

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
EDITED BY LEWIS PATTON
AND PETER MANN

The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 1

Lectures, 1795: On Politics and Religion



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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE · 1
LECTURES 1795
ON POLITICS AND RELIGION

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THE COLLECTED WORKS

1. LECTURES 1795: ON POLITICS AND RELIGION

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GENERAL INDEX



SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

from a portrait painted by Peter Vandyke, 1795
London: National Portrait Gallery.

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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On Politics
and Religion

EDITED BY

Lewis Patton and Peter Mann



ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL

❧ BOLLINGEN SERIES LXXV

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THIS EDITION
OF THE WORKS OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
IS DEDICATED
IN GRATITUDE TO
THE FAMILY EDITORS
IN EACH GENERATION

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I am grateful to my wife for much assistance as well as for much forbearance.

LEWIS PATTON

Durham, North Carolina
15 April 1969

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PETER MANN

Leeds
December 1969

EDITORIAL PRACTICE, SYMBOLS, AND ABBREVIATIONS

THE texts of works reprinted follow those of the original editions, except for the correction of obvious printer's errors. Corrections in the list of errata at the end of *Conciones* have been incorporated into the text, with one exception (see headnote to *Conciones*). "Corrections" in annotated copies are given in footnotes. Texts printed from E. H. Coleridge's transcripts (Lectures on Revealed Religion; Lecture on the Slave-Trade) are printed literatim; textual notes indicate changes in words and order of leaves. The Lecture on the Two Bills and quotations from other Coleridge manuscripts are also printed literatim, including cancellations; marginal figures indicate original folios. Coleridge's square brackets (few in number) have been changed to parentheses; square brackets enclose editorial interpolations.

The editors' headnotes give further details of editorial practice.

Coleridge's footnotes are indicated by symbols (*, †, etc) and are printed full measure. Editors' footnotes are numbered and (when not too brief) printed in double columns. The order of the editors' footnotes follows (perhaps Coleridgean) logic; i.e. it is assumed that when the text contains an asterisk or a dagger the reader then turns from text to note and then goes back again. The editors' footnotes, which are sometimes notes on Coleridge's footnotes, follow that order. Thus the footnote indicators within the text may leap from 1 to 5, notes 2-4 being notes on Coleridge's footnotes.

Textual notes (^{a-b}, etc) at the foot of the page, preceding the editors' notes, indicate all changes in or questions about the texts. Textual notes to *A Moral and Political Lecture* indicate passages not reused in *Conciones* and give variant readings; those to *Conciones* indicate passages added to *A Moral and Political Lecture*; those to the Lecture on the Two Bills indicate passages that reappear in *The Plot Discovered*. See the headnotes to these works.

The editions referred to in the editors' footnotes are, when they are known, those Coleridge used; "see" before the work indicates that it is not necessarily the edition Coleridge cites or quotes (though it may be one he is known to have used).

The following symbols are used in quoting from manuscript (with "wild" as an example):

- [wild] A reading supplied by the editor.
- [?wild] An uncertain reading.
- [?wild/world] Possible alternative readings.
- 「wild」 A tentative reading (owing to obliterations, torn paper etc).
- [...] An illegible word or phrase.
- <wild> A later interpolation by Coleridge.

Strokes, dashes, and other symbols are Coleridge's.

ABBREVIATIONS

(In the works listed, place of publication is London, unless otherwise noted)

- Allsop [Thomas Allsop] *Letters, Conversations and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge* (2 vols 1936).
- Answer C. T. S. [S. T. Coleridge] *An Answer to "A Letter to Edward Long Fox, M.D."* (Bristol [1795]).
- A Reg *The Annual Register* (1758–).
- A Rev *Annual Review and History of Literature* (1802–8).
- B Critic *The British Critic* (1793–1813).
- BL (1907) S. T. Coleridge *Biographia Literaria* ed John Shawcross (2 vols Oxford 1907).
- BM British Museum
- Bristol LB George Whalley "The Bristol Library Borrowings of Southey and Coleridge" *Library* iv (Sept 1949) 114–31.
- C Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- C&S S. T. Coleridge *On the Constitution of the Church and State, According to the Idea of Each* (1830).
- C&SB George Whalley "Coleridge and Southey in Bristol, 1795" *Review of English Studies* n.s. i (Oct 1950) 324–40.
- C Bibl Thomas J. Wise *Two Lake Poets* (1927).
- (Wise TLP)
- CC *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London and Princeton, N.J. 1969–).
- CI *The Cambridge Intelligencer* (1793–1800).
- CL *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed Earl Leslie Griggs (Oxford and New York 1956–).
- CN *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed Kathleen Coburn (New York and London 1957–).
- Conciones S. T. Coleridge *Conciones ad Populum. Or Addresses to the People* (Bristol 1795).

-
- Cottle Joseph Cottle *Early Recollections; Chiefly Relating to the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, During His Long Residence in Bristol* (2 vols 1837).
- E Rec
- CRB Henry Crabb Robinson *on Books and Their Writers* ed Edith J. Morley (3 vols 1938).
- CRD *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson* ed Thomas Sadler (2 vols 1872).
- C Rev *The Critical Review; or, Annals of Literature* (1756–1817).
- EB *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed 29 vols Cambridge 1910–11).
- EHC Ernest Hartley Coleridge.
- EOT S. T. Coleridge *Essays on His Own Times, Forming a Second Series of "The Friend"* ed Sara Coleridge (3 vols 1850).
- Farington Joseph Farington *The Farington Diary* ed James Greig (8 vols 1922–8).
- Friend S. T. Coleridge *The Friend* ([Penrith] 1809–10).
- (1809–10)
- Friend S. T. Coleridge *The Friend* (1812).
- (1812)
- Friend S. T. Coleridge *The Friend* ed Barbara E. Rooke (2 vols (CC) London and Princeton, N.J. 1969). *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* iv.
- G Mag *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1731–1907).
- HNC Henry Nelson Coleridge
- HUL Harvard University Library
- H Works *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt* ed. P. P. Howe (21 vols 1930–4).
- IS *Inquiring Spirit, a New Presentation of Coleridge from his Published and Unpublished Prose Writings* ed Kathleen Coburn (1951).
- LCL Loeb Classical Library
- LL *The Letters of Charles Lamb to Which Are Added Those of His Sister Mary Lamb* ed E. V. Lucas (3 vols 1935).
- LRR S. T. Coleridge *Six Lectures on Revealed Religion, Its Corruptions and Political Views* ms transcript by E. H. Coleridge.
- LS S. T. Coleridge "Blessed Are Ye That Sow Beside All Waters!" *A Lay Sermon, Addressed to the Higher and Middle Classes, on the Existing Distresses and Discontents* (1817).
- M Chron *The Morning Chronicle* (1769–1862).
- M Mag *The Monthly Magazine* (1796–1843).
- M Phil *Modern Philology* (Chicago 1903–).
- MPL S. T. Coleridge *A Moral and Political Lecture* (Bristol [1795]).
- M Post *The Morning Post* (1772–1937).

-
- M Rev* *The Monthly Review* (1749–1845).
- N&Q* *Notes and Queries* (1849–).
- NYPL* New York Public Library
- OED* *Oxford English Dictionary* (13 vols Oxford 1933).
- Parl Hist* *The Parliamentary History of England* ed William Cobbett and John Wright (36 vols 1806–20).
- Parl Reg* *The Parliamentary Register* [ed John Almon] (112 vols 1775–1813).
- PD* S. T. Coleridge *The Plot Discovered; or, An Address to the People Against Ministerial Treason* (Bristol 1795).
- P Lects* *The Philosophical Lectures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed
(1949) Kathleen Coburn (London and New York 1949).
- Poole* M. E. Sandford *Thomas Poole and His Friends* (2 vols 1888).
- PW* (1829) *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (3 vols 1829).
- PW* (1834) *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* [ed H. N. Coleridge] (3 vols 1834).
- PW* (1844) *The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* [ed H. N. Coleridge] (3 vols 1844).
- PW* *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed
(EHC) E. H. Coleridge (2 vols Oxford 1912).
- PW* (JDC) *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed J. D. Campbell (1893).
- RES* *Review of English Studies* (1925–).
- RHS* *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1871–).
- Trans*
- RS* Robert Southey
- Rutt* *The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Priestley*
ed J. T. Rutt (25 vols 1817–31).
- RX* John Livingstone Lowes *The Road to Xanadu* (rev ed 1930).
- SCB* *Southey's Common-Place Book* ed J. W. Warter (4 vols 1849–51).
- Senator* *The Senator; or Parliamentary Chronicle* (1790–1801).
- SL* S. T. Coleridge *Sibylline Leaves* (1817).
- S Letters* *New Letters of Robert Southey* ed Kenneth Curry (2 vols New
(Curry) York and London 1965).
- S Life* *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey* ed C. C. Southey
(CS) (6 vols 1849–50).
- State* *A Complete Collection of State Trials* ed T. B. and T. J. Howell
Trials (33 vols 1809–26).
- TT* *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*
ed H. N. Coleridge (2nd ed 1836).

- UL *Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* ed Earl Leslie Griggs (2 vols 1932).
- VCL Victoria College Library, University of Toronto
- Watchman* S. T. Coleridge *The Watchman* ed Lewis Patton (London and
(CC) Princeton, N.J. 1970). *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* II.
- WW William Wordsworth

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

1772–1795

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 1772 | (21 Oct) C b at Ottery St Mary, Devonshire, to the Rev John and Ann (Bowdon) Coleridge, youngest of their 10 children | George III king
Wordsworth 2 years old
Scott 1 year old
<i>M Post</i> began |
| 1774 | | Southey b |
| 1775 | | American War of Independence
C. Lamb b |
| 1776 | | Adam Smith <i>Wealth of Nations</i>
Gibbon <i>Decline and Fall</i> |
| 1778 | | Hazlitt b
Rousseau and Voltaire d |
| 1781 | (Oct) Death of C's father | Kant <i>Kritik der reinen Vernunft</i>
Schiller <i>Die Räuber</i> |
| 1782 | (Jul) Enrolled at Christ's Hospital preparatory school for girls and boys, Hertford
(Sept) Christ's Hospital School, London, with C. Lamb, G. Dyer, T. F. Middleton, Robert Allen, J. M. Gutch, Le Grice brothers; met Evans family | Priestley <i>Corruptions of Christianity</i>
Rousseau <i>Confessions</i> |
| 1783 | | Pitt's first ministry (–1801) |
| 1784 | | Samuel Johnson d |
| 1785 | | De Quincey b
Paley <i>Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy</i> |
| 1789 | | (14 Jul) French Revolution
Blake <i>Songs of Innocence</i>
Bowles <i>Sonnets</i> |
| 1790 | | Burke <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> |
| 1791 | (Sept) Jesus College, Cambridge, Exhibitioner, Sizar, Rustat Scholar; met S. Butler, Friend, Porson, C. Wordsworth, Wrangham | (Mar) John Wesley d
Paine <i>Rights of Man</i> pt I (pt II 1792)
Boswell <i>Life of Johnson</i>
Anti-Jacobin riots at Birmingham |
| 1792 | (3 Jul) Encaenia, C's prize-winning Greek Sapphic <i>Ode on the Slave-Trade</i> | Pitt's attack on the slave-trade
Fox's Libel Bill |

-
- 1793 (May) Attended Cambridge trial of Frend
 (7 Nov) First poem in *Morning Chronicle*
 (2 Dec) Enlisted in 15th Light Dragoons as Silas Tomkyn Comberbach
- (21 Jan) Louis XVI executed
 (1 Feb) France declared war on England and Holland
 (Mar-Dec) Revolt of La Vendée
 (Apr) Committee of Public Safety in Paris
 (6 May) Grey's motion for parliamentary reform
 (8 May) Ridgway and Symonds sentenced to 4 years in Newgate for selling Paine's works
 (Jun) Girondists arrested; Jacobins in power
 (26 Jul) Duke of Portland installed as chancellor of Oxford
 (15 Aug) Conscription—*levée en masse*—in France; a nation of soldiers
 (28 Aug) Toulon surrendered to Lord Hood
 (Aug-Sept) Trials of Muir and Palmer, Scottish reformers; sentenced to 14 and 7 years' transportation
 (Sept) Board of agriculture instituted
 (20 Sept) New French calendar
 (30 Sept) Bristol bridge riots: 12 killed, 50 wounded
 (8 Oct) Lyons recaptured by republicans; massive reprisals
 (Oct) French planters in San Domingo place selves under British protection
 (16 Oct) Marie Antoinette executed
 (30 Oct) Brissot and other Girondists beheaded
 (Nov) French army under Hoche defeated Austrians
 (27 Nov) Rev W. Winterbotham sentenced to 4 years in Newgate for preaching seditious sermons
 (Dec) Skirving, Margarot, and Gerrald arrested at reform meeting in Edinburgh; sentenced in 1794 to 14 years' transportation
 (19 Dec) Toulon evacuated by British
 Godwin *Political Justice*
 Wordsworth *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*
- 1794 (7-10 Apr) Back at Cambridge
 (Jun) Poems in *Cambridge Intelligencer*; set out with Joseph Hucks
- (16 Jan) Edward Gibbon d
 (4 Feb) Motion in Commons to assimilate law of sedition in

