

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE  
EDITED BY KATHLEEN COBURN  
AND B. WINER

# The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 14, Part 2

*Table Talk*



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SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE · 14  
TABLE TALK

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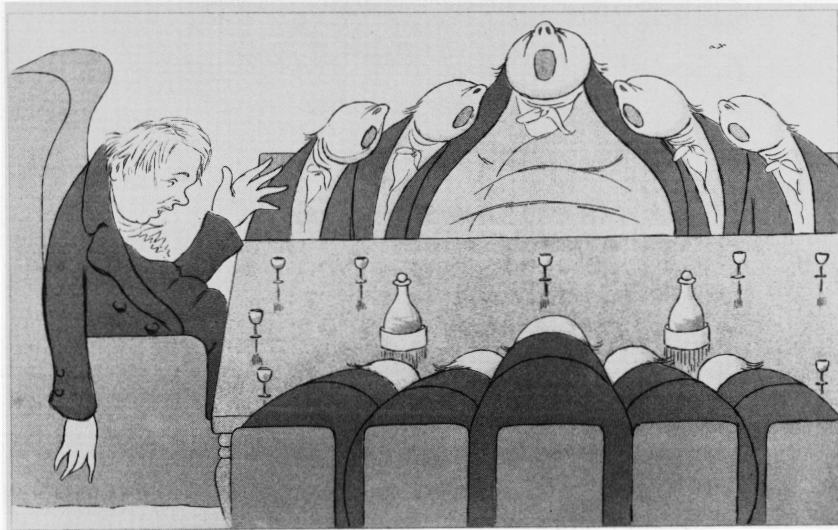
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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Table Talk

RECORDED BY HENRY NELSON COLERIDGE  
(AND JOHN TAYLOR COLERIDGE)

II

EDITED BY  
Carl Woodring



ROUTLEDGE

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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### II

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March 1832 *facing page 159*



APPENDIX H  
*SPECIMENS OF THE  
TABLE TALK OF  
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE*  
EDITED BY  
HENRY NELSON COLERIDGE





**SPECIMENS**

**OF THE**

**TABLE TALK**

**OF**

**SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE**

**SECOND EDITION**



TO  
JAMES GILLMAN, ESQUIRE,  
OF  
THE GROVE, HIGHGATE,  
AND TO  
MRS. GILLMAN,  
THIS VOLUME  
IS  
GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.



## PREFACE

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It is nearly fifteen years since I was, for the first time, enabled to become a frequent and attentive visiter in Mr. Coleridge's domestic society. His exhibition of intellectual power in living discourse struck me at once as unique and transcendent; and upon my return home, on the very first evening which I spent with him after my boyhood, I committed to writing, as well as I could, the principal topics of his conversation in his own words. I had no settled design at that time of continuing the work, but simply made the note in something like a spirit of vexation that such a strain of music as I had just heard, should not last for ever. What I did once, I was easily induced by the same feeling to do again; and when, after many years of affectionate communion between us, the painful existence of my revered relative on earth was at length finished in peace, my occasional notes of what he had said in my presence had grown to a mass, of which this volume contains only such parts as seem fit for present publication. I know, better than any one can tell me, how inadequately these specimens represent the peculiar splendour and individuality of Mr. Coleridge's conversation. How should it be otherwise? Who could always follow to the turning-point his long arrow-flights of thought? Who could fix those ejaculations of light, those tones of a prophet, which at times have made me bend before him as before an inspired man? Such acts of spirit as these were too subtle to be fettered down on paper; they live—if they can live any where—in the memories alone of those who witnessed them. Yet I would fain hope that these pages will prove that all is not lost;—that something of the wisdom, the learning, and the eloquence of a great man's social converse has been snatched from forgetfulness, and endowed with a permanent shape for general use. And although, in the judgment of many persons, I may incur a serious responsibility by this publication; I am, upon the whole, willing to abide the result, in confidence that the fame of the loved and lamented speaker will lose nothing hereby, and that the cause of Truth and of Goodness will be every way a gainer. This sprig, though slight and immature, may yet become its place, in the Poet's wreath of honour, among flowers of graver hue.

If the favour shown to several modern instances of works nominally of the same description as the present were alone to be considered, it might seem that the old maxim, that nothing ought to be said of the dead but what is good, is in a fair way of being dilated into an understanding that every thing *is* good that has been said by the dead. The following pages do not, I trust, stand in need of so much indulgence. Their contents may not, in every particular passage, be of great intrinsic importance; but they can hardly be without some, and, I hope, a worthy, interest, as coming from the lips of one at least of the most extraordinary men of the age; whilst to the best of my knowledge and intention, no living person's name is introduced, whether for praise or for blame, except on literary or political grounds of common notoriety. Upon the justice of the remarks here published, it would be out of place in me to say any thing; and a commentary of that kind is the less needed, as, in almost every instance, the principles upon which the speaker founded his observations are expressly stated, and may be satisfactorily examined by themselves. But, for the purpose of general elucidation, it seemed not improper to add a few notes, and to make some quotations from Mr. Coleridge's own works; and in doing so, I was in addition actuated by an earnest wish to call the attention of reflecting minds in general to the views of political, moral, and religious philosophy contained in those works, which, through an extensive, but now decreasing, prejudice, have hitherto been deprived of that acceptance with the public which their great preponderating merits deserve, and will, as I believe, finally obtain. And I can truly say, that if, in the course of the perusal of this little work, any one of its readers shall gain a clearer insight into the deep and pregnant principles, in the light of which Mr. Coleridge was accustomed to regard God and the World,—I shall look upon the publication as fortunate, and consider myself abundantly rewarded for whatever trouble it has cost me.

A cursory inspection will show that this volume lays no claim to be ranked with those of Boswell in point of dramatic interest. Coleridge differed not more from Johnson in every characteristic of intellect, than in the habits and circumstances of his life, during the greatest part of the time in which I was intimately conversant with him. He was naturally very fond of society, and continued to be so to the last; but the almost unceasing ill health with which he was afflicted, after fifty, confined him for many months in every year to his own room, and, most commonly, to his bed. He was then rarely seen except by single visitors; and few of them would feel any disposition upon such occasions to interrupt him, whatever might have been the length or mood of his discourse. And indeed, although I have been present in mixed company, where Mr. Cole-

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ridge has been questioned and opposed, and the scene has been amusing for the moment—I own that it was always much more delightful to me to let the river wander at its own sweet will, unruffled by aught but a certain breeze of emotion which the stream itself produced. If the course it took was not the shortest, it was generally the most beautiful; and what you saw by the way was as worthy of note as the ultimate object to which you were journeying. It is possible, indeed, that Coleridge did not, in fact, possess the precise gladiatorial power of Johnson; yet he understood a sword-play of his own; and I have, upon several occasions, seen him exhibit brilliant proofs of its effectiveness upon disputants of considerable pretensions in their particular lines. But he had a genuine dislike of the practice in himself or others, and no slight provocation could move him to any such exertion. He was, indeed, to my observation, more distinguished from other great men of letters by his moral thirst after the Truth—the ideal truth—in his own mind, than by his merely intellectual qualifications. To leave the every-day circle of society, in which the literary and scientific rarely—the rest never—break through the spell of personality;—where Anecdote reigns everlastingly paramount and exclusive, and the mildest attempt to generalize the Babel of facts, and to control temporary and individual phenomena by the application of eternal and overruling principles, is unintelligible to many, and disagreeable to more;—to leave this species of converse—if converse it deserves to be called—and pass an entire day with Coleridge, was a marvellous change indeed. It was a Sabbath past expression deep, and tranquil, and serene. You came to a man who had travelled in many countries and in critical times; who had seen and felt the world in most of its ranks and in many of its vicissitudes and weaknesses; one to whom all literature and genial art were absolutely subject, and to whom, with a reasonable allowance as to technical details, all science was in a most extraordinary degree familiar. Throughout a long-drawn summer's day would this man talk to you in low, equable, but clear and musical, tones, concerning things human and divine; marshalling all history, harmonizing all experiment, probing the depths of your consciousness, and revealing visions of glory and of terror to the imagination; but pouring withal such floods of light upon the mind, that you might, for a season, like Paul, become blind in the very act of conversion. And this he would do, without so much as one allusion to himself, without a word of reflection on others, save when any given act fell naturally in the way of his discourse,—without one anecdote that was not proof and illustration of a previous position;—gratifying no passion, indulging no caprice, but, with a calm mastery over your soul, leading you onward and onward for ever through a thousand



windings, yet with no pause, to some magnificent point in which, as in a focus, all the party-coloured rays of his discourse should converge in light. In all this he was, in truth, your teacher and guide; but in a little while you might forget that he was other than a fellow student and the companion of your way,—so playful was his manner, so simple his language, so affectionate the glance of his pleasant eye!

There were, indeed, some whom Coleridge tired, and some whom he sent asleep. It would occasionally so happen, when the abstruser mood was strong upon him, and the visiter was narrow and ungenial. I have seen him at times when you could not incarnate him,—when he shook aside your petty questions or doubts, and burst with some impatience through the obstacles of common conversation. Then, escaped from the flesh, he would soar upwards into an atmosphere almost too rare to breathe, but which seemed proper to *him*, and there he would float at ease. Like enough, what Coleridge then said, his subtlest listener would not understand as a man understands a newspaper; but upon such a listener there would steal an influence, and an impression, and a sympathy; there would be a gradual attempering of his body and spirit, till his total being vibrated with one pulse alone, and thought became merged in contemplation;—

And so, his senses gradually wrapt  
In a half sleep, he'd dream of better worlds,  
And dreaming hear thee still, O singing lark,  
That sangest like an angel in the clouds!<sup>1</sup>

But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the general character of Mr. Coleridge's conversation was abstruse or rhapsodical. The contents of the following pages may, I think, be taken as pretty strong presumptive evidence that his ordinary manner was plain and direct enough; and even when, as sometimes happened, he seemed to ramble from the road, and to lose himself in a wilderness of digressions, the truth was, that at that very time he was working out his fore-known conclusion through an almost miraculous logic, the difficulty of which consisted precisely in the very fact of its minuteness and universality. He took so large a scope, that, if he was interrupted before he got to the end, he appeared to have been talking without an object; although, perhaps, a few steps more would have brought you to a point, a retrospect from which would show you the pertinence of all he had been saying. I have heard persons complain that they could get no answer to a question from Coleridge. The

<sup>1</sup> *Fears in Solitude* lines 25–8 (var):  
PW (EHC) 1 257.

truth is, he answered, or meant to answer, so fully that the querist should have no second question to ask. In nine cases out of ten he saw the question was short or misdirected; and knew that a mere *yes* or *no* answer could not embrace the truth—that is, the whole truth—and might, very probably, by implication, convey error. Hence that exhaustive, cyclical mode of discoursing in which he frequently indulged; unfit, indeed, for a dinner-table, and too long-breathed for the patience of a chance visitor,—but which, to those who knew for what they came, was the object of their profoundest admiration, as it was the source of their most valuable instruction. Mr. Coleridge's affectionate disciples learned their lessons of philosophy and criticism from his own mouth. He was to them as an old master of the Academy or Lyceum. The more time he took, the better pleased were such visitors; for they came expressly to listen, and had ample proof how truly he had declared, that whatever difficulties he might feel, with pen in hand, in the expression of his meaning, he never found the smallest hitch or impediment in the utterance of his most subtle reasonings by word of mouth. How many a time and oft have I felt his abtrusest thoughts steal rhythmically on my soul, when chanted forth by him! Nay, how often have I fancied I heard rise up in answer to his gentle touch, an interpreting music of my own, as from the passive strings of some wind-smitten lyre!

Mr. Coleridge's conversation at all times required attention, because what he said was so individual and unexpected. But when he was dealing deeply with a question, the demand upon the intellect of the hearer was very great; not so much for any hardness of language, for his diction was always simple and easy; nor for the abtruseness of the thoughts, for they generally explained, or appeared to explain, themselves; but preeminently on account of the seeming remoteness of his associations, and the exceeding subtlety of his transitional links. Upon this point it is very happily, though, according to my observation, too generally, remarked, by one whose powers and opportunities of judging were so eminent that the obliquity of his testimony in other respects is the more unpardonable;—"Coleridge, to many people—and often I have heard the complaint—seemed to wander; and he seemed then to wander the most, when, in fact, his resistance to the wandering instinct was greatest,—viz. when the compass and huge circuit, by which his illustrations moved, travelled farthest into remote regions, before they began to revolve. Long before this coming round commenced, most people had lost him, and naturally enough supposed that he had lost himself. They continued to admire the separate beauty of the thoughts, but did not see their relations to the dominant theme. \* \* \* \* However, I can assert, upon my long and intimate

knowledge of Coleridge's mind, that logic the most severe was as inalienable from his modes of thinking, as grammar from his language."\* True: his mind was a logic-vice; let him fasten it on the tiniest flourish of an error, he never slacked his hold, till he had crushed body and tail to dust. He was *always* ratiocinating in his own mind, and therefore sometimes seemed incoherent to the partial observer. It happened to him as to Pindar, who in modern days has been called a rambling rhapsodist, because the connections of his parts, though never arbitrary, are so fine that the vulgar reader sees them not at all. But they are there nevertheless, and may all be so distinctly shown, that no one can doubt their existence; and a little study will also prove that the points of contact are those which the true genius of lyric verse naturally evolved, and that the entire Pindaric ode, instead of being the loose and lawless out-burst which so many have fancied, is, without any exception, the most artificial and highly wrought composition which Time has spared to us from the wreck of the Greek Muse. So I can well remember occasions, in which, after listening to Mr. Coleridge for several delightful hours, I have gone away with divers splendid masses of reasoning in my head, the separate beauty and coherency of which I deeply felt, but how they had produced, or how they bore upon, each other, I could not then perceive. In such cases I have mused sometimes even for days afterwards upon the words, till at length, spontaneously as it seemed, "the fire would kindle," and the association, which had escaped my utmost efforts of comprehension before, flash itself all at once upon my mind with the clearness of noon-day light.

It may well be imagined that a style of conversation so continuous and diffused as that which I have just attempted to describe, presented remarkable difficulties to a mere reporter by memory. It is easy to preserve the pithy remark, the brilliant retort, or the pointed anecdote; these stick of themselves, and their retention requires no effort of mind. But where the salient angles are comparatively few, and the object of attention is a long-drawn subtle discoursing, you can never recollect, except by yourself thinking the argument over again. In so doing, the order and the characteristic expressions will for the most part spontaneously arise; and it is scarcely credible with what degree of accuracy language may thus be preserved, where practice has given some dexterity, and long familiarity with the speaker has enabled, or almost forced, you to catch the outlines of his manner. Yet with all this, so peculiar were the flow and breadth of Mr. Coleridge's conversation, that I am very sensible how

\* Tait's Mag. Sept. 1834, p. 514.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *De Q Works* II 152–3.

much those who can best judge will have to complain of my representation of it. The following specimens will, I fear, seem too fragmentary, and therefore deficient in one of the most distinguishing properties of that which they are designed to represent; and this is true. Yet the reader will in most instances have little difficulty in understanding the course which the conversation took, although my recollections of it are thrown into separate paragraphs for the sake of superior precision. As I never attempted to give dialogue—indeed, there was seldom much dialogue to give—the great point with me was to condense what I could remember on each particular topic into intelligible *wholes* with as little injury to the living manner and diction as was possible. With this explanation, I must leave it to those who still have the tones of “that old man eloquent”<sup>3</sup> ringing in their ears, to say how far I have succeeded in this delicate enterprise of stamping his winged words with perpetuity.

