b.*—not its contingent or apprehended) consequents—and my faith in the voice within, whenever the heart desiringly listens thereto, will not allow me to fear that our verdict should be diverse. If this be true, as true it is, it follows—that we have attached a different import to the same terms in some general proposition;—and that, in attempting to generalise my convictions briefly, and yet comprehensively, I have worded it either incorrectly or obscurely. On the other hand, your communications likewise, my dear friend! were indefinite—“taught light to counterfeit a gloom;” and love left in the dusk of twilight is apt to fear the worst, or rather, to think of worse than it fears, and the momentary transformations of posts and bushes into apparitions and foot-pads must not be interpreted as symptoms of brain fever or depraved vision.

And now, my dearest Allsop! why should it be “a *melancholy* reflection, that the three most affectionate, gentle, and estimable women in your world are the three from whom you have

learnt almost to undervalue their sex?" In other words those who in their reasonings have supposed as possible, not even improbable, that women can be unworthy and insincere in their expressions of attachment to men, the frequency of which it is as impossible, living open-eyed, not to have ascertained, as it is with a heart awake to what a woman ought to be, and those of whom you speak substantially are. Why should this be a melancholy reflection? (Thursday, Nov. 1st. A fatality seems to hang over this letter; I will not, however, defer the continuation for the purpose of explaining its suspension.) Why, dearest friend, a melancholy reflection? Must not those women who have the highest sense of womanhood, who know what their sex may be, and who feel the rightfulness of their own claim to be loved with honour, and honoured with love, have likewise the keenest sense of the contrary? Understand a few foibles as incident to humanity; take as matters of course that need not be mentioned, because we know that in the least imperfect a glance of the womanish will shoot across the womanly, and there are Mirandas and Imogens, a Una, a Desdemona, out of fairy land; rare, no doubt, yet less rare than their counterparts among men in real life. Now can such a woman not be conscious, must she not feel how great the happiness is that a woman is capable of communicating, say rather *of being* to a man of sense and sensibility, pure of heart, and capable of appreciating, cherishing, and repaying her virtues? Can she feel this, and not shrink from the contemplation of a contrary lot? Can she know this, and not know what a sore evil, fearful in its heart-withering affliction in proportion to the capacity of being blessed, a weak, artful, or worthless woman is — perhaps in her *own* experience has been? And if she happen to know a young Man, know him as the good, and only the good, know each other — if he were precious to her, as a younger brother to a matron sister — and so that she could not dwell on his principles, dispositions, manners, without the thought — "If I had an only daughter, and she all a mother ever prayed for, one other prayer should I offer — that, freely chosen and choosing, she should enable me to call this man my son!" would you not more than pardon even an excess of anxiety, even an error of judgment, proceeding from a disinterested dread of his taking a step irrevocable, and, if unhappy, miserable beyond all other misery, that of guilt alone excepted? Especially if there were no known particulars to guide her judgment — if that

judgment were given avowedly, on the mere unbelieved possibility, on an unsusposed supposition of the worst.

In Mrs. Gillman I have always admired, what indeed I have found more or less an accompaniment of womanly excellence wherever found, a high opinion of her own sex comparatively, and a partiality for female society. I know that her strongest prejudices against individual men have originated in their professed disbelief of such a thing as female friendship, or in some similar brutish forgetfulness that woman is an immortal soul; and as to all parts of the female character, so chiefly and especially to the best, noblest and highest—to the germs and yearnings of immortality in the man. I have much to say on this, and shall now say it with comfort, because I can think of it as a pure Question of Thought. But I will not now keep this letter any longer.

God bless you, and your friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. The morning after our arrival, a card with our address and *all our several* names was delivered in at the post office, and to the Postmaster; and this morning, Monday, Oct. 29, I received your letter dated 16th, which ought to have been delivered on Wednesday last—lying at the Post-office while I was hour by hour fretting or dreaming about you. And you, too, must have been puzzled with mine, written on my birthday. A neglect of this kind may be forgivable, but it is utterly inexcusable; a Blind-worm sting that has sensibly quickened my circulation, and I have half a mind to write to Mr. Freeling, if my wrath does not subside with my pulse, and I should have nothing better to do.

LETTER 197. TO ALLSOP

Saturday Afternoon, Nov. 17th, (1821).

At length, my dear friend! we are safe and (I hope) sound at Highgate. We would fain have returned, as we went, by the Steam-vessel, but for two reasons; one that there was none to go by, the other that Mr. Gillman thought it hazardous from the chance of November fogs on the river. *Likewise*, my dear Allsop, I have *two* especial reasons for wishing that it may be in your power to dine with us tomorrow; first, it will give you so much real pleasure to see my improved looks, and how *very well* Mrs. Gillman has come back. I need not tell you, that your sister cannot be dearer to *you* — and you are no ordinary brother — than Mrs. Gillman is to me; and you will therefore readily understand me when I say, that I look at the manifest and (as it was gradual), I hope permanent change in her countenance, expression, and motion, with a sort of *pride* of comfort; second (and in one respect more urgent), my anxiety to consult you on the subject of a proposal made to me by Anster, before I return an answer, which I must do speedily. I cannot conclude without assuring you how important a part your love and esteem constitute of the happiness, and through that (I will yet venture to hope) of the utility, of your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 198. TO ALLSOP

Monday Morning (–1821).

My dear Friend,

Ab Hydromania, Hydrophobia: from Water-lust comes Water-dread. But this is a violent metaphor, and disagreeable to boot. Suppose then, by some caprice or colic of nature, an Aqueduct split on this side of the slider or Sluice-gate, the two parts removed some thirty feet from each other, and the communication kept up only by a hollow reed split lengthways, of just enough width and depth to lay one's finger in; the likeness would be fantastic to be sure, but still it would be no inapt likeness or emblem of the state of mind in which I feel myself as often as I have just received a letter from you! – and when, after the first flush of interest and rush of thoughts stirred up by it, I sit down, or am about to sit down, to write in answer, a poor fraction, or finger-breadth of the intended reply fills up three-fourths of my paper; so sinking under the impracticability of saying what seemed of use to say, I substitute what there is no need to say at all – the expression of my wishes, and the Love, Regard, and Affection, in which they originate.

For the future, therefore, I am determined, whenever I have any time, however short, to write whatever is first in mind, and to send it off in the self-same hour.

I do not know whether I was most affected or delighted with your last letter. It will endear Flower de Luce Court to me above all other remembrances of past efforts; and the pain, the restless aching, that comes instantly with the thought of giving out my soul and spirit where you cannot be present, where I could not see your beloved countenance glistening with the genialspray of the outpouring; this, in conjunction with your anxiety and that of Mr. and Mrs. Gillman concerning my health, is the most efficient, I may say, imperious of the *retracting* influences as to the Dublin scheme.

Basil Montagu called on me yesterday. I could not but be amused to hear from him, as well as from Mrs. Chisholm and two other visitors, the instantaneous expression of surprise at the apparent

change in my health, and the certain improvement of my looks. One lady said, "Well! Mr. Coleridge really *is* very handsome."

Highgate is in high feud with the factious stir against the governors of the chapel, one of whom I was advising against a reply addressed to the inhabitants as an *inconsistency*. "But, sir, we would not carry any thing to an extreme!" THIS IS THE DARLING WATCH-WORD OF WEAK MEN, *when they sit down on the edges of two stools. Press them to act on fixed principles, and they talk of extremes; as if there were or could be any way of avoiding them but by keeping close to a fixed principle, which is a principle only because it is the one medium between two extremes.*

God bless you, my ever dear friend, and

Your affectionately attached

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. Our friend Gillman sees the factious nature and origin of the proceedings in so strong a light, and feels so indignantly, that I am constantly afraid of his honesty spiriting out to his injury. If I had the craft of a Draughtsman, I would paint Gillman in the character of Honesty, levelling a pistol (with "Truth" on the barrel) at Sutton, in the character of Modern Reform, and myself as a *Dutch Mercury*, with rod in hand, hovering aloft and — — pouring water into the touchhole. The superscription might be "Pacification," a little finely pronounced on the first syllable.

The scheme alluded to in the last two letters, was a project to deliver a course of lectures in Dublin. Anster, the translator of *Faust*, was a Professor in Trinity College, Dublin.

LETTER 199. TO ALLSOP

January 25th, 1822.

Dearest Friend,

My main reason for wishing that Mrs. Gillman should have made her call on Mrs. Allsop, or that Mrs. Allsop would waive the ceremony, and taking the willingness for the act, and the *præsens in rus* (if Highgate deserves that name) for the future *in urbe*, would accompany you hither, on the earliest day convenient to you both, is, that I cannot help feeling the old inkling to press you to spend the Sunday with me, and yet feel a something like impropriety in so doing. Speaking confidentially, *et inter nosmet*, if it were prognosticable that dear Charles would be half as delightful as when we were last with him, and as pleasant relatively to the probable impressions on a stranger to him as Mary always is, I should still ask you to fulfil our first expectation. As it is, I must be content to wish it; and leave the rest to your knowledge of the circumstantial pro's and con's. Only remember, that what is dear to you becomes dear to me, and that whatever can in the least add to happiness in which you are interested, is a duty which I cannot neglect without injury to my own. *I am convinced that your happiness is in your own possession.*

One part of your letter gave me exceeding comfort—that in which you spoke of the peculiar sentiment awakened or inspired *at first sight*. *This is an article of my philosophic creed.*

And now for my pupil schemes. Need I say that the verdict of your judgment, after a sufficient hearing, would determine me to abandon a plan of the expediency and probable result of which I was less sceptical than I am of the present? But first let me learn from you whether you had before your mind, at the moment that you formed your opinion, the circumstance of my being already in some sort engaged to *one* pupil already: that with Mr. Stutfield and Mr. Watson I have already proceeded on two successive Thursdays, and completed the introduction and the first chapter, amounting to somewhat more than a closely-printed octavo sheet, requiring no such revision as would render transcription necessary; and that three or four more young men at the table will make no addition, or

rather no change. Mr. Gillman thought my agreeing to receive Stutfield advisable. Mrs. G. did not indeed influence me by any express wish, but thought that this was the most likely way in which my work would proceed with regularity and constancy; in short, it was, or seemed to be, a *bird in the hand*, that, in conjunction with other reliable sources, would remove my anxiety with regard to *increasing* any positive pressure on their finances of former years; so that if I could not lessen, I should prevent the deficit from growing. On all these grounds I did—I need not say down right—*engage* myself, but I certainly permitted Mr. Stutfield to make the trial in such a form that I scarcely know whether I can, in the spirit of the expectation I excited, be the first to cry *off*, he appearing fully satisfied and in good earnest. Now, supposing this to be the state of the case, how would my work fare the better by dictating it to two amanuenses instead of five or six, if I get so many? For the occasional explanations, and the necessity of removing difficulties and misapprehensions, are a real advantage in a work which I am peculiarly solicitous to have “level with the plainest capacities.” To be sure, on the other hand, I *might* go on three days in the week instead of one, and let the work outrun the lectures, but just so I *might* on the plan of an increased number of auditors; and secondly, so many little obstacles start up when it is not *fore-known* that on such a day I *must* do so and so. I need not explain myself further. You can understand the “I would not ask you, but it is only—” “and but that—” “I pray do not take any *time* about it,” etc., etc., added to my *startings* off.

If I do not see you on Sunday, do not fail to write to me, for of course I shall take no step till I am quite certain that your judgment is *satisfied* one way or other, for I am with unwrinkled confidence and inmost reclamation,

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

It will be seen from this letter that Coleridge was falling behind with his Board money due to Gillman: hence his anxiety to form a

philosophical class composed of Mr. Seth Watson, Mr. Stutfield, and others.

LETTER 200. TO ALLSOP

March 4th, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

I have been much more than ordinarily unwell for more than a week past—my sleeps worse than my vigils, my nights than my days;

— — The night's dismay

Sadden'd and stunned the intervening day;

but last night I had not only a calmer night, without roaming in my dreams through any of Swedenborg's Hells *modéré*; but arose this morning lighter and with a sense of *relief*.