-
- 1794 to Oxford (met Southey), panti-
socracy planned; Welsh tour
(Aug-Sept) Met Thomas Poole;
engaged to Sara Fricker
(Sept) With RS published *The Fall
of Robespierre* (Cambridge);
Monody on Chatterton published
with Rowley Poems (Cambridge)
(Dec) Left Cambridge
(Dec-Jan) *Sonnets on Eminent
Characters* in *M Chron*
(24 Dec) Began *Religious Musings*
- Scotland to that of England
defeated
(17 Feb) Lansdowne's motion in
Lords for peace
(Feb) Slavery abolished in French
West Indies
(Mar) Gerrald's trial in Edinburgh;
death of Condorcet
(Apr) Thomas Walker of Man-
chester acquitted of high treason;
Danton executed; Kosciusko,
leader of Polish insurrectionists,
defeated Russians
(May) Privy Council examined
seditious letters, etc, leading to
treason; Hardy, Horne Tooke,
Thelwall, and others arrested on
charge of high treason
(23 May) Habeas Corpus suspended
(30 May) Fox's and Bedford's
motions for peace
(Jun) Howe's victory over French
fleet in Bay of Biscay; Battle of
Fleurus, in which Allies defeated;
war of extermination against
maroons in Jamaica
(Jul) Fall of Robespierre
(Sept) Retreat of Duke of York in
Flanders
(Oct) Kosciusko defeated by Rus-
sians under Suvorov
(Oct-Dec) State Trials of Hardy,
Tooke, and Thelwall, who were
acquitted of treason; other
defendants dismissed without
trial
(Nov) Suvorov captures Warsaw,
20,000 Poles massacred; Poland
completely dismembered
(30 Dec) Wilberforce, a supporter
of Pitt, moved an amendment
supporting a drive for peace
(-1795) Paine *Age of Reason*
Paley Evidences of Christianity
RS and Lovell Poems
- 1795 (Jan) RS to London, to bring C
back to Bristol; lodgings there
with RS and George Burnett
(late Jan/early Feb) First political
lecture
(Feb) Second and third political
lectures
(late Feb/early Mar) First political
- (Jan) Intense cold doubled death
rate; Stadtholder escaped to
England, and Batavian Republic
established; first Turkish ambas-
sador made ceremonial entry into
London
(5 Feb) Habeas Corpus Suspension
Act renewed

- 1795 lecture pub as *Moral and Political Lecture*
(14 Mar–c 24 Apr) RS gave 12 historical lectures (with C's help in composition)
(spring–summer) C contributed lines to and corrected RS' *Joan of Arc*
(c 19 May–c 12 Jun) Six Lectures on Revealed Religion
(16 Jun) Lecture on the Slave-Trade (summer) Quarrel with RS; pantisocracy abandoned
(Aug) *Eolian Harp* composed
(Sept) First meeting with Wordsworth
(4 Oct) Married Sara Fricker; moved to Clevedon in Somersetshire
(17 Nov) In Bristol for meeting at Guildhall on attack on King
(26 Nov) Lecture on the Two Bills
(3 Dec) Revised Feb lectures (including *MPL*) published as *Conciones ad Populum*
(c 10 Dec) Lecture on Two Bills pub as *The Plot Discovered*
(c 18 Dec) *An Answer to "A Letter to Fox"* pub; planning *The Watchman*
(26 Feb) Abolition of slave-trade, to be gradual, postponed
(Mar) Brothers, self-styled prophet, examined by Privy Council and declared insane; Camden appointed lord lieut of Ireland, and Catholic emancipation postponed
(Apr) Prussia signed peace with France; Prince of Wales m Caroline of Brunswick; remains of British troops sailed from Bremen for home; riots owing to high cost of provisions at Oxford, Nottingham, Coventry, etc; Warren Hastings acquitted
(Jun–Jul) Quiberon expedition
(Jun) Intense cold killed thousands of livestock; riot at Birmingham owing to high cost of provisions
(26 Jun) Meeting in St George's Fields to petition for annual parliaments and universal suffrage
(Jul) Price of flour rose to near-famine level; Westminster mob attacked crimping-houses
(22 Jul) Spain signed peace with France
(Aug) New French constitution
(4 Oct) Insurrection in Paris; ended by Bonaparte firing on mob
(26 Oct) Meeting of London Corresponding Society in Copenhagen Fields
(27–8 Oct) French National Convention dissolved, and Directory begun
(29 Oct) Attack on King on way to open Parliament
(4 Nov) Royal proclamation to prevent seditious meetings
(6 Nov) Grenville introduced bill in Lords for "safety of his majesty's person"; Pitt in Commons a motion to bring in a bill to prevent seditious meetings
(10 Nov) Pitt introduced Convention Bill
(8 Dec) Pitt announced that King was ready to treat for peace
(18 Dec) Two Bills became law

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

I

COLERIDGE IN BRISTOL 1795: LECTURING AND POLITICS

LEWIS PATTON AND PETER MANN

DURING the first half of his life Coleridge's pursuits were in large part determined by his friendships. Just prior to and during the period of the Bristol lectures the friend in the ascendancy was Robert Southey, and the lectures were a product of that relationship. They had met in June 1794, when Southey was at Balliol and Coleridge, before going on a walking tour to Wales, had come to Oxford to see an old school friend. They took to one another immediately, sharing as they did many vital interests such as poetry and politics, and their meeting seemed the luckiest of chances. In no time at all they conceived a daring plan of emigrating to America with a group of friends and forming there a Utopian colony. Southey supplied the original suggestion, and Coleridge gave it a name—pantisocracy. "When Coleridge and I are sawing down a tree we shall discuss metaphysics; criticise poetry when hunting a buffalo, and write sonnets whilst following the plough".¹ Under pantisocracy all would be equal, and individual property would be abolished; there would remain the "sole propriety" of marriage.² Marriage actually was central to the scheme, for the pantisocrats planned to sail in their ark in wedded pairs. When, shortly after their meeting, Coleridge and Southey visited Bristol, Coleridge was introduced to the Fricker family with its five daughters. One pantisocrat, Robert Lovell, had already married Mary Fricker; Southey was engaged to Edith; a third pantisocrat, George Burnett, had proposed, albeit unsuccessfully, to Martha. And Coleridge, the "Slave of Impulse",³ soon found himself engaged

¹ RS to H. W. Bedford 22 Aug 1794: *S Letters* (Curry) 172.

² "The leading Idea of Pantisocracy is to make men necessarily virtuous by

removing all Motives to Evil—all possible Temptations". C to RS 21 Oct [1794]: *CL* 1114.

³ C to RS 19 Sept 1794: *CL* 1106.

to Sara, although he was already in love with another woman (to be sure, Mary Evans had refused him).

Back at Cambridge in September, Coleridge's head and heart were alive with pantisocracy. "Since I quitted this room what and how important Events have been evolved! America! Southey! Miss Fricker!"¹ A month passed, and a letter from Mary Evans asking him not to go to America revived his passion for her. He tried to restore his affections to Sara, "to her, whom I do not love", but was "wretched!"² The "Joy of Grief" palsied his will,³ Mary was engaged to be married to another, and by early December, unable to settle himself to work, Coleridge left Cambridge without taking his degree and went to London, where most of his friends were old Christ's Hospital schoolmates, including Charles Lamb. To Southey's increasingly urgent enquiries as to when he was returning to Bristol he replied in evasive terms. His reluctance to leave London is understandable. He had become fully aware of how much Mary Evans meant to him; pantisocracy, which Southey now proposed to rehearse on a farm in Wales, seemed both less likely and less attractive in its new form; and finally he had made a vigorous entry into London intellectual and radical circles and was meeting not only Lamb and old friends from Christ's Hospital but also Thomas Holcroft (recently released from prison after having been indicted in October for high treason), Perry and Gray, editors of the *Morning Chronicle*, William Godwin, author of *Political Justice*, and Richard Porson; and he was writing poetry. All of this Coleridge had revealed, tactlessly perhaps, to Southey in a letter of 17 December.⁴ In a later letter he expressed in the clearest terms his attachment to Mary Evans and his absence of feeling for Sara Fricker:

... but to marry a woman whom I do *not* love—to degrade her, whom I call my Wife, by making her the Instrument of low Desire—and on the removal of a desultory Appetite, to be perhaps not displeased with her Absence!—⁵

That Southey could read these explicit words and a fortnight later persist in bringing Coleridge back to Bristol and to Sara Fricker is astonishing. Southey, however, was adamant: Coleridge had given his word to Sara, and she was his fiancée's sister.⁶ So about the middle of January 1795 he went to London and led Coleridge back to

¹ C to RS 18 Sept [1794]: *CL* I 103.

² To RS 21 Oct [1794]: *CL* I 113.

³ To RS [3 Nov 1794]: *CL* I 123.

⁴ *CL* I 138–43.

⁵ To RS 29 Dec 1794: *CL* I 145.

⁶ See *CN* I 1815n for evidence that Sara may have been on Southey's conscience.

Bristol; "nor would he I believe have come back at all, if I had not gone to London to look for him", said Southey forty years afterward.¹

One wonders what would have happened to Coleridge and to English literature if Southey's virtue had been less aggressive and self-confident. The immediate effect, at any rate, was to bring to an end Coleridge's anguish and indecision and to launch him into one of the most active years of his career.

THE POLITICAL LECTURES BEGIN

To judge from the testimony of his letters Southey set off for London in the week beginning 11 January,² for by Friday, 16 January, at the latest Coleridge was back in Bristol, having been persuaded to return first to Bath with Southey, where Southey remained. Coleridge wrote to Southey in Bath on Monday, 19 January,³ and he had then been in Bristol, he says, "two or three days";⁴ he proposed walking over to Bath on the twentieth and returning on the same day.⁵ Southey may have returned with him then or on the next day, for in the Bristol Library register Southey's name appears as returning and borrowing books on 21 January. By the last week of January, at all events, Southey had joined Coleridge and George Burnett in the house in College Street that they were to occupy together until the following September.

Once settled in College Street, Coleridge allowed the "Person, and polished understanding"⁶ of Sara Fricker to drive Mary Evans from his mind. He and Southey had resolved their differences, for the time being at least; Coleridge had reconciled himself to a Welsh prelude to pantisocracy in America, and both young men now turned their attention to earning a living. It was thought that £150 a year earned jointly by them would be sufficient for them to marry and carry out the temporary settlement in Wales.⁷ Originally Coleridge and Southey had hoped to finance the journey to America by Coleridge's *Imitations from the Modern Latin Poets* and Southey's *Joan of Arc*, both works to be published by subscription. In January and February

¹ To Joseph Cottle 5 Mar 1836: *S Letters* (Curry) II 447. Lamb said that "when it was time for him to go and be married, the landlord [of the Cat and Salutation in Newgate Market] entreated his stay, and offered him free quarters if he would only talk". Allsop I 205.

² *CL* I 149n.

³ *CL* I 149-50.

⁴ To RS [13] Nov 1795: *CL* I 164.

⁵ *CL* I 150.

⁶ To George Dyer [late Feb 1795]: *CL* I 151.

⁷ RS to Thomas Southey 21 Mar [1795]: *S Letters* (Curry) I 93.

both men sought employment as reporters for the *Telegraph*. Also proposed was their joint production of a literary review, the *Provincial Magazine*, which would print their poetry.¹ In March they hoped for a post on a projected magazine, *The Citizen*.²

One venture for financing pantisocracy did not fall through—an ambitious series of public lectures on various topics that Coleridge began in late January or early February 1795 and in which Southey joined a month later.