In reviewing the contents of the following pages, I can clearly see that I have admitted some passages which will be pronounced illiberal by those who, in the present day, emphatically call themselves liberal—the liberal. I allude of course to Mr. Coleridge’s remarks on the Reform Bill and the Malthusian economists. The omission of such passages would probably have rendered this publication more generally agreeable, and my disposition does not lead me to give gratuitous offence to any one. But the opinions of Mr. Coleridge on these subjects, however imperfectly expressed by me, were deliberately entertained by him; and to have omitted, in so miscellaneous a collection as this, what he was well known to have said, would have argued in me a disapprobation or a fear, which I disclaim. A few words, however, may be pertinently employed here in explaining the true bearing of Coleridge’s mind on the politics of our modern days. He was neither a Whig nor a Tory, as those designations are usually understood; well enough knowing that, for the most part, half-truths only are involved in the Parliamentary tenets of one party or the other. In the common struggles of a session, therefore, he took little interest; and as to mere personal sympathies, the friend of Frere and of Poole, the respected guest of Canning and of Lord Lansdowne, could have nothing to choose. But he threw the weight of his opinion—and it was considerable—into the Tory or Conservative scale, for these two reasons:—First; generally, because he had a deep conviction that the cause of freedom and of truth is now seriously menaced by a democratical spirit, growing more and more rabid every day, and giving no doubtful promise of the tyranny to come; and secondly, in partic-

<sup>3</sup> Milton Sonnet x: *To the Lady Margaret Ley* line 8.

ular, because the national Church was to him the ark of the covenant of his beloved country, and he saw the Whigs about to coalesce with those whose avowed principles lead them to lay the hand of spoliation upon it. Add to these two grounds, some relics of the indignation which the efforts of the Whigs to thwart the generous exertions of England in the great Spanish war had formerly roused within him; and all the constituents of any active feeling in Mr. Coleridge's mind upon matters of state are, I believe, fairly laid before the reader. The Reform question in itself gave him little concern, except as he foresaw the present attack on the Church to be the immediate consequence of the passing of the Bill; "for let the form of the House of Commons," said he, "be what it may, it will be, for better or for worse, pretty much what the country at large is; but once invade that truly national and essentially popular institution, the Church, and divert its funds to the relief or aid of individual charity or public taxation—how specious soever that pretext may be—and you will never thereafter recover the lost means of perpetual cultivation. Give back to the Church what the nation originally consecrated to its use, and it ought then to be charged with the education of the people; but half of the original revenue has been already taken by force from her, or lost to her through desuetude, legal decision, or public opinion; and are those whose very houses and parks are part and parcel of what the nation designed for the general purposes of the Clergy, to be heard, when they argue for making the Church support, out of her diminished revenues, institutions, the intended means for maintaining which they themselves hold under the sanction of legal robbery?" Upon this subject Mr. Coleridge did indeed feel very warmly, and was accustomed to express himself accordingly. It weighed upon his mind night and day, and he spoke upon it with an emotion, which I never saw him betray upon any topic of common politics, however decided his opinion might be. In this, therefore, he was *felix opportunitate mortis; non enim vidit*——;<sup>4</sup> and the just and honest of all parties will heartily admit over his grave, that as his principles and opinions were untainted by any sordid interest, so he maintained them in the purest spirit of a reflective patriotism, without spleen, or bitterness, or breach of social union.[\*]

[\* These volumes have had the rather singular fortune of being made the subject of three several reviews before publication. One of them requires notice.

The only materials for the Westminster Reviewer were the extracts in the Quarterly; and his single object being to abuse and degrade, he takes no notice of any even of

<sup>4</sup> Tacitus *Agricola* 45 (var). "Happy in a timely death, for he did not see . . .". Tr William Peterson, Tacitus *Dialogus, Agricola, Germania* (LCL 1914).

It would require a rare pen to do justice to the constitution of Coleridge's mind. It was too deep, subtle, and peculiar, to be fathomed by a morning visitor. Few persons knew much of it in any thing below the surface; scarcely three or four ever got to understand it in all its marvellous completeness. Mere personal familiarity with this extraordinary man did

these, except those which happen to be at variance with his principles in politics or political economy. To have reflected on the memory of Coleridge for not having been either a Benthamite or a Malthusian economist, might perhaps have been just and proper, and the censure certainly would have been borne by his friends in patience. The Westminster Review has, of course, just as good a right to find fault with those who differ from it in opinion as any other Review. But neither the Westminster nor any Review has a right to say that which is untrue, more especially when the misrepresentation is employed for the express purpose of injury and detraction. Amongst a great deal of coarse language unbecoming the character of the Review or its editor, there is the following passage;—"The trampling on the labouring classes is the religion that is at the bottom of his heart,—for the simple reason that he (Coleridge) is himself supported out of that last resource of the enemies of the people, the Pension List." And Mr. Coleridge is afterwards called a "Tory pensioner," "a puffed up partisan," &c.

Now the only pension, from any public source or character whatever, received by Mr. Coleridge throughout his whole life, was the following.

In 1821 or 1822, George the Fourth founded the Royal Society of Literature, which was incorporated by Charter in 1825. The King gave a thousand guineas a year out of his own private pocket to be distributed amongst ten literary men, to be called Royal Associates, and to be selected at the discretion of the Council. It is true that this was done under a Tory Government; but I believe the Government had no more to do with it than the Westminster Review. It was the mere act of George the Fourth's own princely temper. The gentlemen chosen to receive this bounty were the following:—

Samuel Taylor Coleridge;  
Rev. Edward Davies;  
Rev. John Jamieson, D.D.;  
Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus;  
Thomas James Mathias;  
James Millingen;  
Sir William Ouseley;  
William Roscoe;  
Rev. Henry John Todd;  
Sharon Turner.

I have been told that a majority of these persons—all the world knows that three or four at least of them—were Whigs of strong water; but probably no one ever before imagined that their political opinions had any thing to do with their being chosen Royal Associates. I have heard and believe that their only qualifications were literature and misfortune; and so the King wished. This annual donation of 105*l.* a year was received by Mr. Coleridge during the remainder of George the Fourth's life. In the first year of the present reign the payment was stopped without notice, in the middle of a current quarter; and was not recontinued during Coleridge's life. It is true that this resumption of the royal bounty took place under a Whig Government; but I believe the Whigs cannot justly claim any merit with the Westminster Review for having advised that act;—on the contrary, to the best of my knowledge, Lord Grey, Lord Brougham, and some other members of the Whig ministry disapproved and regretted

not put you in possession of him; his pursuits and aspirations, though in their mighty range presenting points of contact and sympathy for all, transcended in their ultimate reach the extremest limits of most men's imaginations. For the last thirty years of his life, at least, Coleridge was really and truly a philosopher of the antique cast. He had his esoteric views; and all his prose works from the "Friend" to the "Church and State" were little more than feelers, pioneers, disciplinants for the last and complete exposition of them. Of the art of making books he knew little, and cared less; but had he been as much an adept in it as a modern novelist, he never could have succeeded in rendering popular or even tolerable, at first, his attempt to push Locke and Paley from their common throne in England. A little more working in the trenches might have brought him closer to the walls with less personal damage; but it is better for Christian philosophy as it is, though the assailant was sacrificed in the bold and artless attack. Mr. Coleridge's prose works had so very limited a sale, that although published in a technical sense, they could scarcely be said to have ever become *publici juris*. He did not think them such himself, with the exception, perhaps, of the "Aids to Reflection," and generally made a particular remark if he met any person who professed or showed that he had read the "Friend" or any of his other books. And I have no doubt that had he lived to complete his great work on "Philosophy reconciled with Christian Religion," he would without scruple have used in that work any part or parts of his preliminary treatises, as their intrinsic fitness required. Hence in every one of his prose writings there are repetitions, either literal or substantial, of passages to be found in some others of those writings; and there are several particular positions and reasonings, which he considered of vital importance, reiterated in the "Friend," the "Literary Life," the "Lay Sermons," the "Aids to Reflection," and the "Church and State." He was always deepening and widening the foundation, and cared not how often he used the same stone. In thinking passionately of the principle, he forgot the authorship—and sowed beside many waters, if peradventure some chance seedling might take root and bear fruit to the glory of God and the spiritualization of Man.

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it. But the money was private money, and they could of course have no control over it.

If the Westminster Reviewer is acquainted with any other public pension, Tory, Whig, or Radical, received by Mr. Coleridge, he has an opportunity every quarter of stating it. In the mean time, I must take the liberty of charging him with the utterance of a calumnious untruth. H.N.C.]<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Footnote in *TT* (1835) omitted from *TT* (1836).

His mere reading was immense, and the quality and direction of much of it well considered, almost unique in this age of the world. He had gone through most of the Fathers, and, I believe, all the Schoolmen of any eminence; whilst his familiarity with all the more common departments of literature in every language is notorious. The early age at which some of these acquisitions were made, and his ardent self-abandonment in the strange pursuit, might, according to a common notion, have seemed adverse to increase and maturity of power in after life: yet it was not so; he lost, indeed, for ever the chance of being a popular writer; but Lamb's *inspired charity-boy*<sup>6</sup> of twelve years of age continued to his dying day, when sixty-two, the eloquent centre of all companies, and the standard of intellectual greatness to hundreds of affectionate disciples far and near. Had Coleridge been master of his genius, and not, alas! mastered by it;—had he less romantically fought a single-handed fight against the whole prejudices of his age, nor so mercilessly racked his fine powers on the problem of a universal Christian philosophy,—he might have easily won all that a reading public can give to a favourite, and have left a name—not greater nor more enduring indeed—but—better known, and more prized, than now it is, amongst the wise, the gentle, and the good, throughout all ranks of society. Nevertheless, desultory as his labours, fragmentary as his productions at present may seem to the cursory observer—my undoubting belief is, that in the end it will be found that Coleridge did, in his vocation, the day's work of a giant. He has been melted into the very heart of the rising literatures of England and America; and the principles he has taught are the master-light of the moral and intellectual being of men, who, if they shall fail to save, will assuredly illustrate and condemn, the age in which they live. As it is, they 'bide their time.

<sup>7</sup>[I might here properly end what will, perhaps, seem more than enough of preface for such a work as this; but I know not how I could reconcile with the duty, which I owe to the memory of Coleridge, a total silence on the charges which have been made against him by a distinguished writer in one of the monthly publications. I allude, of course, to the papers which have appeared since his death in several numbers of Tait's Magazine. To Mr. Dequincey (for he will excuse my dropping his other name) I am unknown; but many years ago I learned to admire his genius, his learning, his pure and happy style—every thing, indeed, about his writing except the subject. I knew, besides, that he was a gentleman by birth and in manners, and I never doubted his delicacy or

<sup>6</sup> Charles Lamb "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago".

<sup>7</sup> The following paragraphs, from *TT* (1835), were omitted from *TT* (1836).



his uprightness. His opportunities of seeing Mr. Coleridge were at a particular period considerable, and congeniality of powers and pursuits would necessarily make those opportunities especially valuable to the critical reminiscents. Coleridge was also his friend, and moreover the earth lay freshly heaped upon the grave of the departed!

Now to all the incredible meannesses of thought, allusion, or language perpetrated in these papers, especially the first, in respect of any other person, man or *woman*, besides Mr. Coleridge himself—I say nothing. Let me in silent wonder pass them by on the other side. I wish nothing but well to the writer. But even had I any interest in his punishment, what could be added to that which a returning sense of honour and gentlemanly feeling must surely at some time or other inflict on such a spirit as his!

Nor, even with regard to Coleridge, is this the time or place—if it were ever or any where worth the while—to expose the wild mistakes and the monstrous caricature prevailing throughout the lighter parts of Mr. Dequincey's reminiscences. That with such a subject before him, such a writer should descend so very low as he has done, is indeed wonderful; but I suppose the eloquence and acuteness of the better parts of these papers were thought to require some garnish, and with the taste shown in its selection it would be idle to quarrel. Two points only call for remark. The first is, Mr. Dequincey's charge of plagiarism, which he worthily introduces in the following manner:—

“Returning late (August, 1807) from this interesting survey, we found ourselves without company at dinner; and, being thus seated tête-à-tête, Mr. Poole propounded the following question to me, which I mention, because it furnished me with the first hint of a singular infirmity besetting Coleridge's mind;—‘Pray, my young friend, did you ever form any opinion, or rather, did it ever happen to you to meet with any rational opinion or conjecture of others, upon that most irrational dogma of Pythagoras about beans? You know what I mean: that monstrous doctrine in which he asserts that a man might as well, for the wickedness of the thing, eat his own grandmother as meddle with beans.’ ‘Yes,’ I replied;—‘the line is in the Golden Verses. I remember it well.’

“P. ‘True: now our dear excellent friend Coleridge, than whom God never made a creature more divinely endowed, yet, strange it is to say, sometimes steals from other people, just as you or I might do; I beg your pardon,—just as a poor creature like myself might do, that sometimes have not wherewithal to make a figure from my own exchequer: and the other day at a dinner party, this question arising about Pythagoras and his beans, Coleridge gave us an interpretation, which, from his manner, I

suspect not to have been original. Think, therefore, if you have any where read a plausible solution.'

" 'I have: and it was in a German author. This German, understand, is a poor stick of a man, not to be named on the same day with Coleridge: so that, if it should appear that Coleridge has robbed him, be assured that he has done the scamp too much honour.'

"P. 'Well: what says the German?'

" 'Why, you know the use made in Greece of beans in voting and balloting? Well: the German says that Pythagoras speaks symbolically; meaning that electioneering, or, more generally, all interference with political intrigues, is fatal to a philosopher's pursuits and their appropriate serenity. Therefore, says he, followers of mine, abstain from public affairs as you would from parricide.'

"P. 'Well, then, Coleridge *has* done the scamp too much honour; for by Jove, that is the very explanation he gave us!'

" 'Here was a trait of Coleridge's mind, to be first made known to me by his best friend, and first published to the world by me, the foremost of his admirers! But both of us had sufficient reasons,' &c.<sup>8</sup>

As Mr. Dequincey has asserted that all this dialogue took place twenty-eight years ago, I waive all objections to its apparent improbability. And I know nothing about this "poor stick" of a German, whose name, by the by, Mr. Dequincey does not mention; but this I know, that I was a little boy at Eton in the fifth form, some six or seven years after this dialogue is said to have taken place, and I can testify, what I am sure I could bring fifty of my contemporaries at a week's notice to corroborate, that this solution of the Pythagorean abstinence from beans was regularly taught us in school, as a matter of course, whenever occasion arose. Whether this great discovery was a *peculium* of Eton I know not; nor can I precisely say that Dr. Keate, and the present Provost of King's, and the Bishop of Chester, and other assistant masters (for they all had the secret), did not in fact learn it from this German; but I exceedingly doubt their doing so, unless Mr. Dequincey will assure me that there was an English translation of the German book, if the book was in German, existing at that time. If I am asked whence the interpretation came, I must confess my ignorance, except that I very well remember that in Lucian's "*Vitarum auctio*,"<sup>9</sup> a favourite school treatise of ours, upon the bidder demanding of Pythagoras, who is put up to sale, why he had an aversion to beans, the philosopher says that he has no such aversion; but that beans

<sup>8</sup> *De Q Works* II 142-3.