I scarce know whether the enclosed Detenu is worth enclosing or reading. I fancy that I send it because I cannot write at any length that which is even tolerably adequate to what I wish to say. Mrs. Gillman returned from town—very much pleased with her reception by Mrs. Allsop, and with the impression that it would be her husband's fault if she did not make him a happy home.

I shall make you smile, as I did dear Mary Lamb, when I say that you sometimes mistake my position. As individual to individual, from my childhood, I do not remember feeling myself either superior or inferior to any human being; except by an act of my own will in cases of real or imagined moral or intellectual superiority. In regard to worldly rank, from eight years old to nineteen, I was habituated, nay, naturalized, to look up to men circumstanced as you are, as my superiors—a large number of our governors, and almost *all* of those whom we regarded as greater men still, and whom we saw most of, viz. our committee governors, were such—and as neither awake nor asleep have I any other feelings than what I had at Christ's Hospital, I distinctly remember that I felt a little flush of pride and consequence—just like what we used to feel at school when the boys came running to us—"Coleridge! here's your friends want you—they are quite *grand*," or "It is quite a *lady*"—when I first heard who you were, and laughed at myself for it with that pleasurable sensation that, spite of my sufferings at that school,

still accompanies any sudden re-awakening of our school-boy feelings and notions. And oh, from sixteen to nineteen what hours of Paradise had Allen and I in escorting the Miss Evanses home on a Saturday, who were then at a milliner's whom we used to think, and who I believe really was, such a nice lady;—and we used to carry thither, of a summer morning, the pillage of the flower gardens within six miles of town, with Sonnet or Love Rhyme wrapped round the nose-gay. To be feminine, kind, and genteelly (what I should now call neatly) dressed, these were the only things to which my head, heart, or imagination had any polarity, and what I was then, I still am.

God bless you and yours,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 201. TO ALLSOP

March 22nd, 1822.

My dear Friend,

Mr. Watson is but now returned. I was about to set off to your house and take turns with Mrs. Allsop in watching you. It is a comfort to hear from Watson that he thinks you look not only better than when he saw you before, but more promisingly.

Si tibi deficient medici, medici tibi fiant

Haec tria: mens hilaris, requies, moderata dieta

is the adage of the old Schola Salernitana, and his belief and judgment. Would to God that there were any druggist or apothecary within the king's dominions where I could procure for you the first ingredient of the recipe, fresh and genuine. I would soon make up the prescription, have the credit of curing you, and then make my fortune by advertising the nostrum under the name of Dr. Samsartorius, *Carbonijugius's Panacea Salernitana -- iensis*.

You will have thought, I fear, that I had forgotten my promise of sending you Charles Lamb's *epistola porcina*. But it was not so. I now enclose it, and when you return it I will make a copy for you if you wish it, for I think that writing in your present state will be most injurious to you.

I am interrupted—"a poor lad, very ragged, he says Mr. Dowling has sent him to you to show you his poetry."—"Well! desire him to step up, Maria!"

As soon as Mr. Green left me, Mrs. Gillman delivered your letter. I am not sorry, therefore, that the *Wild Irish Boy* made it too late to finish the above for that day's post. His name, poor lad! is Esmond Wilton; his mother, I guess, was poetical. But I will reserve him for a dish on our table of chat when we meet.—In reply to your affectionate letter what can I say, but that from all that you say, write or do, I receive but two impressions; first a full, cordial, and unqualified assurance of your love towards me, a genial unclouded faith in the entireness and steadfastness of your more than

friendship, sustained and renewed by the consciousness of a responsive attachment in myself, that blends the affections of parent, brother and friend, —

A love of thee that seems, yet cannot greater be;

and secondly, impressions of grief or joy, according, and in proportion to, the information I receive, or the inferences that I draw, respecting your health, ease of heart and mind, and all the events, incidents, and circumstances, that affect, or are calculated to affect, both or either. Only this in addition — whatever *else* may pass through your mind, never, from any motive, or with any view, withhold from me your thoughts, your feelings, and your sorrows. What if they be momentary, winged thoughts, not native, that blowing weather has driven out of their course, and to which your mind has allowed thorough flight, but neither nest, perch, nor halting room? Send them onward to pass through mine; and between us both, we shall be better able to give a good account of them! What if they are the offspring of low or perturbed spirits — the changelings of ill health or disquietude? So much the rather communicate them. When on the white paper, they are already out of *us*; and when the letter is gone, they will not stay long behind; the very anticipation of the answer will have answered them, and superseded the need, though not the wish, of its arrival. And shall I not, think you, take them for what they are? With what comfort, with what security, could I receive or read your letters, or you mine, if we either of us had reason to believe, that whatever affliction had befallen, or discomfort was harassing, or anxiety was weighing on the heart, the other would say no word of or about it, under the plea of not transplanting thorns, or whatever other excuse a depressed fancy might invent, in order to transmute *unfriendly withholding* into a self-sacrifice of tenderness. If you had come to stay with me while I lay on a bed of pain, it would grieve you indeed, if, from an imagined duty of not grieving you, I should suppress every expression of suffering, and not tell you where my pain was, or whether it was greater or less. *Grant* that I was rendered anxious or heavy at heart, or keenly sorrowful, by any tidings you had communicated respecting yourself! *Should* it not be so? Ought it not to be so? Will not the Joy be greater when the Cloud is passed off — greater in *kind*, nobler, better — because I should feel it was my *right*?

And is there not a dignity and a hidden Healing in the suffering itself – which is soothed in the wish and tempered in the endeavour of removing, or lessening, or supporting it, in the Soul of a dear Friend? However trifling my vexations are, yet if they vex me, and I am writing to you, to you I will unbosom them, my dear ... and my serious sorrows and hindrances I will still less keep back from you. General Truths, Discussions, Poems, Queries – all these are parts of my nature, *often* uppermost; and when they are so, you have them – and I like well to write to, and to hear from you on them – but these I might write to the Public: and with all Christian respect for that gentleman, I love your little finger better than his whole multitudinous Body.

Give my love to Mrs. Allsop, and tell her I will try to deserve hers.

Ever and ever God bless you, my dearest friend.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

“The letter here alluded to,” says Allsop, “is a most delightful communication from Charles Lamb; which, with the hints thrown out by Manning, as to the probable origin of roast meat, were afterwards interwoven into that paper on *Roast Pig*, one of the best of Lamb’s productions.”

9 Mch. 1822.

Dear C.,

It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the Pig turned out so well – they are interesting creatures at a certain age. What a pity such buds should blow out into the maturity of rank bacon! You had all some of the crackling – and brain sauce – did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion? – was the crackling the colour of the ripe pomegranate? – had you no damned complement of boiled neck of mutton before it to blunt the edge of delicate desire? – did you flesh maiden teeth in it?

Not that I sent the Pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen (our landlord) could play in the business. I never knew him give any thing away in his life—he would not begin with strangers. I suspect the Pig after all was meant for me—but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present, somehow, went round to Highgate.

To confess an honest truth, a Pig is one of those things I could never think of sending away. Teals, widgeons, snipes, barn-door fowls, ducks, geese, your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton—collars of brawn—sturgeon, fresh and pickled—your potted char—Swiss cheeses—French pies—early grapes—muscadines,—I impart as freely to my friends as to myself,—they are but *self-extended*; but pardon me if I stop somewhere—*where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity; there my friends (or any good man) may command me*; but pigs are pigs; and I myself am therein nearest to myself; nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature, who bestowed such a boon upon me, if, in a churlish mood, I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs I ever felt of remorse was when a child—my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough, I met a venerable old man—not a mendicant—but thereabouts; a *look-beggar*—not a verbal petitioner—and, in the coxcombrity of taught charity, I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little *in all the pride of an evangelical peacock*, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me—*the sum it was to her—the pleasure that she had a right to expect that I, not the old impostor, should take in eating her cake*—the damned ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like. And I was right; it was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to the dunghill, with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

But when Providence, who is better to us all than our aunts, gives me a Pig, remembering my temptation and my fall, I shall endeavour to act towards it more in the spirit of the donor's purpose.

Yours (short of Pig) to command in everything,

C. L.

LETTER 202. TO ALLSOP

April 18th, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

There was neither self nor unself in the flash or jet of pleasurable sensation with which I saw the old tea-canister top surmounting my own name, but a mere unreflecting gladness, a sally of inward welcoming, on finding you near to me again. I am indebted to it, however, for this, and the dear and affectionate letter that sustained and substantiated it, like a gleam of sunshine ushering in a genial south-west, and setting all the birds a singing; while the joy at the recall of the old, dry, *scathy*, viceroy of the discouraged spring, the Tartar laird from the north-east, augments yet loses itself in the delight at the arrival of the long-wished-for successor to his native realm, gave a sudden spur and kindly sting to my spirits, the restorative effects of which I felt on rising this morning, as soon after, at least, as the pain which always greets me on awaking, and never fails to be my Valentine for every day in the year, had taken its leave.

Charles and Mary Lamb are to dine with us on Sunday next, and I hope it will be both pleasant and possible for you and Mrs. Allsop to complete the party; and if so, I will take care to be quite *free* to enjoy your society from the moment of your arrival, and I hope that Mrs. Allsop will not be too much tired for me to show her some of our best views and walks; and perhaps the nightingales may commence their ditties on or by that day, for I have daily expected them.

Need I say what thoughts rush into my mind when I read a letter from you, or think of your love towards me.

God bless you, my dear, dear friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.]

CHAPTER XXVII THE GILLMANS

Friendship is a Sheltering Tree. — *Youth and Age*, 1822–3.

[The Gillmans necessarily come much into notice in Coleridge's later letters. The following to Allsop have some references to his kind hosts, besides other friends and acquaintances of Coleridge. The Mr. Dawes referred to was the Rev. John Dawes, who kept a day school at Ambleside, and taught Hartley and Derwent classics and mathematics.

LETTER 203. TO ALLSOP

May 30th, 1822.

My very dear Friend,

On my arrival at Highgate after our last parting, I ought to have written, if it were only that I had fully resolved to do so, and when I feel that I have not done what I ought, and what you would (have) done in my place, I will, as indeed too safely to make a merit of it I may do, leave the palliative and extenuating circumstance to your kindness to think of. This only let me say, that mournful as my experience of Messrs. — — and — — in my own immediate concerns had been, of the latter especially, I was not prepared for their late behaviour, or, to use Anster's words on the occasion, for "so piteous a lowering of human nature," as the contents of Mr. W.'s letters were calculated to produce.

I have at *length*—for I really tore it out of my brain, as it were piecemeal, a bit one day and a bit the day after—finished and sent off a letter of two folio *large* and close-written sheets—nine sides equal to twelve of this size paper—to Mr. Dawes, of Ambleside, the rough copy of which I will show you when we meet.

The exceeding kindness and uncalculating instantaneous and decisive generous friendship of the Gillmans, and the presence of *you* to my Thoughts, prevent all approach to misanthropy in my Feelings, but *for that reason* render those feelings more *acutely* painful. If I did not know that Genius, like Reason, though not perhaps so entirely, is rather a presence vouchsafed, like a guardian spirit, to an Individual, which departs whenever the Evil Self becomes decisively predominant, and not like Talents or the Powers of the Understanding, a personal property—the contemplation of — —'s late and present state of Head and Heart would overwhelm me. But I must not represent my neglect as worse than I myself hold it to be; for I feel that I could not have omitted it had I not known that you were so busily engaged.

Charles and Mary Lamb and Mr. Green dine with us on Sunday next, when we are to see Mathews' Picture Gallery. Can you and Mrs. Allsop join the party? or, if Mrs. Allsop's health should make

this hazardous or too great an exertion, can you come yourself? I am sure she will forgive me for putting the question.

God bless you and your affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 204. TO ALLSOP

June 29th, 1822.