Coleridge no doubt was aware of the current lectures on Kant being delivered in London by F. A. Nitsch and even more aware of John Thelwall's political lectures. Thelwall was among the first lecturers to bring eloquence to the masses; like many popular orators of the day, he joined forces with the pamphleteer—indeed, he himself often wrote pamphlets. Coleridge followed his example, as he also followed the example of such ministers-of-religion-turned-lecturers as Joseph Priestley and Richard Price, for to Coleridge reform without religion was meaningless or futile. In his view, reform, in the true sense, had to have as its goal the diffusion of illumination and a sense of awareness through the general public. Once this was done, public opinion, he believed, would be irresistible (as he declared later, in *The Watchman*, "That all may know the truth; and that the truth may make us free!"). Perhaps the specific problem was how, truly and wisely, to create, concentrate, and express power, as power is derived from human motive. After the first excitement of novelty was over and he sensed his public position, Coleridge began to develop in his Bristol lectures certain emerging patterns of thought that were to remain with him all his life. One he called "bottoming on fixed principles", by which he meant the establishment of the reform movement upon a basis more fundamentally moral and just—less merely opportunist—than that of existing philosophies. Another was specifically Christian and even Biblical in connotation; it was a hope for the creation of an "elect",³ a "saving remnant", or, as he later called it, a "clerisy",⁴ which would furnish an educated leadership in both Church and State. These two ambitions were only means to a third and major purpose—the salvation of the people through an education embracing the whole range of humanity's interests.

An early and important acquaintance made by Southey and

¹ C to RS [19 Jan 1795], to Dyer [late Feb]: *CL* I 150, 152. RS to G. C. Bedford 8 Feb 1795: *S Life* (CS) I 231, 232.

² *CL* I 155.

³ Cf *Religious Musings* line 88: *PW* (EHC) I 112.

⁴ A word coined by C and first in print in *C&S* (1830).

Coleridge was Joseph Cottle, a young bookseller in Bristol with poetic aspirations who wished to be the patron of poets. He offered Southey £50 for his epic *Joan of Arc* when completed and offered each of the poets thirty guineas for a volume of poems. Generous with advances for many years, in spite of business reverses, he was useful to both Coleridge and Southey, though he came to prefer the latter. Unhappily, he was to be the first to write extensively of Coleridge's early life. He had come to bear a grudge against Coleridge, some of whose scoffing remarks had become known to him.¹ Nursing his wounded vanity, he was determined to get even, and after Coleridge's death was the first to publish details of his opium addiction.² For this one could forgive him, but his record is an unreliable one, partly from haziness of memory and partly from unscrupulous handling of manuscripts. His *Early Recollections* (1837), for better or worse, is the principal source for the story of the Bristol lectures.

Early in 1795, in February probably, though he may have begun in January, Coleridge gave three lectures. "S. T. C.", Southey wrote to Cottle on 5 March 1836, correcting errors in Cottle's manuscript, "gave his first and second lectures in the Corn Market and his third at a vacant house somewhere near Castle Green. These were followed by my Lectures, and you know the course of our lives till the October following, when we separated."³ Southey's dismissal of the later history of the lectures ("you know the course of our lives" till October) is for our purposes unfortunate. Southey's own memory in 1836 was unclouded, his mental breakdown still two years off, but Cottle's recollection, except when prompted by a document, was on any particular point never reliable. His account, even when he is trying to be honest, is a muddle; he lists some lectures by place of delivery, others by subject, and still others by date, so that one cannot tell whether one lecture is being listed once or three times. Beyond that remains the question of whether any of his "facts" are to be trusted.

According to Cottle, Coleridge's first two political lectures were

¹ Partly through C's letters to Wade and others, which he had borrowed. Southey was still alive when Cottle wrote his *Early Recollections*, the manuscript of which he sent to Southey in Feb 1836; he never saw Southey's private letters in which he was mentioned, some of the remarks in them on Cottle and his poetry even more scoffing than C's—e.g. "Cottle—who brayed thro the epic trumpet...hath

committed another work. . . . His head has lost something—but such a head it matters not what becomes. . . . To John Rickman Jan 1802: *S Letters* (Curry) I 267.

² On Cottle's vanity see *CN* I 566 and n, 1236; perhaps, if Cottle recognised the portrait, the unkindest cut of all, in print too, was in *BL* ch 2.

³ *S Letters* (Curry) II 448.

delivered at the Plume of Feathers in Wine Street, Bristol;¹ according to Southey, in the Corn Market. "Q", writing in 1819, remembered the first lecture being given "in a room over the corn-market".² Coleridge himself, in a letter to George Dyer conjecturally dated "late February", merely wrote: "Since I have been in Bristol I have endeavored to disseminate Truth by three political Lectures", not naming places.³ The "vacant house near Castle Green", in Southey's letter to Cottle, suggests that after the notoriety of the first two lectures it was not easy to rent a room for the third—perhaps the reason that Coleridge did not give a fourth lecture he had planned. "I believe I shall give a fourth—", he wrote to Dyer in the letter of "late February", "But the opposition of the Aristocrats is so furious and determined, that the Good I do is not proportionate to the Evil I occasion. . .".⁴

The former Bristolian who signed himself "Q" when writing a quarter century later noted that Coleridge had appeared "like a comet or meteor in our horizon".⁵ When he gave his Bristol lectures, Coleridge quickly became a central figure and felt the heady stimulation of admiration. Incidentally, he learned the painful truth that the devil or Tom Fool often governs the tongue. A few years later, with his situation in Bristol yet fresh in mind, he said:

What wonder . . . if in the heat of grateful affection & the unguarded Desire of sympathizing with these who so kindly sympathized with me, I too often deviated from my own Principles? And tho' I detested Revolutions in my calmer moments, as attempts, that were necessarily baffled and made blood-horrible by the very causes, which alone justify Revolutions (I mean, the ignorance, superstition, profligacy, & vindictive passions, which are the natural effects of Despotism & false Religion). . . yet with an ebullient Fancy, a flowing Utterance, a light & dancing Heart, & a disposition to catch fire by the very rapidity of my own motion, & to speak vehemently from mere verbal associations. . . I aided the Jacobins, by witty sarcasms & subtle reasonings & declamations full of genuine feeling against all Rulers & against all established Forms!⁶

¹ *E Rec* I 19–20.

² *M Mag* XLVIII (Oct 1819) 204. The upper room of the Corn Market—popularly so called, but really the Cheese Market—was a schoolroom. The Plume of Feathers, also in Wine Street, was only a few steps away from the Corn Market.

³ *CL* I 152.

⁴ *Ibid.* He was not alone in experiencing such opposition. Joseph Farington records in his diary for 6 Jan

1795 that the publisher of Hayley's *Milton* told him that "Hayley first produced a life written in so strong a spirit of republicanism that . . . He could not print it. Hayley made alterations, but said He would print at a future time, as first written.—Hayley is a violent Republican." Farington I 85.

⁵ *M Mag* XLVIII (1819) 203.

⁶ To Sir George and Lady Beaumont 1 Oct 1803: *CL* II 1000–1.

Coleridge supplies a sample of one of these oratorical flights:

Speaking in public at Bristol I adverted to a public Supper which had been given by Lord — I forget his name, in honor of a victory gained by the Austrians, & after a turbid Stream of wild Eloquence I said—"This is a true Lord's Supper in the communion of Darkness! This is a Eucharist of Hell! A sacrament of Misery!—over each morsel & each Drop of which the Spirit of some murdered Innocent cries aloud to God, This is *my* Body! & this my Blood!—" —These words form alas! a faithful specimen of too many of my Declamations at that Time / fortunately for me, the Government, I suppose, knew that both Southey & I were utterly unconnected with any party or club or society. . . .¹

Setting aside the hostility apparent in her picture of Coleridge in 1795, Charlotte Poole's comment comes to much the same thing: "Tom Poole has a friend with him of the name of Coldridge: a young man of brilliant understanding, great eloquence, desperate fortune, democrattick principles, and entirely led away by the feelings of the moment."²

The perils of ebullience quickly manifested themselves, even though Coleridge seems habitually to have lectured from a manuscript, albeit often a rough one, and his rueful comment suggests that he launched into impromptu eloquence. He said of his first lecture, which was published as *A Moral and Political Lecture*: "I was *obliged* to publish, it having been confidently asserted that there was Treason in it. Written at one sitting between the hours of twelve at night and Breakfast Time of the day, on which it was delivered, believe me that no literary Vanity prompted me to the printing of it—The reason which compelled me to publish it forbad me to correct it."³ But the evidence supplied by the published lecture as well as by acquaintance with Coleridge's habits suggests that his memory may have been faulty on two counts. The very title of his lecture in its printed version, protesting a desire to appeal to calm and sober reason, persuades one that when he delivered it in Bristol he may have strayed beyond his hastily composed text. And no one at all familiar with Coleridge's ways as a writer could believe that he ever sent an unamended manuscript to a printer. "Q", attacking Coleridge's account of the Bristol lectures in the *Biographia Literaria*, remembered not only where the lecture had taken place and that Southey and Lovell were in the audience, but also that Coleridge "had talked of 'preparing the way for a revolution in this country, bloodless as Poland's but not, like her's, to be assassinated by the

¹ Ibid 1001.

² Poole 1 124.

³ To Dyer [late Feb 1795]: CL 1 152.

foul hands of ——.’”¹ A similar passage in *A Moral and Political Lecture* reads: “...if a great people shall from hence become adequately illuminated for a Revolution bloodless, like Poland’s, but not, like Poland’s assassinated by the foul Treason of Tyrants against Liberty”.² This passage is not found in the revised and expanded version of the speech published in *Conciones* in December of the same year. “Q’s” statement, and the motive behind it, are obscure, unless we assume that after nearly twenty-five years he is quoting from memory. His use of the blank certainly implies that C libellously or slanderously inserted an actual name or names.

As to the manner and effect of Coleridge’s lectures, which, if they were like Southey’s, lasted about an hour,³ Cottle in his *Recollections* is uniformly complimentary. In one lecture “his audience were kept in good feeling, by the happy union of wit, humour, and argument”.⁴ The effect of another was greatly heightened by “Mr. C’s arch manner of recitation”,⁵ and in general “Mr. C’s lectures were numerous attended, and enthusiastically applauded”.⁶ Another hearer, writing in a contemporary publication called *The Observer*, was, though friendly to Coleridge, less than flattering about his appearance and manner: “...his speech is perfect monotonism; his person is slovenly.... Mr C—— would...do well to appear with cleaner stockings in public, and if his hair were combed out every time he appeared in public it would not depreciate him in the esteem of his friends.”⁷

Cottle, though he described the lectures as “anti-Pittite”,⁸ has little to say of their political repercussions. In Cottle’s account the only instance of vocal opposition to Coleridge in his lectures occurs in this footnote:

Few attended Mr. C’s lectures but those whose political views were similar to his own; but on one occasion, some gentlemen of the opposite party came into the lecture-room, and, at one sentiment they heard, testified their disapprobation by the only easy and safe way in their power; namely, by a hiss. The auditors were startled at so unusual a sound, not knowing to what it might conduct; but their noble leader soon quieted their fears, by instantly remarking, with great coolness, “I am not at all surprised, when the red hot prejudices of aristocrats are suddenly plunged into the

¹ *M Mag* XLVIII (1819) 204.

² *MPL* 7; below, p 7.

³ “...Two lectures a week an hour each in recitation”: RS to Thomas Southey 21 Mar [1795]: *S Letters* (Curry) I 92.

⁴ *E Rec* I 20.

⁵ *Ibid* I 22.

⁶ *Ibid* I 20.

⁷ *The Observer. Part 1st. Being a Transient Glance at about Forty Youths of Bristol* [summer 1795] 15. See also below.

⁸ *E Rec* I 20.

cool water of reason, that they should go off with a hiss!" The words were electric. The assailants felt, as well as testified, their confusion, and the whole company confirmed it by immense applause! There was no more hissing.¹

Coleridge himself later told Crabb Robinson of another occasion on which he was hissed. "A fellow came and hissed him, and an altercation ensued. The man sneered at Coleridge for professing public principle, and said: 'Why, if you are so public-spirited, do you take money at the door?' 'For a reason,' said Coleridge, 'which I am sorry in the present instance has not been quite successful—to keep out blackguards.'"² The charge for admission to Coleridge's lectures was one shilling, the same fee John Thelwall charged for his last two Beaufort Buildings lectures in December 1795. Thelwall's hearers, however, were numbered in the hundreds—one member of a lecture audience "judged there could not be fewer than 800 persons crowded together".³ Coleridge must have had a modest number, for we hear nothing of any considerable profit.