<sup>9</sup> *Philosophies for Sale*: Lucian (LCL

1913) II 459; also Plutarch *Moralia* 12E

(LCL 1917) I 61.

are sacred things, first, for a physical reason there mentioned; but principally, because, amongst the Athenians, all elections for offices in the government took place by means of them. Of the correctness of this interpretation, if the Golden Verses were in fact genuine, which they are not, we might, indeed, well doubt; for there are numerous authorities which would lead us to believe that the practice of voting by beans or ballot was long subsequent to the time of Pythagoras, to whom in all probability the cheirotonia or natural mode of election by a show of hands was alone known. But let that pass. Mr. Coleridge, it seems, at a dinner party of country gentlemen in Somersetshire, mentioned this solution of the difficulty—a solution commonly taught at Eton then, and, as far as I can learn, for fifty years before, and I believe also at Westminster, Winchester, &c.—not to say a word of Oxford or Cambridge;—and, because he did not refer to a “poor stick” of a German, of whom and his book we even now know nothing, “the foremost of Coleridge’s admirers” publishes the tale as “the first hint he received of a singular infirmity besetting Coleridge’s mind!” Very sharp, learned, and charitable at least; but let us go on.

Mr. Dequincey says, that Coleridge in one of his Odes describes France as—

“Her footsteps insupportably advancing;”—(*sic.*)

and his charge is, not that the words were borrowed without marks of quotation, but—that Coleridge “thought fit positively to deny that he was indebted to Milton” for them.<sup>10</sup> Now, without any view of defending Mr. Coleridge upon such grounds, but simply to show the universal carelessness with which Mr. Dequincey has made all these insinuations, I must observe that there is no such line in Coleridge’s Ode; the word “footsteps” is neither in *Samson Agonistes* nor the Ode; the line in the first being,—

“When insupportably his foot advanced;”<sup>11</sup>

and in the second, simply,

“When, insupportably advancing.”<sup>12</sup>

But this is unimportant. That these latter words were *in* Milton was a mere fact about which, with a book-shelf at hand, there could of course

<sup>10</sup> Ibid II 144. WW, in his copy of *TT* (1835), now in the Cornell University Library, noted here: “To my certain knowledge C. had a distinct consciousness of these words being in Milton at the

time he wrote the Ode.”

<sup>11</sup> Milton *Samson Agonistes* line 136.

<sup>12</sup> *France: an Ode* line 53: PW (EHC) I 246.

be no dispute;—if, therefore, Mr. Coleridge denied that he was *indebted* to Milton for them, I believe—(as who in the world, but this “foremost of admirers,” would not believe?)—that he meant to deny any distinct consciousness of their Miltonic origin, at the moment of his using them in his Ode. A metaphysician like Mr. Dequincey can explain what every common person, who has read half a dozen standard books in his life, knows,—that thoughts, words, and phrases, not our own, rise up day by day, from the depths of the passive memory, and suggest themselves as it were to the hand, without any effort of recollection on our part. Such thoughts are indeed not natural born, but they are denizens at least; and Coleridge could have meant no more. And so it seems that in Shelvocke’s Voyage, there is a passage showing how “Hatley, being a melancholy man, was possessed by a fancy that some long season of foul weather was due to an albatross, which had steadily pursued the ship; upon which he shot the bird, but without mending their condition.” This Mr. Dequincey considers the germ—a prolific one to be sure—of the Ancient Mariner; and he says, that upon a question being put to Mr. Coleridge by him on the subject, Mr. Coleridge “disowned so slight an obligation.”<sup>13</sup> If he did, I firmly believe he had no recollection of it.<sup>14</sup>

What Mr. Dequincey says about the Hymn in the vale of Chamouni is just.<sup>15</sup> This glorious composition, of upwards of ninety lines, is truly indebted for many images and some striking expressions to Frederica Brun’s little poem. The obligation is so clear that a reference to the original ought certainly to have been given, as Coleridge gave in other instances. Yet, as to any ungenerous wish on the part of Mr. Coleridge to conceal the obligation, I for one totally disbelieve it; the words and images that are taken are taken bodily and without alteration, and not the slightest art is used—and a little would have sufficed—to disguise the fact of any community between the two poems. The German is in twenty lines, and I print them here with a very bald English translation, that all my readers may compare them as a curiosity with their glorification in Coleridge:—

Aus tiefem Schatten des schweigenden Tannenhains  
Erblick’ ich bebend dich, Scheitel der Ewigkeit,  
Blendender Gipfel, von dessen Höhe  
Ahndend mein Geist ins Unendliche schwebet!

<sup>13</sup> *De Q Works* II 145.

<sup>14</sup> In his copy of *TT* (1835) WW noted at this point: “C knew perfectly well that this fact in Shelvock’s voyage. I suggested it to him myself, when the Poem was planned. It is impossible to say

whether he had forgotten this or no, when this conversation with D. Q. occurred, or whether he ever denied the fact to D. Q.”

<sup>15</sup> *De Q Works* II 143–4.

Wer senkte den Pfeiler tief in der Erde Schooss,  
 Der, seit Jahrtausenden, fest deine masse stützt?  
 Wer thürmte hoch in des Aethers Wölbung  
 Mächtig und kühn dein umstrahltes Antlitz?

Wer goss Euch hoch aus des ewigen Winters Reich,  
 O Zackenströme, mit Donnergetös, herab?  
 Und wer gebietet laut mit der Allmacht Stimme:  
 "Hier sollen ruhen die starrenden Wogen?"

Wer zeichnet dort dem Morgensterne die Bahn?  
 Wer kränzt mit Blüthen des ewigen Frostes Saum?  
 Wem tönt in schrecklichen Harmonieen,  
 Wilder Arveiron, dein Wogentümmel?

Jehovah! Jehovah! kracht's im berstenden Eis;  
 Lavinendonner rollen's die Kluft hinab:  
 Jehovah! rauscht's in den hellen Wipfeln,  
 Flüstert's an reisenden Silberbächen.

#### CHAUMOUNI AT SUNRISE.

##### TO KLOPSTOCK.

Out of the deep shade of the silent fir-grove trembling I survey thee, mountain head of eternity, dazzling (blinding) summit, from whose height my dimly perceiving spirit floats into the everlasting (or hovers, is suspended in the everlasting).

Who sank the pillar deep into the lap of earth, which for centuries past, props (or sustains) thy mass? Who up-reared (*thürmte*, up-towered) high in the vault of ether mighty and bold thy beaming countenance? (*umstrahltes*, beamed around.)

Who poured you from on high out of eternal winter's realm, O jagged streams (*Zackenströme*) downward with thunder noise? And who commanded loud, with the voice of Omnipotence, "Here shall the stiffening billows rest?"

Who marks out there the path for the morning star? Who wreathes with blossoms the edge (skirt, border) of eternal frost? To whom, wild Arveiron, does thy wave-commotion (or wave-dizziness, hurly-burly, or tumult of waves, *Wogentümmel*,) sound in terrible harmonies?

Jehovah! Jehovah! crashes in the bursting ice; avalanche thunders roll it down the chasm (cleft, ravine). Jehovah! rustles (or murmurs) in the bright tree-tops; it whispers in the purling silver brooks.

Mr. Dequincey proceeds thus:—"All these cases amount to nothing at all as cases of plagiarism, and for that reason expose the more conspicuously that obliquity of feeling which could seek to decline the very slight acknowledgments required. But now I come to a case of real and palpable plagiarism; yet that too of a nature to be quite unaccountable in a man of Coleridge's attainments."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid II 145.

I will leave all the rest to the pen of Julius Hare.

“I have been speaking on the supposition that the charges of plagiarism and insincerity brought by the Opium-eater against Coleridge are strictly, accurately, true—that Coleridge is guilty to the full amount and tale of the offences imputed to him. Even in this case it indicates a singular obliquity of feeling, thus to drag them forth and thrust them forward. But are they true? Doubtless,—seeing that he who thrusts them forward can only do it out of a painful and rankling love of truth and justice; seeing that the voice which comes forth from his mask proclaims him to be the ‘foremost of Coleridge’s admirers.’ Reader, be not deluded, and put to sleep by a name; look into the charges; sift them. Among them, the accuser himself acknowledges that there is only one of any moment, the others having been lugged in to swell the counts of the indictment, through a somewhat over-anxious fear—a fear which would have been deemed malicious in any one but the foremost of his admirers—lest any tittle that could tell against Coleridge should be forgotten. One case, however, there is, he assures us, ‘of real and palpable plagiarism:’ so, lest ‘some cursed reviewer’ eight hundred or a thousand years hence, should ‘make the discovery,’ he determines to prevent him by forestalling him, and states it in full, as in admirership bound. The dissertation in the *Biographia Literaria* ‘on the reciprocal relations of the *esse* and the *cogitare*’ is asserted to be a translation from an essay in the volume of Schelling’s *Philosophische Schriften*. True: the Opium-eater is indeed mistaken in the name of the book; but that is of little moment, except as an additional mark of audacious carelessness in impeaching a great man’s honour. The dissertation, as it stands in the *Biographia Literaria*, vol. i. pp. 254–261.,<sup>17</sup> is a literal translation from the introduction to Schelling’s system of *Transcendental Idealism*; and though the assertion that there is no attempt in a single instance to appropriate the paper, by developing the arguments, or by diversifying the illustrations, is not quite borne out by the fact, Coleridge’s additions are few and slight. But the Opium-eater further says, that ‘Coleridge’s essay is prefaced by a few words, in which, aware of his coincidence with Schelling, he declares his willingness to acknowledge himself indebted to so great a man, in any case where the truth would allow him to do so; but in this particular case, insisting on the impossibility that he could have borrowed arguments which he had first seen some years after he had thought out the whole hypothesis *proprio Marte*.’ That Coleridge never can have been guilty of such a piece of scandalous dishonesty is clear even on the face of the charge: he never could apply the word *hypothesis* to that

<sup>17</sup> BL (CC) 1 252ff.

which has nothing hypothetical in it. The Opium-eater also is much too precise in his use of words to have done so, if he had known or considered what he was talking about. But he did not; and owing to this slovenly rashness of assertion, he has brought forward a heavy accusation, which is utterly false and groundless, the distorted offspring of a benighted memory under the incubus of—what shall we say?—*an ardent admiration*. Not a single word does Coleridge say about the originality of his essay one way or other. It is not prefaced by any remark. No mention is made of Schelling within a hundred pages of it, further than a quotation from him in page 247., and a reference to him in page 250.<sup>18</sup> In an earlier part of the work, however, where Coleridge is giving an account of his philosophical education, there does occur a passage (pp. 149–153.) about his obligations to Schelling, and his coincidences with him. This, no doubt, is the passage which the Opium-eater had in his head; but strangely indeed has he metamorphosed it. For Coleridge's vindication it is necessary to quote it somewhat at length:—

“ ‘It would be a mere act of justice to myself, were I to warn my readers, that an identity of thought, or even similarity of phrase, will not be at all times a certain proof that the passage has been borrowed from Schelling, or that the conceptions were originally learnt from him. Many of the most striking resemblances, indeed all the main and fundamental ideas, were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a page of the German philosopher. God forbid that I should be suspected of a wish to enter into a rivalry with Schelling for the honours so unequivocally his right, not only as a great and original genius, but as the founder of the philosophy of Nature, and as the most successful improver of the Dynamic system. To Schelling we owe the completion, and the most important victories, of this revolution in philosophy. To me it will be happiness and honour enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes. Whether a work is the offspring of a man's own spirit, and the product of original thinking, will be discovered by those who are its sole legitimate judges by better tests than the mere reference to dates. For readers in general, *let whatever shall be found in this or any future work of mine, that resembles or coincides with the doctrines of my German predecessor, though contemporary, be wholly attributed to him; provided that the absence of direct references to his books, which I could not at all times make with truth, as designating citations or thoughts actually derived from him, and*

<sup>18</sup> BL (CC) I 244, 248.

which I trust, would, after this general acknowledgement, be superfluous, be not charged on me as an ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism.<sup>19</sup>

“Yet the charge, which he thus earnestly deprecates, has been brought against him; and that, too, by a person entitling himself the foremost of his admirers! Heaven preserve all honest men from such forward admirers! The boy who rendered *nil admirari*,<sup>20</sup> *not to be admired*, must have had something of prophecy in him, when he pronounced this to be an indispensable recipe for happiness. Coleridge, we see, was so far from denying or shuffling about his debts to Schelling, that he makes over every passage to him on which the stamp of his mind could be discovered. Of a truth, if he had been disposed to purloin, he never would have stolen half a dozen pages from the head and front of that very work of Schelling’s which was the likeliest to fall into his reader’s hands; and the first sentence of which one could not read without detecting the plagiarism. Would any man think of pilfering a column from the porch of St. Paul’s? The high praise which Coleridge bestows on Schelling would naturally excite a wish, in such of his readers as felt an interest in his philosophy, to know more of the great German. The first books of his they would take up would be his *Naturphilosophie* and his *Transcendental Idealism*; these are the works which Coleridge himself mentions; and the latter, from its subject, would attract them the most. For the maturer exposition of Schelling’s philosophy, in the *Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik*, is hardly to be met with in England, having never been published except in that journal; and being still no more than a fragment. Indeed, Coleridge himself does not seem to have known it; and Germany has, for thirty years, looked in vain expectation for the doctrine of the greatest of her philosophers.

“But, even with the fullest conviction that Coleridge cannot have been guilty of intentional plagiarism, the reader will, probably, deem it strange that he should have transferred half a dozen pages of Schelling into his volume without any reference to their source. And strange it undoubtedly is! The only way I see of accounting for it is from his practice of keeping note-books or journals of his thoughts, filled with observations and brief dissertations on such matters as happened to strike him, with a sprinkling now and then of extracts and abstracts from the books he was reading. If the name of the author from whom he took an extract was left out, he might easily, years after, forget whose property it was;

<sup>19</sup> Ibid I 161–4 (var with omissions).

<sup>20</sup> “To admire/be astonished at nothing”. A Pythagorean maxim; the Latin

words appear in Cicero *Tusculan Disputations*.



especially when he had made it in some measure his own, by transfusing it into his own English. That this may happen I know from my own experience, having myself been lately puzzled by a passage which I had translated from Kant some years ago, and which cost me a good deal of search before I ascertained that it was not my own. Yet my memory in such minutiae is tolerably accurate, while Coleridge's was notoriously irretentive. That this solution is the true one may, I think, be collected from the references to Schelling, in pages 247. and 250. In both these places we find a couple of pages translated, with some changes and additions from the latter part of Schelling's *Abhandlungen zur Erläuterung des Idealismus der Wissenschaftslehre*. In neither place are we told that we are reading a translation. Yet that the author cannot be conscious of any intentional plagiarism is clear, from his mentioning Schelling's name, and, in the latter place, even that of this particular work. Here, again, I would conjecture, that the passages must have been transcribed from some old note-book; only in these instances, Schelling's name was marked down at the end of the first extract, and at the beginning of the second; and so the end of the first extract is ascribed to him, and he is cited at the beginning of the second.

"There is also another passage about the mystics, in pages 140, 141.,<sup>21</sup> acknowledged to be translated from a recent continental writer, which comes from Schelling's pamphlet against Fichte. In this case, Coleridge knew that he was setting forth what he had borrowed from another: for he had not been long acquainted with this work of Schelling's, as may be gathered from his way of speaking of it in p. 153. and from his saying, in p. 150.<sup>22</sup> that Schelling has *lately* avowed his affectionate reverence for Behmen. Schelling's pamphlet had appeared eleven years before; but, perhaps, it did not find its way to England till the peace; and Coleridge, having read it but recently, inferred that it was a recent publication. These passages form well nigh the sum of Coleridge's loans from Schelling; and, with regard to these, on the grounds here stated, though I do not presume to rank myself among the foremost of his admirers, I readily acquit him of all suspicion of ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism."\*

A single word more. It is said that Mr. Coleridge was "an unconscionable plagiarist, *like Byron*."† With submission, nothing could possibly be

\* British Magazine, January, 1835.