My dear Friend,

As fervent a prayer, as glow-trembling a joy, thanksgiving that seeks to steady itself by prayer, and prayer that dissolves itself into thanks and gladness, as ever eddied in or streamed onward from love and friendship, for pain and dread, for travail of body and spirit passed over, and a mother smiling over the firstborn at her bosom, have sped toward you from the moment I opened your Letter. For as if there had been a light suffused along the paper at that part, "birth of a Daughter after a very short illness," were the first words I saw. "Well pleased!" To be sure you are. It was scarcely a week ago that—during the only hour free from visits, visitors, and visitations that we have had to ourselves for I do not know how long—Mrs. Gillman and I had settled the point; and, after a strict, patient, and impartial poll of the *pro's* and *con's* on both sides, a Girl it was to be, and a Girl was returned by a very large majority of wishes. But as wishes, like strawberries, do not bear carriage well, or at least require to be poised on the *head*, I will send a scanty specimen of the Reasons by way of *Hansel*. *Imprimis*, A Girl takes five times as much spoiling to spoil her. *Item*.—It is a great advantage both in respect of Temper, Manners, and the Quickening of the Faculties, for a Boy to have a Sister or Sisters a year or two older than himself.—But I devote this brief scroll to Feeling: so no more of disquisition, except it be to declare the entire coincidence of my experience with yours as to the very rare occurrence of strong and deep Feeling in conjunction with free power and vivacity in the expression of it. The most eminent Tragedians, Garrick for instance, are known to have had their emotions as much at command, and almost as much on the surface, as the muscles of their countenances; and the French, who are all Actors, are proverbially heartless. Is it that it is a false and feverous state for the Centre to live in the Circumference? The vital warmth seldom rises to the surface in the form of sensible Heat, without becoming hectic and inimical to the Life within, the only source of real sensibility. Eloquence itself—I speak of it as habitual and at call—too often is, and is always like to engender, a species of histrionism.

In one of my juvenile poems (on a Friend who died in a Frenzy Fever), you will find that I was jealous of this in myself; and that it is (as I trust it is), otherwise, I attribute mainly to the following causes:—A naturally, at once searching and communicative disposition, the necessity of reconciling the restlessness of an ever-working Fancy with an intense craving after a resting-place for my Thoughts in some *principle* that was derived from experience, but of which all other knowledge should be but so many repetitions under various limitations, even as circles, squares, triangles, etc., etc., are but so many positions of space. And, lastly, that my eloquence was most commonly excited by the desire of running away and hiding myself from my personal and inward feelings, *and not for the expression of them*, while doubtless this very effort of feeling gave a passion and glow to my thoughts and language on subjects of a general nature, that they otherwise would not have had. I fled in a Circle, still overtaken by the Feelings, from which I was ever more fleeing, with my back turned towards them; but above all, my growing deepening conviction of the *transcendancy of the moral to the intellectual*, and the inexpressible comfort and inward strength which I experience myself to derive as often as I contemplate truth realised into Being by a human Will; so that, *as I cannot love without esteem, neither can I esteem without loving*. Hence I love but few, but those I love as my own Soul; for I feel that without them I should—not indeed cease to be kind and effluent, but by little and little become a soul-less fixed Star, receiving no rays nor influences into my Being, *a Solitude which I so tremble at, that I cannot attribute it even to the Divine Nature*.

Godfather or not (have not Girls Godfathers?), the little lady shall be to me a dear Daughter, and I will make her love me by loving her own Papa and Mamma. God bless you.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

The last letter refers to the birth of “Titania Puckinella,” as Coleridge loved to call Allsop’s girl. The next letter refers to Coleridge’s four “gripping and grasping sorrows.” The third sorrow was the break with Sarah Hutchinson, who, as we have seen, had been one of Coleridge’s good angels, the “Lady” of *Dejection; an Ode*.

LETTER 205. TO ALLSOP

Ramsgate, Oct. 8th, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

In the course of my past life I count four griping and grasping sorrows, each of which seemed to have my very heart in its hands, compressing or wringing. The first, when the Vision of a Happy Home sunk for ever, and it became impossible for me any longer even to hope for domestic happiness under the name of Husband, when I was doomed to know

That names but seldom meet with Love,

And Love wants courage without a name!

The second commenced on the night of my arrival (from Grasmere) in town with Mr. and Mrs. Montagu, when all the superstructure raised by my idolatrous Fancy during an enthusiastic and self-sacrificing Friendship of fifteen years—the fifteen bright and ripe years, the strong summer of my Life—burst like a Bubble! But the Grief did not vanish with it, nor the love which was the stuff and vitality of the grief, though they pined away up to the moment of — —'s last total Transfiguration into Baseness; when, with £1,200 a year, and just at the moment that the *extraordinary* Bankruptcy of Fenner and Curtis had robbed me of every penny I had been so many years working for, every penny I possessed in the world, and involved me in a debt of £150 to boot, he *first* regretted that he was not able to pay a certain bill of mine to his — —'s wife's brother, himself, "never wanted money so much in his life," etc. etc.; and an hour after attempted to extort from me a transfer to himself of all that I could call my own in the world—my books—as the condition of his paying a debt which in *equity* was as much, but in honour and gratitude was far more, *his* debt than mine!

My third sorrow was in some sort included in the second; what the former was to friendship, the latter was to a yet more inward bond. The former spread a wider gloom over the world around me, the latter left a darkness deeper within myself; the former is more akin to indignation, and moody scorn at my own folly in my weaker

moments, and to contemplative melancholy and alienation from the Past in my ordinary state; the latter had more of self in its character, but of a Self, emptied—a gourd of Jonas: and is *this* it under which I hoped to have prophesied?

My fourth commenced with the tidings of the charge against J— —remitted with the belief and confidence of the Falsehood of the charge—relapsed again—and again—and again—blended with the sad convictions, that neither E. nor I. thought of or felt towards me as they ought, or attributed any thing done for them to me; and lastly, reached its height on the nineteenth day of E.'s fever by J.'s desertion of him, when it trembled in the scales whether he should live or die, and the cause of this desertion first awakening the suspicion that I had been deliberately deceived and made an accomplice in deceiving others.

And yet, in all these four griefs, my recollection, as often as they were recalled to my mind, turned not to *what* I suffered, but on what *account*—at worst, I never thought of the sufferings apart from the causes and occasions of them; but the latter were ever uppermost. It was reserved for the interval between six o'clock and twelve on *that Saturday* evening to bring a suffering which, do what I will, I cannot help thinking of and being *affrighted* by, as a terror of itself—a self-subsisting, separate something, detached from the cause. I cannot help hearing the sound of my voice at the moment when I ... took me by surprise, and asked me for the money to pay a debt to, and take leave of, Mr. Williams, promising to overtake me if possible before I had reached his aunt Martha's, but at latest before five. "Nay, say *six*. Be, if you can, by five, but *say six*." Then, when he had passed a few steps—"J— — six; O my God! think of the *agony*, the *sore agony*, of every moment after six!" And though he was not three yards from me, I only saw the colour of his Face through my Tears!—No more of this! I will finish this scrawl after my return from the Beach.

When I had left behind me what I had no power to make better or worse, and arrived at the sea side, I had soon reason to remember that I was not at *home*, or at Muddiford, or at Little Hampton, or at Ramsgate, but under the conjunct signs of Virgo and the Crab; the one in the wane, the other in advance, yet in excellent agreement

with the former, by virtue of its rare privilege of advancing backward. In sober prose, I verily believe we should have found as genial a birth in a nest hillock of Termites or Bugaboos as with this single Ant-consanguineous. As soon therefore as dear Mr. Gillman returned to us, you will not hold it either strange or unwise that, in agreeing to accompany him to Dover, the kingdom of France west of Paris, Ramsgate, Sandwich, and foreign parts in general, I determined to give myself up to each moment as it came, with no anticipations and with no recollections, save as far as is involved in the wish every now and then, that you had been with me; and in this resolve it was that I destroyed the kit-cat or bust at least of the letter I had meant to have sent you. But oh! how often have I wished, and do I wish, that you and Mrs. Allsop could form a household in common at Ramsgate with us next year.

And now for your second Letter. What shall I say? When our Grievs and Fears and agitations are strongly roused towards one object, we almost want some fresh memento to remind us that we have other Loves, other Interests. Forgive me if I tell you that your last letter did, in something of this way, make me feel afresh, that there was that in my very heart that called you Son as well as Friend, and reminded me that a Father's affection could not exist exempt from a Father's anxiety. I am fully aware that every syllable in the latter half of your letter proceeded from the strong two-fold desire at once to comfort and conciliate, and that I ought to regard your remarks as the mere straining of the Soul towards an End felt and known to be pure and lovely; and even so I do regard them, yet I cannot read them without anxiety: not indeed anxious Thoughts, but anxious Feeling. Sane or insane, fearful thing it is, when I can be comforted by an assurance of the latter; but I neither know nor *dare* hear of any mid state, of no vague necessities dare I hear. Our own wandering thoughts may be suffered to become Tyrants over the mind, of which they are the Offspring and the most effective Viceroys, or substitutes of that dark and dim spiritual Personëity, whose whispers and fiery darts holy men have supposed them to be, and that these may end in the loss, or rather Forfeiture of Free agency, I doubt not. But, my dearest friend, I have both the *Faith of Reason* and the Voice of Conscience and the assurance of Scripture, that, "resist the evil one, and he will flee from you." But for self-condemnation, J... would never have tampered with Fatalism; and but for Fatalism,

he would never have had such cause to condemn himself. With truest love,

Yours,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. Affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Allsop, in short, to you and *yours*. While I write the two last words, my lips felt an appetite to kiss the baby.

LETTER 206. TO GILLMAN

Ramsgate, 28th Oct., 1822.

Dear Friend,

Words I know are not wanted between you and me. But there are occasions so awful, there may be instances and manifestations of friendship so affecting, and drawing up with them so long a train from behind, so many folds of recollection as they come onward on one's mind, that it seems but a mere act of justice to oneself, a debt we owe to the dignity of our moral nature to give them some record; a relief which the spirit of man asks and demands to contemplate in some outward symbol, what it is inwardly solemnizing. I am still too much under the cloud of past misgivings, too much of the stun and stupor from the recent peals and thunder-crush still remains, to permit me to anticipate others than by wishes and prayers. What the effect of your unwearied kindness may be on poor M.'s mind and conduct, I pray fervently, and I feel a cheerful trust that I do not pray in vain, that on my own mind and spring of action, it will be proved not to have been wasted. I do inwardly believe, that I shall yet do something to thank you, my dear – in the way in which you would wish to be thanked – by doing myself honour. – Dear friend and brother of my soul, God only knows how truly, and in the depth, you are loved and prized by your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 207. TO ALLSOP

Dec. 26th, 1822.

My very dear Friend,

I might with strict truth assign the not only day after day, but hour after hour employment, if not through the whole period of my waking time, yet through the whole of my writing power, as the cause of my not having written to you with my own hand; but then I ought to add that it was enforced and kept up by the expectation of seeing you. There are two ways of giving you pleasure and comfort; would to God I could have made the one *compossible* with the other and done both! The first, the having finished the Logic in its three main divisions, — as the Canon, or that which prescribes the rule and form of all *conclusion* or conclusive reasoning; second, as the Criterion, or that which teaches to distinguish truth from falsehood, containing all the sorts, forms, and sources of error, and means of deceiving or being deceived; third, as the Organ, or positive instrument for discovering truth, together with the general introduction to the whole.

The second was to come to town, and pass a week with you and Mrs. Allsop. The latter I could not have done, and yet have been able to send you the present good tidings that with regard to the former we are in sight of land; that Mr. Stutfield will give three days in the week for the next fortnight; and that I have no doubt, notwithstanding Mrs. Coleridge and my little Sara's expected arrival on Friday next, that by the end of January the whole book will not only have been finished, for *that* I expect will be the case next Sunday fortnight, but ready for the press. In reality, I have *now* little else but to transcribe, and even this would in part only be necessary, but that I must of course dictate the sentences to Mr. Stutfield and Mr. Watson, and shall therefore avail myself of the opportunity for occasional correction and improvement. When this is done, and can be offered as *a whole* to Murray or other Publisher, I shall have the Logical Exercises, or the Logic exemplified and applied in a critique on — 1. Condillac; 2. Paley; 3. The French Chemistry and Philosophy, with other miscellaneous matters from the present Fashions of the age, moral and political, ready to go to the press with by the time the other is printed off; and this without interrupting the greater

work on Religion, of which the first Half, containing the Philosophy or ideal Truth, possibility, and *a priori* probability of the articles of Christian Faith, was completed on Sunday last.