The Observer implies that Coleridge ran into heavy weather in his political lecturing, but "Undaunted by the storms of popular prejudice, unswayed by magisterial influence, he spoke in public what none had the courage in this City to do before,—he told Men that they have Rights."⁴ The phrase suggests the "rights of man" and implies that Coleridge was a "democrat", a question raised many times, then and later, about his early political views. In *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge asserted that his early politics were "almost equi-distant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats".⁵ "Q", who had known Coleridge in the Bristol days, agrees that he was anti-Pittite and also that he was anti-Foxite, for he remembers "a phillippic I once heard Mr. C. utter against that statesman"; but, he continues, "If ever a democrat existed" Coleridge was one.⁶ Earlier, in *The Friend*, Coleridge had attempted to erase the Jacobin label, defying his "worst enemy to shew, in any of my few writings, the least bias to Irreligion, Immorality, or Jacobinism".⁷ This act of self-defence irritated Southey—"It is worse than folly, for if he was not a Jacobine, in the common acceptation of the name, I wonder who the Devil was. I am sure I was, am

¹ *E Rec* i 178 n.

² *CRB* i 59.

³ Farington *Diary* 14 Dec 1795: i 123. For his earlier lectures that year Thelwall had charged a sixpence admission fee.

⁴ *The Observer* p 15. Cf below, plxxii; LRR, below, p 209.

⁵ *BL* ch 10 (1907) i 121.

⁶ *M Mag* XLVIII (1819) 204.

⁷ *Friend* No 2 (8 Jun 1809): CC ii 25n.

still, and ever more shall be. I am sure too that he wrote a flaming panegyric of Tom Paine, and that I delivered it in one of my lectures."¹ It would take a skilful hand to dissect this piece of spleen. Did Southey, who had just accepted employment with the *Quarterly Review*, hold this same line with his neighbours, Sir George Beaumont and Lord Lonsdale? Oddly enough, the Paine remark that he now restores to Coleridge he had claimed for himself in 1795.²

An attentive reading of Coleridge's writings and letters of this period diminishes one's interest in any of the standard labels.

Coleridge makes it clear that his services were not appreciated in some quarters: "Mobs and Mayors, Blockheads and Brickbats, Placards and Press gangs have leagued in horrible Conspiracy against me... Two or three uncouth and unbrained Automata have threatened my Life—and in the last Lecture the Genus infimum were scarcely restrained from attacking the house in which the 'damn'd Jacobine was jawing away.'"³ Even if we allow for humorous exaggeration, it is clear that Coleridge was stigmatised as a radical. Over a year later, writing to John Prior Estlin, the Unitarian minister in Bristol, Coleridge, who had preached in various other towns, laments that he is unable to relieve Estlin in the pulpit in Bristol because of "my political notoriety".⁴ This notoriety had its effect on his political lectures, for in a letter to Dyer of 10 March he said: "I was soon obliged by the persecutions of Darkness to discontinue them".⁵ The deterrent, if similar to that encountered in London and elsewhere by radical speakers, was the refusal of innkeepers and other owners of public rooms to lease them to anti-Government speakers. To do so might lead to withdrawal of licence or other reprisal by magistrates favourable to the Government.⁶ Thus Coleridge became aware of what it meant to belong to a minority: "The Democrats are... sturdy in their support of me—but their number is comparatively small".⁷ However small their number, they were evidently a cordial and admiring group.

The *Critical Review* for April 1795 found *A Moral and Political Lecture* "spirited, and often brilliant", with "more than sixpenny worth of good sense", and Coleridge "a young man who possesses a poetical imagination".⁸ Revised and expanded, this first political

¹ RS to Charles Danvers 15 Jun 1809: *S Letters* (Curry) I 511.

² See below, p xxxiv.

³ To Dyer [late Feb 1795]: *CL* I 152.

⁴ [22 Aug 1796]: *CL* I 233.

⁵ *CL* I 155.

⁶ See above, Southey's mention of the "vacant house" for the third lecture.

⁷ To Dyer [late Feb 1795]: *CL* I 152.

⁸ *C Rev* ser 2 XIII (1795) 455.

lecture was reprinted as the "Introductory Address" of *Conciones ad Populum, or, Addresses to the People*, which was published on 3 December 1795. The second lecture delivered in February, and perhaps part of the third, appeared under the title "On the Present War", though in the Preface Coleridge calls the *Conciones* "two addresses". In later life he was to refer to these early political lectures as the first of his "Lay-sermons".¹

SOUTHEY'S HISTORICAL LECTURES

The year 1795 saw the association of Coleridge and Southey draw to its closest stage. Perhaps by now they had lost some of the exuberance of the previous year, when they met in Oxford, each then stalled and perplexed, finding in each other a source of vaulting hope that centred in their pantisocratic dreams. But now was a time for action, and that was stimulating, too. Their collaboration seemed to contain the promise of the sort of fulfilment actually achieved two years later by Coleridge and Wordsworth, when it appeared almost as if the achievement of each owed more to the powers of the other. Southey certainly was possessed by this feeling when he wrote in early February: "Coleridge is writing at the same table; our names are written in the book of destiny, on the same page."²

After Coleridge was "obliged to discontinue" his political lectures, Southey gave a course of historical lectures "unconnected with—at least not *immediately* relative to—the politics of the Day",³ of which Coleridge "wrote one half in *Quantity*".⁴ Cottle prints the prospectus of Southey's twelve lectures from "the Origin and Progress of Society" to "the American War". They were due to be given on Tuesdays and Fridays, beginning on Saturday, 14 March 1795,⁵ on which day an advertisement for them appeared in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*. They began on time, for Southey wrote to his brother Tom on 21 March that he had already given three. "Public speaking is awkward at first, but three lectures have accustomed me to it."⁶ He mentioned also that they had moral and political implications. "I am giving a course of historical lectures at Bristol teaching what is right by showing what is wrong; my company of course is sought

¹ *LS* (1817) ixn.

² *RS* to Bedford 8 Feb 1795: *S Life* (CS) I 231.

³ *C* to Dyer 10 Mar 1795: *CL* I 155.

⁴ *C* to *RS* 13 Nov 1795: *CL* I 172.

⁵ Prospectus in Bodl. MS Autogr. b. 7. f 9.

⁶ *S Letters* (Curry) I 93.

by all who love good Republicans and odd characters.”¹ No doubt with Coleridge’s experience of February in mind, he believed he might be required to publish them. “Tis possible that I may be called upon to publish my historical lectures; this I shall be unwilling to do, as they are only splendid declamation.”²

The series should have ended on 21 April, but the fourth lecture, “On the Rise, Progress and Decline of the Roman Empire”, which, according to Cottle, Coleridge had requested from Southey as a subject “to which he had devoted much attention”,³ was postponed when the lecturer failed to turn up. Southey subsequently gave the lecture himself. Coleridge’s defection here presumably lay behind Southey’s later charges of indolence. According to Cottle, Southey’s irritation boiled over during an expedition to Tintern Abbey immediately after the missed lecture. The party, which included the two Fricker sisters, Edith and Sara, returned early to Bristol to allow Southey to prepare the postponed lecture. The series should then have finished on Friday, 24 April, instead of the twenty-first as planned. However, in a letter to Tom Southey of 9 May, Southey says quite explicitly, though possibly mistakenly, that he has given *thirteen* lectures, affirming at the same time their radical political character. “My Lectures are finished and that very quickly. I gave thirteen—and said bolder truths than any other Man in this country has yet ventured. Speaking of my friend Tom I cried O Paine! hireless Priest of Liberty! unbought teacher of the poor! Chearing to me is the reflection that my heart hath ever acknowledged—that my tongue hath proudly proclaimed—the truth and Divinity of thy Doctrines!”⁴ If in fact he gave thirteen, then the series should have finished on Tuesday, 28 April. The record of Southey’s borrowings from the Bristol Library suggests that the eleventh and twelfth lectures, as given in the prospectus, were delivered later than planned (which would have been on 21 and 24 April, allowing for the supposed cancellation and later delivery of Lecture 4).⁵ Having given all his

¹ *S Letters* (Curry) I 92.

² Ibid I 93. His son says, “Of these lectures I can find no trace among my father’s papers.” *S Life* (CS) I 235.

³ Cottle *E Rec* I 38.

⁴ *S Letters* (Curry) I 93–4. See above, p xxxii, Southey’s later claim that C wrote a “flaming panegyric” to Paine, which RS delivered in a lecture.

⁵ On 27 Apr C and RS took out the second and third volumes of Macfar-

lane’s *History of the Reign of George the Third* (3 vols 1770–94), returning them 12 May. *Bristol LB* 120. The eleventh lecture included the “History of Europe to the American War”; the subject of the twelfth was “The American War”. For both of these subjects Macfarlane would have been essential. These lectures, then, may have been given 28 Apr and 1 May.

lectures, Southey turned without delay to the rewriting of *Joan of Arc*, which occupied him until about 10 August.¹ As far as we know, he gave no other lectures at this time.

Southey's lectures have never been published, although the first subject of his Lecture 6, "Manners and Irruptions of the Northern Nations", was printed in part under the title "Historical Sketch of the Manners and Religion of the Ancient Germans, introductory to a Sketch of the Manners, Religion, and Politics of present Germany", in the third number of *The Watchman*.² Whereas in his own lectures, Coleridge claimed, Southey contributed only "a very few pages. . . And such Pages! I would not have suffered them to have stood in a Lecture of your's", to Southey's lectures Coleridge "dedicated my whole mind & heart—and wrote one half in *Quantity*—; but in *Quality*, you must be conscious, that all the *Tug* of Brain was mine: and that your Share was little more than Transcription".³ Unless he felt he had a strong claim to Lecture 6, it seems unlikely that Coleridge would have printed it in *The Watchman*, without acknowledgment to Southey, at a time when he and Southey were estranged.

LECTURES ON REVEALED RELIGION

So far three lectures by Coleridge have been accounted for. We must now turn to the "Six Lectures on Revealed Religion, its Corruptions, and its Political Views" for which Cottle provides a prospectus but no dates⁴ and which Coleridge in his Preface to *Conciones* says followed: "The two following Addresses were delivered in the month of February, 1795, and were followed by six others in defence of natural and revealed Religion".⁵ Unlike his earlier political lectures, these theological lectures were presented under the patronage of several Bristol citizens, including the Reverend and Mrs John Prior Estlin, Mr Morgan (a wine shipper) and his wife, and the three Cottle brothers, Amos, Joseph, and Robert (Joseph was the publisher), and their father.⁶ The lectures, "intended for two classes of men, Christians and Infidels", were probably given on Tuesday and Friday evenings in the Card Room of the Assembly Coffehouse on the

¹ George Whalley "Coleridge, Southey and 'Joan of Arc'" *N&Q* cxix (1954) 67–9.

² *Watchman* (CC) 89–92; see 89 n 1 for RS's claim to the essay.

³ To RS (who was best qualified to

refute such a claim if inaccurate) 13 Nov 1795: *CL* i 172.

⁴ *E Rec* i 27–8.

⁵ *Conciones* (1795) [3]; below, p 27.

⁶ HNC MS Table Talk (3), in VCL.

Quay.¹ The evidence of the Bristol Library register of borrowings suggests that the lectures were given in the second half of May and early June. Cudworth's *True Intellectual System* was taken out on Friday, 15 May, and Maclaurin's *Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries* on Monday, 18 May.² Both of these works entered into Lecture 1, either in the form of quotation or more indirectly but still recognisably, which suggests that the first lecture was given on Tuesday, 19 May. The fact that Lecture 1 offers a comparatively well-prepared and full account³ of the advertised topic suggests perhaps that Coleridge spent more than the week-end of 15–17 May and Monday, 18 May, in putting it together. It could have been done, however.⁴ A limiting date for their conclusion is provided by Coleridge's Lecture on the Slave-Trade. This was advertised for, and delivered on, 16 June. If delivered within these conjectural dates, the Lectures on Revealed Religion were delivered twice weekly, probably on Tuesdays and Fridays like Southey's historical series of March–April.

Reference to the Bristol Library register can help towards a more precise, though still tentative, dating of the series. In what is presented as Lecture 4 in this edition Coleridge incorporated some material (verbal borrowings and matters of fact) from the first volume of Michaelis's *Introduction to the New Testament*. He borrowed this from the library on 1 June (returning it on 11 June) and at the same time took out Paley's *View of the Evidences of Christianity*, which also entered verbally into the same lecture.⁵ This part of the lectures, then, could have been delivered as early as the next day, Tuesday, 2 June, or on Friday, 5 June. From an advertisement in the *Bristol Mercury* of 1 June, we know that Lecture 4 was announced for eight o'clock the following evening. Lectures 5 and 6 would then have been given between 5 and 12 June. With the return of the Michaelis work to the library on 11 June, any pattern of borrowing and known reading parallel to the subject-matter of the Lectures on Revealed Religion comes to an end.