† Edinburgh Review, cxxiii. Of course I have no intention of answering the criticisms or correcting all the mistakes of the Edinburgh Reviewer; but one of his remarks deserves notice. He quotes two passages, the one beginning—"Negatively, there

<sup>21</sup> *BL (CC)* I 147–9.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid* I 164, 161.

more unlike. The charge against Lord Byron,—not his own affected one, but the real one, is this,—that having borrowed liberally from particular passages, and being deeply, although indefinitely, indebted to the spirit of the writings of Wordsworth and Coleridge—yes, and of Southey, too—he not only made no acknowledgment—that was not necessary,—but upon the principle of the *odisse quem læseris*<sup>23</sup> he took every opportunity, and broke through every decency of literature, and even common manners, to malign, degrade, and, as far as in him lay, to destroy the public and private characters of those great men. He did this in works published by himself in his own lifetime, and what is more, he did it in violation of his knowledge and convictions to the contrary; for his own previous written and spoken admiration of the genius of those whom he so traduced and affected to condemn was, and still is, on record; so that well might one of his invulnerable antagonists say;—“Lord Byron must have known that I had the *floci* of his eulogium to balance the *nauci* of his scorn, and that the one would have *nihili-pilified* the other, even if I had not well understood the worthlessness of both.”\*

Now, let the *taking* on the part of Coleridge be allowed,—need I, after the preceding passage cited by Mr. Hare, expressly draw the contrast as to the *manner*? Verily of Lord Byron, morally and intellectually considered, it may be said:—

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may be more of the philosophy of Socrates in the Memorabilia of Xenophon,” &c. (vol. i. p. 16.),<sup>23</sup> and the other beginning—“Plato’s works are logical exercises for the mind,” &c. (vol. i. p. 48.),<sup>24</sup> and says they are contradictory. They might, perhaps, have been more clearly expressed; but no contradiction was intended, nor do the words imply any. Mr. C. meant in both, that Xenophon had preserved the most of the *man* Socrates; that he was the best Boswell; and that Socrates, as a *persona dialogi*, was little more than a poetical phantom in Plato’s hands. On the other hand, he says that Plato is more *Socratic*, that is, more of a philosopher in the Socratic *mode* of reasoning (Cicero calls the Platonic writings generally, *Socratici libri*); and Mr. C. also says, that in the metaphysical disquisitions Plato is Pythagorean, meaning, that he worked on the supposed ideal or transcendental principles of the extraordinary founder of the Italian school.

And I cannot forbear expressing my surprise that the Edinburgh Reviewer—so imperfectly acquainted with Mr. Coleridge’s writings as he evidently is—should have permitted himself the use of such language as that “Coleridge was an unconscionable plagiarist,” and that “he pillaged from himself and others;”—charges, which a little more knowledge of his subject, or a little less reliance on the already exposed misrepresentations of a magazine, would surely have prevented him from flinging out so hastily against the memory of a great man.—Ed.

\* Southey’s Essays, Moral and Political. Vol. ii. Letter concerning Lord Byron.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See TT 36:15, below.

<sup>24</sup> See TT 36:50, below.

<sup>25</sup> Tacitus *Agricola* 42. “To hate those whom you have injured”. Tr Peterson

(LCL).

<sup>26</sup> *Essays, Moral and Political* (1832) II 203.

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Si non alium late spirasset odorem,  
Laurus erat.<sup>27</sup>

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It was in my heart to have adverted to one other point of a different and graver character, in respect of which the unfeeling petulance and imperfect knowledge of Mr. Dequincey have contributed to make what he says upon it a cruel calumny on Coleridge. But I refrain. This is not the place. A time will come when Coleridge's Life may be written without wounding the feelings or gratifying the malice of any one;—and then, amongst other misrepresentations, that as to the origin of his recourse to opium will be made manifest; and the tale of his long and passionate struggles with, and final victory over, the habit, will form one of the brightest as well as most interesting traits of the moral and religious being of this humble, this exalted, Christian.

—But how could this writer trust to the discretion of Coleridge's friends and relatives? What, if a justly provoked anger had burst the bounds of compassion! Does not Mr. Dequincey well know that with regard to this as well as every other article in his vile heap of personalities, the little finger of recrimination would bruise his head in the dust?—]

Coleridge himself—blessings on his gentle memory!—Coleridge was a frail mortal. He had indeed his peculiar weaknesses as well as his unique powers; sensibilities that an averted look would rack, a heart which would have beaten calmly in the tremblings of an earthquake. He shrank from mere uneasiness like a child, and bore the preparatory agonies of his death-attack like a martyr. Sinned against a thousand times more than sinning, he himself suffered an almost life-long punishment for his errors, whilst the world at large has the unwithering fruits of his labours, his genius, and his sacrifice. *Necesse est tanquam immaturam mortem ejus defleam; si tamen fas est aut flere, aut omnino mortem vocare, qua tanti viri mortalitas magis finita quam vita est. Vivit enim, vivetque semper, atque etiam latius in memoria hominum et sermone versabitur, postquam ab oculis recessit.*<sup>28</sup>

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Samuel Taylor Coleridge was the youngest child of the Reverend John Coleridge, Vicar of the Parish of Ottery St. Mary, in the county of

<sup>27</sup> “Had it not wafted afar a different odour, it would have been a laurel.” See above, 15 Oct 1833 and n 13.

<sup>28</sup> Pliny the Younger *Letters* 2.1. “I am not constrained to lament his death, as if it were immature . . . if indeed it be permissible to grieve at all, or to call that event *death*, which, to *such* a man, is

rather to be looked upon as the period of his mortality than of his life. For he lives, and will continue to live for ever; and his fame will be spread further by the recollection and the tongues of men now that he is removed from their sight.” Tr William Melmoth, rev W. M. L. Hutchinson (LCL 1915).

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Devon, and master of Henry the Eighth's Free Grammar School in that town. His mother's maiden name was Ann Bowdon. He was born at Ottery on the 21st of October, 1772, "about eleven o'clock in the forenoon," as his father the Vicar has, with rather a curious particularity, entered it in the register.

He died on the 25th of July, 1834, in Mr. Gillman's house, in the Grove, Highgate, and is buried in the old church-yard, by the road side.

ΑΙ ΔΕ ΤΕΑΙ ΖΩΟΥΣΙΝ ΑΗΔΟΝΕΣ———.<sup>29</sup>

H.N.C.

<sup>29</sup> Callimachus *Epigrams* 2. "But thy nightingales live still". Tr A. W. Mair (LCL 1921).



## TABLE TALK.

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December 29. 1822.

CHARACTER OF OTHELLO.—SCHILLER'S ROBBERS.—SHAKSPEARE.—SCOTCH NOVELS.—LORD BYRON.—JOHN KEMBLE.—MATHEWS.

[1] OTHELLO must not be conceived as a negro, but a high and chivalrous Moorish chief. Shakspeare learned the spirit of the character from the Spanish poetry, which was prevalent in England in his time.\* Jealousy does not strike me as the point in his passion; I take it to be rather an agony that the creature, whom he had believed angelic, with whom he had garnered up his heart, and whom he could not help still loving, should be proved impure and worthless. It was the struggle *not* to love her. It was a moral indignation and regret that virtue should so fall:—"But yet the *pity* of it, Iago!—O Iago! the *pity* of it, Iago!" In addition to this, his honour was concerned: Iago would not have succeeded but by hinting that his honour was compromised. There is no ferocity in Othello; his mind is majestic and composed. He deliberately determines to die; and speaks his last speech with a view of showing his attachment to the Venetian state, though it had superseded him.

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[2] Schiller has the material Sublime†; to produce an effect, he sets you a whole town on fire, and throws infants with their mothers into the flames, or locks up a father in an old tower. But Shakspeare drops a handkerchief, and the same or greater effects follow.

Caballeros Granadinos,  
Aunque Moros, hijos d'algo.<sup>1</sup>—ED.

† This expression—"material sublime"—like a hundred others which have slipped into general use, came originally from Mr. Coleridge, and was by him, in the first instance, applied to Schiller's Robbers.<sup>2</sup>—Sec Act iv. sc. 5.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> "Knights of Grenada, Gentlemen, albeit Moors." Cited in John Gibson Lockhart's Introduction to *Ancient Spanish Ballads, Historical and Romantic* (Edinburgh 1823) xxii.

<sup>2</sup> See 6 Jan 1823 n 5, vol 1, above.

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Lear is the most tremendous effort of Shakspeare as a poet; Hamlet as a philosopher or meditater; and Othello is the union of the two. There is something gigantic and unformed in the former two; but in the latter, every thing assumes its due place and proportion, and the whole mature powers of his mind are displayed in admirable equilibrium.

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[3] I think *Old Mortality* and *Guy Mannering* the best of the Scotch novels.

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[4] It seems, to my ear, that there is a sad want of harmony in Lord Byron's verses. Is it not unnatural to be always connecting very great intellectual power with utter depravity? Does such a combination often really exist *in rerum naturâ*?

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[5] I always had a great liking—I may say, a sort of nondescript reverence—for John Kemble. What a quaint creature he was! I remember a party, in which he was discoursing in his measured manner after dinner, when the servant announced his carriage. He nodded, and went on. The announcement took place twice afterwards; Kemble each time nodding his head a little more impatiently, but still going on. At last, and for the fourth time, the servant entered, and said,—“Mrs. Kemble says, sir, she has the rheumatise, and cannot stay.” “Add *ism!*” dropped John, in a parenthesis, and proceeded quietly in his harangue.

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[6] Kemble would correct any body, at any time, and in any place. Dear Charles Mathews—a true genius in his line, in my judgment—told me he was once performing privately before the King. The King was much pleased with the imitation of Kemble, and said,—“I liked Kemble very much. He was one of my earliest friends. I remember once he was talking, and found himself out of snuff. I offered him my box. He declined taking any—‘he, a poor actor, could not put his fingers into a royal box.’ I said, ‘Take some, pray; you will oblige me.’ Upon which Kemble replied,—‘It would become your royal mouth better to say, oblige me;’ and took a pinch.”

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[7] It is not easy to put me out of countenance, or interrupt the feeling of the time by mere external noise or circumstance; yet once I was thor-

oughly *done up*, as you would say. I was reciting, at a particular house, the “Remorse;” and was in the midst of Alhadra’s description\* of the death of her husband, when a scrubby boy, with a shining face set in dirt, burst open the door and cried out,—“Please, ma’am, master says, Will you ha’, or will you *not* ha’, the pin-round?”

“ALHADRA. This night your chieftain arm’d himself,  
And hurried from me. But I follow’d him  
At distance, till I saw him enter *there*!

NAOMI. The cavern?

ALHADRA. Yes, the mouth of yonder cavern.  
After a while I saw the son of Valdez  
Rush by with flaring torch: he likewise enter’d.  
There was another and a longer pause;  
And once, methought, I heard the clash of swords!  
And soon the son of Valdez re-appear’d:  
He flung his torch towards the moon in sport,  
And seem’d as he were mirthful! I stood listening,  
Impatient for the footsteps of my husband.

NAOMI. Thou calledst him?

ALHADRA. I crept into the cavern—  
’Twas dark and very silent. What saidst thou?  
No! No! I did not dare call Isidore,  
Lest I should hear no answer! A brief while,  
Belike, I lost all thought and memory  
Of that for which I came! After that pause,  
O Heaven! I heard a groan, and follow’d it;  
And yet another groan, which guided me  
Into a strange recess—and there was light,  
A hideous light! his torch lay on the ground;  
Its flame burnt dimly o’er a chasm’s brink:  
I spake; and whilst I spake, a feeble groan  
Came from that chasm! it was his last—his death-groan!

NAOMI. Comfort her, Allah!

ALHADRA. I stood in unimaginable trance  
And agony that cannot be remember’d,  
Listening with horrid hope to hear a groan!  
But I had heard his last;—my husband’s death-groan!

NAOMI. Haste! let us onward!

ALHADRA. I look’d far down the pit—  
My sight was bounded by a jutting fragment;  
And it was stain’d with blood. Then first I shriek’d;  
My eyeballs burnt, my brain grew hot as fire,  
And all the hanging drops of the wet roof  
Turn’d into blood—I saw them turn to blood!  
And I was leaping wildly down the chasm,  
When on the further brink I saw his sword,  
And it said, Vengeance!—Curses on my tongue!  
The moon hath moved in heaven, and I am here,  
And he hath not had vengeance!—Isidore!  
Spirit of Isidore, thy murderer lives!  
Away, away!”—Act iv. sc. 3.



January 1. 1823.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.—PERMANENCY AND PROGRESSION  
OF NATIONS.—KANT'S RACES OF MANKIND.

[8] PRIVILEGE is a substitution for Law, where, from the nature of the circumstances, a law cannot act without clashing with greater and more general principles. The House of Commons must, of course, have the power of taking cognizance of offences against its own rights. Sir Francis Burdett might have been properly sent to the Tower for the speech he made in the House\*; but when afterwards he published it in Cobbett, and they took cognizance of it as a breach of privilege, they violated the plain distinction between privilege and law. As a speech in the House, the House could alone animadvert upon it, consistently with the effective preservation of its most necessary prerogative of freedom of debate; but when that speech became a book, then the law was to look to it; and there being a law of libel, commensurate with every possible object of attack in the state, privilege, which acts, or ought to act, only as a substitute for other laws, could have nothing to do with it. I have heard that one distinguished individual said,—“That he, for one, would not shrink from affirming, that if the House of Commons chose to *burn* one of their own members in Palace Yard, it had an inherent power and right by the constitution to do so.” This was said, if at all, by a moderate-minded man; and may show to what atrocious tyranny some persons may advance in theory, under shadow of this word privilege.

[9] There are two principles in every European and Christian state: Permanency and Progression.† In the civil wars of the seventeenth century

\* March 12. 1810. Sir Francis Burdett made a motion in the House of Commons for the discharge of Mr. Gale Jones, who had been committed to Newgate by a resolution of the House on the 21st of February preceding. Sir Francis afterwards published, in Cobbett's Political Register, of the 24th of the same month of March, a “Letter to his Constituents, denying the power of the House of Commons to imprison the people of England,” and he accompanied the letter with an argument in support of his position. On the 27th of March a complaint of breach of privilege, founded on this publication, was made in the House by Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Lethbridge, and after several long debates, a motion that Sir Francis Burdett should be committed to the Tower was made on the 5th of April, 1810, by Sir Robert Salisbury, and carried by a majority of 38.—Ed.

† See this position stated and illustrated in detail in Mr. Coleridge's work, “On the Constitution of the Church and State, according to the Idea of each,” p. 21. 2d edit. 1830.<sup>1</sup> Well acquainted as I am with the fact of the comparatively small acceptance

<sup>1</sup> C&S (CC) 24–5. See 6 Jan 1823 n 11, vol I, above.

in England, which are as new and fresh now as they were a hundred and sixty years ago, and will be so for ever to us, these two principles came to a struggle. It was natural that the great and the good of the nation should be found in the ranks of either side. In the Mohammedan states, there is no principle of permanence; and, therefore, they sink directly. They existed, and could only exist, in their efforts at progression; when they ceased to conquer, they fell in pieces. Turkey would long since have fallen, had it not been supported by the rival and conflicting interests of Christian Europe. The Turks have no church; religion and state are one; hence there is no counterpoise, no mutual support. This is the very essence of their Unitarianism. They have no past; they are not an historical people; they exist only in the present. China is an instance of a permanency without progression. The Persians are a superior race: they have a history and a literature; they were always considered by the Greeks as quite distinct from the other barbarians. The Afghans are a remarkable people. They have a sort of republic. Europeans and Orientalists may be well represented by two figures standing back to back: the latter looking to the east, that is, backwards; the former looking westward, or forwards.