Let but these works be once done, and the responsibility off my conscience, and I have no doubt or dread of afterwards obtaining an honourable sufficiency, were it only by school books, and compilations from my own memorandum volumes. The publication of my Shakspeare and other similar lectures, sheet per sheet, in *Blackwood*, with the aid of Mr. Frere's short-hand copies, and those on the History of Philosophy in one volume, would nearly suffice.

I was unspeakably delighted to see Mrs. Allsop look so *charmingly* well. My affectionate regards to her, and a heart-uttered Happy, Happy, Happy Christmas to you both, one for each, and the third for the little girl, who (Mr. Watson assures me) has now the ground work and necessary pre-condition of thriving, though it may be some time before a notable change in the appearances may take place for the general eye.

God bless you, and your friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

The Shakespeare Lectures as arranged for *Blackwood* were probably written out by one of Coleridge's friends. The History of Philosophy consisted of the Lectures commenced 14th December 1818. The Logic is still in MS.

Mrs. Coleridge and Sara came to Highgate and remained till the end of February. Mrs. Coleridge wrote that "our visits to Highgate have been productive of the greatest satisfaction to all parties." It was at this time that Sara and her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge, first met.

LETTER 208. TO ALLSOP

Grove, Highgate, Dec. 10th, 1823.

My dear Allsop,

I shall be alone on Sunday, and shall be happy to spend it with you. Ever since the disappearance of a most unsightly eruption on my Face I have been, with but short intermission, annoyed with the noise as of a distant Forge hammer incessantly sounding, so that for some time I actually supposed it to be an outward sound. To me, who never before *knew* by any sensation that I had a head upon my shoulders, this you may suppose is extremely harassing to the spirits and distractive of my attention. Mrs. Gillman, on stepping from my attic, slipt on the first step of a steep flight of nine high stairs, precipitated herself and fell head foremost on the fifth stair; and when at the piercing scream I rushed out, I found her lying on the landing place, her head at the wall. Even now the Image, and the Terror of the Image, blends with the recollection of the Past a strange expectancy, a fearful sense of a something still to come; and breaks in, and makes stoppages, as it were, in my Thanks to God for her providential escape. For an escape we all must think it, though the small bone of her left arm was broken, and her wrist sprained. She went without a light, though (Oh! the vanity of Prophecies, the truth of which can be established only by the proof of their uselessness) two nights before I had expostulated with her on this account with some warmth, having previously more than once remonstrated against it, on stairs not familiar and without carpeting.

As I shall *rely* on your spending Sunday here, and with me alone, I shall defer to that time all but my tenderest regards to Mrs. Allsop, and the superfluous assurance that I am evermore, my dearest Allsop,

Your most cordial, attached, and

Affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. – You will be delighted with my new room.

LETTER 209. TO ALLSOP

Dec. 24th, 1823.

My dearest Allsop,

I forgot to ask you, and so did Mr. and Mrs. G. ... whether you could dine with us on Christmas-day – or on New Year's-day – or on both! If you can, need I say that I shall be glad.

My noisy forge-hammer is still busy; quick, thick, and fervent.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Allsop,

Your ever faithful and affectionate,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 210. TO MRS. ALLSOP

(— 1823).

My dear Mrs. Allsop,

Indeed, indeed you have sadly misunderstood my last hurried note. So over and over again has Mr. Allsop been assured that every invitation to him included you, so often has he been asked to consider one meant for both, that in a few lines scrawled in the dark, with a distracting, quick, thick, and noisy beating as of a distant forge-hammer in my head, and, lastly, written, not so much under any expectation of seeing him (in fact for *Christmas*-day I had none), as from a nervous jealousy of any customary mark of respect and affection being omitted, the ceremony of EXPRESSING your name did not occur to me. But the blame, whatever it be, lies with me, wholly, exclusively on me; for on asking *Mr. Gillman* whether an invitation had been sent to you, he replied by asking me if I had not spoken, and on my saying it was now too late, he still desired me to write, his words being,—“For though Allsop must know how glad we always are to see him, yet still, as far as it is a mark of respect, it is his due.” Accordingly I wrote. But after the letter had been sent to the post, on going to *Mrs. Gillman* to learn how she was, and saying that I had just scrawled a note in the dark in order not to miss the post, *she* expressed her disapprobation as nearly as I can remember in these words:—“I do not think a mere ceremony any mark of respect to intimate friends. How, in such weather as this, and short days, can it be supposed that *Mrs. Allsop* could either leave the children or take them? But to expect *Mr. Allsop* to dine away from his family at this time is what I would not even appear to do, for I should think it very wrong if he did.” I was vexed, and could only reply,—“This comes of doing things of a hurry. However, Allsop knows me too well to attribute to me any other feeling or purpose than the real ones.” I give you my word and honour, my dear madame, that these were, to the best of my recollection, the very words; but I am quite CERTAIN that they contain the same substance. And for this reason, knowing how it would vex and fret on her spirits that you had been offended, and (if the letter of itself without any interpretation derived from the character or known sentiments of the writer were to decide it), justly offended, I have not shown

her your note, nor mentioned the circumstance to her; for this sad accident has pulled her down sadly, coming too in conjunction with the distressful state of my health and spirits; for such is my state at present, that though I would myself have run any hazard to have spent to-morrow with Miss Southey, my own Sara's friend and twin-sister, and with Miss Wordsworth at Monkhouse's, in Gloster-place; yet Mr. Gillman has both dissuaded and forbidden me as my medical adviser. I trust, therefore, that finding Mrs. Gillman *more than blameless*, and that in me the blame was in the judgment and not in the *intention*, you will think no more of it, but do me the *justice* to believe that any intentions or feelings of which I have been conscious have ever been of a kind most contrary to any form of disrespect, omissive or commissive; to which, let me add, that *I should* be doing what Mr. Allsop (I am sure) would *not* do, *if having shown you consciously any disrespect* I continued to subscribe myself *his friend*, not to speak of any profession of being what in very truth I am, my dear Mrs. Allsop,

Sincerely and affectionately *yours*,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Thomas Monkhouse referred to in the above letter was a cousin of Mrs. Wordsworth, with whom Lamb on 4th March 1823 "dined in Parnassus with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers, and Tom Moore, half the poetry of England clustered and constellated in Gloucester Place".

LETTER 211. TO MR. AND MRS. ALLSOP

Grove, Highgate, April 8th, 1824.

Dear Mrs. Allsop,

There are three rolls of paper, Mr. Wordsworth's translation of the first, second, and third books, two in letter-paper, one in a little writing-book, in the drawer under the side-board in your dining-room. Be so good as to put them up and give them to the bearer should Mr. Allsop not be at home.

My dear Allsop,

You I know will have approved of my instant compliance with Mr. Gillman's request of returning with him; and I know, too, that both Mrs. Allsop and yourself will think it superfluous in me to tell you what you must be sure I cannot but feel. I trust that when I next return from you, I shall have – not to thank you less – but with less painful recollections of the trouble and anxiety I have occasioned you.

In the agitation of leaving Mrs. Allsop, I forgot to take with me the translation of Virgil. Could I, that is, dared I, wait till Sunday, I might make it one way of inducing you to spend the day with me. Upon the whole, however, I had better send than increase my anxieties, so I will send Riley with this note.

My Grandfatherly love and kisses to the Fairy Prattler and the meek boy. I did heave a long-drawn wish this morning, as the sun and the air too were so genial, that the latter had been in the good woman's house at Highgate well wrapped up. A fortnight would do wonders for the dear little fellow. You and Mrs. Allsop may rely on it that I would see him every day during his stay here, if there were only one hour in which it did not rain vehemently.

God bless you,

And your obliged and most
affectionately attached friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

Coleridge wrote about this time to Wordsworth regarding his translation of part of Virgil, and threw cold water on the project of Wordsworth's entering into rivalry with Dryden.

LETTER 212. TO ALLSOP

April 14th, 1824.

My dearest Friend,

I am myself at my ordinary average of Health, and beat off the blue Devils with the Ghosts of defunct hopes, chasing the Jack-o'-lanterns of foolish expectation as well as I can, in the which, believe me, I derive no small help from the Faith that in *your* affection and sincerity I have at least one entire counterpart of the Thoughts and Feelings with which I am evermore and most sincerely

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

My kindest love and remembrance to Mrs. Allsop, and assure her that I called this morning at Mrs. Constable's, induced by the very fine though unwarm day, to hope I might find the little boy there, and was rather disappointed to see her return without him. But, doubtless, we are entitled every day to expect a change of the present to a more genial wind. If the meek little one does not crow and clap his wings in a week or so from Thursday, it shall not be for want of being looked after.

LETTER 213. TO ALLSOP

April 27th, 1824.

My dearest Friend,

I direct this to your *house*, or *firm* should I say? because I should not think myself justified in exciting in Mrs. Allsop an alarm, for which I have no more grounds than my own apprehensions and unlearned conjectures. And yet having these bodings, I cannot feel quite easy in withholding them from you. On Saturday, the morning Mrs. Allsop was here, I was in high hope, the little boy looking so much clearer and livelier than on the Thursday; but the weather since then being on the whole genial, and the baby showing no mark of progress, but rather the reverse, and it seeming to me each returning day to require a stronger effort to rouse its attention, and the relapse to a dulness, which it is evident the upright posture alone prevented from being a doze, becoming more immediate, I cannot repel the boding that there is either some mesenteric affection, which sometimes exists in infants without betraying itself by any notable change in the ingestion or the egesta, yet producing on the brain an effect similar to that which flatulence, or confined gas pressing on the nerves of the stomach, will do; or else that it is a case of chronic (slow) hydrocephalus. Against this fear I have to say, first, that I have not been able to detect any insensibility to light in the pupil of its eyes, and that the little innocent has no convulsive twitches, and neither starts nor screams in its sleep. For the first I have no opportunity (the sun being clouded) of making a decisive experiment, and requested Mrs. Constable to try it with a candle, as soon as it was taken up after dark; and though the presence of this symptom is an infallible evidence of the presence of effusion, or some equivalent cause of pressure, its absence is no sure proof of the absence of the disease, though it is a presumption in favour of the *degree*. The freedom from perturbation in sleep, however, is altogether a favourable circumstance, and allows a hope that the continued heaviness and immediate relapse into slumber on being placed horizontally may be the effect of weakness. But then the poor little fellow habitually keeps its hand to its head, and there is a sensible heat and throbbing at the temples. On the whole, you should be prepared for the possible event, and Mrs. Constable is

naturally very anxious on this point, not merely lest any neglect should be suspected on her part, but likewise from an anticipation of the mother's agitation, should she at any time come up just to witness the baby's last struggles, or to find no more what she was expecting to see in incipient recovery.

Do not misunderstand me, my dearest friend, nor let this letter alarm you beyond what the facts require. I have seen no decisive marks, no positive change for the worse, no measurable *retrogression*. I have of course repeatedly spoken to Mr. Gillman, but he says it is impossible to form any conclusive opinion. There is no proof that it may not be weakness at present and hitherto, but neither dare he determine what the continuance of the weakness may not produce. Nothing can warrantably be attempted in this uncertainty but mild alteratives, watchful attention to the infant's regularity, with as cordial nourishment as can be given without endangering heat or inflammatory action.

I do not think that I have been able to remain undisturbed an hour together for the last three days, such a tumble in of persons with requests or claims on me has there been. House-hunting, etc., etc.

The genial glow of Friendship once deadened can never be rekindled.

Idly we supplicate the Powers above —

There is no Resurrection for a Love

That uneclipsed, unthwarted, wanes away

In the chilled heart by inward self-decay.