For a time at least Coleridge seems to have had some intention

¹ *E Rec* 1 27; advertisement of Lecture 4 in the *Bristol Mercury* 1 Jun 1795. The Assembly Coffeehouse was one of the principal coffeehouses in Bristol: *The New History... of... Bristol* (Bristol 1794) 91.

² *Bristol LB* 120, 121.

³ See below, p 86.

⁴ C worked speedily: two books

used in preparing his Lecture on the Slave-Trade, Clarkson's *Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade* and Wadström's *Essay on Colonization*, were borrowed only the day before that lecture was delivered; and see below, the library evidence for Lecture 4 of the Lectures on Revealed Religion.

⁵ *Bristol LB* 121.

of preparing these lectures for publication, as he had already done with his early political lectures. In late March 1796, when he was engaged with *The Watchman*, he said: "I find, that the Watchman comes more easy to me—so that I shall begin about my Christian Lectures—".¹ In fact, even as early as 1796 it would have been difficult for him to have published them without much revision, for his ideas were shifting constantly from the end of 1795 onwards. By March 1796, for example, the Priestleian optimism that had supported the buoyant tone of the Lectures on Revealed Religion and coloured many of the ideas in them had suffered some check from his experiences during the last six months or so.² The idea of a critical treatise on Godwin's *Political Justice* increasingly occupied his mind from 1796 to 1799, and although this would undoubtedly have made use of the material gathered together in the lectures, the lectures themselves were evidently put on one side. They remained in Coleridge's possession, however. The fact that he re-read them later in life³ indicates that the manuscript was probably in his library at Highgate and so passed into the hands of Dr and Mrs Gillman, with whom he lived, and from them to their granddaughter, Mrs Lucy E. Watson. On the first page of his transcript of the manuscript E. H. Coleridge noted: "The MSS were placed in my hands by M^{rs} Watson, the granddaughter of James Gillman." The holograph manuscript of the lectures, however, has disappeared; the lectures exist only in E. H. Coleridge's transcript.⁴

LECTURES ON THE SLAVE-TRADE, THE HAIR-POWDER TAX, AND THE CORN LAWS

In the long accusing letter reviewing their association together that Coleridge sent to Southey on 13 November 1795, shortly before Southey was due to leave for Portugal, Coleridge asserted that he had delivered altogether *eleven* lectures.⁵ With the three political lectures of February and the six Lectures on Revealed Religion of May–June, we are left to account for two other lectures. One is well authenticated—the Lecture on the Slave-Trade, which was delivered, according to a newspaper advertisement, "by particular desire", at the Assembly Coffeehouse on the Quay on 16 June. It was printed in condensed and revised form in the fourth number of *The Watchman*,⁶

¹ To Poole 30 Mar 1796: *CL* i 195.

² See the letter to the Rev John Edwards 20 Mar 1796: *CL* i 192.

³ See below, p 178 n 1.

⁴ See below, pp 76–9.

⁵ *CL* i 172.

⁶ See *Watchman* (CC) 130–40.

and also exists in an incomplete transcript by E. H. Coleridge that substantiates Coleridge's assertion, in the above letter to Southey, that Southey's contributions to Coleridge's lectures were pages he "would not have suffered . . . to have stood in a Lecture of your's".¹ Coleridge, writes *The Observer*, "has delivered many Lectures here, one of which (on the Slave-trade) is a proof of the detestation in which he holds that infamous traffic". He then continues—unfortunately for our purposes—"As all his lectures are about to be published, it would be useless to treat of them in this place. The Public, I will dare to predict, will be highly gratified in them."²

One lecture is unaccounted for. Cottle mentions a Lecture on the Hair-Powder Tax, "in which his audience were kept in good feeling by the happy union of wit, humour, and argument", but again fails to give a date.³ The tax was imposed on 6 May and was reported in the Bristol newspapers a few days later. If the Lectures on Revealed Religion were being prepared from 15 May onwards, as Coleridge's library borrowings suggest, the hair-powder lecture may have preceded them and been given some time in the week beginning Sunday, 10 May. However, the hair-powder tax was satirised in newspapers and prints as early as March, when Pitt proposed it in the budget of 1795, and for many months thereafter the "swinish multitude" (democrats with unpowdered hair, labelled with Burke's unfortunate remark) and the "guinea pigs" (aristocrats who would pay a guinea for a licence to wear hair powder) were the subjects of jest and caricature.⁴ Tom Poole, who always wore his hair unpowdered, may have given some impetus to Coleridge's lecture.⁵ According to Cottle, Coleridge later repeated the lecture as a sermon in Bath, "with the exception of its humourous appendages".⁶

Cottle also speaks of another twice-told lecture—a Lecture on the Corn Laws delivered first in Bristol at the Assembly Room and repeated as a sermon at Bath, "which 'Corn Laws', he laboured to show, were cruelty to the poor, and the alone cause of the prevailing sufferings, and popular discontent".⁷ The "Letter from Liberty to

¹ *CL* I 172. See below, pp 239–43 and nn; Southey's contributions were passages copied from books.

² *The Observer* pp 14–15.

³ *E Rec* I 20.

⁴ See, among others, the descriptions of *One of the Svinish Multitude* (pub 6 Mar), *Leaving Off Powder* (pub 10 Mar), and *Favorite Guinea Pigs Going to Market* (pub 27 Jul) in M. D.

George Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires . . . in the British Museum III (1942) 162, 163, 187.

⁵ See Poole I 131n.

⁶ *E Rec* I 182–3.

⁷ *Ibid* I 181. In 1791 the landed interest had succeeded in repealing Burke's Corn Law of 1773 and raising the protective tariff on imported corn. Instead of a nominal tariff on imports

her *Dear Friend Famine*", which precedes the "Introductory Address" of the *Conciones*, could conceivably come from such a lecture—and Cottle has Coleridge "amusing" his audience by reciting it "at one of his lectures".¹ It could also have been part of the second or third political lecture given in February (the price of wheat in that month stood at the high rate of 58 shillings a quarter, rising to the famine price of 108 shillings in August).² There is, however, no evidence apart from Cottle's that it ever was part of a lecture.

Putting lectures into print has always been common practice. As already noted, Coleridge's first two lectures, with possibly part of a third and with some material from the *Lectures on Revealed Religion*, became *Conciones*. If a lecture has not been published, one has sometimes a fairly reliable indicator as to whether it was actually ever delivered. When Coleridge's ventures in 1796 put a heavy premium on matter for the press, was that lecture reused as an essay? Southey's lecture on the Germans from his historical series (in which Coleridge had a large share) was used in the third number of *The Watchman*, and the *Lecture on the Slave-Trade* in the fourth number. If, as Cottle thought, Coleridge gave a lecture on the hair-powder tax, it was perhaps not printed because its author considered it trivial or ephemeral (the reviewer of *A Moral and Political Lecture* in the *Critical Review* had called for a statement of Coleridge's "principles" in a "form sufficiently scientific and determinate"). The references to the hair-powder tax in *The Watchman* evince no special preparation and are much the sorts of things to be found in the daily press of the period. Subject-matter deriving from a possible lecture on the Corn Laws (except for the *Letter from Liberty to Famine*) would be hard to trace, for the subject is interrelated with the whole question of scarcity, grain monopolies, and the like. Coleridge's reuse of material involves two contending forces in his nature: his respon-

when corn reached the top price of 48s. a quarter, as under Burke's law, the top price was raised to 54s. a quarter. There was a moderate tariff on imported corn when the price reached 54–50s. a quarter, and a prohibitive duty below 50s. The war diminished the supply of foreign corn, and prices fluctuated with the English weather. In July 1795 a quarter loaf of bread cost a shilling—an eighth to a tenth of the average journeyman's weekly wages.

¹ *E Rec* 1 22.

² Earl Stanhope *Life of the Right Honourable William Pitt* (rev ed 1879 3 vols) II 113. If the Corn Laws had been the subject of C's second or third lecture in February, it would have been even more pertinent redelivered as a sermon later in the year, after the disastrously cold summer killed the wheat harvest and brought near-famine to the labouring class in towns and cities.

siveness, leading him to impromptu and to rashness; and his contemplativeness, leading him to hesitation and revision and carefully wrought effects, which (and it was real labour) he might use again and again.

LECTURES ON THE ENGLISH REBELLION AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

In addition to the series on natural and revealed religion, Coleridge intended giving another subscription series of six lectures on a "comparative view" of the French Revolution and the English Revolution of the seventeenth century. No advertisement for them in the Bristol press has been found, but a printed prospectus was preserved among Poole's papers, with an autograph invitation to dinner in verse from Coleridge to Poole on the back.¹ The lectures were to be given once a week, Tuesday evenings, again at the Assembly Coffeehouse, beginning 23 June. The germ of the idea for the lectures may have grown from Coleridge's contributions to and interest in Southey's historical lectures, which, said Cottle, "were numerous attended, and their composition was greatly admired".² Among the subjects Coleridge proposed to treat were "The Liberty of the Press" (Lecture 2), "Characters of Charles the First, and Louis the Sixteenth" (Lecture 4), and "On Revolution in general" (Lecture 6).³

There is good reason to believe that these lectures were not delivered. First, there is a significant change in the pattern of Coleridge's reading in the summer of 1795 in as far as it is reflected in his borrowings from the Bristol Library after 16 June, the date of his Lecture on the Slave-Trade. He took out only Edwards's *History... of the British Colonies in the West Indies* and Chatterton's *Rowley Poems* (1794), in which his *Monody on the Death of Chatterton* was first published. Although we must use the library register with caution as an indication of what Coleridge was reading at any time (he had the facilities of Cottle's bookshop), the exclusion during June and July of political and historical works dealing with the English and French Revolutions does not suggest the strenuous reading that would be required of him. Second, there are no surviving references to the lectures by Coleridge himself.

If they were not given, there may have been various obstacles:

¹ BM Add MS 35343 f 71; the verse invitation has been printed in *CL* 1 296. There is another copy of the prospectus in the Berg Collection of NYPL.

² *E Rec* 1 37.

³ For the complete prospectus see below, pp 255-6.

Coleridge depended on subscriptions, and financial support may not have been forthcoming; the Bristol authorities may have had enough of his lectures for the moment and have spoken words of warning to the proprietor of the Assembly Coffeehouse. Another reason why they were not given could have been that the poet took precedence for the time being over the lecturer; he was preparing copy for his first volume of poems, to be published the following year as *Poems on Various Subjects* (the *Monody* grew from 107 lines in the *Rowley Poems* to 143 lines in his own volume). In addition, cooling friendship may have robbed him of Southey's aid, so necessary in an historical series. Conflict came to a head in early August 1795 over Southey's inclination to adopt the law as a profession, or even the Church, and over differences in their attitudes to pantisocracy. But trouble between the two had been brewing in fact since Coleridge's return to Bristol in the previous January. By mid-1795 Southey had abandoned any real intention of putting the pantisocratic community of goods into practice, even on the farm in Wales. Coleridge, on the other hand, had unequivocally and publicly reaffirmed his belief, on Christian grounds, in the ideal of common property and his abhorrence of private ownership; this must have brought the whole problem of pantisocracy, and the relations between himself and Southey, to a critical point.

It is easy to understand Coleridge's and Southey's attraction for each other: binding them together in their common interests were the dazzling brilliance of Coleridge's mind and the austere strength of Southey's character. "Farewell, sturdy Republican!" Coleridge said in his first letter to Southey,¹ attributing to him the ideal virtue of the "enlightened and unluxurious ancients".² In his next letter he praises Southey's "confirmed *Habits* of strict Morality" and his "stern Simplicity of Republican Wants".³ In practice his efforts sometimes went into holding Southey to this ideal, as when he said: "I am *delighted* to feel you superior to me in Genius as in Virtue".⁴ "Genius" perhaps is flattery, but Coleridge needed to look up to Southey's superiority in virtue, even when that virtue fell short of perfection. "Your undeviating Simplicity of Rectitude has made you too rapid in decision".⁵ In a letter to George Dyer, an awareness of defect may lurk among the praises Coleridge heaped upon Southey: "His Genius and acquirements are uncommonly great—yet they

¹ 6 Jul [1794]: *CL* I 84.

² See below, p 317.

³ To RS 13 Jul [1794]: *CL* I 85.

⁴ To RS 18 Sept [1794]: *CL* I 104.

⁵ To RS 19 Sept [1794]: *CL* I 106.