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[10] Kant assigns three great races of mankind. If two individuals of distinct races cross, a third, or *tertium aliquid*, is *invariably* produced, different from either, as a white and a negro produce a mulatto. But when different varieties of the same race cross, the offspring is according to what we call chance; it is now like one, now like the other parent. Note this, when you see the children of any couple of distinct European complexions,—as English and Spanish, German and Italian, Russian and Portuguese, and so on.

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which Mr. Coleridge's prose works have ever found in the literary world, and with the reasons, and, what is more, with the causes, of it, I still wonder that this particular treatise has not been more noticed: first, because it is a little book; secondly, because it is, or at least nineteen-twentieths of it are, written in a popular style; and thirdly, because it is the *only* work, that I know or have ever heard mentioned, that even attempts a solution of the difficulty in which an ingenious enemy of the church of England may easily involve most of its modern defenders in Parliament, or through the press, upon their own principles and admissions. Mr. Coleridge himself prized this little work highly, although he admitted its incompleteness as a composition:—"But I don't care a rush about it," he said to me, "as an author. The saving distinctions are plainly stated in it, and I am sure nothing is wanted to make them *tell*, but that some kind friend should steal them from their obscure hiding-place, and just tumble them down before the public as *his own*."—ED.

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January 3. 1823.

MATERIALISM.—GHOSTS.

[11] EITHER we have an immortal soul, or we have not. If we have not, we are beasts; the first and wisest of beasts, it may be; but still true beasts.\* We shall only differ in degree, and not in kind; just as the elephant differs from the slug. But by the concession of all the materialists of all the schools, or almost all, we are not of the same kind as beasts—and this also we say from our own consciousness. Therefore, methinks, it must be the possession of a soul within us that makes the difference.

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[12] Read the first chapter of Genesis without prejudice, and you will be convinced at once. After the narrative of the creation of the earth and brute animals, Moses seems to pause, and says:—"And God said, Let us make man in *our image*, after *our likeness*." And in the next chapter, he repeats the narrative:—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;" and then he adds these words,—"and *man became a living soul*." Materialism will never explain those last words.

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[13] Define a vulgar ghost with reference to all that is called ghost-like. It is visibility without tangibility; which is also the definition of a shadow. Therefore, a vulgar ghost and a shadow would be the same; because two different things cannot properly have the same definition. A *visible substance* without susceptibility of impact, I maintain to be an absurdity. Unless there be an external substance, the bodily eye *cannot* see it; therefore, in all such cases, that which is supposed to be seen is, in fact, *not* seen, but is an image of the brain. External objects naturally produce sensation; but here, in truth, sensation produces, as it were, the external object.

In certain states of the nerves, however, I do believe that the eye, al-

\* "Try to conceive a *man* without the ideas of God, eternity, freedom, will, absolute truth; of the good, the true, the beautiful, the infinite. An *animal* endowed with a memory of appearances and facts might remain. But the *man* will have vanished, and you have instead a creature more subtle than any beast of the field, but likewise cursed above every beast of the field; upon the belly must it go, and dust must it eat all the days of its life."—*Church and State*, p. 54. n.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C&S (CC) 47n. See 7 Jan–13 Feb 1823 n 12, vol 1, above.

though not consciously so directed, may, by a slight convulsion, see a portion of the body, as if opposite to it. The part actually seen will by common association seem the whole; and the whole body will then constitute an external object, which explains many stories of persons seeing themselves lying dead. Bishop Berkeley once experienced this. He had the presence of mind to ring the bell, and feel his pulse; keeping his eye still fixed on his own figure right opposite to him. He was in a high fever, and the brain image died away as the door opened. I observed something very like it once at Grasmere; and was so conscious of the cause, that I told a person what I was experiencing, whilst the image still remained.

Of course, if the vulgar ghost be really a shadow, there must be some substance of which it is the shadow. These visible and intangible shadows, without substances to cause them, are absurd.

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January 4. 1823.

CHARACTER OF THE AGE FOR LOGIC.—PLATO AND XENOPHON.  
—GREEK DRAMA.—KOTZEBUE.—BURKE.—PLAGIARISTS.

[14] THIS is not a logical age. A friend lately gave me some political pamphlets of the times of Charles I. and the Cromwellate. In them the premisses are frequently wrong, but the deductions are almost always legitimate; whereas, in the writings of the present day, the premisses are commonly sound, but the conclusions false. I think a great deal of commendation is due to the University of Oxford for preserving the study of logic in the schools. It is a great mistake to suppose geometry any substitute for it.

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[15] Negatively, there may be more of the philosophy of Socrates in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon than in Plato: that is, there is less of what does not belong to Socrates; but the general spirit of, and impression left by, Plato, are more Socratic.\*

\* See p. 51. Mr. Coleridge meant in both these passages, that Xenophon had preserved the most of the *man* Socrates; that he was the best Boswell; and that Socrates, as a *persona dialogi*, was little more than a poetical phantom in Plato's hands. On the other hand, he says that Plato is more *Socratic*, that is, more of a philosopher in the Socratic *mode* of reasoning (Cicero calls the Platonic writings generally, *Socratici libri*); and Mr. C. also says, that in the metaphysical disquisitions Plato is Pythagorean, meaning, that he worked on the supposed ideal or transcendental principles of the extraordinary founder of the Italian school.

[16] In Æschylus religion appears terrible, malignant, and persecuting: Sophocles is the mildest of the three tragedians, but the persecuting aspect is still maintained: Euripides is like a modern Frenchman, never so happy as when giving a slap at the gods altogether.

[17] Kotzebue represents the petty kings of the islands in the Pacific Ocean exactly as so many Homeric chiefs. Riches command universal influence, and all the kings are supposed to be descended from the gods.

[18] I confess I doubt the Homeric genuineness of δακρυόεν γελάσασα.\* It sounds to me much more like a prettiness of Bion or Moschus.

[19] The very greatest writers write best when calm, and exerting themselves upon subjects unconnected with party. Burke rarely shows all his powers, unless where he is in a passion. The French Revolution was alone a subject fit for him. We are not yet aware of all the consequences of that event. We are too near it.

[20] Goldsmith did every thing happily.

[21] You abuse snuff! Perhaps it is the final cause of the human nose.

[22] A rogue is a roundabout fool; a fool *in circumbendibus*.

[23] *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. A dunghill at a distance sometimes smells like musk, and a dead dog like elder-flowers.<sup>2</sup>

\*

ὥς εἰπὼν, ἀλόχοιο φίλης ἐν χερσὶν ἔθηκε  
παῖδ' ἑόν· ἥ δ' ἄρα μιν κηῶδεϊ δέξατο κόλπῳ,  
δακρυόεν γελάσασα.—Iliad. Z. vi. 482.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Homer *Iliad* 6.482–4, tr A. T. Murray (LCL): “So saying, he laid his child in his dear wife’s arms, and she took him to her fragrant bosom, smiling through her tears”. See 7 Jan–13 Feb 1823 n 34, above.

<sup>2</sup> Not in TT; added in 1836 from the Gutch Notebook (CN 1 223). C had used the simile of the dunghill and musk in *Omniana* (1812)—TT (1884) 370—and expanded it in AR (1825) 116. HNC seems to have supplied the Latin from

[24] Plagiarists are always suspicious of being stolen from,—as pick-pockets are observed commonly to walk with their hands in their breeches' pockets.<sup>3</sup>

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January 6. 1823.

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.—CHRISTIANITY.—EPISTLE TO THE  
HEBREWS.—THE LOGOS.—REASON AND UNDERSTANDING.

[25] ST. JOHN had a twofold object in his Gospel and his Epistles,—to prove the divinity, and also the actual human nature and bodily suffering, of Jesus Christ,—that he was God and Man. The notion that the effusion of blood and water from the Saviour's side was intended to prove the real *death* of the sufferer originated, I believe, with some modern Germans, and seems to me ridiculous: there is, indeed, a very small quantity of water occasionally in the præcordia: but in the pleura, where wounds are not generally mortal, there is a great deal. St. John did not mean, I apprehend, to insinuate that the spear-thrust made the *death*, merely as such, certain or evident, but that the effusion showed the human nature. "I saw it," he would say, "with my own eyes. It was real blood, composed of lymph and crassamentum, and not a mere celestial ichor, as the Phantasmists allege."

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[26] I think the verse of the three witnesses (1 John, v. 7.) spurious, not only because the balance of external authority is against it, as Porson seems to have shown; but also, because, in my way of looking at it, it spoils the reasoning.

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[27] St. John's logic is Oriental, and consists chiefly in position and parallel; whilst St. Paul displays all the intricacies of the Greek system.

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[28] Whatever may be thought of the genuineness or authority of any part of the book of Daniel, it makes no difference in my belief in Christianity; for Christianity is within a man, even as he is a being gifted with reason;

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Tacitus *Agricola* § 30; tr M. Hutton (LCL): "the unknown is ever magnificent".

<sup>3</sup> Not in TT; added in 1836 from the Gutch Notebook (CN 1 224).

it is associated with your mother's chair, and with the first-remembered tones of her blessed voice.

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[29] I do not believe St. Paul to be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Luther's conjecture is very probable, that it was by Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew. The plan is too studiously regular for St. Paul. It was evidently written during the yet existing glories of the Temple. For three hundred years the church did not affix St. Paul's name to it; but its apostolical or catholic character, independently of its genuineness as to St. Paul, was never much doubted.

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[30] The first three Gospels show the history, that is, the fulfilment of the prophecies in the facts. St. John declares explicitly the doctrine, oracularly, and without comment, because, being pure reason, it can only be proved by itself. For Christianity proves itself, as the sun is seen by its own light. Its evidence is involved in its existence. St. Paul writes more particularly for the dialectic understanding; and proves those doctrines, which were capable of such proof, by common logic.

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[31] St. John used the term ὁ Λόγος technically. Philo-Judæus had so used it several years before the probable date of the composition of this Gospel; and it was commonly understood amongst the Jewish Rabbis at that time, and afterwards, of the manifested God.

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[32] Our translators, unfortunately, as I think, render the clause πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν\*, “with God;” that would be right, if the Greek were σὺν τῷ Θεῷ. By the preposition πρὸς in this place, is meant the utmost possible *proximity*, without *confusion*; likeness, without sameness. The Jewish Church understood the Messiah to be a divine person. Philo expressly cautions against any one's supposing the Logos to be a mere personification, or symbol. He says, the Logos is a substantial, self-existent Being. The Gnostics, as they were afterwards called, were a kind of Arians; and thought the Logos was an after-birth. They placed Ἀβυσσος and Σιγή (the Abyss and Silence) before him. Therefore it was that St. John said, with emphasis, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος—“In the *beginning* was

\* John, ch. i. v. 1, 2.

the Word." He was begotten in the first simultaneous burst of Godhead, if such an expression may be pardoned, in speaking of eternal existence.

[33] The Understanding suggests the materials of reasoning: the Reason decides upon them. The first can only say,—This *is*, or *ought* to be so. The last says,—It *must* be so.\*

April 27. 1823.

KEAN.—SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.—SIR H. DAVY.—ROBERT SMITH.—CANNING.—NATIONAL DEBT.—POOR LAWS.

[34] KEAN is original; but he copies from himself. His rapid descents from the hyper-tragic to the infra-colloquial, though sometimes productive of great effect, are often unreasonable. To see him act, is like reading Shakspeare by flashes of lightning. I do not think him thorough-bred gentleman enough to play Othello.

[35] Sir James Mackintosh is the king of the men of talent. He is a most elegant converser. How well I remember his giving breakfast to me and Sir Humphry Davy, at that time an unknown young man, and our having a very spirited talk about Locke and Newton, and so forth! When Davy was gone, Mackintosh said to me, "That's a very extraordinary young man; but he is gone wrong on some points." But Davy was, at that time at least, a man of genius;<sup>1</sup> and I doubt if Mackintosh ever heartily appreciated an eminently original man. He is uncommonly powerful in his

\* I have preserved this, and several other equivalent remarks, out of a dutiful wish to popularize, by all the honest means in my power, this fundamental distinction; a thorough mastery of which Mr. Coleridge considered necessary to any sound system of psychology; and in the denial or neglect of which, he delighted to point out the source of most of the vulgar errors in philosophy and religion. The distinction itself is implied throughout almost all Mr. C.'s works, whether in verse or prose; but it may be found minutely argued in the "Aids to Reflection," p. 206, &c. 2d edit. 1831.<sup>1</sup>—ED.

<sup>1</sup> AR (1825) 207–28. See also 7 Jan–13 Feb 1823 n 44, above.

<sup>1</sup> In the same year as the publication of *Fragmentary Remains, Literary and Scientific, of Sir Humphry Davy* . . . ed John Davy (1858), Clement Carlyon re-

called happy occasions with Davy and C in the autumn of 1803 and later and quoted from Davy's praises of C to Poole in 1803, 1807, and 1825. Carlyon i 198–241, 256–7, 259.



own line; but it is not the line of a first-rate man. After all his fluency and brilliant erudition, you can rarely carry off any thing worth preserving. You might not improperly write on his forehead, “Warehouse to let!” He always dealt too much in generalities for a lawyer. He is deficient in power in applying his principles to the points in debate. I remember Robert Smith had much more logical ability; but Smith aimed at conquest by any gladiatorial shift; whereas Mackintosh was uniformly candid in argument. I am speaking now from old recollections.<sup>2</sup>

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[36] Canning is very irritable, surprisingly so for a wit who is always giving such hard knocks. He should have put on an ass’s skin before he went into parliament. Lord Liverpool is the single stay of this ministry; but he is not a man of a directing mind. He cannot ride on the whirlwind. He serves as the isthmus to connect one half of the cabinet with the other. He always gives you the common sense of the matter, and in that it is that his strength in debate lies.

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[37] The national debt has, in fact, made more men rich than have a right to be so, or, rather, any ultimate power, in case of a struggle, of actualizing their riches. It is, in effect, like an ordinary, where three hundred tickets have been distributed, but where there is, in truth, room only for one hundred. So long as you can amuse the company with any thing else, or make them come in successively, all is well, and the whole three hundred fancy themselves sure of a dinner; but if any suspicion of a hoax should arise, and they were all to rush into the room at once, there would be two hundred without a potato for their money; and the table would be occupied by the landholders, who live on the spot.

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[38] Poor-laws are the inevitable accompaniments of an extensive commerce and a manufacturing system. In Scotland, they did without them, till Glasgow and Paisley became great manufacturing places, and then people said, “We must subscribe for the poor, or else we shall have poor-laws.” That is to say, they enacted for themselves a poor-law in order to avoid having a poor-law enacted for them. It is absurd to talk of Queen Elizabeth’s act as creating the poor-laws of this country. The

<sup>2</sup> SC added to *TT* (1851) 15n confirmation from Mackintosh’s “intimate friend”, Robert Hall, that the images in

his “spacious repository” were imported; see App F 1, above.

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poor-rates are the consideration paid by, or on behalf of, capitalists for having labour at demand. It is the price, and nothing else. The hardship consists in the agricultural interests having to pay an undue proportion of the rates; for although, perhaps, in the end, the land becomes more valuable, yet, at the first, the landowners have to bear all the brunt. I think there ought to be a fixed revolving period for the equalization of rates.

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*April 28. 1823.*

CONDUCT OF THE WHIGS.—REFORM OF THE HOUSE  
OF COMMONS.