Poor mimic of the Past! the love is o'er,

That must *resolve* to do what did itself of yore.

God bless you, and your ever affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

P.S. To my great surprise and delight, Mr. Anster came in on us this afternoon, and in perfect health and spirits.

It was about this time that Coleridge wrote his beautiful *Youth and Age*, in which occurs the fine designation of Friendship as “a Sheltering Tree.”

The following opinion of Coleridge by Mrs. Gillman is taken from *The Bright Side of Life* by Dr. Prentiss, an American, who visited Mrs. Gillman in 1842, and will fittingly close this chapter:

“In speaking of Coleridge personally and as a member of her family Mrs. Gillman’s testimony was to this effect:

“I do assure you that through all the years he lived with us, I do not remember once to have seen him fretful or out of humour; he was the same kindly, affectionate being from morning till evening, and from January till December. He delighted to reconcile little differences, and to make all things go smoothly and happily. He was always teaching the Beautiful and the Good, while his own daily life was the best illustration of the good and beautiful which he taught. You know how the world sometimes misrepresented and ill-treated him, and he felt it now and then very keenly; but he bore it all with the sweetest patience. As I have said, I never saw him in what could be called an ill-temper during the nineteen years he was under our roof, — never! The servants in the house idolized him; and when he died it seemed as if their hearts would break. We all had one feeling toward him: we all loved him alike, each in our own way; and we all alike wept when he died. Love was the law of his nature. He clothed his friends, to be sure, in the colours of his own fancy, and sometimes, perhaps, the colours were too bright; but it was his goodness of heart, quite as much as his imagination, that was at fault.”

CHAPTER XXVIII THE NEW ACADEME

[The letters to Allsop gradually lessen in number as we draw away from the year 1822. This is not necessarily because there was less communication between the two friends, but more probably because their meetings were more frequent. The Gillmans, on account of the large circle of friends who assembled round their guest, had to set aside an afternoon once a week as a special "at home" day for the convenience of visitors. This was the origin of the *Table Talk*, edited by Henry Nelson Coleridge, which begins on 29th December 1822, and continues, with breaks, to the year 1834. Various accounts have been given of these celebrated Thursdays, the most notable of which is that of J. Noon Talfourd in the concluding chapter of his *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*. The scraps of *Table Talk*, though reckoned of great value, are, after all, very isolated; and to any one who has studied Coleridge's prose works and can comprehend the "grand planetary wheelings" of his logic they appear insufficient to warrant the accounts of the eulogists of Coleridge's conversational ability. Doubtless they have the same relationship to Coleridge's conversation as the shattered fragments of the great icebergs which come floating down the Gulf Stream and wreck themselves on the coasts of Iceland have to the icebergs of which they are the disunited parts.

Many men who afterwards attained to eminence in their several departments gathered at the Grove to hear Coleridge discourse. Charles and Mary Lamb, Basil Montagu and his wife, J. Hookham Frere, Henry Crabb Robinson, John Sterling, Henry Nelson Coleridge, Allsop, and Joseph Henry Green, may be regarded as the planets who revolved around the central sun. The planets, too, occasionally brought their satellites. Joseph Henry Green made Coleridge's acquaintance in 1817. Deeply interested in philosophy, he imbibed Coleridge's principles, and afterwards wrote a book on the Logos, published in 1865 as *Spiritual Philosophy*. Edward Irving also sat at the feet of Coleridge; he brought Carlyle to Highgate in 1824, who wrote his impressions of Coleridge to his brother the same year, and twenty years later depicted Coleridge in colours which will remain beside those of Hazlitt, De Quincey, Noon Talfourd, Henry Nelson Coleridge, and Clement Carlyon and T.

Colley Grattan, one of the fine gallery of contemporary literary portraits of Coleridge. Dr. Chalmers came in 1827 and caught occasional glimpses of meaning; and Emerson called in 1833, without, however, any vital feeling of spiritual inter-relationship springing up between them.

During 1824 Coleridge was much engaged with Religious subjects; and then composed those Letters afterwards published as *Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit*.

Our next letter refers to the *Aids to Reflection* which Coleridge was now having published. The germs of the volume may be found in the long Theological Letter to Cottle of 1807, in which Coleridge extols Leighton as the best of the old divines, and in a letter to John Murray of 18th January 1822 in which he projected a selection of *Beauties from Leighton*. Its theory of Atonement also lies in germ in the play of *Osorio*, 1797. The *Aids to Reflection* not only became the most popular of Coleridge's works; it helped to forward interest in his other writings.]

The *Aids to Reflection* first appeared in 1825. The original title was *Aids to Reflection in the formation of a manly character on the several grounds of Prudence, Morality, and Religion; illustrated by select passages from our elder divines, especially from Archbishop Leighton*. In an advertisement to the first edition, the Author mentions that the work was proposed and begun as a mere selection from the writings of Leighton, with a few notes and a biographical preface by the selector, but underwent a revolution of plan and object. "It would, indeed," he adds, "be more correct to say, that the present volume owed its accidental origin to the intention of compiling one of a different description than to speak of it as the same work." "Still, however, the selections from Leighton, which will be found in the fundamental and moral sections of this work, and which I could retain consistently with its present form and matter, will, both from the intrinsic excellence and from the characteristic beauty of the passages, suffice to answer two prominent purposes of the original plan; that of placing in a clear light the principle which pervades all Leighton's writings—his sublime view, I mean, of Religion and Morality as the means of reforming the human soul in the Divine Image (*Idea*); and that of exciting an interest in the works, and an

affectionate reverence for the name and memory of this severely tried and truly primitive Churchman.”

Neither Hume nor Clarendon, I believe, mentions the persecution of Archbishop Leighton’s father by the Prelatical party of his day; and yet it was one of their worst acts, and that which most excited wrath and indignation against the Primate—so faithful is their portrait of those times! Never can I read Mr. Wordsworth’s sublime sonnet to Laud, especially the lines,

Prejudged by foes determined not to spare,

An old weak man for vengeance laid aside,

without thinking of another “old weak man for vengeance laid aside”—of Laud in the day of his power pulling off his hat and thanking God for the inhuman sentence that had been passed upon the already wasted victim—of the miserable den to which the mangled man was committed for life after that sentence had been executed in all its multiplication and precision of barbarity—then calling to mind the words of our Saviour, *They that take the sword shall perish with the sword*, and *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy*. It was not *mercy* alone that was violated by these acts—but law and justice; and if he who instigated and rejoiced in them received neither justice nor mercy in his turn, is he worthy of the sacred name of *Martyr*? May we not say that the *vengeance* which fell upon this persecutor was the Lord’s vengeance, even if it came to pass by evil instruments, and fell upon a head already bowed down, and in some respects a noble one? Can the *glory and honour* of meeting death with firmness,—nay even with “sublime” piety, cast its beams backward and bathe in one pure luminous flood a life darkened with such deep shadows, as those that chequer the sunshine of Laud’s career?—the parts really brightened with the light of heaven? Plainness, sincerity, integrity, learning, munificence to a cause—can virtues like these outweigh or neutralize such faults of head, heart, and temper, as lie to the charge of this Bishop in the church of Christ? As well might we set the cold bright morning dews, that rest on the stony crown of Vesuvius, against the burning lava that bursts from its crater, and expect them to quench the fire or reduce it to a moderate heat. *Some* abatement must be made from the guilt of his violences from consideration of the *times*; but to

subtract the whole on that account, or even to make light of it, is surely too much to make moral good and evil dependent on circumstance. What? Have Arundel, Bonner, Gardiner little or nothing to answer for? Was there ever yet a persecutor that persecuted from *merespeculative* inhumanity? Even through Clarendon's account we may discern, I think, that Laud's private passions, in part at least, engaged him in the cause of Intolerance. He had been exasperated, before he attained power, by Puritan molestations and oppositions,—he became the persecutor of Puritans after he attained it; as schoolboys that have been tormented while they were in a low form, torment in their turn when they get into a high one,—not their tormentors but unfortunates who represent them to their imagination. An eminently good and wise man is above his *times*, if not in all, yet in many things; but Laud was the very impersonation of his times—the impersonated spirit of his age and his party. (Compare his over ceremonious consecration of St. Catherine's Church, gloated over by Hume, with Archdeacon Hare's remarks on his neglect of his diocese, in *The Mission of the Comforter*.) They who are of that party still, who would still swathe religion by way of supporting it, and dizen by way of dressing it, and gaze with fond regretful admiration upon the giant forms of Spiritual Despotism and Exaggerated Externalism, as they loom shadowy and magnificent through the vapoury vista of ages, to them no wonder that he is a giant too. And there are others, far above that or any other *party*, who in their love and zeal for the Church, abstract the how and the why of Laud's public warfare, and see him abstractedly as the Champion of the Church of England. "God knows my heart," says Mr. Coleridge, (in a marginal note on Mr. Southey's article on the *History of Dissenters*, in the *Quarterly Review* of October 1813,) "how bitterly I abhor *all* intolerance, how deeply I pity the actors when there is reason to suppose them deluded; but is it not clear that this theatrical scene of Laud's death, who was the victim of almost national indignation, is not to be compared with 'bloody sentences' in the coolness of secure power? As well might you palliate the horrible atrocities of the Inquisition, every one of which might be justified on the same grounds that Southey has here defended Laud, by detailing the vengeance taken on some of the Inquisitors." I do not see that *here* my honoured Uncle *defends* the Primate: he says, "We are not the apologists of Laud; in some things he was erroneous, in some imprudent, in

others culpable. Evil, which upon the great scale is ever made conducive to good, produces evil to those by whom it comes." And how wise and beautiful is this sentiment a little further on! "It especially behoves the historian to inculcate charity, and take part with the oppressed, whoever may have been the oppressors."

As some excuse for my Father's expression, "theatrical scene," I allege that sentence of Laud's; "Never did man put off mortality with a better courage, nor look upon his bloody and malicious enemies with more Christian charity." My Father adds: "I know well how imprudent and unworldly these my opinions are. The Dissenters will give me no thanks, because I prefer and extol the *present* Church of England, and the partizans of the Church will calumniate me, because I condemn particular members, and regret particular æras, of the *former* Church of England. Would that Southey had written the *whole* of his review in the spirit of this beautiful page." In that very interesting collection of meditative Sonnets by the late Sir Aubrey de Vere is one upon Laud, against which I ventured to write, "If *anything* done in the name of principle must needs be righteous, then the tortures and long languishing of Leighton are no impeachment of Laud's righteousness." There was a second edition of the *Aids* in 1831, a fifth in 1843.

The little work *On the Constitution of the Church and State, according to the Idea of each*, first appeared in 1830, and went into a second edition in the same year. It is now joined with the *Lay Sermons* in one volume. To the *Church and State* are appended *Notes on Taylor's History of Enthusiasm*, and *A Dialogue between Demosius and Mystes*.

[LETTER 214. TO ALLSOP

March 20th, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

I should have answered your last but for three causes: first, that I had proofs to correct and a passage of great nicety to add, neither of which could be deferred without injustice to the Publishers, and the breach of a definite promise on my part; second, that I was almost incapacitated from thinking of and doing anything as it ought to be done by poor Mrs. G.'s restless and interrogating anxieties, which in the first instance put the whole working Hive of my Thoughts in a whirl and a bur; and then, when I see her care-worn countenance, and reflect on the state of her health (and it is difficult to say which of the two, ill-health or habitual anxiety, is more cause and more effect), a sharp fit of the Heart-ache follows.

But enough of this Subject. I ought to be ashamed of myself for troubling you with it; you have enough frets and frictions of your own. And so I proceed to the third cause, which is that (how far imputable to the mood of mind I was in, I cannot say) I did not understand your letter.

Is there any definite service, or any chance of any definite service, great or small, that I can do or promote, or expedite, by coming to town? If there be, let me have a line or a monosyllable *Yes*, and mention the time. I would have set off and taken the chance without asking the question, but that I have so many irons in the fire at this present moment,—1, my Preface; 2, my Essay; 3, a Work prepared for the press by my Hebrew Friend, in which I am greatly interested, morally and *crumenically*, though not like the Modern Descendants of Heber, one of *acrumenimulga Natio*, *i.e.* a purse-milking set; and 4, Revisal, etc., for a friend only less near than yourself.