See also *CN* I 1815 and n.

bear no proportion to his moral Excellence—He is truly a man of *perpendicular Virtue*—a *downright upright Republican!*”¹

Friendship had a special meaning for Coleridge: “The ardour of private Attachments makes Philanthropy a necessary *habit* of the Soul. I love my *Friend*—such as *he* is, all mankind are or *might* be!”² In the end Southey failed him. He abandoned pantisocracy and went off to Portugal at the expense of a well-to-do uncle, thus proving to Coleridge that Southey’s panoply of virtue had one chink—self-interest, or what to Coleridge was the same thing, an excess of prudence. It was lucky that he could transfer his admiration to another friend, Tom Poole, who not only had Southey’s uprightness but was disinterested. The collapse of the friendship with Southey produced, along with disillusionment, an unexpected result. In Coleridge’s mind he, the weaker vessel, had become the stronger, the one more dedicated to principle. His giant, Southey, had dwindled to a pigmy, and by contrast he had gained in stature.³ This access of self-confidence doubtless nerved him for his strenuous public duties of late 1795 and early 1796.

SUMMER TO AUTUMN 1795

One of the bonds between Southey and Coleridge had been their sense of estrangement from their families, families with uncongenial ambitions for them. Southey was able to compromise; Coleridge was not. Coleridge’s quarrel with his family and his difficult relationship with his brother George over his political and religious opinions were deeply disturbing. Later in life he wrote that he had been driven towards some personal association with radical figures and “democrats” partly by the uncomprehending hostility and bigotry of his family in the face of his Unitarianism and revolutionary sympathies:

... tho’ they never ceased to talk of my Youth as a proof of the falsehood of my opinions they never introduced it as an extenuation of the error. . . . To such Bigotry what was an enthusiastic young man likely to oppose? They abhorred my person, I abhorred their actions: they set up the long howl of Hydrophoby at my principles, & I repayed their Hatred & Terror by the bitterness of Contempt. Who then remained to listen to me? to be kind to me? to be my friends—to look at me with kindness, to shake my hand with kindness, to open the door, & spread the hospitable board, & to let me feel that I was a man well-loved—me, who from my childhood

¹ [Late Feb 1795]: *CL* I 152–3.

² To RS 13 Jul [1794]: *CL* I 86. These two sentences supply a background to Coleridge’s and Southey’s Bristol lectures. More than a decade

later *The Friend* was to be the title of Coleridge’s work intended to inculcate “principles” in mankind.

³ Cf C to RS 13 Nov 1795: *CL* I 166.

have had no avarice, no ambition—whose very vanity in my vainest moments was $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of it the desire, & delight, & necessity of loving & being beloved?—These offices of Love the Democrats only performed to me; my own family, bigots from Ignorance, remained wilfully ignorant from Bigotry. What wonder then, if in the heat of grateful affection & the unguarded Desire of sympathizing with these who so kindly sympathized with me, I too often deviated from my own Principles?¹

Beneath the surface of Coleridge's active public life in 1795 lay deep preferences for domestic retirement and seclusion and for the simple satisfactions and pieties of family life. "Domestic Happiness", he wrote to Southey in August 1795, "is the greatest of things sublunary. . .".² It has several times been noted that Adelaide's Song in *The Fall of Robespierre* expressed some of his deeper feelings.³ The Song was also published separately under the title *Domestic Peace*. In it memory, love, honour, domestic peace, holiness, joy are all associated with retirement and private life and placed in opposition to both "scepter'd state" and the "rebel's noisy hate". Although conventional in language, the Song successfully evokes a mood of nostalgic longing for the "cottage'd vale" remote from the political violence that the play dramatises, and looks forward to those later poems, such as *Frost at Midnight* and *This Lime-Tree Bower*, in which the longed-for contentments are achieved.

During the middle and latter part of the summer of 1795 Coleridge had the prospect of the private life of a poet before him. He was courting Sara, though at times absent-mindedly if we may accept the evidence of his *Lines in the Manner of Spenser*, where he apologises for forgetting an early-morning meeting. Though his relations with Southey had soured, he spent much time in adding to and correcting *Joan of Arc* and Southey's other poems ("Our Muses had not quarrelled").⁴ He was writing poems for his own volume for which he had contracted with Cottle. He speaks of "re-composing" his lectures,⁵ meaning possibly the revision of the political lectures as *Conciones* or of the Lectures on Revealed Religion. About 20 August he took a lease on a cottage at Clevedon where he and Sara were to live. There he established residence on his marriage on 4 October and lived the idyll he describes in *The Aeolian Harp* and *Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement*. The title of the latter poem

¹ To Sir George and Lady Beaumont
1 Oct 1803: *CL* II 1000.

² *CL* I 158.

³ *PW* (EHC) II 501–2. See Carl R. Woodring *Politics in the Poetry of*

Coleridge (Madison, Wis. 1961) 197–8; Geoffrey Carnall *Robert Southey and His Age* (1960) 31.

⁴ To RS 13 Nov 1795: *CL* I 167.

⁵ *Ibid* 172.

reminds one that he did leave before long; but before dwelling on that one must consider the political events then in progress.

The Government's failure to find incriminating evidence in the seized papers of the reformers arraigned in the State Trials of 1794 and the consequent acquittal of the prisoners lifted the spirits of the Opposition. But the Government was in earnest, as was shown by its renewal of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act in February 1795. The ministry, being disturbed by the widespread discontent over the scarcity in 1795 and the threat of famine, sought for stronger ways of suppressing political dissent. An opportunity came on 29 October, when a mob attacked the King on his way to open Parliament. This outrage was connected by the Government with an immense gathering held a few days before by the London Corresponding Society in the fields near Copenhagen House, Islington. No disorder took place there, but the crowd listened to eloquent denunciations of the war against France and appeals for reform by Thelwall, Frend, and others. The first move of the Government after the attack on the King was a Royal Proclamation on 4 November, directed against seditious assemblies and the circulation of treasonable papers. This move was followed, two days later, by the introduction into the Lords, by Lord Grenville, of a bill against treasonable practices; on the same day in the Commons Pitt introduced a motion to bring in a bill against seditious meetings. Grenville's bill dispensed with the old requirement that treason consist of overt acts; under his bill, treason could be a variety of things including "inciting the people to hatred or contempt of his Majesty", printing, writing, or malicious speaking with the intent to do harm to the King. Pitt's bill forbade meetings of fifty or more without the consent of a magistrate, who should be empowered to disperse meetings at his discretion. While under discussion these bills provoked much popular feeling, and petitions, many more against than for them, poured into Parliament. On 10 November the Whig Club met to protest the abrogation of the right of free speech and assembly, and the London Corresponding Society did likewise. There was, in short, a great stir. Everyone who felt a leaning toward public affairs wished, naturally, to have his say.

Remote from the centre of controversy as he was, Coleridge could hardly fail to respond when liberty was in danger. Though he was still charmed by his life at Clevedon, he was beginning to discover its limitations. Books were hard to get, his friends were at a distance, and he found that Sara complained when he went to see them and stayed overnight; perhaps, too, he felt the restlessness that sometimes

urges the honeymooner to resume his bachelor habits. The public outcry against the Two Bills affected him mightily, and he felt impelled to join in it.

Was it right,
While my unnumber'd brethren toil'd and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use?¹

Bristol shared the national excitement, and by mid-November Coleridge was on hand to lend the support of his eloquence, since his efforts in the spring had made him a leader among the liberals. Azariah Pinney wrote to Wordsworth (26 November):

In Bristol a meeting was convened, to send his Majesty a congratulatory message on his late escape—after that was carried, Coleridge, Coates, and some others, rose, to vote for an amendment; but the Mayor declaring that the meeting was solely for the purpose of framing an address to his Majesty, refused to hear of the amendment. A great noise, in consequence, ensued, but Coleridge's party were at length compelled to give up the point—Dr. Beddoes, the following day, published a pamphlet . . . to explain the nature of the Two Bills now pending in Parliament, and recommending the Citizens to meet and frame a Petition, to shew their disapprobation of the measures likely to be adopted by Government—Dr. Fox, and others, requested of the Mayor the use of the Guildhall, as a proper place to assemble, which was granted—Dr. Fox took the chair and read the Petition, (which I think you will agree was a very proper one,) and closed with an admonitory speech, recommending peace and good order—the whole was carried with greatest decorum and propriety—Coates was about delivering a very inflammatory harangue, but was called to order by the chair—I can assure you the most undivided unanimity prevailed; it did credit to those who had the conducting of it—Dr. Beddoes is no Orator, but spoke to the purpose—Coleridge voted that the Petition might be carried into the House by Mr. Fox, and Mr. Sheridan, but willingly acceded to Beddoes's opposition, who thought it would command greater attention by being presented by our Members.²

In the more detailed account in the London *Star* of the two meetings of 17 and 20 November in Bristol Guildhall, the correspondent, carried away by Coleridge's eloquence, has this to say: ". . . in a tone of voice, and with that sweetness of emphasis which would have fascinated the attention even of a Robespierre; Mr. Coleridge began the most elegant, the most pathetic, and the most sublime Address

¹ *Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement* lines 44–8: *PW* (EHC) 107.

² Pinney Papers, in Bristol University Library.

that was ever heard, perhaps, within the walls of that building.”¹ A compliment indeed when one remembers that Burke, when MP for Bristol, was accustomed to speaking there!²

To follow the progress of this petition, John, Lord Sheffield, Gibbon’s friend and one of the members for Bristol, was asked to present it in spite of his Toryism. If a reluctant choice, he was also a reluctant agent; the *Morning Chronicle* for 24 November reports that, when Lord Sheffield presented a petition from Bristol against the Two Bills, “Mr. Sheridan remarked, that the Petition seemed to have fallen into improper hands, for the Noble Lord had not made any observation upon it, nor had he mentioned by how many persons it was signed, though Mr. Sheridan understood it was signed by no less than *four thousand!*” Sheridan later added, in an exchange with Sheffield, that “he had received a letter from a gentleman at Bristol, who was apprehensive that the Noble Lord would not make it known to be the general sense of the inhabitants of Bristol, and did therefore wish that it should be stated to the House. The Petition was drawn up and signed in due form, and the signatures were those of the most respectable persons in that city”.

THE TWO BILLS: *THE PLOT DISCOVERED* AND *THE ANSWER TO FOX*

The paucity of dates and particulars in the records of Coleridge’s life in this year 1795 continues to the end. We know that he spoke at the two Guildhall meetings of 17 and 20 November and that on 26 November, “in the Great Room at the Pelican Inn, Thomas Street”, he gave the lecture against the Two Bills that was to form the basis of *The Plot Discovered. Conciones ad Populum*, the revision of the February lectures, was advertised for sale on 3 December (its preface was dated 16 November). The publication date of *The Plot Dis-*

¹ For the full report in the *Star*, see below, App B1, pp 359–64.

² Some thought of his predecessor would hardly escape C in this connexion. Le Grice, describing undergraduate evenings in C’s rooms in Jesus College, Cambridge, two or three years before, says: “What little suppers, or *sizings*, as they were called, have I enjoyed; when Aeschylus, and Plato, and Thucydides were pushed aside, with a pile of lexicons, &c., to discuss the pamphlets of the day. Ever

and anon, a pamphlet issued from the pen of Burke. There was no need of having the book before us. Coleridge had read it in the morning, and in the evening he would repeat whole pages verbatim. Pamphlets swarmed from the press. Coleridge had read them all; and in the evening, with our *negus*, we had them *viva voce* gloriously.” C. V. Le Grice “College Reminiscences of Mr. Coleridge” *G Mag* N.S. II (Dec 1834) 606.

covered is not known. It contains matter from early December, and the date on the wrapper, 28 November, may be Coleridge's recollection of the date of delivery (really 26 November). A presentation copy to a Mrs Richardson, now in the Harvard University Library, is dated in Coleridge's hand 10 December, so publication may have been then or several days earlier.¹ Coleridge's *Answer to "A Letter to Edward Long Fox, M.D."* is undated, but the letter to which it was a reply was dated 11 December. As Coleridge speaks of his answer being a speedy one, it may have appeared within a week, possibly by 18 December or even earlier.² By this time Coleridge must already have begun preparations for *The Watchman*.