[39] THE conduct of the Whigs is extravagantly inconsistent. It originated in the fatal error which Fox committed, in persisting, after the first three years of the French Revolution, when every shadow of freedom in France had vanished, in eulogizing the men and measures of that shallow-hearted people. So he went on gradually, further and further departing from all the principles of English policy and wisdom, till at length he became the panegyrist, through thick and thin, of a military frenzy, under the influence of which the very name of liberty was detested. And thus it was that, in course of time, Fox's party became the absolute abettors of the Buonapartean invasion of Spain, and did all in their power to thwart the generous efforts of this country to resist it. Now, when the invasion is by a Bourbon, and the cause of the Spanish nation neither united nor, indeed, sound in many respects, the Whigs would precipitate this country into a crusade to fight up the cause of a faction.

I have the honour of being slightly known to my lord Darnley. In 1808-9, I met him accidentally, when, after a few words of salutation, he said to me, "Are you mad, Mr. Coleridge?"—"Not that I know, my lord," I replied; "what have I done which argues any derangement of mind?"—"Why, I mean," said he, "those letters of yours in the *Courier*, 'On the Hopes and Fears of a People invaded by foreign Armies.' The Spaniards are absolutely conquered; it is absurd to talk of their chance of resisting."—"Very well, my lord," I said, "we shall see. But will your lordship permit me, in the course of a year or two, to retort your question upon you, if I should have grounds for so doing?"—"Certainly!" said he; "that is fair!" Two years afterwards, when affairs were altered in Spain, I met Lord Darnley again, and, after some conversation, ventured to say to him, "Does your lordship recollect giving me leave to retort a certain question upon you about the Spaniards? Who is

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mad now?"—"Very true, very true, Mr. Coleridge," cried he: "you are right. It is very extraordinary. It was a very happy and bold guess." Upon which I remarked, "I think '*guess*' is hardly a fair term. For, has any thing happened that has happened, from any other causes, or under any other conditions, than such as I laid down beforehand?" Lord Darnley, who was always very courteous to me, took this with a pleasant nod of his head.

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[40] Many votes are given for reform in the House of Commons, which are not honest. Whilst it is well known that the measure will not be carried in parliament, it is as well to purchase some popularity by voting for it. When Hunt and his associates, before the Six Acts, created a panic, the ministers lay on their oars for three or four months, until the general cry, even from the opposition, was, "Why don't the ministers come forward with some protective measure?" The present Ministry exists on the weakness and desperate character of the Opposition. The sober part of the nation are afraid of the latter getting into power, lest they should redeem some of their pledges.

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April 29. 1823.

CHURCH OF ROME.

[41] THE present adherents of the church of Rome are not, in my judgment, Catholics. We are the Catholics. We can prove that we hold the doctrines of the primitive church for the first three hundred years. The council of Trent made the Papists what they are.\* A foreign Romish bishop† has declared, that the Protestants of his acquaintance were more like what he conceived the enlightened Catholics to have been before the council of Trent, than the best of the latter in his days. Perhaps you will say, this bishop was not a *good* Catholic. I cannot answer for that. The course of Christianity and the Christian church may not unaptly be likened to a mighty river, which filled a wide channel, and bore along with its waters mud, and gravel, and weeds, till it met a great rock in the middle of its stream. By some means or other, the water flows purely, and

\* See Aids to Reflection, p. 180. note.<sup>1</sup>

† Mr. Coleridge named him, but the name was strange to me, and I have been unable to recover it.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> AR (1825) 206n.

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separated from the filth, in a deeper and narrower course on one side of the rock, and the refuse of the dirt and troubled water goes off on the other in a broader current, and then cries out, “*We are the river!*”

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[42] A person said to me lately, “But you will, for civility’s sake, *call* them *Catholics*, will you not?” I answered, that I would not; for I would not tell a lie upon any, much less upon so solemn an, occasion.” The adherents of the church of Rome, I repeat, are not *Catholic* Christians. If they are, then it follows that we Protestants are heretics and schismatics, as, indeed, the Papists very logically, from their own premisses, call us. And “*Roman Catholics*” makes no difference. Catholicism is not capable of degrees or local apportionments. There can be but one body of Catholics, *ex vi termini*. To talk strictly of *Irish* or *Scotch Roman Catholics* is a mere absurdity.

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[43] It is common to hear it said, that, if the legal disabilities are removed, the Romish church will lose ground in this country. I think the reverse: the Romish religion is, or, in certain hands, is capable of being made, so flattering to the passions and self-delusion of men, that it is impossible to say how far it would spread, amongst the higher orders of society especially, if the secular disadvantages now attending its profession were removed.\*

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April 30. 1823.

ZENDAVESTA.—PANTHEISM AND IDOLATRY.

[44] THE Zendavesta must, I think, have been copied in parts from the writings of Moses. In the description of the creation, the first chapter of Genesis is taken almost literally, except that the sun is created *before* the light, and then the herbs and the plants after the sun; which are precisely the two points they did not understand, and therefore altered as errors.†

\* Here, at least, the prophecy has been fulfilled. The wisdom of our ancestors, in the reign of King William III., would have been jealous of the daily increase in the numbers of the Romish church in England, of which every attentive observer must be aware. See *Sancti Dominici Pallium*, in vol. ii. p. 80. of Mr. Coleridge’s *Poems*.<sup>1</sup>—Ed.

† The Zend, or Zendavesta, is the sacred book ascribed to Zoroaster, or Zerdusht,

<sup>1</sup> See 27 Apr 1823 n 31, vol 1, above.

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There are only two acts of creation, properly so called, in the Mosaic account,—the material universe and man. The intermediate acts seem more as the results of secondary causes, or, at any rate, of a modification of prepared materials.

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[45] Pantheism and idolatry naturally end in each other; for all extremes meet. The Judaic religion is the exact medium, the true compromise.

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May 1. 1823.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STORIES OF DREAMS AND GHOSTS.—  
PHANTOM PORTRAIT.—WITCH OF ENDOR.—SOCINIANISM.

[46] THERE is a great difference in the credibility to be attached to stories of dreams and stories of ghosts. Dreams have nothing in them which are absurd and nonsensical; and, though most of the coincidences may be readily explained by the diseased system of the dreamer, and the great and surprising power of association, yet it is impossible to say whether an inner sense does not really exist in the mind, seldom developed, indeed, but which may have a power of presentiment.\* All the external senses have their correspondents in the mind; the eye can see an object before it is distinctly apprehended;—why may there not be a correspond-

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the founder or reformer of the Magian religion. The modern edition or paraphrase of this work, called the *Sadda*, written in the Persian of the day, was, I believe, composed about three hundred years ago.<sup>2</sup>—ED.

\* See this point suggested and reasoned with extraordinary subtlety in the third essay (marked C), in the Appendix to the *Statesman's Manual*, or first Lay Sermon, p. 19, &c. One beautiful paragraph I will venture to quote:—"Not only may we expect that men of strong religious feelings, but little religious knowledge, will occasionally be tempted to regard such occurrences as supernatural visitations; but it ought not to surprise us if such dreams should sometimes be confirmed by the event, as though they had actually possessed a character of divination. For who shall decide how far a perfect reminiscence of past experiences (of many, perhaps, that had escaped our reflex consciousness at the time)—who shall determine to what extent this reproductive imagination, unsophisticated by the will, and undistracted by intrusions from the senses, may or may not be concentrated and sublimed into foresight and presentiment? There would be nothing herein either to foster superstition on the one hand, or to justify contemptuous disbelief on the other. Incredulity is but Credulity seen from behind, bowing and nodding assent to the Habitual and the Fashionable."<sup>1</sup>—ED.

<sup>2</sup> See 27 Apr 1823 n 33, vol I, above.

<sup>1</sup> *SM (CC)* 80–1. See 1 May 1823 n 3, vol I, above.

ing power in the soul? The power of prophecy might have been merely a spiritual excitation of this dormant faculty. Hence you will observe that the Hebrew seers sometimes seem to have required music, as in the instance of Elisha before Jehoram:—"But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."\* Every thing in nature has a tendency to move in cycles; and it would be a miracle if, out of such myriads of cycles moving concurrently, some coincidences did not take place. No doubt, many such take place in the daytime; but then our senses drive out the remembrance of them, and render the impression hardly felt; but when we sleep, the mind acts without interruption. Terror and the heated imagination will, even in the daytime, create all sorts of features, shapes, and colours out of a simple object possessing none of them in reality.

But ghost stories are absurd. Whenever a real ghost appears,—by which I mean some man or woman dressed up to frighten another,—if the supernatural character of the apparition has been for a moment believed, the effects on the spectator have always been most terrible,—convulsion, idiocy, madness, or even death on the spot. Consider the awful descriptions in the Old Testament of the effects of a spiritual presence on the prophets and seers of the Hebrews; the terror, the exceeding great dread, the utter loss of all animal power. But in our common ghost stories, you always find that the seer, after a most appalling apparition, as you are to believe, is quite well the next day. Perhaps, he may have a headach[e]; but that is the outside of the effect produced. Alston, a man of genius, and the best painter yet produced by America, when he was in England told me an anecdote which confirms what I have been saying. It was, I think, in the university of Cambridge, near Boston, that a certain youth took it into his wise head to endeavour to convert a Tom-Painish companion of his by appearing as a ghost before him. He accordingly dressed himself up in the usual way, having previously extracted the ball from the pistol which always lay near the head of his friend's bed. Upon first awaking, and seeing the apparition, the youth who was to be frightened, A., very coolly looked his companion the ghost in the face, and said, "I know you. This is a good joke; but you see I am not frightened. Now you may vanish!" The ghost stood still. "Come," said A., "that is enough. I shall get angry. Away!" Still the ghost moved not. "By —," ejaculated A., "if you do not in three minutes go away, I'll shoot you." He waited the time, deliberately levelled the pistol, fired, and, with a scream at the immobility of the figure, became convulsed, and af-

\* 2 Kings, iii. 15., and see 1 Sam. x. 5.—Ed.

terwards died. The very instant he believed it *to be* a ghost, his human nature fell before it.

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[47] \* “Last Thursday my uncle, S.T.C., dined with us, and several men came to meet him. I have heard him more brilliant, but he was very fine, and delighted every one very much. It is impossible to carry off, or commit to paper, his long trains of argument; indeed, it is not always possible to understand them, he lays the foundation so deep, and views every question in so original a manner. Nothing can be finer than the principles which he lays down in morals and religion. His deep study of Scripture is very astonishing; the rest of the party were but as children in his hands, not merely in general views of theology, but in nice verbal criticism. He thinks it clear that St. Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews, but that it must have been the work of some Alexandrian Greek, and he thinks Apollos. It seemed to him a desirable thing for Christianity that it should have been written by some other person than St. Paul; because, its inspiration being unquestioned, it added another independent teacher and expounder of the faith.

“We fell upon ghosts, and he exposed many of the stories physically and metaphysically. He seemed to think it impossible that you should really see with the bodily eye what was impalpable, unless it were a shadow; and if what you fancied you saw with the bodily eye was in fact only an impression on the imagination, then you were seeing something *out of your senses*, and your testimony was full of uncertainty. He observed how uniformly, in all the best-attested stories of spectres, the appearance might be accounted for from the disturbed state of the mind or body of the seer, as in the instances of Dion and Brutus. Upon some one’s saying that he *wished* to believe these stories true, thinking that they constituted a useful subsidiary testimony of another state of existence, Mr. C. differed, and said, he thought it a dangerous testimony, and one not wanted: it was Saul, with the Scriptures and the Prophet before him, calling upon the witch of Endor to certify him of the truth! He explained very ingeniously, yet very naturally, what has often startled people in ghost stories—such as Lord Lyttelton’s—namely, that when a real person has appeared, habited like the phantom, the ghost-seer has immediately seen two, the real man and the phantom. He said that such *must* be the case. The man under the morbid delusion sees with the eye

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\* What follows in the text within commas was written about this time, and communicated to me by Mr. Justice Coleridge.—ED.

of the imagination, and sees with the bodily eye too; if no one were really present, he would see the spectre with one, and the bed-curtains with the other. When, therefore, a real person comes, he sees the real man as he would have seen any one else in the same place, and he sees the spectre not a whit the less: being perceptible by different powers of vision, so to say, the appearances do not interfere with each other.

“He told us the following story of the Phantom Portrait:—

\* “A stranger came recommended to a merchant’s house at Lubeck. He was hospitably received; but, the house being full, he was lodged at night in an apartment handsomely furnished, but not often used. There was nothing that struck him particularly in the room when left alone, till he happened to cast his eyes on a picture, which immediately arrested his attention. It was a single head; but there was something so uncommon, so frightful and unearthly, in its expression, though by no means ugly, that he found himself irresistibly attracted to look at it. In fact, he could not tear himself from the fascination of this portrait, till his imagination was filled by it, and his rest broken. He retired to bed, dreamed, and awoke from time to time with the head glaring on him. In the morning, his host saw by his looks that he had slept ill, and inquired the cause, which was told. The master of the house was much vexed, and said that the picture ought to have been removed, that it was an oversight, and that it always was removed when the chamber was used. The picture, he said, was, indeed, terrible to every one; but it was so fine, and had come into the family in so curious a way, that he could not make up his mind to part with it, or to destroy it. The story of it was this:—‘My father,’ said he, ‘was at Hamburg on business, and, whilst dining at a coffee-house, he observed a young man of a remarkable appearance enter, seat himself alone in a corner, and commence a solitary meal. His countenance bespoke the extreme of mental distress, and every now and then he turned his head quickly round, as if he heard something, then shudder, grow pale, and go on with his meal after an effort as before. My father saw this same man at the same place for two or three successive days; and at length became so much interested about him, that he spoke to him. The address was not repulsed, and the stranger seemed to find some comfort in the tone of sympathy and kindness which my father used. He was an Italian, well informed, poor but not destitute, and living economically

\* This is the story which Mr. Washington Irving has dressed up very prettily in the first volume of his “*Tales of a Traveller*,” pp. 84–119; professing in his preface that he could not remember whence he had derived the anecdote.<sup>2</sup>—ED.

<sup>2</sup> See JTC’s report, 9 Jan 1823, n 8, vol 1, above.



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upon the profits of his art as a painter. Their intimacy increased; and at length the Italian, seeing my father's involuntary emotion at his convulsive turnings and shudderings, which continued as formerly, interrupting their conversation from time to time, told him his story. He was a native of Rome, and had lived in some familiarity with, and been much patronized by, a young nobleman; but upon some slight occasion they had fallen out, and his patron, besides using many reproachful expressions, had struck him. The painter brooded over the disgrace of the blow. He could not challenge the nobleman, on account of his rank; he therefore watched for an opportunity, and assassinated him. Of course he fled from his country, and finally had reached Hamburgh. He had not, however, passed many weeks from the night of the murder, before, one day, in the crowded street, he heard his name called by a voice familiar to him: he turned short round, and saw the face of his victim looking at him with a fixed eye. From that moment he had no peace: at all hours, in all places, and amidst all companies, however engaged he might be, he heard the voice, and could never help looking round; and, whenever he so looked round, he always encountered the same face staring close upon him. At last, in a mood of desperation, he had fixed himself face to face, and eye to eye, and deliberately drawn the phantom visage as it glared upon him; and *this* was the picture so drawn. The Italian said he had struggled long, but life was a burden which he could now no longer bear; and he was resolved, when he had made money enough to return to Rome, to surrender himself to justice, and expiate his crime on the scaffold. He gave the finished picture to my father, in return for the kindness which he had shown to him.' "

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[48] I have no doubt that the Jews believed generally in a future state, independently of the Mosaic law. The story of the witch of Endor is a proof of it. What we translate "*witch*," or "*familiar spirit*," is, in the Hebrew, *Ob*, that is, a bottle or bladder, and means a person whose belly is swelled like a leathern bottle by divine inflation. In the Greek it is *ἐγχεστίμυθος*, a ventriloquist. The text (1 Sam. ch. xxviii.) is a simple record of the facts, the solution of which the sacred historian leaves to the reader. I take it to have been a trick of ventriloquism, got up by the courtiers and friends of Saul, to prevent him, if possible, from hazarding an engagement with an army despondent and oppressed with bodings of defeat. Saul is not said to have seen Samuel; the woman only pretends to see him. And then what does this Samuel do? He merely repeats the prophecy known to all Israel, which the true Samuel had uttered some

years before. Read Captain Lyon's account of the scene in the cabin with the Esquimaux bladder, or conjurer; it is impossible not to be reminded of the witch of Endor.<sup>3</sup> I recommend you also to look at Webster's admirable treatise on Witchcraft.<sup>4</sup>

[49] The pet texts of a Socinian are quite enough for his confutation with acute thinkers. If Christ had been a mere man, it would have been ridiculous in *him* to call himself "the Son of man;" but being God and man, it then became, in his own assumption of it, a peculiar and mysterious title. So, if Christ had been a mere man, his saying, "My Father is greater than I," (John, xv. 28.) would have been as unmeaning. It would be laughable enough, for example, to hear me say, "My 'Remorse' succeeded, indeed, but Shakspeare is a greater dramatist than I." But how immeasurably more foolish, more monstrous, would it not be for a *man*, however honest, good, or wise, to say, "But Jehovah is greater than I!"