Mr. Chance, I take it for granted, has written to you. My opinion is, that he will be a valuable man, not only generally, but *especially* to that which alone concerns *me*—*your* comfort and happiness. He is a self-satisfied man, but of the very kindest and best sort. Prosperous in all his concerns, and with peace in his own conscience and family, I regard such vainness but as the overflow of humanity. I do not like

him the better *for* it; but I should not like him the better *without* it. Meantime he is active, shrewd, a thorough man of business; *sanguine* I should think, both by constitution and habitual success: and, under any sudden emergency, I think that Mr. Chance, not so deeply interested, and yet (such is his nature) with equal liveliness in feeling, would be a comfort to you.

I shall miss the post if I do more than add, that whatever really serves *you*, will (and on his death-pillow quite as much as in his present garret) delight

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 215. TO ALLSOP

April 30th, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

Having disburdened myself of the main loads of outward obligation at least that pressed upon me, my Essay for the R. S. L., and my *Aids to Reflection*, with other matters not so expressly my own, but having the same, if not greater, demands on such quantity of time, as bodily pain and disqualification, with unprecludible interruption, have enabled me to make use of, I take the *very* first moment of the Furlough to tell you that I have been perplexed both by your silence and your absence. In fact, I had taken for granted you were in Derbyshire, till this afternoon, when I saw one who had met you yesterday.

Now I cannot recollect anything that can—I am sure, ought to have given you offence, unless it were my non-performance of the request communicated to me by Mr. Jameson.

I was ever in the *stifle* of my *reflected* anxieties, *i.e.* anxieties felt by reflection from those of others, and my *Tangle of Things-to-be-done*, solicitous to see and talk with you. You must not feel wounded if, loving you so truly as I do, and feeling more and more every week that nothing is worth living for but the consciousness of living aright, I was *nervous* if you will, with regard to the effect of this undertaking on the frame of your moral and intellectual Being. In the meantime, you never came near me, so that I might have been able to rectify my opinions, or rather to form them; and I felt, and still feel, that I would gladly go into a garret and work from morning to late night, at any work I could get money by, and more than share my pittance with you and yours, than see you unhappy with twenty thousand at your command.

Do not, my dearest friend, therefore let my perplexities, derived in great measure from my unacquaintance with the facts, and to which

my ever-wakeful affection gave the origin, prevent you from treating, as you were wont to do.

Your truly sincere

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 216. TO ALLSOP

Saturday, May 2nd, 1825.

My dear Friend,

I am sure you did not mean that the interest I feel in this undertaking was one which I was likely to *throw off*, or one which there was any chance of my not retaining; but I would fain have you not even speak or write below that line of friendship and mutual implicit reliance, on which you and I stand. We are in the world, and obliged to chafe and chaffer with it; *but we are not of the world, nor will we use its idioms or adopt its brogue.*

God bless you, and your affectionate Friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

LETTER 217. TO ALLSOP

May 10th, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

I have been reflecting earnestly and actively on the subject of a Metropolitan University, now in agitation, and could conveniently comprise the results in three Lectures.

On the Histories of Universities generally, the most interesting Features in the History of the most celebrated Universities in Great Britain, Germany, France, etc. Reduction of all Universities of any name, with respect to their construction and constitution, to three Classes. 2. The Meaning of the Term, University, and the one true and only adequate Scheme of a University stated and unfolded from the Seed (*i.e.* the idea) to the full Tree with all its Branches. 3. The advantages, moral, intellectual, national, developed from reason and established by proofs of History; and, lastly, a plan (and sketch of the *means*) of approximating to the Ideal, adapted and applied to this Metropolis. (N.B. The Plan *in detail*, salaries only not mentioned—the particular sums, I mean.) The obstacles, the favourable circumstances, the *pro* and *con* regarding the question of Collegiate Universities, etc. etc. That I could make these subjects not only highly interesting but even entertaining, I have not the least doubt. But would the subject excite an interest of *curiosity*? Would the anticipation of what I might say attract an audience of respectable smallclothes and petticoats sufficiently large to produce something more than, with the same exertions of Head and Hand, I might earn in my Garret (to give the precise Top-ography of my abode) here at Nemorosi, *alias* Houses in the Grove. For the expense of coach-hire, the bodily fatigue, and (to borrow a phrase from poor Charles Lloyd) “*the hot huddle of indefinite sensations*” that hustle my inward man in the *monster* city and a Crown and Anchor Room demand a +, and would an =, after all expenses paid, but ragged economy, unless I were certain of effecting more good in this than in a quieter way of industry.

I wrote to Mr. B. Montagu for his advice; but he felt no interest himself in the subject, and naturally therefore was doubtful of any number of others feeling any. But he promised to talk with his

friend Mr. Irving about it! On the other hand, I heard from Mr. Hughes and a Mr. Wilkes (a clever Solicitor-sort of a man who lives in Finsbury-square, has a great sway with the Slangi yclept the Religious Public, and, *this I add as a whitewasher*, was a regular attendant on *my* lectures), that the subject itself is stirring up the Mud-Pool of the Public Mind in London with the vivacity of a Bottom wind. If you can find time, I wish you would talk with Jameson about it, and obtain the opinion of as many as are likely to think aright; and let me know your own opinion and anticipation above all, and at all events, and as soon as possible. We dine on Friday with Mr. Chance. I wish you were with us, for I am sure he would be glad to see you. Need I say that my thoughts, wishes, and prayers follow you in all your doings and strivings, for I am evermore, my dearest friend.

Yours, with a friend and a father's
affection and solicitude,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.

My kindest remembrances to Mrs. Allsop, with kisses for little Titania Puckinella.

Years have passed since I heard the Nightingales sing as they did this evening in Mr. Robart's Garden Grounds; so many, and in such full song, particularly that giddy voluminous whirl of notes which you never hear but when the Birds feel the temperature of the air voluptuous.

P.S. If I undertook these Lectures, I should compose the three, and write them out with as much care and polish as if for the Press, though I should probably make no use of the MS. in speaking, or at all attempt to recollect it. It would, relatively to my *vivâ voce* addresses, be only a way of premeditating the subject.

LETTER 218. TO ALLSOP

(— 1825.)

My dearest Friend,

The person to whom I alluded in my last is a Mr. T..., who, within the last two or three years, has held a situation in the Colonial Office, but *what*, I do not know. From his age and comparatively recent initiation into the office, it is probably not a very influensive one; and, on the other hand, from the rank and character of his friends, he has occasionally brought up with him to our Thursday evening *conver-*, or, to mint a more appropriate term, *one-versazione*, it must be a respectable one. Mr. T... is *Southey's friend*, and more than a literary acquaintance *to me*, only in consequence of my having had some friendly intercourse with his uncle during my abode in the north. Of *him* personally I know little more than that he is a remarkably handsome fashionable-looking young man, a little *too deep or hollow mouthed* and important in his enunciation, but clever and well read; and I have no reason to doubt that he would receive any one whom I had introduced to him as a friend of mine in whose welfare I felt anxious interest, with kindness and a disposition to forward his object should it be in his power.

But again, my dearest Friend, you must allow me to express my regret that I am acting in the dark, without any conviction on my mind that your present proceeding is not the result of wearied and still agitated spirits, an impetus of despondency, *that fever* which accompanies exhaustion. I can too well sympathise with you; and bitterly do I feel the unluckiness of my being in such a deplorable state of health just at the time when for your sake I should be most desirous to have the use of all my faculties. May God bless you, and your little-able but most sincere friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Allsop, Esq.]

CHAPTER XXIX ALARIC WATTS

[While at Highgate, Coleridge contributed some short pieces of poetry, which may be regarded as his *Autumn Leaves*, to the *Annals* got up by Alaric Alexander Watts and F. M. Reynolds, to which Sir Walter Scott and the other leading literary men of the time were induced to send their less ambitious pieces. Fine steel engravings accompanied the poems and novelettes; and one of these by Stoddart, entitled the *Garden of Boccaccio*, was the subject of a poem by Coleridge in the *Keepsake* of 1829. For this poem and some trifling epigrams Coleridge received the sum of £50. The name of Coleridge must have stood high to command so large a fee for the things given to the *Keepsake*. The *Lines on Berengarius* appeared in the *Literary Souvenir* of 1827, and *Youth and Age* and *Work without Hope* in the *Bijou* of 1828.

Some conception of the importance of these annuals may be gathered from stating that the *Literary Souvenir* of 1827, got up by Alaric Watts, sold to the number of 7,712 copies in England, between November and April, and 700 in America of the ordinary edition, and 528 of a large-paper edition. There were other annuals besides these already mentioned, called the *Forget-me-Not*, *Friendship's Offering*, *The Amulet*, *The Winter's Wreath*, *The Anniversary*, *The Gem*, and other kindred publications.

The most finished production of Coleridge's latest period is *Alice Du Clos*, a ballad of the Romantic Movement. Much speculation as to the date of its origin has been put forth, some thinking it belongs to the time when the *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and the *Three Graves* were written, others placing it between the publication of the last two Editions of the *Collected Poems*, 1829–1834. But in Letter 205 of date 8th October 1822, the quotation of the two lines

That names but seldom meet with Love,

And Love wants courage without a name!

seems to imply that the ballad was then extant. Coleridge, as we know, was engaged between 1822 and 1825 writing his *Aids to Reflection*, and the following curious passage occurs in Aphorism

XXXI (Moral and Religious Aphorisms). Speaking of slander, he says: "It is not expressible how deep a wound a tongue sharpened to this work will give, with no noise and a very little word. This is the true white gunpowder, which the dreaming projectors of silent mischief and insensible poisons sought for in the laboratories of art and nature, in a world of good; but which was to be found in its most destructive form, in *the world of evil*, the Tongue" *Alice Du Clos, or the Forked Tongue*, is the full title of the ballad; and it looks as if it had been written to illustrate the passage, though it has an affinity with Lewis's *Ellen of Eglantine* and *The Troubadour, or Lady Alice's Bower (Tales of Terror and Wonder)*.

In a letter to William Blackwood of 20th October 1829 Coleridge says he has among other poems for the Magazine, "a Lyrical Tale, 250 lines," which he could give if desired. The date of the poem may therefore be put down as 1822-1829.

Alice Du Clos ranks with the *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *Love* and the *Ballad of the Dark Ladye*, among Coleridge's poems in which he rises out of his own subjectivity into the clear realm of objective art. The remark of Thomas Ashe that "the great fault of Coleridge is that he puts too much of himself, *unidealized*, into his verses," is perfectly true. Coleridge was himself aware of this defect, and in Letter 167, speaking of the *Hymn before Sunrise*, he admits that there is in the Hymn too much of the *idiosyncratic* for true poetry, a piece of self-criticism that can be alleged against a great number of his poems, beautiful of their kind yet savouring too often of the Ego. The *Lime Tree Bower*, *Dejection*, an *Ode*, the *Lines to Wordsworth*, the *Pains of Sleep*, the *Tombless Epitaph*, *Youth and Age*, the *Garden of Boccaccio*, *Work without Hope*, are not exceptions. It is only in the *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *The Three Graves*, *Love*, *The Ballad of the Dark Ladye*, and *Alice Du Clos*, that Coleridge succeeds in hiding his own personal identity behind his melodious utterance, and attains to that simplicity which is truly classical. Most of his other poems are autobiographical, and can be thoroughly understood only as part of his epistolary correspondence. His finest ode, *Dejection*, is only a versified letter to Wordsworth, afterwards denuded of its most personal references, and addressed to a "Lady," to give it a more artistic cast.