Reviewing Coleridge's lecture and publications of the late autumn in more detail, we note that the day before his Lecture on the Two Bills he borrowed from the Bristol Library James Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*. He was to make much use of this work both in the lecture and in *The Plot Discovered*. Possibly he had known of Burgh before, for *Political Disquisitions* was a popular Whig sourcebook. The Bristol Library records show, for example, that in the period 1773–84 it was borrowed thirty-eight times.³ Coleridge spoke most gratefully of it in *The Plot Discovered*, yet no later reference to it in his writings has been found. As far as the manuscript fragment of the lecture is concerned, he leaned on Burgh to the exclusion of other authorities, and almost of any original contribution of his own. The fragment, it is true, deals with the Convention Bill, which laid restrictions on freedom of speech, a special bailiwick of Burgh's. The first

¹ The Two Bills became the Two Acts on 18 Dec. For an argument that *PD* was published after that date—that the date of 28 Nov on the wrapper was a subterfuge to evade possible prosecution under the Acts—see Lucyle Werkmeister "Coleridge's *The Plot Discovered*: Some Facts and a Speculation" *M Phil* lvi (1959) 254–63. But the speculation on such a late date would seem to be ended on the evidence of C's presentation copy to Mrs Richardson; see also below, p 278. The original date of publication would, in any event, have been no defence—and C continued to promote sales of the pamphlet well into 1796. The danger to the expression of free speech as far as pamphlets were concerned is emphasised by a handbill announcing a

speech by Thelwall on Lord Grenville's Bill; it ended: "BRITONS, who wish for Information, be expeditious; for a Fortnight hence it may be High Treason to sell a Political Pamphlet."

² The first edition of Beddoes's *Word in Defence of the Bill of Rights*, approximately the same length as C's *Answer*, dated 17 Nov on its last page, was advertised for sale in the *Bristol Gazette* two days later, 19 Nov. (Cf above, p xlv, a passage from Pinney's letter to Wordsworth.) If A. W.'s *Letter* was published 13 Dec (two days after it was written), C's *Answer* could have appeared as early as 15 Dec.

³ Paul Kaufman *Borrowings from the Bristol Library 1773–1784* (Bibliographical Society of Virginia, Charlottesville 1960) 59.

part of *The Plot Discovered*, concerned with the new Treason Bill, shows little indebtedness to Burgh.¹

That Burgh's influence on Coleridge, momentarily so great, should have been transient is owing, perhaps, to Burgh's being a compiler rather than a thinker. His purpose was to provide an arsenal of weapons to needy orators. Burgh could not conceive of there being too many quotations if they but tended to support Whig doctrine. His mode of thought, however, in venerating precedent, differed from Coleridge's. Though at times his speculations carried him into the future and into innovation, they rested upon the customs and wisdom of the past. Coleridge might have applied to him his description of J. P. Estlin: he "hath not the catenating Faculty—he wants the silk thread that ought to run through the Pearl-chain of Ratio-cination".² It was not precedents but the ideas implicit in the modes of the past that occupied Coleridge's mind somewhat at this time and increasingly in the future.

An anonymous "A. W." issued *A Letter to Edward Long Fox, M.D.*, dated 11 December 1795, which purports to be an attack upon Dr Fox for misleading the Bristolians and inflaming their political passions.³ Fox is also taxed with personal eccentricities, namely riding in a sulky and delving into animal magnetism. The burden of the attack, however, is directed really against Dr Beddoes, though not by name. His *A Word in Defence of the Bill of Rights Against Gaggling Bills* is cited once but actually quoted several times. A casual reader might suppose that Fox was the author. Coleridge it was who responded to this attack, in *An Answer to "A Letter to Edward Long Fox, M.D."*. Coleridge does not allude to A. W.'s covert censure of Beddoes; instead he defends Fox's use of the sulky, an unsociable but economical vehicle, suitable for a busy doctor, and his investigations into animal magnetism, a subject in which Coleridge himself later took keen interest. Naturally he also upheld Dr Fox's behaviour as chairman of the meeting in which the protest against the Two Bills was adopted, a meeting in which Coleridge had spoken.

¹ Cottle writes: "... he consolidated two other of his lectures, and published them under the title of 'The Plot Discovered'." *E Rec* I 20. There is no other evidence for the "two" lectures, and the *Bristol Gazette* advertisement of 26 Nov announces "an Address... on the Two Bills now pending in Parliament". *PD* does divide into two

sections, each perhaps of lecture length; the first eighteen pages of the fifty-two-page pamphlet are on the Treason Bill, whereas from page 19 Coleridge speaks of the Convention Bill, beginning to use the ms fragment of his lecture on p 21 and heavily relying on Burgh.

² *CL* I 193.

³ See below, App B 4, pp 385-91.

Curiously, Coleridge defended Fox against a charge that A. W. had not made, that Dr Fox had behaved badly in the bridge riots of 1793.¹

In A. W.'s *Letter* Coleridge had been glanced at but not named. "The Citizens of Bristol", A. W. hoped, "have more spirit and prudence than to suffer a few factious Aliens to scatter among them the seeds of discord and sedition".² Coleridge briskly accepted the challenge as meant for himself, presumably the leading "Alien". He in fact gloried in not being a Bristolian, for "recollecting that there was not virtue enough in [Bristol] to tear the cloak of authority from the limbs of murder, I should blush for my birth-place".³ He likewise noticed A. W.'s taunt that the factious group plumed themselves on their mental superiority. We do indeed, replied Coleridge. Though much of the *Answer* is concerned with personal polemics, the main thrust of its force is toward a general view, and Coleridge contrives to look beyond Bristol to the national and even the European scene.

COLERIDGE AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS

At some point in the controversy over the Two Bills a change came over the contestants, though no relaxation of the struggle took place. In spite of the strength of the Opposition, which mustered far more signatures to petitions and a greater volume of protest than did the Government, it seemed probable that the Government, with its great majorities in Parliament, would surely prevail. The Opposition nevertheless did not yield, but rather began to see the contest in a longer perspective. The Bills might pass but they also might, if at the next election the ministry's majority were seriously diminished, be repealed in response to a popular demand. It was now a question of maintaining pressure and keeping up the fight.

On 8 December 1795 the *Morning Chronicle* printed the advertisement: "Westminster Forum, Panton-street, in the Haymarket. This society will be opened, with the following Question, this evening 'Are not the most probable means left of saving the Country from

¹ This disturbance arose when the toll-bridge commissioners sought to extend their privilege of collecting tolls beyond the stipulated time, that is, when enough had been collected to retire the bonds. This charge, at any rate, was made by a popular opposition party, who broke down the toll barriers. The commissioners, supported

by the town authorities, called in the militia, and a series of riots ensued, in which many lives were lost. Dr Fox had sought to resolve the quarrel, but had been rebuffed by the authorities, who, however, in the end abandoned their cause.

² Below, p 389.

³ Below, p 329.

the Despotism of the Minister—an immediate Junction of the Whig Interest and the Corresponding Society?’ 8 o’clock.—6d.” An alliance of this sort meant that a parliamentary group would formally combine with a proletarian group, something unknown in British practice or certainly a rarity. The foot of the masses would be in the door of the House of Commons. It would mean, too, the recognition in semi-official fashion of a political association. Such organisations were known in classical times and were condemned by Plutarch’s Lycurgus, who perhaps influenced Rousseau to oppose them. Burgh, in his *Political Disquisitions*, had favoured a Grand National Association for the preservation of the Constitution. Coleridge, among others, gave close attention to Burgh at this time and must have pondered deeply the moral acceptability of such groups. Some persons normally repelled by them felt, at this juncture, that an association formed for a specific purpose, and that alone, was justifiable. British caution is in evidence here. Burgh, with his leisurely voluminousness, cites from his usual fund of precedent a long history of associations in England, but as a regular mode of action the popular association dated only from the Wilkite agitations of the 1770’s and the movement for parliamentary reform.¹

Unanimity in this matter was not to be found among the reformers themselves. Indeed, two of their greatest figures were now to clash when Godwin decided to attack associations and all popular agitation. In view of Coleridge’s expressed distaste for him and also in view of the low estate to which his follies brought him in later years, it is of some moment that the Godwin of the 1790’s be visualised. Three times within a few years he had brought off coups of significance and brilliance: in 1793 he had published *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, which, to those who take the trouble to read it (and it is very readable), still conveys something of the excitement it caused;² he had then turned surprisingly to the novel, and in *Caleb Williams* (1794) had given for the first time in English fiction a living picture of what it meant to be poor and a victim of the enmity of society; and he had intervened, during the State Trials of 1794, with a pamphlet only less decisive than Burke’s great work on the French Revolution. He was now to contribute the most celebrated pamphlet

¹ See Sir Thomas Erskine May *The Constitutional History of England* ed Francis Holland (3 vols 1912) II 21.

² In his *Reminiscences* (ch 3) Crabb Robinson summed up one effect *Political Justice* had on his mind:

“...it made me feel more generously. I had never before, nor, I am afraid, have I ever since felt so strongly the duty of not living to one’s self, but of having for one’s sole object the good of the community.” CRD I 18.

on the Two Bills. He attempted to bring the controversy into balance and by impartial examination to compose the quarrel. The attempt shows at once his greatness and his naïveté. It did not occur to him, since so great is truth, that his disciple would resent public chastisement for supposed offences against it. A collision resulted between the leading theorist of reform, Godwin, and the leading spokesman of reform, Thelwall. The *Morning Chronicle* of 21 November advertised *Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr. Pitt's Bills, concerning Treasonable and Seditious Practices and Unlawful Assemblies* "By a Lover of Order". Before reprobating the Two Bills, as he did most severely, Godwin (his authorship was no secret) took sharp issue with the London Corresponding Society and with Thelwall's lectures. Of the latter, with true Godwinian rigour, he observed, "It is not, for the most part, in crowded audiences, that truth is successfully investigated, and principles of science luminously conceived", and censured political lectures delivered by "an impatient and headlong reformer". Instead, he said, sounding at times strangely like Burke, reform must be carried on "by slow, almost insensible steps, and by just degrees. The public mind must first be enlightened. . . . There must be a consent of wills, that no minister and no monopolist would be frantic enough to withstand". With respect to the London Corresponding Society, he expressed alarm at the "collecting of immense multitudes of men particularly when there have been no persons of eminence, distinction, and importance in the country, that have mixed with them, and been ready to temper their efforts. We had a specimen of what might be the sequel of such collecting, in the riots introduced by Lord George Gordon and the Protestant Association in the year 1780".¹

In his *Political Justice* Godwin had already inveighed against associations, as his index adequately shows: associations "substitute the part for the whole; are attended by party spirit; with passionate declamation; with cabal; with contentious disputes; with restlessness; with tumult". However, he cautiously admitted exceptions: "But when the crisis arrives [the wise man] will not be induced by the irregularities of the friends of equality, to remain neutral, but will endeavour to forward her reign". So the dispute resolves itself into a question of what constitutes a crisis and when. Burgh had said that as long as England lived under an unreformed Parliament a crisis existed, and Coleridge at the moment was steeped in Burgh. Ordinarily Coleridge would have shared Godwin's fear of associations,

¹ [Godwin] *Considerations* pp 14, 17.

but he had already committed himself fully to the view that a crisis did in fact exist and that the constitution was in peril.

Coleridge never belonged to the London Corresponding Society or to any of the other "patriotic" societies, such as the Friends of the People or the Society for Constitutional Information. No evidence has been found that societies in 1795 were at all active in Bristol. In London an association was presently formed that he supported, if he did not join it, and this was the one formed at the end of 1795 by the Whig Club. This society played a prominent part from time to time in late-eighteenth-century politics and was the unofficial voice of the Whig Party. On 18 December, the day the Two Bills were signed into law, the Whig Club in a meeting proposed to form an association whose sole purpose would be to seek the repeal of the measures. This specific and limited goal engaged the support of many who otherwise would not have found it acceptable. Coleridge's miscellany, *The Watchman*, was founded largely to support this movement, as its prospectus makes clear.¹ Lists for the enrolment of members of the association were kept during the winter of 1795–6. By February, however it was apparent that increasing fear of the French and of Jacobinism at home had fatally undercut the popular support, and the association was quietly abandoned.

The failure of the causes he had fostered in his Bristol lectures—that is, opposition to the war and to the domestic policies of the Pitt government—dampened Coleridge's zeal for politics. Next spring came the failure of *The Watchman*. At one point he expressed aversion to "politicians and politics—a set of men and a kind of study which I deem highly unfavourable to all Christian graces".² Instead, "Bishop Taylor, Old Baxter, David Hartley & the Bishop of Cloyne are *my men*".³ These are all religious men, not a politician in the lot. Never again did politics absorb him as in 1795; but neither did he ever for a moment feel indifference to politics. Good as he was as a political agitator and orator, he tended to shift his emphasis to a study of the foundations of government and to concentrate on the "permanent".

¹ "It's chief objects are to co-operate (1) with the WHIG CLUB in procuring a repeal of Lord Grenville's and Mr. Pitt's bills, now passed into laws, and (2) with the PATRIOTIC SOCIETIES, for obtaining a Right of Suffrage general and frequent." *Watchman* (CC) 5.