May 8. 1824.

PLATO AND XENOPHON.—RELIGIONS OF THE GREEKS.—  
EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.—MILTON.—VIRGIL.

[50] PLATO's works are logical exercises for the mind. Little that is positive is advanced in them. Socrates may be fairly represented by Plato in

<sup>3</sup> HNC's source for much of this passage probably derives from C's annotation on Abraham Hillhouse *Hadad* (1825): "The Witch (Hebrew Ob, i.e. Bladder or Ventriloquist) of Endor is a simple record of the Facts, the solution of which the sacred Historian leaves to the Reader. It was evidently a trick of Ventriloquism *got up* by the Courtiers & Friends of Saul to prevent him, if possible, from hazarding an engagement with an army so despondent and oppressed with Bodings of Defeat. Saul did not *see* Samuel—The Woman only pretends to see him—(Compare Capt<sup>n</sup> Lyon's account of the Scene in the Cabin with the Esquimaux *Bladder* or Conjurer. It is scarcely possible not to be reminded of the *Bladder-Witch* of Endor.)" *CM* (CC) II 1108. George Francis Lyon *The Private Journal of Captain G. F. Lyon,*

*of H.M.S. Hecla, During the Recent Voyage of Discovery under Captain Parry* (1824) first connects with the talk of 10 Mar 1827 (TT, above) by introducing "'Nāk-kā-khīoo,' or 'Bladder'" (p 113), but at greater length with an account of a conjurer, Toolemak, calling up a patron spirit in a dark room (pp 365–7). It is worth noting that the passage on Toolemak is quoted in full in the review of Lyon in *B Critic* NS XXI (May 1824) 492–3 and that the next review is of Samuel Hibbert *Sketches of the Philosophy of Apparitions* . . . (Edinburgh 1824). As C's return to the subject on 10 Mar 1827 shows, the Biblical account of the Witch of Endor called his attention to the "Bladder" in Lyon's *Journal*. With 36:48 cf *P Lects* Lect 11 (1949) 319.

<sup>4</sup> John Webster *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* (1677).

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the more moral parts; but in all the metaphysical disquisitions it is Pythagoras. Xenophon's representation of his master is quite different.\*

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[51] Observe the remarkable contrast between the religion of the tragic and other poets of Greece. The former are always opposed in heart to the popular divinities. In fact, there are the popular, the sacerdotal, and the mysterious religions of Greece, represented roughly by Homer, Pindar, and Æschylus. The ancients had no notion of a *fall* of man, though they had of his gradual degeneracy. Prometheus, in the old mythus, and for the most part in Æschylus, is the Redeemer and the Devil jumbled together.

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[52] I cannot say I expect much from mere Egyptian antiquities. Almost every thing really, that is, intellectually, great in that country seems to me of Grecian origin.

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[53] I think nothing can be added to Milton's definition or rule of poetry,—that it ought to be simple, sensuous, and impassioned; that is to say, single in conception, abounding in sensible images, and informing them all with the spirit of the mind.

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[54] Milton's Latin style is, I think, better and easier than his English. His style, in prose, is quite as characteristic of him as a philosophic republican, as Cowley's is of *him* as a first-rate gentleman.

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[55] If you take from Virgil his diction and metre, what do you leave him?

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June 2. 1824.

GRANVILLE PENN AND THE DELUGE.—RAINBOW.

[56] I CONFESS I have small patience with Mr. Granville Penn's book against Professor Buckland. Science will be superseded, if every phenomenon is to be referred in this manner to an actual miracle. I think it

\* See p. 37n.—ED.

absurd to attribute so much to the Deluge. An inundation, which left an olive-tree standing, and bore up the ark peacefully on its bosom, could scarcely have been the sole cause of the rents and dislocations observable on the face of the earth. How could the tropical animals, which have been discovered in England and in Russia in a perfectly natural state, have been transported thither by such a flood? Those animals must evidently have been natives of the countries in which they have been found. The climates must have been altered. Assume a sudden evaporation upon the retiring of the Deluge to have caused an intense cold, the solar heat might not be sufficient afterwards to overcome it. I do not think that the polar cold is adequately explained by mere comparative distance from the sun.

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[57] You will observe, that there is no mention of rain previously to the Deluge. Hence it may be inferred, that the rainbow was exhibited for the first time after God's covenant with Noah. However, I only suggest this.

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[58] The Earth with its scarred face is the symbol of the Past; the Air and Heaven, of Futurity.

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*June 5. 1824.*

ENGLISH AND GREEK DANCING.—GREEK ACOUSTICS.

[59] THE fondness for dancing in English women is the reaction of their reserved manners. It is the only way in which they can throw themselves forth in natural liberty. We have no adequate conception of the perfection of the ancient tragic dance. The pleasure which the Greeks received from it had for its basis Difference; and the more unfit the vehicle, the more lively was the curiosity and intense the delight at seeing the difficulty overcome.

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[60] The ancients certainly seem to have understood some principles in acoustics which we have lost, or, at least, they applied them better. They contrived to convey the voice distinctly in their huge theatres by means of pipes, which created no echo or confusion. Our theatres—Drury Lane and Covent Garden—are fit for nothing: they are too large for acting, and too small for a bull-fight.

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June 7. 1824.

LORD BYRON'S VERSIFICATION, AND DON JUAN.

[61] How lamentably the *art* of versification is neglected by most of the poets of the present day!—by Lord Byron, as it strikes me, in particular, among those of eminence for other qualities. Upon the whole, I think the part of Don Juan in which Lambro's return to his home, and Lambro himself, are described, is the best, that is, the most individual, thing in all I know of Lord B.'s works. The festal abandonment puts one in mind of Nicholas Poussin's pictures.\*

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June 10. 1824.

PARENTAL CONTROL IN MARRIAGE.—MARRIAGE OF COUSINS.—  
DIFFERENCE OF CHARACTER.

[62] Up to twenty-one, I hold a father to have power over his children as to marriage; after that age, authority and influence only. Show me one couple unhappy merely on account of their limited circumstances, and I will show you ten that are wretched from other causes.

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[63] If the matter were quite open, I should incline to disapprove the intermarriage of first cousins; but the church has decided otherwise on the authority of Augustine, and that seems enough upon such a point.

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[64] You may depend upon it, that a slight contrast of character is very material to happiness in marriage.

\* Mr. Coleridge particularly noticed, for its classical air, the 32d stanza of this Canto (the third):—

“A band of children, round a snow-white ram,  
There wreath his venerable horns with flowers,  
While, peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,  
The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers  
His sober head, majestically tame,  
Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers  
His brow, as if in act to butt, and then  
Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.”

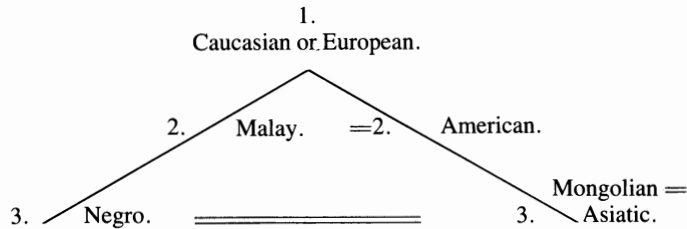
But Mr. C. said that *then*, and *again*, made no rhyme to his ear.<sup>1</sup> Why should not the

<sup>1</sup> See 2 Jun 1824 n 10, vol 1, above.

February 24. 1827.

BLUMENBACH AND KANT'S RACES.—IAPETIC AND SEMITIC.—  
HEBREW.—SOLOMON.

[65] BLUMENBACH makes five races; Kant, three. Blumenbach's scale of dignity may be thus figured:—



There was, I conceive, one great Iapetic original of language, under which Greek, Latin, and other European dialects, and, perhaps, Sanscrit, range as species. The Iapetic race, Ἰάονες, separated into two branches; one, with a tendency to migrate south-west,—Greeks, Italians, &c.; and the other north-west,—Goths, Germans, Swedes, &c. The Hebrew is Semitic.

[66] Hebrew, in point of force and purity, seems at its height in Isaiah. It is most corrupt in Daniel, and not much less so in Ecclesiastes; which I cannot believe to have been actually composed by Solomon, but rather suppose to have been so attributed by the Jews, in their passion for ascribing all works of that sort to their *grand monarque*.

March 10. 1827.

JEWISH HISTORY.—SPINOZISTIC AND HEBREW SCHEMES.

[67] THE people of all other nations, but the Jewish, seem to look backwards and also to exist for the present; but in the Jewish scheme every thing is prospective and preparatory; nothing, however trifling, is done for itself alone, but all is typical of something yet to come.

old form *agen* be lawful in verse? We wilfully abridge ourselves of the liberty which our great poets achieved and sanctioned for us in innumerable instances.—ED.

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[68] I would rather call the book of Proverbs Solomonian than as actually a work of Solomon's. So I apprehend many of the Psalms to be Davidical only, not David's own compositions.

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[69] You may state the Pantheism of Spinosia, in contrast with the Hebrew or Christian scheme, shortly, as thus:—

Spinosism.

$W - G = O$ ; *i.e.* the World without God is an impossible idea.

$G - W = O$ ; *i.e.* God without the World is so likewise.

Hebrew or Christian scheme.

$W - G = O$ ; *i.e.* The same as Spinosia's premiss.

But  $G - W = G$ ; *i.e.* God without the World is God the self-subsistent.

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March 12. 1827.

ROMAN CATHOLICS.—ENERGY OF MAN AND OTHER ANIMALS.—SHAKSPEARE *IN MINIMIS*.—PAUL SARPI.—BARTRAM'S TRAVELS.

[70] I HAVE no doubt that the real object closest to the hearts of the leading Irish Romanists is the destruction of the Irish Protestant church, and the re-establishment of their own. I think more is involved in the manner than the matter of legislating upon the civil disabilities of the members of the church of Rome; and, for one, I should be willing to vote for a removal of those disabilities, with two or three exceptions, upon a solemn declaration being made legislatively in parliament, that at no time, nor under any circumstances, could or should a branch of the Romish hierarchy, as at present constituted, become an estate of this realm.\*

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[71] Internal or mental energy and external or corporeal modificability are in inverse proportions. In man, internal energy is greater than in any

\* See Church and State, second part, p. 189.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *C&S (CC)* 156–7. See 10 Mar 1827 n 6, vol 1, above.

other animal; and you will see that he is less changed by climate than any animal. For the highest and lowest specimens of man are not one half as much apart from each other as the different kinds even of dogs, animals of great internal energy themselves.

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[72] For an instance of Shakspeare's power *in minimis*, I generally quote James Gurney's character in King John. How individual and comical he is with the four words allowed to his dramatic life!\* And pray look at Skelton's Richard Sparrow also!

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[73] Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent deserves your study. It is very interesting.

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[74] The latest book of travels I know, written in the spirit of the old travellers, is Bartram's account of his tour in the Floridas. It is a work of high merit every way.†

“*Enter Lady FALCONBRIDGE and JAMES GURNEY.*

BAST. O me! it is my mother:—How now, good lady?  
What brings you here to court so hastily?

LADY F. Where is that slave, thy brother? where is he?  
That holds in chase mine honour up and down?

BAST. My brother Robert? Old Sir Robert's son?  
Colbrand the giant, that same mighty man?  
Is it Sir Robert's son that you seek so?

LADY F. Sir Robert's son! Ay, thou unreverend boy,  
Sir Robert's son: why scorn'st thou at Sir Robert?  
He is Sir Robert's son; and so art thou.

BAST. James Gurney, wilt thou give us leave a while?

GUR. *Good leave, good Philip.*

BAST. Philip?—Sparrow! James,  
There's toys abroad; anon I'll tell thee more.

[*Exit GURNEY.*”

The very *exit Gurney* is a stroke of James's character.—ED.

† “Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the extensive territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws, &c. By William Bartram.” Philadelphia, 1791. London, 1792. 8vo. The expedition was made at the request of Dr. Fothergill, the Quaker physician, in 1773, and was particularly directed to botanical discoveries.—ED.



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March 13. 1827.

THE UNDERSTANDING.

[75] A PUN will sometimes facilitate explanation, as thus;—the Understanding is that which *stands under* the phenomenon, and gives it objectivity. You know *what* a thing is by it. It is also worthy of remark, that the Hebrew word for the understanding, *Bineh*, comes from a root meaning *between* or *distinguishing*.

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March 18. 1827.

PARTS OF SPEECH.—GRAMMAR.

[76] THERE are seven parts of speech, and they agree with the five grand and universal divisions into which all things finite, by which I mean to exclude the idea of God, will be found to fall; that is, as you will often see it stated in my writings, especially in the Aids to Reflection\*:

	Prothesis.	
	1.	
Thesis.	Mesothesis.	Antithesis.
2.	4.	3.
	Synthesis.	
	5.	

Conceive it thus:—

1. Prothesis, the noun-verb, or verb-substantive, *I am*, which is the previous form, and implies identity of being and act.

2. Thesis, the noun.

3. Antithesis, the verb.

{ Note, each of these may be converted;  
that is, they are only opposed to each  
other.

4. Mesothesis, the infinitive mood, or the indifference of the verb and noun, it being either the one or the other, or both at the same time, in different relations.

5. Synthesis, the participle, or the community of verb and noun; being and acting at once.

Now, modify the noun by the verb, that is, by an act, and you have—

6. The adnoun, or adjective.

\* P. 170. 2d edition.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See 18 Mar 1827 n 2, vol 1, above.

Modify the verb by the noun, that is, by being, and you have—

7. The adverb.

Interjections are parts of sound, not of speech. Conjunctions are the same as prepositions; but they are prefixed to a sentence, or to a member of a sentence, instead of to a single word.

The inflections of nouns are modifications as to place; the inflections of verbs, as to time.

The genitive case denotes dependence; the dative, transmission. It is absurd to talk of verbs governing. In Thucydides, I believe, every case has been found absolute.\*

The inflections of the tenses of a verb are formed by adjuncts of the verb substantive. In Greek it is obvious. The E is the prefix significative of a past time.

June 15. 1827.

MAGNETISM.—ELECTRICITY.—GALVANISM.

[77] PERHAPS the attribution or analogy may seem fanciful at first sight, but I am in the habit of realizing to myself Magnetism as length; Electricity as breadth or surface; and Galvanism as depth.