The relationship between Coleridge and Alaric Watts was not confined to the contributions to the *Annuals*. An agreeable social intimacy sprang up between the Highgate household and the Watts; and a correspondence between Mr. and Mrs. Watts and Coleridge took place. Five fine letters by Coleridge are contained in the *Life of Alaric Watts*, from which it seems Coleridge and Mr. Watts intended to collaborate in the issue of an edition of Shakespeare, which would have been a congenial task to Coleridge, and one can feel regret that it was not carried out. A feature of the edition was to be “properly critical notes, prefaces, and analyses, comprising the results of five and twenty years’ study: the object being to ascertain and distinguish what Shakespeare possessed in common with other great men of his age, or differing only in degree, and what was his, peculiar to himself”. This, of course, as any one acquainted with Coleridge’s *Lectures on Shakespeare* knows, was one of Coleridge’s favourite topics, and one which could have been better illustrated in an annotated edition than in popular lectures.

In one of his letters to Alaric Watts Coleridge gives the best account of the lack of voluntary power to open letters sent him; and counsels Watts if he wishes an immediate answer to his letters to send them under cover to Mrs. Gillman, who is his “outward conscience.” In another letter, sending contributions for the *Annual*, he encloses his poem entitled *Limbo*, which he says is a pretended fragment of the poet Lee.]

CHAPTER XXX

THE RHINE TOUR, AND LAST COLLECTED EDITIONS OF THE POEMS

[Coleridge and Wordsworth, who, as we have seen, had had a serious estrangement in 1810, but gradually drew together again with the softening of the years, went on tour to the Rhine in 1828; and this was Coleridge's third time on the Continent. On their way they met Thomas Colley Grattan, novelist and miscellaneous writer. He gave in his *Beaten Paths* some account of the two poets as they appeared at the time—partly reproduced in Knight's *Life of Wordsworth*. This passage is the best description of the two poets in their later period and the most reliable, along with Clement Carlyon's description of Coleridge in Germany. There is no attempt in Grattan to spin rhetoric out of Coleridge, such as we find in De Quincey, Hazlitt, and Carlyle. Another diarist gave a picture of the poets during the Rhine Tour, Julian Charles Young, who wrote the memoir of his brother, Charles Mayne Young, an actor of the time. This account is also partly reproduced in Knight's *Life of Wordsworth*. Grattan says: "He was about five feet five inches in height, of a full and lazy appearance but not actually stout. He was dressed in black, and wore short breeches, buttoned and tied at the knees, and black silk stockings. And in his costume (the same that he describes to have been worn in his earliest voyages and travels in the year 1798), he worked along, in public coaches or barges, giving the idea of his original profession, an itinerant preacher. His face was extremely handsome, its expression placid and benevolent. His mouth was particularly pleasing, and his grey eyes, neither large nor prominent, were full of intelligent softness. His hair, of which he had plenty, was entirely white. His forehead and cheeks were unfurrowed and the latter showed a healthy bloom" (*Beaten Paths*, ii, 108-109). On all topics touched by Coleridge he said something to be remembered. "In almost everything that fell from Coleridge there was a dash of deep philosophy—even in the outpourings of his egotism—touches not to be given without the whole of what they illustrated". "Coleridge took evident delight in rural scenes. He was in ecstasies at a group of haymakers in a field we passed. He said the little girls, standing with their rakes, the handles resting on the ground, 'looked like little saints.' Half-a-dozen dust-covered

children going by the roadside, with a garland of roses raised above their heads, threw him into raptures”.

Coleridge made a new collection of his Poems in 1828, which added to the Early Poems and *Sibylline Leaves* seventeen new pieces. The collection was published in three volumes by Pickering, and included *Remorse*, *Zapolya*, and *Wallenstein*. Coleridge made many careful revisions; his corrections are a study in verse making. Another edition was issued in 1829; and here again Coleridge made alterations in twenty-one of the poems, the chief of which were in the *Monody on the Death of Chatterton*. The last edition of Coleridge's Poems prepared during his life was that of 1834, in three volumes, but though the first volume was out in May, the third volume was not issued from the press till after his demise on 25th July. The corrections extend to twenty-three poems. Some are merely restorations of former readings; but they constitute a real difference from the text of 1829, and must be accepted as belonging to the *Textus Receptus*. Henry Nelson Coleridge superintended the edition, but it is not likely, as Dykes Campbell supposed, that he made the alterations, for Coleridge was continually readjusting his texts.

The remainder of Coleridge's life from 1829 was taken up with visits from his old friends, in composing a *Commentary on the New Testament*, writing marginalia on the English Divines, and holding his Thursday at-homes. In 1830 he published his noble pamphlet *On the Constitution of Church and State*. Many new friends flocked round the ageing poet, to be introduced to whose acquaintance was one of the highest literary treats of London life. Friendship had been the balm of Coleridge's life; he had had his estrangements and misunderstandings. But he knew well that

Friendship is a Sheltering Tree,

the pathos of which line can be appreciated only when we recall to mind that its writer had been denied the full enjoyment of the deeper friendship called Love.

A good sized volume could be compiled of all the contemporary accounts of Coleridge. We have already had some of these. Another we must add by a young American. Coleridge was highly

appreciated on the other side of the Atlantic; his monument in Westminster Abbey was the gift of an American; and the late Emperor of Brazil was an admirer and student of Coleridge. The following account is taken from *The Nation*, an American literary journal, of 14th July 1910:

“Henry Blake McLellan was born at Maidstone, Essex County, Vt., September 16, 1810. He was the son of Isaac and Eliza McLellan of Boston, and the grandson of Gen. William Hull of Newton, Mass. After a preparatory course at the Boston Latin School, McLellan entered Harvard University in 1825, and graduated in 1829. He studied for the ministry at Andover, 1829–31, and then went on a tour, which included Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. He left America September 16, 1831; started on his return April 18, 1833, and landed at Boston June 12. Then came the tragic ending to a bright young life. Eight weeks after his return he was stricken by typhus, and died four weeks later, in his twenty-third year.

“Such was the young and ardent spirit who went to see Coleridge in the filial spirit in which a disciple might have sat at the feet of an ancient philosopher. He writes this simple and affecting account of the interview:

“Saturday, April 27th, 1832.

“Walked to Highgate to call on Mr. Coleridge. I was ushered into the parlor while the girl carried up my letter to his room. She presently returned, and observed that her master was very poorly, but would be happy to see me, if I would walk up to his room, which I gladly did. He is short in stature, and appeared to be careless in his dress. I was impressed with the strength of his expression, his venerable locks of white, and his trembling frame. He remarked that he had for some time past suffered much bodily anguish. For many months (thirteen) seventeen hours each day had he walked up and down his chamber. I inquired whether his mental powers were affected by such intense suffering; “Not at all,” said he. “My body and head appear to hold no connexion; the pain of my body, blessed be God, never reaches my mind.” After some further conversation, and some inquiries respecting Dr. Chalmers, he remarked, “The Doctor must have suffered exceedingly at the

strange conduct of our once dear brother laborer in Christ, Rev. Mr. Irving. Never can I describe how much it has wrung my bosom. I had watched with astonishment and admiration the wonderful and rapid development of his powers. Never was such unexampled advance in intellect as between his first and second volume of sermons, the first full of Gallicisms and Scottisms, and all other cisms, the second discovering all the elegance and power of the best writers of the Elizabethan age. And then so sudden a fall, when his mighty energies made him so terrible to sinners." Of the mind of the celebrated Puffendorf he said, "his mind is like some mighty volcano, red with flame, and dark with tossing clouds of smoke, through which the lightnings play and glare most awfully." Speaking of the state of the different classes of England, he remarked, "We are in a dreadful state. Care, like a foul hag, sits on us all; one class presses with iron foot upon the wounded heads beneath, and all struggle for a worthless supremacy, and all to rise to it move shackled by their expenses; happy, happy are you to hold your birthright in a country where things are different; you, at least at present, are in a transition state; God grant it may ever be so! Sir, things have come to a dreadful pass with us; we need most deeply a reform, but I fear not the horrid reform which we shall have. Things must alter; the upper classes of England have made the lower persons *things*; the people in breaking from this unnatural state will break from duties also."

"He spoke of Mr. Allston with great affection and high encomium; he thought him in imagination and color almost unrivalled"

The letters of Coleridge written during his last years breathe a pious and tender melancholy, but they are few, and what have been published are fragmentary. On 18th March 1833 he wrote to John Sterling, who, in spite of Carlyle's assertion to the contrary, remained a disciple to the end: "With grief I tell you I have been, and now am, worse, far worse than when you left me. God have mercy on me, and not withdraw the influence of His Spirit from me!" Recommending Mr. Gillman's son for the Living of Leiston he wrote:

"I have known the Rev^d James Gillman from his Childhood, as having been from that time to this a trusted Inmate of the

Household of his dear and exemplary Parents. I have followed his progress at weekly Intervals from his entrance into the Merchants' Taylors' School, and traced his continued improvements under the excellent Mr. Bellamy to his Removal, as Head Scholar, to St. John's College; and during his academic Career his Vacations were in the main passed under my eye.

"I was myself educated for the Church at Christ's Hospital, and sent from that honoured and unique Institution to Jesus College, Cambridge, under the tutorage and discipline of the Rev^d το αιοθητικόν James Bowyer who has left an honoured name in the Church for the zeal and ability with which he formed and trained his Orphan Pupils to the Sacred Ministry, as Scholars, as Readers, as Preachers, and as sound Interpreters of the Word. May I add that I was the Junior Schoolfellow in the next place, the Protégé, and the Friend of the late venerated Dr Middleton, the first Bishop of Calcutta. And assuredly whatever under such Training and such Influence I learnt, or thro' a long life mainly devoted to Scriptural, Theological and Ecclesiastical Studies, I have been permitted to attain, I have been anxious to communicate to the Son of my dearest Friends, with little less than paternal Solitude. And at all events I dare attest, that the Rev^d James Gillman is pure and blameless in morals and unexceptionable in manners, equally impressed with the importance of the Pastoral Duties as of the Labours of the Desk and the Pulpit: and that his mind is made up to preach the *whole* truth in Christ."

Coleridge was always a lover of children. From his earliest years he was interested in the weak and small things of the earth, or as he expressed it at the conclusion of his immortal poem,

All things both great and small,

which embraced more than the babes; and there is an innate connection between his solicitude for children and that sentimental love of the "bird and beast" which characterized his poetical period (*Brandl*, p. 102). We have seen how he took notice of the young haymakers on the Rhine Tour, and how he loved to call the children of his friends by endearing pet names, Puckinella and the like. The last letter Coleridge wrote was to a child, not yet able to read, to whom he had stood godfather.

LETTER 219. TO ADAM STEINMETZ KENNARD

To Adam Steinmetz Kennard,

My dear godchild,—I offer up the same fervent prayer for you now, as I did kneeling before the altar, when you were baptized into Christ, and solemnly received as a living member of his spiritual body, the church. Years must pass before you will be able to read with an understanding heart what I now write. But I trust that the all-gracious God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, who, by his only-begotten Son, (all mercies in one sovereign mercy!) has redeemed you from evil ground, and willed you to be born out of darkness, but into light; out of death, but into life; out of sin, but into righteousness; even into “the Lord our righteousness;” I trust that he will graciously hear the prayers of your dear parents, and be with you as the spirit of health and growth, in body and in mind. My dear godchild, you received from Christ’s minister, at the baptismal font, as your Christian name, the name of a most dear friend of your father’s, and who was to me even as a son, the late Adam Steinmetz, whose fervent aspirations, and paramount aim, even from early youth, was to be a Christian in thought, word, and deed; in will, mind, and affections. I too, your godfather, have known what the enjoyment and advantages of this life are, and what the more refined pleasures which learning and intellectual power can give; I now, on the eve of my departure, declare to you, and earnestly pray that you may hereafter live and act on the conviction, that health is a great blessing; competence, obtained by honourable industry, a great blessing; and a great blessing it is, to have kind, faithful, and loving friends and relatives; but that the greatest of all blessings, as it is the most ennobling of all privileges, is to be indeed a Christian. But I have been likewise, through a large portion of my later life, a sufferer, sorely affected with bodily pains, languor, and manifold infirmities, and for the last three or four years have, with few and brief intervals, been confined to a sick room, and at this moment, in great weakness and heaviness, write from a sick bed, hopeless of recovery, yet without prospect of a speedy removal. And I thus, on the brink of the grave, solemnly bear witness to you, that the Almighty Redeemer, most gracious in his promises to them that truly seek him, is faithful to perform what he has promised; and has reserved, under all pains

and infirmities, the peace that passeth all understanding, with the supporting assurance of a reconciled God, who will not withdraw his spirit from me in the conflict, and in his own time will deliver me from the evil one. O my dear godchild! eminently blessed are they who begin *early* to seek, fear, and love, their God, trusting wholly in the righteousness and mediation of their Lord, Redeemer, Saviour, and everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ. Oh, preserve this as a legacy and bequest from your unseen godfather and friend.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

July 13th, 1834,

Grove, Highgate.