² To Charles Lloyd, Sr, 15 Oct 1796: *CL* I 240.

³ To Poole 1 Nov 1796: *CL* I 245.

George Whalley suggests that probably the reference to "Old Baxter" is not to Richard Baxter, the author of *Saints' Rest* and *Reliquiae*, but to Andrew Baxter (1686–1750), author of *Evidences of Reason in Proof of the Immortality of the Soul*, posthumously published in 1779. For C's acquaintance with his work see below, pp 114–15 n 2.

II

SIX LECTURES ON REVEALED RELIGION,
ITS CORRUPTIONS AND
POLITICAL VIEWS

PETER MANN

A NUMBER of motives lay behind the composition of the Lectures on Revealed Religion, or Theological Lectures.¹ The hope of making at least a little money was certainly one; but more important, perhaps, in the early months of 1795 was Coleridge's need to put in order his intellectual life as he had put in order his personal life by returning to Bristol in January 1795 and accepting his responsibilities there. The attempt to clarify his ideas and beliefs and to adopt a more positive and coherent point of view in politics and religion was the outcome of his reaction against the disorder in his life during 1793 and 1794 at Cambridge and in London. His continual emphasis upon "principles" in his Bristol period sprang in part from a recognition of his own need of them. The instability in his own temperament and attitudes must have been made more apparent to him by the example of Southey's "downright uprightness" and probity of character. The search for principles was in part at least a search for stability within himself.

"Principles", moreover, were necessary to anyone who, like Coleridge, wished to meet vigorously and actively the challenge of contemporary events in England and Europe. Clear principles alone about man and his nature permitted an understanding of the complexities and conflicts of the age; principles provided their possessor with a perspective on human history that allowed him to evaluate contemporary reality and to see the true significance of events. It is not accidental that both Coleridge and Southey lectured, or intended lecturing, on historical subjects in 1795 and that both intended to review the past in order to throw light upon the present state of postrevolutionary Europe.

The Lectures on Revealed Religion constituted a sustained and comprehensive attempt on Coleridge's part to "find himself".

¹ See above, pp xxxv-xxxvii.

COLERIDGE'S PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

The manuscript we possess of the *Lectures on Revealed Religion* is an incomplete transcript of lectures that were written in haste and with more concern for rhetorical force and effectiveness than for polished composition, and in places left in note form for elaboration during delivery. Yet, in spite of the imperfections in thought and expression that one would expect in these circumstances, the *Lectures on Revealed Religion* are an achievement of considerable interest in relation to the rest of Coleridge's work and to the intellectual history of English romanticism, which is both augmented and seen as more complicated by their survival. His use of Cudworth's *True Intellectual System* reveals further his early connexions with seventeenth-century Platonism; politically the lectures look back, through his reading of Moses Lowman, to Algernon Sidney and Harrington and thus establish an interesting new connexion between early romanticism and the republican thinkers and political theorists of the seventeenth century as well as the Commonwealthmen, or Old Whigs, of the eighteenth century; they show more fully the nature of his Unitarianism and his relationship with both the politics and the theology of contemporary Dissent; his attitude to Godwin and his philosophy is clarified and shown in a new light; and above all, perhaps, the lectures confirm and substantiate the overriding importance to Coleridge of Hartley's philosophy in *Observations on Man* in the development of his own ideas and beliefs.

Although the intellectual ramifications and connexions of the lectures are many and various, they are not without coherence or a controlling sense of purpose. They show many signs of being the outcome of an attempt by Coleridge to create a personal philosophy in which his views about religion, politics, morality, and the nature of man as an individual and as a social being could be drawn together and related. This comprehensive exposition of his early beliefs is not without its peculiar confusions and contradictions and is certainly uneven in the quality of its argument and rhetoric, but it constitutes, nevertheless, a unique personal document in the history of ideas and beliefs at a time when English romantic poets and writers were responding positively and vigorously to the challenge of contemporary events. The *Lectures on Revealed Religion*, inescapably political themselves, usefully supplement the political lectures that he gave in February 1795. They make possible a fuller understanding of his early political attitudes as well as throw fresh light on the wider

implications of the relationship between the romantic writer and society. They provide evidence of even greater interest about the nature and depth of his religious feelings at this time.

Some symptoms of immaturity and inexperience are inevitably to be found in these lectures as in his other writings of this period, and the element of condescension or the tendency to explain away his early beliefs (the pantisocratic dream, or his attachment to the mechanistic psychology of Hartley, for instance) in much of his later criticism and autobiography is understandable. It is possible to see why one of his modern admirers should exclaim that "the enthusiasms of this period were largely froth upon his mind's surface";¹ yet the judgment, if understandable, is certainly misleading and even inconsistent with a common-sense view of Coleridge's development as a thinker. Could the later powerful critique of eighteenth-century associationism have had its origins in or been brought into existence by a merely *frothy* interest in Hartley? Coleridge himself later showed a serious, almost obsessive concern with this part of his past, and there is much in his early and later writing that confirms its traumatic impact and continuing influence upon his intellectual career.²

Most notably, the lectures reveal how deeply important to him at this time was his attachment to the Christian revelation. That his political, philosophical, and moral ideas were dependent upon his belief in the "system of Jesus" is a fact that goes far towards explaining his attitude to a number of the most important contemporary issues. His acceptance of the morality of Jesus and his tendency to see in Christ the ideal type of the virtuous reformer and lover of humanity affected his attitude to Godwin and Paine and to the radical movement in general, including the dissenting reformers such as Priestley, Price, and Gilbert Wakefield. The kind of Christian and moral emphasis we find in his beliefs in 1795 distinguishes him in an important way from Southey and from Wordsworth at this time and is one that deserves to be taken seriously. If it is possible to see the conservative in the early radical, this is largely owing to the rôle his religious feelings and beliefs played in the formation of his political attitudes.

The impulse to deliver these lectures on natural and revealed religion, and on the true political principles of Christianity, sprang to a great extent from his repugnance to the atheism and infidelity of some of the leading figures in extreme radical circles whom he had

¹ Basil Willey *Nineteenth Century Studies* (1949) 7.

² Cf, for example, *Friend* (CC) 1224.

met in 1794 or earlier—notably Godwin, Thomas Holcroft, and John Thelwall—and with whom he had been misleadingly identified. His early antipathy to Godwin personally and to what he had heard or read of Godwin's ideas was great enough to make him explore more deeply the nature of his own beliefs and his reasons for holding them. This probing, in turn, lay behind his discussion in the lectures of the rational and historical evidence in favour of revealed religion and his rehearsal of traditional as well as more novel arguments against atheism and infidelity. The tone of the lectures is one of vigorous defence and counterattack; they assume a challenge to the truth and relevance to life of the Christian faith and attempt to refute it.¹

Most eighteenth-century accounts of the “evidences of Christianity” were defensive responses to deism, and much of Coleridge's own argument and language derives from the literature of the deist controversies or from works that were its end-products, such as Priestley's *Discourses on the Evidence of Revealed Religion* (1794) and Thomas Balguy's *Divine Benevolence Asserted* (1781). In the 1790's, however, in Coleridge's eyes, the danger to true Christianity came from two sources, first from the alliance of radicalism with atheism or infidelity, particularly in the works of Godwin and Paine, second from the alliance of the Established Church with wealth and privilege. Doctrinal justifications of inequality and poverty such as Paley's *Reasons for Contentment* (1793), which Coleridge responded to with contempt—“Themes to debauch Boys' minds on the miseries of rich men & comforts of Poverty”²—were a common topic for churchmen. Bishop Watson expressed his belief that “this unequal distribution of property is a great spur to industry and frugality in the lower classes...and habits of industry and frugality bring with them modesty, humility, temperance...so many virtues...”³ Such sentiments offered by the leaders of “official” Christianity no less than the atheism and scepticism flourishing in radical circles disturbed

¹ Cf the Prospectus: “These Lectures are intended for two Classes of Men, Christians and Infidels/to the former, that they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them—to the latter that they may not determine against Christianity from arguments applicable to its' Corruptions only.”

² CN I 75.

³ Richard Watson *A Sermon*

Preached before the Stewards of the Westminster Dispensary...April 1785 (1793) 5. Cf also: “[It is not] within the competence of Government, taken as Government, or even of the rich, as rich, to supply to the poor, those necessities which it has pleased the Divine Providence for a while to withhold from them.” Edmund Burke *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity* (1795) 32.

and split Coleridge's loyalties and pushed him towards a personal philosophy in which he could maintain and harmonise his religious and his political beliefs in the form of a Christianised radicalism that looked back for its justification to the supposed "communism" and uncorrupted faith of the early Christian societies. That Christ was a "reformer" was a common theme in the reform literature of the 1790's, but Coleridge was alone in drawing upon the latent political philosophy in the New Testament and in the Old in so extreme a way.¹

His development towards an individual point of view was accelerated by his unwillingness to accept the political aims of the Dissenters. Although a Priestleian Unitarian with many personal connexions with dissenting reformers, he could not remain satisfied with the political ambitions and perspectives of the "politics of dissent", which he regarded as self-centredly concerned with the social and religious rights of Dissenters and overcomplacent about the injustice suffered by the class below them.² To Coleridge such a characteristic statement as Priestley's to the effect that "all trade and commerce, all buying and selling, is wrong, unless it be to the advantage of both parties"³ could have appeared no more than a grotesque evasion of Christ's specific commands and the whole spirit of his moral teaching. "Jesus Christ forbids to his disciples all property—and teaches us that accumulation was incompatible with their Salvation."⁴

Though repeatedly pressed to do so,⁵ Coleridge refused to commit himself to any organised section of the reform movement. In spite of his connexions with radical and reformist figures in Bristol and London and his active support of the campaign against Pitt's ministry and the war with France, his position was essentially an individual one that tended, inevitably perhaps, to be both eccentric and difficult to maintain.

When the first public lecture Coleridge had delivered in Bristol appeared in print in the spring of 1795, the anonymous reviewer in the April issue of the *Critical Review* deprecated the absence of those "principles" of thought and conduct which Coleridge frequently referred to but never actually defined. "We think it rather defective in point of precision. . . . We also think our young political lecturer

¹ See especially Lect 6, pp 226–9 below; Lect 2, pp 126–8 below.

² Cf *MPL* 11–12; below, p 11.

³ *Institutes of Natural and Revealed*

Religion pt 1 ch 2 sec 3 § 5 (2nd ed 2 vols Birmingham 1782) i 111.

⁴ Below, p 226.

⁵ See below, pp lxxv, lxxx.

leaves his auditors abruptly, and that he has not stated, in a form sufficiently scientific and determinate, those principles to which, as he expresses it, he now proceeds as the most *important point*. We confess we were looking for something further. . . . One or two more lectures might give a fulness to the whole, and be very useful."¹ The Lectures on Revealed Religion go a long way towards setting forth his principles by drawing together into a single point of view his Unitarian and other Christian beliefs, elements of the philosophies of Hartley and Priestley, and social and moral ideas derived from the New Testament. The intellectual and moral resources that sustained Coleridge's humanitarian protest are revealed in them with some comprehensiveness as are also his inconsistencies and naïveties in thought and feeling. The latter are not without their own interest, because they, as much as what was shrewd and realistic and positive in his early thinking, formed the point of departure for the achievements of his maturity and left their mark upon them.

COLERIDGE AND HARTLEY AND PRIESTLEY

There is no lack of evidence for Coleridge's veneration of David Hartley, the "great master of *Christian Philosophy*,"² described in *Religious Musings* as

he of mortal kind
Wisest, he first who marked the ideal tribes
Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain.³

In the course of defending his unorthodox opinions to his brother George in November 1794, Coleridge declared that he had made "an intense study of Locke, Hartley and others who have written most wisely on the Nature of Man,"⁴ and to Southey he affirmed his attachment not only to Hartley, but implicitly to Priestley and his "materialism" as it was described in *Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit* (1777).⁵

I am a compleat Necessitarian—and understand the subject as well almost as Hartley himself—but I go farther than Hartley and believe the corporeality of thought—namely, that it is motion—.⁶

¹ *C Rev* XIII (1795) 455.

² To Poole 24 Sept 1796: *CL* I 236.

³ Lines 368–70: *PW* (EHC) I 123.

⁴ *CL* I 126 (6 Nov 1794).

⁵ The editions of 1777 and 1782 were in the sales lists of the Green and Gillman libraries, which received many

of Coleridge's own books. The two-volume edition of 1782 included the volume on "philosophical necessity", and it is this edition that is cited in the notes.

⁶ To RS c 11 Dec 1794: *CL* I 137.