\* Nominative absolute:—θεῶν δὲ φόβος ἢ ἀνθρώπων νόμος" οὐδείς ἀπείργε, τὸ μὲν κρίνοντες ἐν ὁμοίῳ καὶ σέβειν καὶ μὴ——τῶν δὲ ἁμαρτημάτων οὐδείς ἐλπίζων μέχρι τοῦ δίκην γενέσθαι βιούς ἂν τὴν τιμωρίαν ἀντιδοῦναι.—Thuc. II. 53.<sup>1</sup>

Dative:—εἰργόμενοις αὐτοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ κατὰ γῆν πορθουμένοις ἐνεχείρησάν τινες πρὸς Ἀθηναίους ἀγαγεῖν τὴν πόλιν.—Thuc. VIII. 24.<sup>2</sup>

This is the Latin usage.

Accusative.—I do not remember an instance of the proper accusative absolute in Thucydides; but it seems not uncommon in other authors:—

ὃ ξεῖνε, μὴ θαύμαζε πρὸς τὸ λιπαρὲς,  
τέκν' εἰ φανέντ' ἄελπτα μηκύνω λόγον.

Soph. Œd. C. 1119<sup>3</sup>

Yet all such instances may be nominatives; for I cannot find an example of the accusative absolute in the masculine or feminine gender, where the difference of inflexion would show the case.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Tr C. F. Smith (LCL): "No fear of gods or law of men restrained; for, on the one hand, seeing that all men were perishing alike, they judged that piety and impiety came to the same thing, and, on the other, no one expected that he would live to be called to account and pay the penalty of his misdeeds."

<sup>2</sup> Tr Smith: "Now, however, that they

were shut off from the sea and were being despoiled by land, some of them attempted to bring the city over to the Athenians."

<sup>3</sup> Tr R. C. Jebb: "Sir, marvel not, if with such yearning I prolong my words unto my children, found again beyond my hope."

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June 24. 1827.

SPENSER.—CHARACTER OF OTHELLO.—HAMLET.—POLONIUS.  
 —PRINCIPLES AND MAXIMS.—LOVE—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.  
 —BEN JONSON.—BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.—VERSION OF  
 THE BIBLE.—SPURZHEIM.—CRANIOLOGY.

[78] SPENSER's Epithalamion is truly sublime; and pray mark the swan-like movement of his exquisite Prothalamion. \* His attention to metre and rhythm is sometimes so extremely minute as to be painful even to my ear, and you know how highly I prize good versification.

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[79] I have often told you that I do not think there is any jealousy, properly so called, in the character of Othello. There is no predisposition to suspicion, which I take to be an essential term in the definition of the word. Desdemona very truly told Emilia that he was not jealous, that is, of a jealous habit, and he says so as truly of himself. Iago's suggestions, you see, are quite new to him; they do not correspond with any thing of a like nature previously in his mind. If Desdemona had, in fact, been guilty, no one would have thought of calling Othello's conduct that of a jealous man. He could not act otherwise than he did with the lights he had; whereas jealousy can never be strictly right. See how utterly unlike Othello is to Leontes, in the *Winter's Tale*, or even to Leonatus, in

\* How well I remember this Midsummer-day! I shall never pass such another. The sun was setting behind Caen Wood, and the calm of the evening was so exceedingly deep that it arrested Mr. Coleridge's attention. We were alone together in Mr. Gillman's drawing-room, and Mr. C. left off talking, and fell into an almost trance-like state for ten minutes whilst contemplating the beautiful prospect before us. His eyes swam in tears, his head inclined a little forward, and there was a slight uplifting of the fingers, which seemed to tell me that he was in prayer. I was awestricken, and remained absorbed in looking at the man, in forgetfulness of external nature, when he recovered himself, and after a word or two fell by some secret link of association upon Spenser's poetry. Upon my telling him that I did not very well recollect the Prothalamion: "Then I must read you a bit of it," said he; and, fetching the book from the next room, he recited the whole of it in his finest and most musical manner. I particularly bear in mind the sensible diversity of tone and rhythm with which he gave:—

"Sweet Thames! run softly till I end my song,"

the concluding line of each of the ten strophes of the poem.

When I look upon the scanty memorial, which I have alone preserved of this afternoon's converse, I am tempted to burn these pages in despair. Mr. Coleridge talked a volume of criticism that day, which, printed verbatim as he spoke it, would have made the reputation of any other person but himself. He was, indeed, particularly brilliant and enchanting; and I left him at night so thoroughly *magnetized*, that I could not for two or three days afterwards reflect enough to put any thing on paper.—Ed.

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Cymbeline! The jealousy of the first proceeds from an evident trifle, and something like hatred is mingled with it; and the conduct of Leonatus in accepting the wager, and exposing his wife to the trial, denotes a jealous temper already formed.

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[80] Hamlet's character is the prevalence of the abstracting and generalizing habit over the practical. He does not want courage, skill, will, or opportunity; but every incident sets him thinking; and it is curious, and at the same time strictly natural, that Hamlet, who all the play seems reason itself, should be impelled, at last, by mere accident to effect his object. I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so.

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[81] A Maxim is a conclusion upon observation of matters of fact, and is merely retrospective: an Idea, or, if you like, a Principle, carries knowledge within itself, and is prospective. Polonius is a man of maxims. Whilst he is descanting on matters of past experience, as in that excellent speech to Laertes before he sets out on his travels\*, he is admirable; but when he comes to advise or project, he is a mere dotard. You see Hamlet, as the man of ideas, despises him.

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[82] A man of maxims only is like a Cyclops with one eye, and that eye placed in the back of his head.

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[83] In the scene with Ophelia, in the third act,† Hamlet is beginning with great and unfeigned tenderness; but, perceiving her reserve and coyness, fancies there are some listeners, and then, to sustain his part, breaks out into all that coarseness.

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[84] Love is the admiration and cherishing of the amiable qualities of the beloved person, upon the condition of yourself being the object of their action. The qualities of the sexes correspond. The man's courage is loved by the woman, whose fortitude again is coveted by the man. His vigorous intellect is answered by her infallible tact. Can it be true, what

\* Act i. sc. 3.

† Sc. 1.

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is so constantly affirmed, that there is no sex in souls?—I doubt it, I doubt it exceedingly.<sup>1</sup>\*

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[85] Measure for Measure is the single exception to the delightfulness of Shakspeare's plays. It is a hateful work, although Shakspearian throughout. Our feelings of justice are grossly wounded in Angelo's escape. Isabella herself contrives to be unamiable, and Claudio is detestable.

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[86] I am inclined to consider The Fox as the greatest of Ben Jonson's works. But his smaller works are full of poetry.

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[87] Monsieur Thomas and the little French Lawyer are great favourites of mine amongst Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. How those plays over-

\* Mr. Coleridge was a great master in the art of love, but he had not studied in Ovid's school. Hear his account of the matter:—

"Love, truly such, is itself not the most common thing in the world, and mutual love still less so. But that enduring personal attachment, so beautifully delineated by Erin's sweet melodist, and still more touchingly, perhaps, in the well-known ballad, 'John Anderson, my Jo, John,' in addition to a depth and constancy of character of no every-day occurrence, supposes a peculiar sensibility and tenderness of nature; a constitutional communicativeness and utterancy of heart and soul; a delight in the detail of sympathy, in the outward and visible signs of the sacrament within,—to count, as it were, the pulses of the life of love. But, above all, it supposes a soul which, even in the pride and summer-tide of life, even in the lustihood of health and strength, had felt oftenest and prized highest that which age cannot take away, and which in all our lovings is *the* love; I mean, that willing sense of the unsufficingness of the self for itself, which predisposes a generous nature to see, in the total being of another, the supplement and completion of its own; that quiet perpetual seeking which the presence of the beloved object modulates, not suspends, where the heart momentarily finds, and, finding again, seeks on; lastly, when 'life's changeful orb has passed the full,' a confirmed faith in the nobleness of humanity, thus brought home and pressed, as it were, to the very bosom of hourly experience; it supposes, I say, a heartfelt reverence for worth, not the less deep because divested of its solemnity by habit, by familiarity, by mutual infirmities, and even by a feeling of modesty which will arise in delicate minds, when they are conscious of possessing the same, or the correspondent, excellence in their own characters. In short, there must be a mind, which, while it feels the beautiful and the excellent in the beloved as its own, and by right of love appropriates it, can call goodness its playfellow; and dares make sport of time and infirmity, while, in the person of a thousand-foldly endeared partner, we feel for aged virtue the caressing fondness that belongs to the innocence of childhood, and repeat the same attentions and tender courtesies which had been dictated by the same affection to the same object when attired in feminine loveliness or in manly beauty." (Poetical Works, vol. ii. p. 120.)<sup>2</sup>—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Last sentence added in *TT* (1836) from C's N L (*CN* iii 3531 var).  
<sup>2</sup> *PW* (EHC) i 464–5 (var). See 24 Jun 1827 n 11, vol i, above.

flow with wit! And yet I scarcely know a more deeply tragic scene any where than that in Rollo, in which Edith pleads for her father's life, and then, when she cannot prevail, rises up and imprecates vengeance on his murderer.\*

[88] Our version of the Bible is to be loved and prized for this, as for a thousand other things,—that it has preserved a purity of meaning to many terms of natural objects. Without this holdfast, our vitiated imaginations would refine away language to mere abstractions. Hence the French have lost their poetical language; and Mr. Blanco White says the same thing has happened to the Spanish. [By the way, I must say dear Mr. Sotheby's translation, in the Georgics, of

“Solve mares; mitte in venerem pecuaria primus;”  
 “Loose the fierce savage to the genial bed;”—

and

“Frigidus in venerem senior;”[†]  
 “Nor urge reluctant to laborious *love*”—

are the most ludicrous instances I remember of the modern slip-slop.]

\* Act. iii. sc. 1.:—

“ROLLO. Hew off her hands!  
 HAMOND. Lady, hold off!  
 EDITH. No! hew 'em;  
 Hew off my innocent hands, as he commands you!  
 They 'll hang the faster on for death's convulsion.—  
 Thou seed of rocks, will nothing move thee, then?  
 Are all my tears lost, all my righteous prayers  
 Drown'd in thy drunken wrath? I stand up thus, then,  
 Thou boldly bloody tyrant,  
 And to thy face, in heav'n's high name defy thee!  
 And may sweet mercy, when thy soul sighs for it,—  
 When under thy black mischiefs thy flesh trembles,—  
 When neither strength, nor youth, nor friends, nor gold,  
 Can stay one hour; when thy most wretched conscience,  
 Waked from her dream of death, like fire shall melt thee,—  
 When all thy mother's tears, thy brother's wounds,  
 Thy people's fears, and curses, and my loss,  
 My aged father's loss, shall stand before thee——  
 ROLLO. Save him, I say; run, save him, save her father;  
 Fly and redeem his head!  
 EDITH. May then that pity,” &c.

[† Virg. Georg. iii. 64 and 97.]<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Virgil *Georgics* 3.64, 3.97. The entry, expanded from the ms version, was dropped in 1836.

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[89] I have the perception of individual images very strong, but a dim one of the relation of place. I remember the man or the tree, but where I saw them I mostly forget.\*

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[90] Craniology is worth some consideration, although it is merely in its rudiments and guesses yet. But all the coincidences which have been observed could scarcely be by accident. The confusion and absurdity, however, will be endless until some names or proper terms are discovered for the organs, which are not taken from their mental application or significance. The forepart of the head is generally given up to the higher intellectual powers; the hinder part to the sensual emotions.

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[91] Silence does not always mark wisdom. I was at dinner, some time ago, in company with a man, who listened to me and said nothing for a long time; but he nodded his head, and I thought him intelligent. At length, towards the end of the dinner, some apple dumplings were placed on the table, and my man had no sooner seen them, than he burst forth with—"Them's the jockies for me!" I wish Spurzheim could have examined the fellow's head.

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[92] Some folks apply epithets as boys do in making Latin verses. When I first looked upon the Falls of the Clyde, I was unable to find a word to express my feelings. At last, a man, a stranger to me, who arrived about the same time, said—"How majestic!"—(It was the precise term, and I turned round and was saying—"Thank you, Sir! that *is* the exact word for it"—when he added, *eodem flatu*)—"Yes! how very pretty!"<sup>4</sup>

\* There was no man whose opinion in morals, or even in a matter of general conduct in life, if you furnished the pertinent circumstances, I would have sooner adopted than Mr. Coleridge's; but I would not take him as a guide through streets or fields or earthly roads. He had much of the geometrician about him; but he could not find his way. In this, as in many other peculiarities of more importance, he inherited strongly from his learned and excellent father, who deserves, and will, I trust, obtain, a separate notice for himself when his greater son's life comes to be written. I believe the beginning of Mr. C.'s liking for Dr. Spurzheim was the hearty good humour with which the Doctor bore the laughter of a party, in the presence of which he, unknowing of his man, denied any *Ideality*, and awarded an unusual share of *Locality*, to the majestic silver-haired head of my dear uncle and father-in-law. But Mr. Coleridge immediately shielded the craniologist under the distinction preserved in the text, and perhaps, since that time, there may be a couple of organs assigned to the latter faculty.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> This entry does not appear in TT. The episode that gave rise to the anecdote occurred on 21 Aug 1803, when C sat with DW and WW on a bench over-

July 8. 1827.

BULL AND WATERLAND.—THE TRINITY.

[93] BULL and Waterland are the classical writers on the Trinity.\* In the Trinity there is, 1. Ipseity. 2. Alterity. 3. Community. You may express the formula thus:—

God, the absolute Will or Identity, = Prothesis.

The Father = Thesis. The Son = Antithesis.

The Spirit = Synthesis.

[94] The author of the Athanasian Creed is unknown. It is, in my judgment, heretical in the omission, or implicit denial, of the Filial subordination in the Godhead, which is the doctrine of the Nicene Creed, and for which Bull and Waterland have so fervently and triumphantly contended; and by not holding to which, Sherlock staggered to and fro between Tritheism and Sabellianism. This creed is also tautological, and, if not persecuting, which I will not discuss, certainly containing harsh and ill-conceived language.

[95] How much I regret that so many religious persons of the present day think it necessary to adopt a certain cant of manner and phraseology as a token to each other. They must *improve* this and that text, and they must do so and so in a *prayerful* way; and so on. Why not use common language? A young lady the other day urged upon me that such and such feelings were the *marrow* of all religion; upon which I recommended her to try to walk to London upon her marrow-bones only.

\* Mr. Coleridge's admiration of Bull and Waterland as high theologians was very great. Bull he used to read in the Latin *Defensio Fidei Nicænæ*, using the Jesuit Zola's edition of 1784, which, I think, he bought at Rome. He told me once, that when he was reading a Protestant English Bishop's work on the Trinity, in a copy edited by an Italian Jesuit in Italy, he felt proud of the church of England, and in good humour with the church of Rome.—ED.

looking the Falls of the Clyde. DW's account agrees with HNC's that the stranger's first epithet was "majestic", but gives the dumbfounding sequel as "Sublime and beautiful". *DWJ* 1 223-4. The version that Richard Henry Dana Jr had from Allston, who apparently had it from WW, gives the first epithet as "Magnificent" but concludes in agreement with

DW's account at the time. Jared B. Flagg *The Life and Letters of Washington Allston* (1893) 357. HNC was presumably unaware of the more philosophic versions of the anecdote in Lect 1 of 15 Jan 1808 and Lect 1 of 18 Nov 1811—*Lects 1808-19 (CC)* 1 34, 193—and in "On the Principles of Genial Criticism in the Fine Arts" II—*BL* (1907) II 224-5.