CHAPTER XXXI

CONCLUSION

After Mr. Coleridge's death in July 1834, four volumes of his *Literary Remains*. Vols. I and II appeared in 1836, Vol. III in 1838, Vol. IV in 1839. Vol. I contains *The Fall of Robespierre* and other poems, and poetical fragments, Notes of a Course of Lectures delivered in 1818, Marginal Notes on several books, Fragments of Essays, Mr. C.'s Contributions to the *Omniana* of Mr. Southey, published in 1812, and fifty-six other short articles on various subjects. Vol. II contains more Notes of Lectures on Shakespeare, including criticism on each of his Plays, with Introductory Matter on Poetry, the Drama, and the Stage, prefaced by extracts of letters relating to these Lectures: Notes on Ben Jonson, on Beaumont and Fletcher, on Fuller, on Sir Thomas Browne, an Essay on the Prometheus of Æschylus, and other miscellaneous writings.

Vol. III contains *Formula Fidei de S. Trinitate*, A Nightly Prayer, Notes on the Book of Common Prayer, on Hooker, Field, Donne, Henry More, Heinrichs, Hacket, Jeremy Taylor, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and John Smith, and a Letter to a Godchild.

Vol. IV contains Notes on Luther, St. Theresa, Bedell, Baxter, Leighton, Sherlock, Waterland, Shelton, Andrew Fuller, Whitaker, Oxlee, A Barrister's Hints, Davison, Irving, and Noble, and an Essay on Faith. The present edition of the *Literary Remains* is nearly exhausted. In a fresh edition new matter will be added from marginal notes, probably in a fifth volume. Archdeacon Hare speaks of *The Remains* in the Preface to his *Mission of the Comforter* in a passage which may fitly be produced here.

"Of recent English writers, the one with whose sanction I have chiefly desired, whenever I could, to strengthen my opinions, is the great religious philosopher to whom the mind of our generation in England owes more than to any other man. My gratitude to him I have endeavoured to express by dedicating the following Sermons to his memory; and the offering is so far at least appropriate, in that the main work of his life was to spiritualize, not only our philosophy, but our theology, to raise them both above the empiricism into which they had long been dwindling, and to set them free from the technical trammels of logical systems. Whether

he is as much studied by the genial young men of the present day, as he was twenty or thirty years ago, I have no adequate means of judging; but our theological literature teems with errors, such as could hardly have been committed by persons whose minds had been disciplined by his philosophical method, and had rightly appropriated his principles. So far too as my observation has extended, the third and fourth volumes of his *Remains*, though they were hailed with delight by Arnold on their first appearance, have not yet produced their proper effect on the intellect of the age. It may be that the rich store of profound and beautiful thought contained in them, has been weighed down, from being mixt with a few opinions on points of Biblical criticism, likely to be very offensive to persons who know nothing about the history of the Canon. Some of these opinions, to which Coleridge himself ascribed a good deal of importance, seem to me of little worth; some, to be decidedly erroneous. Philological criticism, indeed, all matters requiring a laborious and accurate investigation of details, were alien from the bent and habits of his mind; and his exegetical studies, such as they were, took place at a period when he had little better than the meagre Rationalism of Eickhorn and Bertholdt to help him. Of the opinions which he imbibed from them, some abode with him through life. These, however, along with everything else that can justly be objected to in the *Remains*, do not form a twentieth part of the whole, and may easily be separated from the remainder. Nor do they detract, in any way, from the sterling sense, the clear and far-sighted discernment, the power of tracing principles in their remotest operations, and of referring all things to their first principles which are manifested in almost every page, and from which we might learn so much."

The last posthumous work of Mr. Coleridge, published September, 1840, is entitled *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, and consists of seven letters on the Inspiration of the Scriptures. It should be understood that this work is intended *not to undermine the belief that the Bible is the Word of God*, or in any degree to lessen the deep reverence with which it is regarded by Christians, but to put that belief on a better foundation than it commonly rests upon. "Let it be distinctly understood," the author says, "that my arguments and objections apply exclusively to the following Doctrine or Dogma. To the opinions which individual divines have advanced in lieu of this

doctrine,"—for instance, I suppose, the strange fancy that the *words* of the Bible are not divinely dictated, that the language is human and yet exempt, by divine power, from any possible admixture of human error,—“my only objection, as far as I object, is—that I do not understand them.—I said that in the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together; that the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and that whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit. But the Doctrine in question requires me to believe, that not only what finds me, but that all that exists in the sacred volume, which I am bound to find therein, was not alone inspired by, that is, composed by men under the actuating influence of the Holy Spirit, but likewise—dictated by an infallible intelligence;—that the writers, each and all, were divinely informed as well as inspired.— —I can conceive no softenings here which would not nullify the Doctrine, and convert it to a cloud for each man’s fancy to shape and shift at will. And this doctrine, I confess, plants the vineyard of the word with thorns for me, and places snares in its pathways.” He proceeds to shew how the doctrine in question injures the true idea of the spirituality and divinity of the sacred volume, and directly or indirectly tends to alienate men from the outward Revelation. A second edition of this little work will soon be prepared.

The book has been denounced in strange style by some who do not profess to have read it. These reasoners assume in the first place that both the tendency and object of it is to overthrow Christianity—whereas any one who reads *it*, and not merely what a hostile spirit has predetermined to find in it, cannot fail to perceive that at least the writer’s *object* is to guard and exalt the religion of Christ. But, secondly, forgetting that the book is [not] intended to overthrow Christianity, they urge that Christianity has done very well hitherto without such views as it propounds, and that very great thinkers and good men have lived and died, in the faith and fear of the Lord, without the knowledge of them;—as if the wants of the Church were in all ages exactly alike; or as if there had not been in all ages clouds over the sunshine of faith, occasioned by the difficulties which the writer seeks to remove; or as if it were not true that the more light men obtain on one side of the region of thought the more they need on other sides; as if greatness and goodness, in their application to

men, were not relative terms, and the best and wisest of mortals that have appeared upon earth had ever been free from error and imperfection! I should think there is hardly a foolish or evil notion on any subject which might not be screened from attack by such arguments as these. And, even were they not such mere weakness, of what force can they be with those, who take for their motto, as Mr. Coleridge did from first to last: *That all men may know the truth* and that *the truth may set them free*? Religious truth and religion are identified in Scripture, or at least represented as one and inseparable; and how can a man obey the truth or minister to it, except by setting forth, what, after the widest survey of the subject which he is capable of taking, *he believes to be the truth*?

The suggestion that no man should examine such subjects or call in question prevailing views in religion save one who starts from a high station of holiness and spiritual light, can be of little value unless accompanied by a *criterion* of holiness, both as to kind and degree, admitted by all men. *Prevailing* notions are often utterly erroneous, and if none might expose what they believe in their hearts to be wrong and injurious views, till it was proved, even to their adversaries' satisfaction, that they were far advanced in true sanctity, wrong views would be the prevailing ones till the end of time. Providence works by finer means than enter into this sort of philosophy, making imperfection minister to the perfecting of what is good and purifying of what is evil.

Whether or no the views of St. Jerome and other ancient Fathers concerning Inspiration are, as has been affirmed, something far deeper and higher than we, in our inferior state of spirituality, can conceive, I do not presume to decide; but yet I would suggest, that high and spiritual views in general are capable of being set forth in words, and of gradually raising men up to *some* apprehension of them. They do not remain a light to lighten the possessor and mere darkness, or a light that closely resembles a shade, to the rest of the world. Things that pertain to reason and the spirit appeal to the rational and spiritual in mankind at large; they tend to elicit the reason and expand the understandings of men; deep calleth unto deep; and if the teaching of Paul and John is now in a wonderful manner apprehended by peasants and children, who hear the Gospel habitually, St. Jerome's notions of Inspiration, if truly divine

and evangelical, would by this time be generally apprehended by Christians in the same way, and by the wise and learned would be comprehended more intellectually and systematically. Whereas, can it be denied, that no consistent scheme of Inspiration has ever been gathered from the teaching of those ancient Fathers? They who believe that such a scheme is contained in their writings, explicitly or implicitly, will do well to unfold it. Merely to talk about such a thing in a style of indefinite grandeur is but to conjure up a mist, by the spell of solemn sounding words, to mock the eyes of men with a cloud castle for a season—a very little season it is during which any such piece of mist-magnificence can remain undispersed in times like the present, except for those who had rather gaze on painted vapours than on realities of a hue to which their eyes are unaccustomed.

I have not been able to obtain any exact account of all my Father's courses of lectures, given after his visit to Germany, but find, from letters and other sources of information that he lectured in London, before going to Malta, in 1804; on his return from Malta, in 1807; again in 1808; in 1811; in 1814, in which year he also lectured at Bristol; in 1817; and, for the last time, I believe, in 1819. His early lectures at Bristol are mentioned in the biographical sketch.

The poetic or imitative art, an ancient critic has observed, must needs describe persons either better than they are, at the present time, or worse, as they are exactly. The fact is, however, that in literary fiction *individuals* can seldom be exhibited *exactly* such as they are, the subtle interminglings of good and evil, the finely balanced qualities that exist in the actual characters of men, even those in whom the colours are deepest and the lines most strongly traced, being *too* fine and subtle for dramatic effect. Indeed it is scarcely possible to present a man as he truly is except in plain narrative; his mind cannot be properly manifested save in and through the very events and circumstances which gave utterance to his individual being and which his peculiar character helped to mould and produce. When taken out of these and placed in the alien framework of the novelist or dramatist it becomes another thing; the representation may convey truth of human nature in a broad way, and seem *drawn to the life*, if the writer have a lively wit, but as a

portrait of a particular person it is often the more a falsehood the more natural it appears.

To poetic descriptions these remarks do not apply. They are, for the most part, mere views of a character in its elevated and poetic aspects—tributes of admiration to its beautiful qualities. Such are the fine stanzas, already quoted, in which the *poet* Coleridge is described by the great Poet, his Friend: and such are some less known, composed by a poet of a later generation, who never saw my Father face to face. Of these the last four will serve for a conclusion to this sketch. I give them here for the sake of their poetic truth and the earnest sympathy they manifest with the studious poet—

Philosopher contemning wealth and death,

Yet docile, childlike full of life and love,—

though they are not among the very finest parts of their author's thoughtful and beautiful poetry.

No loftier, purer soul than his hath ever

With awe revolved the planetary page

(From infancy to age)

Of knowledge: *sedulous and proud to give her*

The whole of his great heart for her own sake;

For what she is; not what she does, or what can make.

And mighty voices from afar came to him;

Converse of trumpets held by cloudy forms,

And speech of choral storms.

Spirits of night and noontide bent to woo him—

He stood the while, lonely and desolate

As Adam when he ruled a world, yet found no mate.
His loftiest Thoughts were but like palms uplifted;
Aspiring, yet in supplicating guise –
His sweetest songs were sighs.
Adown Lethean streams his spirit drifted,
Under Elysian shades from poppied bank
With Amaranths massed in dark luxuriance dank.
Coleridge, farewell! That great and grave transition
Which may not Priest or King or Conqueror spare,
And yet a Babe can bear,
Has come to thee. Through life a goodly vision
Was thine; and time it was thy rest to take.
Soft be the sound ordained thy sleep to break –
When thou art waking, wake me, for thy Master's sake!

Freeditorial 